

NATION BUILDING: GOTHIC REVIVAL HOUSES IN UPPER CANADA  
AND CANADA WEST, c.1830–1867

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## ABSTRACT

The Gothic Revival is, without question, the most influential architectural movement to have ever come out of England. Its effects on houses, and colonial houses, in particular, however, have been little studied. *Nation building: Gothic Revival houses in Upper Canada and Canada West, c.1830–67* examines the Gothic Revival houses built in the English colony of Upper Canada and Canada West prior to Confederation in 1867 in order to contextualize them and to give this category of housing the academic attention it merits. Using the buildings themselves as well as architectural drawings, plans, and archival photographs, this dissertation reveals and contextualizes the houses of pre-Confederation Canada within the broader scope of Western architectural history.

The houses are divided into temporal and theoretical categories, examining the chronological spread of the style as well the means by which it was employed; namely, through architects and publications. Beyond formal analysis of the objects themselves, then, the influence of British and American precedents is examined from the mid-eighteenth century through to the late 1860s, as well as the dissemination of these ideas to the colony through a variety of conduits such as architects, publications and popular aesthetic theories. This study also explores the rise of the architectural practice in the colony and the resulting eventual spread of the architectural vocabulary of the Gothic style into vernacular housing. Likewise examined are the multiple identities and associations produced by the Gothic style as applied to designs for houses, both on paper and as actually built. This study is the first of its kind, providing not only a comprehensive examination of the houses themselves, but the diverse theories, influences and cultural meanings behind them as well.

In short, this dissertation establishes the framework for the academic discussion of these houses by rigorously contextualizing them within existing architectural histories. Overall, it exposes these houses as valid cultural objects and as an important part in the formation of Canada's built heritage.

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## INTRODUCTION

In an 1846 publication titled *Illustrations of the early domestic architecture of England*, it was written that “Domestic Architecture is the most obscure chapter in the history of art.”<sup>1</sup> Although it was written almost 170 years ago, in many ways, the statement still rings true today. This is particularly true of Canadian architectural history in which houses do indeed often seem to suffer in silent obscurity in contrast to their religious and civic counterparts. In fact, upon hearing my research topic, the typical responses are—not always, but often—either one of baffled boredom or of polite, but confused curiosity. Either way, the first question that generally follows is “Are there even any houses worth studying in Canada?” Far from being discouraging, this type of question proves the significance of this particular study.

While in the twenty-first century, houses rarely fall under the purview of the architect, it is important to remember that this was not always the case. Indeed, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, houses were a cornerstone of the architectural practice and of architectural debate. Architects and theorists wrote extensively on the subject and, increasingly throughout this period, most such writings were available for public consumption and use. As such, it was not just the wealthiest patrons (who could afford the services of an architect) that participated in architectural trends. The effects of architect-built houses and architectural publications reverberated across class divisions and into the vernacular as well. The selection of a certain

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<sup>1</sup> John Britton and Charles Boutell, *Illustrations of the early domestic architecture of England*, London: David Bogue, 86, Fleet Street, 1846, p.5.

style and plan for a house, moreover, could reflect a number of different things regarding its inhabitant including status, lineage, nationality and identity in general.

All of these notions were of importance throughout Canada's colonial past, and to the group of houses as covered by this study in particular. Although there is much work to do in the field of Canadian domestic architecture as a whole, this dissertation will explore one facet in particular: the Gothic Revival houses of pre-Confederation Ontario, which was known as Upper Canada from 1791 to 1841 and as Canada West from 1841 to 1867. This period was chosen because it was a time of heightened activity with regard to building and settlement, and was furthermore a time in which the area was firmly entrenched as a colony of Britain. At the time, its inhabitants were, by governance, British citizens and most were of British descent, if not British by birth. As a result, British cultural exports were highly valued. Incidentally, the most influential architectural movement ever to have emanated from Britain—the Gothic Revival—was in full swing during this period.

Trickling into architectural vocabulary in a significant fashion for the first time since the Middle Ages, Gothic began to gain currency in the middle of the eighteenth century and further gained momentum in the late 1830s. The movement exerted a powerful influence on the architecture as produced during this period across all building types in England and, in turn, in Upper Canada and Canada West. The trajectory of the Gothic Revival, and its application to houses in British North America in particular, however, is less straightforward than might be expected. Upper Canada-Canada West, though an increasingly prosperous colony of Great Britain, was still

growing and was geographically remote from the motherland. As such, there were few architects working in the province and, relatedly, limited resources in terms of a skilled labour force in the building trade. Beyond this, there were also issues of climate, as well as displacement and nostalgia, that factored into the architecture as built, meaning that it was not always the most current or fashionable architecture to be employed. Instead, slightly old-fashioned, familiar or practical choices were often made instead. There was also the nearby and increasingly powerful influence of the United States of America which had its own architectural traditions that manifested themselves in the province at an early date. Beginning in the 1840s, Americans also put their own spin on the Gothic style as applied to houses. All of these factors complicated the domestic architectural landscape and meant that at no point was one style or influence more prevalent than another. As such, changes to the Gothic Revival movement with regard to houses came about rather more slowly than in England and with rather different results. Indeed, many of the Gothic houses as built were stylistic hybrids, combining a variety of influences.

Given the confluence of ideas and the resulting peculiarities, there is little work that has been done on the subject of Gothic houses in Upper Canada and Canada West. While Gothic houses are indeed found in a number of different types of Canadian publications, they are typically discussed rather briefly. (It should also be noted that Canadian houses are never mentioned in international publications or architectural histories.) Books dealing with the subject of domestic architecture in Canada, for instance, are typically broad in scope, covering vast periods of time, wide geographic spans, or both. As such, these act as generic surveys rather than concentrated studies which necessarily skim the subject of Gothic houses. Examples include the now-

canonical *The ancestral roof: domestic architecture of Upper Canada* of 1963 by Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, which succinctly covers all styles of houses from the beginning of English rule in the province. Architectural monographs for architects working in Canada likewise discuss domestic commissions such as *Fred Cumberland: building the Victorian dream* of 1997 by Geoffrey Simmins or *William Thomas, architect, 1799–1860* of 1996 by Glenn McArthur and Annie Szamosi. In these types of books, however, the contextualization of church and civic commissions form the main focus. Typically, then, houses are treated as stepping stones toward an architect's more notable projects rather than as important in their own right. This is reinforced by the lack of thorough treatment that is given to the theoretical precedent for houses, particularly as compared to the frequently detailed discussions of ecclesiology and A.W.N. Pugin's views on churches, for instance.

Gothic houses have also been included in some useful general Canadian architectural surveys, albeit necessarily briefly given the breadth of the topics at hand. Such surveys include Canada-wide texts such as Harold Kalman's *A history of Canadian architecture* of 1994 and Mathilde Brosseau's *Gothic Revival in Canadian architecture* of 1980, as well as more localized surveys such as Eric Arthur's *Toronto: no mean city* of 1964 and Jennifer McKendry's *With our past before us: nineteenth-century architecture in the Kingston area* of 1995. Otherwise, a number of Gothic houses of the pre-Confederation period have received exposure in heritage publications or architectural picture books, which, while great for raising the profile of heritage buildings in Ontario, provide little useful information for the art or architectural historian. In short, the Gothic houses of the province lack rigorous scholarly study. The fact that many of the houses built

during the period in question no longer exist simply complicates the matter and indeed promotes the type of brief discussion as delineated above. This dissertation, then, proposes to fill this gap in the field by thoroughly contextualizing and theorizing the Gothic Revival houses in Upper Canada and Canada West within Canadian architectural history, the Gothic Revival and architectural history at large.

Beyond providing a niche for this study, this dearth of material meant that there was little existing literature upon which to build this dissertation. An abundance of sources were scrutinized and extrapolated from including the types of books as described above, as well as an abundance of English and American architectural writings—whether specific to domestic architecture or not—in order to provide thorough contextualization and parallels. Original primary sources were also consulted, including articles and books by nineteenth-century architects and theorists as well as contemporary Canadian books, personal journals, periodicals and newspapers. A running list of houses that were built in the province was compiled from these sources and was supplemented by Robert G. Hill's invaluable *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*. Otherwise, information was fastidiously mined wherever possible, for instance from architectural drawings, archival records, building specifications, historic photographs, maps, and, of course, from the (remaining) buildings themselves.

This was not without its challenges, however, as, in some cases, there is simply little evidence to be found. For instance, for many of the houses in question, there was difficulty in accessing plans. Many houses in the province were not built by architects and so plans simply do not exist.

Even many houses that were built by an architect have no surviving plans. Beyond this, the internal arrangement of extant houses has often been altered since their original state in correspondence with changing lifestyles and technologies. There is also the delicate issue of accessing and documenting private homes, which in most cases is not possible. Sometimes no surviving documentation about a house exists at all, aside from perhaps a tender call or a brief journal entry. Even with these challenges, this study aims to present as complete a picture as possible. The goal for this dissertation, then, is not to produce an exhaustive chronicle of all of the Gothic Revival houses as built in Upper Canada and Canada West, but, rather, to introduce the major trends and lines of inquiry, and to contextualize these valuable cultural objects as never before.

The chapters have been divided into periods of time and theoretical groupings. In either case, each chapter examines not only the architectural products of Upper Canada and Canada West, but their English and American antecedents and parallels as well. As such, each chapter can be read individually, but each builds upon the next in order to paint the full picture of what was happening in the province leading up to Confederation.

The first chapter represents the earliest period of time covered by this dissertation. After briefly examining the history of Gothic houses in eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century England, this chapter then transitions into a discussion of Upper Canada's first known Gothic Revival houses. Despite the longevity of Gothic for domestic architecture in England, the first generation of Gothic houses in Upper Canada appeared only in the 1830s and appears to have been

restricted to the context of York (present-day Toronto). This chapter examines the varied applications of the style, primarily as practiced by the English-born architect John George Howard (1803–90), and the diverse reasons for the selection of a Gothic house in the settler's context.

The second chapter examines the history of printed media in relation to the spread of the Gothic style for houses in Britain and in America in order to lay the foundation for the discussion of the use of printed media across Canada West. Particular attention is given to the Scottish landscape gardener John Claudius Loudon (1783–1843), whose immensely successful book on the subject domestic architecture, titled *An encyclopaedia of cottage, farm and villa architecture* of 1833 was unparalleled in length and in scope. Closely following from Loudon was the American landscape-gardener-turned-tastemaker Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–52) whose books were extremely popular in both the United States and in Canada West beginning in the 1840s. The rest of this chapter discusses, at length, the implications of such publications on the built environment in Canada West and the possible reasons for their use. In some cases, direct print models for houses have been identified, while in others, the use of a book is implied rather more subtly. This chapter provides a breakdown of features that indicate the likely use and/or influence of a pattern book either in the absence or, in some cases, in the presence of an architect.

The third chapter discusses the resurgence in popularity of the Gothic style in England through an examination of the writings and work of the indefatigable architect and theorist Augustus Welby Pugin (1812–52). Following this is an in-depth discussion of architects working at



roughly the same time in Canada West (from 1841 through to 1853) in order to explore similarities and differences to Pugin's brand of cutting-edge English architecture. While there are some traces of Pugin's influence to be found during this period, for the most part, architects working in Canada West appear to have been borrowing rather more heavily from picturesque precedent—such as the work of John Nash (1752–1835)—than from meticulous scholarly study and adaptation of medieval buildings, as promoted by Pugin. Even so, this generation of architects—notably Fred Cumberland (1821–81), Henry Bowyer Lane (1817–78) and William Thomas (1799–1860)—succeeded in spreading the taste for Gothic houses and in adapting English precedent to the Canadian context. This chapter examines the works of these architects and explores the possible reasons for the use of a somewhat outdated style in the province.

The fourth chapter begins by briefly examining the state of Gothic Revival theory in England following Pugin's successful publications, namely through the writings of John Ruskin (1819–1900) and George Gilbert Scott (1811–78) as well as the influential periodicals *The Builder* and *The Ecclesiologist*. It then transitions into a period of heightened Gothic activity with regard to architects working in Canada West. It is during the 1850s that architects in Canada West began to emulate their English counterparts and succeeded in employing the latest English fashions for houses in the Gothic style. This period appears to have been initiated by the Scottish-born architect (and ardent admirer of Pugin) William Hay (1818–88) upon his immigration in 1853. The style was continued and embellished upon by architects such as William Thomas, Fred Cumberland, and the Toronto-based firm of Gundry and Langley, some of whom dabbled in High Victorian Gothic trends as well.

The final chapter examines the trickle-down effect of the Gothic style into rural and working-class dwellings, and eventually, the provincial vernacular. This was accomplished in large part due to the architect, James Avon Smith (1832–1918) who published plans in a non-architecturally specific newspaper, *The Canada Farmer*, which was begun in 1864. As such, this chapter demonstrates the wide spread of the Gothic style via printed media across Canada West.

Though the houses themselves have been divided into different categories—both temporal and theoretical—several appear in more than one chapter. This lack of definitive categorization in many cases highlights the clashing streams of contemporaneous theory and the resulting confusing nature of the period. Indeed, this dissertation will reveal that the situation with regard to domestic Gothic is not as black and white as might be expected.

## CHAPTER ONE: THE EARLY GOTHIC REVIVAL

### **Section A: A brief overview of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century English Gothic houses**

Though the eighteenth-century origins of the Gothic Revival have received detailed scholarly attention elsewhere, they bear a brief discussion here, particularly as the movement achieved widespread popularity not through churches, but through the medium of the English country house. Though Gothic elements had been used occasionally for houses since the early eighteenth century, one house in particular—Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, Middlesex—ignited the desire for the style across elite social circles, thus bringing Gothic back into the architectural vocabulary in a serious way for the first time since the Middle Ages. The taste and traditions as established in the middle of the eighteenth century—and which carried on into the nineteenth century—created the legacy and the traditions that were transmitted across the Atlantic into the nineteenth-century British North American context. The taste for Gothic architecture also established the milieu in which many of Canada's early immigrants were raised and in which its earliest architects were trained, thus necessitating an examination of its origins here. In short, the houses as built and the ideas that were circulating in the eighteenth century laid the foundation for what was to appear in the context of Upper Canada beginning in the 1830s.

Undoubtedly the most influential Gothic house of the mid-eighteenth century was Strawberry Hill, which helped to spark the trend and to sell the Gothic style to a wider audience in the eighteenth century (Figures 1.1–1.4). The house began its life as a small cottage that was unremarkable but for its location near the banks of the Thames in the fashionable area of

Twickenham, to the west of London.<sup>2</sup> The property was acquired by Horace Walpole (1717–97), the son of the former Prime Minister Robert Walpole, in 1747,<sup>3</sup> and though the house was not complete until 1790, it was well known prior to its completion, in print and even through tours.<sup>4</sup> Walpole decided to drastically expand and improve upon the original cottage, with a stylistic vision of Gothic in mind nearly from the outset.<sup>5</sup> In a letter to his friend, Horace Mann, in early 1750, Walpole proclaimed, “I am going to build a little Gothic castle at Strawberry Hill,”<sup>6</sup> to which Mann replied “Why will you make it Gothic? I know it is the taste at present, but I really am sorry for it.”<sup>7</sup> Mann’s puzzled response demonstrates that though Gothic was indeed known at this time, it was not yet a widely accepted or understood trend. For instance, there had been books released that dealt with Gothic architecture, though they were not nearly as popular as publications dealing with classical architecture. The most popular of these, Batty Langley’s, *Ancient architecture restored and improved by a great variety of grand and useful designs, entirely new in the Gothick mode for the ornamenting of buildings and gardens* of 1742<sup>8</sup> (re-

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<sup>2</sup> W.S. Lewis, “The genesis of Strawberry Hill,” *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, Vol.5, No.1 (August 1934), pp.57–92 at pp.57–58.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Guillery and Michael Snodin, “Strawberry Hill: building and site,” *Architectural History*, vol.38 (1995), pp. 102–128 at p.102.

<sup>4</sup> Horace Walpole, *A description of the villa of Horace Walpole, youngest son of Sir Robert Walpole Earl of Orford, at Strawberry-Hill, near Twickenham. With an inventory of the furniture, pictures, curiosities, &c.*, Twickenham: Strawberry Hill Press, 1774 and Horace Walpole, *A description of Strawberry Hill*, 1784, Twickenham: Strawberry Hill Press, 1784.

<sup>5</sup> Lewis notes that some non-Gothicizing alterations were made prior to Walpole’s first mention of the Gothic style with regard to the house in September, 1749. Lewis, p.62.

<sup>6</sup> Horace Walpole, *The Yale edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, Vol. 20, ed. W.S. Lewis, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961, 10 January 1750, p.111.

<sup>7</sup> Horace Mann, *The Yale edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, Vol.20, ed. W.S. Lewis, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961, 13 February 1750, p.119.

<sup>8</sup> Batty Langley and Thomas Langley, *Ancient architecture restored and improved by a great variety of grand and useful designs, entirely new in the Gothick mode for the ornamenting of buildings and gardens*, London: publisher not identified, 1742.

released in 1747<sup>9</sup>), was not incredibly widely read,<sup>10</sup> but found its way into the hands of Horace Walpole who borrowed some of its ideas for Strawberry Hill. Shortly thereafter, in fact, Langley's book quickly became the subject of derision as opinions began to shift with regard to the application of Gothic toward a rather more studied approach of medieval artifacts. Around this time, too, extending from the use of Gothic garden ornaments, a number of wealthy patrons became enamored with the aesthetic of Gothic ruins in the landscape. If a landowner was not fortunate enough to have the remains of a medieval building on his property, he could hire someone to build one. Indeed, this is how Sanderson Miller (1716–80) made his career with sham ruins such as the ruined Gothic castle at Hagley Park, Worcestershire of 1748 or his own Tower at Radway, Warwickshire of 1747 to which he added a ruined wall and drawbridge in 1749.<sup>11</sup> Despite their appeal, mock ruins of this nature had little staying power. With a figure as prominent and as influential as Walpole partaking in the Gothic trend, however, the movement was to gain popularity rapidly.

Walpole's Strawberry Hill employed a number of architects, artists and amateurs (including Robert Adam, Richard Bentley, John Chute and Johann Heinrich Müntz, Thomas Pitt and James Wyatt), with varying degrees of responsibility, and took several decades to build. As such, the plan is additive and ultimately asymmetrical in nature. While the original house on the property was indeed asymmetrical, it is significant that Walpole consciously decided to carry on with his

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<sup>9</sup> Batty and Thomas Langley, *Gothic architecture, improved by rules and proportions. In many grand designs of columns, doors, windows, chimney-pieces, arcades, colonades [sic], porticos, umbrellos, temples, and pavillions [sic] &c.* London: printed for John Millan, 1747.

<sup>10</sup> Michael McCarthy, *The origins of the Gothic Revival*, New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 1987 p.4.

<sup>11</sup> McCarthy, p.51.

additions in an asymmetrical fashion, claiming a fondness for the look as produced by the irregularity.<sup>12</sup> In the already quoted correspondence, Walpole replied to Mann:

I shall speak much more gently to you, my dear child, though you don't like Gothic architecture. The Grecian is only proper for magnificent and public buildings. Columns and all their beautiful ornaments look ridiculous when crowded into a closet or a cheesecake house. The variety is little, and admits no charming irregularities. I am almost as fond of the *Sharawaggi* ['studied irregularity'<sup>13</sup>], or Chinese want of symmetry, in buildings, as in grounds or gardens. I am sure whenever you come to England, you will be pleased with the liberty of taste into which we are struck, and of which you can have no idea.<sup>14</sup>

Beyond selecting a fashionable style, then, Walpole had several reasons for selecting a Gothic house as he had a firm idea regarding the propriety of architectural styles for use in different types of buildings. Walpole's response also demonstrates that Gothic was perceived as a liberated style in the sense that it could feature irregularity in design, which was evidently a highly desirable feature to Walpole for use in a house. This was drastically different from the prevailing Palladian house plan and signalled a shift in perception with regard to what a house could be.

Though asymmetrical planning in house design did not take hold immediately in architecture, what Strawberry Hill did succeed in promoting almost instantaneously was the general use of the Gothic style, particularly for the exterior of houses. Strawberry Hill's own exterior displays a range of Gothic motifs applied to its surface from a variety of building types as well as from a variety of historical periods. It freely blends elements from the three eras of English Gothic that were first categorized by Thomas Rickman in 1817 as Early English (which he dated to 1189–

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<sup>12</sup> Guillery and Snodin, p.113; McCarthy, p.74.

<sup>13</sup> W.S. Lewis in footnote, *The Yale edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, Vol. 20, ed. W.S. Lewis, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961, 25 February 1750, p.127.

<sup>14</sup> Horace Walpole, *The Yale edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, Vol. 20, ed. W.S. Lewis, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961, 25 February 1750, p.127.

1272, but which has since been modified numerous times), Decorated (1272–1377) and Perpendicular (1377–1547).<sup>15</sup> Although each of these categories possesses distinct characteristics, they were all understood (or misunderstood) in the mid–eighteenth century as simply English in origin and as emanating from the Middle Ages, with no differentiation. As such, Strawberry Hill presents an eclectic, jumbled mixture of crenellation, buttresses, quatrefoils, pinnacles, tracery, lancets, ogee arches and four–centred arches, which all commingle to form this castle–like home.

Combining a love for exterior display and for fashionable taste, the demand for Gothic houses thus grew in elite circles across Britain nearing the turn of the century. As an indication in the growing interest in these houses, it should be noted that, with regard to the architectural practice of James Wyatt (1746–1813), twenty out of around thirty of his country–house commissions between 1798 and 1813 were carried out in the Gothic style.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps one of the most influential and successful architects of the post–Strawberry–Hill generation, Wyatt worked on a number of prominent and well known houses, including Lee Priory, Kent, begun in 1782 (now demolished),<sup>17</sup> which was heavily influenced by Strawberry Hill (Figures 1.5–1.7). In fact, Walpole hailed it as “the most perfect thing ever formed!” noting that, “*if Strawberry were not its*

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<sup>15</sup> Rickman’s dates have been used here. Thomas Rickman, *An attempt to discriminate the styles of English architecture, from the Conquest to the Reformation*, London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1819.

<sup>16</sup> John Martin Robinson, *James Wyatt: architect to George III*, New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2012, p.233.

<sup>17</sup> Though now demolished, the house was featured in J.P. Neale’s *Views of the country seats of noblemen and gentlemen, in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland*, Second Series, Vol.II, London: Sherwood, Jones, and Co., 1825 and in *The mansions of England: or picturesque delineations of the seats of noblemen and gentlemen, from drawings by J.P. Neale, Esq.* Vol.I, London: M.A. Nattali, 1847. A room from the house has also been reconstructed at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

*parent, I would be jealous.*”<sup>18</sup> Wyatt’s approach was rather more studied than that as used at Strawberry Hill, however, and reflected the growing interest in antiquarianism in England at the time. As such, Wyatt’s houses, such as Lee Priory, come across as slightly more cohesive ensembles than that of the additive, piecemeal nature of Strawberry Hill. In fact, Walpole noted this for himself in a 1788 letter to the owner of Lee Priory, Thomas Barrett. He wrote:

Mr. Wyatt has made [his building foreman] too correct a Goth not to have seen all the imperfections and bad execution of my attempts; for neither Mr. Bentley nor my workmen had *studied* the science, and I was always too desultory and impatient to consider that I should please myself more by allowing time, than by hurrying my plans into execution before they were ripe. My house therefore is but a sketch by beginners; yours is finished by a great master.<sup>19</sup>

Wyatt’s most famous—or most infamous—Gothic house, however, was Fonthill Abbey, begun in 1796 (Figures 1.8 and 1.9). Just as with Strawberry Hill, it was commissioned by an eccentric and wealthy patron, William Beckford (1760–1844), and was perhaps equally well known as Strawberry Hill, though for its sheer extravagance rather than for its imitability. Prior to its completion in 1807, for instance, it appears that Beckford commissioned Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851) in 1799 to create five large watercolours of Fonthill Abbey, which were displayed at the Royal Academy in 1800.<sup>20</sup> (Incidentally, one of these ended up in Canada, eventually hanging in Toronto’s Casa Loma, a castle–mansion of 1911–14).<sup>21</sup> Other artists

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<sup>18</sup> Robinson, p.222.

<sup>19</sup> Horace Walpole, June 5, 1788 to Thomas Barrett, *The Yale edition of Horace Walpole’s correspondence*, Vol.42, ed. W.S. Lewis, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980, pp.220–221.

<sup>20</sup> E.G. Cundall, “Turner drawings of Fonthill Abbey,” *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol.29, No.157 (April, 1916), pp. 16–17, 20–21, at p.16; John Wilton–Ely, “The Genesis and Evolution of Fonthill Abbey,” *Architectural History*, Vol. 23 (1980), pp.40–51, 172–180 at p.45.

<sup>21</sup> Cundall, p.16; Peter Coffman, “Casa Loma and the Gothic imagination,” *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, Vol.28, No.3–4, pp.3–12, at p.8.



likewise depicted Fonthill and Wyatt showed architectural drawings at the Royal Academy.<sup>22</sup> Beyond Fonthill's romantic associations as produced in images, however, it received increased public exposure in 1822, when Beckford was forced to auction the house and most of its contents. This also resulted in an exhibition catalogue titled *Magnificent effects at Fonthill Abbey, Wilts. to be sold by auction by Mr. Christie of 1822*, followed by a number of publications such as John Rutter's *A description of Fonthill Abbey and demesne* of 1822 and his *Delineations of Fonthill and its abbey* of 1823. At the time of auction, "thousands of tourists from all over Britain and Europe,"<sup>23</sup> went to see the house, implying that it indeed had a reputation prior to the dissolution of the estate. In terms of architecture, this massive house displayed the extent to which the imagination could run wild with a Gothic home in a way that was not possible with the symmetrical restrictions of a house built in the classical tradition. Perhaps its monumental scale and sheer opulence, however, were the reason that it inspired few imitators, but its spectacular (final)<sup>24</sup> collapse in 1825 must have also assisted in convincing others of the suitability of the use of Gothic on a slightly less grand scale. Indeed, the rest of Wyatt's Gothic houses were aligned rather more closely with Strawberry Hill and the idea of creating inhabitable and comfortable castles in the landscape, such as Norris Castle, on the Isle of Wight of 1799, and Ashridge Park, Hertfordshire, of 1808.

### **Aesthetic theory and Gothic houses**

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<sup>22</sup> Cundall, p.21; Wilton–Ely, pp.42–44.

<sup>23</sup> Anne Nellis Richter, "Spectacle, exoticism, and display in the gentleman's house: the Fonthill auction of 1822," *Eighteenth-century studies*, Vol.41, No.4 (Summer, 2008), pp.542–563 at p.542.

<sup>24</sup> The first collapse of the tower occurred in 1800, part way through construction, and was subsequently rebuilt. Wilton–Ely, p.45.

The use of the Gothic style for houses was bolstered in the late–eighteenth century by the emergence of new aesthetic theories: the sublime, as begun by Edmund Burke in 1756,<sup>25</sup> and the picturesque, set down in print in 1792 with *Three essays: on picturesque beauty; on picturesque travel; and on sketching landscape*<sup>26</sup> by William Gilpin (1724–1804) and more popularly in 1794 with *An essay on the picturesque*<sup>27</sup> by Uvedale Price (1747–1829) and with the poem *The Landscape*<sup>28</sup> by Richard Payne Knight (1751–1824). The sublime and the picturesque emerged as aesthetic categories in order to explain and rationalize an interest in things that were not beautiful in the classical sense. The sublime was at the opposite end of the scale from beauty in that it was wild, unruly, terrifying and awe–inspiring. According to this spectrum, the picturesque fell right in the middle as it encompassed all that was not beautiful nor sublime, but aesthetically pleasing in some capacity. It focused on framing and interesting perspectives, as might be found in a painting (hence part of the reason for the name “the picturesque”), and prized irregularity and variety of form. In terms of nature, a picturesque landscape was to be slightly irregular, rough and not immaculately groomed, in the manner of overgrown vines or gnarled trees, but not threatening and seemingly infinite as a sublime chasm, for instance, had the potential to be.

Though the theories began with nature—much like the Gothic Revival movement in architecture in general—the picturesque, in particular, quickly became tied to the perception of architecture in

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<sup>25</sup> Edmund Burke, *A philosophical enquiry into the origin of our ideas of the sublime and beautiful: with an introductory discourse concerning taste*, New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1856.

<sup>26</sup> William Gilpin, *Three essays: on picturesque beauty; on picturesque travel; and on sketching landscape: to which is added a poem, on landscape painting*, London: Printed for R. Blamire, in the Strand, 1792.

<sup>27</sup> Uvedale Price, *An essay on the picturesque as compared with the sublime and beautiful, and, on the use of studying pictures, for the purpose of improving real landscape*, London: 1794.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Payne Knight, *The landscape, a didactic poem, in three books*, London: 1794.

the landscape. In his *An essay on the picturesque*, Price explained the suitability of architectural styles with regard to the application of picturesque theory:

Gothic architecture is generally considered as more picturesque, though less beautiful, than Grecian, and, upon the same principle that a ruin is more so than a new edifice. The first thing that strikes the eye in approaching any building is the general outline against the sky (or whatever it may be opposed to) and the effect of the openings: in Grecian buildings the general lines of the roof are straight and even when varied and adorned by a dome or a pediment, the whole has a character of symmetry and regularity. [...] In Gothic buildings, the outline of the summit presents such a variety of forms, of turrets and pinnacles, some open, some fretted and variously enriched, that even where there is an exact correspondence of parts, it is often disguised by an appearance of splendid confusion and irregularity.<sup>29</sup>

In short, classical architecture was beautiful and suited for large-scale, formal buildings, but Gothic architecture was visually appealing in a different way and was ideally suited for use in the English countryside.

Given that the picturesque in architecture was tied to the appearance of the house in the landscape, it should be noted that most patrons, amateurs and architects were concerned with applying Gothic ornament only to the exterior of houses. Although Gothic interiors were employed at Strawberry Hill, it seems that they were rather more difficult to promote than Gothic exteriors. It appears that most patrons were not ready to abandon the comfortable, classical interiors which they had come to expect in polite society. Richard Payne Knight's own home, Downton Castle, Herefordshire, of c.1772–78 (Figure 1.10), for instance, made use of a castle-like exterior with a classical interior. Knight congratulated himself on this duality in his 1805 book *An analytical inquiry into the principles of taste*, stating that he was pleased that the house,

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<sup>29</sup> Uvedale Price, *An essay on the picturesque: as compared with the sublime and the beautiful; and, on the use of studying pictures, for the purpose of improving real landscape*, London: J. Robson, 1796 ed., pp.63–64.

with its “Grecian ceilings, columns, and entablature within,” had “at once, the advantage of a picturesque object, and of an elegant and convenient dwelling.”<sup>30</sup> Much like at Knight’s home, a “combination of a Gothic shell with classical interiors was typical of Wyatt’s Gothic houses, apart from Fonthill [and later Ashridge Park, Hertfordshire], which [were] Gothic through and through.”<sup>31</sup> This again demonstrates that though the taste for exterior effect was shifting, tradition was not sacrificed on the interior. In fact, the preference for classical interiors enclosed within a Gothic shell carried on well into the nineteenth century and would carry over into the British North American context.

While the sublime affected few country houses in the Gothic style—with the grand exception of the cliff-like walls of Fonthill Abbey—it was necessary to the evolution of country houses in that it gave clarity to the notions of the picturesque. Locating the other extreme of the aesthetic scale helped to locate the limits of the picturesque and to define it. Beyond this, terror was perhaps not the most desirable of features to possess in a residence and, further, since awe-inspiring size was required by its tenets, the sublime was difficult to produce on an affordable scale. Price, for instance, argued that man cannot fabricate the sublime in nature (as he could handily with the picturesque), so it was likewise not possible for architecture.<sup>32</sup> The picturesque, however, could be created in the landscape and could be inscribed onto architecture in a relatively simple fashion; for instance by creating an asymmetrical facade. It was found that with its bold outlines and lack of restrictions with regard to symmetry, the Gothic style was

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<sup>30</sup> Richard Payne Knight, *An analytical inquiry into the principles of taste*, London: T. Payne, Mews Gate; and J. White, Fleet-Street, 1805, p.221.

<sup>31</sup> Robinson, p.240.

<sup>32</sup> Price, p.123.

particularly well suited to the tenets of the picturesque. Houses, in particular, were built that sampled from all of the different genres of Gothic while making use of the picturesque in order to integrate the house into the landscape and to create an interesting and up-to-date visual statement for its owner.

Although the ideas as espoused by Price and his circle were in circulation prior to the date of publication of the *Essays*, they had not yet been explicitly laid out.<sup>33</sup> To a certain degree, then, picturesque publications formalized and put into common parlance what had already been in practice in landscape architecture and in architecture going back to the time of Strawberry Hill. Price wrote rather more concisely and directly on the subject than did Knight, but those who might not have been willing to read a dense treatise might have picked up Knight's ideas in the form of a poem instead. Either way, each author agreed; the picturesque favoured variety, ruggedness and irregularity and the best kind of architecture suited to these features was Gothic.

### **Gothic is English**

Beyond the symbiotic nature of the picturesque and the Gothic style, many also became interested in Gothic for another specific reason; Gothic was believed to have been an inherently English style. In addition to aesthetic claims, for instance, Knight argued for the use of the style on nationalistic grounds. He wrote:

But let no servile copyist appear,  
To plant his paltry imitations here;  
To show poor Baalbec dwindled to the eye,  
And Paestum's fanes with columns six feet high!

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<sup>33</sup> Christopher Hussey, *The Picturesque: studies in a point of view*, Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1967, p.13.

With urns and cenotaphs our vallies fill,  
And bristle o're with obelisks the hill!  
Such buildings English nature must reject,  
And claim from art the appearance of neglect:  
No decoration should we introduce,  
That has not first been naturalized by use;  
And at the present, or some distant time,  
Become familiar to the soil and clime [...]<sup>34</sup>

Though written floridly, the message is nonetheless clear; English, meaning Gothic, architecture is more suitable for use in England than foreign imports, such as Grecian. The idea that Gothic architecture was English began to rise slowly throughout the eighteenth century and gained momentum approaching the turn of the century. It came to be associated with English history and heritage as Gothic monuments and ruins dotted the landscape and were featured regularly as part of gardens or as part of scenic vistas as viewed from the country house. While certain associations—whether political, historical or aesthetic—could be made with a Gothic garden ornament, “Translated into domestic architecture, into the big house itself, Gothic could imply a lived heritage, a family’s active and continuing engagement in the historical drama of making the nation.”<sup>35</sup> This meant that Palladian houses—early-eighteenth century signifiers of the British elite—gradually came to lose their ubiquity as the style had no deep roots in English history.<sup>36</sup> A Palladian house, such as Chiswick House, London by Lord Burlington and William Kent of 1725, or Kedleston Hall, near Quarndon, Derbyshire, by Robert Adam of 1759–65, featured symmetry in design, classical motifs and, as such, was inherently Italian in terms of its origins (Figures 1.11–1.13). A Gothic house, on the other hand, hinted at a time before the arrival of the

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<sup>34</sup> Knight, *The Landscape*, Book 2, p.54, lines 302–313.

<sup>35</sup> Chris Brooks, *The Gothic Revival*, London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1999, p.68.

<sup>36</sup> Brooks, p.68.

Renaissance and classical values in England, suggesting a lengthy and well established lineage for its owner.

With his finger ever on the pulse of society, Horace Walpole noted in 1781:

Our empire is falling to pieces; we are relapsing to a little island. In that state, men are apt to imagine how great their ancestors have been... the few, that are studious, look into the memorials of past time; nations, like private persons, seek lustre from their progenitors.<sup>37</sup>

Indeed, this was precisely what began to happen in English architecture in the eighteenth century.

These ideas were given further traction with the onset of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, which, essentially, restricted English access to the Continent from the last decade of the eighteenth century through to 1815. During this period of instability: “it became extremely difficult for artists and architects to travel to Greece and Italy and study the remains of classical antiquity at first hand. The tradition of the Grand Tour, with its leisurely meanderings through France, Central Europe and Italy, had ended.”<sup>38</sup> With the continent closed to English travel, antiquarian and architectural interest began to turn inward and English monuments became appealing in a way that they had never been before. In fact, antiquarians such as John Carter (1748–1817) and John Milner (1752–1826) argued that Gothic was invented in England (a myth that was not challenged until the early nineteenth century) and that, as such, it was the best type of architecture to be built on English soil.<sup>39</sup> This resurgence in national pride meant that

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<sup>37</sup> Walpole to Mason, 13 November 1781, *The Yale edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, Vol.29, ed. W.S. Lewis, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961, p.165.

<sup>38</sup> John Frew, “An aspect of the early Gothic Revival: the transformation of medievalist research, 1770–1800,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol.43 (1980), pp.174–185 at p.179.

<sup>39</sup> Simon Bradley, “The Englishness of Gothic: theories and interpretations from William Gilpin to J.H. Parker,” *Architectural History*, 45, 2002, pp.325–346 at pp.326–328.

classical architecture came to be increasingly considered as a “foreign import.”<sup>40</sup> This meant that medieval English architecture became increasingly highly valued and, consequently, thoroughly studied. Artists likewise began to turn their attention to the English landscape, which produced a number of detailed and romantic images of medieval ruins, churches, castles and Gothic country houses. These artists—such as Turner, Thomas Girtin (1775–1802) and Paul Sandby (1731–1809)—helped to highlight the fact that it was not only the Continent that held valuable cultural artifacts worthy of attention and of emulation, and brought visions of English architecture to a wider audience. It was at this time, too, that an abundance of antiquarian publications detailing English monuments began to be released, which were complemented by picturesque publications, such as Price’s and Knight’s. These intersecting interests helped to push for the widespread use of the Gothic style in architecture. Ultimately, this combination of sources resulted in the gradual acceptance of Gothic as a valid form of architectural expression.

### **John Nash and the spread of country houses in the Gothic style**

Following from this, in the final years of the eighteenth century, a torrent of further publications—books of designs and pattern books in particular—were released that merged the theories of the picturesque with Gothic architecture. Perhaps the most successful architect to incorporate picturesque principles with the Gothic style for houses was John Nash (1752–1835). Trained as an architect in London under Sir Robert Taylor, Nash began his own successful career in Carmarthen, Wales in 1785.<sup>41</sup> His earliest houses in Wales are dated to around 1790 to 1795 and

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<sup>40</sup> Robinson, p.233.

<sup>41</sup> Richard Suggett, “John Nash before fame and fortune,” *John Nash: Architect of the Picturesque*, ed. Geoffrey Tyack, Swindon: English Heritage, 2013, p.6.



incorporate picturesque principles into their planning and elevations in 1791, regardless of style. This newfound approach to housebuilding came about with the commission of Castle House, Aberystwyth, of 1791–94 for Uvedale Price, one of the key proponents of the picturesque. Though Nash supposedly originally proposed a rather conventional square plan, Price asked for a house from which he could take in “the different viewpoints of castle ruins, the sea, and the view towards the Llyn Peninsula.”<sup>42</sup> According to Price, Nash “was exceptionally struck with these reasons”<sup>43</sup> which is evident in his final solution for the house; a triangular plan from which all three aspects of the scenery could be magnificently framed. It was thus that Nash absorbed picturesque principles and applied them to planning. This house and its patron provided Nash with “a series of encounters with the theoreticians and enthusiasts of the Picturesque movement [which] gave him the intellectual platform from which to become a brilliant and innovative metropolitan and country house architect.”<sup>44</sup> Furthering his penchant for picturesque building, Nash paired up with landscape architect Humphry Repton around 1795. Perhaps not surprisingly, their first work together was for the Gothic house, Corsham Court, Wiltshire (1797–1802), which was a remodel of an existing house. Though the partnership was brief, it succeeded in expanding Nash’s contacts and solidified him as a premiere country house architect.

Following this, though Nash worked in a variety of styles, to him, the castle style was the most picturesque as it was “enrich’d with towers, turrets, battlements and pinnacles.”<sup>45</sup> In essence, a

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<sup>42</sup> Suggett, p.14; Geoffrey Tyack, “Domestic Gothic,” *John Nash: Architect of the Picturesque*, ed. Geoffrey Tyack, Swindon: English Heritage, 2013, p.36.

<sup>43</sup> Price in Tyack, p.36.

<sup>44</sup> Suggett, p.16.

<sup>45</sup> John Nash in Tyack, p.41.

castellated approach would enhance and highlight the irregularity of the house by adding variety to the overall outline. This can be seen at his own East Cowes Castle on the Isle of Wight begun in 1798 and at Luscombe Castle in Devon begun in 1799 (Figure 1.14). Following these, his output of castles increased, with Killymoon Castle, Co. Tyrone (1803–09), Garnstone Castle, Herefordshire (c.1806–10), Childwall Hall, Merseyside (1806–13), Kilwaughter Castle, West Grinstead, Sussex (c.1806–08), Co. Antrim (1807), Knepp Castle, Sussex (1808), Ravensworth Castle, Northumberland (1808), Caerhayes Castle, Cornwall (1808), Shanbally Castle, Co. Tipperary (c.1809–10), and finally, Nash's last castle, Lough Cutra Castle, Co. Galway (1811–17). In addition to these castles spread across the British Isles, Nash also built Tudor designs such as Longner Hall, Shropshire of 1805 and Aqualate Hall, Staffordshire of 1806–09, as well as remodeling a number of actual medieval and Tudor houses.<sup>46</sup> Regardless of type, most of Nash's Gothic country houses also made use of crenellation, which had been a favoured Gothic motif since the days of Strawberry Hill. Indeed, crenellation and the interest in façadism as practiced by Nash carried over into the first Gothic houses to appear in the province of Upper Canada, which is where the story of Canadian Gothic Revival houses begins.

### **Section B: Early Gothic Revival houses in Upper Canada**

Nearing the middle of the nineteenth century, the use of the Gothic Revival style for houses had been a mainstay of architecture in England for almost a hundred years. On the outskirts of the Empire, however, the situation was rather different. In the English colony of Upper Canada (present-day Southern Ontario as it was known from 1791–1841), the first Gothic houses

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<sup>46</sup> Tyack, p.45.

appeared only in the 1830s. Though under British rule since the Treaty of Paris in 1763, this part of the colony was a French province until 1791 when a new act was put in place in order to mandate English laws and culture. This meant that permanent English settlements were beginning to be established and built up only around the turn of the century; as such, style was not an option for the average homeowner. Until English-trained architects began to arrive in the third decade of the nineteenth century, even the highest order of houses were not carried out by architects. In fact, it appears that some of the earliest dwellings were not even permanent; Toronto's first surveyor, Joseph Bouchette, writing in 1832, recalls that in York in 1793:

His Excellency [Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe] inhabited during the summer and through the winter a canvass house, which he imported expressly for the occasion; but frail as was its substance it was rendered exceedingly comfortable, and soon became as distinguished for the social and urbane hospitality of its venerated and gracious host, as for the peculiarity of its structure.<sup>47</sup>

In the early days of settlement, then, it seems that shelter and comfort were of greater importance than form or style, even for the most prominent of citizens. Once the colony became more stable and as more settlers arrived from Britain, however, it is no great surprise that British architectural styles began to appear.

The first houses of any substance appear to have been derivative of English Palladian and Georgian houses, though on a rather modest scale. In short, these were classically inspired houses that were simple to build being primarily square or rectangular in plan, such as the Laurent Quetton de St George house at York of 1809 (Figure 1.15). Beyond ease of construction—which was of prime importance in a land of few trained builders and architects—houses of this

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<sup>47</sup> W.H. Smith, *Canada: past, present and future, being a historical, geographical, geological and statistical account of Canada West*, Vol. II, Toronto: Thomas Maclear, 1851, p.1.

type were desirable for their ease of heating in the winter months. In contrast, the Gothic style (an umbrella term for any style affiliated with Gothic motifs, including Castle Gothic, Monastic Gothic, Old English, Tudor, Elizabethan, and Rustic or Cottage Gothic) was typically seen to be more ornamental and also less prone to symmetry than classical houses, and so in an important sense, these would have been much less practical in the British North American context.

The only known examples of early Gothic houses are few and appear to have existed in the context of present-day Toronto. Toronto was founded as an English garrison town in 1793 and was known as York until its incorporation as a city in 1834. As Upper Canada's capital beginning in 1796 and as the province's first-ever city,<sup>48</sup> it is no great wonder that many of the most experimental examples of architecture were to be found there. The population, and, concomitantly, the town's built environment, continued to grow steadily; in 1800 it held only four-hundred people<sup>49</sup> but by "1816 the population was 720 [and] there were 94 one-storey and 23 two-storey houses [...]."<sup>50</sup> By 1833, a reporter from Montreal remarked that "this year four hundred [buildings] have been built, are building or contracted for within town and suburbs; and a good portion of them are substantial and commodious brick buildings."<sup>51</sup> Many of these buildings would indeed have been houses, as by the time of York's incorporation the following year, "the population was 9,252 and there were 529 one-storey and 485 two-storey houses

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<sup>48</sup> Bruce West, *Toronto*, Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1967, p.106.

<sup>49</sup> Liz Lundell, *The Estates of Old Toronto*, Erin, Ontario: Boston Mills Press, 1997, p.12.; West, *Toronto*, p.106.

<sup>50</sup> Lucy Booth Martyn, *The Face of Early Toronto: an archival record 1797-1936*, Sutton West, Ontario: Paget Press, 1982, p.9.

<sup>51</sup> West, *Toronto*, p.134.

[...].”<sup>52</sup> It is clear that the number of houses in town was multiplying at a rapid rate, but the style for houses appears to have remained rather stagnant, continuing to make use of simply planned houses with a few classical details, such as the Grange of 1817 (Figure 1.16). Despite the fact that houses such as these had been commonplace in Britain since the early eighteenth century and were likewise the most popular manifestation for houses in the United States, it seems as though many citizens of Upper Canada were content to employ this traditional mode rather than branching out into something more current and fashionable. Indeed it appears as though a risky style, such as Gothic, despite being in fashion in England for decades, was not popular at all. In fact, there may have been only a handful that were actually built in the entire province, none of which survives.

### **Castle Gothic and John George Howard**

Interestingly, the known examples of Gothic houses all appear to have been built shortly after the immigration of the English-born architect, John George Howard (1803–90). Howard arrived at York in September of 1832 and quickly began to practice architecture. It seems that he was the first, and certainly the most prolific, architect in the province to take full advantage of the market for houses and to employ a range of fashionable styles from England. He was certainly well positioned to do so as he was trained as an architect and surveyor in London, England beginning in 1820, “in the office of an uncle,” who is otherwise unidentified, and then entered an apprenticeship with the architect John Grayson of London.<sup>53</sup> Following his early training,

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<sup>52</sup> Martyn, *Early Toronto*, p.9.

<sup>53</sup> John George Howard, *Incidents in the life of John G. Howard, Esq. of Colborne Lodge, High Park, near Toronto, chiefly adapted from his journals*, Toronto: Copp Clark Company, Limited, 1888, p.3.

Howard went on to work briefly on the rebuilding of Leeds Castle, Kent and then stayed in the area to work for an architectural firm in Maidstone “where he remained for some time.”<sup>54</sup> This could not have been for long, however, as the rebuilding of the castle began only in 1822 and as Howard was working in London again in 1824 in the office of William Ford and Samuel Paterson.<sup>55</sup>

At the time of Howard’s training in England, a variety of styles were popular, many of which made use of the aesthetic theory of the picturesque. The so-called Castle Gothic style, in particular, gained popularity in the mid-eighteenth century with houses like Strawberry Hill and Lee Priory, Kent by James Wyatt (1782–90), which gradually opened the door to all varieties of the Gothic style. Though the style had been in use since the middle of the eighteenth century, with varying degrees of success, it was with John Nash (1752–1835) that it was thoroughly incorporated into the principles of the picturesque. His status as champion of the style was firmly established as he partnered with the picturesque landscape architect Humphry Repton (1752–1818) from 1795 to 1800, as the two men merged picturesque landscapes and architecture into one coherent vision. After the dissolution of the partnership, Nash carried on independently exploiting the Gothic genre for country houses with great success through to the second decade of the nineteenth century, expanding beyond Castle Gothic, for instance with his Tudor inspired Longner Hall, Shropshire, of 1805–08 (Figure 1.17) and with his Rustic Gothic worker’s village and cottages at Blaise Hamlet, near Bristol, of 1810–11. Nash’s works were well known because Nash was, increasingly throughout the early nineteenth century, a public figure in London; he

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<sup>54</sup> Howard, *Incidents*, p.3.

<sup>55</sup> Howard, *Incidents*, p.3.

was the favourite architect of the Prince Regent, he carried out many metropolitan improvements in London, including the development of Regent's Park, and he was named "one of three 'attached architects'"<sup>56</sup> with the Office of Works in 1815 (along with John Soane and Robert Smirke). His country houses were often published<sup>57</sup> and he entertained celebrated guests at his own country home; the famous Romantic painter J.M.W. Turner, for instance, visited Nash, making many sketches of East Cowes Castle. Even in the city context, Nash did not completely abandon Gothic motifs and several of his houses for Park Village East (1824–32) and Park Village West (1832–38) in London made use of the style. As such, although Nash was primarily invested in urban projects in London in the 1820s, it is inconceivable that the young John G. Howard, while still in training in London, would not have known of the attached architect's earlier achievements, particularly as they dotted the city and all reaches of the British countryside.

Though not the only style (nor even the primary style) employed for his house commissions, Nash was able to successfully use the Castle Gothic to its full advantage as few had done before him, marketing Gothic 'castles' to a wealthy clientele with vast amounts of property. Knepp Castle in Sussex of 1808 (Figure 1.18) and Luscombe Castle in Devon of 1799–1804 are two

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<sup>56</sup> Geoffrey Tyack, "Introduction," *John Nash: Architect of the Picturesque*, ed. Geoffrey Tyack, Swindon: English Heritage, 2013, p.xiv.

<sup>57</sup> For example, *The Repository of Arts, Literature, Fashions, Manufactures, &c.* The third Series. Vol. VII, May 1, 1826, No.XLI, pp.249–250 and features an image and a description of East Cowes Castle; an image of Nash's Knepp Castle was published in Thomas Walker Horsfield, *The history, antiquities and topography of the County of Sussex*, Sussex Press, 1835; an image of Nash's rebuild of Corsham Court was available in John Britton, *Historical account of Corsham Court, in Wiltshire, the seat of Paul Cobb Methuen, esq.: with a catalogue of his celebrated collection of pictures dedicated to the patrons of the British Institution, and embracing a concise historical essay on the fine arts: with a brief account of the different schools, and a review of the progressive state of the arts in England: also biographical sketches of the artists, whose works constitute this collection*, London: Printed for the author, and J. Barrett, Bath, 1806.

prime examples that are based on Nash's particular Gothic idiom that he derived from antiquarian sources as well as from late medieval castles with "high stone curtain walls interrupted by towers of varied shapes, often capped with corbelling or machicolation."<sup>58</sup> Part of the appeal of the style was due to the idea that "Gothic houses and castles proclaimed the primacy of landed property in an age of rapid and transformative economic change [...]."<sup>59</sup> This was also true of the situation in York where these types of concerns were particularly pertinent for wealthy citizens; a house that announced deep ancestral ties to England would have been most appealing in Upper Canada (just as it was in England) in order to preserve and project a certain social status.

In order to emphasize the importance of associations and a certain continuity of English heritage in the New World, it should be noted that Howard's original surname was Corby, but he changed it upon arriving in Canada, likely in order to bolster his more desirable ancestral ties.<sup>60</sup> If it was important for a person to secure his rank in the colonies, it was just as important for his home to partake in a similar ideology. As such, naming and the reification of links to the Old World—in any way possible—were of the utmost importance. This is likely one of the reasons that patrons in Upper Canada would have chosen to build a house in the Gothic style. The connection to

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<sup>58</sup> Tyack, "Domestic Gothic," *John Nash: Architect of the Picturesque*, ed. Geoffrey Tyack, Swindon: English Heritage, 2013, p.41.

<sup>59</sup> Tyack, "Domestic Gothic," *John Nash: Architect of the Picturesque*, ed. Geoffrey Tyack, Swindon: English Heritage, 2013, p.40.

<sup>60</sup> Throughout his life, Howard gave several different explanations as to the reason for changing his name. The first story is that he was born out of wedlock, given his step-father's name of Corby and so changed it to his actual father's name, Howard, upon arrival in Canada. Later in life, he claimed that he changed it because he was a descendent of Thomas Howard, the fourth Duke of Norfolk, which reinforces the idea that he changed his name for credibility. John George Howard, *The Journal of John George Howard, 1833–49*, ed. Shirley G. Morriss, Toronto: Ontario Heritage Foundation, 1980, I, p.133.



England and the assertion of a respectable lineage were particularly pertinent for wealthy citizens in British North America, as the social order was less straightforward than in England and as hierarchies were still in the midst of being assessed and established in this strange new land.

One such house as built at York that projected this very image—and perhaps the first to perceptibly break the stylistic standstill in the province—was Holland House (Figure 1.19). Little is known about this house as it was demolished in 1904 and as plans do not exist. The only surviving evidence consists of a few late–nineteenth century photographs as well as several mentions of the house in the journal of the architect John G. Howard. There is some discrepancy with regard to the details surrounding the construction of this house as some sources claim that it was begun in 1831<sup>61</sup> and was Gothicized in 1833 by Howard, while others give him full credit and a firm date of 1832.<sup>62</sup> Some sources believe that Holland House was built as a classically planned house the year before Howard’s arrival, though there is no concrete evidence to support the claim for the appearance of the original house. It is likely that these speculations are based on the straightforward composition of the street facade (Figure 1.20) and on the fact that the preexisting popular house type in York took the form of a symmetrically planned house with classical details, much like The Grange of 1817 or the Campbell House of 1822 (Figure 1.21).

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<sup>61</sup> Shirley Morriss’s explanatory footnote in the reprinted entry of 2 January 1833 in the journal of John G. Howard claims a date of 1831 and that Howard was working on “an alteration for Holland House” early in 1833. Shirley G. Morriss in *The Journal of John George Howard, 1833–49*, ed. Shirley G. Morriss, Toronto: Ontario Heritage Foundation, 1980.

Harold Kalman also gives a date of 1831 in his *History of Canadian Architecture* but no explanation as to where the information was obtained for the remodeling concept. Harold Kalman, *History of Canadian Architecture*, 2 vols, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1994, I, p.276.

<sup>62</sup> Robert G. Hill, “John G. Howard,” *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, at [www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1532](http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1532) (accessed on 2 July 2013); Unknown Author, “Old Toronto Mansions,” *Toronto World*, 16 November 1885, p.1.

The partial attribution to Howard is based on a note in a later journal which states that, in 1833, Howard was working on repairs to the roof and was working on “forming the Groined Arches in Front.”<sup>63</sup> This, however, does not preclude the possibility that Howard might have been solely responsible for the entire house. Though Howard arrived at York in September of 1832, it is entirely feasible that he could have started the house in 1832 as an entirely Gothic vision and finished or worked on the minor details in 1833 that were recorded in his journal. Though he arrived at York later in 1832, Howard typically worked quite quickly, so it would not have been out of the question for him to have acted speedily on this house. At this time, he was also eager to establish himself as a prominent architect in the town and in the province at large, and so might well have taken an immediate commission. Beyond this, Howard did not keep a journal prior to 1833 and so his detailed work activities at this time are not known. As such, the alterations listed in the journal of 1833 actually could be final details for the final phases of the construction of the house. Only on 13 March 1833 did Howard use the word “alteration” though the entry does not specify what he was altering. Otherwise, in that year’s journal, with regard to Holland House, he discussed designing chimney pots, groins and cornices and working on the plan of the house in general. His work on the house is not mentioned in his 1888 memoir except to say that he provided repairs for a sub-letter in 1837 while the original owner was serving as the chief of justice in Newfoundland.<sup>64</sup> It is entirely possible, then, that the house was Howard’s conception from the outset, albeit not well documented. *The Toronto World* newspaper of 16

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<sup>63</sup> John George Howard, *The Journal of John George Howard, 1833–49*, ed. Shirley G. Morriss, Toronto: Ontario Heritage Foundation, 1980, vol.X.

<sup>64</sup> Morriss, *Journal*, I, p.72; Hereward and Elinor Senior “Henry John Boulton,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol.9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, at [www.biographi.ca/en/bio/boulton\\_henry\\_john\\_9E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/boulton_henry_john_9E.html), accessed, 15 July 2013.

November 1885, furthermore, cites Howard as the architect and gives a firm start date of 1832.

This was printed at a time when Howard was still alive and when he was a preeminent citizen (in part for having donated a large parcel of land to the city as park space in 1873);<sup>65</sup> likely, then, his work at Holland House would have been common knowledge. Whatever the nature of his involvement, it is clear that Howard was indeed—at the very least—responsible for the Gothic character of the house as he specifically mentions the cornice (the crenellation),<sup>66</sup> the groins<sup>67</sup> and the chimney pots.<sup>68</sup>

These Gothic features on the house presented themselves as rather inventive, particularly given the tendency toward reserved, classicizing architecture in the colony to date. The chimneys in particular were fanciful in creation, consisting of bulbous stepped corbels, covered with shingles and tiny brackets near the top (Figure 1.22). This is an example of the type of imaginative and peculiar invention that was only possible, or at least acceptable, in the Gothic style. Beyond invention, a variety of interpretations of preexisting Gothic motifs were also used, regardless of historical period. Much like its stylistic forbears in England, Holland House did not make use of any consistent form of ornamentation and borrowed from a variety of periods. Pointed windows, for instance, were mixed with square-headed windows with Tudor hood moulds. Crenellation was also used freely, despite the small stature of the house as compared to actual medieval castles. There is no direct historical authority for any of the details as executed at Holland House,

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<sup>65</sup> Charles Pelham Mulvany, Graeme Mercer Adam, Christopher Blackett Robinson, *History of Toronto and County of York, Ontario: Biographical Notices*, Toronto: C. Blackett Robinson, Vol.1, 1885, p.69.

<sup>66</sup> Howard, *Journal*, I, p.26.

<sup>67</sup> Howard, *Journal*, I, p.24.

<sup>68</sup> Howard, *Journal*, I, p.4.

but as the house presented a Gothic character with its pointed windows and crenellation, it would have been perceived as inherently English, particularly as contrasted with the typical house at York.

The original owner, Henry John Boulton (1790–1870), was born in England and immigrated to Canada with his family around 1800, returning to England only briefly to study law.<sup>69</sup> In his legal career in Canada, he rose to prominence, becoming solicitor general and then attorney general in 1829, before having his house built.<sup>70</sup> Boulton carried on his family’s longstanding tradition of prominence in the legal profession as, previously, his father had held all of the same titles in Upper Canada and as his grandfather was once Master of the Rolls in England.<sup>71</sup> A man with such status and family lineage, not only in Canada, but in England as well, surely merited a home to reflect his importance. It is fitting then, in an era that prized such high-profile associations, that Boulton would wish to make a bold architectural statement and to have his home built to impress.

In short, the appearance was reminiscent of a tiny castle, recalling Horace Walpole’s now-famous proclamation of 1750 in a letter to Horace Mann: “I am going to build a little Gothic castle at Strawberry Hill.”<sup>72</sup> The house is indeed indebted to the Gothic Revival tradition of Strawberry Hill, Twickenham (1748–90), in terms of its form and its ornamentation, though it

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<sup>69</sup> Senior, “Henry John Boulton.”

<sup>70</sup> Senior, “Henry John Boulton.”

<sup>71</sup> Senior, “Henry John Boulton.”

<sup>72</sup> Horace Walpole, *The Yale edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. W.S. Lewis, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961, p.111.

likely owes its appearance to rather more direct precedents; perhaps most probable are the rebuilding of Leeds Castle by William Baskett (1782–1842) and the country houses of John Nash, such as East Cowes Castle of 1798 to 1810 (Figures 1.23 and 1.24). Images of both Leeds and East Cowes Castle were published and Howard was certainly intimately familiar with Leeds as he had worked on it and lived nearby for a good period of time. Howard is also known to have visited the Isle of Wight (at least once) before emigrating and so may have seen East Cowes Castle, or residences like it, for himself.

Aside from first-hand knowledge, the Gothic style was promoted in publications as well as in the architectural literature of the day, such as in John Claudius Loudon's *Encyclopedia of cottage, farm and villa architecture* of 1833.<sup>73</sup> Howard is known to have kept a large library and to have kept up with overseas publications in particular. In 1881, for instance, he donated some of his collection to the Toronto Library. At this date, he bequeathed 61 volumes of the *Illustrated London News*, 34 volumes of *The Builder*, 2 of *Picturesque America*, 2 of the *Antiquities of Ireland*, 2 of the *History of Wales*, and so on.<sup>74</sup> Not only did Howard own an extensive collection of English magazines, but there is evidence that he read them voraciously: a letter from Howard stating as much was published in the January 29, 1870 issue of *The Builder*. In this letter, he stated:

I have been a constant reader of the *Builder* for many years, the number of which have so accumulated as to form almost a library of themselves. I am an old worn-out architect,

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<sup>73</sup> Loudon, pp.773–781.

<sup>74</sup> John George Howard, *Catalogue of paintings in the gallery at Colborne Lodge, High Park; a donation from John G. Howard, esq. to the corporation of the city of Toronto, May 7th, 1881*, Toronto: Copp, Clark & co., 1884, p.15.

and have retired to a snug retreat on the north shore of Lake Ontario, and look as regularly for my *Builder* every week as my Sunday's dinner.<sup>75</sup>

This dedication to keeping up with architectural news and fashions surely began at a young age, as is alluded to in his letter and as is clear from his of-the-moment castellated and picturesque-inspired design for Holland House.

With their emphasis on crenellation and on the use of towers placed for picturesque effect, it is clear that both the remodel of Leeds Castle and the design of Holland House owe their appearance to Nash's brand of Gothic. These two houses also serve to show the continued popularity of the style in England as well as its gradual transmission into the colonies, even if only experimental. The value of these types of houses was not in the correctness of detail nor in the proper application of motifs, but in the evocation of the style in the eye of the beholder in order to establish concrete visual ties to ancient England.

It is said that Holland House was built after the Boulton family's ancestral home in England, and so the house in Upper Canada would have been perceived as a continuation of that legacy.<sup>76</sup> This flaunting of family legacy through houses was also a concern in England at the turn of the century as the social order was being reinvented.<sup>77</sup> The English Holland House of London (Figure 1.25), known originally as Cope Castle and begun in the early-seventeenth century,

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<sup>75</sup> John George Howard, "A note from Toronto," *The Builder*, Vol.28, January 29, 1870, p.90.

<sup>76</sup> Kalman, *Canadian Architecture*, I, p. 276; John Ross Robertson, *Landmarks of Toronto: Sketches of Old Houses and Places of Interest from 1792-1890*, Toronto: J. Ross Robertson, 1894, pp.7-8.

<sup>77</sup> Geoffrey Tyack, "Longner Hall," *Georgian Group Journal*, XIV (2004), pp.199-213 at p.202.

however, does not remotely resemble Holland House in York, thus reinforcing the fact that it was the association that mattered, not the accuracy of detail.<sup>78</sup>

### **Materials and style**

Until Holland House, it appears that this associative desire had not yet manifested itself stylistically in Upper Canada, because the use of certain building materials, up to this time, was sufficient to announce a certain level of wealth. In terms of the hierarchy of materials, stone was the most luxurious material available, followed by brick, both of which were rather costly and difficult to procure in Upper Canada in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Timber, being in great abundance, was the lowest ranking of the materials, not least for its lack of durability. The first brick house in York, the Laurent Quetton de Saint George House (Figure 1.26), was not built until 1809 and the first stone house, in 1820 (at Church and Lombard, for James Hunter).<sup>79</sup> In these instances, the materials were left unadorned and unpainted so as to flaunt the material itself. This was likewise the case in other areas of the province. The earliest brick houses elsewhere in the province were to be found in the Niagara peninsula around the turn of the century, for instance the Field House, Niagara (now Niagara-on-the-Lake) of 1800. These classical box houses made an early appearance in this particular part of the province due to its proximity to the United States where this type of house was the standard and as Loyalists and Americans settled there in large numbers. Stone houses, at this time, were primarily limited to areas with an abundance of natural stone in the immediate vicinity, such as the eastern part of the

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<sup>78</sup> For a discussion on the importance of associations in Regency architecture see Donald Pilcher, *The Regency Style 1800 to 1830*, London: B.T. Batsford, 1947, p.66.

<sup>79</sup> John Ross Robertson, *Landmarks of Canada: what art has done for Canadian history: a guide to the J.Ross Robertson historical collection in the Public Reference Library, Toronto, Canada*. Toronto: publisher not identified, 1917, p.132.

province, otherwise, brick was slightly more common. Even so, brick was difficult to acquire and was out of reach for the average citizen; in the case of the Laurent Quetton de St George house in Toronto, for instance, the bricks were imported across Lake Ontario from Oswego, New York.<sup>80</sup> Elsewhere in Upper Canada, examples in brick and stone do not appear until after the close of the War of 1812 (in 1815) and into the early 1820s, at which time many towns began to rebuild and to become thoroughly settled.

The use of brick, at this time, therefore, would have been highly prestigious, displaying to the public that the patron had the means to procure this fairly rare material. The rather simple style of classical Georgian house, then, as it was executed in brick and in rare cases in stone (where available as a building material), carried much symbolic weight, and as such, persisted as a popular house style well into the century. It was not until after these materials became more widely accessible that new styles, such as Gothic, would begin to be sought out for houses. While red brick was indeed employed at Holland House, it was stuccoed over and scored in imitation of masonry, creating the appearance of something rather more sturdy and even more expensive than it really was. This, then, represented a new use for brick; one in which it was not about flaunting the material, but in which style and appearance were of greater importance. Much like its stylistic forbears, going back to Nash and even as far back as Strawberry Hill, there was no consideration given at Holland House for truthful exposure of materials in terms of construction. What mattered in this case was that it created a unique impression in the cityscape and, more importantly, that it was different from the standard red brick house. That Boulton had

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<sup>80</sup> Martyn, *Early Toronto*, p.34.



the means to build in brick and to cover it up so that it masqueraded as stone (one step above brick in the hierarchy of materials), shows that he aspired beyond the statements of wealth provided by a red brick house. Much more could now be proclaimed by the building of a house (particularly as the materials were, by now, much more readily available) and so the Gothic style was employed at Holland House for reasons of prestige, lineage and power. This house was aspiring to be doubly persuasive as an upper class residence, through style and through the emulation of luxurious materials. Holland House, then, represents an early experimentation of style for the purposes of making a social statement.

### **Howard's picturesque planning**

Aside from ornamental details and stylistic motifs, planning was a crucial element in the building of Gothic houses. The plan of Holland House is not known, though if it was originally a classically planned house of the prevailing York mode, it would be fairly straightforward to deduce. If it was Howard's design, however, it complicates the issue as Howard's extant architectural drawings reveal a talented and innovative planner. His house and cottage creations of all styles—but particularly his Gothic designs—display a tendency toward off-centre or rear entrances, axial corridors and irregular room shapes even if contained within a standard rectangular form.

The picturesque theories as adopted by Howard placed heavy emphasis on the view of the house in the landscape as well as the exterior views that were framed from within. Aside from the blatant castellated motifs applied, then, one major hint in the interest in the picturesque at

Holland House is the central projecting turret and porch on the garden facade, which would have aided in variety of appearance as well as in taking advantage of the views from the interior of the house. This was a regular feature in Howard's picturesque designs regardless of style, favouring the use of one or more large turrets in order to add interest to the facade, just as Nash did. Even with this feature, however, the garden facade was primarily symmetrical in plan, perhaps due to the house's possible classical origins. Beyond this, the street facade though rather regular, had the entrance placed to one side. Its relative regularity notwithstanding—in comparison to Nash's and to Howard's other rather more irregular compositions, for instance—these features would have marked a radical departure from the typical classical plan that was common currency in the colony to this point.

Another of one of Howard's undated and unlabeled designs makes use of a similar arrangement (Figure 1.27). Though he did not make use of castellation or any other overt stylistic details aside from one pointed window on the side, this shows the eclectic nature of picturesque Gothic and the suggestibility of the Gothic style through simple details alone. This drawing also betrays Howard's thorough knowledge of English picturesque precedent as the drawing has an attached flap; this was a technique famously used by Nash and Repton in their Red Books which were presented to a client when remodeling a house and property according to the fashionable principles of the picturesque.

In his designs, Howard often made use of interesting, picturesque-derived planning, deviating from the colonial norm of the rectangular, classical box plan. In an unexecuted Gothic plan of

April 1836 for a cottage for Joseph Ridout of Toronto, for instance, Howard made use of a roughly cross-shaped design with a central block of chimneys around which all of the rooms radiated (Figure 1.28). The walls, moreover, met at the chimneys on the diagonal, thus drastically altering the traditional expectations of right angles in an interior space. There is also a slightly later drawing that made use of the same plan but with an addition at the rear (Figure 1.29). In his journal, Howard noted on April 20, 1836 that he was working on Gothic cottages (with emphasis on the plural) for Joseph Ridout and his memoir of 1881 states that in 1836 he “Built a frame house on Front street for Joseph D. Ridout.” These drawings are both labeled April 1836. These drawings raise a number of questions; was this what was built at Front Street? Was the addition a modification to the same house or was it a variant on it, making these two of the multiple cottages that Howard hints at in his memoir? There is, unfortunately, no evidence for what was actually built but if this design was realized, either on Front Street or anywhere else in the province, it appears to have been short-lived. Either way, if built, it would have certainly marked a new and wildly different type of style and plan than had ever been seen there before. Regardless, the architectural drawings themselves single out Howard as a one-of-a-kind architect in the province at large.

Another example of Howard’s offbeat planning is a house, designed but apparently unexecuted, for a clergyman in Port Hope in March of 1833 (Figure 1.30). The hall and main entrance were hidden to the side of the house, the staircase was planned in a highly unusual spiral arrangement and it would have been necessary to walk through the drawing room and the dining room in

order to get to the study, which would typically have been placed near the main entrance.

Perhaps this unorthodox and somewhat inconvenient plan is the reason that it was not built.

This is similar to an unlabeled, undated plan in which the house appears to have been packaged within a fairly standard rectangular plan with a porch, but in which the staircase is found, not in front of the main entrance as would be expected of house planning at this time, but tucked away in the corner. So even though it would have appeared straightforwardly arranged from the outside, it was, in fact, slightly more complex. This house goes to show that despite the similarly straightforward exterior appearance at Holland House, in reality, it is difficult to guess as to the interior arrangement with any degree of certainty.

### **Howard's lost Toronto houses**

Beyond these apparently unexecuted designs, it is possible to link Howard to another Gothic house that was actually built. In Howard's papers, there is a sheet of architectural drawings, signed by him, for an addition to an existing house that is labeled for Charles Small with a date of 1837 (Figure 1.31). Howard has also listed in his memoir that in 1836, he worked on an addition for Charles Small, though he could have certainly taken on the job in 1836 and still have been working on it in 1837. It is also possible that he confused the dates in his late-in-life memoir. Though there is no more information available on this commission, the house closely matches Berkeley House, which was documented in John Ross Robertson's 1894 volume of the *Landmarks of Toronto* (Figure 1.32) as well as in several paintings and photographs, now in possession of the Toronto Public Library (Figures 1.33 and 1.34). The house, demolished in

1925,<sup>81</sup> once stood at the corners of what are now King and Parliament streets. It seems that it is well known that there was an addition that was made to the house by the original owner's son—likely due to its unusual plan—but to this point, it seems that it has not been definitively linked to an architect or to a precise date. That Howard actually carried out this Gothicization of the house (slightly modified from the extant plans) with a rambling extension, for a prominent family with Upper Canadian lineage is rather significant; Charles Small's father, Major John Small, arrived at York with Lieutenant–Governor John Graves Simcoe. This signals that it was not just the recently arrived elite who were interested in the style but that more settled citizens were also becoming interested in these associations. It also shows that Howard was the go-to Goth in town and that he was able to carry out different variants of the Gothic style with aplomb.

This same type of Old English style can be found, though in perhaps more ornate fashion, in a few of his other undated and unlabeled drawings for twin-gabled facade arrangements (Figures 1.35–1.37) as well as in an addition for a house, which has been tentatively identified as Sunnyside, a Toronto house of the 1840s (Figure 1.38). Given the poor documentation surrounding the Berkeley house, it might likewise be possible that these houses were actually built. If so, the architectural landscape of Upper Canada would have appeared rather differently than might be believed.

Another instance of Howard's versatility and knowledge of picturesque Gothic can be seen in his in-depth familiarity with variants on the Cottage or Rustic Gothic style. Howard is known to

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<sup>81</sup> S.R. Mealing, "John Small," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed May 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/small\\_john\\_6E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/small_john_6E.html).

have executed four apparently identical gate lodges for the University of Toronto (then known as King's College), in 1833, which was shortly after his arrival at York (Figure 1.39).<sup>82</sup> Here Howard continued the trend begun in the late-eighteenth century in which the cottage genre rose to architectural prominence. At this time, wealthy landowners sought to improve the aesthetic appeal of their properties by building visually appealing cottages, while at the same time (supposedly) benevolently improving the living conditions of their labourers. Increasingly, the Gothic style and its variants were deemed most appropriate for such buildings and so Howard's gate lodges (which were inhabited by the caretakers of the University)<sup>83</sup> can be seen as an extension of this trend. Although all of the cottages have long since been demolished, one remained in 1894 when it was described and sketched in John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto*. A photograph also remains which is held by the Toronto Public Library. In this photograph, it is plain to see that the small cottage is simple in execution with prominent pointed windows and a pointed entrance. Above the door are the same layered double hood moulds that Howard employed at Berkeley House a few years later. This shows that Howard was prone to repeating elements in his architectural vocabulary across a variety of commissions, just as he repeated planning elements in his houses of all styles.

Howard also prepared another small, one-storey Gothic cottage for a Captain Irving in 1842, which he labeled explicitly as a labourer's cottage, though it is unknown as to whether or not it was ever built. This type of cottage, though rather remarkable for the British North American

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<sup>82</sup> Robertson gives a date of 1832 for these, though Howard himself notes that they were a product of 1833 on p.18 of *Incidents* and in his journals from March of 1833 to January of 1834.

<sup>83</sup> Robertson, p.27.

context, was to be found scattered across England as well as throughout the pages of English publications such as pattern books, which were books that provided information and designs for houses in a variety of styles. It is clear that Howard was indeed keeping abreast of such trends *through* publications, not simply for the ease with which he tackled the concepts of the picturesque and the styles as promoted by them but because it is possible to match a sheet of drawings in his personal papers to designs in John Claudius Loudon's *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture* first published in 1833, which underwent numerous editions throughout the next few decades (Figures 1.40–1.45). It is clear from even the quickest glance that Howard carefully copied these sketches for a variety of different houses directly from Loudon's book.<sup>84</sup> The *Encyclopedia* combined advice and sketches from a variety of architects and previous publications into one convenient, 1,000+ page book; it is easy to imagine that this comprehensive volume would have been appealing for an architect working at such a remote distance from the motherland.

A number of Howard's other designs, whether Gothic or not, reflect picturesque planning and motifs as found in such English publications. This is quite clear in a non-Gothic sketch for a butterfly-plan house, which can find its match in a number of books including the plan for a gardener's house in Loudon's *Encyclopedia* (Figures 1.46 and 1.47).<sup>85</sup> Howard's own home,

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<sup>84</sup> Howard copied Design III "A Cottage of Two Stories, Combining the Accommodations and Conveniences of Design I, differently arranged, and with an additional Bed-room," p.26; Design IX "A Dwelling in the Swiss style, for a Married Couple and Family; with a Cow-house and Pigsty," p.46; Design XI "A Dwelling for a Man and his Wife, and One or Two Children, with a Cow-house and Pigsty," p.50; Design XII "A Dwelling of Two Stories for a Man and his Wife, with a Servant and Two or Three Children, with a Cow-house and Pigsty,"; and Design XIV with an added storey "A Dwelling for a Man and his Wife, with One Servant and a grown-up Son or Daughter," p.60. All plates are from John Claudius Loudon, *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture*, London: Longman, Rees and Co., 1833.

<sup>85</sup> Loudon, *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture*, p.832.

Colborne Lodge of 1836 (Figure 1.48), likewise appears to have been derived from English books as it is similar in elevation to several small rustic cottages in John Buonarotti Papworth's 1818 publication *Rural residences: a series of designs for cottages, decorated cottages, small villas and other ornamental buildings* [...] <sup>86</sup> (Figure 1.49) but also similar in plan and elevation to Design LVI "A Dwelling of Four Rooms, with other Conveniences and a large Rustic Portico," which is, once again, from Loudon's *Encyclopedia* (Figure 1.50). <sup>87</sup> Though the *Encyclopedia* was published after Howard arrived in Canada, it is clear that he was invested in keeping up with trends and news in England as attested to by his late-in-life donation to the Toronto Public Library from his personal collection. It is known that he kept abreast of periodicals, and so would probably have been familiar with Loudon's earlier writings while still in England. It is therefore not inconceivable that he would have purchased Loudon's book as soon as it became available.

### **A new attribution**

The only other known exception to the lack of Gothic in the province at the time is Castlefield of about 1832–35 (Figure 1.51). The precise date of the house, while not known, is believed by most to have begun around 1835, although Harold Kalman and Janet Wright give a precise date of 1832. <sup>88</sup> It is unclear, however, as to where these two authors acquired this firm date as they provide no source and as written information about the house is quite scarce. Like Holland

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<sup>86</sup> John B. Papworth, *Rural Residences, consisting of a series of designs for cottages, decorated cottages, small villas, and other ornamental buildings*, London: R. Ackermann, 1818, p.13 "Plate III. A cottage adapted to garden scenery, or as an entrance lodge"; p.17, "Plate IV. A steward's cottage, adapted to park or garden scenery."

<sup>87</sup> Loudon, *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture*, p.188.

<sup>88</sup> Kalman, p.277; Janet Wright, *Architecture of the picturesque in Canada*, Ottawa: Parks Canada Agency, 1984, p. 77.



House, the house has been demolished and no plans survive. The only remaining evidence is one photograph from 1856 and one painting from about 1860. There is no architect recorded for this house, though I would contend that it was once again John G. Howard. The house was built while Howard was most actively working to build up his reputation after his 1832 immigration and it is also executed in much the same castellated style as Holland House. Perhaps more striking is the fact that Castlefield bears a strong resemblance to the remodeled Leeds Castle in Kent, where Howard worked briefly in the 1820s (Figure 1.52).<sup>89</sup> Though the extent of his work at Leeds is unknown and though he himself admitted that his tenure there was rather brief,<sup>90</sup> he did continue to live near the castle while he worked for a firm in Maidstone, Kent. As such, it is likely that he would have been familiar with the completed building, particularly as the exterior shell was finished by the summer of 1822.<sup>91</sup> Given his familiarity with Leeds Castle, it is not unthinkable that Howard could have brought drawings of it with him to Canada, and if not, that he could have redrawn it from memory upon arrival in Canada. That Howard maintained a continued interest in Leeds Castle is underscored by the fact that in his journal in 1867, he records that he drew the Castle from a map.<sup>92</sup> He revisited the same drawing twelve years later, this time adding colour to it. It is possible that he also brought drawings of the castle with him upon emigration, as he brought numerous paintings and drawings to Upper Canada from his early life and architectural career in England. For instance, the contents of his personal gallery were listed in 1881 and show several of his own designs from the 1820s as well as two drawings

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<sup>89</sup> Howard, *Incidents*, p.3.

<sup>90</sup> Howard, *Incidents*, p.3.

<sup>91</sup> David Arthur Henry Cleggett, *History of Leeds Castle and its families*, 4th revised and enlarged ed., Maidstone, Kent: Leeds Castle Foundation, 1994, p.165.

<sup>92</sup> Shirley McManus, *The Life of John George Howard*, Toronto, publisher not identified, 1975, p.58 and Schedule E, p.7.

by his one-time colleague, Samuel Paterson.<sup>93</sup> In his personal papers, there is also a drawing of a door frame by another colleague, William Ford, which is signed and dated from 1828 (Figure 1.53). It is clear, then, that Howard brought images with him from England, and so, perhaps too, there might have been at least a sketch of Leeds Castle somewhere in the mix. Beyond this, Howard also stated his interest in Leeds Castle in print. In the aforementioned letter of 1870 published in *The Builder*, Howard's main purpose in writing to the magazine was to state his appreciation of an article on the subject of Leeds Castle that was printed in the November 6, 1869 issue.<sup>94</sup> His continued fascination with Leeds Castle becomes apparent in another work of his, an unidentified design for a courthouse, which makes use of the exact same clasping octagonal corner turrets (Figure 1.54). It even made use of crenellation and of the simple lancet windows on the surface of the turret as employed at Leeds Castle. It is clear, then, that these prominent features from the castle were retained in Howard's imagination and in his architectural vocabulary from a young age. These activities highlight his seemingly lifelong affinity for the building and suggest that it would not have been out of the question for him to have designed a mini-replica of it at some point in his career.

Though the scale differs, the massing of Castlefield and Leeds Castle is identical and many of the details of Castlefield were simply miniaturized or shorthand versions of what is to be found at Leeds. Perhaps most visibly, both have a central projecting block with clasping octagonal buttresses topped by crenellation. The flanking wings are likewise each terminated by clasping buttresses (turrets of the same form in the case of Leeds) topped by crenellation. Though they are

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<sup>93</sup> Howard, *Catalogue of paintings in the gallery at Colborne Lodge, High Park*, pp.6-7.

<sup>94</sup> John George Howard, "A note from Toronto," *The Builder*, Vol.28, January 29, 1870, p.90.

square at Castlefield and octagonal at Leeds, this type of simplification in construction was not uncommon in British North America where skilled labour was less available and funds were not nearly as abundant as those of an English castle. Because of the difference in scale, the clasping buttresses at Castlefield could not possibly hold stairs as they do at Leeds. As such, the pointed windows at Leeds were replaced by blind panels at Castlefield in imitation of this. This type of shorthand would have still been considered as a replica of the original. The corner turrets were also given an extra fanciful Gothic detail in that they have a quatrefoil detail above the main panel. The entire roofline of each is crenellated and while a photograph from 1856 shows no crenellation on the main block of Castlefield, the painting, believed to have been from about 1860, though not precisely dated, shows that it may have existed at some point in time (Figure 1.55). Otherwise, the two buildings make use of the same Gothic vocabulary with pointed windows grouped in a rectangular frame, topped by Tudor hood moulds, and though difficult to determine in the surviving images, given the overall styling and the other parallels, it is likely that the doorway at Castlefield also took the form of a depressed pointed arch.

The visual evidence indeed makes a strong case for Howard as the architect of the building, though there is no textual evidence. Seemingly, the only concrete link between Howard and Castlefield is a note in Howard's journal of 1837, which states that Howard visited the owner, James Hervey Price, at his home on March 29. Otherwise, although Howard often kept a journal of his work, it was often spotty, excluding significant commissions that are known to be his. In fact, he did not even keep a journal for the year of 1835 which is when the building is commonly believed to have been built, and so his building activities at this time are unknown. Furthermore,

while he does briefly recapitulate the events of 1835 in his memoir of 1888, he also leaves out several other projects in the memoir that are certainly his. The memoir, then, may not represent a complete inventory of all of his works, particularly as it was written late in his life. On the chance that Castlefield was not Howard's design, the responsible architect must have also had a good knowledge of Leeds Castle or had perhaps even seen drawings by Howard. Although there were reproductions of the Castle that were published, most tended, according to the fashion of the time, to show a picturesque view that did not include a head-on view of the facade, which is replicated almost exactly in Upper Canada. As such, the builder or architect must have found out about the facade and its minute details through other direct means. Given Howard's familiarity with picturesque Gothic, however, and the fact that he was the only person actively working in this style in the city (and possibly in the province), it is almost inconceivable that he would not have been responsible for Castlefield. Howard's 1870 letter to *The Builder*, moreover, states that he met only two people in Canada West who "who knew anything of that castle,"<sup>95</sup> lending credence to the idea that Howard may, indeed, have been the only man capable of producing such a close copy.

Like Holland House, this little castle was likely built for reasons of prestige. The original owner of this home was James Hervey Price, who, after studying law and moving to Canada from England in 1828, purchased large tracts of land north of York.<sup>96</sup> Much like Boulton of Holland House, the owner, Price was a wealthy man and his small version of Leeds Castle helped to

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<sup>95</sup> John George Howard, "A note from Toronto," *The Builder*, Vol.28, January 29, 1870, p.90.

<sup>96</sup> Lillian F. Gates, "James Hervey Price," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 11, University of Toronto/ Université Laval, 2003–, accessed July 2, 2013, at [www.biographi.ca/en/bio/price\\_james\\_hervey\\_11E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/price_james_hervey_11E.html).

project this. One major difference from Holland House, however, is that Castlefield was built at quite a distance from the existing city. The house was located approximately four kilometers north of the northernmost border of the newly incorporated City of Toronto (as of 1834) where land would have been cheaper and more readily available than in the city itself. The property consisted of “two hundred and ten acres extending from Yonge Street to the present Bathurst Street”<sup>97</sup> with present-day Eglinton and Lawrence Avenues acting as the north-south borders. In short, this was a massive lot beyond the confines of the city that was much larger than those found in town. The placement of the house in such picturesque landscape would have been absolutely ideal: it was not in the city, but it was not in rude, untamed nature either, as it was situated near Yonge Street which, at the time, was the major thoroughfare stemming from Lake Ontario and running up north through the province. Picturesque tenets held nature dear, after all, but the theory prized controlled nature and so a somewhat groomed landscape as well as proximity to a major town would have been considered assets. Most other towns and villages in Upper Canada were still being developed at this time and would still have been surrounded by rough, sublime nature. As such these locations would have been no place for an architectural trinket such as Castlefield; Gothic houses were to be admired in the landscape, not consumed by it. Perhaps this is another reason why the style appears not to have been very popular in the Upper-Canadian context at large. So while there was cause for wealthy citizens to establish their lineage, their fashionable nature and their Britishness, it was likely considered frivolous to build in the Gothic style in a settler’s context. Moreover, such patrons with something to prove would

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<sup>97</sup> Lucy Booth Martyn, *Aristocratic Toronto: 19th century grandeur*, Toronto: Gage Pub., 1980, p.58.

have lived in or near a major city such as York, and would have been able to afford an architect, as it seems was the case with Castlefield.

While little is known of the specific details surrounding the construction of Castlefield, its effect in the landscape appears to have been notable; its crenellated towers apparently became a Yonge Street landmark known to locals and visitors alike.<sup>98</sup> Despite the remarkable appearance of this house, it appears that most other citizens were content to remain with the red-brick Georgian house for the time being, as examples appeared well into the middle of the nineteenth century. The continued popularity of the classically inspired house was likely due to a number of reasons, most important of which would have been practicality. Beyond an investment in nostalgic aesthetics, a Georgian-style box house would have been simpler to create than an irregular house, which would have been particularly important in a land where there were few architects and where most homes were designed and erected by builders. It seems, too, that the red-brick box was preferred for its ability to endure the North American climate; its simple, central plan allowed for the easy heating of space and there were no flimsy ornamental elements on the exterior that might have been damaged in inclement weather. Howard, however, was ingenious in this regard. Perhaps in deference to the climate at Holland House, Howard used a shorthand version of proper (sham!) crenellation for the roofline of the main body of the house; the imitation crenellation is composed of a solid frieze with panels carved out at regular intervals. In effect, this provided the appearance of Gothic crenellations (a typically thin and vulnerable feature when built of wood) while, in reality, the detail was massive and sturdy. Regardless of

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<sup>98</sup> Martyn, *Aristocratic Toronto*, p.59.

this clever concession, to many, it is possible that the illusion was convincing and that the Gothic style remained frivolous in a settler's context. This may be yet another reason why the style did not gain many followers in the colonies. In general, Gothic was not yet well understood and a risk on a Gothic house in this climate, even if it signalled a certain type of entitlement, might have been interpreted as pure folly rather than as admirable.

Overall, it appears as if not many risks were taken in the growing metropolis nor in the colony at large. With few exceptions, it appears that those who could afford to build in a novel architectural style were not doing so. Beyond this, with its implied associations of wealth and power, the Gothic style (at this point in time) was out of reach for the non–elite and so Gothic experimentation was not widespread. While it is clear that the colony was growing, the style of architecture was not changing drastically.

As it turns out, it appears that the impact of the early Gothic Revival on houses in Upper Canada was actually quite slight. Toronto is the focus of this chapter not only as a case study for the style but also as seemingly the only place that offered any Gothic Revival houses at such an early date. In short, Gothic homes are quite rare in present–day Southern Ontario before the late 1840s to early 1850s at which point pattern books appeared with greater frequency and the influence of Augustus Welby Pugin began to manifest itself with the influx of a greater number of settlers and English–trained architects, all well–versed in the Gothic style. Though the examples shown have strong ties to the popular English Gothic Revival, in the context of Canadian architecture, these few Gothic houses should be considered as experiments rather than as the instigators of a trend,

as they may well have been the only houses constructed in the Gothic style before the union of the Canadas in 1841. There are perhaps numerous reasons as to why there were few houses built in the Gothic style in Upper Canada, though it was not for lack of a willing and able architect. John G. Howard, through his designs, proved to be an innovative architect who was adept at keeping up with trends and theories from England, though it seems, in terms of the Gothic style, he was not often given the chance to prove it.



## CHAPTER TWO: PATTERN BOOKS

### Section A: The history of pattern books in England and the United States

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, architectural ideas were disseminated in a variety of ways. Perhaps the most popular was the use of printed media. Prior to the advent of the architectural periodical, one of the most successful types to be found in print was the pattern book. A pattern book refers to a type of book in which architectural designs—primarily for dwellings—were printed. In fact, because of their subject matter, some of these are often called cottage books in the literature.<sup>99</sup> The types of designs offered and the format as a whole, however, could vary from book to book; some included perspective drawings with lengthy descriptions while others included architectural drawings and plans with limited text. Relatedly, some were more useable than others in a practical sense which often depended on the target audience. Pattern books were enormously popular in Britain between 1785 and 1835 for cottage and villa designs with over sixty books published that featured original designs.<sup>100</sup> The use of print for the dissemination of architectural ideas was not new, but the formula and subject matter of pattern books were rather different than what preceded them.

Beginning with the ancient Roman architect, Vitruvius, and his rediscovery (or, more correctly, popularization) in the Renaissance, the architectural treatise, following his *The Ten Books on Architecture* was the preeminent printed standard for architects.<sup>101</sup> This treatise discusses the

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<sup>99</sup> Cynthia Wolk Nachman, “The Early English Cottage Book,” *Marsyas*, vol. XIV (1968–69), pp.67–79, at p.67.

<sup>100</sup> Henry Russell Hitchcock, *Early Victorian architecture in Britain*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954, p.24.

<sup>101</sup> Vitruvius, *The ten books on architecture*, translated into English by Morris Hicky Morgan, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1960.

classical Orders of architecture as well as the design for a variety of building types. Renaissance architects, keen to receive instruction directly from an ancient Roman source, adopted Vitruvius's model for their own treatises, in which they discussed materials, the proper execution and application of the Orders, and ideal building types for various genres of buildings. Beyond this, Vitruvius's profound influence is evident even in the titles of the architectural treatises of the Renaissance; *The ten books on architecture* of 1452 by Leon Battista Alberti (1404–72) and *The four books on architecture* of 1570 by Andrea Palladio (1508–80).<sup>102</sup> Palladio was the first to incorporate contemporary designs for a variety of building types (his villas were particularly successful), while previous books, such as Alberti's, discussed ancient examples exclusively. Palladio's work was enormously successful, particularly when it was reprinted and translated into English in the early eighteenth century. The first full English translation of *The four books* was published in 1715, which quickly followed the popular *Vitruvius Britannicus* of 1715 by Colen Campbell. Campbell published a variety of designs including those of Palladio's closest English follower, Inigo Jones (1573–1652) which reignited a mania for Renaissance-based classicism and Palladian-inspired buildings.<sup>103</sup> This was Campbell's reaction to what he perceived to be the "extravagant,"<sup>104</sup> "affected and licentious"<sup>105</sup> nature of Baroque. Essentially, it was a "protest against Baroque extravagances"<sup>106</sup> and a return to a simpler time and form of

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<sup>102</sup> Leon Battista Alberti, *Ten books on architecture*, translated into English by James Leoni, London: A. Tiranti, 1955; Andrea Palladio, *The four books on architecture*, translated into English by Robert Tavernor and Richard Shofield, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002.

<sup>103</sup> Colen Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus, or, the British architect, containing the plans, elevations, and sections of the regular buildings, both publick and private in Great Britain, with variety of new designs*, London: Sold by the author, 1715.

<sup>104</sup> Campbell, p.1.

<sup>105</sup> Campbell, p.1.

<sup>106</sup> Rudolf Wittkower, *Palladio and Palladianism*, New York: G. Braziller, 1974, p.116.

architecture. The book was an instant success and was quickly followed by the first English translation of Palladio's *Four books*, which appeared in installments between 1715 and 1720.<sup>107</sup> These editions by Giacomo Leoni and Nicolas Dubois, however, contained several modifications on Palladio's original designs and so a more precise version was undertaken and released by Isaac Ware in 1738.<sup>108</sup>

Otherwise, the architectural treatise genre remained in fashion and it became the mark of a popular and reputable architect to have published one. James Gibbs (1682–1754), for instance, published *A Book of Architecture, containing designs of buildings and ornaments* in 1728 which contained plans for his highly influential church St Martin-in-the-Fields in London of 1722–24 among others. Robert Adam (1728–92) and William Chambers (1723–96) also produced treatises and, according to the architectural fashion of the time, these were classical in nature.<sup>109</sup> There were not many publications that dealt specifically with the Gothic style, though a few attempts were made, such as Batty and Thomas Langley's *Ancient architecture restored and improved of*

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<sup>107</sup> The first English translation appeared with a French translation alongside the Italian text. Robert Tavernor, "Introduction," *The four books on architecture*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002, p.xvii.

<sup>108</sup> Andrea Palladio, *The architecture of A. Palladio, in four books. Containing a short treatise of the five orders, and the most necessary observations concerning all sorts of buildings, as also the different construction of private and publick houses, high-ways, bridges, market-places, xystes, and temples, with their plans, sections and uprights. To which are added several notes and observations made by Inigo Jones, never printed before*, revised, designed and published by Giacomo Leoni, London, printed by John Watts for the author, 1715; Andrea Palladio, *The four books of Andrea Palladio's architecture: wherein, after a short treatise of the five orders, those observations that are most necessary in building, private houses, streets, bridges, piazzas, xisti, and temples are treated of*, translated from the original Italian by Isaac Ware, London: published by Isaac Ware, 1738.

<sup>109</sup> Robert and James Adam, *The works in architecture of Robert and James Adam*, Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2006, reprint of original publications, vol.1 1778, vols.2–3, 1822; William Chambers, *A treatise on civil architecture: in which the principles of that art are laid down, and illustrated by a great number of plates, accurately designed, and elegantly engraved by the best hands*, London : Printed for the author, by J. Haberkorn. To be had at the author's House in Poland Street, near Broad-Street, Soho; Likewise of A. Millar, J. Nourse, Wilson and Durham, all in the Strand, T. Osborne in Gray's-Inn, J. and R. Dodsley in Pall-Mall, R. Sayer in Fleet-Street, Piers and Webley near Chancery-Lane, Holborn, and J. Gretton, in Old-Bond-Street, 1759.

1742 which was rereleased as *Gothic architecture improved by rules and proportions* in 1747,<sup>110</sup> and despite possibly having been used at Strawberry Hill (at the very least, Walpole had Langley drawings in his collection),<sup>111</sup> it was widely considered a folly.<sup>112</sup> Even Horace Walpole (1717–97) himself called Langley’s style “bastard Gothic.”<sup>113</sup> Books in the treatise format continued well into the eighteenth century throughout Europe, but drastic social and technological changes toward the end of the century precipitated a change in the way print media was used in England as well as the styles that were deemed acceptable for inclusion.

While architectural publications, which came primarily in the form of treatises, historically targeted the elite in terms of the types of houses provided, interests began to shift nearing the end of the eighteenth century. Landowners were becoming interested in improving their properties and, in turn, improving the lives of their workers; in this way an interest in the improvement of assets was disguised as philanthropy. As such, books were created that targeted the landed gentry with cottages for the working classes as the primary subject matter. James Malton’s 1798 *An essay on British cottage architecture*, for instance was presented “to those Noblemen and Gentlemen of taste, who build retreats for themselves, with desire to have them appear as

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<sup>110</sup> Batty and Thomas Langley, *Ancient architecture restored and improved by a great variety of grand and useful designs entirely new, in the Gothic mode, for ornamenting buildings and gardens*, London: 1742; Batty and Thomas Langley, *Gothic architecture, improved by rules and proportions. In many grand designs of columns, doors, windows, chimney-pieces, arcades, colonades [sic], porticos, umbrellos, temples, and pavillions [sic] &c.* London: printed for John Millan, 1747.

<sup>111</sup> Walpole lists receiving works by Langley in a letter to John Ratcliffe, March 1762, *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, vol.40, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937–1983, p.237.

<sup>112</sup> Even in the mid–nineteenth century, derisive remarks were made with regard to Batty Langley’s approach to the Gothic style, for instance John Claudius Loudon notes in his *Encyclopedia of cottage farm and villa architecture* that Langley is “a name sneered at by modern critics.” *Encyclopedia of cottage, farm and villa architecture, and furniture*, p.1122, London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longmans, 1839 edition.

<sup>113</sup> Horace Walpole, “Letter to Richard Bentley, 5 July 1755,” *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, vol.35, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937–1983, p.233.

cottages, or erect habitations for their peasantry or other tenants.”<sup>114</sup> Publications with this audience in mind carried on for several years; even in 1815, Robert Lugar provided designs for cottages “for those persons whose liberal minds may lead them to accommodate their peasantry and dependants [*sic*] with dwellings, and at the same time embellish their domains with a variety of picturesque buildings, which shall be both ornamental and useful.”<sup>115</sup>

Around the same time, however, attention began to shift slowly so that cottages and country residences, while still the main focus, became targeted more directly to different classes of society. Though these publications were by no means intended for use by labourers (in the early nineteenth century, they were still considered to be a depraved group<sup>116</sup>), they began to be directed to those of moderate wealth (for instance merchants) rather than to the extravagantly wealthy. The titles of books even began to list the classes to which they addressed, for instance, E Gyfford’s *Designs for elegant cottages and small villas: calculated for the comfort and convenience of persons of moderate and of ample fortune* of 1806 and T.D.W. Dearn’s *Sketches in architecture; consisting of original designs for cottages and rural dwellings, suitable to persons of moderate fortune, and for convenient retirement, with plans and appropriate scenery to each* of 1807. Even John Soane offered a book in 1793 “consisting of cottages for the laborious and industrious part of the community, and of other buildings generally calculated for

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<sup>114</sup> James Malton, *An essay on British cottage architecture*, London: Hookham and Carpenter, 1798, p.2.

<sup>115</sup> Robert Lugar, *Architectural sketches for cottages, rural dwellings, and villas, in the Grecian, Gothic, and Fancy styles, with plans; suitable to persons of genteel life and moderate fortune, preceded by some observations on scenery and character proper for picturesque buildings*, London: W. Stratford, 1815, p.1.

<sup>116</sup> T.D. Dearn, *Sketches in architecture; consisting of original designs for cottages and rural dwellings, suitable to persons of moderate fortune, and for convenient retirement, with plans and appropriate scenery to each*, London: J. Taylor, 1807, p.4.

the real uses and comforts of life, and such as are within reach of the moderate fortunes.”<sup>117</sup>

Turn-of-the-century pattern books became increasingly aimed at various levels of society, particularly as “there was a growing middle-class audience with a thirst for self improvement.”<sup>118</sup>

This ensured that plenty of options were available for those seeking advice on the construction of a house of any size, particularly in rural environments.<sup>119</sup> Aside from the new projected readership, this genre was groundbreaking in terms of its subject matter as well.

Cottages and small rural residences had never before received validation as legitimate architectural forms but were now beginning to receive detailed attention in print.<sup>120</sup> They began to be considered as an area of the built environment which was in need of fixing as there was “much scope for improvement and invention [that] still remained.”<sup>121</sup> In fact, at this time, “domestic architecture [became] the most common and perhaps the most important subject in British architectural literature.”<sup>122</sup> Although original house designs had been published since Palladio’s *The four books*, these were intended as large country houses for the elite, rather than small houses for the working classes. Entering the nineteenth century, it was becoming clear that

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<sup>117</sup> John Soane, *Sketches in architecture containing plans and elevations of cottages, villas, and other useful buildings with characteristic scenery*. London: Taylor, 1798, p.1.

<sup>118</sup> Michael McMordie, “Picturesque pattern books and pre-Victorian designers,” *Architectural History*, vol. 18 (1975), pp.43–59, 109–112 at p.47.

<sup>119</sup> John Archer, *The Literature of British domestic architecture, 1715–1842*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985, p. 29.

<sup>120</sup> Wolk Nachman, p.67.

<sup>121</sup> E. Gyfford, *Designs for elegant cottages and small villas: calculated for the comfort and convenience of persons of moderate and of ample fortune; carefully studied and thrown into perspective*, London: J. Taylor, 1806, p.viii.

<sup>122</sup> Archer, p.33.

ornamented houses were no longer the sole purview of the wealthy; smaller dwellings too could now possess character and take part in architectural trends.

### **Gothic and picturesque**

Complementing the emergence of this new printed genre were the parallel developments of the picturesque and the Gothic Revival. Gothic, in particular, with its lack of concrete rules, worked perfectly with the principles promoted by the picturesque, which espoused variety and irregularity in bucolic settings. As such, Gothic and picturesque designs—ranging from castellated, to monastic, to Tudor—began to be incorporated into pattern books with greater frequency following the turn of the century.<sup>123</sup> At this time, however, the Gothic style was little understood, having been little studied, and, as a result, many awkward, Gothic-inspired buildings were erected. This deficiency in understanding the style was discussed by several authors, for instance William Fuller Pocock who wrote in 1807:

The Gothic style, as applied to Dwellings, is, perhaps, less understood than any other description of Building, which may be in some degree occasioned by the short time that has elapsed since the preference for Buildings of this character has become in any degree general, to which may be added the uncertainty in which we are left, with respect to precepts, upon the subject. [...] This want of written rules has left every one at liberty to form his taste by the existing examples according to his own judgment.<sup>124</sup>

There were indeed many such interpretations, with varying degrees of success, though due to the newness of the fashion, as alluded to above by Pocock, there were few writers who dealt exclusively with Gothic designs. One exception is Robert Lugar's *Plans and views of buildings*

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<sup>123</sup> McMordie, p.43; Sandra Blutman, "Books of designs for country houses, 1780–1815," *Architectural History*, vol. 11 (1968), pp.25–33, 105–106, p.25.

<sup>124</sup> W.F. Pocock, *Architectural designs for rustic cottages, picturesque dwellings, villas, &c.*, London: J. Taylor, 1807, p.13.

*executed in England, Scotland, &c. in the castellated and other styles* of 1811, although it did not deal exclusively with new plans. Otherwise, most publications blended a variety of Gothic designs for different circumstances with classical and astylar picturesque designs.

The emergence of the picturesque precipitated “the increasing belief that general principles of design no longer could be applied with equal validity to all circumstances and situations.”<sup>125</sup> With their lack of a set plan and lack of stylistic historic precedent, cottages and small houses became “molded into one of several expressive instruments of the picturesque [and] came to be regarded as [...] architectural trinket[s] in a native, rustic setting.”<sup>126</sup> In effect, then, these dwellings were treated like the garden structures of the early eighteenth century,<sup>127</sup> in that they were perceived as ornaments in the landscape and could make use of otherwise unorthodox or eclectic stylistic elements that might have been considered risky on any other form of building. Perhaps more than any other type of building, small houses and cottages came to be attached to the ideas of the picturesque. As such, pattern books often included a range of picturesque designs for houses, of varying styles and plans.

The demand for such books is demonstrated by the number of authors who wrote more than one book and by those that were reprinted a number of times. Peter Frederick Robinson’s *Rural architecture: being a series of designs for ornamental cottages* of 1822, for instance, was in its third edition by 1828. Robinson wrote other books including *Village architecture: being a series*

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<sup>125</sup> Archer, p.28.

<sup>126</sup> Wolk Nachman, p.70.

<sup>127</sup> Wolk Nachman, p.74.



*of picturesque designs for the inn, the schoolhouse, almshouses, markethouse, shambles, workhouse, parsonage, townhall, and church of 1830 and Domestic architecture in the Tudor style, selected from buildings erected after the designs and under the superintendence of P.F. Robinson* of 1836. Robinson even admitted that the success of his 1822 *Rural architecture* encouraged him to write these later books: he stated that “The extensive sale of my former works, having greatly exceeded my expectations, encourages me to persevere.”<sup>128</sup> John Buonarotti Papworth likewise had a book—*Rural residences, consisting of a series of designs for cottages, decorated cottages, small villas, and other ornamental buildings* of 1818—which was reprinted in 1832 and which was reported to have had large sales abroad.<sup>129</sup>

Although pattern books delivered advice with regard to taste, they were not necessarily dictating it. Instead, they were responding to current taste and trends. It is important to remember that prior to the use of the Gothic style for houses in pattern books, influential tastemakers such as Horace Walpole (1717–97) and William Beckford (1760–1844) famously used the style for their own homes, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham (1748–90) and Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire (1796–1813), respectively (as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 1). Despite what seems to be a groundbreaking application of styles, “[m]ost books [in fact] drew their ideas from what had been and was being built rather than the other way around.”<sup>130</sup> As such, many of the Gothic designs provided in the books appear to present-day viewers as rather awkward or strangely

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<sup>128</sup> Peter Frederick Robinson, *Domestic architecture in the Tudor Style, selected from buildings erected after the designs and under the superintendence of P.F. Robinson*, London: J. Williams, 1836, p.i.

<sup>129</sup> Wyatt Angelicus Van S. Papworth, *John B. Papworth, architect to the King of Wurtemberg: a brief record of his life and works; being a contribution to the history of art and architecture during the period 1775–1847*. London: privately printed, 1879, p.44.

<sup>130</sup> Blutman, p.32.

proportioned. Once again, it is important to note that the application of any variant of Gothic was not well understood and this was a rather experimental, whimsical approach to the creation of picturesque homes. This watering-down of contemporary architectural ideas means that, in reality, it is difficult to identify the use of pattern books and their influence exerted over houses as built. Some even claim that, despite the demand for houses and the large number of books printed, that “very few of the cottages proposed in the pattern books ever reached the stage of construction” as the French Wars took a large toll on building practice as a whole.<sup>131</sup> Regardless of their difficulty to assess on a practical level, “Villa and cottage books thrived in the 1820s and 1830s.”<sup>132</sup>

### **John Claudius Loudon**

One author who held enormous influence, particularly in terms of the North American context, was John Claudius Loudon (1783–1843). His contribution, *Encyclopedia of cottage, farm, and villa Architecture* of 1833, assembled, in unparalleled detail and length, the ideas of authors, architects and theorists who preceded him such as Archibald Alison, John Carter, Jean–Nicolas–Louis Durand, Richard Payne Knight, J.B. Papworth, P.F. Robinson and James Stuart, to name but a few. In addition to advice, the book provided a variety of designs and recommendations for house types appropriate to different classes and price points. As a landscape gardener by trade, much focus was also placed on the setting of houses within the landscape with particular emphasis on picturesque arrangements. As part of the aforementioned reordering and education

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<sup>131</sup> Wolk Nachman, p.67.

<sup>132</sup> Helen C. Long, *Victorian houses and their details: the role of publications in their building and decoration*, Oxford, Boston: Architectural Press, 2002, p.26.

of all members of society, Loudon provided designs ranging from small, two-room cottages for labourers through to country houses or villas for “an English gentleman of wealth and refinement.”<sup>133</sup> Perspective drawings of each type of dwelling are provided along with measurements, ground plans, and, in some instances, hints on landscape. In the spirit of usability and usefulness, an estimate for each model is provided so that prospective builders and patrons could make informed decisions. Combining all of this advice and information from such a wide variety of authors and architects truly makes Loudon representative of his age.

Aside from his profession and the epic length of the *Encyclopedia*, Loudon differed from his counterparts in that he believed in a wholly democratic vision of architecture; one that could be accessed by all levels of society, even labourers. He believed that with a changing, progressive society (one that produced innovations such as the steam-engine, for instance),<sup>134</sup> that knowledge would soon no longer be limited to professionals and did not need to be jealously guarded by architects alone.<sup>135</sup> His intent in writing a comprehensive architectural guide book, then, was:

to prepare the way for rendering general, a knowledge of Domestic Architecture; for the immediate purpose of increasing the comforts of the great mass of society; and for the more remote objects of improving the knowledge and the taste of the public in Architecture, and of inducing Architects to study their art on general principles, and on a theory formed on the nature of the human mind, and on the changing condition of society, rather than on the precedents and rules of former ages, or on any hypothesis whatever.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Loudon, p.6.

<sup>134</sup> Loudon, p.v.

<sup>135</sup> Loudon, p.v.

<sup>136</sup> Loudon, p.vi.

Not only was he calling for a democratized vision of the art of architecture, but he was also calling for progress and for a break with tradition. Allowing the masses (including “young persons, [and] especially ladies”<sup>137</sup>) to access the privileged category of architecture certainly represented the next step in the evolution of the pattern book genre and announced a decisive break with tradition, in general. It also reinforced the use of printed media as a prime vehicle for the circulation of architectural ideals rather than the dissemination of these ideas from person to person or in obscure academic or antiquarian publications. The approach worked: Loudon’s influence was such that in 1843, the English periodical, *The Builder*, reprinted several passages from the book at length, noting that:

It was said by the *Times*, of the Encyclopaedia [...], that ‘no single work had ever effected so much in improving the arrangement and the external appearance of country dwellings, generally,’ and nothing that was ever said by that influential journal had in it greater truth.<sup>138</sup>

### **The growing reputation of Gothic**

For Loudon, a house was, first and foremost, to be built well with style acting as a secondary feature. Like many authors before him, Loudon provided a variety of designs in a range of styles, though he had much to say on the use of the Gothic and its variants. Gothic, for instance, held associations that buildings in the classical tradition could not and so was particularly appropriate for use in England. He says:

Whenever [...] the artist wishes to affect the imagination, and to raise emotions of grandeur and beauty, or recall the images of antiquity in general observers, he must adopt one or other of those styles with which general observers are familiar. The truth is, that, in order thoroughly to enjoy an object, we must first understand it: now, for one person who

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<sup>137</sup> Loudon, p.1.

<sup>138</sup> “Reviews: First Additional Supplement to the Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture. By J.C. Loudon, F.L.S., &c. London: Longman and Co.,” *The Builder*, February 18, Vol.1, No.II, p.22.

knows and can comprehend the uses of the component parts of a Grecian elevation, there are numbers who are familiar with all the details of Gothic Architecture. Towers, battlements, buttresses, pointed windows, mullions, and porches have been, from infancy, before the eyes of every one who has been in the habit of attending his parish church; and whenever they occur in other buildings, they recall a thousand images connected with the place of our birth, the scenes of our youth, the home of our parents, and the abodes of our friends. In this frame of mind how easy it is to be pleased!<sup>139</sup>

Loudon was not alone in this view. At this time, the style of a dwelling, perhaps more than any other building type, was closely linked to identity, and not just national identity. This had been a growing trend as “[e]arly in the eighteenth century British architects and poets were aware of the expressive potential of architecture, particularly its ability to reveal the personality or position of the inhabitant.”<sup>140</sup> This was especially important in an age of eclecticism as the choice of one style over another could speak volumes. Unlike eighteenth-century prejudices leveled against the Gothic style as being a foolish style in which to build (in large part due to Batty Langley), by the early-nineteenth century, it carried rather different connotations. In 1818, for instance, Papworth linked Gothic designs “to the man of literary study, or to the amateur of taste”<sup>141</sup> and in 1827, J. Thomson proclaimed of a Gothic residence that “Sometimes the character rather than the dimensions of an habitation, serves to indicate the rank which its owner holds in society.”<sup>142</sup> In a design for a Gothic Villa in his 1835 book *Rural architecture*, Francis Goodwin wrote:

In this age, when classical architecture is so universally understood, and so successfully practised by many able professors of the art, whoever, thinking for himself, determines to build in the old English style, may be pronounced a person of

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<sup>139</sup> Loudon, p.773.

<sup>140</sup> Archer, p.47.

<sup>141</sup> John B. Papworth, *Rural residences, consisting of a series of designs for cottages, decorated cottages, small villas, and other ornamental buildings, accompanied by hints on situation, construction, arrangement and decoration, in the theory & practice of rural architecture; interspersed with some observations on landscape gardening*, London: J. Diggins, 1818, p.69.

<sup>142</sup> James Thomson, *Retreats: Series of designs, consisting of plans and elevations for cottages, villas, and ornamental buildings*. London: J. Taylor, 1827, p.8.

independent notions, superior to prejudice and by inference a man of taste. Notwithstanding the predilection for the classic, or Italianate style, he adopts that which poets and painters have always admired.<sup>143</sup>

This demonstrates the interest in and respect for the style that was building throughout the early–nineteenth century.

Although the use of the Gothic style for houses did not abate until the end of the nineteenth century, the end of the height of popularity of cottage books in England came about with the development of architectural periodicals; these could be printed more frequently and circulated more quickly, at a reduced cost to architects as well as to patrons.<sup>144</sup> This coincides with the early days of Queen Victoria’s reign as one of the most successful of these periodicals, *The Builder*, began publication on December 31, 1842. Also contributing to their decline was the professionalization of the architectural practice, beginning in 1834 with the formation of the The Institute of British Architects, later the Royal Institute of British Architects.<sup>145</sup> While these developments occurred in England in the late 1830s and early 1840s, at this time in North America, there were no such developments. The profession grew rather more slowly and so the best way to spread ideas remained the publication and distribution of a book. One author who exploited and essentially developed this practice in America was Andrew Jackson Downing.

### **American Pattern Books and Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–52)**

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<sup>143</sup> Francis Goodwin, *Rural architecture: first series of designs for rustic, peasants’, and ornamental cottages, lodges, and villas, in various styles of architecture; containing fifty plates*, London: John Weale, 1835, Design no.12.

<sup>144</sup> McMordie, p.45.

<sup>145</sup> Long, p.2.

In the United States, the demand for printed sources regarding architecture was particularly high as there was little architectural precedent and as the architectural practice, as a whole, was still in its nascent stages. The American Institute of Architects was not established until 1857, the first school of architecture (at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) was not established until 1865 and the first American periodical, the *American Architect and Building News*, was not begun until 1876.<sup>146</sup> Because the architectural practice, press and periodicals were established at an even later date in Canada, it is important first to examine the precedent set in the United States, particularly as ideas and sources were fairly fluid across the border. While in England, shortly after the onset of Victoria's reign, it was clear that periodicals had taken the place of architectural books, in America at this time, books were only just beginning to gain popularity. In fact, "Between 1797 and 1860, 188 architectural books were issued by American presses, their numbers swelling each decade. Only 2 had appeared in the 1790s; 93 new books were available between 1850 and 1860."<sup>147</sup> Books, then, were a highly important means of transmission in mid-nineteenth-century North America.

In the early nineteenth century, builder's guides were the predominant genre in the United States, particularly those of Asher Benjamin (1773–1845) and Minard Lafever (1798–1854).<sup>148</sup> These were practical handbooks that showed carpenters how to execute classical details in wood,

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<sup>146</sup> Kenneth Hafertepe and James F. O'Gorman, "Introduction: Architects and Books," *American architects and their books, 1840–1915*, Kenneth Hafertepe and James F. O'Gorman eds., Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001, p. xviii.

<sup>147</sup> Dell Upton, "Pattern books and professionalism: aspects of the transformation of domestic architecture in America, 1800–1860," *Winterthur Portfolio*, vol.19, no. 2/3 (Summer–Autumn, 1984), p.108.

<sup>148</sup> Examples include Asher Benjamin, *The country builder's assistant*, 1797; Asher Benjamin, *The American builder's companion*, 1806; Asher Benjamin, *The architect, or, practical house carpenter*, 1830; Minard Lafever, *The young builder's general instruction*, 1829; Minard Lafever, *The modern builder's guide*, 1833.

focusing in particular on the classical Orders. Benjamin's projected readership was "[t]hose Carpenters in country villages who aspire to eminence in their business, having no Architect to consult,"<sup>149</sup> meaning that the audience for this type of book was rather specialized. Around mid-century, however, a new genre of American-produced book emerged that targeted a broader audience, including builders as well as patrons; these were pattern books for houses, which closely followed their English predecessors. Builder's guides fell out of favour by mid century, disappearing entirely by the late 1850s,<sup>150</sup> which, incidentally, echoed the waning popularity of pure examples of Greek and Roman Revival buildings in the country, as espoused by the builder's guide genre. In a sense, the pattern book genre helped to open the door to a variety of styles. These books were heavily influenced by English pattern and cottage books as they provided plans, elevations and descriptions for different types of houses and often included a breakdown of cost as well. These were, in essence, a reworking of the formula provided by Loudon with his *Encyclopedia of cottage, farm and villa Architecture* of 1833. In short, pattern books rose in popularity as more information was sought for the building of a house than that which was provided by builder's guides.

The most successful and most direct follower of Loudon in North America was the ubiquitous Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–52). Just as Loudon had originally been a landscape gardener by profession, so too was Downing. Perhaps it was for this reason that Downing adopted the Scotsman's formula and theories almost exactly. Downing published three books that dealt (at

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<sup>149</sup> Asher Benjamin, *Practice of architecture*, Boston: Benjamin, and Carter, Hendee & Co., 1833, p.iii.

<sup>150</sup> Vincent J. Scully, "Expression of Structure in Wood: Downing, Wheeler, Gardner, and the 'Stick Style,' 1840–1876," *The Art Bulletin*, vol.35, no.2 (June, 1953), p.123.



least in part) with the subject of architecture; *A Treatise on the theory and practice of landscape gardening: adapted to North America* of 1841; *Cottage residences* of 1842; and *The architecture of country houses* of 1850. After Downing's untimely drowning in 1852, a collection of his writings from his periodical, *The Horticulturist*, was also published under the title *Rural essays* and included editorials on the topic of architecture. Although pattern books were not written by tastemakers in England, it was quite the opposite in North America and Downing became extremely highly regarded as an arbiter of taste. His works were incredibly popular and, as a result, versions of houses promoted in his books appear all over the United States and British North America.

Just like many English pattern books such as Loudon's *Encyclopedia*, Downing introduced a variety of designs for houses with tips on practical aspects of building as well as surrounding natural elements. Although the Gothic style was preferable in his esteem, Downing also recognized the necessity of variety for his clientele as he believed that different styles were inherently suited to different personality types; an Italianate design, for instance could be "remarkable for expressing the elegant culture and variety of accomplishment of the retired citizen or man of the world,"<sup>151</sup> a Norman villa was "not a house to please a practical, common-sense man,"<sup>152</sup> while a Pointed country-house could "indicat[e] intelligent, domestic life in the country."<sup>153</sup> This helped to ensure the popularity of the books as Downing did not call for an

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<sup>151</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing, *The architecture of country houses, including designs for cottages, and farm-houses, and villas, with remarks on interiors, furniture, and the best modes of warming and ventilating*, New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1850, pp.285–286.

<sup>152</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.280.

<sup>153</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.304.

impractical, uniform type of architecture, but rather opened up the possibility of a variety of fashionable houses to an American audience in a way that had never been done.

Downing wholly believed that a uniform style applicable to all types of people, houses and classes could not possibly be truthful. This overtone of morality can be seen as an echo of Augustus Welby Pugin's call for social responsibility through architecture, and though they shared the same preference for the Gothic style, Downing clearly took a different stance with regard to stylistic diversity. Almost exactly Downing's contemporary, Pugin (1812–52) was the driving force behind the Gothic Revival movement in England and believed that Gothic was the only style in which it was appropriate to build in the nineteenth century. Downing, however, wrote that "Rural Architecture is, indeed, so much more a sentiment, and so much less a science, than Civil Architecture, that the majority of persons will always build for themselves, and, unconsciously, throw something of their own character into their dwellings."<sup>154</sup> According to this logic, diversity in architecture must exist, as no two people are identical. In Downing's view, a house, above all, must be built with a truthful intent in mind, which meant that it must reflect the owner's character. From this, it follows that if a man is to build a style for reasons of fashion and novelty alone, it can never be a good and moral house. As such, if a certain style suited a person better than the favoured Gothic style, then he is to be true to his character and build in the appropriate style.

## **Downing and Gothic**

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<sup>154</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.xx.

Despite this, Downing unabashedly promoted the Gothic as his favourite as well the most suitable style for houses. To him “the domestic virtues, the love of home, rural beauty and seclusion cannot possibly be better expressed than in the English cottage, with its many upward pointing gables, its intricate tracery, its spacious bay windows, and its walls covered with vines and flowering shrubs.”<sup>155</sup> Downing, again, differed from Pugin, however, in that while he favoured Gothic, he was not interested in faithfully replicating details from the past. Instead, he focused on the promotion of a wholly modern architecture that looked to past styles for inspiration only. Downing’s “interest was not in great works of architecture from ages past but in the contemporary architectural scene [...]”<sup>156</sup> and as such, he used designs from a variety of successful contemporary architects, particularly those of his friend Alexander Jackson Davis (1803–92). In spite of the lack of direct historic authority for his works, he was quick to condemn and caution against the building of “frippery”<sup>157</sup> or of “cocked-hat”<sup>158</sup> cottages that made use of overzealous ornament. The use of the castellated style, for instance, was unacceptable to Downing as the improper use of it “would be discreditable to any person having the least pretension to correct taste.”<sup>159</sup> “Nothing can well be more paltry and contemptible,”<sup>160</sup> than wooden imitations of castles. Exceptions, however could be made for each type depending on the owner and on the location of the home; for instance, in the same passage, Downing

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<sup>155</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.26.

<sup>156</sup> Kenneth Hafertepe, “Downing’s Readings—and Readings of Downing,” in Hafertepe and O’Gorman, p.2.

<sup>157</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.42.

<sup>158</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.41.

<sup>159</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing, *A treatise on the theory and practice of landscape gardening, adapted to North America; with a view to the improvement of country residences*, New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1841, p.397.

<sup>160</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.37.

admitted that “there is no very weighty reason why a wealthy proprietor should not erect his mansion in the castellated style, if that be in unison with his scenery and locality.”<sup>161</sup> In short, no style was truly restricted as long as its ornament was carefully incorporated with the building, with its location and with its owner’s personality.

Ornament, then, was to be subtle, rather than overt in the manner as seen at Strawberry Hill.

Once again, this approach to style may have been derived from Loudon who believed that the Gothic style could be conjured up from the simplest of suggestions:

We may remark, incidentally, that the mere circumstance of deviating from the straight line in a very small degree in the window opening [...] adds materially to the effect of that window, as a Gothic one. The more obvious forms of Gothic architecture are so universally known [...] that the slightest line in a building which has an allusion to them, operates upon the imagination and at once gives the idea of style.<sup>162</sup>

This meant that simple houses could be constructed making use of a solitary pointed window and could still be accepted under the rubric of the Gothic style. In fact, many houses made use of other aspects of Gothic planning and design rather than employing ornament alone in order to create the desired effect.

### **Expressions of domesticity**

Rather than relying solely on ornament from the past to achieve style, as many earlier picturesque Gothic houses did, certain domestic features were to be highlighted in order to show the “expression of purpose”; as a dwelling–house’s plan and features must reflect its function.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Downing, *A treatise on the theory and practice of landscape gardening*, p.397.

<sup>162</sup> Loudon, p.102.

<sup>163</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing, *Cottage residences; or a series of designs for rural and cottage–villas, and their gardens and grounds. Adapted to North America*, New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1842, pp.11–13.

Thus chimneys, verandas, oriel windows and bay windows, in particular, were to be given notable expression on the exterior before any additional decorations were added, as they are features that provide comfort and convenience to the occupant. It was simply an added bonus that they all fit nicely with the aesthetic of the Gothic style. This approach to style through planning was likely borrowed from Loudon who advocated an emphasis creating a comfortable house:

In Dwelling-houses, the expression of use is indicated, in a decided manner, in all cold countries, by their having a number of chimney tops, or other outlets, for permitting the escape of smoke from separate fires. [...] Porticoes, colonnades, verandas, and balconies are all expressive, more or less, of comfort and elegant enjoyment on the part of the the occupant.<sup>164</sup>

According to both Loudon and Downing, then, it was best not to copy a model from a past age, but to seek instead “a subdued expression of manifestation of that style adjusted to the humbler requirements of the building and the more quiet purposes of domestic life.”<sup>165</sup> This essentially, was a plea not to copy past forms directly—an apparently common trend as the condemnation of “servile” copying or imitation<sup>166</sup> was repeated in many pattern books—but to manipulate certain features in order to create something comfortable and familiar while simultaneously being new, modern, and reflective of life in nineteenth-century America. Once again, heavy emphasis was placed on virtue and honesty in building a house, which in turn would reflect these qualities in its owner. In this way, “every thing in architecture that can suggest or be made a symbol of social or

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<sup>164</sup> Loudon, pp.1112–1113.

<sup>165</sup> Downing, *Cottage residences*, p.20.

<sup>166</sup> Samuel Sloan, *The model architect*, vol. I, Philadelphia: E.S. Jones & Co., 1852, p.34; Gervase Wheeler, *Rural homes; or sketches of houses suited to American country life, with original plans, designs, &c.*, New York: Charles Scribner, 1851, pp. 32, 106.

domestic virtues, adds to its beauty, and exalts its character.”<sup>167</sup> And so, a well built and designed house was a good house.

Another attribute of a good house was that, in addition to reflecting the character of the owner, it was to be built in a style that was congruent with its location. Downing claimed that:

The highest merit of a villa or country house, after utility and beauty of form and expression, is, that it be, as much as possible, characteristic of the country in which it is built. In the Eastern and Norther States, high roofs, thick walls, warm rooms, fine stacks of chimneys — in the Middle and Southern, broad roofs, wide verandas, cool and airy apartments.<sup>168</sup>

This meant that, in general, Gothic was prescribed in the North and Italianate—Downing’s second favourite style—for warmer regions. Again, however, just as with personality types, Downing concedes that not everyone must let the style be dictated for them. He goes on to say that:

[...] everywhere, and in all parts of the country, in planning a country house, let the habits, and wants, and mode of life (assuming them to be good and truthful ones) stamp themselves on the main features of the house.<sup>169</sup>

Though he was eager to see a national style of architecture native to the United States, Downing’s notions of truth and honesty prevented him from making an assertive statement on what that might be. Downing adopted Loudon’s vision of democratic architecture as an idea that was well suited to American values. He also suggested some abstract characteristics for an American style (republican, simple, free) but he also admits that a national architecture would

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<sup>167</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.23.

<sup>168</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, pp.264–265.

<sup>169</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.265.

have to be “aided in its growth by all foreign thoughts.”<sup>170</sup> So with the continued influence and dominance of European styles and without any concrete advice on how to create something entirely new, the choice of style of houses as promoted by Downing remained eclectic and picturesque in nature, just as with pattern books from England.

### **Other Pattern books in the United States**

Downing’s format and message proved to be powerful and, as his books were the first of their kind to be written in the United States for an American population, they proved to be incredibly successful. In fact, the Swedish author, Fredrika Bremer wrote of his influence in *The homes of the new world: impressions of America* of 1853:

Of that which he himself has done, Mr. Downing speaks with the utmost modesty; but I heard from Miss Sedgwick that few men in the United States are so universally known, or so generally influential as he. His works on architecture, gardening, on flowers and fruits—and all of which are calculated to ennoble the taste, to make the purest productions in their branches of science and art accessible to every man—these works are to be found every where, and nobody, whether he be rich or poor, builds a house or lays out a garden without consulting Downing’s works. Every young couple who sets up housekeeping buys them.<sup>171</sup>

It is clear that Downing’s premature death in 1852 ended what would have surely been a long and fruitful career, and his few books were reprinted frequently throughout the nineteenth century. Though evidently a great loss, in effect, Downing’s death opened the print market to others, although no subsequent writer achieved nearly the same level of success. *Cottage residences*, for instance, was reprinted three times in Downing’s short lifetime alone.<sup>172</sup> Some

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<sup>170</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.264.

<sup>171</sup> Fredrika Bremer, *The homes of the new world: impressions of America*, translated by Mary Howitt, Vol.I, New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1853, p.46.

<sup>172</sup> Adolf K. Placzek, “Preface to the Dover edition,” in Andrew Jackson Downing, *Victorian Cottage Residences*, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1981, p.iii.

notable examples of other pattern–book writers include Henry W. Cleaveland (1827–1919), Samuel Sloan (1815–84), Calvert Vaux (1824–95) and Gervase Wheeler (1815–89), all of whom produced a number of books similar to Downing’s.<sup>173</sup>

Like Pugin or Loudon, “Downing’s influence did not end with those who read his books but often carried over to those who were reading the works of his imitators.”<sup>174</sup> This, in combination with the abundance of Downing’s imitators, makes it quite difficult to assess the influence of each individual pattern book throughout the century. There are, however, certain characteristics that allow the identification of the use of a pattern book, if not the specific one, as will be examined in depth in the rest of this chapter. Many of Downing’s followers indeed used many of the same features, plans and styles as did Downing, and many likewise promoted Gothic above all other styles. Most, taking Loudon and Downing’s cues, tended to discuss “the Gothic styles,” rather than forming a particular set of principles pertaining to one historical era. Just as with picturesque English Gothic houses, then, elements of Gothic from all periods were combined with frequency. Thus it is that houses are labeled under the stylistic heading of Gothic, that perhaps have little to no actual historical Gothic elements. Again, strict copying was forbidden, though the truthfulness and suitability of a building to its function were prized as Gothic characteristics. Gervase Wheeler wrote of Gothic that:

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<sup>173</sup> Examples of their publications include Henry W. Cleaveland, William Backus and Samuel D. Backus, *Village and farm cottages. The requirements of American village homes considered and suggested; with designs for such houses of moderate cost*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1856; Samuel Sloan, *The model architect. A series of original designs for cottages, villas, suburban residences, etc. accompanied by explanations, specifications, estimates, and elaborate details*. Philadelphia: E. S. Jones & Co., 1852; Calvert Vaux, *Villas and Cottages. A series of designs prepared for execution in the United States*. New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1857; Gervase Wheeler, *Homes for the people, in suburb and country; the villa, the mansion, and the cottage, adapted to American climate and wants. With examples showing how to alter and remodel old buildings. In a series of one hundred original designs*. New York: Charles Scribner, 1855.

<sup>174</sup> Hafertepe, p.24.



[...] the great principle upon which all were based, and in which all agreed, was reality: every form of even the simplest moulding; every line and portion of the building was contrived exactly to answer the purpose for which it was intended; and in this we will gladly follow the mighty artist-minds of old whilst we scorn the petty trickery of servilely copying a bit here and there of their immortal works, and leaving unnoticed the inborn principle which made each bit of detail beautiful.<sup>175</sup>

Attention was often likewise focused on characteristic domestic elements as well as on careful planning, in order to spread the style and proper taste. This was done in an effort to rectify the architectural ills of the past in which white-painted wooden Greek Revival houses with green shutters dominated the landscape. This was a popular classical mode that was to be found throughout the country and that was met with great disapproval by pattern book writers.<sup>176</sup>

Apparently this was an aspect of taste common not just to architectural enthusiasts, but to other arbiters of taste as well. The great Victorian writer Charles Dickens, for instance, also condemned this style of house on his 1842 visit to America. Of a residential area near Boston, he said:

The suburbs are, if possible, even more unsubstantial-looking than the city. The white wooden houses (so white that it makes one wink to look at them), with their green jalousie blinds, are so sprinkled and dropped about in all directions, without seeming to have any root at all in the ground [...].<sup>177</sup>

Though Dickens would certainly not have had much impact on the architecture of the time, his remarks do reflect that tastes had changed and that better houses needed to be built in North America. Indeed, improvement was one of the primary goals of Downing's books and it was a market that many other writers hoped to exploit in the name of good taste.

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<sup>175</sup> Wheeler, *Rural Homes*, pp. 31–32.

<sup>176</sup> Downing, *Cottage residences*, p.10.

<sup>177</sup> Charles Dickens, *American notes for general circulation*, London: Chapman and Hall, 1842, p.22.

Many architects and writers realized the potential of print media and aimed to exploit it to its fullest, targeting markets where an architect might not usually be employed, for instance in the country and in the suburbs, which were just beginning to be established at this time in America. As such, large, sprawling designs were provided in the pages of pattern books along with quaint cottages in an effort to appeal to all classes of homeowners. These were often presented under the guise of spreading good taste and morality to non-city dwellers, although for many the ultimate goal was to sell books and penetrate a new market. This is reflected by the practice that emerged after Downing's death of inserting an advertisement in the books which announced that designs from the architect were available by mail order. Following the preface of Cleaveland, Backus and Backus's *Village and farm cottages* of 1856, for instance, the architects note that they:

have prepared careful, lithographed working drawings and printed specifications for each [design in the book]. These comprise everything necessary to enable any competent workman fully to understand the plans. They will be forwarded, together with blank forms of contract, by mail, on receipt of a special application, and remittance, at the following rates: —For any one of the first ten designs, \$3. For Numbers 11, 12, 13, and 14, \$4 each. For the last ten, \$5 each.<sup>178</sup>

As such, certain details required in order to build from the book were omitted. In *Rural Homes*, Gervase Wheeler explicitly stated that “The designs that illustrate this book are not offered for actual embodiment and execution.”<sup>179</sup> It seems that good intentions alone, then, were not the only factor at stake in the creation of a pattern book.

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<sup>178</sup> Cleaveland, Backus & Backus, “Notice,” n.p.

<sup>179</sup> Wheeler, *Rural Homes*, p.19.

While most writers had slightly differing aims and perspectives, most took on the mantle of Downing and spread up-to-date house designs to all classes of citizens, even if they were beyond the reach of an architect. In fact, a lack of available architects was the contemporary situation in Canada West, and so pattern books and related theories were widely used across the province.

### **Section B: Pattern books in Canada West**

In the middle of the nineteenth century, architectural taste in Canada West was changing and the population was growing. The demand for appropriate homes and a shortage of trained architects—or, at least, architects willing to take on small commissions, particularly outside of major city centres—ensured the demand for printed books. At this time, however, there were no books written in Canada and so English and American books, such as those just discussed, exerted a large influence. The use of books from Britain was an obvious choice as Canada West was still under colonial rule and as the majority of citizens were of British descent. The use of American pattern books was primarily due to the fact that the United States was close to Canada West in terms of proximity as well as economics and trade. Beyond this, the climate in Canada West is similar to that of the northern United States and thus the settings recommended in pattern books for northern houses in the United States were applicable. This was the closest that citizens of Canada West could get to specific architectural advice for their climate. The Canadian reliance on American sources may seem contentious given American–English relations and that citizens of Canada West were, in fact, British, but it is important to remember that the greatest purveyor of American pattern books, Andrew Jackson Downing copied his formula and ideas directly from

British sources, such as John Claudius Loudon's *Encyclopedia of cottage, farm and villa architecture* of 1833. As such, many of Downing's theories and designs reflect those as found applied to picturesque houses in Britain. In fact, a contemporary pattern book author and architect, Samuel Sloan (1815–84), confirms the exchange of ideas overseas and the use of British ideals in the United States. In 1852 he wrote that, "Throughout England and America, all kinds of style in their different adaptations are used, and indeed at the present day there are few countries in which a peculiar national style is exclusively adopted."<sup>180</sup> Despite the fact that many at the time wished for a wholly national architecture, this was certainly not a reality.

Given the continuity of ideas from England to North America, it is quite difficult to trace the first definitive instance of the use of pattern books in the province of Canada. It is clear, however, that houses using pattern books begin to appear in British North America at some point in the 1840s, as this is when fashionable and architecturally up-to-date houses began to appear outside of major city centres, seemingly without the aid of architects.<sup>181</sup> This timeframe is confirmed by the fact that it is known that bookstores in Canada West did indeed sell pattern books at this time, from both England and the United States. One British example is *Designs for Cottage and Villa Architecture* of 1839 by S.H. Brooks which was available for sale in Toronto in 1848.<sup>182</sup> Pattern books are also known to have been part of architectural libraries at the time; for instance, the

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<sup>180</sup> Samuel Sloan, *The model architect*, vol. I, Philadelphia: E.S. Jones & Co., 1852, p.12.

<sup>181</sup> Although houses making use of books, such as Asher Benjamin's or Minard Lafever's, had appeared prior to this, for instance the Bluestone House in Port Hope of 1834, these were standard classical designs that seemed to make use of books for details only. Houses of this classical nature had been built in the province since the turn of the century and so were a common sight in most cities and towns. In the 1840s, however, a greater eclecticism was ushered in and houses not making use of the classical tradition (by now deeply rooted in the province) began to appear in no particular, or ordered fashion.

<sup>182</sup> Glen McArthur and Annie Szamosi, *William Thomas, architect, 1799–1860*, Ottawa: Archives of Canadian Art, 1996, p.63.

Toronto architect William Storm (1826–92) owned some British books from earlier in the century, including Loudon’s *Encyclopedia*, as well as numerous American publications, such as Downing’s *The architecture of country houses* of 1850, David Henry Arnot’s *Gothic architecture applied to modern residences* of 1850 and Charles P. Dwyer’s *The economic cottage builder* of 1856.<sup>183</sup> Books were affordable and widely circulated and so ideas could be easily transported across such a large geographical span as that of Canada West.

There are also other indications as to the use of pattern books, particularly if there are any documents pertaining to a house. One of the key signals when identifying pattern–book houses is the absence of an architect. In Canada West and in British North America as a whole, as the architectural profession was beginning to be established, the use of an architect was a proud achievement. It would have been prestigious for a patron to hire an architect and to flaunt him, just as it would have been advantageous for an architect to promote himself through his latest work. The absence of an architect in any of the documentation surrounding a house, then, either means that the house was simply poorly documented, or perhaps more likely, that it was a builder who constructed the house. While the distinction between builder and architect was not always clear early in the century, it was becoming increasingly so throughout the period.<sup>184</sup> A division can be made between the two professions, and though there could indeed be much overlap, in general, an architect could be said to supply ideas and designs while a builder could be said to be a craftsman. Though not yet a professionalized career with any sort of governing body,

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<sup>183</sup> Marianna May Richardson, *Ontario Association of Architects: centennial collection*, Toronto: Ontario Association of Architects, 1990, pp.9, 20.

<sup>184</sup> A thorough discussion of the professionalization of the architect in Upper Canada and Canada West is provided by Sharon Vattay’s unpublished PhD thesis titled *Defining “Architect” in nineteenth-century Toronto: the practices of John George Howard and Thomas Young*, completed at the University of Toronto in 2001.

architecture was a career that required a certain degree of (usually lengthy) training and did hold a certain value in society. William Henry Smith's business directory for Canada West in 1851, for instance, lists architects under the heading of professional men.<sup>185</sup> Beyond this, architects who were trained in England, such as John George Howard (1803–90) or William Thomas (1799–1860), ensured their status as prominent, well-known citizens by becoming active in the arts and in the community in general, while builders and other tradesmen were generally not recognized in the same way. So while architects working in the province were not professionalized until 1890 (with the formation of the Ontario Association of Architects),<sup>186</sup> at mid-century, the few who were working in the province were known and maintained a fairly illustrious reputation. Despite this, however, even England, nearing the nineteenth century “the high-sounding title ‘architect’ was adopted by anyone who could get away with it. Architects were recruited from tradesmen, from surveyors, and from the gentry.”<sup>187</sup> This was equally true of Canada West where the profession was essentially lawless until the late nineteenth century. Even so, if a so-called architect was responsible for only one house or building in his career, it can be reasonably assumed that he was simply a layman with high-minded intentions.

Again, it is worth noting that many houses with commonalities in plan and in ornament began to spring up in geographically diverse locations across Canada West and, importantly, most of these were located outside of the reach of city-dwelling architects. Although many of these houses

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<sup>185</sup> W.H. Smith, “Business directory—Canada West,” *Canada: past, present and future*, Vols.1 & 2, Toronto: Maclear, 1851.

<sup>186</sup> Sharon Vattay, *Defining “Architect” in nineteenth-century Toronto: the practices of John George Howard and Thomas Young*, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 2001.

<sup>187</sup> John Summerson, *Georgian London*, 3rd ed., Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1978, p.47.

retained the use of the principles of the picturesque, they tended to represent more convincing applications of the Gothic style than that of their earlier counterparts in the province as designed by John George Howard, for instance (see Chapter 1). While the Gothic details were certainly not historically derived, they were rather less garish than the mini–castles of the early nineteenth century, such as Holland House of Toronto of the early 1830s. As such, the simultaneous appearance of these new houses, sharing common features across a wide span of land, signal a common source, thereby suggesting the likelihood of the spread of pattern books.

### **An early case study**

An early example of the probable use of pattern books is Pinehurst of 1846 in Port Hope (Figure 2.1). The town of Port Hope marks a prime location for the flourishing of pattern books as it is positioned midway between the metropolises of Toronto and Kingston on the northern shore of Lake Ontario. Though it began to grow at a steady rate in the mid–nineteenth century as it developed into an active shipping port connected to two railway lines, by 1856, the population of the town was still only 4,000 people.<sup>188</sup> Of this population, it is known that there were no architects. Despite the patron Nesbit Kirchoffer’s social standing as a prominent lawyer with affiliations in the burgeoning railway system, there appears to have been no architect attached to the building of this house. Even for a fairly large house such as Pinehurst, Port Hope was far enough away from Toronto and Kingston (the only cities with any resident architects at the time) that the commission would not have been worth an architect’s time and travel. As such, it is

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<sup>188</sup> Ian Montagnes, *Port Hope: a history*, Port Hope: Ganaraska Press, 2007, p.63.

instructive to look at the architectural literature that was circulating at the time in order to look for similarities in design.

Though it may not have come directly from one specific pattern book, Pinehurst, with its stately Tudor appearance, makes use of a variety of ideas that were circulating in books at the time with regard to Gothic housing. To take two examples from widely read books, the house closely resembles Downing's design for "A Cottage in the Pointed or Tudor Style"<sup>189</sup> from *Cottage Residences* of 1842 (Figure 2.2) as well as Design XXXI by Downing's mentor Loudon from his *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture* of 1833 (Figure 2.3).<sup>190</sup> By this time, each of these books had been re-released in new editions with the same design included in each.<sup>191</sup> This shows that the style as employed at Pinehurst was fashionable given that similar examples were included and reprinted in two of the most popular books of the period. While the elevations of each Tudor design share common traits and massing, the plan of Pinehurst more closely resembles Loudon's design than it does Downing's. The main difference, in terms of the plan, is the division of the back chambers in Loudon's design compared to the larger open chambers in Pinehurst. It would seem that a few other factors were borrowed from Loudon's design, including the placement of the side finials (now missing on Pinehurst) and its situation on a small hill. Loudon makes a variety of recommendations for the placement of a home on its chosen

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<sup>189</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing, *Cottage residences or a series of designs for rural cottages and cottage villas and their gardens and grounds. Adapted to North America*, New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1842, p.50.

<sup>190</sup> John Claudius Loudon, *Encyclopedia of cottage, farm and villa architecture*, London: London: Longman, Rees and Co., 1833, p.110.

<sup>191</sup> Loudon's *Encyclopedia* had been through four editions by this time (1833, 1839, 1842 and 1846) and Downing's *Cottage residences* had been through three (1842, 1844 and 1847).



property and recommends an elevated situation.<sup>192</sup> He writes that a house is desirable if built on a rise as “it gives a command of prospect, without which a villa may be beautiful, picturesque, or romantic; but it never can be dignified or grand, and scarcely even elegant or graceful.”<sup>193</sup> This description certainly applies to what is supposed to read as a stately Tudor manor house.

While the house’s location may speak to romantic and picturesque notions, its layout is decidedly more conservative. Pinehurst’s exterior layout displays symmetry and regularity as can be seen by the regular placement of the windows and the overall rectangular plan. Although many architects and writers at the time claimed that a Gothic home should not be contained within a pre-determined rectangular form,<sup>194</sup> Pinehurst nonetheless succeeds in achieving a Gothic appearance while maintaining a relatively classical symmetry. The square plan, however, is roughly in keeping with Loudon and Downing’s recommendations for a refined Tudor house, which, in principle, were rather more regular than other types of Gothic houses. In addition, although they each typically held a preference for a picturesque plan, both Loudon and Downing admitted that this was not always a feasible possibility:

As [...] a square or parallelogram is the most economical form in which a house can be built, and as a small house does not easily permit irregularity, we have adopted it in designing the greater number of cottages which follow, but we have endeavored to raise them above mere uniformity, by adding such characteristic ornaments as to give also some *variety* to the composition.”<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Loudon, p.764.

<sup>193</sup> Loudon, p.764.

<sup>194</sup> Arnot, pp.1–2; “Parsonage Houses,” *The Ecclesiologist*, Nos. XXIII, XXIV, June 1843, pp.146–47.

<sup>195</sup> Downing, *Cottage residences*, p.18.

As such, many designs found within the pages of pattern books, as well as houses as built, maintain a symmetrical or, at least, a highly compact plan with added Gothic ornament, such as the brick buttresses at each corner of the house (Figure 2.4). Beyond this, the appearance and plan are not unlike many classical homes that were built not too long before this one in Canada West and even in the town of Port Hope itself; for instance the Bluestone House of 1834 which is indeed nearby in town (Figure 2.5). This similarity in planning, however, does not negate the use of pattern books at Pinehurst; rather, it enhances its likelihood as the builders and patron were able to take advantage of a familiar and comfortable form and update it through the use of a similarly arranged, fashionable design in a pattern book.

Although Tudor Gothic features were applied to a relatively simple frame, Pinehurst was much different than the earlier Gothic homes built in in the province. By mid century, experiments—such as Holland House in Toronto of the 1830s (Figure 1.20)—were considered to have been completed at a time when:

[...] grotesque exhibitions of folly were all the rage [...]. Circular towers, octagonal rooms, battlemented parapets, and all the finery of the very worst styles of pseudo–middle–age architecture, have freely been lavished upon the country dwellings of a modern [...] family—so freely indeed, as almost to disgust a sensible man with any other style of building than the old–fashioned square box of his forefathers.<sup>196</sup>

While Pinehurst certainly resembles “the old-fashioned square box” in plan, its Gothic details are carefully incorporated to create a Tudor Gothic manor that was drastically different from the somewhat whimsical castellated Gothic as applied at Holland House. Pinehurst displays a

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<sup>196</sup> Gervase Wheeler, *Homes for the people, in suburb and country; the villa, the mansion, and the cottage, adapted to American climate and wants*, New York: C. Scribner, 1855, p. 282.

spectrum of influences that might have been exerted over it which is common to many houses that were likely derived from pattern books.

### **Hints suggesting the use of pattern books**

Popular styles and notions of the picturesque applied to a compact plan are certainly indications of the use of a book, but there are a number of other hints as well. One such clue is the mixing of different architectural styles. Rock Castle at Hamilton of 1848 (Figure 2.6), for instance, which is situated on the Niagara Escarpment, though predominantly Gothic in character, makes use of a seemingly incompatible stylistic element which signals the use of different styles. Brackets, which appear at odds with the rest of the house, appeared in many pattern books, often under the rubric of Italianate or Swiss designs, for instance in Downing's Design VI "An irregular villa in the Italian style, bracketed," from *Cottage residences*.<sup>197</sup> Their use on an otherwise Gothic house such as this indicates that the owner or the builder were likely looking to books for ideas where Gothic, Italianate and Swiss designs would have been found side-by-side. The brackets stand as a reminder of the potential influence of pattern books, particularly as the owner and builder (the same person in this case, Alexander Carpenter) was not, in fact, an architect by profession.<sup>198</sup>

Just as with Pinehurst, Rock Castle is regular in plan with a projecting porch, albeit with the addition of a steeply pitched roof. Plans of this type were popular in the province and may, in fact, have no specific source, despite the fact that simple rectangular plans with pitched roofs

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<sup>197</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing, "Design VI, An irregular villa in the Italian style, bracketed," *Cottage Residences*, p. 114.

<sup>198</sup> Carpenter was in the business of stoves and, later, iron. Frederick H. Armstrong, "Edward Gurney," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol.11, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, Accessed June 24, 2014 [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/gurney\\_edward\\_11E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/gurney_edward_11E.html).

were indeed provided in the pages of pattern books. Instead, it is possible that an arrangement such as this derived from simple, practical solutions to building; houses arranged as such were easier to build, it was easier to heat a compactly arranged house, and a pitched roof is better for throwing off snow and rain in this particular climate. Even if less fashionable and less picturesque than an asymmetrical house, a number of writers discussed the superiority of a square plan. In the preface to *Hints on Dwellings* of 1800, D. Laing wrote:

the greater are its conveniences and the cost proportionably less [*sic*]. A square, equal in superficial extent to a parallelogram, requires less external walling, and, consequently, less internal finishing. By compactness, convenience is produced, and expense is saved: when the apartments are scattered and lie wide from each other, with long passages between, much unpleasantness must be experienced; and a much larger expense must be incurred from covering a larger space of ground than is absolutely necessary.<sup>199</sup>

It is worth noting that this passage was quoted in Loudon's 1833 *Encyclopedia* and all of its subsequent editions.<sup>200</sup> This is not surprising given that Loudon's purview was practicality and accessibility to all people. On the matter of roofing, it was not simply pattern-book writers who pushed for the superiority of pitched roofs over flat roofs, both for practicality and for the sake of a Gothic aesthetic. In his influential treatise of 1841, *The true principles of Pointed or Christian architecture*, Augustus Welby Pugin made an argument for steeply pitched roofs for stylistic as well as practical reasons<sup>201</sup> which was echoed in an 1853 article in the *Anglo-American magazine*,<sup>202</sup> printed in Toronto, by the architect William Hay (1818–88) who had just immigrated to Canada West.

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<sup>199</sup> D. Laing, *Hints for Dwellings: Consisting of Original Designs for Cottages, Farm-houses, Villas &c. Plain and Ornamental; with Plans to Each: .... Including Some Designs for Town-houses*, London: J. Taylor, 1801.

<sup>200</sup> Loudon, p.53.

<sup>201</sup> Augustus Welby Pugin, *The true principles of pointed or Christian architecture*, London: J. Weale, 1841, p.10.

<sup>202</sup> William Hay, "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada," *The Anglo-American Magazine*, vol.2, 1853, p.253.

As such, these ideas were widely spread and so it is not surprising that many houses combining these features are to be found throughout Canada West. A simple version can be seen in Goderich with the Henry Horton Cottage of c.1860 (Figure 2.7) which, like Rock Castle, makes use of a blend of styles. The roof is steeply pitched with bargeboard and a pointed window in the central gable, all of which indicate the Gothic style, but the house also makes use of a round-headed entrance as well as prominently articulated quoins, both of which are quintessentially classical features. A similar plan and mixing of styles also appear at Chiefswood in Brantford of 1853–56 (Figure 2.8). This house appears as primarily Italianate due to its symmetrical, rectangular plan with square-headed windows, brackets and low pitch of the roof. The only features that allow this to be considered in a Gothic Revival context are the ogee arches framing the main entrance and the window above it. Both of these houses display a disregard for the use of any consistent or historically accurate style and indicate that the patrons were probably looking to a variety of designs and selecting their favourite features to include in their ideal homes. Despite having roughly the same layout as Rock Castle, each house, through its incongruous blend of styles, demonstrates that some homes in the province are easy to identify as having been derived from a pattern book. These examples also serve to highlight the various ways in which the Gothic style might be appropriated and understood (or misunderstood) from a pattern book and the sliding scale by which a house might be included under the umbrella of the Gothic style. Despite the prevalence of theories about the appropriateness of certain styles for certain contexts and patrons, in reality, this advice was not always followed strictly. As a result, there are numerous hybrids in the manner of Rock Castle, Henry Horton Cottage and Chiefswood that speak to the owner's

specific tastes and desires. While this combining of elements is common of pattern–book–inspired houses, it makes a specific source difficult to pinpoint.<sup>203</sup>

### **Domestic features: verandas, chimneys and bay windows**

Rock Castle, Henry Horton Cottage and Chiefswood point to the use of multiple printed sources and lead to an important investigation of particular motifs as promoted by pattern books. In the absence of thorough documentation, an examination of the fabric of a building and its features can provide clues as to the possible inspirations for a house, though they are not always as blatant as the blending of a variety of stylistic motifs as just examined. The designs provided for houses in pattern books are often perceived of as quaint, making use of features that highlighted a house’s domestic function. These ideas were expounded by Loudon—“Every building should appear to be what it is, and every part of an edifice ought to indicate externally its particular use,”<sup>204</sup>—and followed closely by Downing who likewise referred to the “expression of purpose” of certain features.<sup>205</sup> Essentially, a house was to look like a house, not a castle, a church or a temple. As such, features that were exclusive to houses were necessary to set it apart from any other building type and to express a house’s function. On this subject, in *Cottage residences*, Downing declared that:

The prominent features conveying expression of purpose in dwelling–houses, are the chimneys, the windows, and the porch, veranda, or piazza; and for this reason, whenever

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<sup>203</sup> Similar hybrid houses can be found in Port Hope (Richard Trick House and Chrysler Cottage) and are discussed and illustrated in the rural and vernacular chapter.

<sup>204</sup> Loudon, p.1112.

<sup>205</sup> Loudon, p.1112; Downing, *Cottage residences*, p.12.

it is desired to raise the character of a cottage or villa above mediocrity, attention should first be bestowed on those portions of the building.<sup>206</sup>

Continuing this line of thinking, in his next book, *The architecture of country houses*, he said that:

Every feature [...] which denotes domestic life becomes a valuable truth in Domestic Architecture. Windows, doors, and chimneys, are the first of these truths, though they are not the highest, as churches, factories, and out-buildings also have windows, doors, and chimneys [...] Verandas, piazzas, bay-windows, balconies, etc., are the most valuable truths in Domestic Architecture; they express domestic habitation more strongly because they are chiefly confined to our own dwellings.<sup>207</sup>

Prominent verandas, chimneys, and bay windows, therefore, provided a home with a superior architectural quality and clearly separated a house in terms of function from any other building type, as none of these features was required for churches or civic buildings. As such, with these prominent domestic features in place, an overall Gothic style could be suggested through the simple and subtle use of one or two traditional Gothic details, rather than reverting to the overt displays that were common currency in the picturesque Gothic of earlier in the century. In fact, Loudon suggested that “The more obvious forms of Gothic architecture are so universally known in this country, that the slightest line in a building which has an allusion to them, operates upon the imagination and at once gives the idea of style.”<sup>208</sup> Those who wished to build Gothic houses in Canada West began to heed the advice of Loudon and Downing, making use of the requisite domestic features accompanied by carefully orchestrated Gothic elements. These elements and their use on houses as built will be examined here individually.

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<sup>206</sup> Downing, *Cottage residences*, p.12.

<sup>207</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing, *The architecture of country houses including designs for cottages, and farm-houses, and villas, with remarks on interiors, furniture, and the best modes of warming and ventilating*, New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1850, p.32.

<sup>208</sup> Loudon, p.102.

## Verandas

Verandas denoted perhaps the most notable change from earlier houses in British North America generally and became a regular feature for houses in the province. This is a feature that became so prevalent in North America that, writing in 1851, architect Gervase Wheeler (English-trained and living in the United States), claimed: “Were I asked what should be the feature most prominent in an American villa, I would say ‘the veranda,’ [...]”<sup>209</sup> Their abundant use in Canada West, then, indicates the influence of American architectural ideas rather than specifically British ones. Although Loudon mentions the necessity of a veranda, he groups it in with porches and porticoes. As such, the type as advocated by Loudon is rather different than the type of porch as seen on North American houses, which is typically much larger than its British counterparts. The McKinley House in Perth of 1849 (Figure 2.9) provides an excellent early example of the use of a large, wrapping veranda on a Gothic house. While the house does not resemble any historical variant on the Gothic style, the style is suggested by the pointed window in the central gable as well as through the use of ornate woodwork in the balcony supports as well as in the gable bargeboard and finial. Woodwork of this type—specifically bargeboard and finials—became iconic of Gothic Revival houses in the mid-nineteenth century, and few Gothic houses were without it. Verandas were not exclusive to Gothic houses (they featured prominently on Italianate houses too) but as they were most often constructed of wood, this was an area that allowed for greater articulation with regard to the style selected. The additional dimension of the application of traditional Gothic motifs can be seen at the McKinley House in the pointed arches employed at either end of the veranda and in the central arch framing the door. Overall, then, despite its

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<sup>209</sup> Gervase Wheeler, *Rural homes; or sketches of houses suited to American country life, with original plans, designs, &c.*, New York: Charles Scribner, 1851, p.110.



relative simplicity, the house displays a distinct Gothic style and projects an air of domestic comfort wholly in keeping with the architectural literature circulating at the time. On the topic of verandas, Downing remarked that:

no dwelling–house can be considered complete without one or more of them. [...] In all countries like ours, where there are hot summers, a veranda, piazza, or colonnade is a necessary and delightful appendage to a dwelling–house, and in fact during a considerable part of the year frequently becomes the lounging apartment of the family. Hence a broad shady veranda suggests ideas of comfort, and is highly expressive of purpose.<sup>210</sup>

As such, many Gothic houses began to adopt a veranda, despite the fact that it was not a traditional Gothic detail. It was, however, a necessary feature for the sake of comfort and convenience in the context of nineteenth–century North America, and so they were made to fit the style. For many citizens wishing to build a house, historical accuracy was not a concern and a house with a veranda, if it included even the subtlest of Gothic features, would indeed have been read as completely Gothic in execution. A few other examples of prominent verandas include the Voelker House in Waterloo of 1849; Thornwood in London of 1852–56; and Highfield in Hamilton of 1858 (Figure 2.10).

## **Chimneys**

Prominent chimneys may seem like an odd feature to discuss at length, but, in fact, writers at the time placed enormous emphasis on them as defining characteristics of a house. Loudon remarked that they were practical necessities for houses in cold climates<sup>211</sup> while Downing was insistent on their meanings: “The chimney–tops, in all countries where fires are used, are decidedly

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<sup>210</sup> Downing, *Cottage residences*, p.13.

<sup>211</sup> Loudon, pp.1112–1113.

expressive of purpose, as they are associated with all our ideas of warmth, the cheerful fireside, and the social winter circle.”<sup>212</sup> These notions were particularly relevant to Gothic houses as prominent chimneys paired well with the requisite steeply pitched roof to create a picturesque ensemble. Fairmont in Port Hope of 1858 (Figure 2.11), for instance, makes use of a large, prominent cluster of chimneys which, along with the gables and finials, assists in the creation of a varied and interesting skyline. Incidentally, both of these elements assist in guiding the eye upward, creating a vertical effect that was often described as characteristic of Gothic architecture. Just as with several other examples previously examined, Fairmont also indicates the use of pattern books through the use of an incongruous stylistic element; the awning above the balcony (Figure 2.12) is strikingly similar to a design for a balcony window in Downing’s *The architecture of country houses* for “A Villa in the Italian Style” (Figure 2.13), as well as a balcony window provided in Design VI in Samuel Sloan’s *The model architect* (Figure 2.14).<sup>213</sup> This demonstrates that even convincingly executed Gothic houses, such as Fairmont, can provide telltale clues as to their origins.

Other houses made use of a number of chimneys in order to create a varied skyline, such as Auchmar in Hamilton of 1855 (Figure 2.15). This home features numerous clusters of chimneys, and while they are simply articulated, they combine with the five gables, numerous dormers, and (now missing) finials to create a dynamic composition, as can be more clearly observed in a historical photograph (Figure 2.16). Beyond the picturesque charm to which these chimneys

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<sup>212</sup> Downing, *Cottage residences*, p.12.

<sup>213</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.317; Samuel Sloan, *The model architect*, vol. I, Philadelphia: E.S. Jones & Co., 1852, Design VI.

contribute, there is no mistaking that the interior of this house would have been quite comfortable in the winter months with so many roaring fires. Auchmar also bears a resemblance, though no direct similarity, to a number of low-lying, multi-gable designs procured in various pattern books, such as Design VIII for almshouses in T. F. Hunt's *Designs for parsonage houses, alms houses, etc. etc. with examples of gables, and other curious remains of Old English Architecture* of 1841. The use of a number of gables and of modeled chimneys were seen at the time to be quintessential characteristics of the Old English style. Kilton Cottage in Paris of 1857 (Figure 2.17) likewise makes use of a varied roofline and prominent chimneys, which appears similar in execution to a "Cottage for a country clergyman,"<sup>214</sup> in Downing's *Cottage residences* (Figure 2.18). The similarity between Auchmar, Kilton Cottage and the printed sources confirms that this desired Gothic effect did indeed appear in print and that such arrangements in Canada West were no accident.

### **Bay windows**

Both Auchmar and Kilton Cottage also make use of another essential domestic feature in Loudon and Downing's views; the bay window. These polygonal windows had been part of the vocabulary of domestic architecture in Britain since the Middle Ages, "till the great increase of window-duty during the war with Bonaparte, rendered bay windows with three lights too expensive for the middle classes, not to speak of the lower."<sup>215</sup> Their reappearance in the early nineteenth century coincided with the rise in popularity of Gothic Revival for houses, and their prominent use in North America was due, in large part, to their widespread promotion in books

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<sup>214</sup> Downing, *Cottage residences*, p.164.

<sup>215</sup> Loudon, p.180.

such as Loudon and Downing's. Their sudden reemergence is perhaps not surprising given that a bay window worked well with most plans—even simple rectangular plans—to provide visual interest to both the interior and the exterior. Not only was this crucial to picturesque tenets, but because they let in more light to a house than a flat wall with a window, they too were promoted as a feature that reflected a certain degree of domestic comfort. Loudon proclaimed that:

Bay windows are great additions to the cheerfulness of rooms when they have lights on three sides [...]. In point of expression, bay windows of three lights convey ideas of ancient times [...].<sup>216</sup>

Although, in many cases, a bay window might only have introduced a slight change from the classical rectangular plan, it was one that held deliberate connotations of comfort while simultaneously conjuring notions of ancient Britain.

### **Other characteristic features**

Several other characteristics were affiliated with pattern-book houses, though some were more widely used than others. Bargeboards and finials, for instance, were nearly ubiquitous as they paired well with the requisite steeply pitched roof of a Gothic dwelling. They have already been seen in a number of houses in this chapter, but several more can be identified in geographically diverse areas of the province that make prominent use of one or both, such as McIntosh Castle, Kingston of 1852 (Figure 2.19); Geary House, Goderich of c.1863 (Figure 2.20); Raleigh House, London of c.1866; Henry Calcutt House, Peterborough of 1866 (Figure 2.21); and the Silver Springs Farm House, Ottawa of 1867. There was no set pattern for the design of these wooden features, but each pattern book provided numerous designs and tips for their execution.

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<sup>216</sup> Loudon, p.180.

Towers were a less widely used feature, but were sometimes applied to larger Gothic villas in order to make a grand statement. They were often associated with Italianate houses and so are not emblematic of the style in the same way as bargeboard, for instance. The Fearman House (also known as Ivy Lodge) in Hamilton of 1863 (Figure 2.22) makes use of a prominent central tower in addition to many of the details already discussed, such as bargeboard, bay windows, finials, gables and pointed windows, all of which help to distinguish it from an Italianate application of a tower. A tower can also be seen at Penryn Park of 1859 (Figure 2.23) and at Terralta of 1874 (Figure 2.24) both in Port Hope, and lends a stately appearance to each. Terralta, in particular, helps to display the continuity of the use of pattern book motifs well into the late nineteenth century.

Perhaps more subtly, the use of board-and-batten construction was likewise linked to the use pattern books. This was a fairly uncommon mode of construction for the province and so its use is indicative of the likely inspiration for a house. This type of construction, in which wooden boards are arranged vertically with thin strips of wood covering the joints, was given high praise by Downing who believed it to be the most truthful method of wooden construction and, importantly, one that was picturesque.<sup>217</sup> This technique was also featured in print by other pattern-book writers; Wheeler, for instance, also used this construction in a design for a Cottage Ornée in his *Homes for the People* of 1855 (Figure 2.25).<sup>218</sup> Examples to be found in Canada West include the Bryning Manse in the County of Brant of c.1840 (Figures 2.26 and 2.27); the

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<sup>217</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, pp.51–52.

<sup>218</sup> Wheeler, p.289.

Doctor's House, Wilmot of 1850; the Eckhardt–McKay House, Unionville of c.1845–56; and The Cone, Port Hope of 1858 (Figure 2.28).

While many houses in the province make use of a handful of quintessential pattern book features, some make use a majority of the features that have been discussed. Earnescliffe in Ottawa of 1856–57 (Figure 2.29) and Hillary House in Aurora of 1861–62 (Figure 2.30), for instance, appear as archetypal Victorian Gothic homes precisely because they employ all of the requisite pattern–book Gothic features. When examining Hillary House, for instance, each detail appears quaint and comfortable; with its prominent chimneys, it speaks of warm nights by the fire and with its large, wrapping veranda, it speaks of hot summer nights on the porch. It is precisely these types of associations that Downing wished to promote in his writings. Not only can it be classified as a comfortable house through its use of the wrap–around veranda and prominent chimneys, but it also qualifies as Gothic through its use of many of the pattern–book Gothic features that are to be expected, such as the central pointed window, steeply pitched roof and Gothic–inspired woodwork, such as bargeboard, finials, and pointed elements and trefoils in the veranda supports and on the balcony. In short, this house, while it may not have come directly from a single design in a pattern book, does make careful use of the ideas that were circulating in print at the time in order to create a true North American variant on the Gothic style.

### **Plucked from the pages of pattern books**

While the previous examples made use of certain pattern–book features and of their general philosophies, there are numerous instances that follow specific pattern–book designs quite

closely. Again, just as with the previous examples, these too were built at a remove from major city centres and have no known architects. Beyond successfully incorporating the elements as previously discussed, however, the following examples are so distinct in their character and execution that it is clear as to which particular books and designs were consulted. Indeed, in some cases, the houses appear to have leapt directly from the pages of a pattern book.

The Cone of 1858 in Port Hope, for instance, makes an absolutely unmistakable use of Downing's *The architecture of country houses* of 1850 (Figure 2.31). The house bears a striking resemblance to the design in the book (provided by architect Gervase Wheeler) for "A plain Timber Cottage-Villa," not just in elevation, but in terms of the plan, the materials used and the construction as well (Figure 2.32). The home features twin steeply pitched gables, with board-and-batten construction and a few simple Gothic details, such as the pointed window in the dormer, which is subdivided by wooden tracery and topped by a wooden finial. The tracery takes the form of trefoil-headed lancets with a quatrefoil above. There are also trefoil details in the attic windows. Between the two gables is the front entrance, which consists of a low porch covered by a sloping roof. The Cone makes use of the truthful exposure of wood, a point that Downing—as well as many other writers and theorists—endorsed whole-heartedly.<sup>219</sup> This perfectly represents the pattern-book version of the Gothic style in that it communicates the style through the sparing use of decorative elements and through a close adherence to the principles of domestic comfort. Since Downing did not like direct imitations of a past style, this house complies with his interpretation of what Gothic should be in the nineteenth century as it makes

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<sup>219</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, pp. 30–31, 35–36; Augustus Welby Pugin, *The true principles of pointed or Christian architecture*, London: J. Weale, 1841, p.30.

use of only these few poignant Gothic details. As Wheeler said of this design: “Its character is given by simplicity and fitness of construction, and no attempt is made with inch board finery, to dress up and *make* Gothic what would otherwise appear a very plain house.”<sup>220</sup> Though several minute details were changed from the book to the execution of Cone itself, they are in line with Wheeler’s recommendations for a subtly Gothic house. While the building reached its completed state in phases,<sup>221</sup> it is clear that the entire design from Downing’s book was planned from the outset. In terms of the layout, the house as built and the plans from the book are essentially the same: the front hall and the stairway are placed similarly and the arrangement of the rooms is quite close (Figure 2.33). Though there is one great room to the left of the hallway in the Cone, while Wheeler’s plan has two, this is written with regard to the plan in the book:

The exigencies of the proprietor [of the design] required the two rooms on the left of the hall to be divided by sliding doors; otherwise the writer wished to have had them as one large room.<sup>222</sup>

It is clear that the original builder—as well as the one who made the subsequent additions<sup>223</sup>—was truly paying close attention to the recommendations in the book. Even the dimensions of the rooms are remarkably similar to the plan for the “Timber Cottage-Villa”; the scale differs by about a foot in the most extreme cases.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Wheeler in Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, pp.300–301.

<sup>221</sup> Supposedly only the right (west) wing was originally built, with the matching side being built only in the 1870s. Tom Cruickshank, *Port Hope: a treasury of early homes*, Port Hope: Bluestone House, 1987, p.58.

<sup>222</sup> Wheeler in Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.303.

<sup>223</sup> Cruickshank, p.58.

<sup>224</sup> The house was for sale in the first decade of the 2000s and so a ground plan with measurements was available on the realtor’s website.



The original owner, Thomas Curtis Clarke, moved to Port Hope to oversee the construction of the railway connecting Port Hope with its northern neighbours Lindsay and Beaverton.<sup>225</sup> He was an engineer and a contractor, receiving the commission in 1859 to contract the East and West Block for the Parliament buildings in Ottawa with his partnership of Jones, Haycock and Clarke, who were also from Port Hope.<sup>226</sup> In 1855, he was in charge of overseeing the development of Port Hope harbour, which is rumoured to be the reason that he chose the Cone's location; the home backs on to a ravine, from which the harbour is visible. Clarke himself would have had ready access to Downing's books as he had previously worked in the United States. Port Hope also had ready access to New York State through shipping<sup>227</sup> and through ties with a number of prominent expatriate American citizens.<sup>228</sup> Complementing the wealth of visual evidence, then, is a strong likelihood of Clarke having purchased—or at least having access to—Downing's book.

As a testament to the influence of this design, and of pattern books in general, it is worth noting that variants of this type of double-gable Gothic house appeared across the province through to the late-nineteenth century. While these houses will not be discussed in detail, their mere existence reinforces and strengthens the case for the broad use of pattern books in the Canadian context. The William J. Scott House of 1858 in the township of Wilmot, for instance, provides a stone example, as does the rectory for All Saints Anglican Church in Collingwood of 1877. Two other nearly exact examples are Claverleigh in Creemore of about 1870 (Figure 2.34) and the

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<sup>225</sup> Montagnes, p.53.

<sup>226</sup> Mark Bourrie, *Canada's Parliament Buildings*, Toronto: Hounslow Press, 1996, p.21; Carolyn A. Young, *The glory of Ottawa: Canada's first parliament buildings*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995, p. 82.

<sup>227</sup> Montagnes, p.45.

<sup>228</sup> Montagnes, p.16.

McClure House of about 1871 in Mississauga. There is also a double cottage in Whitby of 1877 and an undated version at 193 Queen Street in Milton that are similar in their massing to Downing's design but do not make use of any Gothic features (Figures 2.35 and 2.36). *The architecture of country houses*, in which the 'Timber Cottage-Villa' design appears, was reprinted nine times and sold "well over sixteen thousand copies before the end of the Civil War [1865]" alone.<sup>229</sup> Beyond this, it is known that bookstores in the province advertised when they received a new shipment of Downing's books, which implies that there was a demand for them.<sup>230</sup> The design for the 'Timber Cottage-Villa' with its distinctive twin gables is easily the most recognizable of pattern-book designs and can be found all over British North America throughout the century, speaking to the successful formula and to the longevity of pattern books, and to that of Downing's books in particular.

Another house that appears to be extracted nearly directly from pattern-book designs is Penryn Park in Port Hope of 1859 (Figure 2.37). This home was built by Edward Haycock, the one-time partner of Clarke of The Cone, for Arthur Williams, a politician and a military man, who was building the home for his new wife.<sup>231</sup> Just as Clarke would have had access to Downing's books, so too would Haycock as he worked with Clarke at the time that the home was built. Both the patron and the builder would have also been familiar with the Cone—and as an extension,

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<sup>229</sup> J. Stewart Johnson, "Introduction to the Dover edition," in Andrew Jackson Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969, p.vii.

<sup>230</sup> Harold Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture*, vol. 2, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994, p.604. Kalman also notes that "Bookstores in Kingston offered six different titles by Downing between 1849 and 1853."

<sup>231</sup> Cruickshank, p.28.

Downing's theories—as it had recently been built close to the site of Penryn Park (less than one kilometre away).

The front entrance consists of a tower flanked by a steeply-pitched gable to its right side as well as additional bays on either side of the tower and the gable. Finials extend up from the bargeboard of the gables as well as from the peak of each of the dormer windows. The windows on the main body of the house are varied, with pointed windows with tracery on the tower and Elizabethan or Tudor square-headed windows with hood moulds throughout the rest.

In elevation, this house closely resembles the design for “A Lake or River Villa for a Picturesque Site” from Downing's *The architecture of country houses* of 1850 (Figure 2.38). About the style of this design, Downing says that it is for a person of “common sense but [also of] imagination.<sup>232</sup> Perhaps this appealed to Williams and his wife, or perhaps it was the site that held the most appeal. With regard to location, Downing's design is, as its title suggests, indeed near a lake; Penryn Park is bordered to the south, below a gently sloping hill, by Lake Ontario. This type of location merits a bold house in Downing's view, as:

It is in such picturesque scenery as this [...] wherever, indeed, the wildness or grandeur of nature triumphs strongly over cultivated landscape—but especially where river or lake and hill or country are combined—it is there that the highly picturesque country-house or villa, is instinctively felt to harmonize with and belong to the landscape. It is there that the high tower, the steep roof, and the boldly varied outline, seem wholly in keeping with the landscape, because these forms in the building harmonize either by contrast or assimilation, with the pervading spirit of mysterious power and beauty in romantic scenery.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.343.

<sup>233</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.344.

Perhaps this design was chosen by the owner based on the property and then modified in terms of stylistic preference. Though Downing's design does not appear stylistically identical to Penryn Park, he had this to say on the subject of style:

We have avoided, in the composition of this villa, all that difficult and elaborate detail which might have been introduced in a building in this style. The general spirit of the composition is pointed, without being strictly Gothic, and we have sought to produce effect by light and shade rather than intricate details.<sup>234</sup>

This demonstrates the extent to which all manner of houses could be categorized under the stylistic heading of Gothic and further underscores the idea that subtlety had taken precedence over the lavish displays of the early nineteenth century. Perhaps the slightly more assertive expression of the Gothic style at Penryn rather than the style suggested in Downing's "A Lake or River Villa" was because its builder, Edward Haycock, adopted a proficiency for the style while he worked as a contractor for the Parliament buildings in Ottawa that same year with the firm of Jones, Haycock and Clarke.<sup>235</sup> Otherwise, it is possible that it was inspired by other designs provided in the pages of pattern books; for example, it is also similar to a design titled "A Cottage in the Rhine Style" from Downing's *Cottage residences* of 1842 (Figure 2.39). It would not have been altogether difficult, for instance, to choose the plan for the "Lake or River Villa" and to exchange its square-headed door and windows for pointed ones, perhaps as modeled by a different Downing design. Whatever the reason, despite a slight stylistic difference between the design and the house, there is no denying a close tie between Penryn Park and Downing's "Lake or River Villa" design.

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<sup>234</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.347.

<sup>235</sup> Mark Bourrie, *Canada's Parliament Buildings*, Toronto: Hounslow Press, 1996, p.21; Carolyn A. Young, *The glory of Ottawa: Canada's first parliament buildings*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995, p.82.

Aside from the overall style and massing of the house, several minute details also correspond with those provided in Downing's *The architecture of country houses*. The bargeboard on the gables, for instance, is taken exactly from a detail provided for the design of a small cottage earlier on in the book (Figures 2.40 and 2.41).<sup>236</sup> This demonstrates that the ways in which pattern books were used were not always straightforward (as an architectural historian would hope), often making it difficult to track the inspirational provenance of a house. In leafing through the pages of a book such as this, the reader could assemble thoughts and ideas on how his ideal home might take shape. Writers knew this to be the case; another pattern-book writer, Thomas Ustick Walter, acknowledged that "From such previously formed ideas [the reader] embodies his own conceptions of the ornamental and useful and learns what will be most suitable."<sup>237</sup> One of the benefits of pattern books was that the reader could choose the details to include in his home, or simply find inspiration even if it did not correspond exactly to his chosen design. It is quite clear that while Penryn Park may not have been copied precisely from Downing's *The architecture of country houses*, the owner and builder were using this book (and possibly others) to their advantage.

Downing was certainly one of the most, if not the most, popular of the American pattern-book writers, but that is not to say that other books were not known and used in Canada West. In the case of the Tennant House in Mount Pleasant of 1848 (Figure 2.42), the source used was not Downing's books, but that of another (briefly) popular writer, Orson Squire Fowler (1809–87).

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<sup>236</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.105.

<sup>237</sup> Thomas Ustick Walter and J.J. Smith, *Cottage and Villa Architecture: Two Hundred Designs*, Philadelphia: Carey & Hart, 1846, p.1.

This peculiar Gothic house has obvious roots in terms of the printed source material used, though it is quite without precedent in terms of its choice of style. In 1848, the American phrenologist Fowler first published his book titled *The octagon house: a home for all, or a cheap, convenient, and superior mode of building* in which he provided designs for octagonally shaped houses (Figure 2.43). At this time, the mania for these houses, which were said to be futuristic and morally superior, spawned many offspring throughout the northeastern United States and Canada West, although the trend came nowhere near to surpassing the Gothic or classical styles, even at the height of its popularity. Indeed, the peak of the fad appears to have lasted only from about 1850 to 1857.<sup>238</sup> Popularity notwithstanding, it was a peculiar style of building that did not go without its fair share of criticism. An article in the March 1854 issue of *The Anglo-American Magazine*, for instance, called Fowler “One of the most flatulent quacks which this empirical age has produced,”<sup>239</sup> and declared “that if a man be determined to make his family uncomfortable for life, he will indubitably house them in an octagon shaped dwelling.”<sup>240</sup>

Fowler’s justification was that an eight-sided house was a better use of space than that of a square or a rectangle because the same perimeter measurement will enclose a greater amount of space<sup>241</sup> and as there were fewer deep recesses.<sup>242</sup> For this reason too, he claimed, octagons were

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<sup>238</sup> Walter Creese, “Fowler and the domestic octagon,” *The art bulletin*, Vol. 28, No.2 (June 1846), pp.89–102, at p. 89.

<sup>239</sup> “The Editor’s Shanty,” *The Anglo-American Magazine*, Vol.4, No.3, March 1854, p.324.

<sup>240</sup> “The Editor’s Shanty,” *The Anglo-American Magazine*, Vol.4, No.3, March 1854, p.325.

<sup>241</sup> Orson Squire Fowler, *The octagon house: a home for all*, New York: Dover Publications, 1973, pp.82–84

<sup>242</sup> Orson Squire Fowler, *The octagon house: a home for all*, New York: Dover Publications, 1973, p.80, 85.

healthier, because they admitted more light and air as they possessed fewer unused corners and more space for windows.<sup>243</sup>

Interestingly, particularly for the purposes of the Tennant House, Fowler was deeply opposed to the use of historical motifs, especially Gothic or what he called the “Cottage style.”<sup>244</sup> Fewer angles, to him, were more beautiful, and so anything approaching the circle or the sphere was highly valued.<sup>245</sup> Any form with extreme angles, Fowler believed to be ugly, and so, for instance, a pitched roof—an iconic Gothic feature—was unacceptable:

Look at the dome, and then at a cottage roof, full of sharp peaks, sticking out in various directions, and say if the undulating regularity of the former does not strike the eye far more agreeably than the sharp projections of the latter.<sup>246</sup>

To Fowler, this was not simply a preference, but a universal truth. He also claimed that gables were a waste of space and that they caused the top floor to become hotter as there was more surface area on the roof to heat up the interior.<sup>247</sup> Fowler was a follower of Downing’s brand of pattern book only insofar as he made advantageous use of the format. He is an oddity, however, in that he followed none of the stylistic recommendations or trends that were prevalent at the time.

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<sup>243</sup> Madeleine B. Stern “Introduction” in Fowler, *The octagon house: a home for all*, New York: Dover Publications, 1973, p.vi.

<sup>244</sup> Fowler, p.71.

<sup>245</sup> Fowler, p.88.

<sup>246</sup> Fowler, p.88.

<sup>247</sup> Fowler, p.75.

The house in Mount Pleasant, then, as well as a later Gothic octagon in Granton of 1872 (Figure 2.44), would have been incredibly problematic for Fowler. While it is safe to conclude that the patrons of these houses were indeed borrowing Fowler's octagonal motif, it is clear that they were not interested in paying close attention to the rest of the text. It seems, in what appears to have been a common practice with regard to the use of pattern books, the patrons made selective use of ideas and motifs in order to create their own unique octagon houses with Gothic motifs. Perhaps a different book was even used to source the Gothic detailing. In short, in both of these houses, two fashionable mid-nineteenth-century styles are tantalizingly combined, with somewhat strange results.

### **Architects and pattern books**

In certain cases the use of a pattern book is quite evident, although this does not necessarily negate the presence of an architect. While books were most often used when there was no architect available, it does not mean that architects were not aware of them or that they did not use these books themselves. Many architect-built houses, in fact, make use of features common to pattern books, which demonstrates the degree to which these books appealed to a broad audience and to which the ideas found within them spread. Beyond simply adopting popular features for use in their buildings, several major nineteenth-century architects did, in fact, own pattern books. The Toronto-based architect William Storm, for instance, as previously mentioned, owned a variety of such publications.<sup>248</sup> While it may seem strange to think that an architect might borrow designs or ideas from popular pattern books, it is important to remember

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<sup>248</sup> Richardson, pp.9, 14, 20, 26, 27, 40, 41.



that even the most reputable English architects at the time looked to printed sources for guidance. In terms of churches, for instance, many looked to Pugin's writings or the pages of *The Ecclesiologist* for principles, details and general inspiration. It is not far-fetched, then, to suggest that architects living in British North America—where there was even less built heritage from which to glean inspiration—would have looked to books in order to remain competitive in the housing market and to remain abreast of the latest trends. Loudon himself conceded that he hoped that architects would benefit from his *Encyclopedia* (and by extension books like his):

The use of published Designs to an experienced Architect is to furnish him with ideas for composition; that is, with different modes of connecting the various parts of which a building is composed; of varying the forms of those parts; of devising new forms from them; and, finally, of composing the exterior as well as the interior details; subject always to the guiding principle of unity of expression, whether of purpose or of style.<sup>249</sup>

One example of a house that may have adopted ideas from pattern book designs is Trafalgar Castle in Whitby of 1859–62 (Figure 2.45). The house was built by Toronto architect Joseph Sheard (1813–83), who enjoyed a successful architectural career and, subsequently, a political career, serving as Toronto's mayor from 1871–72. Although Trafalgar Castle was executed by an architect and has many possible influences,<sup>250</sup> it is important not to rule out the potential influence of pattern books. This is particularly relevant after examining the design for a mansion in Samuel Sloan's *Model Architect* of 1852 (Figure 2.46) as well as Plate XCVII of Samuel H. Brooks's *Designs for Cottage and Villa Architecture* of 1839 (Figure 2.47). Many elements of these two designs match Trafalgar Castle quite closely, and while some of the details are different, it is important to consider that the house as built was carried out by a trained architect

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<sup>249</sup> Loudon, p.6.

<sup>250</sup> Jessica Mace, "Storming the castle: the architecture of Trafalgar Castle, Whitby, Ontario," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 2008, pp.43–51.

who would have been able to alter such details with ease. It is likely that the patron, Nelson Gilbert Reynolds (1814–81), the town’s outlandish sheriff, had an idea for what he wanted in his house, or came across one of the designs himself, asking Sheard to make them suit his needs. The similarity between the central block in Brooks’s design and that as executed at Trafalgar is quite close, particularly in terms of the polygonal crenellated clasping buttresses that rise up from the body of the building (Figure 2.48). The house and Brooks’s design also share the same blind, pointed–arch panels which ornament the buttresses above the stringcourse. Each also has a crenellated roofline on this central block or tower, although the crenellation at Trafalgar is stepped in the centre, adding an extra degree of elaboration. The drawings provided for the finials on the front porch in Brooks’s design can likewise find their counterpart on the interior of Trafalgar Castle on the newel posts of the main staircase; the flattened onion dome topped by a fleur–de–lis motifs are quite similar in each (Figures 2.49 and 2.50). Beyond these ornamental features, the plan of Trafalgar and of Brooks’s design are remarkably similar (Figure 2.51). Though Brooks does not provide measurements for his house, the arrangement of the rooms is nearly identical, including the covered porch projecting from the body of the house as well as the entrance hall with angled niches in the corners (Figure 2.52).

Although Brooks had little to say with regard to this particular design, he did say that it is “in the modern style of Gothic Architecture, and [is] suited for the residence of a man of distinction or large property.”<sup>251</sup> The patron, Reynolds, certainly possessed each of Brooks’s required traits as he was a prominent citizen in the town of Whitby and made sure that everyone was aware of it

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<sup>251</sup> Samuel H. Brooks, *Designs for cottage and villa architecture; containing plans, elevations, sections, perspective views and details for the erection of cottages and villas*, London: Thomas Kelly, 1839, p.131.

through the construction of his little castle.<sup>252</sup> The grandeur of the home is marked on the property by the large circular drive or path which leads to the main entrance. Incidentally, this was a feature that was promoted in Sloan's design. Again, the general massing of Trafalgar and of Sloan's design is similar here as the house is roughly square in plan and as each make use of a projecting, covered porch. Beyond this, Sloan's design may have provided the model for the use of a pitched roof and bay windows which are notably absent in Brooks's drawings. While the side gables on Sloan's design make use of Flemish gables, Sheard used a variant on a Dutch gable instead (Figure 2.53). Again, this speaks to the ease with which a trained architect could substitute such minor details depending on the whim of the patron. In short, although it seems clear that pattern books were indeed consulted for the design of Trafalgar Castle, it is likewise clear that Sheard was not reliant on books for each minute element.

Amisfield Castle of 1854–56<sup>253</sup> in Hamilton represents a close match for Trafalgar Castle and its repetition in a different city, at a relatively close date, hints at a common source of inspiration (Figure 2.54). This house, however, is rather closer to Sloan's mansion, particularly in terms of the arrangement of the low, covered (but not fully enclosed) porch topped by a bay window, as well as in the flanking of the central gable by clasping octagonal buttresses culminating in onion domes. Just as with Trafalgar Castle, the Flemish gables of Sloan's drawings have been replaced by Dutch gables although the arrangement is quite similar in that the small gables over the

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<sup>252</sup> Mace, p.44; Brian Winters, *Chronicles of a county town: Whitby past and present*, Whitby: B. Winters, 1999, pp. 94–95.

<sup>253</sup> Hamilton Public Library gives the dates of 1857–60, Stephen Otto gives the dates as 1854–56 in "Frederick James Rastrick and the Changing Face of Hamilton in the 1850s" *Raise the Hammer*, Published February 26, 2007, [https://www.raisethehammer.org/article/516/frederick\\_james\\_rastrick\\_and\\_the\\_changing\\_face\\_of\\_hamilton\\_in\\_the\\_1850s](https://www.raisethehammer.org/article/516/frederick_james_rastrick_and_the_changing_face_of_hamilton_in_the_1850s), (Accessed April, 2014).

windows project from the facade and are purely ornamental. This house has been attributed to the English-trained architect Frederick James Rastrick, although this cannot be proved definitively since Rastrick's files burned in a 1923 fire and because he rarely released tender calls for his projects.<sup>254</sup> Whether Rastrick was responsible or not, this house certainly points to the use of a pattern book for inspiration, just as at Trafalgar Castle.

Another instance of an architect who may have looked to pattern books is Brantford's John Turner and Wynarden or Yates's Castle of 1864–65 (Figure 2.55). Despite its name, the house does not resemble a castle in the slightest, only meriting the name in terms of its palatial scale (in North American terms anyway). This house is known to have been worked on by John Turner (1807–87) who was also responsible for several churches, a hotel, Brantford's Town Hall, the Brant County Court House and Jail, Gore Bank in Hamilton and several other houses prior to this commission. Interestingly, however, Turner is listed as a builder rather than as an architect in Smith's 1851 business directory for the province of Canada West.<sup>255</sup> This demonstrates that architectural training in the province was scarce and that builders could indeed work their way up the ranks and title themselves as architects in the absence of an organized body of professionals. Perhaps Turner had no formal architectural training at all, lending credence to the idea that he may have indeed consulted a pattern book for this particular house. It should be noted that some sources credit Turner with the full commission while others credit him only with

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<sup>254</sup> Otto, "Frederick James Rastrick and the Changing Face of Hamilton in the 1850s," *Raise the Hammer*, <http://www.raisethehammer.org/article/516/>, Accessed April, 2014.

<sup>255</sup> W.H. Smith, "Business Directory—Canada West," *Canada: past, present and future*, vol. 1, Toronto: Maclear, 1851, p.41.

additions and alterations.<sup>256</sup> Even though Turner had undertaken several architectural commissions prior to this,<sup>257</sup> the house, no matter what his involvement, shares many similar features to typical pattern-book houses. The heavy bargeboard, prominent finials and massive wrap-around porch in particular speak to the likely use of printed material. It has been suggested that the house is indebted specifically to Downing's design for a "Lake or River Villa for a Picturesque Site,"<sup>258</sup> though it is difficult to find any sort of striking resemblance between the two. While there is indeed a tower at Wynarden (which can also be found in Downing's design) it is located at the rear of the house rather than on the facade. There is also a secondary tower abutting the side of the house. Since the house is situated on a hill, the facade of this house is three storeys in height rather than two as shown in the "Lake or River Villa." The rear of the house, however, as it is located on the incline of a hill, consists of two storeys in elevation, and as such, the balcony is stacked, allowing for the enclosure of two floors of additional outdoor space. Despite the variation in arrangement from Downing's design at Wynarden, there are some shared stylistic features. Beyond this, the description of the principles of "A Lake or River Villa for a Picturesque Site" might well describe their use at Wynarden:

We must call the attention of the reader to the combination of power and domestic feeling in this villa—power in the high roofs and gables, and especially in the lofty heavenward pointing tower, and domesticity in the peculiarly homelike look of the wing on the right [...].<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> Brantford's heritage inventory gives full credit to Turner while Robert Hill's *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800–1950* suggests that he was only responsible for alterations.

<sup>257</sup> For full listing of Turner's works see Paul Dilse, "John Turner and English architectural influence in Southwestern Ontario," *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin*, September 1985, Volume 10, No.3, pp.4–6, and Robert Hill, "John Turner," *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1370>.

<sup>258</sup> Dilse, p.6.

<sup>259</sup> Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, p.343.

Once again, emphasis is placed on the domestic character of the building and this advice appears to have been followed closely in Brantford. The polychromy in the brick and on the roof as well as the use of iron cresting, indicates the architect's familiarity with contemporary (High Victorian) architectural practice and underscores the notion that he may have looked to a book for select ideas rather than out of a necessity to rely upon an overall design. While Turner was indeed familiar with the latest practices in Gothic Revival architectural theory, it is important to remember the ubiquity of pattern books and that, even if a book was not directly consulted in the case of Wynarden, prominent features such as verandas and bargeboard, were now part of the general vocabulary for the Gothic style for houses in North America. It is difficult to say with certainty whether or not these ideas came directly from a book, but even if they did not, it demonstrates that the ideas as promoted by pattern books were widely believed and applied at the time.

Pattern books not only helped to spread the use of the Gothic style, but they helped to do it in a way that the general public could understand and that, more importantly, was simple to achieve. In spite of rumours that a Gothic house was uncomfortable and expensive to build, pattern books transformed the style into something that was applicable to all situations and levels of society, by focusing on domestic comfort and ease of execution. No longer was a Gothic house a delicate, precious jewel or a plaything of the exorbitantly wealthy, such as the infamous Strawberry Hill or Fonthill Abbey, as discussed in Chapter 1. It could now be simple, hearty and well-lived in. Authors like Loudon and Downing distilled the information for the creation of a Gothic house into an easily accessible and digestible format, mixing architecture with the concepts of truth and

morality; qualities which Victorians strove toward with voracious appetites. With a pattern book in hand, it seems that anyone—from architect to amateur—could build the perfect house.

## **CHAPTER THREE: PUGIN AND ARCHITECTS WORKING IN CANADA WEST BETWEEN 1841 AND 1853**

### **Section A: English influences beginning in 1836**

By the time that social and political changes were reordering the province of Upper Canada into Canada West, there were changes occurring with regard to the state of Gothic houses in England. These changes, however, were brought about relatively slowly, particularly as compared to the rapid transformation of churches during the period. Houses lagged behind as the situation regarding the application of the Gothic style to houses was not nearly as straightforward as it was with regard to churches. In the late 1830s and 1840s, it was widely recommended that those wishing to build a church should look to medieval models and to make the architecture of churches conform to liturgical needs. For houses, however, few printed options existed and examples of ancient domestic architecture were scarce and little studied, whereas churches (as well as their remains) were well known and widely published. Given the wide variety of possible clientele for houses, there was also the added difficulty of not being able to prescribe a universal, or even a basic, plan for widespread adoption. Additionally, concerned with the state of Christianity with a view to the reform of society, most architectural publications at this time were aimed at churches. Being ranked lower on the hierarchical scale of architecture at the time, then, houses were not given the same extensive and rigorous treatment as ecclesiastical architecture. As such, changes were brought about rather slowly. Indeed, it would be the major practitioners of the Gothic style for churches who were ultimately responsible for the shift in practice for houses.



Having a sound understanding of the style and its principles, such architects were able to successfully and convincingly adapt Gothic to the domestic context. The most important and influential such architect throughout the 1840s and into the early 1850s, was the theorist and architect Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812–52). Though he is much better known for his churches, Pugin was, in fact, the most consistent proponent of change with regard to the practice of Gothic for houses through to his premature death in 1852. Although Pugin was slowly changing the style for houses in England, the situation lagged behind in Canada West, as the latter portion of this chapter will demonstrate. In fact, although some evidence of Pugin's influence trickled in during his lifetime, the Gothic Revival houses in Canada West continued to follow the pattern of picturesque-inspired Gothic that had been established with the arrival of John George Howard in 1832. As such, it is important to examine Pugin's thoughts with regard to houses prior to examining the contemporary houses as built in Canada West. This chapter will begin by examining Pugin's writings and select houses which will be followed by an examination of the same time frame in Canada West in order to highlight the differences and similarities.

### **Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin: *Contrasts and True principles***

There is not much that can be said about Pugin that has not already been said within the context of the English Gothic Revival. His influence on churches throughout the English-speaking world has been discussed in tremendously thorough detail, but what has not been examined, in even a fraction of the detail, are his thoughts on houses. His houses—and usually only his 1843–45 home at Ramsgate—are briefly discussed in general surveys of the Gothic Revival, such as

Henry Russell Hitchcock's *Early Victorian architecture in Britain*<sup>260</sup> or in Michael Lewis's *The Gothic Revival*,<sup>261</sup> as well as in the iconic monograph on Pugin by Phoebe Stanton of 1971.<sup>262</sup> Otherwise, there are only a few concentrated studies of Pugin's houses, including articles by Rosemary Hill and Alexandra Wedgwood, published in *Architectural History* and in a volume titled *Pugin: a Gothic passion*, respectively.<sup>263</sup> Pugin's houses were also the subject of an unpublished PhD dissertation of 2004 by Timothy Brittain-Catlin, though its influence is, arguably, limited.<sup>264</sup> On the whole, however, aside from these studies, the topic of the proper application of the Gothic style to houses has been little discussed in an academic context with regard to *any* major nineteenth-century British architect. Given that Pugin was indeed the Gothic Revival's greatest hero, most other English-trained architects began to adopt his style for their own domestic commissions. Pugin was also widely published and though houses took a back seat to other types of buildings in his practice (namely churches), there is still much useful information on the subject of domestic architecture to be gleaned from each book.

Pugin was, without question, the most important and influential proponent of the mature Gothic Revival. Under his influence, Gothic architecture began to shift away from whimsy and fancy to studied and bound by guiding principles. In 1836, with no formal training in architecture, Pugin

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<sup>260</sup> Henry Russell Hitchcock, *Early Victorian architecture in Britain*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1954.

<sup>261</sup> Michael J. Lewis, *The Gothic Revival*, New York: Thames & Hudson, 2002.

<sup>262</sup> Phoebe Stanton, *Pugin*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1971.

<sup>263</sup> Rosemary Hill, "Pugin's small houses," *Architectural History*, Vol. 46 (2003), pp.147–174; Alexandra Wedgwood, "Domestic architecture," *Pugin: a Gothic passion*, Paul Atterbury and Clive Wainwright, eds., New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the Victoria & Albert Museum, 1994.

<sup>264</sup> Timothy Brittain-Catlin, *A.W.N. Pugin's English residential architecture in its context*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Cambridge University, January 2004.

self-published his (in)famous book *Contrasts; or, a parallel between the noble edifices of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and similar buildings of the present day; shewing the present decay of taste: accompanied by appropriate text*<sup>265</sup> (reprinted in 1841 by the publisher Charles Dolman).<sup>266</sup> This short book was essentially intended as a pictorial manifesto for the use of the Gothic style in nineteenth-century England. The text consisted of a brief, impassioned discussion of the downfall of English architecture following the Reformation, which was inspired by Pugin's similarly impassioned 1835 conversion to Catholicism. The images presented in the book are striking, comparing scenes of an English town of 1840 to Pugin's romanticized Gothic vision of the same town in 1440. Nineteenth-century England is portrayed as dirty, corrupt and pagan because it makes use of bastardized (in Pugin's view) classical architecture, while the medieval town is beautiful, moral and properly Christian, sprinkled, as Pugin imagined, with churches, all executed in the Gothic style (Figures 3.1 and 3.2). The images effectively demonstrated Pugin's message with regard to the implications of the use of the Gothic style; Gothic was to be understood and used as an inherently English and Christian style. Additionally, if perhaps unintentionally, *Contrasts* earned Pugin many commissions in spite of the fact that he had not been trained as an architect. To date, however, he had worked on ornamentation for a handful of buildings and had built his own house, even if it was rather clumsy. Even so, following the success of *Contrasts*, Pugin began to be awarded numerous commissions, among which were alterations to existing houses and several new presbyteries. Through his subsequent

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<sup>265</sup> A.W.N. Pugin, *Contrasts; or, a parallel between the noble edifices of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and similar buildings of the present day; shewing the present decay of taste: accompanied by appropriate text*, London: printed for the author, and published by him, at St Marie's Grange, near Salisbury, Wilts., 1836.

<sup>266</sup> A.W.N. Pugin, *Contrasts; or, a parallel between the noble edifices of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and similar buildings of the present day; shewing the present decay of taste: accompanied by appropriate text*, London: Charles Dolman, 1841.

works and writings, it is possible to track Pugin's views on the proper construction of houses as they appear to have been felt out and learned over time.

Pugin's first house, for instance, St Marie's Grange, Alderbury (near Salisbury) of 1835 (Figure 3.3), was, as is perhaps to be expected from an amateur, rather awkwardly organized. The L-shaped plan featured no corridors, meaning that each room had to be traversed in order to cross the house. Unlike most contemporary houses which, even if Gothic, were arranged around a central staircase, the stairs at St Marie's Grange were not centralized, and, moreover, consisted of tight spirals. The house also combined unorthodox elements such as a chapel befitting of Pugin's newly found faith, a tower, a stair turret and a drawbridge, likely in order to conjure up notions of the medieval past. While it has been noted that Benjamin Ferrey's drawing (the accompanying diagram) does not accurately represent the original house, it serves well to highlight its perceived eccentricity.

Despite the inconveniences and absurdities, the asymmetrical planning of the house broke definitively with the typical house plan of the time, which would have seen all rooms made to fit within a predetermined rectilinear form in the name of symmetry. This arrangement had been one of the defining characteristics for houses in England since the Renaissance, and remained commonplace through to the nineteenth century, even for the majority of so-called Gothic houses, for example T. D. Dearn's "Design for a small residence in the florid Gothic style" of 1807 (Figure 3.4)<sup>267</sup> or J. C. Loudon's Design V "A Parsonage House for a particular Situation in

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<sup>267</sup> T.D. Dearn, *Sketches in Architecture; consisting of original designs for cottages and rural dwellings, suitable to persons of moderate fortune, and for convenient retirement, with plans and appropriate scenery to each*, London: J. Taylor, 1807, p.6, Plate VI.

Somersetshire,” printed in the 1846 edition of *An encyclopaedia of cottage farm, and villa architecture* (Figure 3.5).<sup>268</sup> Although asymmetry in architecture had been promoted by the aesthetic theory of the picturesque since prior to the turn of the century, in actuality, it was little heeded with regard to house planning, typically for reasons of practicality, convenience and convention. What Pugin was doing at St Marie’s Grange—but what he had yet to articulate in print—was to break free of the rigid constraints of classical symmetry and facadism in order to liberate the plan and to create what he believed to be a truthful elevation. As such, at Alderbury, each element and each room of the house was separately articulated on the exterior, and separately roofed, not hiding behind a uniform facade. This defiance of traditional planning is also evident in some of his other early-career houses such as the presbyteries for St Marie’s, Derby, Staffordshire (demol.), and St Mary’s, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire (Figure 3.6), both of 1838–39. A quick glance at the facade of each house reveals variety in planning, meaning that windows, doors and chimneys were placed where they were needed, not where symmetry dictated.

Aside from planning, St Marie’s Grange represented a break in the tradition of nineteenth-century Gothic in that the brick was not whitewashed but left bare and truthfully exposed as brick. This was likewise the case at Uttoxeter, where there was never any attempt to disguise brick as another material. Prior to this, brick had not been celebrated as a visually appealing building material and was often stuccoed over and scored in imitation of masonry as seen, for instance, at Chester Terrace designed by John Nash in Regent’s Park, London of 1824–25

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<sup>268</sup> John Claudius Loudon, *An encyclopaedia of cottage, farm, and villa architecture and furniture*, ed. Mrs. Loudon, London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1846, p.841.

(Figures 3.7 and 3.8). To this point, in Britain, brick was considered somewhat gauche<sup>269</sup> and, even when used, was only exposed where it was not to be seen, such as at the rear or on the sides of a building. This can be seen at Chester Terrace at the junction between the main terrace and one of its semi-detached villas (Figure 3.9). It was this type of falsehood that Pugin despised. In fact, notions of truth in building and the truthful exposure of materials would become defining principles of Pugin's next book.

*The true principles of pointed or Christian architecture* of 1841 laid out what Pugin believed to be the underlying principles of all English medieval architecture, and in turn, all good building. Although the primary focus of this book is the proper construction of churches, the principles were extended to houses as they formed part of the landscape and society that Pugin was trying to overhaul. More than this, Pugin indicated that the rules as laid out should indeed be applied to all types of architecture.<sup>270</sup>

In *True principles*, Pugin was quick to set the tone of the book by stating two overarching rules with regard to building; "*1st, that there should be no features about a building which are not necessary for convenience, construction or propriety; 2nd, that all ornament should consist of enrichment of the essential construction of the building.*"<sup>271</sup> Extending these principles to a consideration of Gothic houses already built in England, it is plain to see that Pugin would strongly object to a house such as Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill (1748–90), which is littered

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<sup>269</sup> Hill, "Pugin's small houses," p.151.

<sup>270</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.1.

<sup>271</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.1.

with ornamental and non-functional features, including sham buttresses, pinnacles, gables, corbel tables, and crenellations on the exterior (Figure 1.1) and even papier-maché vaulting on the interior (Figure 1.3). (Incidentally, Strawberry Hill is an apt example because Pugin mentions it by name in his critique of modern interiors and improper Gothic furnishings.<sup>272</sup>) Even from the earliest proclamations in *True principles*, then, it is clear that Pugin was striving to make a definitive change.

Pugin further admonished the type of Gothic as employed at Strawberry Hill beyond its abundance of ornamentation. *True principles* is strict about the notion of propriety in building, stating that “*the external and internal appearance of an edifice should be illustrative of, and in accordance with, the purpose for which it is destined.*”<sup>273</sup> This meant that a house was to look like a house and should never be confused with any other form of architecture. As such, it should come as no surprise that Pugin would detest a house aspiring to be a mini-castle, which was precisely the intent at Strawberry Hill. On this subject, he said:

What can be more absurd than house built in what is termed the castellated style? Castellated architecture originated in the wants consequent on a certain state of society: of course the necessity of great strength, and the means of defence suited to the military tactics of the day, dictated to the builders of ancient castles the most appropriate style for their construction. Viewed as historical monuments, they are of surprising interest, but as models for our imitation they are worse than useless. What absurdities, what anomalies, what utter contradictions do not the builders of modern castles perpetrate! How many portcullises which will not lower down, and drawbridges which will not draw up! [...] all is a mere mask, and the whole building an ill-conceived lie.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.41.

<sup>273</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.40.

<sup>274</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, pp.58–59.

Even though Pugin had, in fact, used a drawbridge at his St Marie's Grange in 1835, it is important to consider that he admitted other mistakes from the past. On the subject of interiors, he wrote: "I have perpetrated many of these enormities in the furniture I designed some years ago for Windsor Castle. At that time I had not the least idea of the principles I am now explaining [...]"<sup>275</sup> Not only does this admission display an evolution of ideas, but, perhaps more importantly, it also suggests that good Gothic architecture was something that could be learned and understood.

Returning to the notion of propriety, aside from castellated houses, Pugin was equally critical of houses making use of church motifs, such as Fonthill Abbey of 1796–1813 by James Wyatt ("a mere toy, built to suit the caprice of a wealthy individual, and devoted to luxury"<sup>276</sup>) and pressed for the examination of ancient houses as models instead. Specifically, Pugin was calling for the examination of Tudor (or Old English) houses from the period prior to the emancipation of England from the Catholic church, which he believed to be the pinnacle of civilization, and, therefore, the best era for house architecture. Of these houses, he drew on characteristics that he believed to be the most well suited to contemporary use, all of which coincide with the principles as laid out earlier in the text:

Each part of these buildings indicated its particular destination: the turreted gate-house and porter's lodging, the entrance porch, the high-crested roof and Louvred hall, with its capacious chimney, the guest chambers, the vast kitchens and offices, all formed distinct and beautiful features, not *masked or concealed under one monotonous front*, but by their

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<sup>275</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.35.

<sup>276</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.59.



variety in form and outline increasing the effect of the building, and presenting a standing illustration of good old English hospitality.<sup>277</sup>

In short, a good house was to make truthful use of material, to use ornamentation only on essential features such as chimneys or door jambs and to have a steeply pitched roof for throwing off rain and snow, as dictated by the cool, wet climate. Perhaps most importantly, the greatest error and the one that Pugin saw as the cause of all of the problems in modern housing, even with Gothic houses, arose from the common practice wherein “*the plans of buildings are designed to suit the elevation, instead of the elevation being made subservient to the plan.*”<sup>278</sup>

### ***True principles applied to Pugin’s houses***

Indeed, the organization of the plan is perhaps the most evident change when it came to Pugin’s own houses as compared to contemporary houses. This was seen to some extent at St Marie’s Grange and the presbyteries at Derby and Uttoxeter, but became a much more recognizable quality of his houses around the time of publication of *True principles*. The Bishop’s House in Birmingham (Figure 3.10), for instance, thoroughly displayed the principle of careful planning. In fact, Pugin used this house as an example of an excellent clergy house in *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England* of 1843. In this publication, he discussed the house at length, which is the only time he ever discussed one of domestic commissions specifically. Built in 1840–41 (demolished 1960), the elevation of this house was certainly not subservient to a conventional rectangular plan. Instead, the whole house was arranged around a small central

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<sup>277</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, pp.60–61.

<sup>278</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.63.

courtyard which Pugin called a cloister,<sup>279</sup> perhaps in an effort to create further legitimacy for this medieval-inspired building (Figure 3.11). The wings of the house wrapped around the courtyard and terminated in a low screen-wall fronting the street (Shadwell Street). Similar to St Marie's Grange, the Bishop's House did not make use of a centralized staircase, using instead two sets of tightly spiraling stairs. Just as at St Marie's Grange, these were placed at a distance from one another (one in the courtyard and one on the opposite external wall to the northwest), but at the Bishop's House, corridors created a procession through the house for greater convenience and privacy than was to be had at Alderbury. The windows were placed, not regularly, but where needed, making sections of the elevation blank, even if facing the street. This was an absolute affront to typical classical façadeism.

The exterior of red brick, which matched St Chad's Church (now Cathedral) of 1837–56 (Figure 3.12), was mostly unadorned, with the exception of “stone dressings; and some ornamental devices [...] occasionally working on the walls with vitrified bricks.”<sup>280</sup> On one corner of the house (Shadwell and Weaman Streets) was a niche that housed a statue of St Chad “standing on an angel corbel.”<sup>281</sup> This seemingly decorative feature can be argued as essential, given that it was the house of a cleric and needed to be distinguished as such. This religious icon, then, would have served to differentiate the Bishop's House from nearby lay houses.

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<sup>279</sup> Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England*, London: Charles Dolman, 1843, p.102.

<sup>280</sup> Pugin, *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England*, p.102.

<sup>281</sup> Pugin, *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England*, p.102.

Overall, rather than relying on ornamentation for the expression of the house, the plan and the irregularity it caused in the elevation provided the house with its architectural character. In Pugin's own words, the character of the house

is owing to the *absence of all artificial resources, and the severity and simplicity in which they have been raised*; there is no attempt at concealment, no trick, no deception, no false show, no mock materials; they appear as true and solid as the faith itself.<sup>282</sup>

Indeed, the house did not deceive in any sense as its materials were exposed and as its façade made no effort to mask the interior arrangement.

The interior was likewise truthful in that several of the rooms—the great hall, the library and the chapel—made use of open timber roofing, exposing the structural elements of the ceiling (Figure 3.13). This was recommended for both churches and houses in *True Principles* as a preferable alternative to the common nineteenth-century practice of plastering ceilings and, even worse (in Pugin's esteem), creating vaults or ceiling ornament out of plaster.<sup>283</sup> The rooms also featured Pugin-designed wallpaper and simple furnishings, just as prescribed in *True Principles*.<sup>284</sup> All of these features, inside and out, make the Bishop's House an exemplar of Pugin's theories.

Another instance of a contemporary house to which Pugin applied his principles is the presbytery for St Giles, Cheadle, Staffordshire which was a remodel of an existing building carried out

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<sup>282</sup> Pugin, *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England*, p.99.

<sup>283</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, pp.34–37.

<sup>284</sup> For wall paper, see Pugin, *True principles*, p.25; for furniture, see Pugin, *True principles*, pp.40–42.

around 1842<sup>285</sup> (Figure 3.14) for the church of St Giles of 1840–46 (Figure 3.15). Though the red-brick facade is regular in terms of the window placement, it is not symmetrical. The entrance is to the left (or east) side, there is a dormer in same bay and to the right (or west), bay windows are topped by a tall gable. The facade is quite plain with the only ornamentation integrated into the essential features, such as the weatherings on the eaves and the tops of the chimney clusters. There is also some cresting running along the roof line which is executed in a geometric pattern, which matches that found on the convent, thereby visually linking these buildings into a cohesive ecclesiastical unit. There is also a cross above the right gable, which, while not strictly essential to construction, would have been—like the statue of St Chad on the Bishop’s House at Birmingham—important in terms of differentiating this house from the others in the town. Again, this house represents a fairly rigid, yet simple interpretation of Pugin’s principles as set out in *True principles* and important to remember for the changing tide of Gothic houses in Canada West.

### ***An apology and Pugin’s later houses***

As Pugin’s practice matured, he did not abandon his principles in his subsequent writings. In fact, he made a specific recommendation for their application to houses in *An apology for the revival of Christian architecture in England* of 1843; “[I]t is not only possible, but easy, to work on the same consistent principles as our ancestors in the erection of all our domestic

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<sup>285</sup> Rosemary Hill, *God’s architect: Pugin and the building of Romantic Britain*, London: Penguin Books, Ltd., 2007, p.505; In his dissertation, Brittain–Catlin states that part of the facade was in place upon Pugin’s intervention into the building and that Pugin’s contribution was “substantial.” As such, it is reasonable to assume that the house’s dominant character is due to Pugin’s work. Brittain–Catlin, p.255

buildings.”<sup>286</sup> It is clear that he viewed houses as an integral component of his national Christian rejuvenation and so they, too, were to receive a thorough and studied treatment. Just as ancient churches were to be adapted for the needs of nineteenth-century churches, so too could ancient houses provide suitable models for nineteenth-century needs. Although Pugin recommended the study of ancient houses, it is important to note that he never recommended direct copying unlike other architectural authorities at the time such as The Cambridge Camden Society. This society, formed in 1839 and renamed The Ecclesiological Society in 1845, doggedly promoted specific medieval models for direct imitation until the early 1850s. In fact, Pugin stated his views on the matter explicitly in *An apology for the revival of Christian architecture in England* of 1843:

Any modern invention which conduces to comfort, cleanliness, or durability, should be adopted by the consistent architect; *to copy a thing merely because it is old, is just as absurd as the imitations of the modern pagans*. Our domestic architecture should have a peculiar expression illustrative of our manners and habits: *as the castle merged into the baronial mansion, so it may be modified to suit actual necessities*; and the smaller detached houses which the present state of society has generated, should possess a peculiar character: they are only objectionable when made to appear diminutive representations of larger structures. And it is not only possible, but easy, to work on the same consistent principles as our ancestors in the erection of all our domestic buildings.<sup>287</sup>

To reiterate, Pugin did not condone copyism but encouraged a thoughtful interpretation of medieval principles when it came to building houses. Perhaps this was even a reflexive self-critique looking back to his first house project at St Marie’s Grange, Alderbury, which featured an unnecessary drawbridge to add an air of medieval authenticity. Once again, this demonstrates Pugin’s eagerness to share his experience and to enrich the built landscape, even if the lessons came at his own expense.

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<sup>286</sup> Augustus Welby Pugin, *An apology of the revival of Christian architecture in England*, London: John Weale, 1843, p.39.

<sup>287</sup> Pugin, *An apology of the revival of Christian architecture in England*, pp.38–39.

Though he committed what he viewed as errors in his early career, in his later career, Pugin carefully followed his own logic in relation to the use of medieval models and the application of medieval principles. So while his houses project an air of ancient authority, they are, in fact, quite innovative and original in their design. This is perhaps nowhere more evident than in Pugin's own home, The Grange, Ramsgate, Kent of 1843–45 (Figure 3.16). While this is certainly the most thoroughly studied of all of Pugin's houses, it is important for this study to demonstrate that Pugin followed his own principles in a scenario where he was both architect and patron. This shows a thoroughness in his practice and helps to convey the strength of his convictions. In deference to his principles regarding the elevation of a building, the arrangement of the rooms can be read from the exterior; each element is separately roofed and clearly demarcated by the careful placement of windows. The chapel and the stair tower, for instance, are clearly read as such, containing pointed windows subdivided with tracery and square-headed windows placed to light each landing, respectively (Figure 3.17). The house is composed of bare brick with stone dressings, and there is absolutely no ornament other than in the essential features of the chapel, such as the windows. These relatively delicate Decorated windows and the cross, which adorns the peak of the chapel gable, mark the space as distinct in function from the rest of the house.

The interior circulation is centred around a stair hall to which all rooms, or corridors leading to rooms, connect (Figure 3.18). It has been suggested that the stair hall loosely takes its cue from

the medieval hall which acted as the gathering place and heart of the medieval home.<sup>288</sup> While the stair hall at Ramsgate is not a room intended for living in or for entertaining, it does serve to anchor the rest of the house and joins rooms not only laterally, but vertically through the house as it rises two storeys in height. In this way, Pugin adapted the medieval device and effectively endowed it with a new function that served to provide a cohesiveness to the sprawling country-house plan. In terms of the interior articulation of the house, Pugin, once again, followed his own prescriptions exactly, making use of wallpaper, exposed wooden structural elements, wooden (rather than plaster) carvings, and hand-painted panels (Figure 3.19). Just as in his other buildings, the only ornamentation is to be found only on essential features, such as the carvings on the chimney pieces (Figure 3.20).

Similar in scale, but executed for a cleric rather than for a layman, is the Bishop's House in Nottingham of 1844–45 (Figures 3.21 and 3.22) for St Barnabas Church and later Cathedral of 1841–45 (Figure 3.23). This house makes use of all of the requisite principles including the truthful exposure of materials, minimal ornament, steeply pitched roofs and careful planning as reflected by the elevation. Here, Pugin made use of a feature in the elevation that he had promoted in *True principles*, applied to the design of Bishop's House Birmingham, and which also has medieval precedent; the placement of chimneys projecting from the outer walls of a building.<sup>289</sup> Placed as such, he believed, they would free up space within the building, would serve as additional buttressing and would minimize internal damage in the event of a fire.<sup>290</sup> For

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<sup>288</sup> Hill, "Pugin's Small Houses," p.165; Hitchcock, *Early Victorian architecture in Britain*, p.232.

<sup>289</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.51.

<sup>290</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, pp.51–52.

precedent, he recommended looking to medieval collegiate architecture, for instance at Oxford or Cambridge, but for this particular detail, it seems that he was referencing yet another medieval source; the Jew's House at Lincoln of about 1170 (Figure 3.24). In this Romanesque house, the original chimney projected beyond the surface of the wall and wrapped around the main entrance. Similarly, at Nottingham, the massive southern chimney envelops two deeply set windows before reaching the ground (Figure 3.25). This type of specific detail demonstrates that Pugin had not only a profound knowledge of medieval architecture throughout England at his disposal, but that he was also interested in making use of local precedent, as he did with many of his churches.

Though the Grange at Ramsgate and the Bishop's House at Nottingham are two fairly large-scale examples, it is important to note that Pugin remained consistent in his principles even for much smaller and less prestigious commissions. They can be seen, for instance, even in the simplest houses, such as the presbytery at Brewood, Staffordshire of 1843–44 (Figures 3.26 and 3.27) for the church of St Mary's, Brewood also of 1843–44 (Figure 3.28). The plan is T-shaped and windows are only placed only where necessary, which, like the Bishop's house at Birmingham, results in several blank expanses of wall. The only ornamentation consists of the inlaid brick crosses on the walls and in the trefoil-shaped cresting, which serves to link the house to the church and the schoolhouse, both of which make use of the same feature. Otherwise, the brick and stone work are completely unadorned and untreated, speaking to Pugin's notion of truth to materials. Overall, this tiny house gives an air of dignity and solemnity befitting a cleric. This is an important model to keep in mind for the Canadian context as it reads as truthful and



medieval but is small in scale and remains quite compact in nature. This sort of subtle modification on the typical box formula for houses is one that would flourish in the North American context.

Perhaps Pugin's closest contemporary was his Anglican counterpart, William Butterfield (1814–1900), who followed the principles quite closely in his domestic work, for instance in the parsonage for St Saviour's church at Coalpit Heath, South Gloucestershire of 1844–45 (Figure 3.29). This house is void of all ornament and the exterior is composed of bare stone, free of stucco. Like Pugin's houses, Butterfield's plan is likewise legible from the exterior elevation with each element roofed separately, including the tiny porch, and with windows placed as needed. The parsonage certainly does not present a monotonous front of the type that Pugin warned against,<sup>291</sup> nor was this an anomaly in Butterfield's oeuvre; indeed, he remained quite consistent in the planning of his houses throughout his career. While each subsequent decade brought about a new set of influences and stylistic preferences, Butterfield's planning remained stalwart as did his dedication to the Gothic style. There is not much differentiation in planning, for instance between the parsonage at Coalpit Heath and the houses in the village of Baldersby St James, North Yorkshire beginning with the parsonage in 1857. Even in his late career, when permanent polychromy became his signature ornamental feature, Butterfield was always careful to make the elevation secondary to the plan, such as at the Warden's House, Keble College, Oxford of 1877 (Figure 3.30). While the latter house is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is

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<sup>291</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.60.

instructive in that it demonstrates the lasting nature of Pugin's rational approach to house planning.

While Pugin and Butterfield were building houses in this manner, however, the situation in Canada West was rather different. Indeed, the changes as suggested by Pugin were not yet completely accepted throughout England and many continued to build in the formula with which they had become accustomed. If the new approach to Gothic housing was slow to come about in England, it was even slower in the province of Canada West, as the next section will illustrate.

### **Section B: Architects in Canada, 1841–53**

In the nineteenth century, architects typically immigrated to Canada after having been trained in England. Until the end of the century, there was no system of architectural training in place in the colonies and so it was common for architects either to arrive following their apprenticeships, or in some cases, following a career in England. The type of enterprising spirit required of such immigrants was discussed at length in W. H. Smith's *Canadian Gazetteer* of 1846.<sup>292</sup> Smith's book, which was intended as a guide for those contemplating a departure from England, notes:

Much has been written on the subject of emigration, and many speculations entered into as to who are the proper persons to emigrate? The only answer that can be given to this question is—those who are obliged to do so. Let no person who is doing well at home, no matter what may be his profession or occupation, emigrate with the expectation of doing better,—let him not leave his home and travel over the world, in search of advantages which he may not find elsewhere. But those who are not doing well, who find it difficult to struggle against increasing competition, who fear the loss in business of what little property they possess, or who find it difficult with an increasing family to keep up appearances as they have been accustomed to do, and find it necessary to make a change

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<sup>292</sup> William H. Smith, *Smith's Canadian gazetteer; comprising statistical and general information respecting all parts of the Upper Province, or Canada West*, Toronto: Published for the author, by H. & W. Rowsell, 1846.

—all these may safely emigrate with a fair prospect of improving their condition. Persons of small, independent incomes may live cheaply in Canada, particularly in the country, and enjoy many comforts, and even luxuries, that were not within their reach at home.<sup>293</sup>

As such, it was not the most successful architects who made the move to North America, but those who were perhaps struggling in Britain or, at the very least, looking for a change in lifestyle. Even if the province received no architectural genius in the manner of Pugin, a handful of fairly competent architects did arrive in Canada West and were rewarded with an abundance of commissions.

The first wave of architects to work in English-speaking Canada in the pre-Confederation period of 1841–67 began to arrive in the early 1840s; this first generation will form the focus of the rest of this chapter. This meant that these architects were trained in the 1820s or 1830s; a period that focused on eclecticism in style and that was firmly rooted in the picturesque. For houses, this meant that all variants on the Gothic style were acceptable—Castle Gothic, ecclesiastical Gothic, Tudor, Old English—as was any combination of them. Invention was prized, ornament was abundant and plans tended toward the classical, even if asymmetry was preferred for overall effect. Architects who had worked and trained in this milieu indeed brought these traits with them and applied them to houses through to the 1850s, even though Pugin was making notable changes to the landscape of domestic architecture in England during this same period. The most notable architects to work in the Gothic style for houses at this time are William Thomas (1799–1860) who arrived in 1843, Henry Bowyer Lane (1817–78) in 1841 and Fred Cumberland (1820–81) in 1847, all of whom settled in the growing metropolis of Toronto. Edward Horsey

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<sup>293</sup> Smith, *Smith's Canadian Gazetteer*, p.250.

(1809–69), John Power (1816–82) and William Coverdale (1801–65) built Gothic houses in Kingston in the 1840s and early 1850s, and were also all English immigrants.

As of 1846 there were only four architects listed as working in the city of Toronto<sup>294</sup> and by 1851, there were only twelve architects listed as working in the whole of Canada West.<sup>295</sup> At this time, eight of these men were based in Toronto and four were in Kingston. The one exception was William Thomas who, though primarily based in Toronto, kept a satellite office in Hamilton.<sup>296</sup> Of these Toronto architects, only those listed above appear to have built houses in the Gothic style (with the exception of John George Howard whose Gothic houses were built, for the most part, in the 1830s and who was discussed at length in Chapter 1).<sup>297</sup> Of the Kingston architects, only Coverdale is listed in Smith's directory. This is perhaps due to the fact that Horsey only worked on a small number of buildings throughout his life (possibly not enough to have considered himself an 'architect' at the time) and that John Power appears to have begun his architectural career the following year with the very house that will be discussed later on in this chapter. It is not surprising that Canada West's pioneering architects would have settled in the province's two largest cities as both were undergoing rapid growth, and promised many large-scale commissions. As such, Gothic houses as built by architects are, during this period, primarily confined to the city context and to its environs.

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<sup>294</sup> Smith, *Smith's Canadian Gazetteer*, p.195.

<sup>295</sup> A full business directory for each county in the province is listed across both volumes, appended to the end of each book. William H. Smith, *Canada: past, present and future, being a historical, geographical, geological and statistical account of Canada West*, Vols.I & II, Toronto: Thomas Maclear, 1851.

<sup>296</sup> Smith, *Canada: past, present and future*, p.31.

<sup>297</sup> John George Howard appears to have only designed a few small Gothic cottages during the 1840s, although it seems as though these were not built (Cottage for Captain Irving, for example). Perhaps this was due to the fact that Howard had moved into the position of Toronto's city surveyor by 1843.

Despite training in England under the reign of the picturesque, these architects would have certainly had an awareness of Pugin's existence, particularly having been in England at some point in the 1840s. By 1843, when William Thomas arrived in Toronto, for instance, Pugin had already published *Contrasts and True principles*, and released *An apology* and *The present state* in the same year. Beyond this, by this time, Pugin had also undertaken more than a dozen full house commissions as well as renovations and alterations for prestigious patrons. Even so, throughout the 1840s, the newly arrived Canadians remained firmly entrenched in the architectural language of the early-nineteenth century, and applied these principles to their early Canadian houses with only the faintest of hints pointing toward the recognition of Pugin and his works. As such the mature Gothic Revival for houses was late to establish itself in the province in comparison to England, only truly manifesting itself in the early 1850s with the arrival of a second wave of British architects and, consequently, a renewed interest in Pugin's principles.

### **William Thomas in England**

Perhaps the most prolific practitioner of the Gothic style in Canada West since the heyday of John George Howard was William Thomas (1799–1860). Born in Suffolk, England, not much is known of Thomas's training other than that he likely completed an apprenticeship as a carpenter and joiner,<sup>298</sup> then acted as an apprentice and, subsequently, as a partner to the architect Richard Tutin of Birmingham in the late 1820s.<sup>299</sup> All that is known about Tutin is that he “practised [*sic*]

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<sup>298</sup> Neil Einarson, “William Thomas” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/thomas\\_william\\_8E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/thomas_william_8E.html), accessed July 2014; Glenn McArthur and Annie Szamosi, *William Thomas, architect: 1799–1860*, Ottawa: Archives of Canadian Art, 1996, p.xv.

<sup>299</sup> Einarson, “William Thomas”; McArthur and Szamosi, p.xvii.

as an architect and surveyor in Birmingham from before 1820 until after 1840.”<sup>300</sup> Following Thomas’s time in Birmingham, he began work in the nearby town of Leamington, Warwickshire in 1832<sup>301</sup> which was then beginning to be transformed into a popular spa and resort town. In fact, the name of Leamington was officially changed by Queen Victoria to Royal Leamington Spa in 1838 after a royal visit.<sup>302</sup> In the 1830s at Leamington, Thomas undertook several commissions and speculative ventures, taking advantage of the popularity and rapid growth of the town which exploded in population from 315 people in 1801 to 15700 in 1841.<sup>303</sup> The noted architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner hailed the nineteenth century as the “golden age for Leamington,” with the period of 1820 and 1840 as being particularly important for secular building;<sup>304</sup> indeed, it was Thomas who was responsible for many of these splendid secular structures.

The majority of the houses that Thomas built in England were built in the town of Leamington and so, they are worth examining in detail, particularly as many of the elevations and features are ones that he would reuse in his career in Canada West. Possibly the earliest example at Leamington in the Gothic style is Grafton Villa (now called The Cedars) of 1834–36 (Figure

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<sup>300</sup> Howard Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840*, London; John Murray, 1978, p.845.

<sup>301</sup> Einarson, “William Thomas.”

<sup>302</sup> Nikolaus Pevsner and Alexandra Wedgwood, *The Buildings of England, Warwickshire*, Harmondsworth; Penguin Books Ltd., 1966, p.333.

<sup>303</sup> Pevsner, p.333.

<sup>304</sup> Pevsner, p.333.

3.31). Built for a particular client,<sup>305</sup> this twin-gabled Gothic house makes use of an abundance of Gothic details, such as the single and grouped lancet windows, the string course with floral bosses, and the large, elaborately detailed finials, as well as moulded and figure-head corbels (Figure 3.32), all of which contribute to a rich ornamental program. The use of heavy hood moulds likewise stands out by creating bold shadows against the stark, white stucco. The bay windows, topped with lozenge-patterned parapets, help to lend visual interest and variety to an otherwise roughly rectangular plan. These polygonal windows also would have helped the owner to take advantage of the once-scenic views from the interior as the house is located on a rise to the east of the city.<sup>306</sup> In its arrangement and use of ornament, this house is closely related to the Gothic idiom of John Nash and the houses at 17 Park Village West of 1832 (Figure 3.33) and 18–20 Park Village East (c.1829, demol. 1941)<sup>307</sup> in particular. Each of these houses also makes striking use of twin-gabled arrangements and heavy-handed finials. The quality of the details on Thomas's Grafton House, however, exceed those on either of Nash's houses, particularly in the attention paid to moulding and to sculptural elements, for example Thomas's use of finely carved heads for label stops and for corbels (Figures 3.34 and 3.35). Nash was not known to have been the most careful or detail-oriented of architects ("‘An Ionic is an Ionic,’ he once told James Elmes, and he ‘did not care which one his draughtsmen used,’”<sup>308</sup>), and so it is safe to say that

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<sup>305</sup> Robert G. Hill and Glen McArthur give different surnames for this patron: Hill lists him as Charles Milverton while McArthur lists him as Charles Grafton. Robert G. Hill, "William Thomas," *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1355>, accessed July 2014.

<sup>306</sup> McArthur and Szamosi, p.6.

<sup>307</sup> Michael Mansbridge, *John Nash: a complete catalogue*, Oxford: Phaidon, 1991, p.257.

<sup>308</sup> Joseph Mordaunt Crook, "John Nash and the genesis of Regent's Park," *John Nash: Architect of the Picturesque*, ed. Geoffrey Tyack, Swindon: English Heritage, 2013, p.88.

although Thomas adopted Nash's Gothic vision, Thomas added his own signature skills and contributions.

In a slightly different Gothic mode is Warwick Place of 1834–36, consisting of two semi-detached villas executed in a castellated style directly adjacent to Grafton Villa (Figure 3.36). In keeping with the Regency picturesque-inspired Gothic of its neighbour, these dwellings present a stucco facade, but are rather simpler in execution of detail (Figure 3.37). The roofline and ornamentation, for instance, are relatively sparse and red brick is visible on the sides of each house, indicating that Thomas was operating with a lower budget than at the specifically commissioned Grafton Villa (Figure 3.38). The ornamentation on this residence is also less elaborate, but still includes a variety of different elements such as castellation which is additionally adorned with incised crosses on the bay windows and on parts of the roofline. Beyond this, it includes bulbous corbelled turrets, a smattering of Tudor hood moulds, a few pointed windows with figure-head label stops and limited strips of quatrefoil banding. In short, as at Grafton Villa, the motifs used are eclectic, whimsical, and fashionable, speaking to imagination rather than to any particular medievalizing tendencies. It is important to remember that this was common in the use of Gothic at the time; to put the house in context, it was finished in the same year that Pugin's debut book, *Contrasts*, was published. Pugin's awkward house at Alderbury, moreover, was built in 1835, and, in 1836, was still being critiqued for its exposed red brick and peculiar ornament.<sup>309</sup> Warwick Place, then, with its abundance of ornament appended to a symmetrical plan, can be seen to fall in line with contemporary Gothic expectations.

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<sup>309</sup> Critiques and Pugin's response on p.151, Rosemary Hill, "Pugin's small houses," *Architectural History*, Vol.46 (2003), pp.147–174.



A smaller and more pared down example of Thomas's Leamington Gothic is the terminal house of Lansdowne Circus (no. 18) of 1835 (Figure 3.39), where the basic layout of the house mimics that of Grafton Villa, though it is rather plainer in execution of detail. The lancets (single and grouped) as well as the four-centred arch framing the porch and the pointed doorway represent the only overt stylistic details. Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes clear that the porch is framed by clasping octagonal buttresses that taper as they rise, providing another subtle dimension of the Gothic style—albeit not an archaeologically correct detail (Figure 3.40). While the octagonal pier form might have been used to conjure up notions of the medieval past, the tapering displays the liberties that were taken with historical motifs during this period. It also demonstrates their lack of structural functionality. This house, however simple, appears rather dignified in its placement as a bookend to the small simple box-shaped semi-detached houses that line the circus. The only embellishment that these speculative houses possess are the delicate iron-work porches (Figure 3.41). Side by side, these plain houses make 18 Lansdowne Circus truly stand out, as it was the home of the project's developer<sup>310</sup> who, in all likelihood, would have wanted to distinguish himself from his patrons.

Following this, Thomas completed a number of houses in the same area of town in 1836.

Although the order in which they were undertaken is unclear, they are worth discussing as a group, particularly as they all share many similarities. Oak House, now the Leamington Liberal Club, at 87 Upper Holly Walk of 1836 (Figure 3.42) displays another stylistic variation on

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<sup>310</sup> McArthur and Szamosi, p.16.

Thomas's repertoire of Gothic motifs. This house, like Warwick Place, blends castellation with pointed elements though with different overall effect given the house's twin-gabled arrangement, which is similar to that at Grafton Villa. Unlike the simple triangular shapes of the gables at Grafton Villa, however, here Thomas makes use of curvilinear forms in a variant on a Dutch gable. This house, in combination with two of its neighbours, Elizabethan Place of 1836 (Figure 3.43) and The Furze of 1836, both by Thomas, highlights the desirability of a variety of styles in picturesque-inspired housing. Apparently, The Furze (now demolished) shared a similar elevation to that of Oak House<sup>311</sup> and Elizabethan Place also makes use of a twin gables, although in the form of a rather more traditional Dutch gable as compared to the liberties that were taken at Oak House. Despite similar rectilinear planning and massing of the elevation at each house, the subtle manipulation of styles creates a unique home for each potential client. Why Thomas landed on the twin-gabled arrangement is unclear although it is important to note that there were many examples of it to be found in the architectural literature at the time, such as Plate XVIII in Robert Lugar's *Architectural sketches* of 1815.<sup>312</sup>

Even though it presents its own individual character, Oak House takes advantage of many of the same features as Thomas's other Gothic houses in Leamington to date; the bay windows, hood moulds, pointed windows, castellation and figure-head corbels, to list but a few. Also present here is a variant on the quatrefoil banding found on Warwick Place, although the foils at Oak House have been subtly modified to take the form of an inventive sexfoil (Figure 3.44). Just as at

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<sup>311</sup> McArthur and Szamosi, p.13.

<sup>312</sup> Robert Lugar, Plate XVIII, *Architectural sketches for cottages, rural dwellings, and villas, in the Grecian, Gothic, and fancy styles, with plans suitable to persons of genteel life and moderate fortune: preceded by some observations on scenery and character proper for picturesque buildings*, London: Printed by W. Stratford for J. Taylor, 1815.

Warwick Place, the stucco facade, gables and castellation are revealed as sham when viewed from the side, as they all project well above the actual roofline, with no practical function (Figures 3.45 and 3.46).

The technique of making use of a sham facade is likewise used at Elizabethan Place of 1836. A curious blend of styles is employed at this house; as a whole, it appears rather classical in inspiration as it makes use of the Dutch gables, quoins, square-headed windows and stucco medallions, but the entrances are both composed of four-centred arches which are characteristic of Perpendicular Gothic (Figure 3.47). This mix of classical and Gothic details within one building highlights Thomas's picturesque-based training and demonstrates that prior to the onset of Pugin's ideals there was little to no regard for overall historical accuracy. As an additional note, the sculpture at Elizabeth Place has been credited to John Thomas, William's brother,<sup>313</sup> as he was supposedly in Leamington in 1836, the year that William was working on this house and preparing it for his own occupation. This attribution is based on the fine quality of the sculpture, although it is important to consider that William Thomas continued to use fine sculptural elements in his Canadian houses and so this attribution must not be taken at face value.

Different from the twin-gable type but on the same street is Comyn Villa of 1836 which is opposite Oak House and Elizabeth Place (Figures 3.48 and 3.49). This was one of three completed villas (and the only one to survive) that was to have been part of a grouping of Tudor-

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<sup>313</sup> McArthur and Szamosi, pp.12-13.

inspired houses on Holly Walk. This development was described in an 1837 Leamington guide which stated that:

When the whole is finished it will form one grand facade of the Tudor Gothic Style of Architecture, the beautiful effect of which, will be in perfect harmony with the fine and spacious wooded scenery with which it is surrounded. The land belonging to each villa is arranged as ornamental pleasure ground [...].<sup>314</sup>

The planning and construction of such a development show an investment in not only the style but the theories of the picturesque as well, and demonstrate that prospective builders placed faith in the Gothic style, knowing that it would draw clients. Though perhaps not authentically Tudor in the archaeological sense (for instance, because of the castellation above the porch), Thomas once again made use of his repertoire of Gothic motifs in order to create an eclectic and original villa.

It has been suggested that Thomas might have been responsible for other residences in Leamington during his tenure there; it has been claimed that one of two houses possibly built by Thomas still exists on Brandon Parade, although no identification has been made.<sup>315</sup> If any of the buildings on Brandon Parade were indeed built by Thomas, it seems likely that it would be 60 Brandon Parade, based on stylistic details such as the twin gables, finials, quatrefoil banding and figure-head corbels (Figures 3.50 and 3.51). The side porch topped with crenellation likewise indicates Thomas's hand given that it was used at Oak House and Comyn Villa. Even if this was not Thomas's work, it is clear that its designer was looking to Thomas's earlier houses nearby, testifying to his importance in and impact on the town.

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<sup>314</sup> J. Moncrieff, *Guide to Leamington Spa and its vicinity*, 7th ed., Leamington: Merridew, 1837, p.76.

<sup>315</sup> McArthur and Szamosi, p.136.

### **English influences used at Leamington**

Thomas's Leamington houses of all styles are reminiscent of the nearly contemporary works of John Nash in London. Indeed there are many similarities between Thomas's work and Nash's terraces for Regent's Park of the 1810s and 1820s as well as his houses in the neighbouring developments of Park Village East of 1824–1832 and Park Village West begun in 1832 and finished in its entirety in 1838, three years after Nash's death.<sup>316</sup> Nash's speculative terraces at Regent's Park each presented a different variant on the classical style and were built with a view to attracting a wealthy clientele. The detached and semi-detached houses of Park Village East and Park Village West were likewise each designed in a different style—although they were not restricted to classical motifs—and managed to attract a bourgeois clientele.<sup>317</sup> Presumably, Thomas also would have been trying to attract a certain level of society and wealth to his Leamington projects and so appears to have adopted Nash's successful strategy. This is evident in terms of the choice of style as employed for Thomas's various Leamington houses; the terraces on the main roads are in the classical style while the detached and semi-detached houses on the side streets make use of an abundance of styles. Beyond the choice of style, the execution of the houses can also be linked to Nash's particular idiom as all of the Leamington facades make similar use of whitewashed stucco and an abundance of heterogeneous stylistic elements.

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<sup>316</sup> Mordaunt Crook, p.91; Geoffrey Tyack, "John Nash and the Park Village," *The Georgian Group Journal*, 3, 1993, p.70.

<sup>317</sup> Mordaunt Crook, p.91.

The interest in a variety of styles—and the link to Nash’s work as a model—is further reinforced by Thomas’s use of a curving classical terrace in Leamington, Lansdowne Terrace which was built to follow the bend in the road (Figure 3.52). This can be seen as an echo of Nash’s Park Crescent of 1812–22 which borders the south end of Regent’s Park in London and was also curved to adapt to its urban setting (Figure 3.53). Although both make use of the same general classical style of the building and sweeping curvature, Thomas’s version can be read as a simpler version (most likely due to a lower budget).

This multiplicity of styles appears to have been a deliberate strategy used at Leamington in order to create an interesting cityscape. It seems that, once again, this concept was borrowed from Nash, whose brilliant work as a city planner and whose mark on the modern cityscape of London, in particular, are beyond compare. Though each house in Leamington may not have been wholly picturesque of its own accord (in terms of their symmetry, for instance), the ensemble of all of Thomas’s houses was picturesque in an urban conception of the term. This is explained by Joseph Mordaunt Crook in relation to Nash’s developments of Park Village East and West as follows:

In visual terms, [these developments] were pictorially conceived on kinetic principles. Like Regent’s Park itself, each village was designed for the mobile spectator. As the spectator perambulates, or drives, a sequence of images unfolds, kinetically adjusted and pictorially composed. That is Nash’s concept of the urban picturesque.<sup>318</sup>

In much the same manner, Thomas’s individual houses are perhaps not all individually spectacular, but when viewed as part of a thoughtfully planned, eclectic cityscape, the ensemble

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<sup>318</sup> Mordaunt Crook, p.91.

of closely grouped houses is revealed as a carefully orchestrated picturesque whole.

(Incidentally, Pugin's *Contrasts* of 1836 decried Nash's picturesque groupings in this manner as "nests of monstrosities."<sup>319</sup>) Thomas's picturesque sensibilities have already been highlighted in his houses, particularly in the application of detail, but it is also clear that he extended the principles to his architectural vision at large. Like Nash, Thomas was adept at keeping up with the styles of the day and had a keen sense of what people wanted, which was an important talent for a speculative architect. Both architects succeeded in taking advantage of the picturesque and of variety in design, both of which were highly desirable. These sought-after qualities were likewise reflected in the architectural literature of the time as discussed in detail in Chapter 2.<sup>320</sup>

Even though there are numerous similarities between Thomas and Nash, there is no indication of contact between the two architects. It is known that Nash undertook a minor project in Leamington in 1827, though this was well before Thomas set up his practice there.<sup>321</sup> It seems clear, however, that Thomas was aware of Nash's successful speculative developments in the capital and had them in mind when beginning his own speculative work at Leamington in 1832, though how he acquired this knowledge is uncertain. It is possible that he learned of Nash and his works in London through contemporary publications. For instance, detailed descriptions of each of the buildings and terraces of Regent's Park as well as the houses of Park Village East, are detailed in a book of 1827 titled *Metropolitan improvements or London, in the nineteenth century: being a series of views, of the new and most interesting objects in the British metropolis*

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<sup>319</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.31.

<sup>320</sup> Geoffrey Tyack, "John Nash and the Park Village," p.69.

<sup>321</sup> Nash worked on a bridge at Leamington with James Morgan in 1827. Geoffrey Tyack, "List of buildings by John Nash," *John Nash: Architect of the Picturesque*, ed. Geoffrey Tyack, Swindon: English Heritage, 2013, p.192.

*& its vicinity: from original drawings by Mr Thomas H. Shepherd*, by James Elmes.<sup>322</sup>

Importantly, as the title suggests, this text also provides drawings of each of the buildings. It is also likely that these and Park Village West were also published elsewhere, given that Nash was, by this time, a well-known public figure whose life and career were discussed and often lampooned in the press (in 1824, for instance, cartoonist George Cruikshank depicted Nash perched atop the spire of All Souls Church, Langham Place with the caption “Nashional Taste”).

While Thomas’s travels are unknown, it seems likely that he would have visited Regent’s Park in person at some point in time. It is known that, in 1851, Thomas traveled from Canada West in order to view his brother John’s display in the Great Exhibition in London.<sup>323</sup> Although this is an anachronistic detail, it demonstrates a willingness to travel a great distance. It is not inconceivable, then, that Thomas would have made the relatively short trip from Birmingham or Leamington to London at least once prior to the beginning of his work in the spa town. Whatever the exact means of the transmission of these ideas, the visual evidence suggests that Thomas possessed an intimate knowledge of Regent’s Park and its surrounding developments.

In 1837, Thomas left Leamington to set up practice in Birmingham. During this time, it seems that he worked on only one new Gothic house; Henwood Court in Handsworth of 1839.<sup>324</sup> This house appears to have been executed in a twin-gabled arrangement with prominent bargeboard and finials, combined with bay windows and stepped Tudor hood moulds as seen in many of his

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<sup>322</sup> James Elmes, *Metropolitan Improvements or London, in the Nineteenth Century: being a series of views, of the new and most interesting objects in the British metropolis & its vicinity: from original drawings by Mr Thomas H. Shepherd*, London: Jones & Co., 1827.

<sup>323</sup> Einarson, “William Thomas.”

<sup>324</sup> Hill, “William Thomas.”



Leamington houses.<sup>325</sup> Aside from this house, he built a church, St Matthew's, in Duddeston (Birmingham) in a Commissioners's Gothic style in 1839–40. Just as with his houses, this church was one that Thomas would repeat with subtle modifications upon arrival in Canada West. Gothic, however, was not the only style in which he was adept prior to immigration; in addition to working with a variety of Gothic motifs, Thomas also worked handily in the classical tradition. This is reinforced by the use of a multitude of styles in Leamington as well as in the publication of his book of 1843 titled *Designs for Monuments and Chimney Pieces*. This work features designs executed in a variety of styles including Grecian, Roman, Gothic and Elizabethan. Even though Thomas was writing this book and building houses at the same time that Pugin was working tirelessly to shift the popular taste toward archaeological Gothic, for instance with *True principles* of 1841 and with *An apology* of 1843, the change did not happen instantly, especially for houses, nor did Gothic become the only style used. This meant that it was necessary for architects to work in a number of styles in order to maximize their client base; it was not until the arrival of Pugin and his insistence on the supremacy of Gothic that certain architects began to hone in on a single style in which to work. Even still, the debate over which styles to use persisted throughout the century, and many, like Thomas, continued to practice a degree of flexibility throughout their careers. Given that there was still a widespread demand for variety in style, Thomas carried on with his successful formula in both Leamington and in his early Canadian career.

### **William Thomas in Toronto and Hamilton**

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<sup>325</sup> This house is illustrated in McArthur, on p.25, although it is labeled as “Endworth Court,” rather than “Henwood Court.”

Upon arriving in Toronto in 1843, Thomas set up practice immediately. While the precise reasons for his immigration are unknown, it was potentially due to his bankruptcy (resulting from a bank failure) in 1840, compounded with an economic downturn in the early 1840s.<sup>326</sup> It also seems likely that his speculative work in Leamington led to his interest in the rapidly growing city of Toronto; after all, Thomas was aware of the potential of a burgeoning urban environment and may have sought, once again, to exploit these possibilities. In Canada West, just as in Leamington, Thomas worked in a multitude of styles, working to accommodate the needs of each patron or commission: St Lawrence Hall, Toronto which he began designing in 1845, for instance, is classical in inspiration, while the contemporary St Paul's Anglican church in London of 1844–46, is Gothic having been built on the same formula as St Matthew's, Duddeston. Though he worked with diverse styles for religious and civic commissions, his most notable early houses were Gothic.

Thomas's first house commission in Canada West was the Bishop's Palace of 1845 (Figure 3.54) for Toronto's St Michael's Cathedral of 1845–48 (Figure 3.55). This house is situated directly north of St Michael's Cathedral and was designed for the Bishop, Michael Power (1804–47). Though the choice of style here was dictated by the house's close ties to the church, Thomas was able to draw on the finest aspects of his secular Gothic houses in Leamington, assembling them into a coherent and attractive whole. The original house is roughly rectangular in plan, consisting of two storeys with a central, projecting, enclosed porch topped by a gable—the third storey and

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<sup>326</sup> Einarson, "William Thomas"; Historical plaque in Leamington.

north wing were added a few years later by a different architect.<sup>327</sup> The house itself is rather simpler in elevation than many of the Gothic houses at Leamington, though its austerity might be due, in part, to the fact that it was the house of a cleric, and so was meant to reflect the Bishop's humble nature. This type of austerity in building clergy houses was described in the architectural literature at the time, for instance by Peter Frederick Robinson in 1830:

Presuming the incumbent to be a popular man in his village, much will depend upon the external appearance of his dwelling; and although some little decoration may be employed to increase its interest, the general character should make it modest and unassuming.<sup>328</sup>

While the general plan and elevation of the building are rather unremarkable at the Bishop's Palace, some of its elements and ornamentation certainly do aid in increasing visual interest. The ornamental details are quite rich, with carved stone heads acting as label stops and with a coat of arms and shields dotting the facade, perhaps reflecting the prestige and importance of the Bishop's position (Figure 3.56). These sculpted elements can be seen as a continuation of Thomas's attention to ornamental details in Leamington, particularly with the rich sculptural program of Elizabethan Place of 1836. Below the gable at the Bishop's Palace is a moulded string course with carved foliate bosses, which can find its match at Grafton Villa. This was apparently a favoured motif of Thomas's, as it would also subsequently be repeated three years later on Thomas's own home, Oakham House.

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<sup>327</sup> Robert Hill credits Joseph Sheard with the 1852 addition based on a tender call in the *British Colonist*. Robert G. Hill, "Joseph Sheard," *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1298>.

<sup>328</sup> P.F. Robinson, *Village architecture: being a series of picturesque designs for the inn, the schoolhouse, almshouses, markethouse, shambles, workhouse, parsonage, townhall, and church, forming a sequel to a work on rural architecture*, 4th ed., London: Henry G. Bohn, 1837, Design No. VIII, n.p.

Sculpted ornament aside, many other elements reflect Thomas's Leamington practice such as the gables and buttresses. The form of the gable on the porch, for instance, is similar to the form of the gables at Grafton Villa of eleven years earlier (Figure 3.57). In a subtle modification, the finials of Grafton Villa are replaced here by clasping octagonal buttresses, and might be construed as a slightly more elaborate version of those seen at 18 Lansdowne Circus of ten years earlier. The motifs are repeated on the front corners of the house, and echo the octagonal clasping buttresses found on the church itself (Figure 3.58).

Another element linking the house to the church is the brickwork frieze that divides the first and second storeys and extends the full width of the facade, wrapping the porch and its buttresses (Figure 3.59). The design within is executed simply in brick in a rough cross shape, or what could be interpreted as a quatrefoil pattern, which Thomas used on several occasions in Leamington, such as at Warwick Place (Figure 3.60). Although executed in different materials, it is important to remember that resources and skilled labour were rather more limited in mid-nineteenth-century Canada than they were in England, so even a seemingly tenuous link such as this can be interpreted as a similarity of intention.<sup>329</sup> On the note of skilled labour, for instance, Smith's *Canadian Gazetteer*, noted that, as of 1846, stone masons were in demand<sup>330</sup> and there appear to have been none based in Toronto.<sup>331</sup> While the frieze was executed in brick rather than stone, this demonstrates that labourers specializing in ornamental detail were sparse in the

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<sup>329</sup> On the note of skilled labour, for instance, Smith's *Canadian Gazetteer*

<sup>330</sup> Smith, *Smith's Canadian Gazetteer*, p.251.

<sup>331</sup> There appear only to have been ten stone masons in the province in 1846; five in Hamilton and five in Kingston. This makes sense as each city were in proximity to rich, local quarries, whereas no such resource was available in Toronto. Smith, *Smith's Canadian Gazetteer*, pp. 75–76, p.93.

province. As such, exceptions had to be made with a view toward economy, even when it came to the residences of prominent citizens. The idea of a copy, then, must be interpreted much more broadly with regard to form and material. This same pattern is also present on St Michael's cathedral itself in the stringcourse on the transepts. As such, perhaps, given the Catholic context, it might be interpreted as a variant on medieval details as published in English antiquarian books, such as the parapet of St Peter's, Oxford, illustrated in John Henry Parker's *A glossary of terms used in Grecian, Roman, Italian, and Gothic architecture* (Figure 3.61).<sup>332</sup> This type of connection would serve to connect this house to a direct English medieval source, which could have acted as an incredibly important signifier of status at the time. Any sort of direct link of this kind at this time in the colonies would have served to create historical legitimacy and to give the original occupant of the house, Bishop Michael Power, the weight of authority in a land that was in the midst of sorting out its hierarchies, particularly in terms of religion.

Further emphasizing the ties between the house and the church is the pattern of the corbel table below the stringcourse banding on the transepts of the church, which can be found at the top of the second storey of the house (this would have originally been directly below the roofline but now acts as a stringcourse dividing the second and third storeys). Thomas paid close attention to his motifs and made a careful effort to visually and stylistically link the house to the church, so that there would be no doubt as to the dwellers' profession and status. This type of link between clergy house and church was recommended in print in a number of books and periodicals at the time. In 1818, John Buonarotti Papworth noted that:

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<sup>332</sup> John Henry Parker, *A glossary of terms used in Grecian, Roman, Italian, and Gothic architecture*, 4th ed., Vol. II, Oxford: David Bogue, 1845, pl. 97.

The practice of designing the residence of a clergyman with reference to the characteristics of the church to which it belongs where the style of architecture is favourable to such selections, is desirable, not only as relates to a tasteful advantage, but as it becomes another and visible link of connexion between the church itself and the pastor who is devoted to its duties; and also leads the spectator very naturally from contemplating the dwelling, to regard the pious character of its inhabitant.<sup>333</sup>

Closer in date to the building of the Bishop's Palace in Toronto, it was printed in *The Ecclesiologist* that a clergyman's house "should [...] partake of the stable and permanent character of the church itself."<sup>334</sup> This connection between the two buildings is evident in both the details and the materials.

Thomas noted in the building specifications that white brick was to be used for the body of the house and that details such as the window frames, the cornice, the string course on the octagonal turrets and the window sills were to be executed in either Kingston limestone or "good lake stone."<sup>335</sup> There is no mention, however, of using stucco to cover the facade, which represents a fairly significant shift in practice since his work in Leamington. Perhaps, this was a response to Pugin's call for the use of truthful materials in *True Principles* of 1841. Although Pugin was well known by the time of Thomas's emigration in 1843, Pugin's views on houses were less well known and less visible in the built landscape of England at large. Additionally, it is difficult to assess his influence over Thomas with regard to houses as the creation of a house built on medieval principles was not yet desirable to the general public in Canada West. It is likely,

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<sup>333</sup> J.B. Papworth, *Rural residences, consisting of a series of designs for cottages, decorated cottages, small villas, and other ornamental buildings, accompanied by hints on situation, construction, arrangement and decoration, in the theory & practice of rural architecture; interspersed with some observations on landscape gardening*, London: R. Ackermann, 1818, p.45.

<sup>334</sup> "Parsonage houses," *The Ecclesiologist*, Nos. XXIII, XXIV, June 1843, p.146.

<sup>335</sup> William Thomas's specifications for the Roman Catholic Bishop of Toronto Mansion in Toronto, Ontario, C 11-881, Archives of Ontario.

however, that Thomas was made aware of Pugin's buildings in a direct fashion while he was still living in England; Thomas was living and working in Birmingham when Pugin's St Chad's Roman Catholic Church (later Cathedral) was begun in 1837, as well as the adjacent Bishop's House which was built from 1840–41. It would be strange if Thomas had worked as an architect in Birmingham without knowledge of the famous Pugin's work there, particularly as these two buildings were specifically published and discussed with images in Pugin's 1843 book *The present state*.

If Thomas had a sound awareness of Pugin's house practice at this time, however, it is certain that the principles were not the guiding force in the design of the Bishop's Palace in Toronto. Instead, he continued to work in the picturesque method in which he was trained. The formula had worked well for Thomas in the past, and through an examination of his subsequent works it will become apparent that he seemed content to continue in this manner for as long as the market required. Beyond this, the Bishop's House in Birmingham was perhaps the only Pugin house with which Thomas was familiar, which was an experiment in urban Gothic, with its tight plan complete with a walled-in courtyard (Figure 3.10). The setting in colonial Toronto was drastically different from that of industrial Birmingham and so the model would not have been appropriate to use even though both buildings served the same function. So while there may be small hints of Pugin's style to be found in Thomas's early Canadian work, such as the use of exposed brick, for this house he continued to rely on the tradition of Gothic houses in the style of John Nash.

For the Bishop's Palace, Thomas put his experience to good use, carefully selecting details with which he had experimented in the past in order to create a strong ensemble for his first major domestic commission in Toronto. While he was indeed working on other more prominent commissions in the city, it is likely that, due to its small size, the Bishop's Palace would have been the first to be finished in its entirety; as such, this would have been an incredibly important work for his burgeoning Canadian career.

Another house that makes perhaps even more striking use of Thomas's Leamington precedent is Arkledun in Hamilton of about 1846 (demol. 1930) (Figure 3.62). While this house has only been attributed to Thomas,<sup>336</sup> it becomes clear from even a brief glance at the house that it bears more than a little resemblance to Grafton Villa of ten years earlier. The general arrangement of the house matches closely in that it is predominantly rectilinear in plan and the facade consists of a twin-gabled arrangement as seen at Grafton Villa as well as in a number of his other Leamington houses. The gables are framed by finials that appear to be just like those at Grafton Villa, and at the Bishop's Palace, with a crenellated base topped with foliation. The front entrance, like the Bishop's Palace, appears to have been framed with buttresses, although they are purely ornamental in this case as the pointed entrance is flush with the surface of the walls. The small roundel piercing the side gable at the attic level is also reminiscent of the roundels as used in the gables at Henwood Court.

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<sup>336</sup> Robert G. Hill, "William Thomas," *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1355>.



Although the building has long since been demolished, making it difficult to analyze in great detail, there are remains of its stone sculptures that have been appended to a twentieth-century apartment building in Hamilton, near to where the house originally stood. The quality of the stone carvings is high just as at the Bishop's Palace as well as at Thomas's own house, Oakham House of 1848. The similarity between the monograms and the carved heads—and particularly those of the kings and queens (Figures 3.63–3.66)—indeed suggest the same designer.

The authorship of Arkledun becomes particularly evident when viewed in light of the elevation and plan of Oakham House of 1848, which likewise consists of a twin-gabled facade and can, again, be construed as a reworking of Grafton Villa of 1834–36 and of Arkledun of 1846 (Figure 3.67). The twin gables frame the entrance and similarly ornamental, elaborately carved finials are present on each side of the gables. This, however, should not to be mistaken for a direct copy.

While many details are repeated, there are differences in their articulation. For instance, there is also a similar string course with moulded foliate bosses repeated here, although unlike at Grafton Villa, where it is repeated numerous times, it is restricted in its placement at Oakham House to above the entrance only. Another similarity is the group of triple lancets on the second storey enclosed within a square frame. At Oakham House, however, the hood mould is simple with no stepping unlike the elaborate version at Grafton Villa. On the lower storey, a similar triple group of windows is given additional articulation with ogee heads topped by quatrefoils (Figure 3.68). At Grafton, shields were used in lieu of quatrefoils, displaying the ease with which (or lack of concern for which) Gothic motifs from different historical eras were blended by Thomas on either side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Although this house retains many of the features that Thomas used in England, it differs in that the brick and stone are now exposed. Just as with the Bishop's Palace, there is no stucco used at Oakham House, nor would there likely ever have been, given the deliberate band of polychromy in the brickwork that serves to distinguish the storeys. It is tempting to attribute the relative austerity of the details, as compared to his work from the 1830s, to the influence of Pugin, although, a hint of castellation above the door betrays Thomas's picturesque sensibilities (Figure 3.69). Likely in deference to the climate, this delicate woodwork ornament is well sheltered by the porch. This combination of Gothic motifs is also indicative of a lack of close attention to Pugin; never would Pugin have mixed, or would have condoned mixing Early English lancets with Decorated ogee arches and Perpendicular heraldic shields (as seen in stone above the entrance). Instead, this freely blended application of styles can be seen as an extension of John Nash's liberal approach to style and further emphasizes that Thomas was taking advantage of a new market in which to display the full extent of his stylistic range as learned and practiced in England.

Otherwise, the only sense in which he can be seen to be keeping up with Pugin's recommendations, in terms of houses, at this point in his career is in the fact that the house does not subscribe to façadism as did his English houses; the gables in this instance are part of the structure rather than simply ornamental. The materials are also given equal treatment and exposure on each side of the house, unlike several of his Leamington house which presented stucco facades with exposed brick sides.

Thomas's continued interest in intricate sculptural detail becomes evident in each of the label stops on the ground storey and each of the corbels supporting the finials, all of which take the form of carved stone heads (Figure 3.70). Perhaps Thomas was attempting to flaunt his station as one of the city's premier architects, using the house as a showpiece for his talents. This is a practice which was carried out by many prominent English architects, such as Sir John Soane with his house at Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, (Figure 3.71). Similar to the recently completed Bishop's Palace, Oakham House would have worked as an architectural calling card of sorts; a notion that is reinforced by Thomas's permanent autograph (WT) above the entrance (Figure 3.72). Thomas's use of Gothic for Oakham House combines many of his previous efforts and indicates a talent and a proclivity for the Gothic style.

Furthering Thomas's adherence to a particular type throughout his first decade in the colony is Inglewood in Hamilton of about 1850 or 1853 (Figure 3.73). Here, Thomas repeats the twin-gable arrangement, albeit in this instance, not on the facade but on the side of the house. The facade is a symmetrical three-bay composition with a central gable and entrance, which is framed by a one-story porch (Figure 3.74). Though the porch is a feature that is new to Thomas's houses (as are the use of bargeboard and wooden finials), this can be interpreted as a reflection of the growing interest in pattern books in the North American context at the time. Porches, in particular, were an element promoted by American pattern-book writers such as Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–52) whose popular books featured porches on almost all designs for houses. Even with such aspects from contemporary pattern books, there are still other traces of Thomas's

earlier works evident at Inglewood, such as the Tudor hood moulds executed in stone with intricate label stops as well as his signature use of a string course dotted with foliate bosses. This house also marks a change for Thomas in that while the overall layout of the house is predominantly rectangular in its footprint, some asymmetry has been introduced, which is evident in the separately roofed side gables as well as in the placement of the chimneys. This sort of planning indicates that Pugin's influence may indeed have been creeping into Thomas's works at this time, and into the Canadian context at large. As early as the 1840s, indications of Pugin's thoughts with regard to planning began to manifest themselves in print, but with no sign of their use in Thomas's work until this time. In the June 1843 issue of *The Ecclesiologist*, for instance, the notion of the dominance of classical planning is discussed: "The exterior ought to be adapted to the requirements of the internal arrangements, instead of the latter being made to accommodate, and in a manner *pack into*, a preconceived uniform shell."<sup>337</sup> This type of consideration can be seen at Inglewood but is one that was not evident in his relatively rectangular plans for the Bishop's Palace, Arkledun and Oakham House.

Beyond planning, it is clear that Thomas was familiar with Pugin's writings at this time in a way that he may not have been with his houses of the mid-1840s. Thomas's younger brother, John, worked as a sculptor on the Houses of Parliament in London<sup>338</sup> where Pugin was responsible for the ornamentation and overall decorative program. Although it is possible that John Thomas and Pugin never worked together directly, it is certain that Thomas would have at least known of the

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<sup>337</sup> "Parsonage houses," *The Ecclesiologist*, Nos. XXIII, XXIV, June 1843, pp.146–147.

<sup>338</sup> "The late John Thomas, Sculptor," *The Illustrated London News*, Vol.32, August 30, 1862, pp.231–232; Benedict Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982, pp.232–234.

famous Pugin. It is also clear that William Thomas kept in touch with John when they were both living in England and it is evident that he maintained an interest in his work as at the Toronto Society of Arts Exhibition of 1847, Thomas exhibited plaster models of details from the Houses of Parliament that were executed by John.<sup>339</sup> This underscores an interest in his brother's career, which by this time, surely would have included a familiarity with Pugin in some capacity.

Beyond the family connection, Thomas made reference to Pugin's principles of design in his 1849 submission for St James's Cathedral, Toronto.<sup>340</sup> This shows that Thomas was aware of Pugin and was familiar with his writings by the end of 1849. It is not surprising, then, that a house like Inglewood, like his churches at this time, began to show an increased sensitivity to Pugin's theories.

Throughout the 1840s, Thomas continued to work in a multitude of styles in Canada West, not only for major commissions but for houses as well. For example, he built a villa in the Italian style on Gerrard Street in 1846–47<sup>341</sup> and a terrace on Wellington Street in 1847, which was presumably in a classically inspired style given that his Leamington terraces were also classical in nature.<sup>342</sup> Due to the fact that many of his other domestic commissions throughout the decade are now demolished and undocumented, the stylistic orientation of these remain unknown. It can be reasonably deduced, however, that they would have been varied in style given the documented houses as well as the seamless continuity from his picturesque-based English

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<sup>339</sup> Toronto Society of Arts: first exhibition catalogue, p.18, Item 346.

<sup>340</sup> The Sept 10, 1849 submission stated that Thomas expected his "opinion to fully coincide with his [Pugin's] on the principles of Design." McArthur, p.36; Geoffrey Simmins, *Fred Cumberland: building the Victorian dream*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997, p.118.

<sup>341</sup> Toronto Society of Arts: first exhibition catalogue, p.16, Item 294.

<sup>342</sup> Toronto Society of Arts: first exhibition catalogue, p.16, Item 305.

practice. Based on the evidence that survives, it is clear that Thomas continued to be invested in the creation of a picturesque cityscape in the manner of Leamington Spa. Overall, it is clear that Thomas's early career in Canada was an extension of his John Nash-influenced work in England. By choosing and combining favourite elements from his English Gothic houses, Thomas was able to create successful Gothic showpieces for the New World. Further, while it is possible to detect subtle traces of Pugin's influence in Thomas's early Canadian houses, it was not until the demand arose in Canada West, in the mid-1850s, that Thomas began to practice in a manner that was more closely related to the new style of English Gothic for houses, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

### **Henry Bowyer Lane in Toronto**

Working in much the same manner as William Thomas was Henry Bowyer Lane (1817–78)<sup>343</sup> whose period of residency in Canada West lasted only six short years. Lane was presumably trained in England prior to his departure for Canada in 1841, although nothing is known about where he trained or with whom.<sup>344</sup> Lane arrived in Cobourg in 1841 and relocated to Toronto in 1842, leaving North America altogether in 1847.<sup>345</sup> During his stay, Lane built and submitted entries for competitions for several major buildings, including churches, schools and civic buildings, but his complete domestic commissions in Canada West only numbered two. Both of

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<sup>343</sup> Robert G. Hill "Henry Bowyer Joseph Lane," *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800–1950*, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1430>. There is some speculation as to the birth and death date of Lane, though Hill has tracked his movements beyond his return to England. It appears that Lane worked in Australia after his time in England, though this was not known in earlier documents. It is for this reason that Hill's dates are used.

<sup>344</sup> Stephen Otto and Marion Bell MacRae, "Henry Bowyer Joseph Lane" *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed September, 2013, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/lane\\_henry\\_bowyer\\_joseph\\_8E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/lane_henry_bowyer_joseph_8E.html).

<sup>345</sup> Stephen Otto, *Henry Bowyer Lane*, [S.I: s.n.],[between 1977 and 1983], p.1.

the houses were built in Toronto, and of the two, only one was Gothic in style. This was built for George William Allan (1822–1901) and later became known as Homewood.

Born in 1822 in York (Toronto), Allan studied law at Upper Canada College, acted as alderman, became mayor of Toronto for the year of 1855, served on Legislative Council, and following Confederation, was called to the Senate.<sup>346</sup> Allan's house was built by Lane in 1847–48 and is said to have been built following Allan's 1846 marriage to Louisa Maud Robinson.<sup>347</sup> Not only did Allan travel extensively in his youth, but he was also an ardent patron of the arts and so the choice of style for his home would have been no accident.<sup>348</sup> Allan's importance in the city of Toronto was such that he had two houses built for him in the span of seven years by prominent architects; Lane's Gothic creation of 1847 and a fashionable Second Empire house in 1854 by the Toronto firm of Cumberland and Storm. The precise reason for the building of this second home is not known, but may have been due to the death of Robinson in 1852.<sup>349</sup>

Although the house was demolished in 1964,<sup>350</sup> specifications, plans and a variety of drawings do, in fact, survive. There are two sets of drawings that show variations on the facade, and are both dated to August 1847. In one, figurehead label stops are used for the hood moulds of the upper windows and intricate half-bodied angel label stops were used for hood mould above the

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<sup>346</sup> "Hon. George William Allan," *A cyclopaedia of Canadian biography: being chiefly men of the time*, ed. George Maclean Rose, Toronto: Rose Publishing Company, 1888, pp.781–782; Henry James Morgan, *The Canadian men and women of the time: a handbook of Canadian biography*, Toronto: W. Briggs, 1898, p.14.

<sup>347</sup> Morgan, p.15.

<sup>348</sup> "Hon. George William Allan," pp.781–782.

<sup>349</sup> Liz Lundell, *The estates of old Toronto*, Erin, Ontario: The Boston Mills Press, 1997, p.58.

<sup>350</sup> Hill, "Henry Bowyer Joseph Lane."

main entrance (Figure 3.75). In the second, plain Tudor hood moulds were used for the upper windows and simple geometric label stops were used for the main entrance (Figure 3.76). A photo of 1912 reveals that the simpler version was the final version, and this is likewise indicated in the drawings; even though they bear the same date, the elevation with the figure label stops has pencil marks seemingly added in after the coloured wash in order to make window jambs more prominent, thereby, signaling that a change was to be made (Figure 3.77). The attic windows likewise have pencil marks calling for the addition of a stone lintel. These details aside, the overall vision of the house was consistent as the remaining ornament was drawn the same way in both versions. The body of the house was of red brick while all of the accents were executed in white stone, including, for instance, the thick white string course that separated the ground and first floors and which rose up to frame a panel with a shield and the date above the main entrance (Figure 3.78).<sup>351</sup> The large white quoins on the red brick body mimic Lane's strategy at his earliest Toronto church, Little Trinity of 1843 (Figure 3.79), and represent a classical intrusion into this Gothic home.

The main body of the house was roughly square in plan, with a servants's wing extending out to the rear (or north) side (Figure 3.80). The building specifications further point to the square nature of the house as it is described as being 55 by 43 feet, without the bay windows and projection of the dining room on the east side of the house.<sup>352</sup> The servants's quarters were confined to the back of the house while the kitchen was in the basement, directly below the

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<sup>351</sup> The date on the panel reads 1848 and the building specifications estimate an end date of December 1, 1848, and so it is reasonable to assume that the house proceeded according to plan.

<sup>352</sup> Henry Bowyer Lane, specifications "Mansion for George Allan Esq. in the domestic Gothic Style." Archives of Ontario (Reference code C 11-499).



servants's quarters, likely in an effort to keep smells out of the main house. This was a strategy that dates back at least to the late-Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio (1508–80) whose famous treatise, *The Four Books on Architecture* of 1570, detailed that the service rooms should be kept out of sight.<sup>353</sup> At Homewood, in addition to the kitchen and similar in strategy, the dairy, wine storage, beer cellar and other cellars, were also placed in the basement. The inclusion of these extensive service rooms highlights Allan's importance and distinguishes the house as such.

The roughly rectangular arrangement of the plan may have been adopted so as to reflect the common practice of compact planning for houses in the province—for ease of construction and heating—as seen in nearby classically inspired homes such as The Grange of 1817 (Figure 3.81) or the nearly contemporary house for J. Cochrane of 1845 by John George Howard. Even so, the Allan house differed from its classical counterparts with regard to plan in several significant ways. In the typical fashion of the time, there was a central stair hall, although in this case, the rooms surrounding it were not distributed evenly and symmetrically. The rooms were all rectangular, but were not of equal size. Of these rooms on the ground floor, three of the four had bay windows and on the first floor, there was only one bay window, all of which interrupted the expectation of pure symmetry. In addition to this break with symmetry, a variety in interior planning was also displayed on the first floor where the landing and attic stairs pushed into the space of the east bedroom (Figure 3.82). A further disruption in plan that can be read on the elevation is the dining room on the east side of the house which was turned on axis and pushed out beyond the wall of the adjacent room and corridor; the fireplace was likewise oriented this

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<sup>353</sup> Andrea Palladio, *The four books on architecture*, translated by Robert Tavernor and Richard Schofield, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002, pp.77–78.

way and was located in the middle of the house rather than on the outside wall. This was likely as much a practical consideration as it was an aesthetic one; so placed it could serve two adjacent rooms and further add variety to the skyline. It is possible that this was Lane's response to Pugin's notion of practical planning, in which case it represents an early instance of this type of planning in the province.

Though the footprint of the house was roughly symmetrical overall, the elevation demonstrated variety, at least from one side to the next. In fact, it is only the front facade of the house that displayed pure symmetry with a twin-gabled arrangement, not unlike William Thomas's Arkledun in Hamilton of 1846. The east side of the house featured a slightly projecting gabled wing (due to the off-axis arrangement of the dining room) and projected even further beyond the rectangular confines with a two-storey bay window (Figure 3.83). The north side elevation of the house, or the rear, was quite simple, consisting primarily of the service rooms, although it featured a large tracery window which broke the continuous line of the string course that wrapped the entire house (Figure 3.84). This church-like window would have lit the stair hall within in a rather striking manner and served to add visual interest to an otherwise plain and utilitarian exterior surface, although its primary purpose would have been to add to the splendour of the interior. This type of ecclesiastical-inspired window would have been problematic for Pugin in that its character was not in keeping with the domestic function of the house.<sup>354</sup> While Pugin did indeed use pointed, traceried windows in some of his houses (for instance at The Grange, Ramsgate), they were used to light chapel spaces and so were deemed appropriate for

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<sup>354</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.42.

use. As it was, the placement of this elaborate window at Homewood would have been inconsistent with Pugin's notions of propriety in architecture. To the immediate right of this window was a blank wall topped by a chimney. This type of void would have been unacceptable in a classically-inspired house but was used by Pugin, for instance, at his own home at Alderbury in 1835. Its inclusion here, however, rather than being a nod to Pugin, may well have been due to the fact that few would have seen this functional side of the house. The west side of the house was rather simple as it was dominated by a single gable with grouped chimneys, square-headed windows on the first floor and a roundel enclosing a shield at attic level (Figure 3.85). Also to be found on this side of the house was what appears to have been either a small conservatory or possibly a green house, which given Allan's interest in horticulture, seems likely.<sup>355</sup>

Though the somewhat irregular planning and varied elevation of this house suggest a potential knowledge of Pugin, there are perhaps more elements that imply a predominantly picturesque lineage. Reinforcing this notion is the fact that Lane arrived in Canada in 1841, the same year that Pugin's *True Principles* was first published. While this does not mean that Lane could not have read Pugin, it does mean that Lane was trained in the 1830s. This was a time before Pugin's principles regarding houses truly became crystallized in his own practice and before they were applied by other architects in any kind of consistent or widespread way. It is tempting to think that Lane might have at least had a knowledge of Pugin's written works, particularly as there is a "Mr. H. Lane" listed as a donor to a Pugin memorial fund in the back of Benjamin Ferrey's

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<sup>355</sup> Allan was a member and president of the Horticultural Society of Toronto and made large land donations to horticultural interests. "Hon. George William Allan," *A cyclopaedia of Canadian biography: being chiefly men of the time*, p.782.

*Recollections of A.N. Welby Pugin, and his father, Augustus Pugin; with notices of their works.*<sup>356</sup>

The donor, however, may not be Toronto's Henry Bowyer Lane as there is, in fact, a different "H Lane" listed in Howard Colvin's *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects*. This other Lane was born c.1787 with no date of death given,<sup>357</sup> so it is possible that he might have been alive and contributing to the fund in 1861 at the time of publication of Ferrey's book. It may also be an entirely different "H. Lane" altogether. It is also important to consider that Henry Bowyer Lane signed all of his architectural drawing's for Allan's house as "H.B. Lane." So if, by chance, Lane's middle initial was indeed left out of *Recollections* (a possibility given Ferrey's misprint of Pugin's initials in the title of the book), it is still difficult to guarantee with any certainty that Lane was aware of Pugin during his brief stay in Canada. Until this is determined for certain, the architectural drawings must stand alone.

As revealed by the drawings, then, the majority of ornamental elements speak to a picturesque brand of Gothic rather than to the new, archaeologically correct style of Gothic as backed by Pugin. One revealing aspect of the design is the use Perpendicular Gothic detailing on the house; Perpendicular was greatly favoured in England in the early part of the nineteenth-century and condemned by Pugin's writings as well as those of his followers. In the 1853 article "On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture," in *The Ecclesiologist*, for instance, George Edmund Street stated that one of the main faults of so-called Gothic houses in England was "the too close copying in all our works of the latest kind of Third-Pointed work without much attempt

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<sup>356</sup> Benjamin Ferrey, *Recollections of A.N. Welby Pugin, and his father, Augustus Pugin; with notices of their works*, London: E. Stanford, 1861, p.472.

<sup>357</sup> Colvin, p.595.

at adaptation.”<sup>358</sup> The use of this style is demonstrated at the Allan mansion by the heraldic shield motifs which adorned various surfaces around the house as well as by the use of four-centred arches. If the exterior does not adequately express Lane’s early-nineteenth century tendencies, it is only necessary to examine the simplified Perpendicular tracery in the bay windows, and, perhaps even more tellingly, the mantelpiece for the dining room in which a four-centred arch is topped by crenellations and small crenellated turrets, with small false buttresses (Figures 3.86 and 3.87). This sort of sham ornamentation and crenellation are what Pugin called “trifling details” that serve to damage the reputation of the Gothic style.<sup>359</sup> Contradicting the Perpendicular character of these details was the large flowing bargeboard that overwhelmed each gable on the facade and further served to sever strong ties to Pugin. This use of bargeboard creates a strong alliance with English picturesque practice and further hints at the influence of contemporary American pattern books which, around this time, began to feature bargeboard prominently. The use of superfluous ornamentation and the borrowing from a variety of Gothic traditions displays an inconsistency in character which was completely at odds with Pugin’s mandate.

Although Lane did not build any more Gothic houses in Canada West (and possibly no more in his subsequent Australian career),<sup>360</sup> this Gothic residence with its prominent owner would have made an indelible mark on the face of the city of Toronto. Although its vocabulary was still

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<sup>358</sup> George Edmund Street, “On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture,” *The Ecclesiologist*, No.XCV (New series, No. LIX), April 153, pp.70–80 at p.70.

<sup>359</sup> Augustus Welby Pugin, *The true principles of pointed or Christian architecture*, London: J. Weale, 1841, p.40.

<sup>360</sup> It seems as though Lane’s Australian career primarily involved civic commissions. Hill, “Henry Bowyer Joseph Lane.”

deeply rooted in the picturesque, its lack of perfect symmetry in ground plan and in elevation hinted at new things to come.

### **Fred Cumberland in Toronto**

Another Toronto architect who worked in a Gothic style similar to Lane and to Thomas is Frederic William Cumberland (1820–81) who arrived in Toronto in 1847. Cumberland trained in London, England, as an architect and surveyor.<sup>361</sup> Though his training appears to have been unremarkable, it is clear from Cumberland's correspondences and buildings that he was nonetheless up to date with architectural theory, at least in terms of church-building.

Cumberland's first major commission in Canada West, for instance, was a Gothic church; the Church of the Ascension in Hamilton of 1850 (Figure 3.88). This church displays a knowledge of the principles of Pugin and The Ecclesiological Society (Pugin's Anglican counterparts), with its separately articulated nave, transepts, chancel and porch as well as the placement of the tower on the south-west corner.<sup>362</sup> The interior is likewise expressive of new developments in architectural theory as it presents an open-timber roof (promoted by Pugin)<sup>363</sup> as well as a raised chancel distinct from the nave which is lit by three lancet windows (Figure 3.89); this arrangement of the chancel was aggressively promoted by The Ecclesiological Society in *A few words to church builders* of 1841<sup>364</sup> and in their journal, *The Ecclesiologist*. Cumberland's next church, the

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<sup>361</sup> Geoffrey Simmins, *Fred Cumberland: building the Victorian dream*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997, pp.4–5.

<sup>362</sup> On distinguishing the nave and chancel, see The Cambridge Camden Society, *A few words to church builders*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1841, pp.3–4; on the positioning of the tower, see *A few words to church builders*, p. 6.

<sup>363</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, pp.34–37.

<sup>364</sup> The Cambridge Camden Society, *A few words to church builders*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1841, p.3.

winning design for St James's Anglican Cathedral in Toronto, was also Gothic—as specified by the competition committee—and further reinforces his knowledge with regard to the proper application of Gothic to churches as it continues to make use of these same principles.<sup>365</sup>

One of Cumberland's first forays into houses (with his new partner, William G. Storm), however, was rather less adept with regard to the use of Gothic style. Instead of drawing on current theory and following Pugin's lead, the parsonage for Little Trinity Anglican Church of 1853 looks back to the application of Gothic as understood earlier in the century (Figure 3.90). This symmetrical red-brick box was to be built in the Gothic style in order to match the church to which it belonged, Little Trinity Anglican Church of 1843 by Henry Bowyer Lane (Figure 3.79).

According to custom, the parsonage was made to resemble the church in both materials and in style, although the style of the house is not readily apparent. The church is of a Perpendicular Gothic common to many early-nineteenth-century churches in the province that were inspired by the 1818 Commissioners's churches in England. The parsonage, however, is classical in layout and the Gothic details are somewhat difficult to detect, not for their subtlety in the manner of Pugin's houses, but because they appear to have been heavily influenced by classicism. For instance, the windows on the actual building appear to be round-headed. Their appearance is made even more classicizing in proximity to the white brick dentils and prominent quoins. This incongruous blend of stylistic motifs hints at a source of inspiration far-removed from the cutting-edge Gothic of Pugin and The Ecclesiological Society. In fact, in Cumberland's papers

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<sup>365</sup> Although it is likely that Cumberland read Pugin's books, it is possible that he only owned one book by Pugin, *A Glossary of ecclesiastical ornament and costume* of 1844, which would not have been very practical for building purposes (Simmins, p.295). Cumberland's partner, William G. Storm, however, had a copy of both *True principles* of 1841 and *An apology* of 1843, although it is unclear as to what date these were acquired (Marianna May Richardson, *Ontario Association of Architects: centennial collection*, Toronto: Ontario Association of Architects, 1990).

there is a sketched copy of a small cottage from Peter Frederick Robinson's *Rural Architecture* of 1823, a picturesque-based pattern book, from which he borrowed the bargeboard for use on Little Trinity (Figures 3.91–3.93).

Cumberland's debt to the picturesque is also alluded to by the plan (Figure 3.94). For this house, Cumberland used the type of plan and massing that he would use for all of his houses up to about 1855 regardless of style, for instance, the John Hawkins Hagarty House in Toronto of 1852, the Casimir Stanislaus Gzowski House in Toronto of c.1854–55 and the William Hume Blake House in Toronto of 1855–56. Despite being executed in classical and Italianate styles, these houses can be read almost identically in terms of plan and elevation as all were square in plan with a projecting central bay. In terms of interior arrangement, each house consisted of a central hallway around which all rooms were evenly distributed. The one exception to the otherwise symmetrical nature of the parsonage is that the entrance was designed to have been placed on the west side of the porch rather than directly facing the street.<sup>366</sup> This appears not to have been carried out to plan and so the house appears as did most houses in the province to date. Though the Gzowski House and the Blake House were built after the parsonage, the entire sequence of these early houses helps to demonstrate the formula with which Cumberland was comfortable and which clearly remained in demand in Canada West, even for the fashionable elite. The conservative planning of the parsonage serves to show that, despite his of-the-moment designs for churches, there was little experimentation with regard to domestic design during this period in Cumberland's career.

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<sup>366</sup> There was also a discreet entrance on the west side of the house that was to have been attached to a covered walkway leading to the privies.



Surely Cumberland would have been familiar with Pugin's writings and perhaps, indeed, some of his works as had the opportunity to visit England in 1851 as a representative of Canada for the Great Exhibition.<sup>367</sup> It seems that, while in London, Cumberland visited with Charles Barry, whom he may have known prior to emigration or to whom he may have been introduced on this particular trip. Either way, a personal relationship is suggested in that on his 1851 visit to London, Cumberland visited with him and was given a tour of the new Houses of Parliament by Barry's son.<sup>368</sup> It is important to note that Pugin was responsible for the ornamental program at the Houses of Parliament and that he had a large display at the Great Exhibition itself. Cumberland also had a chance to travel while in England and so may have seen some of Pugin's houses or perhaps those of William Butterfield (1814–1900), who was, by then gaining fame as the favourite architect of The Ecclesiological Society.

This outdated parsonage for Little Trinity may seem strange given Cumberland's proficiency with Gothic theory for churches (and his possible knowledge of Puginian theory for houses prior to its construction in 1853), but it demonstrates that, at this date, the impact of Pugin's ideas for houses was limited and that there was not yet a market for such houses in the context of Canada West. Cumberland, however, would become one of the most proficient practitioners of the new Gothic style for houses in a matter of a few years, which will be examined at length in the following chapter.

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<sup>367</sup> Shirley G. Morriss, "The nine-year odyssey of a High Victorian Goth: three churches by Fred Cumberland," *Journal of Canadian Art History*, Vol.II (1975), p.49; Simmins, p.68.

<sup>368</sup> Simmins, p.69.

## Kingston

Outside of Hamilton and Toronto (the largest city in Canada West), activity was rather limited regarding Gothic houses in the province. If the most metropolitan city in the province was only turning out a handful of Gothic houses, then it should come as no great surprise that there were not many other areas where the style was to be found. As such, the only other city where there is any Gothic house—building by architects at this time is Kingston. With the union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841, Kingston was selected as capital of the newly formed Province of Canada; a position it held from 1841 to 1844, at which time the capital was moved to Montreal. Prior to this devastating blow, Kingston was being rapidly built up in order to become commensurate with its assigned status. At this time:

Handsome stone buildings were erected, and the inhabitants, supposing that Kingston would continue to be the capital of the Province, went to considerable expense in improving, not merely the public buildings, but also their places of business and private dwellings.<sup>369</sup>

It appears, however, that the first Gothic residence in the city was not built until well after the removal of the seat of government from Kingston. This move caused the population to drop drastically and delivered “a great shock to the town,” but as of 1846, the city was “beginning to recover its prosperity.”<sup>370</sup> As such, building likewise resumed and a number of Gothic houses were built by local architects. Reflecting the pattern as seen in Toronto and Hamilton, the first Gothic houses built in Kingston were not built according to Puginian principles, but rather, looked back to English picturesque precedent.

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<sup>369</sup> Smith, *Smith's Canadian gazetteer*, p.91.

<sup>370</sup> Smith, *Smith's Canadian gazetteer*, p.91

The first such house was Elizabeth Cottage of 1846, built by Edward Horsey (1809–69) for his own occupation (Figure 3.95). The influences for this house have been attributed to American pattern books,<sup>371</sup> though it is important to consider that Horsey was English and built this house after a stay in England from 1839 to 1841. It is therefore more likely that the brand of Gothic as used at Elizabeth Cottage came from English pattern books or from recently built Gothic houses in England. The type of façadism as used at Elizabeth Cottage, for instance, is reflective of that as used by the likes of John Nash or of William Thomas at Leamington. The rise of the gable well above the actual roofline of the house, for instance, can be seen at Thomas’s Oak House of 1836 in Leamington (Figure 3.45). This type of falsehood was apparently such a common feature for English buildings that it was critiqued by Pugin on numerous occasions.<sup>372</sup> Aside from contemporary houses in England, it is possible that the design was derived from English pattern books, particularly given its use of large, non-essential ornament and peculiar arrangement (the left or west wing was added by William Newlands Jr in 1883).<sup>373</sup> These features can be seen to reflect designs such as Plate XVIII (Figure 3.96)<sup>374</sup> printed in Robert Lugar’s *Architectural sketches for cottages, rural dwellings and villas* of 1815 or “A Gothic cottage, designed for a

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<sup>371</sup> Jennifer McKendry, “A reassessment of the architectural history of Elizabeth Cottage, Kingston,” *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 2010, pp.27–34, at pp.30–31.

<sup>372</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.44; Pugin, “Contrasted Chapels” plate, *Contrasts*, n.p.

<sup>373</sup> Robert G. Hill, “William Newlands Jr.,” *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, accessed August 2014, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1450>.

<sup>374</sup> Robert Lugar, *Architectural sketches for cottages, rural dwellings and villas, in the Grecian, Gothic, and Fancy styles, with plans; suitable for persons of genteel life and moderate fortune, preceded by some observations on scenery and character proper for picturesque buildings*, London: W. Stratford, Crown Court, 1815, plate XVIII.

vicarage or farm house” (Figure 3.97)<sup>375</sup> and “A cottage orné, designed to combine with garden scenery” (Figure 3.98)<sup>376</sup> printed in J. B. Papworth’s *Rural residences* originally published in 1818 and reprinted in 1832. Designs such as these, though perhaps not practical for the Canadian context, made use of picturesque principles and an abundance of ornament, all of which were desirable traits in the early–nineteenth century. While American pattern–book designs indeed carried on certain aspects of the picturesque, their approach to planning and to ornamentation was rather more practical than that as found at Elizabeth Cottage. Beyond this, if American books were used, it would have been an incredibly early manifestation of their style in Canada, particularly as built by an English–born architect. As such, it seems much more likely that Edward Horsey was influenced by English picturesque architecture than American pattern books, just as were his contemporaries in Toronto.

One of the contractors with whom Horsey worked in Kingston was John Power (1816–82), who sailed to Canada West from England “with some members of the Horsey family” in 1846.<sup>377</sup> Perhaps then, Power worked on Elizabeth Cottage immediately upon his arrival in Kingston, given the connections he had made on the voyage. Regardless, it appears that he was close with the family and may have worked with Edward Horsey at some point in time, and thereby would

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<sup>375</sup> J. B. Papworth, *Rural residences, consisting of a series of designs for cottages, decorated cottages, small villas, and other ornamental buildings; accompanied by hints on situation, construction, arrangement, and decoration, in the theory and practice of rural architecture: interspersed with some observations on landscape gardening*, 2nd ed., London: R. Ackermann, 1832, Plate IX.

<sup>376</sup> J. B. Papworth, *Rural residences, consisting of a series of designs for cottages, decorated cottages, small villas, and other ornamental buildings; accompanied by hints on situation, construction, arrangement, and decoration, in the theory and practice of rural architecture: interspersed with some observations on landscape gardening*, 2nd ed., London: R. Ackermann, 1832, Plate V.

<sup>377</sup> Jennifer McKendry, “A case study in the attributions of two important Kingston Villas,” *RACAR: revue d’art canadienne/Canadian Art Review*, vol.16, no.1 (1989), p.49.

have been familiar with the Gothic house in some capacity. In 1852, Power likewise tackled the design of a Gothic home in Kingston called McIntosh Castle (Figure 3.99). This home, like Elizabeth Cottage, appears to have been picturesque in influence, resembling, as it does, a miniature castle. This impression is in large part due to its use of local limestone and perhaps even more so to its large central turret, topped with crenellation. Just as with the false gable at Elizabeth Cottage, the crenellated front of the turret rises above the actual house without any seeming communication with the rest of the house; it appears to be simply a showpiece for the sake of the appearance of the facade. An incongruous blend of Gothic styles has been applied here as the medievalizing tower is mixed with Old English gables, complete with a steeply pitched roof, fanciful bargeboard and large finials. Although this house was designed a number of years after the completion of Pugin's home at Ramsgate—which also combined steeply pitched gables and a tower (Figure 3.16)—it is clear that McIntosh Castle does not look to Pugin's principles which value truth and subtlety above all. In fact, it seems that Power may have looked to picturesque precedent or perhaps to specific printed sources, such as John Claudius Loudon's *Encyclopedia of Cottage, farm, and villa architecture* of 1833, which published a butterfly plan similar to that employed at McIntosh Castle (Figure 3.100).<sup>378</sup> In the *Encyclopedia*, Loudon also discussed the use of the Castle Gothic style at length. Even if this type of style was not learned from a book, Power was born near Exeter, South Devonshire and worked with his father who was supposedly a master builder and architect.<sup>379</sup> As such, he would have likely been familiar with examples of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century castellated residence

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<sup>378</sup> John Claudius Loudon, *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture*, London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longmans, 1839 edition, p.832.

<sup>379</sup> McKendry, 1989, p.49.

that, by 1846, dotted the English countryside. So while this Kingston house was built in the year of Pugin's death, it shows no indications of his approach to Gothic or his principles.

Slightly earlier than McIntosh Castle is the Archbishop's Palace of 1849 for St Mary's Roman Catholic Church, which was likewise built in an eclectic Gothic fashion (Figure 3.101). This house, attributed to John Bowes,<sup>380</sup> is contained within a large rectilinear plan with an explosion of Gothic ornament on the facade, including pinnacles, hood moulds, corbel heads, pointed arches, buttresses, traceried windows and even a small rose window. Given its riotous use of ornament and classically derived planning, the Archbishop's Palace does not appear as an authentic medieval creation as outlined by Pugin. Instead, it falls closely in line with the nearby Elizabeth Cottage, as both houses make use of a variety of influences and historical periods which come together to create a fanciful whole.

Although it may seem that there was no evidence of the new style of Gothic to be found in Kingston, one of the city's most prominent architects may have absorbed a few principles and applied them to a house on Wolfe Island. William Coverdale has been credited with designing Allen Cottage or Ardath Castle in 1848 for the rector Joseph A. Allen of Trinity Anglican Church, Wolfe Island (Figure 3.102).<sup>381</sup> The house, long since demolished, was built of limestone with Tudor hood moulds and heavy wooden bargeboard and finials, not unlike those of the contemporary house for George W. Allan in Toronto by Henry Bowyer Lane. Although the

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<sup>380</sup> Jennifer McKendry, *With our past before us: nineteenth-century architecture in the Kingston area*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995, p.48.

<sup>381</sup> Jennifer McKendry, *William Coverdale and the architecture of Kingston from 1835–1865*, unpublished PhD dissertation, 1991, p.115.

woodwork was heavy-handed in its execution, the plan indicates a potential awareness of Pugin's principles; the body of the house was L-shaped in plan and the entrance consisted of a porch that was roofed separately from the rest of the house. If originally built as such, this exterior articulation of interior function shows an early application of Pugin's principles of truthful expression and propriety in Canada West. Unfortunately, only a few photographs survive in relation to this house and so it is difficult to assess fully. Although Allen Cottage represents a potentially exciting direction for architects in the province, it is difficult to see the house and its architect as a true instigators of change, particularly as Coverdale's 1855 parsonage for the Gothic St John's Anglican Church, Portsmouth was executed in a completely different style of Gothic (Figure 3.103). This house, while also built of limestone, is essentially astylar in its execution (making only subtle use of Gothic motifs) and appears to have been derived from American pattern books rather than English architectural theory, as it makes use of a rectilinear plan, hipped roof and large, wrapping veranda. Even so, the house's general arrangement and elevation would have been recognized as Gothic at this point in time, due to their affiliation with houses under the rubric of Gothic such as those found in the ubiquitous pattern books of Andrew Jackson Downing (discussed in detail in Chapter 2). Coverdale's Gothic houses from this period demonstrate that there was a confluence of ideas arriving in Canada West and that the results were often confusing. As such, it is often difficult to trace precise sources of influence as styles were often blended and not strictly followed one way or the other.

## CHAPTER FOUR: POST-PUGIN ENGLAND AND ARCHITECTS WORKING IN CANADA WEST BETWEEN 1853 AND 1867

### Section A: English precedent after Pugin

There were few architects or architectural critics that held nearly as much influence as A.W. N. Pugin (1812–52). Given that the most visible aspect of Pugin’s reconfiguration of the architectural practice was church–building, this remained the primary focus of other architects and writers throughout the middle decades of the century. As such, information regarding the proper application of Gothic to houses was comparatively scarce. Even so, architects eventually began to adopt Pugin’s style for houses and a handful of instructive written sources were indeed produced. The slow development of the style for houses in England should be noted as it is instructive in understanding its similarly slow development in the colonies.

### **John Ruskin**

Another influence that should be addressed is that of the art critic, John Ruskin (1819–1900). Although early in his career Ruskin wrote several articles on the topic of architecture for J.C. Loudon’s *Architectural Magazine*<sup>382</sup> and two of his books pertained to architecture—*The seven lamps of architecture* of 1849<sup>383</sup> and *The stones of Venice* of 1851<sup>384</sup>—it is important to note that Ruskin was not an architect, nor did he have any architectural training. Unlike Pugin, however, who likewise had no formal architectural training, Ruskin never entered into practice. His writing style, therefore, remained that of the critic; descriptive and critical, but without offering

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<sup>382</sup> “The Poetry of Architecture” series of 1837–38, later published together in a book of the same name.

<sup>383</sup> John Ruskin, *The seven lamps of architecture*, London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1849.

<sup>384</sup> John Ruskin, *The stones of Venice*, Vol. I, London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1851.



much practical advice. Despite this, however, his two books on architecture were in large part aimed at and read by the architectural community. Prior to these books, Ruskin was already well known for the first two volumes of the popular *The Modern Painters* (1843 and 1846) and as such was already a critic of note. His subsequent architectural works, then, were widely read and considered. While neither *The seven lamps of architecture* nor *The stones of Venice* is concerned with domestic architecture specifically, some aspects of Ruskin's ideas were, in fact, carried over into practice. The main aspects that were adopted by the architectural community were the examination of Continental models and the introduction of permanent polychromy. The latter, however, was also contemporaneously introduced by William Butterfield at All Saints, Margaret Street, London, beginning in 1849 (Figures 4.1 and 4.2) and so it is difficult to gauge the main driving force with regard to its widespread use. What Ruskin did definitively achieve—and what was followed by other writers and architects—was the opening up of the use of greater eclecticism in Gothic buildings and the widening of the sphere of possible influence for use as models; no longer were architects confined to the British Isles, but buildings throughout the whole of the Continent of Europe were now acceptable for use. Combining both of his main requirements, Continental examples and polychromy, Ruskin recommended no specific model for domestic use in *The seven lamps of architecture* and the study of Venetian domestic Gothic in general in *The stones of Venice*.<sup>385</sup>

Despite a great interest in Ruskin as a writer and as a critic, however, his examples and advice appear to have been little heeded for domestic architecture and in the North American context in

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<sup>385</sup> Ruskin, *The stones of Venice*, p.294.

particular. To clarify, there are indeed traces of his influence evident in the increasingly widespread use of polychromy (as seen prominently in the houses of William Butterfield and George Edmund Street and as will be seen in Canada West), but it would be a stretch to label any house in Canada West as having been built in a Venetian style of Gothic. The lack of widespread and consistent application of Ruskin's theories in the North American context has been discussed by Henry Russell Hitchcock who provided a look at the publication history of Ruskin's books in the United States in an essay titled "Ruskin and American architecture."<sup>386</sup> Hitchcock claimed that while there was a keen interest in Ruskin's writings in the United States, in general, his architectural books were less well read overall. In fact, Hitchcock argued that while *The seven lamps* was fairly popular throughout the 1850s, the impact of *The stones of Venice* was actually quite slight given that it was not printed with illustrations in the United States until 1874.<sup>387</sup> At this point, the ideas were rather outdated and so Ruskin's suggestion of specific Venetian models was not followed. In spite of this, it is certain that *The stones of Venice* would have been available via England and it is clear that architects were paying close attention to his theories, although perhaps not always applying his principles to their practices. As early as the 1850s, for instance, several pattern-book authors mention or quote Ruskin—for example, Gervase Wheeler in *Rural homes* of 1851<sup>388</sup> and Henry William Cleaveland, William Backus and Samuel D.

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<sup>386</sup> Henry Russell Hitchcock, "Ruskin and American architecture," *Concerning architecture: essays on architectural writers and writing presented to Nikolaus Pevsner*, ed. John Summerson, London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1968, pp.166–208.

<sup>387</sup> Hitchcock, "Ruskin and American architecture," p.172.

<sup>388</sup> Gervase Wheeler, *Rural homes; or sketches of houses suited to American country life, with original plans, designs, &c.*, New York: Charles Scribner, 1851, p.269.

Backus, *Village and Farm Cottages* of 1856<sup>389</sup>—but the lack of interest in pure Venetian or Continental models is reflected in the houses as built in North America. Where Ruskin’s stylistic principles were primarily used was with civic and commercial buildings; it was rare for his prescriptions to be followed for churches and, even more rarely, for houses. The pattern of building in Canada West parallels that of the United States quite closely and so perhaps access to Ruskin’s books was likewise limited, or perhaps it was due to the fact that his advice was difficult to follow. Regardless, for houses in North America, the primary effects of Ruskin’s writings can be summarized as assisting in the popularization of permanent polychromy and introducing a greater eclecticism with regard to style.

### **Periodicals**

Just as Ruskin’s text was not specific to domestic architecture, following Pugin, there was surprisingly little concentrated writing with regard to domestic Gothic. Even though there were no great treatises on the subject, there was indeed a smattering of articles that began to appear in the architectural press with regard to the application and use of Gothic for houses, many of which often borrowed ideas from or paraphrased Pugin directly. Not coincidentally, most of these appear in the two most popular periodicals at the time; *The Builder*, which began publication on December 31, 1842, and *The Ecclesiologist*, which began on October 1, 1841. Though the articles printed in *The Builder* remained primarily anonymous, the publication had a wide readership as it was geared toward all matters related to “the Building Arts.”<sup>390</sup> Many of those

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<sup>389</sup> Henry W. Cleaveland, William Backus and Samuel D. Backus, *Village and farm cottages. The requirements of American village homes considered and suggested; with designs for such houses of moderate cost*, New York: D. Appleton and Company, pp.62, 65, 100.

<sup>390</sup> “Address,” *The Builder*, December 31, Vol.1, No.1, 1842, p.1.

printed in *The Ecclesiologist* were written by relatively well known church architects who also incorporated Gothic houses in the Puginian style into their practices and as such likewise carried great weight. What follows is a brief examination of some of the materials available in each of these influential publications.

*The Builder* was a weekly publication that was intended as a low-cost alternative to architectural books that would distribute information quickly and effectively regarding all aspects of building, from issues of style to heating and ventilation.<sup>391</sup> Given that the publication was dedicated to building in general and held no stylistic bias, it is perhaps not surprising that there were not many articles that specifically discussed Gothic houses. In fact, houses in general were not given much coverage, since, despite stating an intent of covering all facets of building, the focus of the periodical was centred on churches. This inclination was explained in a note on the front page of the July 29, 1843 issue:

Churches are the main and engrossing feature of building operations now-a-days; churches are the determining influence in the question of taste in design, &c. [...] Nobody cares to dispute as to the question of proprieties in any thing else. No Camden Society cares to take cognizance of work houses, gaols, or barracks (the other distinguishing features of present building operations)—they leave us alone in our house-building, too [...].<sup>392</sup>

Even though the editors admitted that other types of buildings required attention, it appears that they remained content to target churches. Despite the paper's ecclesiastical leanings, a few articles on Gothic houses can be found, particularly in the first year of publication (there is comparatively little available on the topic in the following years). The information offered

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<sup>391</sup> "Address," *The Builder*, December 31, Vol.1, No.1, 1842, p.1.

<sup>392</sup> *The Builder*, July 29, 1843, Vol.1, No.XXV, p.1.

however, is scattered across a number of short articles, and so, was not always immediately useable advice in the manner of any of Pugin's writings. Even so, over time, it might have been possible for a reader to glean some information to aid in the construction of a Gothic house. On March 4, 1843, for instance, there are warnings provided with regard to the overzealous use of bargeboard and pendants on non-wooden houses.<sup>393</sup> On June 10, June 17, June 24, and July 1, 1843,<sup>394</sup> there are also editorials discussing the advantages of using the Tudor (a term used here interchangeably with Old English) style for houses rather than making use of sham or "Carpenter's Gothic."<sup>395</sup> This anonymous author, using the pseudonym "Philo-Tudor," even produced a drawing of what he believed to be a poor use of Gothic, which corresponds with the type of critique as seen in Pugin's books (Figure 4.3).<sup>396</sup> There are also a number of excerpts on the subject of Gothic from the famous John Claudius Loudon's books, reviews of Pugin's writings,<sup>397</sup> and even designs provided by readers (usually under pseudonyms), for instance "Designs for a cottage," from the September 2, 1843 issue executed in a simple Tudor style by a "J.H.C." (Figure 4.4).<sup>398</sup> Otherwise, the content regarding houses was primarily concentrated on improving the houses of the poor, which, in general, had little concern for style. Even if not wholly practical, what the few articles about Gothic houses do show, however, is the degree to

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<sup>393</sup> *The Builder*, March 4, 1843, Vol.1, No.IV, p.49.

<sup>394</sup> Philo-Tudor, "On Tudor architecture," *The Builder*, June 10, Vol.1, No.XVIII, p.216; Philo-Tudor, "On Tudor Architecture," *The Builder*, June 17, Vol.1, No.XIX, p.227; Philo-Tudor, "On Tudor Architecture," *The Builder*, June 24, Vol.1, No.XX, pp.245-246; Philo-Tudor, "On Tudor Architecture," *The Builder*, July 1, Vol.1, No.XXI, pp.259-260.

<sup>395</sup> Philo-Tudor, "On Tudor Architecture," *The Builder*, June 24, Vol.1, No.XX, pp.245-246 at p.245.

<sup>396</sup> Philo-Tudor, "On Tudor Architecture," *The Builder*, June 24, Vol.1, No.XX, pp.245-246 at p.246.

<sup>397</sup> For instance, both Pugin and Loudon are discussed in the February 18, 1843 issue. An excerpt from Pugin's *True principles* is cited on p.19 while on p.22, there is a review of the new supplement to Loudon's *Encyclopedia of cottage, farm and villa architecture*. *The Builder*, February 18, Vol.1, No.II, pp.19,22.

<sup>398</sup> J.H.C., "Designs for a cottage," *The Builder*, September 2, 1843, Vol.1, No.XXX, p.363.

which Pugin's approach had begun to consume this aspect of building; in general, the tone used and the advice provided echoed Pugin's writings. It seems that many in the architectural community were finally ready to abandon picturesque-inspired Gothic in favour of something more studied and authentic in appearance.

Arguments for the abandonment of sham Gothic could also be found in the pages of *The Ecclesiologist*, which was the journal of the Cambridge Camden Society (formed in 1839) that later became known as The Ecclesiological Society (beginning in 1845). This was a group that was interested in the application of the Gothic style to churches across the English-speaking world in their attempt to overhaul Anglicanism in general. In essence, The Ecclesiological Society made use of Pugin's formula (as well as his feverish tone) but with regard to Anglicanism rather than Catholicism. Given that the Society's purview was churches, it is perhaps not surprising that there is comparatively little advice for houses within the pages of *The Ecclesiologist*. Even so, there are several reviews and tips for clergy houses that are to be found throughout the journal's run.

In June of 1843, for instance, there is a full article on the topic of parsonage houses, because "although not strictly included under the head of *Church Architecture*," it is an area which "in so many instances [the sacred] character [of the parsonage house] has been recklessly sacrificed to the secular spirit of the age."<sup>399</sup> In an echo of Pugin, the unidentified writer condemns modern parsonages and recommends looking to ancient parsonages for inspiration. He even provides

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<sup>399</sup> "Parsonage houses," *The Ecclesiologist*, Nos. XXIII, XXIV, June 1843, pp.145–147, at p.145.

specific examples for examination, such as at Barnack, Uffington, Market Deeping and Enfield.<sup>400</sup> Following from medieval precedent, a parsonage is to possess a dignified air (meaning an absence of showy or useless ornament), is to be well built and well organized. In fact, the author paraphrases a passage from Pugin's *True principles*<sup>401</sup> when discussing the principles of good architecture: "The exterior ought to be adapted to the requirements of the internal arrangements, instead of the latter being made to accommodate, and in a manner *pack into*, a preconceived uniform shell."<sup>402</sup> This similarity is no coincidence and shows the degree to which Pugin's influence and principles had begun to infiltrate the architectural community at large. The claim at the outset of the article that the proper application of Gothic principles was little understood, however, displays that there was still much work to be done in this field.

Just as with new churches, *The Ecclesiologist* offered several reviews of recently built parsonages, for example, two parsonages by Richard Cromwell Carpenter at Monkton Wyld, Dorset and at Buxted, Sussex in the April 1848 issue<sup>403</sup> and Samuel Saunders Teulon's rectory at Broughton Sulney, Nottinghamshire in the June 1854 issue, all of which were positive.<sup>404</sup> Aside from these terse reviews, there were increasingly elaborate and informative articles that began to be featured in later editions of the periodical which took up Pugin's line of thinking. One such article is by William White (1825–1900) in the October 1851 issue, titled "Upon some of the

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<sup>400</sup> "Parsonage houses," *The Ecclesiologist*, Nos. XXIII, XXIV, June 1843, pp.145–147, at p.147.

<sup>401</sup> "[...] all these inconsistencies have arisen from this great error,—*the plans of buildings are designed to suit the elevation, instead of the elevation being made subservient to the plan.*" Pugin, *True principles*, p.63.

<sup>402</sup> "Parsonage houses," *The Ecclesiologist*, Nos. XXIII, XXIV, June 1843, pp.145–147, at p.147.

<sup>403</sup> "Reviews: Parsonages," *The Ecclesiologist*, No.LXV (New series, No.XXIX), April 1848, p.321.

<sup>404</sup> "New Parsonages," *The Ecclesiologist*, No.CII (New series, No.LXVI), June 1854, p.215.

causes and points of failure in modern design.” While not specifically addressing the topic of houses, there are several drawings accompanying the article including designs for a vicarage, a manor house, and a cottage, all in a Puginian mode (Figures 4.5 and 4.6). In fact, many of the principles of design proffered are reflective of Pugin’s writings and seem to apply more to houses than to churches:

- [A] modern building, though it may contain some good points is at best but very faulty—
1. If any deception, or base imitation, in materials or construction, is discernible.
  2. If any of the gables are set out from the face of the wall merely for the sake of making a break.
  3. If any point of convenience is sacrificed for the sake of uniformity or apparent effect.
  4. If the front wall be of superior workmanship to the sides or even the back of the building.
  5. If the chimneys form the prominent feature.
  6. If there are any blank windows.
  7. If there are very large square windows in a gable; or it is adorned with meagre perforated barge-boards.<sup>405</sup>

Although some of these principles are at odds with Pugin’s practice—for instance the inclusion of a square window in a gable is used on the seaside facade at The Grange, Ramsgate—most bear more than a little resemblance to Pugin’s thoughts about proper design. It should be noted that White apprenticed with George Gilbert Scott (1811–78) who was an ardent admirer of Pugin. As such, White surely would have been familiar with Pugin’s writings and works. In a further echo of Pugin and of *The Builder*, White repeated the notion that ecclesiastical architecture was much more advanced than domestic and stated that it was time to rectify this problem.<sup>406</sup> Articles such as this one were surely intended to further this cause.

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<sup>405</sup> William White, “Upon some of the causes and points of failure in modern design,” *The Ecclesiologist*, No.LXXXVI (New series, No. L), October 1851, pp.305–313, at p.306.

<sup>406</sup> White, “Upon some of the causes and points of failure in modern design,” p.307.



Taking up the mantle was another article in the pages of *The Ecclesiologist* titled “On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture” by George Edmund Street (1824–81).<sup>407</sup> Unlike White’s article, Street’s dealt exclusively with the subject of houses, and given that Street was a rising influential architect, this article would have likely carried greater significance. (White was regrettably categorized as a mediocre architect, even in his own lifetime.)<sup>408</sup> In fact, it seems that this is the first instance of a reputable architect after Pugin laying claim to ideas regarding the application of Gothic to houses. After working in the offices of Scott and Moffatt—which, like White, may have been where he received his first exposure to Pugin—Street began his own practice in 1849, taking on apprentices beginning in 1853.<sup>409</sup> By the publication of this article, Street had been appointed architect to the diocese of Oxford (1850)<sup>410</sup> and had begun to travel widely in order to study buildings on the Continent. He was also an active member in the Ecclesiological Society, and frequently presented papers which were ultimately printed in the journal, such as the influential “On the proper characteristics of a town church,” in 1850<sup>411</sup> and “The true principles of architecture and the possibility of development,” in 1852.<sup>412</sup> Not only does the title of the latter essay blatantly hint at Street’s convictions and influences, but the text also mimicked many of Pugin’s arguments directly. For instance, he claimed that the one major

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<sup>407</sup> George Edmund Street, “On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture,” *The Ecclesiologist*, No.XCV (New series, No. LIX), April 1853, pp.70–80.

<sup>408</sup> Paul Thompson, “The writings of William White,” *Concerning architecture: essays on architectural writers and writing presented to Nikolaus Pevsner*, ed. John Summerson, London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1968, pp.226–237, p.226.

<sup>409</sup> Arthur Edmund Street, *Memoir of George Edmund Street, 1824–1881*, London: John Murray, 1888, pp.6, 11, 20.

<sup>410</sup> Arthur Edmund Street, p.14.

<sup>411</sup> George Edmund Street, “On the proper characteristics of a town church,” *The Ecclesiologist*, No.LXXXI (New series, No.XLV), December 1850, pp.227–233.

<sup>412</sup> George Edmund Street, “The true principles of architecture and the possibility of development,” *The Ecclesiologist*, No. XCI (New series, No.LV), August 1852, pp.247–262.

principle to be followed in all cases “is that of truth.”<sup>413</sup> Interestingly, while adhering to Pugin’s principles, in this paper, Street argued for open-mindedness with regard to the use of foreign examples in Gothic architecture in England. This would soon become a common call-to-arms in the architectural community at large, in large part with thanks to Street’s own writings as well as those of John Ruskin. In this way, just as with White’s article, Street builds his arguments on Pugin’s writings but adapts them. It is clear that neither architect was simply parroting Pugin’s ideas but thoughtfully built upon his principles in order to extend their relevancy. In a way, both White and Street echoed Pugin’s thoughts with regard to strict copyism; each architect used the principles as his base and modified them to suit the needs of the present day.

Returning to the subject of houses, by the time of the publication of “On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture,” then, it is clear that Street was a leading architect and theorist whose ideas had been made known far and wide. As such, it is likely that this paper would have held some importance. Once again, following Pugin’s lead regarding the careful and thoughtful use of ancient principles, Street stated:

I think that it will be generally allowed, that viewed simply, and irrespective of the question of internal comfort or convenience, there is no reason whatever why our houses should not be built upon precisely the same architectural principles which we recommend for use in our churches.<sup>414</sup>

Furthering this recommendation, Street likewise condemned “the necessity for correct detail, for accuracy of mouldings and the like,”<sup>415</sup> stating that it is preferable to have a simple and

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<sup>413</sup> Street, “The true principles of architecture and the possibility of development,” p.248.

<sup>414</sup> Street, “On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture,” p.72.

<sup>415</sup> Street, “On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture,” p.71.

convenient plan, which is ultimately more truthful and beautiful.<sup>416</sup> This approach to planning can be seen clearly at Street's vicarage at Wantage, Oxfordshire of 1849–50 which evidently makes use of Pugin's vision of Old English planning, but uses anachronistic or incorrect (in Pugin's view) trefoil-headed ogee arches (Figure 4.7). Other points are similar to Pugin's principles, for instance that no plaster mouldings or ceilings should be used,<sup>417</sup> but just as with his previous paper, Street expanded upon these ideas, adding his own interests and concerns. For instance, Street promoted the study of foreign examples for adaptation in England recommending a look at houses in Wurzburg and Nuremburg, Germany.<sup>418</sup> His interest in foreign models can be clearly seen in his own practice in the adoption of polychrome brick patterning in his vicarage at Boyne Hill, Maidenhead of 1854. While this house makes use of polychromy, which was quickly becoming a high-Victorian stylistic preoccupation, the house retains Pugin's principles in terms of the planning and expression of the elevation. Beyond the interest in stylistic eclecticism, however, many of the basic concerns and critiques in the article are the same as Pugin's of ten years earlier, which demonstrates the extent to which Gothic houses had fallen behind churches in terms of the spread of the application of current theory and in the progress of the Gothic Revival movement as espoused by Pugin in general.

### **George Gilbert Scott**

Another indication of the dire state of domestic Gothic in England came in the form of a book, written by another leading architect, George Gilbert Scott in 1857, titled *Remarks on secular and*

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<sup>416</sup> Street, "On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture," pp.71–72.

<sup>417</sup> Street, "On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture," p.75.

<sup>418</sup> Street, "On the revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture," pp.77–78.

*domestic architecture, present and future*.<sup>419</sup> This book was a reiteration of Pugin's ideas on domestic architecture, which nearing the end of the 1850s, effectively reformulated Pugin's principles for a new generation. Scott was a zealous admirer of Pugin and his works, later stating in his memoir (published posthumously) the extent to which Pugin had influenced his career:

He was tremendously jolly, and showed almost too much *bonhomie* to accord with my romantic expectations. I very rarely saw him again, though I became a devoted reader of his written, and visitor of his erected works, and a greedy recipient of every tale about him, and report of what he said or did.<sup>420</sup>

Just as Scott had surely passed on some of this enthusiasm to his apprentices, White and Street whose papers on the topic were published in *The Ecclesiologist*, his admiration for Pugin is likewise evident throughout *Remarks*. Like Pugin (as well as White and Street), Scott addressed the lamentable state of Gothic houses in England and the need for a renewed interest in this aspect of the built environment. In the book, he laid out some of his requirements for houses, but these do not develop far beyond the central idea of the book that houses must be built in the Gothic style, and in no other. To Scott, just as it was to Pugin, Gothic was seen to be the easiest and most logical style in which to work, particularly with regard to domestic buildings as it allowed for adaptability of plan, unlike houses subscribing to the rigid classical tradition. Furthermore, if a certain feature was needed in a Gothic house it could be placed where utility dictated without fear of disrupting the symmetry of the elevation.<sup>421</sup> Variety was possible in plan and in ornamentation in a way that was not possible under the tightly controlled Greek or Roman styles; square-headed and pointed windows for example could be used interchangeably and in

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<sup>419</sup> George Gilbert Scott, *Remarks on secular and domestic architecture, present and future*, London: John Murray, 1857.

<sup>420</sup> George Gilbert Scott, *Personal and professional recollections*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1879, p.89.

<sup>421</sup> Scott, *Remarks*, p.50.

the same building without ruining the effect.<sup>422</sup> This would not have been allowed in any other style. Flexibility of this nature was indeed practiced by Scott in his own houses, for instance at Christ Church parsonage, Barnet, Hertfordshire of 1845 or the rectory at Eastnor, Herefordshire of 1849.

In short, for Scott, a house was to arise from a convenient plan, have steeply pitched roofs (but not too steep!<sup>423</sup>), gables, and pointed windows, placed where convenience dictated. His goal was “not to write a treatise, but to advocat[e] liberty in our mode of dealing with each feature of our domestic work.”<sup>424</sup> Regardless of intent, however, *Remarks* often does read as a manifesto for the use of the Gothic style, which Pugin already had done famously twenty years earlier. It is important to note, however, that at the time of publication, Scott was a famous architect with a large office, meaning that his influence was widespread. This book, then, likely would have been well read, and so, even if it was a reiteration of many ideas that came before him, it was the first time since Pugin’s death that an English Gothic architect of any consequence dedicated so much of an entire book to the betterment of houses in the Gothic style. Pugin’s disciples, then, continued to spread the word.

That a book like this was released in late-1850s England demonstrates the extent to which the state of domestic Gothic was still a matter of contentious debate. This confused situation and arrested state of affairs hints at an even more stifled state of affairs in Canada West, being even

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<sup>422</sup> Scott, *Remarks*, p.29.

<sup>423</sup> Scott, *Remarks*, p.45.

<sup>424</sup> Scott, *Remarks*, p.41.

further removed from the nucleus of the debate. All of this considered, however, houses in the Puginian style did, in fact, begin to appear in Canada West in the 1850s, meaning that these ideas, however slowly, were indeed beginning to spread. By the 1850s, just as with their English counterparts, architects in Canada West were beginning to catch up to Pugin and his ideas for houses. One possible explanation for this is the increasing number of articles on the subject as discussed here, but also that more and more practicing architects were, at this time, making their way from England to the colonies.

### **Section B: Architects in Canada West, 1853–67**

Although the Gothic style for houses was beginning to grow in popularity in Canada West at large throughout the 1840s, the approach to plan and ornament still tended toward the picturesque. In the early 1850s, however, the application of the Gothic style to houses began to change drastically. The impetus, it seems, came from a combination of sources; a burgeoning (or renewed) interest in houses in the architectural press and newly arrived architects in the English-speaking portion of the province of Canada. One such architect was William Hay (1818–88) who was well versed in Puginian Gothic in his own practice and who, additionally, wrote articles on the subject that were adapted for the Canadian context.

While Pugin-inspired articles as found in *The Builder* and *The Ecclesiologist* did indeed make their way to North America, Hay was the first to tailor the arguments to the Canadian context. Complementing his written works, Hay made consistent use of Pugin's principles and built concrete manifestations of the new style of Gothic in the province. As such, Hay had the

potential to be doubly influential to architects and to patrons who were looking for something new. In effect, just as the English were beginning to catch up to Pugin's ideas, so too were architects in the colonies, in large part with thanks to Hay's efforts.

In fact, William Thomas and Fred Cumberland (who were examined in the previous chapter) began to change their housebuilding practices following Hay's arrival. While each of these architects may have learned of Pugin's ideas regarding domestic architecture in different ways, it is important to note that neither began to work in the style until after Hay had established his practice in Canada West in 1853. This means that even if Hay did not directly influence each of these architects, it appears that he was at least partly responsible for spreading his convictions and in changing the tastes of local patrons, which shifted quickly following his emigration. As such, Hay was influential in combining both streams of dissemination of the new Gothic style; the printed and the built. Just as Pugin was the primary agent of change for Gothic in England in the 1840s, it appears that Hay may have fulfilled a similar role in Canada West in the 1850s.

### **The British buildings and Canadian writings of William Hay**

In order to understand Hay's influence and career in Canada West, it is important to first look at his early career in Great Britain and his writings as they are both indicative of his theoretical leanings. William Hay was born in 1818 at Dykeside, Scotland and was trained as a joiner. After an accident while working, Hay began to study architecture and took on a number of projects and apprenticeships.<sup>425</sup> His first building was St James Episcopal Church, Cruden Bay,

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<sup>425</sup> Frederick H. Armstrong, "William Hay," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol.11, University of Toronto/ Université Laval, 2003–, accessed September 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/hay\\_william\\_11E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/hay_william_11E.html).

Aberdeenshire in 1842 (Figure 4.8) which was a novice attempt at the Gothic style. That it was somewhat reminiscent of a Commissioners's church in its organization is not surprising given that Hay was inexperienced and that Pugin's *True principles* and the Cambridge Camden Society's *A few words to church builders* had only been released the previous year. One significant difference, however, was the inclusion of a separate chancel, which was a feature promoted by both Pugin and the Cambridge Camden Society. The use of a distinct chancel indicates an early attention to and affinity for the new principles of the Gothic Revival.

Following the design of St James, Hay apprenticed in Edinburgh with John Henderson (1804–62), then in London with George Gilbert Scott (1811–78), for whom he was dispatched to St John's, Newfoundland.<sup>426</sup> Hay arrived in Newfoundland in 1847, acting as the clerk of works for Scott's St John the Baptist Anglican Cathedral in St John's (Figure 4.9),<sup>427</sup> which was built according to Pugin's principles; this is evident, for instance, in its distinct exterior articulation of nave, aisles, transepts and chancel.<sup>428</sup> The close adherence to Pugin's writings in this case was to have been expected given that Scott was an avid admirer of Pugin, but that Hay was the clerk of works on this particular cathedral meant that, by this time, he had been thoroughly exposed to contemporary British ecclesiastical theory. This detailed knowledge of theory carried over into Hay's own architectural practice and can be seen in his subsequent churches such as at St Anne's, Coupar Angus, Perthshire, Scotland, designed in 1847 (Figure 4.10). This small church consists of a two-cell composition with a separately articulated chancel, and is devoid of ornamentation,

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<sup>426</sup> Peter Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, Québec: Éditions Multimondes, 2008, p.109.

<sup>427</sup> Illustrated London News, vol.XIV, June 23, 1849.

<sup>428</sup> Coffman, p.109; Benjamin Webb, "Colonial Church Architecture, Chapter VI. St John's Cathedral, Newfoundland," *The Ecclesiologist*, No. LXV (New Series, No. XXIX), April 1848, pp.274–279.



with only simple lancet windows adorning the bare stone walls. This was precisely the type of execution for a small parish church as recommended by both Pugin and The Ecclesiological Society, and represents a modified, simplified version of Pugin's own churches of Our Lady and St Wilfred at Warwick Bridge, Cumbria of 1840–41 (Figure 4.11) or St Lawrence, Tubney, Berkshire of 1844–47 (Figure 4.12). In effect, then, Hay had quickly learned and had readily incorporated Pugin's principles into his own practice in the span of a few short years.

In addition to his first-hand knowledge of the primary practitioners of contemporary Gothic architecture and their works, Hay closely followed their writings as well. Pugin's written works were of particular importance to Hay's own writings. In January of 1853, for instance, Hay wrote a eulogy to Pugin titled "The late Mr. Pugin and the revival of Christian architecture," which was published in the Toronto-based *Anglo-American Magazine*.<sup>429</sup> This article displayed not only a general awareness of Pugin's life and writings (as a typical eulogy might), but also provided a summary of the main points of Pugin's *True Principles* of 1841, listing each principle that Hay believed to have been important.<sup>430</sup> In short, the text reads as less of an obituary than it does as an opportunity to present Pugin's principles to a new audience: the citizens of North America. Indeed, it may have been the first time that the general public—aside from architects, clergymen or anyone with a vested interest in contemporary architecture—would have been exposed to such ideas in print.

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<sup>429</sup> William Hay, "The late Mr. Pugin and the revival of Christian architecture," *The Anglo-American Magazine*, vol. 2, 1853, pp.70–73.

<sup>430</sup> Hay, "The late Mr. Pugin and the revival of Christian architecture," p.70.

The familiarity with Pugin's principles as seen in "The late Mr. Pugin and the revival of Christian architecture," was reiterated and expanded upon in Hay's next article, "Architecture for the meridian of Canada," which was printed two months later (March 1853) in *The Anglo-American Magazine*.<sup>431</sup> In this article, Hay not only once again demonstrated an affinity for Pugin but he also distilled Pugin's principles explicitly for use in the Canadian context. In particular, the text relied heavily upon domestic architecture and made use of specific recommendations for houses, which had never before been done in Canada. In the article, Hay followed Pugin's logic, paralleling many sections of *True principles* with only slight modifications in order to make them relatable to the citizens of Canada West. For example, on the pitch of roofs, Pugin wrote in *True Principles*: "It will be found, on examination, that the most beautiful pitch of a roof or gable end is an inclination sufficiently steep to throw off snow [...] All really beautiful forms in architecture are based on the soundest principles of utility."<sup>432</sup>

Similarly, Hay wrote:

A high-pitched roof [...] which in this climate is necessary for the purpose of throwing off the snow and to deflect the rays of the summer sun, is an object of pictorial beauty from its boldness of outline. This is exemplified in some of the better class of Canadian log huts [...] the beauty of which is greatly enhanced in one's estimation by the knowledge of its being founded on principles of utility.<sup>433</sup>

Hay's paraphrasing of Pugin's text is evident and just as Pugin provided a local type from which to work,<sup>434</sup> so too did Hay by drawing on the local vernacular with the log huts. Here Hay also

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<sup>431</sup> William Hay, "Architecture for the meridian of Canada," *The Anglo-American Magazine*, vol.2, 1853, pp.253–255.

<sup>432</sup> Augustus Welby Pugin, *The true principles of pointed or Christian architecture*, London: J. Weale, 1841, p.10.

<sup>433</sup> Hay, "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada," p.253.

<sup>434</sup> Pugin recommends "old English Catholic mansions" for adaptation in the nineteenth century. Pugin, *True principles*, pp.60–61.

reworked Pugin's formula by appealing to the practicality in building for the climate, but there were more than issues of convenience at stake. While steeply pitched roofs were certainly useful in the North American context, the choice of style must not be interpreted as solely utilitarian. Indeed issues of fashion and perhaps of displacement must be considered as recently immigrated citizens would have been seeking out the familiar. Established citizens would have also been seeking to reiterate their identity as British citizens. Pugin's emphasis on the use of Gothic architecture and the identification of Gothic as British ("we are not Italians, we are Englishmen"),<sup>435</sup> then, were arguments that were just as relevant to the English subjects living in the New World. Hay was surely aware of these arguments, and though they are not explicitly reproduced in this text, they surely factored into his choice of style.

The subtext of identity, however, remained as such and so Hay made his recommendations for the appropriate style for building based on the suitability to the context and by process of elimination. Just like Pugin, Hay delineated (albeit rather more briefly) the reasons as to why other styles were not appropriate for use in Canada West. Greek and Roman architecture—the predominant influences for houses in the province—were crossed off of the list of potential styles for use and even different branches of English medieval architecture were decried. Similarly to Pugin, Hay found fault with previous attempts at the Gothic style for houses in Canada West, when historical precision and consistency of style were not concerns. Though such houses made use of Hay and Pugin's favoured branch of architecture (Christian rather than

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<sup>435</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.56.

pagan), they were failures in the esteem of these two men in that ornament had been applied for aesthetic purposes and without regard for function. In these houses, Hay wrote:

Pinnacles of tiny dimensions occupy every available place of the front — in positions, moreover, where an avalanche of snow from the roofs must peril their existence. Trefoils, quatrefoils, cinquefoils, and every other foil which the popular illustrations of ancient or modern Gothic supply, unite with the symbolic triplet window of the altar, in admitting light to the kitchen and pantries within.<sup>436</sup>

It is unclear as to whether or not Hay was referencing a particular house, although it is not difficult to apply this critique to any Gothic house from the previous two decades, for instance, Henry Bowyer Lane's mansion for George Allan of 1847 which made use of a large traceried window on the rear facade of the house (Figure 3.85). This critique was made even more cogent in that Hay recommended only one medieval style from which to borrow ideas; the Old English style. Unlike picturesque houses, an Old English house, by contrast, was inherently truthful—in Hay and Pugin's view—in that it was simple and functional with an adaptable plan that did not require excessive ornament to provide character. For instance, the pitch of the roof, as previously discussed, while functional, also represented a predominant characteristic of the Old English style. As such, it was truthful in both functional and stylistic terms. Form and function, then, were united in this style of architecture.

The production of a convincingly medieval home, however, did not appear to be a preoccupation of the patrons of Upper Canada and Canada West up until this point, as is evident in the heavily picturesque-inspired McIntosh Castle, Kingston of 1852 or the Gothic-classical-hybrid parsonage for Little Trinity, Toronto of 1853. Specific ideas relating to the planning and

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<sup>436</sup> Hay, "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada," p.254.

execution of a house, as well as to the particular choice of historical era from which to borrow, were difficult to come by and it seems that patrons were content with the options available to them. It was not until the mid–1850s when Hay eschewed “the riot of fancy”<sup>437</sup> and ushered in “the severity of the [Old English] style”<sup>438</sup> that tastes began to change.

Canadians, just like their English counterparts, were in need of guidance in order to adopt a new approach to planning and to style. Hay, then, can be seen as responding to this deficiency in contemporary theory by imitating the most successful architect and theorist of the period. In short, in his writings, Hay heralded a new era for houses in Canada West. It is clear that this new direction was a reflection of Pugin’s rigorous principles that had not yet been seen in the province. Unlike many idealistic theorists, however, Hay—like Pugin—was able to support his theories in his houses as built, thereby enacting an immediate change in the built landscape. Reinforcing this notion is the fact that, in his obituary in *The Canadian Architect and Builder* of 1888, it was stated that he “introduced here the revival of mediaeval architecture,” and that possessing “a thorough knowledge of both the theoretical and practical parts of architecture, and having good taste, he soon acquired quite a large practice.”<sup>439</sup>

### **William Hay in practice**

Unlike other architects working in Canada West up until this time, it is important to note that—based on existing evidence—Hay only built houses in the Old English style. His convictions

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<sup>437</sup> Hay, “Architecture for the Meridian of Canada,” p.254.

<sup>438</sup> Hay, “Architecture for the Meridian of Canada,” p.254.

<sup>439</sup> “The late Mr. Wm. Hay, Architect,” *The Canadian Architect and Builder*, July 1888, vol.1, issue 7, p.11.

were such that he did not stray from the style, but this dedication also indicates the degree to which tastes were changing in the province. Unlike William Thomas or Fred Cumberland, who worked in a multitude of styles, a major architect like Hay could now make a career out of one specific style.

One such house was the mansion for M.P.P. George Wright (later nicknamed The Castle) in Brampton of 1853 (Figure 4.13) which was Hay's first domestic work in Canada West. While there are no known existing plans for this house and though it has been drastically altered, it is clear from the elevation as depicted in an archival photograph, that the interior arrangement and planning took precedence over the production of a contrived facade. The facade consisted of a twin-gabled composition, which had been seen previously in the province, notably in William Thomas's Arkledun in Hamilton of 1846 and Oakham House in Toronto of 1848 (Figure 3.68). With The Castle, however, the rest of the plan strayed from the arrangement of Thomas's houses in that it did not make use of a typical rectangular form. Instead, variety in room planning can be detected as the house featured multiple side gables and wings that pushed beyond the rectangular boundaries as adopted by Thomas and most other architects working in the province at the time.

In other words, the facade did not mask the rest of the house; instead, it responded to it. This was prescribed by Pugin, for instance, in *The present state* of 1843, when he wrote that the elevations should be "left in that natural irregularity produced by the internal arrangements to which we owe the picturesque effect of ancient buildings."<sup>440</sup> The picturesqueness as alluded to by Pugin,

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<sup>440</sup> Augustus Welby Pugin, *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England*, London: Charles Dolman, 1843, p.102.

however, was different from the carefully studied and composed picturesque from earlier in the century. Houses making use of the aesthetic theory of the picturesque were not truthful in Pugin's view because they held little regard for convenience and made use of abundant ornament: indeed, many such houses were planned in the classical fashion and presented false fronts. The call for planning from the ground up was likewise commented upon in the pages of *The Builder*: "That the whole interior of a modern house should be made to correspond precisely with the external architecture is unnecessary, and would be highly inconvenient."<sup>441</sup> With this house in Brampton, it seems that Hay was the first to employ these types of recommendations in Canada West.

Related to planning were the placement of the tower and the chimneys, which both figured prominently into the irregular skyline of the house. In response to convenient planning, all of the chimneys were placed on the exterior walls as endorsed by Pugin.<sup>442</sup> The placement of chimneys as such was said to help buttress the walls, take up less interior space, minimize fire damage and produce variety in the elevation.<sup>443</sup> Such seemingly trivial details, then, were carefully calculated to provide character to the building.

Furthering the house's Old-English character and true to his own writings, Hay's use of ornamentation was sparse with only the bay windows, a few wooden brackets (reminiscent of

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<sup>441</sup> *The Builder*, vol.1, no.xxxv, October 7, 1843, p.424.

<sup>442</sup> Even though Pugin was discussing collegiate buildings and the placement of chimneys, the argument extends to the domestic portions of these buildings. The same arguments for safety and convenience can likewise be extended to other dwellings. Pugin, *True principles*, p.51.

<sup>443</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, pp.51–52.

Old English half-timbering), and the pointed doorway carrying any sort of decorative articulation. On the subject, Hay wrote “Every species of decoration should form an essential element in the composition of the fabric,”<sup>444</sup> which echoes Pugin’s second principle in *True principles* “that all ornament should consist of enrichment of the essential construction of the building.”<sup>445</sup> The restricted ornamentation of The Castle contrasts sharply with the abundance of ornament to be found on earlier Gothic houses such as Thomas’s Oakham House in Toronto; though well executed, there was no functional need for the finials, the friezes or the castellation (found above the entrance) in Thomas’s work. The type of surface application as seen at Oakham House, then, was precisely the sort of thing which Hay protested in saying that “[o]rnamant should never be pinned onto a building.”<sup>446</sup> It is clear that Oakham House and The Castle, though only five years apart, each descended from different theoretical backgrounds and are telling of each architect’s influences. The rational planning and the limited ornament of The Castle fall closely in line with Pugin’s recommendations and represent a new type of Gothic house for the province.

The next known house of Hay’s is Thornton Cliff in Brockville of 1854 for Reuben P. Colton (Figures 4.14–4.16).<sup>447</sup> This is another example where, true to function, the elevation appears to have met the requirements of the plan. The main body of this limestone house is three stories in height in what appears to have been an L- or T-shaped plan (it is difficult to distinguish in this

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<sup>444</sup> Hay, “Architecture for the Meridian of Canada,” p.254.

<sup>445</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.1.

<sup>446</sup> Hay, “Architecture for the Meridian of Canada,” p.254.

<sup>447</sup> Robert G. Hill, “William Hay,” *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, accessed September 2014, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1510>.



case since the house has undergone significant alterations). This central portion of the house was flanked to each side by a two-storey block and there also appears to have been a tower at the back of the house. In addition to reflecting Pugin's overall views on the correspondence between plan and elevation, it is possible that the tower facing the lake was Hay's response to Pugin's seaside tower at Ramsgate which Hay may have seen in person or possibly in print as it was published in *The Builder* in June of 1853 (Figure 4.17).<sup>448</sup> This type of tower is a fairly unique feature in English Gothic architecture and so, given Hay's close attention to Pugin in all other matters, it does not seem unlikely that he would have borrowed the tower motif from him as well. Beyond this, it contributed to the irregular skyline of the house, providing a contemporary update to the additive picturesque turrets from Castlefield, Toronto of c.1835 and Holland House, Toronto of c.1831–33.

Just as at The Castle, features such as the tower, the chimneys and the general arrangement of the rooms contribute to a visually appealing whole, which is otherwise nearly devoid of ornamental articulation, thereby reinforcing Hay's own recommendation yet again:

In the design of a building the convenient arrangement of the ordered interior will generally present some feature to give architectural expression to the exterior without the aid of meretricious ornament.<sup>449</sup>

The use of ornamentation at Thornton Cliff was indeed sparing and was only to be found accenting the necessary functional features. Even though this was clearly a house that was intended for a wealthy patron, Hay remained faithful to his principles. "When the means are ample," proclaimed Hay, "those parts only of the erection should be selected for [decorative]

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<sup>448</sup> *The Builder*, vol. 11, no.540 (11 June 1853), p.377.

<sup>449</sup> Hay, "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada," p.253.

purpose that displays peculiar ingenuity in construction, and where it is desirable to direct attention.”<sup>450</sup> Though the hood moulds took slightly different forms over the door and windows, respectively, and appear to have carved label stops, it is important to note that these were no mere surface ornaments. Instead, they served a functional purpose in that they were intended to throw rain away from the openings, and as such, were permitted to be ornamented. The reliance on plan and its resulting elevation to denote style was further emphasized by the fact that each block of the house was separately roofed (and steeply pitched, of course). Not surprisingly, this is a strategy that was employed by Pugin at a number of his houses, including The Grange at Ramsgate, as well as in his church designs, such as St Thomas of Canterbury, Fulham (Figure 4.18). Pugin termed this type of organization as “propriety,” meaning “*that the external and internal appearance of an edifice should be illustrative of, and in accordance with the purpose for which it is destined.*”<sup>451</sup> This external legibility of interior features was something that Hay would continue to employ throughout his career in Canada West.

There were a number of other houses built by Hay around this time, for which no documentation nor physical evidence survives. Built in 1854 was the presbytery for St Mary’s Catholic Church, in Toronto. This house (now demolished), however, was not well documented,<sup>452</sup> although given the Gothic nature of the church as well as the adamancy of Hay’s writings, it is reasonable to

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<sup>450</sup> Hay, “Architecture for the Meridian of Canada,” p.254.

<sup>451</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.42.

<sup>452</sup> John Ross Robertson briefly addressed the presbytery in the 1898 edition of *Robertson’s landmarks of Toronto*, noting that it cost \$8000 to build. John Ross Robertson, *Robertson’s landmarks of Toronto: a collection of historical sketches of the old town of York from 1792 until 1833, and Toronto from 1834 to 1898: also, nearly two hundred engravings of old houses, familiar faces and historic places, with maps and schedules connected with the local history of York and Toronto*, Toronto: J.R. Robertson, 1898, p.320.

assume that it was executed in a similar character as his previous two houses. Indeed, his obituary in *The Canadian Architect and Builder* in 1888 hinted at Hay's stylistic leanings by noting that he built "various private residences, through all of which the mediaeval feeling ran."<sup>453</sup> Also built in 1854 was a house on "the North side of Carleton [*sic*] street [in Toronto], between the residences of Capt. Eccles and A.N. Buell, Esquire."<sup>454</sup> This tender call, unfortunately provided no further information as to the particulars of the house, in terms of style or size. Another house for which the details are unknown is "a dwelling house, to be erected on the corner of Simcoe and Boulton streets."<sup>455</sup> While there are no other details surrounding its construction, the tender call does state that "Three-fourths the amount of the contract will be paid in advance, on good security,"<sup>456</sup> implying that it was for a patron of considerable means.

Also of 1855 was a "First-Class Dwelling-House on the corner of John and Richmond streets [in Toronto], for John Robertson, Esq."<sup>457</sup> This house was described briefly in a subsequent article about Hay's works in Toronto in *The Globe*, although not many specifics were given. This house consisted of:

three stories and a basement; red brick front; dining and drawing rooms on ground floor; bedrooms and dressing rooms on the 2nd and 3rd floors; bath room fitted up with hot and cold shower baths. Cost £1,800.<sup>458</sup>

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<sup>453</sup> "The late Mr. Wm. Hay, Architect," *The Canadian Architect and Builder*, July 1888, vol.1, issue 7, p.11.

<sup>454</sup> *The Globe*, August 24, 1854, p.3. Robert G. Hill interpreted this as houses *for* Captain Eccles and A.N. Buell, although the tender call clearly states "between." Hill, "William Hay," <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1510>.

<sup>455</sup> *The Globe*, March 10, 1855, p.239.

<sup>456</sup> *The Globe*, March 10, 1855, p.239.

<sup>457</sup> *The Globe*, September 12, 1855, p.873.

<sup>458</sup> "Building operations in Toronto," *The Globe*, August 11, 1856, p.2.

While issues of style were not mentioned, the house was surely Gothic, given that Hay was not known to have worked in any other style for houses. It is also clear from the cost as well as the modern amenities that he was working for a wealthy class of patrons. That Hay was commissioned to build some notable residences for well-to-do patrons within the city of Toronto signifies a keen interest in the new style of Gothic in the mid-1850s.

Following these houses, it appears that Hay focused on churches until 1860 and 1861 at which time he began work on four new Gothic houses, all in Toronto. Similar in scale to The Castle and to Thornton Cliff and for a similarly wealthy client was Oaklands, while the other three houses were on a smaller scale, commensurate with their uses and sites. These were the Gardener's Lodge for Allan Gardens, the rectory for Holy Trinity Anglican Church and the Henry Scadding House.

Oaklands was built in 1860 for John Macdonald<sup>459</sup> (a merchant, not to be confused with the future prime minister, John A. Macdonald) and unlike many Hay houses, it still stands today, although it has been greatly altered and added to a number of times.<sup>460</sup> Archival images, however, point to the original character of the house which is in keeping with Hay's other large country estates (Figure 4.19). Though now thoroughly situated within the boundaries of Toronto, this house qualifies as a country house given that, at the time of its construction, it was well north of the city limits, "on the ridge of land opposite the north end of the College Avenue, in the

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<sup>459</sup> *The Globe*, January 25, 1860, p.3.

<sup>460</sup> The house was altered in 1869 by Gundry and Langley, and it was enlarged again in 1925 by Warren H. Manning. It served as a college for boys since 1931 and today, it remains in use as part of De La Salle College. Eric Arthur, *Toronto: no mean city*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964, p.149; Liz Lundell, *The estates of old Toronto*, Erin, Ontario: The Boston Mills Press, 1997, p.78.

vicinity of the Yorkville Brick Yards.”<sup>461</sup> Indeed at the time, it was considered to be “far in the country,”<sup>462</sup> and so its commonalities with Hay’s other country houses were entirely appropriate.

Just like The Castle in Brampton, it too featured numerous gables, a rambling plan and minimal surface ornament, which in this case, appears to have been limited to ornamental woodwork, such as bargeboard, finials, and traceried balcony supports. This woodwork, although not seen in his houses of the 1850s, was still in keeping with the Old English character and would be used again by Hay in other houses. The tower was added in 1869 and so was appended to the house after Hay had departed Canada West.<sup>463</sup> Although Hay had used towers in his previous country houses, this particular tower is rather too elaborately ornamented to have been a creation of his. The tower and some of the additions, however, were carried out by Hay’s former partner and student, Thomas Gundry and Henry Langley, respectively, so the changes are mostly in keeping with Hay’s fundamental principles. As such, it is separated from the rest of the house and is roofed separately, thereby lending further distinction to the house’s Old English style and displaying the continuity of the Gothic style through to the 1870s.<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>461</sup> *The Globe*, January 25, 1860, p.3.

<sup>462</sup> Lundell, *The estates of old Toronto*, p.78.

<sup>463</sup> Robert G. Hill, “Thomas Gundry,” *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, accessed October, 2014, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/757>.

<sup>464</sup> Towers also started to come into vogue in mid-century with pattern books and described by Gervase Wheeler in *Homes for the people in suburb and country* in 1855 as follows: “On undulating land, where perhaps a distant water view or other loveliness can be looked upon, provided the elevation be sufficient, a style of building has recently come very much into vogue, which having an honest purpose to gain, deserves study. I allude to the villas, of varying size, that one sees, possessing each one a tower, (sometimes two,) for the purpose, *ostensibly*, of commanding a distant view. Where such a feature is of use, it becomes a great beauty; where merely put on because other houses possess it, it is a deformity that cannot be too much reprehended.” p.42. Perhaps, then, the subsequent architect and patron were responding to the site or perhaps simply to the trend.

Built for a much different class of patron, but still retaining a similar Old English character was the Gardener's Lodge for Allan Gardens. This house, though demolished and poorly documented, can be seen in a coloured engraving of 1863 as well as in two sketches of 1877 and 1878 (Figures 4.20–4.22). While these representations leave much to be desired—the house is only seen in the distant background of the engraving and the sketches were executed by an eleven-year-old child—their similarities confirm the house's general appearance and prove that it was in keeping with Hay's house practice to date. For example, the illustrations can be assumed to provide a reasonable representation of the massing and planning. The depictions of the rear facade each show that there was a sloping roof that was longer on one side than the other and which enclosed three windows of different sizes (one bay window and two pointed windows). The drawing of the front facade shows a low, one-storey entrance wing nestled into the two-storey cross-shaped plan. Like Hay's other houses, each element of the house appears to have been roofed separately.

The ornament appears to have been Old English in execution and consisted predominantly of bargeboard and finials, not unlike those seen at the exactly contemporary Oaklands. The windows on the house appear to have varied between pointed and square-headed, and were each topped with simple hood moulds. While this house was on a much different scale than those built for Hay's wealthier patrons, he skillfully applied the principles of the Gothic style as he himself had laid out. The use of these principles on such a small residence also confirms the versatility of the Gothic style; it was not a style that was only applicable to houses of great stature and to patrons of means. This meant that change in the built environment could be enacted at all levels

of society and that good taste and ornament were not necessarily restricted to the elite. This is not altogether removed from the use of Gothic for the gate lodges at King's College (now the University of Toronto) as built by John George Howard in 1832, which carried on the tradition of the application of the Gothic style to cottages for labourers as begun in the late eighteenth century (as discussed in detail in Chapter 5).

On a slightly larger scale but even simpler in terms of ornamentation is the rectory of 1860 (Figure 4.23) for Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Toronto of 1847 by Henry Bowyer Lane (Figure 4.24). Hay was responsible for the new Sunday School for the church in 1856–57 and was subsequently commissioned to build the rectory shortly thereafter. The house was originally one of a number of buildings that formed a square surrounding the east end of the church (known as Trinity Square). This meant that the rectory was part of an urban context, and so would have been restricted in terms of space (Figures 4.25 and 4.26). As a result, the house is rather more compact and symmetrical in nature than its relatively bucolic counterparts as built by Hay such as Thornton Cliff, Oaklands or even the tiny Gardener's Lodge. It is important to consider, however, that even if predominantly symmetrical in plan, this was accounted for by Gothic architects and theorists, including Pugin. For instance, Pugin wrote that "to make a building inconvenient for the sake of obtaining irregularity would be scarcely less ridiculous than preparing working drawings for a new ruin."<sup>465</sup> Even before this, in a time when the picturesque dominated aesthetic theory, concessions were made to practicality. In 1800, D. Laing wrote on this matter in *Hints for Dwellings: Consisting of Original Designs for Cottages, Farm-houses,*

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<sup>465</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.52.

*Villas &c. Plain and Ornamental*, and was reprinted in Loudon's *Encyclopedia* in 1833 (as well as in its subsequent editions) as follows:

The nearer the plan of a building approaches to a square, says Laing [in the preface to his *Hints on Dwellings*], "the greater are its conveniences and the cost proportionably less. A square, equal in superficial extent to a parallelogram, requires less external walling, and, consequently, less internal finishing. By compactness, convenience is produced, and expense is saved: when the apartments are scattered and lie wide from each other, with long passages between, much unpleasantness must be experienced; and a much larger expense must be incurred from covering a larger space of ground than is absolutely necessary."<sup>466</sup>

This meant that nineteenth-century architects, no matter what their theoretical underpinnings, understood that compromises needed to be made in order to suit the circumstances of each particular house.

For this particular house, Hay worked with a compact T-shaped plan, in which both wings of the house intersect at a right angle. Given the tight lot, however, each wing does not project far beyond the surface of the next. Nonetheless, the appearance of the intersecting wings is evident in the slight stepping forward of the gabled ends and in the separate roofing of each element, punctuated with wide rectangular chimney clusters. Just as with his earlier houses, the slope of the roof—although perhaps even more steeply pitched in this case— falls in line with Hay's recommendations as it "is an object of pictorial beauty from its boldness of outline."<sup>467</sup>

The ornament on the house is essentially non-existent, and is only to be found in the simple trefoil bargeboard in the dormer windows and in the carving above the entrance, which is divided

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<sup>466</sup> D. Laing in John Claudius Loudon, *Encyclopedia of cottage, farm and villa architecture*, London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longmans, 1839 edition, p.53.

<sup>467</sup> Hay, "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada," p.253.



by simple tracery (Figures 4.27 and 4.28). Otherwise, it is the essential features and the plan that contribute to the Gothic character of the house. As such it is in keeping with the longstanding notion that a clergyman's house was to be austere in nature. In *The present state* of 1843, Pugin wrote at length on the characteristics of the house of a clergyman, stating that:

Ecclesiastical residences were always erected in harmony of design with the sacred structures to which they formed necessary appendages, that is to say, they *exhibited a solid, solemn, and scholastic character, that bespoke them at once to be the habitations of men who were removed far beyond the ordinary pursuits of life.*<sup>468</sup>

Certainly, Hay was paying attention to his idol's words and carried them out effectively in this humble rectory. It is also possible that the limited ornamentation was due to a small budget, which Hay himself warned about in "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada:" "The extrinsic decoration of an edifice requires considerable judgment and skill, and should not be attempted with slender funds."<sup>469</sup> Indeed, perhaps it was the combination of Pugin's and Hay's ideas with regard to modesty and to finances that provided the rectory for Holy Trinity with its character.

Similarly plain and compact in plan is Henry Scadding House of 1861 which was originally situated directly adjacent to the rectory for Little Trinity (Figure 4.29). The house was placed as such because the owner, Henry Scadding, was appointed as the incumbent of Holy Trinity in 1847.<sup>470</sup> The house was given an addition sometime between 1875 and 1890, since a photograph of 1875 depicts it with its original two storeys while sketches from 1890 show it in its present state (Figures 4.25 and 4.30). Like its next-door neighbour, the house is built of white brick with

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<sup>468</sup> Pugin, *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England*, p.99.

<sup>469</sup> Hay, "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada," p.254.

<sup>470</sup> Edith G. Firth and Curtis Fahey, "Henry Scadding," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 13, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed September 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/scadding\\_henry\\_13E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/scadding_henry_13E.html).

minimal ornamentation. The only articulation on this house consists of a brickwork frieze executed in a rectilinear quatrefoil pattern, Tudor hood moulds and relieving arches that match those as found on the rectory. Unlike Hay's previous houses, this house is absolutely rectangular in plan, reflecting its original use as a town house. While town houses, particularly British ones, were typically classical in execution, Henry Scadding House is not. Despite its relative uniformity of plan and starkness of ornamentation, it is clearly Gothic in nature, featuring a handful of quintessentially Gothic features along with the deliberate asymmetry and variation in size of the windows. This would have been convenient in lighting the interior as necessary, but it would have also served to distinguish the house from townhouses in the classical tradition, such as 82 Bond Street of the late 1850s (now known as the Mackenzie House, for its most famous occupant, William Lyon Mackenzie) (Figure 4.31). Such town houses could not only be found nearby in Toronto but find their stylistic forbears in London, England, most of which were classical and often made use of an abundance of surface ornament, such as Sir John Soane's house (Figure 4.32). Indeed such a house forms a startling comparison to the relatively stark surface of Henry Scadding House.

In plan it is much different from Hay's sprawling country houses and even the Gardener's Lodge, which though likewise small in scale, was not designed for an urban lot. Such planning for a Gothic house, however, did have English precedent, for instance, Pugin's St Edward's presbytery of 1850 at Ramsgate, which was likewise designed to front a public road. While Henry Scadding House made use of conservative planning and limited ornamentation, it effectively demonstrates that the style, even if subtle, could be adapted to suit any situation.

The application of the Gothic style as seen in Hay's minimally ornamented houses of the early 1860s, demonstrates the degree of change that had taken place since John George Howard built the first Gothic houses in the province fewer than thirty years prior. Even the houses of about ten years earlier, such as Cumberland and Storm's parsonage for Little Trinity of 1853, were of a drastically different character. Although Hay built only a small number of residential works in Canada West before his return to Scotland in 1861, his approach to houses remained consistent with each commission. For each house, he remained faithful to his—and, in turn, to Pugin's—values, thereby providing concrete models for architects and patrons to admire and from which to learn. Ultimately, his houses gave form to what were previously intangible and somewhat abstract theories, that up until his arrival in Canada West could only be learned from print. In short, Hay helped to make Pugin's principles as applied to houses abundantly clear.

### **Other architect-built Gothic houses in the 1850s**

Hay's numerous prominent civic and ecclesiastical commissions would have ensured notice in the architectural community, and would have drawn attention to his writings and houses. In fact, after Hay's arrival, Puginian Gothic quickly became the norm for architects in terms of Gothic houses. Though a number of architects throughout the decade began to take up the mantle for Pugin's principles as applied to houses, the shift toward the new approach can perhaps be seen most clearly in the works of the Toronto-based architect William Thomas (1799–1860) and the firm of Cumberland and Storm, whose early Gothic works were examined in Chapter 3. Their

houses of the 1850s, more than any others, reveal the newfound tendency toward rational planning and simplification of ornament.

William Thomas arrived in Toronto ten years before Hay. During this time in the colony, he worked consistently in a predominantly picturesque Gothic Revival mode, as seen in his Bishop's Palace, Toronto of 1845 and Oakham House, Toronto of 1848. Though he continued to work in a multitude of styles throughout his career, Thomas's only known Gothic house after Hay's arrival in 1853<sup>471</sup> is reflective of the changes as prescribed and enacted by Hay. Indeed, Thomas's manse of 1857 for St Andrew's (now St Paul's) Presbyterian Church of 1854–57, has much more in common with Hay's Gothic houses than it does with Thomas's own houses from the 1830s and 1840s (Figure 4.33).

This house shows a slight, but definitive, break from Thomas's signature straightforward square plan, and displays far fewer ornamental details. The house consists of two bays and a recessed, one-storey side porch entrance. The right bay is two storeys in height, culminating in a steeply pitched gable pierced with a small roundel (similar to that at Arkledun, Hamilton but embedded here in a square frame). The left bay likewise consists of two storeys, but is topped with a dormer rather than a full gable. The use of an asymmetrical facade is different from Thomas's previous houses, in which he tended to favour symmetrical twin-gable elevations, such as at Arkledun, Hamilton and Oakham House, Toronto, and going back to his English works such as Grafton

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<sup>471</sup> While Thomas's Ballinahinch was built in 1853, it is important to note that it was a rebuild of a house that Thomas built in 1849 which subsequently burned down. As such, it seems likely that it was a reworking of what had been built in 1849, particularly as it possesses more in common with his early picturesque houses than with current architectural theory.

Villa at Leamington. Prior to Hay's arrival in Canada West, even the slight asymmetrical stepping of the facade and the intersecting perpendicular rooflines would have been quite unusual, not just for Thomas but for any architect working at the time. Such an arrangement, however, was to be found more regularly across the province throughout the 1850s and was later used by Hay himself at the rectory for Holy Trinity in 1861.

Both the dormer and the main gable are lined with bargeboard and topped with finials of different sizes. The only indication of Thomas's affinity for sculptural ornament—as seen in all of his houses from the 1830s and 1840s—is in the Tudor hood moulds above the windows on the right bay and above the entrance (Figure 4.34). This ornamental program is reminiscent of Hay's at Thornton Cliff in Brockville. This represents a drastic departure from Thomas's earlier fanciful use of ornamentation, and is in keeping with Hay's mandate that “Ornament should never be pinned to a building.”<sup>472</sup> By this time, it is clear that Hay's work was garnering much attention and winning him numerous high-profile commissions. As such, even if Thomas was not directly following Hay's principles through print, perhaps the scaling-back on ornamentation in the manse can be read as a reflection of Hay's popularity with clients and the general appeal of the style to the public.

Hay would have surely been known to Thomas, however, as there were still only a handful of architects based in Toronto throughout the 1850s. This meant that they were in direct competition for a number of commissions during this time, for instance in 1855 with Gould Street

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<sup>472</sup> Hay, “Architecture for the Meridian of Canada,” p.254.

Presbyterian Church in Toronto where Hay won the commission over Thomas.<sup>473</sup> Their professional service activities also put them in direct contact, at least by 1860, when Hay and Thomas served together on the Board of the Association of Architects, Engineers and Surveyors in 1860, with Thomas serving as president and Hay serving as treasurer.<sup>474</sup> The brief minutes of this particular meeting note that Hay thanked Thomas for his work as president and for his recent contribution to the museum, demonstrating that, by this time, the men knew each other personally.<sup>475</sup> Although it seems likely that Hay was the agent of change in Thomas's Gothic house practice, it is important to consider that Thomas may have also discovered and adopted Pugin's principles on his own, particularly as he visited the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. Pugin's Medieval Court at the Great Exhibition was well attended and Hay remarked that it "will be remembered as one of the most attractive objects in that famous exhibition."<sup>476</sup> Beyond the glass walls of the Crystal Palace, it is also possible that Thomas saw the effects of Pugin's works on the built landscape during this trip, which may have directly impacted Thomas's own approach to Gothic architecture. Whatever the means of Thomas's arrival at these new theories, it is clear that the manse for St Andrew's displays a significant change in his application of the Gothic style.

Thomas died late in 1860 with an excellent reputation as one of the province's best architects. In his obituary, it was written:

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<sup>473</sup> Robert G. Hill, "William Thomas," *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1355>, accessed August, 2014.

<sup>474</sup> *Globe*, April 19, 1860, p.2.

<sup>475</sup> *Globe*, April 19, 1860, p.2.

<sup>476</sup> Hay, "The late Mr. Pugin and the revival of Christian architecture," p.73.

To him we owe some of the most tasteful buildings of which [Toronto] can boast. Still higher praise it is to say that he was the first to abandon the old paths in which his predecessors had walked, and to adopt new styles eminently well suited to the materials which he had at hand. [...] He was among the first to discover the use which might be made of the white brick peculiar to Toronto in ornamental architecture, and he turned it to the best advantage.<sup>477</sup>

Even with his popular reputation, it is unclear as to whether or not Thomas built any more residences in the Gothic style during his lifetime. Though he did build a great number of houses throughout the 1850s, documentation on stylistic particulars is scarce. A summary of Thomas's building activities in the first half of 1857 printed in *The Globe*, for instance, lists seven different house commissions, but provides the style for only two, both of which were Italianate.<sup>478</sup> If any of his commissions from around this time were indeed Gothic, any trace of documentation has long since vanished. It would be reasonable to assume, however, that they would have been similar to the new style and planning as employed at St Paul's manse in Hamilton and as first hinted at in Inglewood, Hamilton of 1853. All in all, that an established architect such as Thomas would subscribe to new principles of design at such an advanced stage in his career shows the prevalence of the new Gothic ideals while also indicating shifting tastes among architects and patrons.

Before returning to the architectural scene in Toronto, it is worth briefly discussing two other houses that make poignant use of the new style of Gothic style from the same period, both of which are located in the town of Guelph. Also of about 1857, and sometimes attributed to Thomas, is Tyrcahlen or Tyrcahleen (now also known as Ker Cavan), Guelph, which served as

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<sup>477</sup> *The Globe*, December 27, 1860, p.2.

<sup>478</sup> "Building operations in Toronto," *The Globe*, July 6, 1857, p.2.

the rectory for St George's Anglican Church of 1851 (Figure 4.35).<sup>479</sup> Thomas was responsible for the church and so, this is presumably why it has been credited to him. While the authorship remains unclear, it is certain that whoever was responsible for the house was working in the manner of William Hay. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that whoever was responsible was well versed in the new Gothic principles that were arriving from Great Britain. The building has been altered since its construction, though the plan and many of the original details remain the same.<sup>480</sup> Consistent with Pugin and Hay's practices, the house is arranged in a roughly H-shaped plan with each section of the house abutting the next at a right angle and with an additional low porch forming the entrance. This is a perfect example of Puginian planning, as seen, for instance at The Grange, Ramsgate of 1845 and in Hay's Thornton Cliff, Brockville of 1854. It is an excellent example of Puginian planning in that it does not appear to have been created within a predetermined footprint, but rather rooms appear to have been laid out one at a time and given different emphasis based on function. Additionally, each of these elements is separately roofed—the entrance, the wings and the dormers—in keeping with the principles of truth and propriety in construction, again, much like The Grange and Thornton Cliff, or the vicarage at Coalpit Heath of 1845 by William Butterfield (Figures 4.36–4.38). Also similar to Coalpit Heath is the juxtaposition of the main entrance porch with a blank chimney wall. This would have been

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<sup>479</sup> The house has also been credited to Sir Charles Barry, although the accreditation was not given until the 1920s when its new secular owner presumably wished to create a prestigious lineage for himself. There is no record of Barry having sent plans to Canada West, nor were his domestic works executed in such a style. If it was indeed built by an architect, it is much more likely that it was someone who was working in the province at the time. First mention of Barry was printed in Lenore Cutten, *History of St George's Parish, 1832–1932*, Guelph: Gummer Press, Ltd., 1932 and reprinted in a 1982 edition of the book: Lenore Cutten, *A history of St George's Church, 1832–1982*, ed. Peter B. Moore, Guelph: The Church, 1982.

<sup>480</sup> The renovations began in the 1920s when the house was taken over by a new owner and subsequently renamed Ker Cavan. The originally open side porch was later changed to a stone porch while the solitary dormer on this side was enlarged and flanked by two identical dormers. On the rear facade, the open porch was removed and replaced by a stone porch at ground level in the central bay, two dormers were added to the central bay, and a bay window was added on to the left-most gable.



completely inappropriate in a classical house and shows the extent to which the architect was keeping up with contemporary English practice.

Nearby in Guelph, though rather simpler in nature and in execution, is the Bell–O’Donnell House or the House of Heads (Figure 4.39) by Matthew Bell (1820–83) which also displays an interest in asymmetrical planning. Though he seems to have arrived in Canada around 1850 from Newcastle, England,<sup>481</sup> Bell may have built this house as late as 1853 or 1858. If it was built in 1853, then it is an early example of this type of planning, but if in 1858 it is simply reflective of the new trends in the province at the time. Based on his other houses, however, it seems that Bell was a better sculptor than an architect, which indicates that the house was likely following a trend and so is more likely to have been built in 1858. Furthering this notion is the fact that all of the ornament is additive, having been carved out of stone and applied to the surface. In this sense, the ornament is rather more picturesque in nature than representative of the new style, indicating a lack of awareness of Pugin’s principles. As such, it can be seen as a showpiece for the sculptor’s works rather than as a careful integration of recent architectural theory. This is the only Gothic house that Bell produced and it was, additionally, outside of a major city centre, so even if it was built in 1853, it would have been of little consequence to other architects working at the time.

Perhaps more striking and even more indicative of the contemporary English approach toward Gothic houses in the province are the works of Fred Cumberland (1820–81) and William George

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<sup>481</sup> “Bell O’Donnell House,” *Canada’s Historic Places*, <http://historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=10786>.

Storm (1826–92). It is difficult to determine as to precisely when and where the firm learned this style, but it is certainly evident in the now–demolished David Lewis MacPherson house, or Chestnut Park, Toronto of 1855 (Figures 4.40 and 4.41). This was Cumberland and Storm’s first Gothic house following their classically–derived Gothic style as used at the parsonage for Little Trinity Anglican Church in Toronto of 1853. Although only two years separate these houses, each are representative of distinctly different modes of application of the Gothic style.

Chestnut Park shows an interest in sophistication of planning and in aesthetic subtlety that was not present in the Little Trinity parsonage of two years prior. This approach is reflective of Pugin’s works and writings, which Hay had, by this date, incorporated successfully in a number of houses across the province. Though it is possible that the rambling layout may have arisen due to the fact that the firm’s work of 1855 was appended to a pre–existing house, the fact remains that there was no effort made to mask this asymmetry as might have been done earlier in the century. The taste for irregular planning, it seems, had now gripped the imagination of citizens living in Canada West.

That such a drastic change is apparent between these two houses demonstrates new and powerful influences. Perhaps it was Hay himself who was beginning to make an indelible mark across the province, or perhaps it was Cumberland’s own studies and visit to England in 1851.<sup>482</sup> Perhaps, too, in might have been Storm’s influence as he had apprenticed with William Thomas until 1853 (at which point, Inglewood, Hamilton was beginning to show signs of new influences). Storm’s

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<sup>482</sup> Cumberland traveled to England for the Great Exhibition in 1851, and returned in 1856 and 1859 researching two different projects. Geoffrey Simmins, *Fred Cumberland: building the Victorian dream*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997, pp.21, 26.

bibliophilic nature may also have been of some influence as he kept a large architectural library; although it is unclear as to what dates each of the titles in Storm's collection was acquired, it is known that he had four titles by Pugin, including *True principles*, as well as publications by William Butterfield and The Ecclesiological Society.<sup>483</sup> Whatever the case, it is clear that by 1855 Cumberland and Storm were practicing and fully immersed in the principles as espoused by Pugin in England and Hay in Canada West.

Ornamentally, however, it appears that Cumberland and Storm may have been looking to a variety of sources other than Pugin and Hay. While there were several hallmark Gothic details integrated into the necessary features for the house—such as pointed windows, Tudor hood moulds, bargeboard and finials on the exterior and pointed arch tracery and balustrades, fleurons—de-lis and ballflower ornament on the interior (Figures 4.42 and 4.43)—just as at the parsonage for Little Trinity, there were lingering elements of classicism to be found in the ornamentation of this house. There were, for instance, prominent plaster ceiling medallions and floral bosses in the dining room, drawing room and main staircase (Figure 4.44). This type of superficially applied ornament was frowned upon by Pugin and his followers because it was not essential to construction, nor was plaster intended to be used as such. Indeed, in *True principles*, Pugin stated that “when used for any purpose other than coating walls, [plaster] is a mere modern deception.”<sup>484</sup> Contrary to Pugin's intentions, however, it seems that the rational approach to planning may have inspired a rational approach to the architectural practice. Architects, liberated

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<sup>483</sup> Marianna May Richardson, *Ontario Association of Architects: centennial collection*, Toronto: Ontario Association of Architects, 1990, pp.15, 20, 31–32.

<sup>484</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.2.

from the strictures of the classical style, could now select what they believed to be most fitting for the specific situation rather than doggedly complying with rigid rules. In closely following Pugin's principles as guidelines for the organization and resulting elevation of the house, though following less closely in terms of ornament, Cumberland and Storm appear to have been exercising their rational minds and, concomitantly, their artistic freedom.

Even if they were residual classical features, the plaster medallions were executed with embedded Gothic motifs. Progress is also evident in that the Gothic details as executed within were no longer the geometric, picturesque–pattern–book–inspired details as seen at Little Trinity, such as the simple trefoil patterns in the bargeboard. Instead, an abundance of naturally–inspired ornament was used. This interest in natural forms indicates a shift in focus in the study for ornamental inspiration. Instead of looking to geometry or to motifs as found on ancient buildings, leaves, grape vines and acorns were all incorporated into the design and were represented faithfully (Figures 4.45 and 4.46). It is likely that this was inspired by the writings of John Ruskin who insisted that “Beauty [is] derived chiefly from the external appearances of organic nature.”<sup>485</sup> His recommendation for architectural ornamentation then was that it “must consist of such studious arrangements of form as are imitative or suggestive of those which are commonest among natural existences,”<sup>486</sup> much like the foliage and acorns as found in the medallions at Chestnut Park in Toronto. Ruskin's writings were influential in this regard and were first—and perhaps most famously—put into practice by Thomas Deane and Benjamin

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<sup>485</sup> John Ruskin, *The seven lamps of architecture*, reprint of 2nd edition, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1989, p.103.

<sup>486</sup> Ruskin, *The seven lamps*, p.117.

Woodward at Trinity College Museum Building, Dublin in 1852 (Figures 4.47 and 4.48) and at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History which was begun in 1854 (Figures 4.49 and 4.50). That the Toronto firm of Cumberland and Storm was able to incorporate such naturalistic detail into a house that was designed in 1855 shows the extent to which the practice was keeping abreast of current trends in English architecture. In fact, it appears that during his 1856 trip to England, Cumberland met with Thomas Deane (arranged by Charles Barry),<sup>487</sup> which demonstrates an awareness of and interest in Deane's practice.

As a further testament to the firm's interest in keeping up with international trends, a porch was included in the remodel for the house. While this may seem unremarkable, in fact, it denotes that Cumberland and Storm were keeping abreast of contemporary American fashion, likely through the medium of pattern books. It is important to note that, while commonplace by the end of the nineteenth century, this type of porch or veranda only became popular in North America following the advent of Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–52). This was not a common feature of English houses, and so the American influence is evident, particularly given that most of Downing's popular house designs featured porches in order to suit the peculiarities of the North American climate. Indeed, Storm is known to have had Downing's *Architecture of country houses* of 1850 in his library,<sup>488</sup> and, based on the design for this house, it seems likely that it was in his possession by this date. The inclusion of the porch on this house demonstrates that Cumberland and Storm were looking to a variety of literature for inspiration.

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<sup>487</sup> Simmins, p.28.

<sup>488</sup> Richardson, p.20.

Though the impetus for the use of naturalistic ornament may have ultimately derived from the writings of Ruskin, and the porch from Downing, the overall form of the house and the newfound demure application of the Gothic style was clearly derived from Pugin's principles. The attention to the careful execution of motifs and rational planning indicates a shift in taste and signals that the Gothic style was beginning to be taken more seriously. In short, in Canada West, a house in the Gothic style in the mid 1850s was no longer considered a folly.

### **High Victorian Gothic arrives in Canada West: Ruskinian ornamentation, Puginian planning**

The Puginian phase in domestic Gothic, while an important step in the evolution of the Gothic Revival and in domestic planning in general, was rather short-lived in its purest form in Canada West. Though Hay continued to push his brand of Gothic without wavering in his principles up until his departure in 1861, just as with the English Gothic Revival movement, near the end of the 1850s there arose throughout the province an increasingly eclectic tendency in terms of style, as was hinted at in Chestnut Park. The attention to planning and the other lessons as taught by Pugin and as reinforced by Hay, however, carried on despite changing stylistic trends and, indeed, outlived them. The new approach to ornament has been labeled as High Victorian Gothic, which, at large, is a rather difficult movement to define. In sum, it can be characterized by the use of naturally inspired ornament, permanent polychromy, an increased reliance on iron and a less insular approach to source material and influences as compared to Pugin. What this meant for buildings was that the field was open once again to sampling from a variety of historical styles—not simply English, but international as well—and also that buildings could be eclectic and inventive, rather than reliant on strict medieval precedent. While the turn toward High

Victorian Gothic never attained extreme popularity in Canada West, it did manifest itself widely in subtle ways, often with a simple touch of polychromy or with the blending of styles hinting at its presence.

Perhaps the architects to have made the most faithful use of the style were, once again, Cumberland and Storm. The seeds of the characteristics as employed at Chestnut Park, blossomed in a complex of domestic buildings for the grounds of the Royal Magnetical Observatory at the University of Toronto (all demolished). Each of these houses was slightly different from the next, in terms of both planning and articulation, although they all shared similar principles of design. While these houses may not have presented readily identifiable Gothic elements, such as pointed windows, they represent a continuation of the Puginian Gothic tradition in that they applied its primary lessons regarding rational planning and truth in construction.

The smallest cottage for the grounds of the Magnetical Observatory consisted of three rooms arranged in a linear sequence (Figures 4.51 and 4.52). Although rectangular in plan, this single cottage consisted of two separately articulated and separately roofed wings, creating an uneven skyline as the larger wing contained an attic. While the main wing of this cottage presented an A–B–A arrangement on the ground floor of window–door–window, the design featured an unexpected element of asymmetry in that there was only one dormer which was to be placed above one of the windows rather than centrally above the entrance. It seems, however, that the house was actually built with two dormers, thus restoring symmetry to the main block (Figure

4.53). This additional window was likely added for reasons of practicality as it would have provided more light to the interior of the house. This type of concession was accounted for even by Pugin, who stated that “to make a building inconvenient for the sake of obtaining irregularity would be scarcely less ridiculous than preparing working drawings for a new ruin.”<sup>489</sup> The interior, however, may have retained some of its planned asymmetry as the vestibule was designed to have be segregated from the rest of the rooms rather than acting as the core around which all rooms radiated. The staircase was likewise placed in an unconventional spot, in the smaller side wing of the house. These types of modifications to the plan would have ensured greater privacy, room size and interior convenience. Even a small cottage such as this, then, received thoughtful details and individualized treatment in its execution, just like a much larger house would have. This type of attention to even the lowest genre of dwelling shows the adaptability of Pugin’s principles to all levels of society and to houses of all sizes. It also ensured that all of the buildings in the residential complex formed a unified whole, representing a coherent architectural vision across a number of buildings. This represents a continuity with turn-of-the-century building practices in England, in which workers’s houses were improved by landowners in order to provide adequate housing for their employees, while simultaneously ensuring that their properties remained aesthetically pleasing.

The other single cottage was also composed of three rooms, although rather than being aligned in sequence, the rooms were arranged in a T-shape plan (Figure 4.54). The house also carried a full attic rather than a half attic such as in the previous plan (Figure 4.55). Even though the rooms

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<sup>489</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.63.



were arranged in a T, the plan of the roof appeared in an L-shaped arrangement as it extended beyond the walls of the house to shelter a rear porch (Figure 4.56). In profile, this low sloping side of the roof is reminiscent of Hay's drawing of a Canadian log hut as printed in the article "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada," in which he described the outline of the roof as "refreshingly varied"<sup>490</sup> (Figures 4.57 and 4.58).

Just as with the other small cottage, the dormers were to have been distributed asymmetrically across the roofline, adding to the visual interest of the elevation. Beyond aesthetics, however, this indicates an attention to interior planning as windows were placed as needed to light the interior space rather than as dictated by symmetry (Figures 4.59 and 4.60). This was true of the rest of the windows as well, as implied by their variance in size and in shape. Pugin would have been pleased with the thoughtful planning as well as the resulting variety and asymmetrical elevation. It is unclear as to whether or not this cottage was built according to plan, or if, indeed, it was even built at all. Maps from this time provide no useful information on this matter, but a photograph of about 1897 reveals that another, slightly larger double cottage was, in fact, built on the premises.

This double cottage for the Magnetical Observatory was slightly more complex, featuring three rooms on both floors for each cottage (Figures 4.61 and 4.62). As such, the arrangement was staggered in order to provide each dwelling with a degree of privacy as well as the same amenities; each residence contained a kitchen, parlour, a bedroom and two sheltered outdoor

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<sup>490</sup> Hay, "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada," p.253.

areas on the ground floor (Figure 4.63) as well as two bedrooms and a lumber room in the attic (Figure 4.64). This dwelling shared many of the same features as the single cottages, such as the abundance of dormer windows, low cantilevered porches, weathered buttressing on the chimneys and a variety of window shapes and sizes. The placement of the chimneys in the design was located on the periphery of the house, as recommended by Pugin in *True principles*. It appears, however, that modifications were made to the cottage when built, and the chimneys were not actually placed as such, as can be seen in a photograph of the south side of the house prior to its demolition in 1905 (Figure 4.65).

Hinting at the firm's theoretical leanings is the bold shingle work on the roofs of this double cottage as well as the full-attic single cottage. These were arranged in broad polychrome diapering, which is a hallmark of High Victorian Gothic. While these houses were small in stature and in prestige, they partook in a popular trend which began to be applied to a wide variety of Gothic buildings in England at the time, from the smallest of churches to luxurious railway hotels. While not derivative of one particular historical era (and indeed possibly none) these small houses at the University of Toronto are reflective of the growing interest in rational Gothic planning as a base that could carry any stylistic motif. In other words, now that the firm had mastered useable planning, it was possible to incorporate new architectural theories in an age of growing eclecticism.

Similar in planning and in execution was the Director's Residence for the Magnetical Observatory, which was more prestigious architecturally than the small cottages as it was larger

in scale, more elaborately ornamented and featured greater amenities, such as five bedrooms, a drawing room, a dining room, pantries, cellars and its own privies (Figures 4.66 and 4.67). The house also appears to have been remarkable in the Toronto landscape, since there are numerous extant photographs taken of the exterior prior to its demolition in 1901 (Figures 4.68–4.70).<sup>491</sup> Just as with the small cottages, this house was completely asymmetrical and eclectic in its use of styles. It could not possibly be identified as making use of the elements of any specific historical era in a comprehensive fashion, and as such is quintessentially High Victorian. Even though eclectic in its ornamental program, the architects still made thorough use of Pugin’s principles in terms of its design. There was no surface ornament applied and only the windows, window jambs, chimneys, porches and roofs were given any sort of articulation; in Pugin’s words, “*all ornament [consisted] of enrichment of the essential construction of the building.*”<sup>492</sup>

Like the smaller cottages, the windows were varied in shape and size, although no pointed windows were to be found anywhere on the house. Instead, on each of the houses, there appeared to be a preference for round-headed windows—sometimes with large, radiating voussoirs—as accents. This may seem strange for houses that made use of so many other Gothic principles of construction and design, but, in fact, it points to the greater freedom of design as permitted by High Victorian Gothic. Indeed, as part of a collegiate setting, it is possible that the round-headed windows were chosen to accord with the Observatory itself, which was completed by Cumberland and Storm in 1855 (Figure 4.71), or with the Romanesque style as employed at the

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<sup>491</sup> Source for demolition date, Robert G. Hill, “William Frederic Cumberland,” *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, accessed September 2014, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1632>.

<sup>492</sup> Pugin, *True principles*, p.1.

nearby University College, also by Cumberland and Storm, which was begun in 1856 (Figure 4.72). Also contributing to the hybrid stylistic program for each of the residences were the woodwork for the entrances and the large brackets supporting the overhanging roofs, which are reminiscent of Swiss–Cottage motifs. Although some Gothic elements were used for these houses, they were rather more subtle than what might be commonly expected from houses that were planned using Gothic principles. Instead of ornament, rather more understated features speak to the medieval past, such as prominent chimneys, steeply pitched roofs, dormer windows, and small, weathered buttresses. Even more blatantly than Chestnut Park, then, these houses are reflective of growing trends in English Gothic as espoused by Ruskin and as practiced by popular architects such as William Butterfield and George Edmund Street.

Furthering Cumberland and Storm’s participation in the High Victorian Gothic movement, was their unexecuted design for the Governor–General’s house in Ottawa (Figure 4.73), which was included in their submission for the the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa of 1859–61 (Figure 4.74). Though their second–place design for the parliament buildings was drawn in a fortified Romanesque style (not unlike University College, Toronto of 1856), the designs for the house presented an even more eccentric mix of styles. While the first impression of the house could be categorized as Second Empire due to the prominent Mansard roofing, there were also elements to be found from the classical tradition, the Renaissance, and High Victorian Gothic. In terms of the firm’s Gothic evolution, this strange blend of styles demonstrates that they remained invested in the latest architectural trends coming out of England and were keen to apply them to houses for

all levels of society: from the small workers's cottages of the Magnetical Observatory in Toronto to the most important residence in all of the Canadas.

The house was designed twice: in the first round of the competition, Cumberland and Storm's proposal came in second place, although they were invited to redesign and resubmit (Figure 4.75).<sup>493</sup> In the end, however, issues with financing and with the contractors meant that the project was delayed until 1864 when it was decided simply to remodel an existing house.<sup>494</sup> The layout of each design was rather formally arranged as might have been expected given the house's intended formal usage and its massive scale. Even so, some asymmetry was to be found, perhaps in a nod to the Gothic principles of planning as laid out by Pugin. In the plan of 1860, for instance, the grand staircase was planned off axis, to the side of the main entrance rather than facing it directly (Figure 4.76).

Even though it was designed twice, both designs made use of the same stylistic character. The firm escalated its application of Ruskinian principles in these instances by making use not only of permanent polychromy, but of Ruskin's favoured Venetian Gothic as well. Each elevation was arranged in horizontal bands, areas of the ground floor were rusticated, roundels were used in the spandrels between the windows, and many windows were round-headed and surrounded by large voussoirs which culminated in a pointed arch (Figures 4.77 and 4.78). The use of these motifs in the designs actually displays one of the few instances where Ruskin's ideas regarding Venetian

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<sup>493</sup> Simmins, p.235.

<sup>494</sup> Simmins, p.240.

Gothic were incorporated into a domestic setting in Canada. Had it been built, perhaps the style would have been of greater significance to Canada as a whole.

Alas, it was never built, and though the style was influential in England for clubs and commercial buildings, Ruskin's ideas regarding Venetian Gothic never truly took hold in the same way in Canada, least of all in terms of houses. They were, however, employed for commercial buildings. For instance, Cumberland and Storm worked in a Ruskinian Gothic mode for the Edinburgh Life Assurance Company Building in Toronto of 1858 as did the firm of Sheard and Irving for the Ontario Bank in Toronto of 1861–62 (Figure 4.79),<sup>495</sup> both of which resembled a Venetian palazzo in their elevation and planning as well as in their details. It was also occasionally used for ecclesiastical purposes, for example, with Bethany Church, Toronto of 1892 (Figure 4.80) by Henry Simpson (1865–1926).<sup>496</sup> With regard to houses, however, only certain elements were filtered out of Ruskin's writings rather than a comprehensive style. What appeared instead were houses like the cottages at the Magnetical Observatory of 1858 which borrowed the Venetian Gothic penchant for polychromy but not its dominant features. With the design for the Governor General's House, Cumberland and Storm, then, demonstrated the sophistication of their firm as the characteristics employed were completely up to date with British architectural theory, even if it was a style of limited interest to the Canadian public.

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<sup>495</sup> Robert G. Hill, "Joseph Sheard," *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, accessed September 2014, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1298>.

<sup>496</sup> Robert G. Hill, "Henry Simpson," *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, accessed September 2014, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1306>.

Though few other architects displayed such a ready incorporation of Venetian Gothic as Cumberland and Storm, there were several others who borrowed certain features of High Victorian Gothic for some prominent residences. Just as with the works of Cumberland and Storm at the Magnetical Observatory, the High Victorian Gothic movement from England appeared in these houses primarily under the guise of permanent polychromy and eclecticism in style.

The greater freedom of stylistic influences, for instance, can be seen at Trafalgar Castle, Whitby by Joseph Sheard (1813–83) of 1859–62 (Figure 4.81) which was contemporary with the design for the Governor–General’s residence. Though Gothic in its overall character, rather than relying on elements from any one particular historical era, this mansion makes use of several: castellation, tracery, Dutch gables, Tudor hood moulds, ogee arches, painted glass, heraldry and Perpendicular four–centred arches all commingle here, indicating an abundance of possible influences (Figures 4.82–4.85). As such, it is difficult to determine precisely what models Sheard was looking to for the design of this grand residence. In addition to this eclecticism, a touch of polychromy in the roof betrays the house’s contemporary leanings. Though it resembles a castle in appearance, rather than looking back to the castellated houses of the eighteenth and early–nineteenth centuries, then, this house was perfectly of its time. Its castle–like appearance, moreover, helps to demonstrate that Gothic houses had come full circle; Romantic sentiment and stylistic incongruity were once again in fashion.

Elements of English High Victorian Gothic can also be seen in Brantford with John Turner's Yates's Castle (also known as Wynarden) of 1864 (Figure 4.86). This house readily adopted the polychromy of the movement by making use of red and yellow bricks as well as polychromatic slate-work on the roof. Exposed, ornamental ironwork can also be seen running along the perimeter of the roof, which was also common to many High Victorian buildings. While this house has perhaps more in common with American pattern books than with English architectural theory in regard to its planning and execution (see Chapter 2), it is evident that by the mid 1860s, elements of High Victorian Gothic had infiltrated popular taste at large. Such was the strange confluence of styles in Canada West at the time: not only were architects being influenced by English tastes, but by American as well, and so, efforts were made to reconcile both popular modes. It also shows the extent to which architects were no longer required to rely upon historical precedent; more than Trafalgar Castle, this house does not resemble any house type from any historical period. Instead, it is a wholly nineteenth-century creation.

Another castellated residence commensurate with its wealthy patron was the Arthur McMaster mansion (later known as Euclid Hall and now The Keg Mansion) in Toronto of 1868 (Figures 4.87 and 4.88) built by the Toronto firm of Thomas Gundry (1830–69) and Henry Langley (1836–1907). Though the house has undergone numerous renovations,<sup>497</sup> it appears as if there were numerous juxtaposed styles present from the outset as it combines castellation, Tudor gables, Old English gables, dormers, a steeply pitched roof, blind wall tracery, bay windows, clustered chimneys, and rich sculptural details such as stiff-leaf capitals (Figure 4.89). In short,

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<sup>497</sup> Interior additions were carried out by Langley, Langley and Burke in 1882; the addition of the veranda and conservatory were carried out by E.J. Lennox in 1883–85; and the porte-cochère, sunroom, corner veranda, and south turret by George M. Miller in 1900–01. Patricia McHugh, *Toronto architecture: a city guide*, 1989, p.166.



the house partakes in the stylistic eclecticism as seen a decade earlier at Trafalgar Castle in Whitby. While many of the details are quintessentially English rather than from a variety of countries as was the case for many High Victorian Gothic buildings, there was still a freedom in inspiration in terms of the historical eras as used for inspiration which was symptomatic of this movement. Even though the architects made use of the most current decorative style, the planning of the house remains consistent with the lessons as taught by Hay. While the entrance is placed centrally, for instance, the facade is staggered with bay windows and gables of various sizes, suggesting an attention to convenient interior planning. Beyond this, each wing of the house is roofed and articulated separately, and windows and chimneys appear to have been placed for convenience and comfort rather than for the sake of symmetry just as with Hay's houses, such as Thornton Cliff, Brockville of 1854 or Pugin's houses, such as The Grange, Ramsgate of 1844. This return to a Romantic, castellated mode is of the same line of thinking as the roughly contemporary châteaux of Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814–79) in France and in the later (and much larger) works of William Burges (1827–81) in Britain. All of these examples, in addition to the McMaster mansion, show the cosmopolitan nature and widespread appeal of the High Victorian approach to design as well as the flexibility of Puginian planning for residences.

### **Continuity of Pugin's principles throughout the 1860s**

Even though liberal approaches to the Gothic style were enjoying popularity in the late 1850s and 1860s, straightforward designs in the manner of Pugin did not disappear. So while some architects were blending a number of styles and appending them to Gothic bases, others were

adhering rather more strictly to their Gothic roots. Even Cumberland and Storm did not limit themselves to High Victorian Gothic, as can be seen by the relatively simply ornamented Dalrymple Crawford house of 1860 (Figures 4.90 and 4.91). The plan was roughly L-shaped with a sizable one-storey kitchen and bedroom wing extending to the east side. Even the main body of the house, though roughly rectangular in its footprint, was staggered in various stages by the non-symmetrical layout of the interior, resulting in a layered effect on the facade. Just as originally recommended by Pugin in 1841 and as reiterated and specified for use in Canada West by Hay in 1853, this “well ordered interior [gave] architectural expression to the exterior without the aid of meretricious ornament.”<sup>498</sup> True to Hay’s vision, there was little “meretricious ornament” to speak of, and indeed, little ornament at all. The main door was to have been carved with quatrefoils and lancets, there were small finials on the gables, a simple string course and some simple capitals on the porch and large frames surrounding each of the windows and the door. Otherwise, the house reads as rather severe in its character, not unlike a Pugin or a Hay house, and reflects the growing tendency toward modesty and simplicity as seen increasingly throughout the 1860s when High Victorian Gothic was not necessarily employed.

Perhaps most notable in carrying on this brand of simplified ornament combined with rational planning were Hay’s former partner and former student, Thomas Gundry and Henry Langley who had an expansive and popular practice throughout the 1860s. Gundry paired up with Hay in late 1861 and—when it was evident that Hay would remain in Scotland—with Langley in mid

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<sup>498</sup> Hay, “Architecture for the Meridian of Canada,” p.253.

1862.<sup>499</sup> The pair remained together until Gundry's death in 1869. Throughout the decade of the 1860s, the firm built a number of Gothic Revival houses which were in keeping with Hay's ideas about propriety in planning in that "the convenient arrangement of the internal space ought always to be the object of primary importance."<sup>500</sup> This meant that an attractive elevation would arise from a well-planned building. More so than ornament, then, the arrangement of their elevations spoke to the principles of the Gothic Revival. This was important as the ornamentation was subdued, and, indeed, almost non-existent in certain houses. Additionally, it was relegated only to the essential features of construction, proving the lasting nature of Pugin's principles. Even as styles changed, truth in construction lingered. The following are a few examples throughout the decade that exemplify these ideas and the firm's Gothic idiom, in general.

One of Gundry and Langley's earliest house commissions was a double house for John L. Blaikie and William Alexander on Jarvis Street, Toronto, built in 1864 (Figures 4.92 and 4.93). Although the northern section was later remodeled in a Queen Anne style, the residence was originally stylistically uniform, of red-brick with white stone and white brick accents. Based on its general layout, however, it seems likely that the original apartments would have been roughly mirror images of each other. (The round veranda appears to have also been a later addition because its base is made of red sandstone as used in the later Queen Anne portion while the rest of the house has limestone as a base.) Indeed, an unlabeled plan for a double residence from the Horwood

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<sup>499</sup> Robert G. Hill, "Thomas Gundry," *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*, accessed September 2014, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/757>.

<sup>500</sup> Hay, "Architecture for the Meridian of Canada," p.253.

architectural collection at the Toronto Public Library, signed by Gundry and Langley, clearly displays such balanced symmetry between both parts (Figure 4.94). The placement of the verandas and the bay windows, moreover, lead me to believe that this is, in fact, the same building. The presence of two water closets per household as well as the fairly large size of the lot further indicate that the drawn plan was indeed a double residence for wealthy patrons, which would have suited the Blaikie–Alexander residence’s location.

The house is fairly straightforward in elevation, though this relative symmetry would have been in keeping with its location on then–fashionable Jarvis Street and with its use as a townhouse. Even with its tight plan, in keeping with Hay’s practice, the windows and chimneys were placed as needed and the one–storey side veranda was separately roofed and articulated with a finely executed pair of lancets (Figure 4.95). The dormers and side gable carried some wooden ornamentation in the form of simple bargeboards pierced with quatrefoils. The gable is also accentuated by a wooden finial. Beyond harbouring ornamentation, these features—along with the bay and oriel window on the facade—add to the visual interest of the exterior, and nod to the efficient planning within. Otherwise, in terms of ornamentation, the architects made use of brackets, brick lozenges and delicately carved hood moulds and label stops, all of which were emphasized neatly by the use of permanent polychromy in tribute to the popular contemporary style. The result is a subtle blend of a truthful plan and the latest in architectural theory in a way that Hay would not use for houses until his return to Scotland. For instance, none of his Canadian houses showed the kind of stylistic diversity as seen at the Kingsknowes House in Galashiels, Scotland of 1868 (Figure 4.96). That Gundry and Langley were happily combining diverse

architectural motifs and theories demonstrates the evolution of taste in the province and the extent to which the architectural practice in the colonies had begun to catch up with that as found in Britain.

The strategy of subtlety was taken to new extremes in two Toronto houses built by the firm in 1865: the rectory for St Stephen-in-the-Fields Anglican Church (Figure 4.97) and the parsonage for St George's Anglican Church (Figure 4.98). Each of these houses was absolutely pared down in terms of ornamentation and, in fact, in terms of identifiable Gothic features in general. At the rectory for St Stephen's, for example, the only traditional Gothic features were the pointed arches of the main window and those that framed the porch. This means that it was the asymmetrical planning related to and complemented by the steeply pitched roofs as well as the separately articulated sections of the building that made a claim for the Gothic style and which tied the house to its Gothic church. The same is true of the parsonage for St George's in which the Gothic elements are perhaps even more faintly pronounced. While there are pointed windows, they are located in the attic and are essentially masked by the wooden bargeboard. Otherwise, the house is bare of all other ornamentation, and so, just as with the rectory for St Stephen's, the planning-related features of the house speak for the style. In other words, the bay windows, the steeply pitched roof and the chimney clusters help to identify this house as taking part in the Gothic tradition. This approach to design as used by Gundry and Langley for these houses extrapolates the degree of simplicity as found in Hay's houses, and his parsonage for Holy Trinity of 1860 in particular. Even more than Hay's parsonage, these two clergy houses were reduced to their simplest components and appear to have taken Pugin's advice to heart. In fact, Pugin's words on

the subject of ecclesiastical residences of twenty–two years earlier appear to be echoed here precisely in brick and mortar:

[Their character] is not produced by richness of detail [...] but it is owing to the *absence of all artificial resources, and the severity and simplicity in which they have been raised*; there is no attempt at concealment, no trick, no deception, no false show, no mock materials; they appear as true and solid as the faith itself.<sup>501</sup>

While these two houses were intended for occupation by the clergy, it is important to note that the simplicity in ornamentation and the attention to planning were carried over into lay houses as well. Perhaps even more importantly, the difference should be noted between these clergy houses and Gothic houses as found in the province from the previous decades, even if intended for similar use. The Bishop's Palace by William Thomas of 1845, for instance, though perhaps understated for its time, reads as showy and superficial when contrasted against these drastically simplified houses. While all three were designed as houses for clergymen—granted, of different status—the approach to the application of ornamentation and to the overall plan and elevation are startlingly different. The Bishop's Palace appears as classically and symmetrically planned with an abundance of applied surface ornament, while the clergy houses of 1865 appear as asymmetrical and essentially astylar. This demonstrates the nature of the changes that took place in architectural theory and in public taste under the umbrella of the Gothic style over the course of twenty short years.

While the firm of Gundry and Langley did build slightly more extravagantly ornamented houses for the elite, such as the McMaster mansion, the clergy houses demonstrate the suitability of the style for smaller houses, which translated well into the homes of the middle class. Indeed, it was

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<sup>501</sup> Pugin, *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England*, p.69.

the essential features regarding planning and convenience that were carried over into house planning in the province throughout the rest of the century. This shift away from ornamentation and toward planning from the 1840s through to the 1860s shows that architects like William Hay really were instrumental in the means of transmission of architectural ideas.

It is possible that the style was employed regularly by other architects, but unfortunately, there is little evidence for it. Another architect who was working in the Gothic style in the province, for instance, was Thomas Fuller (1823–98) who is perhaps best known for winning the 1859 competition for the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa with his partner Chilion Jones. Few of Fuller’s houses are known and given that he worked in a number of different styles, it is unclear as to what vocabulary might have been employed for them. Fuller—along with one-time partner Robert Messer—has been credited with a house in Toronto of 1859 “near Davenport Road at the head of Crookshank Lane, for an unidentified client,”<sup>502</sup> about which there is no surviving documentation. Given that Fuller was in the midst of preparing designs for the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, it may be that the house was likewise executed in a Gothic style. It should be noted, however, that Fuller and Jones’s accompanying design for the Governor–General’s residence in Ottawa was not Gothic, but classical, and so a definitive guess as to the articulation of the Toronto house cannot be made. The George Canning Longley House in Maitland of 1860–61 has likewise been attributed to Fuller and Jones.<sup>503</sup> The original house (which has since been altered beyond recognition) consisted of a rather rectangular plan with three gables framing the

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<sup>502</sup> Robert G. Hill, “Thomas Fuller,” *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada*, accessed October, 2014, <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1578>.

<sup>503</sup> Stephen A. Otto, *Maitland: “a very neat village indeed,”* Toronto: The Boston Mills Press, 1985, pp.121–122.

facade, and made use of bay windows and (reportedly) board-and-batten construction (Figure 4.99).<sup>504</sup> Beyond these features, the the house was not readily identifiable as Gothic in its execution. Though the house appeared as somewhat clumsy, it is important to remember that architectural advice with regard to houses was relatively scarce and that proficiency of Gothic design for churches or for civic buildings did not necessarily imply proficiency with regard to domestic designs. It is also important to remember, that, at this time, Gothic houses were moving in the direction of subtlety, and so it would have been considered Gothic by virtue of the few affiliated features mentioned and because it was not classical in its appearance.

Indeed, this seems to have become a defining characteristic of Gothic as the nineteenth century wore on; a house was Gothic with even the subtlest use of the style's hallmark motifs. Even if the style was not blatantly practiced by leading architects, the characteristics as introduced by architects such as Hay carried over into houses of all styles for all classes of people, as the next chapter will illustrate.

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<sup>504</sup> Otto, p.122.



## CHAPTER FIVE: COTTAGES AND FARMHOUSES IN THE GOTHIC STYLE, 1864 AND BEYOND

The relationship between architecture and printed media has always been close. In Canada, the most successful home-grown print campaign, and the one that managed to infiltrate the vernacular, appeared in the mid-1860s under the inconspicuous guise of a farming magazine.

The architectural designs for houses provided in the magazine, *The Canada Farmer*, spread across Canada West and remain to this day in numerous manifestations. These easily identifiable houses stem from three specific designs for Gothic Revival residences that were simple to create and that were also highly affordable; these are “A Small Gothic Cottage” (Figure 5.1),<sup>505</sup> a “Suburban Villa or Farm House” (Figure 5.2)<sup>506</sup> and “A Cheap Farm House” (Figure 5.3).<sup>507</sup>

With their simplicity and efficacy, these three plans effectively changed the rural architectural landscape of the province in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

An increased focus on architectural literature surrounding rural and farm buildings began in late-eighteenth-century England, yet well into the 1860s, reference is made to the poor state of farm houses in Canada.<sup>508</sup> The ideas as promoted by English cottage books were known in Canada, though they were primarily filtered through the American pattern-book genre (as discussed in Chapter 2). While it is clear that pattern books circulated here, as attested to by the number of pattern-book-inspired houses to be found in most towns in present-day Southern Ontario, it

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<sup>505</sup> “A Small Gothic Cottage,” *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.2, 1864, p.21.

<sup>506</sup> “Suburban Villa or Farm House,” *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.9, 1864, p.132.

<sup>507</sup> “A Cheap Farm House,” *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.22, 1864, p.340.

<sup>508</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.1, 1864, p.7.

seems that the influence had not yet extended into rural areas. The first time that the influence of printed media truly infiltrated Canada's rural landscape was with the introduction of *The Canada Farmer* in 1864. This was a bi-weekly journal that was delivered to post offices free of charge with a subscription of one dollar for the year. As such, it was an affordable printed source which, importantly, also included a regular column on the topic of rural architecture.

In the prospectus of January 15, 1864, the contributors to the journal are listed, with a "Mr. Smith, a successful and rising Architect of Toronto"<sup>509</sup> contributing to architectural matters. This Mr. Smith has been identified as James Avon Smith (1832–1918) who would later go on to form the prominent Toronto-based architectural firm of Smith and Gemmell.<sup>510</sup> Smith's architectural career began after immigrating to Canada from Scotland, when he was apprenticed to William Thomas (1799–1860).<sup>511</sup> At the time of his introduction in *The Canada Farmer*, Smith had designed a few churches, a few houses and several commercial buildings and warehouses, mostly in Toronto, so it is clear that he was already an architect of some repute. The architectural column, which made its debut in the introductory issue, was titled "Canadian Farm Architecture," later to become a recurring column titled "Rural Architecture" that would be featured in many, though not all, issues. Of these columns provided throughout 1864, some were composed of excerpts from various other agricultural journals, while some were written without an author identified; presumably, these would have been written by Smith.

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<sup>509</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.1, 1864, p.8.

<sup>510</sup> Harold Kalman, *A history of Canadian architecture*, vol. 2, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994, p.606. For a list of James Avon Smith, and Smith and Gemmell buildings, see Robert G. Hill, "James Avon Smith," *Biographical dictionary of architects in Canada, 1800–1950*: <http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1313>.

<sup>511</sup> Eric Arthur, *Toronto: no mean city*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964, p. 259.

The information provided in the journal was not altogether revolutionary as the precedent for the architectural consideration of rural cottages and farmhouses began in England in the late-eighteenth century, and was carried on with fervour in North America beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. The interest in rural types began in England for a number of reasons; first, workers's houses were seen as inhumane and in need of improvement, and second, all things rural enjoyed a newfound respect under the aesthetic theory of the picturesque. At this time architects such as John Plaw (1745–1820) and John Wood (1728–82) began to write books aimed at wealthy landowners who were looking to improve the quality of living for their labourers while at the same time, improving the picturesque appearance of their own property.<sup>512</sup>

Following these, books began to be written by architects such as Robert Lugar (1773–1855), John Buonarotti Papworth (1775–1847) and Peter Frederick Robinson (1776–1858) with a broader audience in mind, as at this time, rural dwellings became not just a preoccupation of the architectural community, but of the agricultural community as well as society at large. As such “Many agricultural writers believed that improving the living conditions of rural labourers would lead to increased productivity, and so included exemplary designs for farm houses, cottages, and other structures in their books and essays.”<sup>513</sup> Perhaps the most popular author to combine the interest in rural life with architecture was John Claudius Loudon (1783–1843), as he wrote extensively on horticulture, landscape gardening and rural houses in both periodicals and in books. The formula that he used to combine all of these aspects in his *Encyclopaedia of cottage*,

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<sup>512</sup> Cynthia Wolk Nachman, “The early English cottage book,” *Marsyas*, vol. XIV, 1968–1969, p.70.

<sup>513</sup> John Archer, *The literature of British domestic architecture, 1715–1842*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985, p.xx.

*farm, and villa architecture* of 1833 would be adopted by nineteenth-century American pattern-book writers because of its inclusion of all types of rural dwellings as well as a breakdown of costs and materials for each design. Books such as Loudon's also relied heavily on the popular theory of the picturesque, which prized all aspects of bucolic life and placed emphasis on irregularity of form in architecture, which coincided happily with the newly developed Gothic style.

The important contribution of these English cottage books to the Canadian situation is in their use of the Gothic style blended with picturesque planning and in the broadening of the architectural field to include rural buildings. While the philanthropic issue was of less importance in the North American context, the goal of rural improvement was indeed continued, as Smith wrote that "By the publication of occasional articles, engravings, plans, &c., we hope to do somewhat toward improving the style of rural architecture in Canada."<sup>514</sup>

With the goal of improving rural architecture in mind, the first issue of *The Canada Farmer* discussed the importance of hiring an architect, echoing the major concern of American pattern-book writers around this time in an effort to preserve the practice as a whole, which was, at the time, perceived to be more-or-less non-existent in rural areas. Smith, an architect himself, would have been aware of these debates and mimicked them in the magazine. This, however, does not appear to have been done in order to promote Smith's own practice because, interestingly, his drawings were not labeled and his name was not mentioned again until 1865.

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<sup>514</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.1, 1864, p.7.

Much of the local readership likely would have known who created the work, but outside of Toronto, unless someone had been reading quite closely since the first issue, Smith's name would have been unknown. It seems, then, that he was not promoting his practice, but simply and truly proposing to beautify the countryside.

As such, Smith took full advantage of this new medium and wasted no time in getting to the point. In the first column, Smith immediately launched into a criticism of existing farm structures, stating that "Architecture is perhaps a complimentary word when used in reference to most of the structures which have been erected upon the farms of Canada."<sup>515</sup> Smith went on to admit that there were indeed a few admirable examples that could be found in the country "But, as might be expected in a comparatively new country, it is the few, and not the many, of which this can be said [...]."<sup>516</sup> While this kind of attack on rural architecture dates back to the English cottage books of the eighteenth century, it was the first time in Canada West that it was presented in a forum that was addressed exclusively to the rural population. Incidentally, this may have been the first time that the advice was taken seriously; it is one thing for those with a vested interest in architecture to discuss the fate of rural architecture amongst themselves, but it is quite another to provide specific instruction to the people who are directly affected by these proposed changes. As the new voice of authority on the matter, Smith and the journal recommended the use of professional advice for the rural citizen; if not an architect, then at least a book or the advice that was to be given in the upcoming issues of *The Canada Farmer*.

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<sup>515</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.1, 1864, p.7.

<sup>516</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.1, 1864, p.7.

Following this line of thinking, within the first year of the journal's publication, Smith provided four designs for affordable houses, ranging from \$750 to \$1800, depending on the materials used and the size of the model selected. Two versions of a small one-story cottage design were offered in the February 1, 1864 issue, a second, larger design was offered in the May 16, 1864 issue, and a third small two-story cottage was offered in the November 15, 1864 issue. There is nothing that is particularly interesting about the designs other than the medium in which they were presented and the fact that three of the four of them are in the Gothic style. It must again be emphasized that the designs for these houses were not new or revolutionary and, in fact, examples of similar types can be found, built and in print, prior to the publication of the periodical. The difference is that with the assistance of *The Canada Farmer*, the audience was wider and more accessible, and so the message of style was transmitted more clearly than ever before. Those who may not have been willing to read or purchase an entire book on cottage or farmhouse design might have read the occasional column containing architectural advice pertaining to their situation, particularly when the drawings outweighed the text. For the farming community at the time, it is likely that the immediate visual impact of the elevations and plans would have been an attractive selling feature. The realization, moreover, that a modicum of taste could be achieved for a low cost, would certainly have been appealing. The participation in a popular trend—the Gothic Revival—was now within reach of those who might not previously have had access.

For the designs of the houses themselves, it is clear that Smith was looking to American books for inspiration. As the shift in focus from urban to rural became a popular tendency due to

crowding in cities and, relatedly, to health concerns, a large number of pattern books were released in order to extend the authoritative arm of the city-based architect. Suburban and rural areas were perceived to be lawless in terms of good taste, and so in an effort to keep building under control, architectural books were created to be used as tools that would facilitate good taste and design.

In reality, however, breaking into the rural market appears to have been a difficult task.

Whenever pattern books were used to build a house, they were typically used by fairly wealthy citizens living in smaller towns who sought to keep up with current architectural trends. They could also afford to build well. This meant that the state of rural and working-class housing did not change much around mid century, though it was not due to a lack of effort. There were, indeed, plenty of options for cottages put into print, although farmhouses often received relatively slight architectural attention. The ubiquitous pattern-book author Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–52) included a chapter on farmhouses in *The architecture of country houses* of 1850, and was followed by other writers including Gervase Wheeler with *Homes for the people, in suburb and country; the villa, the mansion and the cottage, adapted to American climate and wants*<sup>517</sup> of 1855 and Samuel Sloan with *Sloan's homestead architecture, containing forty designs for villas, cottages, and farm houses* of 1861.<sup>518</sup> The first to write specifically for this genre, however, was Lewis Falley Allen (1800–90), with his 1852 book *Rural architecture*, which he opened by stating that it “owes its appearance to the absence of any cheap and popular

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<sup>517</sup> Gervase Wheeler, *Homes for the People, in Suburb and Country; the Villa, the Mansion and the Cottage, adapted to American climate and wants*, New York: Charles Scribner, 1855, pp. 363–400.

<sup>518</sup> Samuel Sloan, *Sloan's Homestead Architecture, containing forty designs for villas, cottages, and farm houses*, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1861.

book on the subject of Rural Architecture, exclusively intended for the farming or agriculture of the United States.”<sup>519</sup> Allen claimed that he was not aware of the reason that this topic had not yet been addressed by other writers, though suggested that perhaps farmers “themselves have indicated but little wish for instruction” on this matter.<sup>520</sup> As such, he took a careful and respectful approach with regard to the matter of taste. Allen described the farmer as a “plain” man, though one who was certainly worthy of a comfortable residence.<sup>521</sup> He wrote:

Why should a farmer, because he *is* a farmer, only occupy an uncouth, outlandish house, any more than a professional man, a merchant, or a mechanic? Is it because he himself is so uncouth and outlandish in his thoughts and manners, that he deserves no better? [...] Surely not. Yet, in many of the plans and designs got up for his accommodation, in the books and publications of the day, all due convenience, to say nothing of the respectability or the elegance of domestic life, is as entirely disregarded as if such qualities had no connection with the farmer or his occupation.<sup>522</sup>

Though he discussed much of the expression of character throughout the book, Allen gave no specific recommendations with regard to style to match the character of the farmer, perhaps in order to avoid offending his potential clientele. He did, however, provide designs for farmhouses and farm buildings in a variety of styles, mainly Gothic, Italian, Swiss, and “Rustic [a quaint, thatched–roof style considered to be a variant on Gothic],”<sup>523</sup> but did not rank any above the rest. This, then, was the first time in North America that the farming community was addressed exclusively. The impact of this was not felt on a large scale in Canada, however, until the release

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<sup>519</sup> Lewis Falley Allen, *Rural Architecture*, New York: C.M. Saxton, Agricultural Book Publisher, 1852, p.ix.

<sup>520</sup> Allen, p.ix.

<sup>521</sup> Allen, p.xiii.

<sup>522</sup> Allen, p.xi.

<sup>523</sup> Allen, p.50.



of *The Canada Farmer* in 1864, which used a powerful combination of Allen's careful approach to the rural community and a new, affordable medium of transmission.

Smith's reliance on American books is particularly evident in the drawing provided for a barnyard in the March 1, 1864 issue<sup>524</sup> that is almost identical to a drawing for a barnyard in Allen's book of twelve years earlier (Figures 5.4 and 5.5).<sup>525</sup> The basic details of each structure are the same and even the same angle was used for the perspective view. While Smith changed a few of the minor details, he took the exact measurements from Allen's design and repeated the text almost verbatim. This shows that Smith was copying directly from this publication and highlights the fact that his designs for houses may well have been modeled on extant designs for houses and cottages. This helps to explain the existence of houses executed in a similar manner prior to the date of publication and also clearly demonstrates that architectural ideas were often widely appropriated in the nineteenth-century without proper acknowledgement. Rather than creating something that was completely new for his houses, then, it is possible that Smith was simply presenting existing and familiar forms to Canadians, although now with a definite Gothic slant.

This borrowing of vernacular forms is evident with the first of Smith's designs presented in the pages of *The Canada Farmer*, which was simply titled "A Small Gothic Cottage."<sup>526</sup> This was a simple one-story cottage of the type that might have been found anywhere in North America

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<sup>524</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.4, 1864, p.52.

<sup>525</sup> Allen, p.291.

<sup>526</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.2, 1864, p.21.

before the publication of the plans in the journal. There are several examples in Port Hope, for instance, that were built in the 1850s without the attribution of an architect. The Trick House of about 1850, for example, is square in plan with a hipped roof and some minor Gothic embellishments and was built by a local bricklayer (Figure 5.6).<sup>527</sup> The vestigial classical form and the use of some classical motifs, such as the quoins, make this a vernacular hybrid rather than a pure example of the Gothic style. It is no great surprise that a house as simple as this could have been created without the aid of an architect. To highlight this fact, it is only necessary to look at Chrysler Cottage of 1853 (located near the Trick House in Port Hope), which was built around the same time and articulated plainly (Figure 5.7). The house does not evolve from a specific stylistic tradition, rather it comes from a simple and efficient solution to small-house building in its compact nature and use of minimal ornamentation. It is likely that Smith would have seen any number of houses like these to take as models before he published his tips for small rural houses.

The “Small Gothic Cottage” was recommended for a small family and featured three bedrooms with a kitchen wing at the back of the house. Beyond the addition of the kitchen wing, Smith recommended a simple, rectangular shape for the plan to avoid extra costs. He admitted that while irregular houses held picturesque advantages, this design was primarily intended to be economical in nature. The symmetrical plan was thus favoured for reasons of simple and sturdy construction, even though it is labeled as a Gothic house. While picturesque planning was eschewed here for financial reasons, Smith did add a touch of High Victorian Gothic flare in the

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<sup>527</sup> “Richard Trick Cottage,” *Canadian register of historic places*, Canada’s Historic Places website <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=10013>, accessed May, 2013.

recommendation that the house, if built of brick, should be red with white brick accents. Though there were examples of permanent polychromy to be found in the province prior to the arrival of the Gothic Revival, it was championed in print by John Ruskin beginning in 1849 and was made popular by William Butterfield's All Saint's Margaret Street, London, also begun in 1849. The inclusion of polychromy in the case of Smith's "Small Gothic Cottage," was a simple way of adding some Gothic style while avoiding frivolous, and potentially costly, embellishment.

One example of a house that might well have been inspired by this design is 151 Robert Street, Milton of the 1860s; the hipped roof, central gable, pointed window and general massing all echo those as found in Smith's drawings (Figure 5.8). The only thing that is truly different is the addition of the porch, but even so, the guiding principles behind the house are quite similar. A house in Georgetown also provides another replica of the design from the journal, albeit one which has been subsequently heavily modified (Figure 5.9). Though the central window has been blocked and the main entrance covered, its small stature, hipped roof and bargeboard detailing reveal its origins and demonstrate that these types of houses, while cost-efficient, were built to last.

The second design, "The Suburban Villa or the Farm House," was rather larger than the "Small Gothic Cottage," featuring two floors, five bedrooms and formal entertaining rooms.<sup>528</sup> It played on contemporary trends in Gothic and picturesque planning in terms of its asymmetry which complemented the house's subtle Gothic or "Early English" detailing, as Smith called it.<sup>529</sup> This

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<sup>528</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.9, 1864, p.132.

<sup>529</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.9, 1864, p.132.

might well have been inspired by Smith's teacher William Thomas who built some of the Toronto-area's earliest and most convincing Gothic houses (as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4). In particular, Smith's design in *The Canada Farmer* could be linked to Thomas's design for the manse for St Andrew's (now St Paul's) Presbyterian Church, Hamilton of 1857 which was built while Smith was still working as an apprentice (Figure 5.10). Though not identical, the distribution of chimneys is closely related, as is the placement of the projecting bay and bay windows. In general they are quite similar in terms of the overall massing and in terms of the style of Gothic used.

It is also possible that Smith was making reference to earlier American pattern-book designs. This does not seem unlikely, particularly given Smith's nearly exact replication of the barn found in Allen's book of 1852. One possible source could be Downing's design for a "Villa Farm House" from *The architecture of country houses* of 1850 (Figure 5.11).<sup>530</sup> While at first, the two farmhouses seem only slightly similar, the comparison becomes more salient when considering the text that follows. Of this design, Downing wrote:

The exterior of this design might perhaps be improved, by omitting the two small gables in the front, and increasing the size of the middle gable sufficiently to allow of a small attic window.<sup>531</sup>

It is clear that Smith was paying close attention to the text in Allen's book, so there is good reason to suppose that he was doing the same with Downing's books. Even the name "Villa Farm House" is similar to Smith's appellation of the design as "Suburban Villa or Farm House." His drawings might also be likened to "A cottage for a country clergyman," which appeared in the

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<sup>530</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing, *The architecture of country houses*, New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1850, p.173.

<sup>531</sup> Downing, p.173.

1856 edition of Downing's *Cottage residences* (Figure 2.18).<sup>532</sup> That this type of house existed in various manifestations physically and in print prior to its appearance in the pages of *The Canada Farmer* in 1864 underscores the fact that Smith was adapting preexisting architectural forms for use by the general public.

Regardless of the specific influences, this design proved to be quite versatile and can be found in many different manifestations across the province. Although the proportions are not identical, 294 Sumner Avenue in Oakville of about 1870 (Figure 5.12) displays the same massing as the "Suburban Villa or Farmhouse." In this example, the Gothic feel is further amplified by the use of pointed rather than Tudor windows, although the Gothic elements are secondary in importance to the asymmetrical plan. Another brick example is the Daniel Lamb House at 156 Winchester Street in Toronto of 1867 which was modified in the subsequent decade (Figure 5.13). Two wooden examples are 157 Robert Street in Milton (date unknown) and 301 Centre Street South in Whitby, of 1875 (Figures 5.14 and 5.15). While the previous houses are made of brick or wood rather than stone, as portrayed in the drawing, Smith specifically stated that any material might be used "without interfering with the design."<sup>533</sup> Another nearly direct version can be found in Almonte, where the rectory for St Paul's Anglican Church was built in 1878 in much the same style and is, indeed, made of stone (Figure 5.16). This house omits the bay window on the projecting bay, but it is important to recall that the plans in *The Canada Farmer* were to provide a prototype rather than an exact model. Indeed, they could be adapted to stone, brick or wood and could be embellished as much or as little as needed depending on the location and available

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<sup>532</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing, *Cottage residences*, New York: Wiley & Halstead, 1856, Design XI.

<sup>533</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.9, 1864, p.132.

finances. The idea was to create a sturdy and comfortable type of house that would, in essence, not be offensive to the eye. As testament to the versatility of the designs, many examples can be found well into the late–nineteenth century that are not at all Gothic in their execution. The details as used for many Gothic versions of this house—usually pointed or Tudor windows and bargeboard—are relatively minor details that could be easily changed depending on preference or current fashion. Gothic was clearly the preferred style for Smith at the time of publication, and while popular, it was by no means the universally adopted style. It was the plan with its irregular massing, borrowing from the developments in Gothic housing beginning in the 1850s, that was the most important contribution of the “Suburban Villa or Farm House” to the Canadian landscape.

Perhaps the most popular, or at least the most recognizable, of the three designs is the third; “A Cheap Farm House.”<sup>534</sup> This design was small and cost efficient, providing five bedrooms, a parlor, dining room and kitchen for an estimated \$800 if built of timber. The “Small Gothic Cottage,” in contrast, if built of timber was estimated at \$750 but held only three small bedrooms. The Suburban Villa also featured five rooms but, if built of timber, would cost \$1200. For the greatest value, then, the Cheap Farm House was the best option. The design provided was a simple prototype and Smith recommended a variety of optional improvements in order to make it more comfortable, such as a veranda, terraces, and a picket fence.<sup>535</sup>

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<sup>534</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.22, 1864, p.340.

<sup>535</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.22, 1864, p.340.

Much like the “Small Gothic Cottage,” it is easy to imagine how houses similar to the “Cheap Farm House” might have pre-dated Smith’s plans, as it is simply laid out with few embellishments. Once again, Smith likely borrowed a vernacular example that he found acceptable. Perhaps he might have described a house like the William Eckardt House of about 1852 in Unionville (Figure 5.17) as one of the “excellent farm residences which, in accommodation, form, proportion, picturesqueness, colour, light and shade, are all that can be desired,” and which are “in admirable keeping, and marked by convenience, spaciousness, [and] neatness.”<sup>536</sup> Smith might well have adapted such a model, brought it up to date and popularized it through his choice of style and medium of transmission. In adapting existing vernacular types, Smith cleverly appealed to the rural population; not only were the forms familiar and within reach of the rural community, but they could also be easily replicated without the aid of an architect, as proven by the similar pre-existing non-architect built models. While examples of houses like the William Eckardt House pre-date Smith’s designs, they only began to appear widely in the second half of the nineteenth century after the publication of the plans in *The Canada Farmer*.

There are many houses based on the “Cheap Farm House” model that can be found in almost every area of present-day Southern Ontario, for instance in Georgetown and in Oakville (Figures 5.18–5.19) and can often be found in multiple incarnations within one town, as seen for instance in Whitby (5.20–5.24). The type is easily identifiable with its steeply pitched central gable and simple square plan. Most often there is a pointed window in the dormer, which is typically

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<sup>536</sup> *The Canada Farmer*, vol.1, no.1, 1864, p.7.

framed by bargeboard. While not all versions of the house made use of the same decorative features, they often retained at least one from Smith's plans, whether it was the pointed central window or the bargeboard. The materials varied as well depending on what was locally available, as well as depending on cost and preference, and so examples are to be found in stone, brick and wood. Some remained true to the simple façade, while others opted for the additional porch as recommended by Smith. This again serves to highlight the fact that the design was meant as a basic and versatile prototype rather than as a direct model.

These houses are typically found in rural areas, small towns, or on the outskirts of late–nineteenth–century city centres at the time. It appears that the design caught on in popularity and was not restricted to use on a farm, as its name would suggest. It seems that they were also adopted as cheap cottages, often for labourers, as suggested by their placement in a row of five at Harbord Street and Clinton Street in Toronto, which in the second half of the nineteenth century was on the fringes of the city limits (Figures 5.25 and 5.26). The model's use as affordable worker housing is reinforced by its appearance in abundance in Toronto's Cabbagetown neighbourhood, located near what was then the eastern extreme of the city of Toronto. The houses on Amelia Street, for instance, were built beginning in 1875 (Figures 5.27–5.30), the remaining pair of houses on Metcalfe in 1874 (#66) and 1886 (#62) (Figures 5.31 and 5.32), and those on Wellesley Cottages begun in 1887, thus displaying the long–term appeal of Smith's designs.<sup>537</sup> These cottages for workers or labourers bring the original project of the eighteenth–

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<sup>537</sup> Dates acquired from the City of Toronto's Heritage Property inventory, <http://app.toronto.ca/HeritagePreservation/setup.do?action=init>, accessed January, 2015.



century cottage book writers full circle, by providing sturdy, comfortable housing for labourers, while at the same time improving the look of the built environment.

The popularity of Smith's Gothic designs is attested to by the number of reprints of the plans in subsequent years of the journal as well as by the sheer number of houses built and by their wide distribution across the province. It is clear that Smith succeeded in gaining the trust of the rural population and also succeeded in the creation of agreeable and simply built designs. Whether the original designs were adapted from architectural or vernacular models, *The Canada Farmer* truly succeeded in popularizing these simple houses, helping to spread the Gothic Revival, in both style and plan, and in allowing it to persist and endure in the vernacular of the province well into the late-nineteenth century.

## CONCLUSION

This dissertation has demonstrated the lasting power of the Gothic Revival and its wide spread across Upper Canada and Canada West. From its origins in the 1830s with only a few houses, the movement gradually expanded to make its presence felt (or at least suggested) in almost every corner of the province following Canada's Confederation. The Gothic style, then, was instrumental in effectively changing the built landscape of the colony at large.

Interestingly, though a remote colony of Great Britain with its own distinct climate and concerns, there was no concerted effort toward creating a new style of architecture or a distinct regional variant on the Gothic style in the province, as I believed there might have been at the outset of this project. Instead, the citizens of Canada West were content to borrow from and adapt what was popular elsewhere. Though the formation of a distinct identity would eventually become a major preoccupation of the Canadian psyche, it was of no concern to citizens living in the colonial heyday. This goes to show that architectural change can often come about slowly, particularly when migration and nostalgia are concerned.

Even with an architectural culture of borrowing and adaptation, the trajectory for Gothic houses in the province was not always entirely clear. While it seems logical that it might have been a straightforward case of the whole-hearted and eager adoption of the style of the motherland by all colonial citizens, this was certainly not the reality. The novelty of the style typically took hold in small morsels and almost always with conservatism or restraint in mind. Few were the houses that adopted the full-blown-castle-folly mentality of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth

centuries or direct adaptations of the studied historical style as promoted by William Hay and A.W. N. Pugin. Instead, the seeds of the new style coming from England were rather slow to take root in the province, with patrons and architects erring on the side of cautiousness. The American influence also exerted a powerful influence that watered down the potency of English architectural notions. Indeed, arguably, the American version of domestic Gothic was even more widely spread in the province than that of the English, given the portability and versatility of its primary mode of transmission, pattern books, not to mention their universal appeal to all levels of society. Either way, the architectural climate of the province can be categorized as one of slow innovation tempered by restraint.

While perhaps not on pace with the rapid spread of ideas for Gothic churches, the Gothic houses as built in Upper Canada and Canada West stood and stand as testaments to a specific moment in colonial history and in architectural history at large. Many of the novel ideas as first employed in Gothic houses indeed affected the way subsequent houses were built, regardless of style. For instance, while the stylistic details and vocabulary of the Gothic style began to die out in the later nineteenth century, the style succeeded in inspiring greater diversity. Perhaps most significantly, the rational approach to planning and lack of forced symmetry loosened up domestic spaces and made them much more convenient and comfortable than ever before. These effects carried over into houses of all types by the end of the nineteenth century. It was thus in concrete ways that the Gothic style and its inherent versatility helped to free the architectural imagination of the province at large.

Using the the city of Toronto as a final small case study, it is clear to see the continued use of the Gothic style as well as its lingering effects on subsequent domestic architecture. There are numerous examples to be found that speak to the developments and lessons as learned since the introduction of the Gothic style into the houses of Toronto by John George Howard in 1832. William Hay's former student, Henry Langley carried on building houses in the Gothic style on occasion, for instance with the firm of Langley, Langley and Burke at the Thomas Thompson House at 471 Jarvis Street of 1873–74<sup>538</sup> (Figure 6.1). Though taller in proportion than many of the houses from the pre–Confederation period, it is plain to see the considerations that were taken into effect for this house as learned from its predecessors: the truthful exposure of materials, variety in planning and its resulting elevation, and the simplicity of ornamentation which, in this case, is restricted to the pointed dormer windows and to the bargeboard. These traits carried over into other Gothic houses well into the century even as new stylistic influences began to dominate, which can be seen, for instance in the Thomas Thompson House's nearby neighbour, the Alfred Mason House of 1880–81 at 441 Jarvis Street (Figure 6.2). The tradition of non–architect–built Gothic houses carried on throughout the following decades as well, even if not derived from one particular written source. Examples such as the John Ward House at 401 Sackville of 1873 and the Hugh Neilson House at 295 Carlton of 1878, both display an understanding of the type of comfortable and subtly ornamented Gothic as developed throughout the period (Figures 6.3 and 6.4). That there is no particular person responsible for these types of houses, nor an attributable print source should not come as a surprise given that the essentials of the Gothic style for houses had, by this time, made their way into the provincial vernacular.

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<sup>538</sup> Patricia McHugh, *Toronto architecture*, p.165.

Beyond this, as the population of the province of Ontario grew, so too did the architectural practice, which meant that architectural examples and advice were now much easier to come by. By the late–nineteenth century, the number of practitioners had drastically increased and the business was becoming more and more organized, meaning that the influence of architects could be felt more widely across the area. The importance of print sources—which had made their presence strongly felt in the province since the 1840s—did not decrease in importance as a result, but the medium did begin to change; architectural periodicals were on the rise both in Canada and in the United States, thus drastically quickening the rate of the dissemination of ideas. The increase in architectural activity as well as in the means of distribution meant that a multitude of voices could now be heard and that opinions and advice could be spread far and wide. Enacting architectural change was therefore much less exhausting and much less slowly paced than it was for Gothic’s early and tireless champions such as John George Howard or William Hay.

Even with changing styles and with new architectural influences making their presence felt, Gothic principles held strong. Houses that were not even remotely Gothic in their details, for instance, bear evidence of the developments in domestic architecture as brought about by the Gothic Revival. A house as seemingly astylar as the John Y. Reid House at 87 Pembroke Street of 1872 by Henry Langley (Figure 6.5), for example, smacks of the lessons in simplicity of ornament and careful attention to planning as introduced into the province by William Hay and which eventually trickled down into the pages of *The Canada Farmer*. Indeed, this house represents a blend of the type of high architecture as practiced by Langley’s teacher, Hay, and the

type of massing as presented in the popular publication, *The Canada Farmer*, thus demonstrating the thorough integration and assimilation of the Gothic style into the built landscape.

The deeply engrained ideals of the Gothic Revival and the luxury of available information also meant that architects and citizens were free once more to delight in the style and to select their favourite aspects of it for use on each individual house. This is not unlike the ideology that guided John George Howard's eclectic application of Gothic motifs as seen in the earliest Gothic houses in the province, although now, principles of planning were inherently included in the choice of style. Gothic was no longer something that was doggedly prescribed by the few available authorities in the province; the use of the style and its principles was now a thoroughly conscious decision. The continued appearance of many of the Gothic Revival's core principles throughout the rest of the century in houses of all styles, then, means that the innovations of the style were truly revolutionary.

While this dissertation may not prove to be the final word in the field of the Gothic Revival houses of Upper Canada and Canada West, I hope that it will be useful for those who wish to pursue further the study of the field of Canadian architecture. At the very least, I hope that it helps to contextualize any houses that were not included in this study (and certainly, there are many). Perhaps this dissertation might even act as a template for those who wish to take on an equally "obscure chapter in the history of art."<sup>539</sup> Finally, I hope that it helps to shed light on and encourage further study in this fascinating area of our history.

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<sup>539</sup> John Britton and Charles Boutell, *Illustrations of the early domestic architecture of England*, London: David Bogue, 86, Fleet Street, 1846, p.5.

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*observations made by Inigo Jones, never printed before*, revised, designed and published by Giacomo Leoni. London, printed by John Watts for the author, 1715.

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