Introduction

When Kenneth Clark wrote his splendid *Gothic Revival* in 1928, he subtitled it 'An Essay in the History of Taste'. Indeed, in the history of taste and fashion, the revival forms an astonishing chapter. A style of architecture that stood condemned for three centuries as the apex of barbarism and irrationality was rehabilitated – at first playfully, then seriously and finally dogmatically. Within a lifetime, a semi-ludicrous garden novelty was solemnly authorized as the style of the English Houses of Parliament, then the governing centre of the world's most powerful economic and political power. But the Gothic Revival is rather more than a fashion craze for pointed arches and pinnacles. During its years of greatest influence, it subjected every aspect of art, belief, society and labour to intense intellectual scrutiny, using the Middle Ages as a platform from which to judge the modern world.

This seems a considerable burden to place on the back of what was, after all, just a style of architecture. But the Gothic always stood for ideas larger than itself. The eighteenth century admired it for its suggestive quality of decay and melancholy, the early nineteenth century for the religious piety it expressed, the late nineteenth for its superb engineering. In the course of the revival the Gothic was attached to social movements of every sort – from political liberalism to patriotic nationalism, from Roman Catholic solidarity to labour reform. Like Marxism, which also drew lessons from medieval society, the Gothic Revival offered a comprehensive response to the dislocations and traumas of the Industrial Revolution. In the broadest view, it is the story of Western civilization's confrontation with modernity.

It is easy to see why the Gothic exerted such a lasting hold on the Western mind, for there is no architectural experience comparable to that of stepping into a High Gothic cathedral, an intricate canopy of stone vaults suspended far overhead, morning light blazing through its coloured glass windows. In structural terms – in the ability to enclose a maximum amount of space with the least amount of material – it is the most efficient system of stone masonry ever devised. The Gothic originated in the Ille-de-France, in northwestern France, in the years around 1140, a time

2. Tintern Abbey, Monmouthshire, twelfth century. The Gothic had a special cultural meaning in England which, more than any other country in Europe, was shaped by monasteries. Their foetid and crumbling hulks suggested a vanished civilization, exerting a hold on the imagination like that of classical ruins in other places. For Romantic painters, the high roofless arcades of Tintern Abbey became a favourite subject.
3 Flying buttresses at Mont-Saint-Michel. For the rational architects of the nineteenth century, such as Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, the bewildering array of buttresses about the apse of a Gothic cathedral was a diagram of structural logic. Each force was exactly matched with an equal and opposing one. Even the finials above, once ridiculed as meaningless flourishes, serve to weigh down the buttresses, giving them additional stiffness.

4 Chartres Cathedral, twelfth century. The architecture of a Gothic cathedral served as a receptacle for every type of decorative art, including painting, stained glass and statuary. Chartres Cathedral preserves its façade and transept sculpture, forming a visible summation of Christian faith. Such communal statements of belief made the cathedral the centre of public life in a medieval town.

of great cultural energy. A series of discrete structural improvements were made to the prevailing Romanesque style of architecture. The round arch of the Romanesque was raised to a point, which was both more widely applicable (there are an infinite number of pointed shapes) and more efficient structurally. The Romanesque groin vault was replaced by the much lighter Gothic ribbed vault. In place of the ponderous walls needed to support a groin vault, flying buttresses were aligned on the exterior to press against the ribbed vaults of the interior, matching the thrust with a countervailing pressure. These channelled the structural load of the lofty vaults directionally, carrying it away from the building as efficiently as drainpipes might carry away excess water. Structural members were placed only where they were needed, producing a truly skeletal architecture.

The highest development of this principle took place in the urban cathedrals of Christian Europe. In them the expressive potential of the new technology was fully realized, the wall dissolving into shimmering screens of glass, separated by the slenderest of piers. In the High Gothic churches of the thirteenth century, such as the royal chapel of Sainte-Chapelle, Paris (1242–47), the limits of Gothic lightness were reached. The Gothic was more than bold engineering; structural elements

5 Sainte-Chapelle, Paris, 1242–47, is among the finest of High Gothic buildings, a class which includes the cathedrals of Amiens, Cologne and Beauvais. Never again would the Gothic be so insubstantial, and the architects of the Late Gothic tended to lavish their energies on ornamental elaboration rather than structural daring.
Antonio Joli, Westminster Abby, 1735. Perhaps the most
selfful distinction between Gothic
urvival and Revival is that the
iter understands that it is
ngaged in a self-conscious act of
istorical imagination. If so, then
ristopher Wren is perhaps the
est of the revivalists. In restoring
estminster Abbey, he claimed
 have made designs 'such as
conceive may agree with the
iginal Scheme of the old
chitect, without any modern
xtures to show my own
ventions.' Nicholas Hawksmoor
pleted the west towers, as
own here.

were embellished with all the colour and surface enrichment that
the decorative arts could provide. In these cathedrals, the orches-
tration of light, sound and space brought Christian worship to a
pitch of spiritual reverie.

This style reigned supreme for nearly four centuries, until the
Italian Renaissance revived the architecture of classical
iquity. Then the Gothic came to be disparaged as irregular and
savage, mocked by Vasari as the maniera telesca, the 'German
style'. He and like-minded critics ignored the invisible logic of
Gothic structure. Although it was supremely rational in a tech-
nical sense, it did not look rational; the sixteenth-century mind saw
only the grotesque water-spewing gargoyle. By 1450 pointed
ches were out of fashion in Florence, a generation later in Paris,
and by the middle of the sixteenth century fashionable
lishmen were building themselves classical manor houses.
Still, the Gothic died hard, and Gothic churches were built well
into the seventeenth century in parts of Germany and England.
Gothic vaulting also persisted for a time, although it was often
asked with the decorative forms of the Renaissance. This phe-
nomenon is called Gothic Survival, whose latest examples
op with the first examples of the revival.

In some cases, Gothic Survival was not mere provincial
rightness, but a matter of deliberate intellectual choice. During
the late sixteenth century, following a wave of experimental clas-
sicism, Gothic buildings began to appear again in Elizabethan
land, and at the highest levels of society. Lord Burghley, Lord
igh Treasurer of England, remodelled Burghley House along
edieval lines, even giving himself a great hall under a lofty ham-
er-beamed ceiling. Gothic sentiment was strong among the
obility, the church and the universities, such as Cambridge,
ose St. John's College built a Gothic library in 1624. That these
ndamentally conservative institutions were drawn to medieval
agery is not surprising. Each had recently undergone a jolting
reak with the past — the protestant Reformation, the dissolu-
ion of the monasteries and the radical reshaping of England's social
der — and desired emblems of continuity, legitimacy and
ational identity. Such were the great preoccupations of
izabethan England, and they flare through the historical dra-
m of Shakespeare.

The religious aspect, mingled with the national, complicated
the issue. Classical architecture suggested Italy, France and
pan, all Catholic territories and potential rivals. During the
ears when fear of Catholicism blazed most strongly, the century
between the Spanish Armada of 1588 and the Glorious
olution of 1688, the Gothic provided a pleasing emblem of
lishness. Even Christopher Wren's Office of Works, a cockpit
of classicism, was able to draw on this living Gothic tradition. As
late as 1681 it produced the church of St Mary Aldermary,
don, a Gothic basilica complete with a clerestory, tracerie-
indows and fan vaults — alas, a sham construction of plaster.

Not every use of the Gothic was a matter of ideology. In some
cases, it was used 'innocently': simply to maintain visual contin-

10
ity with existing buildings. Wren felt that 'to deviate from the old Form, would be to turn [a building] into a disagreeable Mixture, which no Person of a good Taste could relish.' At Christ Church, Oxford, he built Tom Tower, a rather florid Gothic gatehouse. For the restoration of Westminster Abbey he made designs for a Gothic facade and transept, intending 'to make the whole of a Piece.' Wren also appreciated the structural refinements of the Gothic. At St Paul's, London, the crowning achievement of his classicism, he supported the great barrel vault of the nave with a mighty array of flying buttresses, although these were carefully masked from sight behind a blank second-storey wall. Here was the characteristic seventeenth-century attitude toward the Gothic: respect and admiration for its structural achievements, horror and disgust for its visual forms.

Throughout Europe, similar attitudes prevailed. Damaged or dilapidated cathedrals were patched with simplified Gothic elements, as at Noyon, France in the mid-eighteenth century. In some cases entirely new Gothic elements were designed: Gothic transepts were designed for the cathedral of Saint-Croix in Orleans in the 1620s, a Gothic facade followed in about 1708. This was no provincial outpost, but a major cathedral funded by royal contribution, and the decision to proceed in the Gothic was made personally by Louis XIV. And the quality of the work was uncommonly high, carried out in finely dressed stone, much finer, in fact, than much of the Georgian era that followed it.

At the other side of Europe, the Gothic was likewise enjoying a spirited afterlife. The Bohemian architect Giovanni Santini-Aichel (1677–1729) concocted a richly idiosyncratic blend of Baroque and Gothic forms, reviving the sinuous tracery and web-like vaulting of the late Gothic Parler style. Typically inventive was his pilgrimage church of St John of Nepomuk, Zelená Hora, now in the Czech Republic (c. 1720—). This was Baroque in its pentagonal central plan and undulating walls even as its laminated surfaces and its energetic ribbing were resolutely Gothic. These works and those of Wren represent the culmination of Gothic Survival, requiring just a speck of nostalgia and antiquarian pleasure to tip them over into Revival.

Ironically, even as the Renaissance dislodged the Gothic, it suggested by its own example that a discarded style might, at some distant day, be made to live again. Thus in 1700, just as the Gothic finally vanished as a structural system and a style, it was about to be revived as an idea.
the Puritan interregnum. Wenzel Hollar's superb plates formed a rich sourcebook for the Gothic Revival, even into Pugin's day.

It was one thing to draw and research medieval monasteries; it was quite another to build copies of them. For this to happen required mental adjustments of a traumatic nature. Up to the start of the eighteenth century it was still taken for granted that a building must be beautiful to look at. This meant classical architecture, as revived by the Renaissance and proportioned according to the punctilious method of Vitruvius. In this system Gothic architecture had no place. To admit the merit of Gothic architecture, either one of two things must occur. Either the definition of beauty could be stretched so that the Gothic could be defined as beautiful, or the merit of a building could be seen to reside in values other than beauty. The eighteenth century, though it struggled to do the first, chose the second course. The consequences of this were not restricted to the Gothic Revival and came to affect much of Western culture.

The doctrine which came to compete with beauty as the fundamental end of art was that of associationism. According to this doctrine, a work of art should be judged not by such intrinsic qualities as proportion or form, but by the mental sensations they conjure in the minds of viewers. Such an idea has a long pedigree and it ultimately stretches back to John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), which treated sensory experience as the source of human knowledge. The relationship of this concept to art was stated most succinctly by Richard Payne Knight (1750–1824), whose *Analytical Inquiry into the Picturesque* proclaimed that 'all the pleasure of intellect arise from the association of ideas'. For Knight, the real richness of a work of art was not in the opulence of its materials or elegance of its form but in its limitless capacity to induce thoughts and impressions: 'almost every object of nature or art, that presents itself to the senses, either excites fresh trains and combinations of ideas, or vivifies and strengthens those which existed before.' A wooded landscape might summon agreeable thoughts and memories of childhood picnics, a ruined Abbey might call to mind melancholy reflections of the violence of the Middle Ages, or reflections on its piety. Payne Knight's book did not appear until 1805 but it only put into words what had long since become common practice.

The playground for indulging associations was the picturesquely landscaped garden, that essential creation of eighteenth-century English culture. These gardens recreated the rambling irregularity and contrasting scenery found in the painted landscapes of Claude Lorrain and Salvator Rosa. In their paintings melancholy ruins were indispensable, serving to establish scale and perspectival depth, and in landscaped gardens they did the same. Of course, while Claude's ruins were classical, those of the English countryside were medieval. Thus from an early date the English landscaped garden introduced medieval vignettes among its classical pavilions. Some of these consisted of remodelled or altered monastic ruins while others consisted of entirely new buildings in the 'Gothick' style. Such lighthearted structures posed no menace to the classical tradition, which always tolerated grotesqueness in the Saturnalia of the garden. (The spelling 'Gothick' was gradually replaced by 'Gothic' in the 1750s. In the nineteenth century, 'Gothic' came to stand for any Gothic Revival building that was particularly naïve, flimsy or historically incorrect.)

One of the first of these new buildings was the solitary Gothic Temple built for Colonel James Tyrrell at Shotover Park,
Oxfordshire, in 1716. This was a modest arcaded loggia, which faced Tyrrell's manor house across a small lake, each structure offering a view of the other. Its function was purely scenographic: a flat frontispiece set among the trees as a picturesque accent. Its rose window lit no usable space and its crenellations sheltered no crouching archers. Only its Gothic details were novel while in every other respect, even in name, it was classical. With such amiable works the Gothic tiptoed back into Western culture through that most unguarded aperture, the garden.

Many of these early Gothic garden buildings were shoddily built in impermanent materials; they were fashioned by amateurs who knew little of design and even less of archaeology. But to mock these pavilions, gazebos and artificial ruins as architecture, as the nineteenth century came to do, misses the point. In them, composition, formal coherence and structural solidity were subordinated to the desired associations. Except for the fact that they were made of brick and stood on the ground, they were closer to book illustration than architecture, with the quality of a freehand sketch. In the communication of ideas their slapdash design was no obstacle; on the contrary, it helped. The worse a building was in architectural terms - its formal repertoire reduced to a few oversized pointed arches, buttresses and pinnacles - the more legible it would be as illustration. In some instances this thinking produced mere cartoons, a mouldering tower or a ruined abbey, often built out of canvas and board as eye catchers on the fringe of a garden. Such manufactured stage scenery did not yet constitute a Gothic Revival. When they were built there was no more intention of reviving the Middle Ages than the building of a Greek temple meant a return to the worship of Zeus.

The growing cosmopolitanism of the day also cast a new light on Gothic architecture. England's trade ties to the Near and Far East revealed a wealth of architectural traditions that had little to do with the classical orders. Room for these styles was found in landscaped gardens, particularly at Kew, which in the late eighteenth century boasted a Hindu, Moorish and Chinese pavilion. Such structures were often organized in a didactic programme in a garden, which presented the viewer with a choreographed set of views and objects that unfolded sequentially. While these alien pavilions would have exotic associations, medieval structures often conveyed a distinctive political meaning: Tyrrell's Gothic Temple was built just after the Hanoverian king George I ascended the throne in 1714, an event which caused England to brood over questions of national identity. A German-speaking

8 The Gothic Temple, Painshill, Surry, c. 1745, aroused the ire of Horace Walpole. 'The Goths never built summer houses or temples in a garden,' he complained. (Nor did they build panelled libraries and vaulted art galleries, the anonymous builder of Painshill might have retorted.)

Protestant now reigned, while the Catholic Stuarts threatened invasion and rebellion from Scotland: this could not help but throw into doubt every aspect of English religion, nationality and culture. The Gothic assuaged these doubts, providing an assertive and haughty symbol of national independence, untainted by any association with the Roman Catholic courts of Europe, where Baroque taste reigned. The effectiveness of such symbolism depended largely on historical ignorance, of course: ignorance of the French origin of the Gothic and ignorance of its intimate relationship with medieval Catholicism. And a century would pass before this ignorance was dispelled.
Given this lack of basic historical knowledge, English pedants could cheerfully associate the Gothic with semi-legendary figures such as King Alfred or King Arthur. Likewise, they connected it not with Catholic cathedrals but with secular buildings, above all sturdy castles. Such imagery was entertained at the highest levels, up to the throne itself. In 1739 Queen Caroline commissioned the bizarre Merlin’s Cave for Richmond Park in Surrey. This rustic little pavilion was a sort of subterranean grotto, whose Gothic arches and vaults were made of unshaped boulders, bark-covered tree trunks and thatched roof. Here was a Gothic for a protestant queen, suggesting nothing of Catholic cathedrals but evoking the Druidical origin of Gothic. Light filtered in from high windows above to fall upon a didactic exhibition of wax figures taken from English history – associating the newly arrived German court with the most ancient of English monarchs.

Merlin’s Cave was built by William Kent, the painter and architect to Lord Burlington, the patron of England’s neo-Palladians. It is ironic that the first champions of the Gothic should have come from Burlington’s circle, which practised a rather narrow and bookish classicism and which cherished the sober and decorous Renaissance classicism of Andrea Palladio. Nonetheless, the same trait that made them susceptible to Palladio – the connoisseur’s craving for fashionable novelty – made them sympathetic to the Gothic. At the same time, Burlington’s circle consisted of Whigs, who upheld the authority of Parliament in its struggles with the monarchy. They could argue that the Gothic was just as much a Whig style as a Tory style. The Tory could say that the Gothic was the style of tradition and legitimacy; the Whig could retort that it was also the style of the thirteenth century and the Magna Carta, when the power of the king was checked. Here, at the very outset of the revival, was the first indication of the infinite elasticity of the Gothic, which could be twisted by literary argument into justifying any cause – church or state, people or king, aristocrat or democrat. For the moment, however, it conveyed Englishness, a quality to which both parties were busily staking out a claim.

Kent became the favourite architect for medieval-minded Whigs, most of his work consisting of carefree garden follies, such as those in the garden at Rousham, Oxfordshire (1737–40). At Stowe something more serious was built. This was the Temple of Liberty, built for Richard Temple, the Viscount Cobham. It marks the culmination of the Whig Gothic. Cobham was the champion of the Whig faction in Parliament, standing up for the parliamentary tradition in defiance of continental absolutism. At the peak of his political struggle he built for himself a garden
pavilion that represented his position in symbolic terms. Unlike other examples, where a few contrived buttresses braced a rickety tower, the Temple of Liberty was a substantial piece of architecture. Its designer was James Gibbs, who had trained in the Baroque of Rome and who had far more feeling for the movement and massing of the Gothic than his paper-bound neo-Palladian rivals, who kept their noses in books. He gave the Temple of Liberty a compact triangular form with robust polygonal bays and richly sculpted blind arches, all executed in handsome sandstone. Its interior was perhaps more impressive, forming a dramatic well of space surmounted by a gallery and a glittering dome at the apex.

Temple's iconography was literary; it included statues of seven Saxon worthies, the motto 'I thank God that I am not a Roman', and even its punning title, 'the Temple of Liberty'. The imagery was a delirious swirl of ideas, a mixed metaphor in which Saxony, Protestantism and the Gothic style were conflated to stand against Catholicism, Roman absolutism and Classicism. Its complex and interlocking programme, like that of an allegorical painting, was just the sort of witty performance the Enlightenment loved.

Gothic nostalgia burst brightly during the reign of the Hanoverian Georgian era. When Squire Sanderson Miller acquired the site at Radway, Warwickshire, overlooking Edge Hill, the culminating battle of the English Civil War — where Charles I was decisively beaten — he treated it as a national shrine.

12 Sanderson Miller, Tower at Radway, Warwickshire, 1745–49. Miller's tower established the fact for the inhabitable ruined castle as well as its formulaic programme: the battlemented mass of the tower, a lower volume to offset the vertical and a spur of ruined wall that trailed from it and died away. This was the minimal number of elements needed, a short story of a ruined castle rather than an epic.

13, 14 Batty Langley, 'The Fifth Order of the Gothick Architecture' and 'An Umbrello for the Centre or Intersection of Walks' (from Gothic Architecture Improved, 1741–42). Langley's impeccably drawn programme set the stage for a century of paper Gothic creations, from which even Pugin, his great opponent, was not immune.
He raised an octagonal tower, whose form was loosely based on
that of Guy’s Tower of Warwick Castle, one of the first instances
of an actual historical model being followed for a ruin. Miller’s
building was built on an agglutinative plan, in which parts were
added by accretion and without regard for formal symmetry.
This was probably happenstance rather than design. He added a
section of wall to the original tower, along with a smaller square
tower and a spurious draw-bridge, and clearly liked the results.
Soon he was repeating the scheme for his neighbours. One of
these was the Tower at Hagley, Worcestershire (1748), one of the
first to feature an arcaded wall, a familiar sight from abandoned
abbeys and now an essential component of the artificial ruin.
Another was designed for the grounds of Lord Hardwicke’s
estate, Wimpole (although this was built to revised plans in 1768,
apparently by the architect James Essex).

With the growing popularity of Gothic houses, a correspond-
ing architectural literature arose. The most notorious entry was
by Battie Langley, the enterprising landscape gardener and archi-
tectural publicist. In 1742 Langley brought out his eccentric
Ancient Architecture Restored and Improved by a Great Variety of
Grand and Useful Designs, entirely New in the Gothic Mode for the
Ornamenting of Buildings and Gardens, reissued five years later as
Gothic Architecture, Improved by Rules and Proportions. Despite the
customary bombastic title, the book was a prim attempt to sub-
ject Gothic forms to classical discipline. Langley was a great foe
of Palladian architecture but he was nonetheless a classicist
through and through, who believed that any architecture worthy
of the name was based on ‘geometrical rules’. If no Gothic treat-
ises on proportion survived and there was no medieval equiva-
lent of Vitruvius, this was only because the ravages of his-
tory had obliterated them. Surely ‘there were many ingenious
Saxon architects in those times who composed manuscripts of all
their valuable rules, which with themselves were destroyed and
buried in ruins’. To reconstruct those rules was the burden of
Langley’s book. He presented five Gothic orders in analogy to
the five Vitruvian orders, arranged from most robust to most deli-
cate. He also showed that the proportions of the tiniest
mouldings and subdivisions of parts were generated by the diam-
eter of the column base, again like Vitruvius, making the design of
a Gothic building a fussy matter of adjusting modules and pro-
portions. This was hardly the Gothic of the great cathedrals, and
in fact Langley’s proportions were more classical than medieval.
Like classical columns, the relationship of height to width was
eight or nine to one, while a genuine Gothic shaft might easily be
several times that.

For all of his painstaking work with compass and dividers,
Langley did not propose to rehabilitate the Gothic as a monu-
mental style. His ambition ran no higher than the making of
merry ‘Umbrellas for the Centre or Intersection of Walks’. His
Gothic range was limited, consisting of buttresses, crenellations
and his ubiquitous ogee arch. This was rather a late Gothic fea-
ture, a hallmark of fourteenth-century English design, and it
comprised a four-centred arch each of whose sides traces a deli-
cate S-curve. Langley appreciated the form for its decorative
lightness and used it repeatedly, making the feature an essential
element of anything purporting to be Gothic. So indelibly did the
public associate the ogee with Langley that when he fell from
favour a half century passed before anyone used the feature again.

Far more influential than Langley’s quaint book was
Strawberry Hill, the rambling and eccentric plaything of Horace
Walpole (1717–97), youngest son of prime minister Robert
Walpole. Unlike Langley, Walpole had no desire to domesticate
the Gothic or to remove its gloom; he cherished it for the melan-
choly it evokes. In 1750 Walpole bought a cottage at
Twickenham, on the Thames near London, which he altered and
expanded repeatedly over the next three decades. Its strongest point was its gradual growth by accretion, improvisation building upon improvisation, giving it a rich complexity which distinguished it from the schematic quality of most examples of early Gothic Revival.

Walpole designed his house as he had amassed his art collection: as a connoisseur, by scrupulous selection of individual treasures. To design the house he formed a Committee of Taste, comprising John Chute, Richard Bentley, Johann Heinrich Müntz and others, with Walpole as the controlling mind. He himself selected the Gothic models which they fitted to their new functions. The change in use was often extraordinary: the tomb of Archbishop Bourchier at Canterbury Cathedral, for example, became the fireplace in the long gallery; the screen at the high altar of Rouen Cathedral, the Holbein Chamber screen; the vaults of King Henry VII’s chapel at Westminster Abbey, the plaster ceiling of the gallery; and the choir screen of old St Paul’s Cathedral, the arched and crocketed bookshelves of the library. Scarcely any element — carpets, chairs or wallpaper — lacked an authenticated pedigree. These imaginative leaps across architectural categories are not surprising if one considers that Walpole often worked from books and prints, where his motifs were already flattened into outline form, and where a tomb was as useful a motif as a window, or even an entire facade.

That his motifs came from different countries and centuries caused Walpole no distress. He demanded the precise copying of medieval models — indeed, he was the first to do so — but historical accuracy mattered discretely. So long as each detail had a Gothic source, so he seems to have believed, the overall ensemble would take care of itself. Walpole had no wish to build a dank medieval keep; he wanted to live in Georgian comfort, in warm rooms with high ceilings and sash windows. His ‘Gothic’ house was a witty sham, an immense curiosity cabinet of architectural fragments heaped up into a building. There is no artistic unity other than that provided by Walpole’s whimsical personality, much as a great art collection can evoke the taste behind it. The interior details, however, are of a piece. Most were by Bentley and show a similarly playful treatment, and a love of graceful, elegant lines. On his wainscoted walls and panelled ceilings Bentley draped a filigree of delicate, gossamer-thin detail whose spirit was as much rococo as it was Gothic, which was in keeping with his materials of choice: plaster and papier mâché.
If the Gothic Revival was originally inspired by literature, Strawberry Hill took the process full circle. In June 1764 Walpole dreamed of a gigantic armoured hand hovering at the top of his staircase and he immediately elaborated his dream into a novel, the *Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story*, which appeared in 1765. The story was overwrought and ridiculous: King Manfred, seeking to marry the intended bride of his dead son, imprisons her in his gloomy castle; she escapes, braves underground passages replete with spectral voices and the occasional skeleton, finds her true love, at which time the castle collapses spectacularly. The mixture of horror and romance strikes us as conventional but these are the conventions Walpole himself created. The *Castle of Otranto* begat a new and durable literary genre, the Gothic novel, whose pedigree extends from Walpole through Walter Scott and Edgar Allan Poe to the Stephen King novels of our own day. It is a more lasting achievement than Walpole's house. Even before Strawberry Hill was finished, it was widely copied. Walpole's Committee of Taste, his happy band of Gothic draftsmen and artisans, took its forms and lessons to other clients. By the 1760s there was a considerable number of self-styled Gothic architects, including Sanderson Miller, Henry Keene and the talented amateur Sir Roger Newdigate. A charming English eccentric, Newdigate insisted on making his own architectural drawings and designed a far-reaching series of additions to his sixteenth-century house, Arbury Hall, Warwickshire. Almost all of these men continued to work on the Walpole method, composing each room additively out of features copied from approved Gothic models. But the quality of work improved rapidly, spurred by the rivalry of fashion and the rapid movement of architectural ideas. Already by 1768 we find a Gothic design whose construction, detail and spatial character were all the product of a single unified conception. This was the Chapel at Audley End, Essex, of 1768, a jewel of rococo lightness whose authorship remains a mystery.

The Gothic Revival took a different course in Scotland, where the medieval past was not quite so distant. Conditions were quite feudal in some of the more rugged, less hospitable regions, where chieftains still held sway by personal authority, ensconced in their remote fastnesses. Unlike England, where the military features of a castle had become purely symbolic, the Scottish castle remained a useful place of retreat when warfare erupted, as it did during the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Many estates were rebuilt and reinforced during these upheavals, using the tough granite masonry of Scottish tradition. Nothing could be
further removed from the dainty affectations of Walpole's Strawberry Hill.

The overlap of Gothic Revival and Gothic Survival in Scotland is shown at Inveraray Castle, Argyll. Some time before his death in 1726, John Vanbrugh made plans for an abstractly Gothic castle to replace the original medieval structure. This project came to nought but it was evidently dusted off in 1745 when Archibald Campbell (1682–1761) became Duke of Argyll. He chose Robert Morris (died 1749), the English Palladian architect, to make a new design, which was close in spirit to Vanbrugh's. The building, begun in 1745 and completed around 1757, was a prodigy of stern Scottish masonry. Four round tow-

20 Britzler Tower (1777–81), Alnwick Park, illustrates Robert Adam's jaunty approach to the Gothic. The ornate window surrounds look as if they were glued to the solid wall behind them while the triangular arches at ground level have little architectural logic. But what is glaring to us hardly mattered to eighteenth-century eyes, which did not look at buildings for structural truth.

21 The sumptuous forms of the thirteenth-century tomb of Aymer de Valence, Westminster Abbey, appealed to eighteenth-century Rococo taste. Not only did Horace Walpole copy the tomb for his library shelves but Sir Roger Newdigate borrowed it for his drawing room chimney at Arbury Hall, Warwickshire (1762).

22 'What I admire here is the total defiance of expense,' wrote Dr Johnson of Inveraray Castle. He may have meant the impressive riot and array of crenellated battlements, a luxury at a time when there was little occasion for firing arrows or pouring boiling oil. Built by Robert Morris from 1743 to c. 1757, Inveraray was subsequently raised by a storey in the nineteenth century, losing its crenellations.
ers with battlements marked the corners of the square castle, which rose at the centre to form a mighty towered block, expressing the great hall within. Its medieval character depended almost entirely on size and the severity of its construction, for other than the traceried windows of the great hall and the arched portal, there was no ornament at all. The walls were taut ashlar planes, without any projection or recession to create a play of shadows—a sensible omission given Scotland’s climate.

Strawberry Hill and Inveraray represent two distinct types of eighteenth-century Gothic. One was the self-conscious creation of fashionable antiquarianism, the other the adaptation of a local tradition that was sustained by a warring nobility of great antiquity. Strawberry Hill was an instrument for communicating associations, literary in its programme and pictorial in its execution. It was a pastiche, although a learned one. It mixed its sources indiscriminately: twelfth-century lancet arches, fourteenth-century crenellations and sixteenth-century Tudor window labels. Inveraray was also an invented Gothic, but as the work of a trained architect it had the unity of a single conception. Robert Morris’s imagination was disciplined by two lively traditions, that of Palladian planning and of Scottish stone, there was nothing frivolous or calligraphic about it. And yet Inveraray was as much an intellectual creation as Strawberry Hill, a carefully orchestrated work of ancestral symbolism. Built during the Jacobite troubles, its immense stone mass stood for a desired dynastic stability that was in reality all too precarious.

The masons who built Inveraray Castle were William Adam and his sons John and Robert, who took its style throughout

Scotland and beyond. In fact, Robert Adam worked at both Inveraray and Strawberry Hill—for which he designed a ceiling, fireplace and some furniture—and he drew on both buildings to form his own personal variant of the castle type. Of this there were many, including Dalquharran Castle, Ayrshire (1785), Seton Castle, East Lothian (1789) and Aitthrey Castle, Stirlingshire (1790). Because of his training as a stone mason, Adam’s castles were more solidly architectonic than those of any other early Revivalist. In part this came from his predilection for building around an existing medieval building, exploiting its historical associations. The most splendid of these was Culzean Castle (1777–90), superbly sited above a craggy promontory. Like many Scottish castles, the character is late medieval, with
round or flat-headed windows. Only in the interior did Adam depart from Scottish rigour, providing gracious salons in the elegant Pompeian taste that he had pioneered during his years of Italian study.

The Adam brothers were not the only architects to imitate Inveraray, which served as the model for a century of castellated Scottish houses. Its castellated style had two great merits: it evoked hereditary legitimacy and it did so cheaply, without the cost of raising a classical portico. Carved ornament was held to a minimum and each rambling volume in the picturesque composition contained serviceable rooms within. The style was immediately popular. Even Richard Payne Knight, the author of the Analytical Inquiry into the Picturesque, built himself a castellated house: Downton Castle, Ludlow. Knight had no ancestral nobility to celebrate. His stately castle was built by the wealth of the family iron foundry in Shropshire. Perhaps for that reason, Knight took pains to explain that the ‘association of ideas’ aroused by a building was a purely mental process, and did not need to reflect any actual state of affairs or historical truth. Such a doctrine could not help but be embraced at a time of colossal social upheaval.

It is ironic that Knight’s doctrine should have produced so many tasteful and refined Gothic estates, for the associations that the Middle Ages conjured were still primarily ones of melancholy and gloom. In fact, the castellated style lived a double life, and the same forms that made mansions elegant served – with slight changes – to make prisons terrifying. John Haviland’s Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia (1821–36), with its innovative radial plan and system of solitary confinement, was the world’s most progressive prison. And yet its exterior was nothing more than an austere version of Downton Castle, the windows narrowed and the playful irregularity made rigidly symmetrical.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Gothic had progressed a long way toward rehabilitation. It was now an essential part of the architect’s repertoire, an indispensable mode for lighter commissions. Nonetheless, the rehabilitation was only partial. There was still only the most imperfect understanding of real Gothic architecture; it had yet to be attached to more serious cultural ideas than affectsations of melancholy and gloom. While it was handy for country houses or inherently gloomy objects like prisons, it was not yet fit for the most important civic commissions. In short, the Gothic had still not gathered the irresistible cultural momentum that a true revival requires. This would happen only with the twin forces of Romanticism and the Industrial Revolution, which liberated the Gothic from the quarantine of the picturesque garden and placed it in the centre of public life.
Chapter 2: Romanticism

Some people drink to forget their unhappiness; I do not drink, I build.
William Beckford

The literary Gothic of the eighteenth century had the limitations of literature as well as the merits. It was intelligent and variegated but at best it was the nature of book illustration, failing to exploit those abstract properties that are essential to architecture, the sculptural and the spatial. In the late eighteenth century this state of affairs changed, the Gothic at last being treated in architectural terms, and with an eye towards artistic unity. This was the achievement of that glib and overworked designer James Wyatt (1746–1813), the first of the Gothic romantics. Wyatt showed that a building might thrill by its sheer scale, confronting the imagination rather than merely titillating the intellect. In other words, a building might be sublime.

The concept of the sublime was the peculiar contribution of the philosopher Edmund Burke, whose Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful appeared in
1757, when its author was twenty-seven. Burke noted that there were aspects of nature that were neither agreeable nor pleasant but which exercised a powerful effect on the mind. Phenomena such as ocean tempests or glaciers suggested the menacing vastness of nature and the seething, implacable forces within her, a rather different view of nature than that of Claude's benign landscapes. Burke subsumed these phenomena under the rubric of the sublime, which was not only a psychological but an aesthetic category, to be set alongside beauty. Artists were invited to explore the sublime, to call forth infinity and to plumb the emotions of dread and terror that this induced. Burke wrote in the spirit of the Enlightenment, seeking to analyze a misunderstood aspect of human experience, but his doctrine confronted something that was itself anti-rational. Inadvertently he helped plant the seeds of Romanticism. In short order architecture would not be judged according to the cool and dispassionate standards of Walpole but by its ability to inspire reverence and delirium. This entailed colossal scale but also contrast and the manipulation of darkness and shadow. According to Burke, 'all edifices calculated to produce an idea of the sublime ought to be dark and gloomy'. By the turn of the century this idea became the common coin of romantic artists and architects, and to Wyatt it was especially congenial.

An artist of rare imagination, Wyatt knew what the pious antiquaries did not, that the most potent aspect of the Gothic lay in its sublime and overwhelming vistas and not in its repertoire of crockets and pinnacles. He found his ideal client in the millionaire William Beckford, the tragic eccentric who built the most fantastic of Gothic prodigies. If Walpole lived at Strawberry Hill in an imaginary world of Gothic dreams, Beckford lived them. He fled England to escape charges of pederasty and while overseas wrote his novel *Vathek*, an Arabian tale of a cruel caliph living in his tower and flirting with the temptations of demonic genii. Beckford wrote his novel in French, perhaps to put at a distance what was otherwise a parable of his own life. Upon his return he built Fonthill Abbey (1796–1812) in Wiltshire, an appropriate setting for playing the part of the capricious despot.

Beckford’s first idea was to create a fiction of a ruined abbey, with a few wings and fragments of cloister huddled at the base of his tower. The improvisation grew more elaborate over time, as more wings were added and the abbey turned from plaything to permanent residence. Its hub was a 278-foot-high tower which rose above a lofty octagonal hall from which four wings radiated. Wyatt’s architectural tastes were in keeping with Beckford’s

29 Fonthill Abbey, 1796–1807, by James Wyatt, was composed much like a painting: sprouting pyramidal out of a cluster of cloistered wings, the vertical of its tower emerged to offset the bleak horizontality of the Salisbury plain. Roughly 278 feet in height, the tower collapsed twice.
megalomania; he appreciated absolute magnitude and the power of a long axial procession, and he treated the western hall as a long and solemn nave, surmounted by an intricate hammer-beamed ceiling and leading to a flight of stairs allegedly wide enough to drive a carriage up. The stunning complex effectively ended the Georgian phase of the Gothic Revival. Compared to Wyatt's performance, Strawberry Hill looked prim and polite. No longer did it suffice to equip a Georgian parlor with medieval chimneypieces and crocketed panelling or to furnish a Palladian facade with a matched pair of bay windows.

Beckford's abbey recalls the biblical parable of the man who built his foundations on sand. Wyatt's builders, working day and night by torchlight, skimped on foundations, a fact belatedly revealed by the builder on his deathbed. But no heed was taken and in December 1825 his mournful tower collapsed spectacularly. For Beckford's architectural folly this was an appropriate end, like the striking of the sets after a play. But Wyatt has come in for harsher historical judgment. His romantic impulses may have been virtues in his imaginative work but they were vices in his architectural restorations, the most notorious aspect of his career. His freewheeling restorations of Durham, Salisbury and Hereford cathedrals, as well as Westminster Abbey, earned him an indelible reputation for ruthlessness, 'Wyatt the destroyer' in Pugin's epithet. And indeed, his habitual destruction of medieval chapels, tombs and rood screens in the name of architectural purification is lamentable.

Salisbury (begun 1789) is typical of the lot. There his charge was to 'clean and colour the Church', to 'clean and varnish the stalls' and to remove the rood screen that divided the choir from the Lady Chapel. But Wyatt was operating upon firm aesthetic principle, as at Fonthill Abbey. His controlling idea was to treat the cathedral as an artistic whole, to unify its disparate parts into one overwhelming space. The stirring emotional effect, touching on the sublime, was one that Burke himself might have endorsed, even though a good deal of historical evidence was moved or lost in the process. Moreover Wyatt's restorations were always excessively tidy, eliminating the sense of congealed time that is the principal charm of cluttered old buildings. Nonetheless, his were the first systematic reconstructions, where historical and aesthetic considerations were consciously at the forefront.

Wyatt's self-consciously artistic restorations showed how speedily pictorial values had become ascendant. Of course, painters were now discovering Gothic architecture as subject
matter, but inversely, a building was now more likely to be conceived as a painting, its features organized pictorially, its lines and contours arranged for visual effect. This meant a great increase in the amount of picturesque interest of a design, and in general irregularity and movement. A sign of this shift in values was the sudden emergence of the picturesque rendering. Architectural drawings were heretofore simply a means to an end. This is not to say that there were not attractive renderings of Strawberry Hill, for example, but these were made after the fact; the architectural amateurs who conceived these buildings and the carpenters who assisted them made no ravishing drawings. But in the middle of the eighteenth century the Italian architect and artist Piranesi had shown that architectural drawings might themselves be objects of intrinsic aesthetic interest—an idea that was intensely exciting to Gothic architects. Soon they devised a rendering style befitting their architecture. Atmospheric watercolour drawings depicted the buildings in wooded or mountainous settings whose jagged lines echoed the towered forms of the churches themselves. Thomas Sandby (1721–98), professor of architecture to the Royal Academy, was exceptionally adept at the romantic rendering, integrating building and landscape in a seamless ensemble.

The relationship of architecture to landscape was something to which English designers gave much thought. Since the 1730s the picturesquely landscaped park had arisen in opposition to the stiff formality of the French and Dutch tradition, with its insistence on subjecting nature to geometric order. The chief apostles of the new style were first William Kent and then the prolific Lancelot ("Capability") Brown, who tormented gardens and parks throughout England into serpentine lines punctuated with clumps of trees and meandering lakes. Brown applied his studied irregularity without much variation or subtlety and after his death in 1783 it became fashionable to deplore his highly artificial conception of naturalness. A more sophisticated doctrine of the Picturesque emerged in the 1790s. Its chief advocates—Richard Payne Knight, Uvedale Price and Richard Gilpin—argued that the inherent qualities of a landscape must always be taken into account and that any process of landscaping should work to strengthen these qualities through a process of intelligent correction and pruning. The optimistic era termed the process 'improvement'.

The greatest of the improvers was Humphry Repton (1752–1818), the author of Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening (1795) and Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening (1808). Repton made his name with his 'Red Books', portfolios of recommended alterations which he would
prepare after his site visit, superbly illustrated by before-and-after views and bound in red leather as a book. This clever presentation technique was fully in the spirit of picturesque doctrine, the comparisons showing how his interventions followed logically and inevitably from the natural traits of the landscape itself. Often Gothic buildings were proposed, whose rambling wings complemented the undulations of the setting. Repton's reassuring landscapes hinted at permanence and stability, and were dearly valued during an age when the landscape was roiled by immense physical changes, brought on by the Industrial Revolution and the disruptive enclosure movement—what was bringing unpartitioned common land under cultivation at a considerable human cost, dislodging countless thousands of agricultural labourers from their homes and livelihoods. The great theme of Repton's landscapes was the continuity of English culture and life, a theme expressed in the architecture as well as the planting. Here he found an ideal complement in John Nash, his architectural partner. Nash had a particular knack for the making of picturesque castles, which evoked the same associations of hereditary continuity and legitimacy as did Repton's parks. From 1796 to 1802 they worked together, the summit of the Gothic Revival in its pictorial mode—the counterpart to the blithe and graceful world of Jane Austen, although it masked forces and social pressures that were convulsive and terrifying.

Nash was a genius at architectural pastiche, untroubled by qualms about historical accuracy. Nonetheless, during these years the archaeological quality of neo-Gothic work made a sudden and remarkable leap. Up until the end of the eighteenth century, the Gothic Revival did not scruple to distinguish between military, ecclesiastic and domestic Gothic, nor between the various epochs of medieval architecture. There was no great advance beyond Wren's division of medieval architecture into an older Saracenic style and Gothic (that is between Romanesque and Gothic). In fact, according to associational theory it was no violation to place a sixteenth-century Tudor window above a twelfth-century archway. All the better, if such a juxtaposition heightened the aura of chivalry, romance and gloom. But there now came into being a growing corpus of documented buildings, plans and elevations reproduced in accurate line drawings, largely achieved through the patient spadework of local antiquaries. The key figure was the industrious architect John Carter, who produced *Views of Ancient Buildings in England* (1786–93), he systematically measured and drew the nation's cathedrals and
abbey, subsequently etching them for the Society of Antiquaries' Cathedral Series (1795-). These books established the mould for all subsequent compendia of Gothic architecture, such as John Britton's Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain, which appeared in forty lavish instalments from 1805 to 1814. Carter was influential in another respect, for as the chief architectural writer for the Gentleman's Magazine he brought learned and intelligent – if not dispassionate – discussion of Gothic architecture to a wide popular audience. Frequently he commented on Wyatt's freewheeling restorations which to Carter, the best-informed Gothic scholar of his day, were acutely painful. His diatribes against these were conducted on a plane of furious invective, injecting into the Gothic polemic a dogmatic, almost theological tone that would resound in the works of Pugin, Ruskin and the Ecclesiologists.

Through the efforts of Carter, Britton and others, it gradually became possible to identify the various phases of the Gothic style and to classify them in terms of their internal process of development. When this first happened in the years around 1800, it was inevitable that the whole mental framework of the classification be borrowed from classical scholarship. There the concept of stylistic development was at that time a novel insight. Until the third quarter of the eighteenth century, the classical heritage was commonly seen as one long unchanging afternoon of perfection. This understanding was shaken by recent archaeological discoveries at either end of classical antiquity, which could not be reconciled with the seemingly timeless proportions of Vitruvius. Rather, they seemed to show an unfolding continuum from the archaic Doric of Paestum to the late Imperial style of Diocletian's
palace at Spalato, a trajectory which progressed inexorably from a state of early vigour and vitality to one of overelaboration and degeneracy. This seemed to suggest that inexorable laws of organic development and decline might apply to any style, and this was the insight that John Milner applied to Gothic architecture.

A Catholic priest, Milner was an antiquary of unusual sophistication. In 1798 he was the first Englishman to argue that the pointed arch itself was the fundamental element of all Gothic architecture, in distinction to its various decorative features. He elaborated the concept in his *Treatise on the Ecclesiastical Architecture of England during the Middle Ages* (1811), which divided the Gothic into three orders of ‘Pointed Architecture’ which, like the architecture of antiquity, progressed from uncouth vitality to corruption. This suggested that an ideal Gothic might be found, midway between the periods of birth and decay, in which the properties of vigour and refinement were exactly counterbalanced, neither too brutal nor too decorative. This was the ‘chaste grandeur’ of the Middle or Second Pointed, which Milner illustrated by the forms of York Minster, which dated from about 1000. Here was a fateful turn for the Gothic Revival, for this way of categorizing Gothic architecture simultaneously permitted the making of moral judgments about it. Like Carter, Milner’s ability to recognize the period styles made him an ingenuous critic of contemporary restoration practice. He came to enjoy the accumulated stylistic phases of the great cathedrals. Beneath the visual disorder he saw the orderly and poetic march of time, each successive building campaign contributing elements in its distinctive stylistic voice. Wyatt’s crime was the attempt to give these parts a spurious unity, which led unfailingly to ‘the destruction of the proportions, and of the relation of the different parts of the Cathedral’.

Milner’s chronology was further refined by Thomas Rickman (1776–1841), who in 1819 published his *Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of English Architecture*, a practical handbook intended to make clerics ‘more capable of deciding on the various designs for churches in imitation of the English styles’. Rickman accepted Milner’s three ‘pointed orders’ but he renamed them Early English, Decorated English and Perpendicular English. To these he added an earlier fourth order to describe the Romanesque architecture that followed the Norman conquest. Recognizing its imported quality, he gave it the term Norman rather than English. Rickman’s terms, coming after the long isolation of England during the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars, inevitably assumed a patriotic cast. Once applied to the Gothic, this patriotic vocabulary and the associations it aroused – like Milner’s moral ones – would be difficult to extirpate.

Unlike Milner, Rickman was no moralist but a practising architect who worked happily in the Perpendicular – the first to know consciously that he was doing so. Never before had an architect conceived his Gothic designs as stylistic entities, based on a specific moment of historical development. His notion of historical fidelity ended at the walls, however, and his interiors were modern creations in both the spatial and technical sense. Rickman was a Quaker and he gave his interiors something of the open spatial sense of a Quaker meeting house, using spindly cast iron columns to support brittle galleries.

The early efforts won acceptance for the use of the Gothic in Anglican churches. The trickle of essays soon rose to a torrent, as shown by the Church Building Act of 1818. This sought to meet the demand for new churches brought about by the dramatic population spurt that coincided with the Industrial Revolution and the consequent enormous urban overcrowding. In the initial campaign, 214 churches were built, the vast majority of them Gothic. The increase in medieval knowledge was also palpable, although most architects continued to use the Gothic as a cladding, as did John Soane, not taking into account its peculiar spatial and structural qualities. There was one notable exception.
St Luke’s, Chelsea (1820–24) was a true basilica, with low aisles and a lofty nave, instead of the customary barn-like auditorium. It was also vaulted in stone, a radical advance over the plaster and lath vaults of the eighteenth century. This gave the church an unmistakable sense of structural reality, even to the flying buttresses of the exterior, no affectation but structurally necessary elements. Perhaps not surprisingly, its designer was a bridge builder, James Savage (1779–1852). Here at last, after a century of paper Gothic by draughtsmen, was a building whose artistic form and structural system were the work of the same mind; it instantly made Wyatt’s work look like sham and gimcrack, raising both the aesthetic and technical standards of the Gothic.

The new fad for precise period accuracy was apparent in other arts, especially literature. The novels of Walter Scott’s Waverley series, such as Ivanhoe (1819) and Kenilworth (1821), depend on the accuracy of their setting, language, costume and overall mental atmosphere; they can rightly be called the first historical novels in the modern sense. (In comparison to their vivid recreation of medieval life, The Castle of Otranto and Vathek were no more than fairy tales.) His instant financial success showed that there was a thirst for medieval romance in England — and in France as well, where he was wildly popular and where Victor Hugo copied both the technique and the medieval subject matter. Scott was one of the revival’s most influential propagandists, whose readers carried away a vast mental storehouse of characters and events which was agreeably activated whenever they gazed on a Gothic building. Surely many of the Gothic houses and churches built in increasing numbers from the 1820s onward trace their origin to a happy encounter with Scott.

The pursuit of period accuracy also characterized Scott’s own house, Abbotsford, which followed the baronial style of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is unfortunate that Scott did not choose as his architect William Burn (1789–1870), the chief practitioner of the baronial style, for this would have brought together the two greatest artists of Scottish medievalism. Burn had the strongly architectonic sense of Scottish architecture, and the memory of the quarry. His favourite sources were Jacobean
41 Walter Scott's house, Abbotsford, Roxburghshire (1816–18) was not generically Gothic, despite the author's ardent medievalism. It is an essay in the rugged Scottish Barony style, with massive walls, crowstep gables and polygonal bartizans. It was designed by William Atkinson in consultation with Edward Blore, and preserved fragments of actual medieval buildings - a touch not all that different from the cleverly integrated historical learning in Scott's novels.

42 The Sir Walter Scott Monument, Edinburgh, 1840–46, by G. M. Kemp, was in the spirit of his novels: the Middle Ages of happy jousts and chivalric romance, not the gloomy, brooding Gothic of Exeter. The excessively pinnacled composition recalled the flamboyant spires of the late-Gothic churches of Belgium or Holland.

43 Duplin, 1829–32. William Burn's house for the Earl of Kinnoull was built in a highly accomplished Jacobean style. As in the architect's work, the asymmetry was motivated by internal planning needs and handled with the classical discipline that might be expected of a pupil of Robert Smirke.

44 Burn was also an accomplished church architect and St John's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh, 1814, built in the Perpendicular style, is one of the finest. Although the subsequent Revival would come to scorn the Perpendicular, the early nineteenth century was particularly fond of it, perhaps because its emphatic cornices and strong delineation of borders matched the neo-classical taste for clearly defined volumes. Burn's church was an early example of a Gothic basilica, with its raised central nave, lighted by a clerestory, and shouldered between two lower aisles.

and Elizabethan - merged by him into a solid and elegant 'Jacobean' synthesis - without Nash's dainty flourishes. While earlier revivalists deployed their irregular rambling wings in order to manufacture pictorial drama, Burn's compositions were sober and stately, in which the occasional asymmetrical wing was motivated by function. His greatest importance was in planning, and he designed the era's most efficient and comfortable domestic interiors, becoming one of the most brilliant planners of the entire revival. He intelligently wove together three types of spaces - the family's private dwelling quarters, the servants' rooms and the principal public chambers - which in chilly Scotland might only periodically be heated for use. By making the family's private rooms the spatial heart of the house, and subordinating the rest of the plan to them, Burn singlehandedly abolished the tyranny of the Palladian plan, with its compulsory symmetry and its obligatory formal salons. This revolution would long outlive the Gothic Revival itself.
45 Despite independence, America continued to look to England for architectural leadership. The émigré Benjamin Henry Latrobe (1766–1820) arrived in the 1790s, bringing with him the fashionable taste for Gothic villas and informal landscaping. His house for William Crimmond, Sedgeley, 1799, overlooking the banks of the Schuykill at Philadelphia, applied elegant Gothic touches to a relatively four-square neoclassical cube.

46 Glen Ellen (1832), Towson, Maryland. Following his encounter with Walter Scott at Abbotsford, Robert Gilmore commissioned a Gothic house, the first important work of A. J. Davis, the 'architectural composer' who was the picturesque lobe of a partnership with Ithiel Town. Both the irregular plan and informal asymmetry of Glen Ellen were radical departures in American architecture.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century the taste for Gothic had become a middle class phenomenon. The landscape gardener John Claudius Loudon (1783–1843), yet another Edinburgh-trained product of the Scottish Enlightenment, deftly served this market. His *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture* (1832) democratized the taste of Nash and Repton, transposing their castles and landscaped parks to the format of cottages and gardens, suitable to the smallest budget—'appropriate to every Class of Purchasers', as he termed it. The success of the book led him to launch the *Architectural Magazine*, which he edited from 1834 to 1838. A flurry of illustrated pattern books now appeared.

Loudon was even more influential in the United States, where there were few ancestral estates to speak of and where modern villa and cottage design was a matter of great public interest. In America, the aristocratic symbolism of the castle was suspect, and a different picturesque doctrine was required. Here there was little sympathy for the Tory view of landscape promulgated by Repton and Knight, with its reverence for continuity of ownership; instead a universal consensus held that the conquest of nature and the improvement of the landscape was America's providential destiny. Nonetheless, the unfolding of this destiny was traumatic. In 1826 the Erie Canal opened, connecting New
York City to the American interior, and transforming the majestic Hudson River into something of an industrial corridor. This event, coupled with the rapid deforestation of the settled regions, unleashed a great wave of nostalgia for America's vanished forests. In painting, this led to the Hudson River School, in literature to the Leatherstocking Tales of James Fenimore Cooper (who admired Walter Scott so much that he visited Abbotsford and modelled his own house after it). The canal's completion also coincided with the introduction of the naturally landscaped park, which had been irreverent during the initial period of settlement. The new mode was introduced, strangely enough, in several rural cemeteries—Mount Auburn, near Boston (1831), and Laurel Hill, Philadelphia (1836)—where the conventional classical monument soon competed with a rising tide of Gothic tombs and chapels.

The mania for Gothic cottages followed, and the Hudson River became the showplace of the new style. Here was some of America's most picturesque scenery and here was poured the commercial wealth that was transforming it. A. J. Davis (1808–92) and his friend Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–52) were the leading figures of the movement, the former its most imaginative designer and the latter its outstanding theorist. Downing's influence was sensational. Like Loudon, his model, he too was a landscape architect who was inevitably drawn into architectural matters. He produced a torrent of gardening manuals and pattern books which culminated in The Architecture of Country Houses (1850), America's first great work of architectural theory. Downing brilliantly presented English landscape theory and its fashionable Gothic architecture—which had arisen in a nation whose understanding of history and landscape was almost diametrically opposed to prevailing American views—in a way that was acceptable to American patrons. Downing recognized that American attitudes towards art were still coloured by the Puritan heritage. Art was still perilously close to being a 'graven image', disallowed by the Second Commandment, although it was tolerated if it was useful. Here Downing found his opening, repeatedly stressing the utility of the picturesque cottage, not only in crassly functional terms but in moral terms as well. For him the cottage was an instrument of moral improvement. Rather than evoking medieval nostalgia and cultural continuity, as in England, he praised the cottage as a symbol of Republican simplicity, unaffected natural life and an absence of pretence.

Downing created the foundation for the picturesque American suburb, of which Llewellyn Park, New Jersey, with its Gothic houses and picturesque wooden 'ramble', was the first example. This was the democratization of the picturesque landscaped garden of Uvedale Price and Humphry Repton, its visual irregularity and continuity preserved even as it was carved into salable parcels. These picturesque suburbs remain the preferred model for American living to the present. Although their specifically Gothic features have been abandoned, modern suburban tracts continue to be characterized by architectural informality, winding serpentine roads and continuous swaths of lawn. Probably no other contribution of the Gothic Revival to the form of the modern world was so sweeping, or is so little recognized.