3: Aiming at Eternity

Introduction

1. Class title 1 (Museum of Natural History, London)

This is one of three classes devoted to a single medium, in this case, architecture; there will be others on literature and music later on.

2. *Saint Paul's Cathedral*, with Wren quotation

Let me explain my title. Writing, I think, of his work on Saint Paul's Cathedral, **Sir Christopher Wren** (1632–1723) wrote: "*Architecture has its political Use; publick Buildings being the Ornament of a Country; it establishes a Nation, draws People and Commerce; makes the People love their native Country, which Passion is the Original of all great Actions in a Commonwealth. Architecture aims at Eternity*." He was writing, of course, about public architecture, and its connection with the National Identity. Most of Wren's work was indeed public: the virtual rebuilding of the major monuments of the City of London after the **Great Fire of 1666** and the construction of **Saint Paul's Cathedral**. I will jump a century and a half and start my discussion of Nineteenth Century architecture with the public buildings of that later age.

3. Fowke and Waterhouse: *Natural History Museum*, South Kensington, London (1864–)

My title picture was certainly of a public building: the **Natural History Museum** in the South Kensington area of London, commissioned in 1864. It was not a building that Wren could have considered, for the creation of museums, art galleries, and concert halls to spread cultural awareness among the public was essentially a Victorian concept, though there were even more splendid parallels in the United States. It was not a building that Wren could have built, for the metals supports of its ceiling depended on Industrial Revolution technology. But the building enshrined a purpose he would have approved of, for before being an architect, he was himself a scientist, Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, no less. And the collection, beginning with fossils and moving right up to the present day, certainly takes its own kind of aim at Eternity.

4. Building purposes by category

In thinking about this class on 19th-century architecture, I started with the question: **What is architecture *for*?** Here are three American examples, representing the three main divisions of this class. First **OLD**: the kind of public buildings that have been built for centuries, and simply needed to be adapted to the philosophy of a new age: government buildings of all kinds, **meeting houses**, **churches**, **monuments**, and the design of city **environments** larger than the single house. Second, and I think most interesting, we have the **NEW**: buildings that enshrine purposes that either were given greater

prominence in the new century—things like **colleges**, **museums**, **parks**, and even **prisons**—or that essentially did not exist before: **factories**, **railroad stations**, **department stores**. Both the old and new are facets of *public* architecture. But there is also a third category, **PRIVATE**: buildings created for a single client; these can range from the simple cottage all the way up to country estates and palaces, which I suppose have a public element to them as well.

A. Building a Nation

5. Section title A (transformation)
6. Burning scenes by Turner and Allyn Cox

So let's look at our first comparison, the centers of government in the two capitals, Washington and London. Both buildings had a complex history. **The US Capitol** was a collaboration between several different architects, principally **William Thornton** (1759–1828). It was begun in 1800, partially burnt by the British in the War of 1812, then rebuilt in an expanded form, ironically under the guidance of a *British*-American architect, **Benjamin Latrobe** (1764–1820). **The Houses of Parliament**, technically the *Palace of Westminster*, was also rebuilt in its present form after the original medieval building was destroyed by fire in 1834. This rebuilding was also a collaboration, between **Sir Charles Barry** (1795–1860) and **Augustus Welby Pugin** (1812–52); more about them in a moment.

7. **COMPARISON 1**: the images below
8. US Capitol, Washington DC
9. Palace of Westminster, London

Let's compare. In contrast with most of the comparisons I put up, the differences between these are glaringly obvious, but they are still worth teasing out. What is the age of each building? What is the place of each in the plan of the city? What is its predominant style? What are its international cousins? What political messages, in Wren's terms, or even moral ones, does each building aim to impart? The main factor is that whereas London is an old city, going back to Roman times at least, Washington is an almost entirely new one, *chosen* as the capital of the United States. Its entire design, not merely its individual buildings, were designed to create an impression of majesty and order. In 1791, George Washington himself asked **Pierre Charles L'Enfant** (1754–1825) to draw up plans for the new city. L'Enfant was the son of a French artist; he distinguished himself in the Revolutionary War, changed his name to Peter, and set up a successful engineering and design practice in New York City, so you could say he combined American patriotism with French style. He did not last long in his position—he quarreled with the commissioners and ultimately with the President himself—but although it was modified by others, his plan determined the layout of Washington to this day.

10. Evolution of L'Enfant's plan
10y — still from the above
10z — still from the above
11. L'Enfant's 1791 plan as revised by Andrew Ellicott in 1792

You will note that L'Enfant envisioned a "Congress House" symbolically placed atop a hill, a "President's House" connected to it by a ceremonial avenue, and another broad space running westwards from the Congress House to the Potomac. These are what we now know as the **Capitol**, **White House**, and **National Mall**, all envisioned by L'Enfant although he had no part in their design.

12. Washington in the early 1850s
13. Washington in 1893
14. The McMillan Plan, 1901

The Mall, in fact, took over a century to evolve. By the middle of the 19th century, as you see from this painting, it was still mostly farm land, although the **Smithsonian Castle** had been erected in 1849. Further developments from mid-century on filled the space with a variety of small parks and ornamental gardens. Finally in 1901, a Senate committee chaired by **Senator James McMillan** of Michigan came up with a plan to open the space up entirely. Although not specifically designed by them, the Lincoln Memorial, the museum buildings on either side of the Mall, and the creation of Grand Union Station all were inspired by this plan. Only the later development of the Jefferson Memorial and Tidal Basin to the south significantly departs from this blueprint.

15. Coronation procession map
16. London: Admiralty Arch, the Mall, Victoria Memorial, and Buckingham Palace

If you watched the Coronation of Charles III, you might have got the impression that London was laid out in a similar manner. But not so, at least at this time. There was plenty of green space, but no grand ceremonial avenue until the early 20th century, when the architect **Aston Webb** (1849–1930) drew up plans to enlarge the **Mall**, built the **Admiralty Arch** at one end of it and a monument to **Queen Victoria** at the other, and reface **Buckingham Palace**. This is the setting we enjoyed on television. [All other **Malls**, incidentally, take their name from the London one, and that derives from the 17th century game of **pall-mall**, a precursor of both croquet and golf, for which the London space was originally laid out. Don't ask me why the two are pronounced differently!]

17. Coronation procession of Charles III
18. **COMPARISON 2**: Washington and Victoria monuments

Both Malls include a prominent monument: George Washington and Queen Victoria. Here is another comparison; the two are so different as to make it almost trivial, but let's try anyway. Which looks the more modern? What is the scale of each? How does each fit into its setting? And, entirely speculatively, what does each say about the society that created it? In fact, the Victoria Monument was the last to be created in 1901 by the sculptor **Sir Thomas Brock** (1847–1922) to fit in with the grand design of **Aston Webb**, as I mentioned before.

19. Robert Mills' design for the Washington Monument, c.1845

Some kind of monument to George Washington at approximately this position had been included in **L'Enfant's** plans, but as with the Capitol and White House, he did not specify what he should be. It took until 1835 for the actual monument to begin to take shape, according to the instructions of the

Washington Monument Committee: "*It should blend stupendousness with elegance, and be of such magnitude and beauty as to be an object of pride to the American people, and of admiration to all who see it*." The winning designer was **Robert Mills** (1781–1855), supposedly the first native-born American to be professionally trained as an architect, and already the author of an earlier memorial to George Washington, the one right here in Baltimore. His original design arose out of a kind of Grecian temple, but the Committee felt it would be too expensive. Construction took almost 40 years, partly because of the Civil War, partly because funds ran out. Various changes were made along the way included widening the foot of the obelisk and tapering it more. The result was to fulfil the Committee's request for "stupendouness and elegance" to a remarkable degree. It was the tallest structure in the world until overtaken by the Eiffel Tower in 1890, and it remains the tallest stone monument anywhere.

20. Pennsylvania Avenue and the two Malls compared

The question of size, incidentally, emphasizes the huge difference between the two Malls. Although grand in size, the London Mall is still a throughfare, used by cars on most days, and cleared for grand processions on special occasions. L'Enfant's equivalent of this is Pennsylvania Avenue; his open space stretching all the way to the river is vast, like the country it represents. **The Victoria Memorial**, on the other hand, is certainly large, but still small enough for a visitor to take in all its detail, which is basically about the Queen bringing peace and prosperity to a quarter of the world; we'll come back to that in the Empire class.

21. Elgar: *Land of Hope and Glory*, with the Victoria Memorial

B. Battle of the Styles

22. Section title B (transformation)
23. Gandy: *Design for New Senate Houses in St. James' Park, London* (1835)

Here's a real oddity: what do you think it is? The top part is obviously a fantasy, but what about the building below it? It is in fact an entry for the competition to design new Houses of Parliament in London after the fire of 1834. It is fairly clear that the artist, **Joseph Michael Gandy** (1771–1843) did not expect his design to be built; it moved the buildings way off the original site and was not at all in the kind of style requested by the Commissioners of the competition. But he was certainly a visionary, and he knew his classics. It is significant that he does not call the building "Houses of Parliament" but "New Senate Houses," making an obvious link with the democracy of ancient Rome.

24. The Palace of Westminster in 1815
25. William Kent: *Design for the Houses of Parliament, London* (1739)

In fact, there had been classical designs for the building before. The Palace of Westminster that burned in the fire was a complex of small buildings around the medieval **Westminster Hall**, far too cramped for its purpose. **William Kent** (1685–1748), a Georgian architect who had already built several classical

buildings in London such as the Horse Guards shown here, came up with a series of designs in a similar manner, one of which is shown here. But Britain got involved in wars, funds were diverted, and nothing was ever built.

26. Barry: Royal Manchester Institution and Trentham Hall

The leading architect of the team that won the 1835 competition, **Charles Barry** (1795–1860) already had many classical buildings to his credit, such as the two shown here. But the Commissioners asked that the new Houses of Parliament be built in either Gothic or Elizabethan style; they explicitly rejected classical; why do you think that was? This brief video should give the reason.

CUT

28. White House, with quotation

Although there were plenty of classical buildings in London already, this one had to convey a message about National Identity, and both America and Napoleonic France had already defined national identities in neoclassical terms. The British government website is quite explicit about it: "*In 1835, a Royal Commission was appointed to study the rebuilding of the Palace and a heated public debate over the proposed styles ensued. The neo-classical style, similar to that of the White House in the United States, was popular at that time. However, as the design was associated with revolution and republicanism while the Gothic style was felt to embody conservative values, the commission announced in June 1835 that the style of the buildings should either be Gothic or Elizabethan*." So Barry worked with a younger architect, **Augustus Welby Pugin** (1812–52), who was not only an expert in Gothic but a veritable evangelist for the style. All the detail of the new building was his, and fantastic detail it is.

29. Pugin and Barry: detail on the Houses of Parliament
30. The Houses of Parliament from the river, with Burton and Pugin quotations

Yet the committee's mandate did not please everybody. The leading British classicist at the time, **Decimus Burton** (1800–1881), whom we shall meet again, denounced the chance to replace the old chambers with something really modern: "*Must the new seat of the British Empire be doomed to crouch and wither in the groinings, vaultings, tracery, pointed roof, and flying buttresses of a Gothic building…* [*a style*] *improper to the prevailing sentiment of an age so enlightened*?" I don't know if he was replying to Burton or to somebody else, but Pugin himself denied that the building *was* even Gothic: "All Grecian, Sir; Tudor details on a classic body," he said—and if you look at the symmetry of Barry's design, you can see what he means. Barry might have submitted a quite different proposal under his own name, but he was unable to do so; as a fervent convert to **Catholicism**, he had to submit his work through someone more acceptable to the Anglican establishment. I don't think Pugin was too pleased with the necessary compromise, since Gothic for him was much more than mere details.

31. Pugin: plate from *Contrasts* (1836)
32. — detail from the above
33. — detail from the above

This comparison is not mine but Pugin's. It comes from a book of architectural drawings he published in 1836, called *Contrasts*. Its purpose was to compare the architecture—and by extension life—in the Gothic period with that of the Nineteenth Century. And I must say, he really loads the dice!

34. Pugin: plate from *Contrasts*: All Soul's, Langham Place and St. Mary Redcliffe
35. —the above with photo of All Souls

Not surprisingly, he has little time for neo-classical architecture. His drawing of **St. Mary Redcliffe** in Bristol is thronged with people going to the church and receiving its benefits. By contrast, **All Souls, Langham Place** is penned in by iron railings in a commercial street where people creep along in ones and twos. But then he is drawing; a photographer could have shown the magnificence of this 1824 masterpiece by **John Nash** (1752–1835) in altogether more flattering terms.

36. Pugin: *St Giles Roman Catholic Church, Cheadle* (1841)

Pugin was only 40 when he died, so he did not get to build a lot of churches on his own. But here is one he did: the Roman Catholic **Church of St. Giles** in the small provincial town of Cheadle, Cheshire. Outside, it might almost be a genuine medieval church, but Pugin filled the interior with a wealth of detail that would never have accumulated in any one place in the middle ages.

37. Chart of Classical/Gothic

Who won the battle of the styles? Nobody, really. The situation is clearest in the United States, where the prevaling style for both government and church buildings was predominantly classical; for some reason, though, gothic pretty much took over for church architecture after about 1835. At the start of the century, Britain had a mixture of gothic and classical churches, though its administrative buildings were generally classical. The Houses of Parliament competition, however, triggered a shift: church buildings turned almost entirely gothic, and administrative buildings could be built in just about any style. The Wikipedia article on Victorian Architecture opens with the sentence, "*Victorian architecture is a series of **architectural revival styles** in the mid-to-late 19th century*," implying that style is simply a suit of clothes to be tried on, and there is no native Victorian style. Certainly Pugin would not have felt this way, and I'll suggest some other exceptions in the second hour, but on the whole it is true.

38. Latrobe: *Baltimore Basilica* (1806) and Renwick: *St. Patrick's Cathedral, NYC* (1858)

Two Catholic cathedrals in America, **Baltimore** and **New York City**, fifty years apart; why is one classical and the other gothic? Other than shifting fashions, I can suggest one reason for the choice of gothic in New York: **real estate**. A classical building requires a certain balance of width to height, but gothic is build upwards. So if you are building on a relatively small footprint, the soaring majesty of gothic gives you more bang for the buck. You might be surprised to hear, though, that **Benjamin Latrobe's** first design for the Baltimore Basilica was gothic too; let this video explain.

39. Baltimore Basilica video (excerpt)
40. Goodwin (1822) and Waterhouse (1868): old and new Manchester Town Halls

Here is another example of the shift from classical to gothic, this time with secular buildings. In 1822, the newly prosperous cotton town of Manchester required a Town Hall in the most imposing style, so they commissioned this beautifully proportioned building from **Francis Goodwin** (1784–1835). But Manchester continued to grow and prosper, and soon this classical building was not big enough. So in 1868, they turned to **Alfred Waterhouse** (1830–1905) and, as he was to do in most of his buildings, he went full Gothic.

41. **COMPARISON 3**: the images below
42. Waterhouse: *Manchester Town Hall* (1868–77)
43. Richardson: *Albany City Hall* (1880–83)

Which leads me to the last of our comparisons in this hour: Waterhouse's **Town Hall in Manchester** with the **City Hall in Albany** (1880–83), by **Henry Hobson Richardson** (1838–86), one of the relatively few exceptions to the American tendency to build government buildings in a classic style. But it's not gothic either; what style is it? What other comparisons do you care to make between them? If there is time, I can show come close-ups of the Albany building; the music (which I added) is also Romanesque.

44. Richardson: *Albany City Hall* (1880–83), video
45. Class title 2 ("Old Styles for a New Century")

C. The Triumph of the New

46. Section title C (transformation to next slide)
47. **COMPARISON 5**: the two images below
48. The Crystal Palace, Great Exhibition, London, 1851
49. The Electrical Building, World's Columbia Exhibition, Chicago, 1893

Let's start again with a comparison. Two world fairs: the **Great Exhibition** held in London in 1851, generally called the first world's fair, and the **World's Columbia Exhibition** held in Chicago in 1893. Before getting into more particular questions, let's just brainstorm about them. Both buildings were specially built: the Crystal Palace was designed by **Sir Joseph Paxton** (1803–69); the Electrical Building in Chicago was the work of the Kansas City firm **Van Brunt and Howe**. What do you think of the atmosphere of each? What were the organizers hoping to achieve?

50. Exterior of the Crystal Palace and wider view of the Chicago Fair

However, this is a class on Achitecture, so I am mostly concerned with the buildings. What is the style of the buildings in each place? What is technique of their construction? The Chicago fair was laid out by **Frederick Law Olmstead**, the designer of New York's **Central Park**, and the main architecture was by the Chicago firm of **Burham and Root**, essentially the inventors of the skyscraper. So you might have expected something up-to-the-minute. But in fact they chose to go with a panoply of classical styles, crowning a triumphal arch with a colonnade then sticking an ornate dome on top of that!

Paxton's Crystal Palace also uses classical motifs, but it is conceived entirely in terms of its technology, iron and glass, and so is essentially a new concept. This hour of the class is basically a riff on that statement from Wikipedia that "Victorian architecture is a series of architectural revival styles." In the last 15 minutes or so, I'll show some fun examples of revivalism going so wild that it essentially becomes a new style. But for now, I want to look at buildings that did *not* blindly follow in the footsteps of their predecessors, mainly for one or both of two reasons: they were built for purposes that did not exist earlier, and/or they employed new technologies.

51. Interiors of both exhibitions

If you look at the inside of one of the Chicago buildings, you will see that it is technically much the same as the Crystal Palace, with iron posts and cross-beam girders supporting the floors. Both have glass roofs; the difference is that Paxton's roof is an elegant barrel vault, whereas the Chicago building uses a more utilitarian combination of flat panels supported on trusses.

52. Paxton, the Great Conservatory at Chatsworth, and the Palm House at Kew

Paxton was a remarkable man. By faking his age, he got a job with the Royal Horticultural Society as and assistant gardener. His assiduity there caught the attention of the **Duke of Devonshire**, who offered him the post of **Head Gardener at Chatsworth** (Mr. Darcy's home in the film of *Pride and Prejudice*) when he was only 20. There, among other things, he developed the cultivar of banana that we still enjoy today. He did this by developing a revolutionary design for a huge greenhouse, which he built at Chatsworth in 1836; it has since been destroyed, but at the time, it was the largest glass building in the world, and the inspiration for numerous other conservatories, such as the **Palm House at Kew** (not by Paxton).

53. Paxton's blotting-paper sketch, and the Crystal Palace

The Great Exhibition of 1851 was the brainchild of **Prince Albert**, husband of Queen Victoria. But it took time to get it off the ground, and it was not until early 1850 that the committee was in a position to invite tenders for designs. Paxton was not among them, but the committee rejected *all* the original 245 entries as being either unsuitable, or too expensive, or taking too long to build. Only then did Paxton throw his hat into the ring. By then, he was quite famous, and his ideas were accepted purely on the basis of his verbal pitch and a quick concept doodle he did on blotting paper! He took only two weeks to produce detailed designs and cost estimates, which were a quarter of those of his nearest competitor and offered a building four times the size. He achieved this by sourcing the largest sheet of glass then commercially available (about 4' by 1') and building the entire design around that. It is the perfect example of material-driven design, and it made possible a construction time of less than 10 months. Let's watch a short clip from the TV series *Victoria*—sorry for the abrupt cut-off.

54. *Victoria*, season 6 episode 8, opening of the Great Exhibition

55. A Century of Bridges in Britain

The use of cast iron, wrought iron, and steel was part of the success story of the British Industrial Revolution, beginning with the **Iron Bridge at Coalbookdale** (1777) and going on from there. It resulted in structures that were not only practical for their purpose, but often extremely beautiful, and owing

nothing to previous influences in terms of style. The **Forth Bridge**, begun in 1882, and many other bridges before and since, was built to carry traffic generated by that other Industrial Revolution innovation, railroad travel, which also gave rise to another masterpiece of Victorian architecture, the railway station.

56. Isambard Kingdom Brunel: *Paddington Station* (1854)

Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806–59)—I love that name!—was a civil engineer, responsible for building bridges, railways, even a steamship, but the roof structure of his train sheds at **Paddington Station** (1854) is as beautiful a work of Victorian Architecture as anything I can think of. The station also provided the setting for this magnificent 1862 painting by **William Powell Frith** (1819–1909), showing a cross-section of English society about to leave for points West—down to the criminal hoping to make a lucky escape, but being arrested by Scotland Yard at the extreme right!

57. William Powell Frith: *The Railway Station* (1862)
58. Fowke and Scott: *Royal Albert Hall*, South Kensington (1867)

The success of the Great Exhibition gave a boost to Prince Albert's zeal for bringing knowledge and culture to the public, leading to the creation of the numerous cultural institutions in **South Kensington**, London, an area jokingly known as **Albertopolis**. Most of them he did not live to see. Nor did the architect of two of its chief jewels, the military engineer **Captain Francis Fowke** (1823–65). His 5,000-seat **Royal Albert Hall** is no longer London's prime orchestral venue, but it is used every summer for the BBC's celebrated Promenade Concerts. Structurally, it is a work of engineering, but in design it is unabashedly classical, though a new shape for London: a Roman amphitheatre given a dome of glass and iron, and a Greek frieze around the outside.

59. Fowke and Waterhouse: *Natural History Museum*, South Kensington (1864)

Another Fowke building in South Kensington that he did not live to complete was the **Natural History Museum**, which I used for my title slide. The internal structure of the main hall is very similar to Brunel's Paddington Station, although its feeling is more akin to a great Gothic cathedral. This is because the project was taken over by the architect of the Manchester Town Hall, **Alfred Waterhouse**, who designed the building's huge façade in his idiosyncratic but most impressive form of Gothic.

60. Natural History Museum, New York, earlier stages
61. Natural History Museum, entrance façade and Roosevelt Memorial Lobby

Though not unknown in earlier centuries, it is fair to say that the explosion of libraries, museums, and art galleries was essentially a phenomenon of the Victorian era. You got this in America also, but generally a generation behind developments in Britain. With the exception of the **Smithsonian Castle** (1855), virtually all the museum buildings on the National Mall are 20th-century creations. The oldest grand museum in the United States is the **American Natural History Museum** in New York, which was founded in 1874. But that grew in stages, taking its final form only beween the wars. And although it doubtless used the latest technologies, they were hidden away behind either the heavy masonry of the

first building, in the Romanesque manner of **HH Richardson**, or the Roman triumphal arch erected by **John Russell Pope** in 1929 as a memorial to Teddy Roosevelt.

62. Adler & Sullivan: Auditorium Building, Chicago (1886)
63. Burnham & Root: Monadnock Building, Chicago (1891)

An even more important occasion for new types of building in the 19th Century was **Commerce**: warehouses, offices, and retail stores. Temples of commerce can of course be found in both countries, but in this field the torch passes distinctly to the United States, and specifically to **Chicago**, which underwent a huge building boom following the fire of 1871. Here it was the rapid expansion of business that made major construction necessary, and the development of technologies that made it possible: various kinds of metal skeleton structures and above all the invention of the elevator. The result was the birth of the skyscraper. Here are two iconic buildings from the end of the century: the **Auditorium Building** by the firm of **Adler and Sullivan**, and the **Monadnock Building** by the firm of **Burnham and Root**. Both buildings combined retail shops and business offices; the Auditorium Building, as its name suggests, also contains an opera house. Both contain some marvelous detail—**Louis Sullivan** (1856–1924) in particular was extraordinarily inventive in his later work—but the main quality of these early skyscrapers was their freedom from the constraints of historical style. I could show more, but photos are not very sexy; the buildings were designed to *impress* rather than *entrance*, and above all to *work*.

64. World's Columbian Exhibition, 1893

But sometimes style *is* the poinr. One set of Chicago buildings that were definitely intended to entrance the visitor were those of the **World's Columbian Exhibition** in 1893, also mostly by Burnham and Root. And with that, we get back to where we started the hour, and an occasion for a couple of minutes of video, narrated by **Gene Wilder**. Another abrupt cut-off.

65. World's Columbian Exhibition, video

D. Style Set Free

66. Section title D (transformation to next slide)
67. **COMPARISON 6**: the two images below
68. Renfrew: Smithsonian Castle, 1855
69. Stoke Newington Pumping Station, 1854

One last comparison: two buildings from almost the same date, one of which you surely know, and the other you almost cetainly don't. Do you get any sense of scale? What style would you say each is in? Does similarity of style necessarily mean similarity of purpose? The 1855 building is of course the **Smithsonian Castle** by the future architect of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, **James Renwick** (1818–95). It is an exception in at least two ways: it is the oldest museum building on the Mall by at least half a century, and its red sandstone Gothic is a contrast to the white-marble Classicism all around.

70. Crossness Pumping Station, London (1859–65)

The other building is—wait for it—a **sewage pumping station** in Stoke Newington, a London suburb! The inside has been gutted, but here is a photo of another one, just South of the Thames. You can see that the Victorian taste for fantasy—coupled with the engineering skill to make things that worked—was not confined to a few gothic turrets. In the first hour of the class, I was looking at building with serious purposes and their adoption of either the Classical or Gothic style. In the last half-hour, I have been showing buildings that, on the whole, transcend style, either because they serve new purposes or their structure is dictated by new materials. In these last few minutes, I want to do the opposite: look at a few buildings which are *not* bound by purpose or decorum, and—like the Chiago Exhibition but more playfully—are *all* about style. **Style set free!**

Actually, the Chicago World's Fair buildings are also all about style. No need to change things, I think; just needs better metadiscourse.

71. Buildings at Ryhope, Chipping Norton, and Glasgow

So how about these? From top right counterclockwise: another pumping station made to look like a **Jacobean hall**; a tweed mill in the Cotswolds looking like a **Georgian Country House**; and a carpet factory in Glasgow looking like a **Sienese palazzo!** In each case the designers, having no tradition for buildings of that type, felt themselves entirely free to follow their own fancies.

72. William Kent, Capability Brown, and others: Stowe Park, Buckinghamshire

Here is a view of an English country park, **Stowe in Buckinghamshire**, laid out in the mid-18th century. Look at the buildings in it; what do you see? A Gothic ruin, a monumental column, and a Classical bridge. In fact none of these structures have any purpose other than to add visual interest; the ruin, for instance, was *built* as a ruin; the bridge conceals a dam. The English made a specialty of such things; they called them **follies**. Their sole purpose is to serve as flavor-packets of style.

73. Broadway Tower (1794) and Beckford's Tower (1830s)

Here are two more, around the beginning of the 19th century. **Broadway Tower** is on a hill in the Cotswolds, above the picturesque village of Broadway. It was built for a Countess, but its only purpose is to look good from a distance and provide a good view if she could ever be bothered to climb up there. The other, **Beckford's Tower**, is not strictly a folly in that it could be lived in. **William Beckford** (1760–1844), author, member of parliament, the richest commoner in England (through the slave trade) and a certified eccentric, built the tower near his home in Bristol to house his own mausoleum.

74. Fonthill Abbey (1796–1814)

But Beckford enters architectural history for another building. Among other things, he wrote one of the first Gothic novels, the now-forgotten *Vathek* (1786). And shortly after, he built the gothic-horror film set to end all film sets, the huge and forbidding **Fonthill Abbey**. It did not last; Beckford was a better visionary than engineer, and the tower collapsed. But it was one of the things that put Gothic back on the map—indirectly responsible, I suppose, for the return of that style in the Houses of Parliament.

75. John Nash: Carlton House Terrace and All Soul's Langham Place, London
76. John Nash: Cronkhill and Blaise Hamlet
77. John Nash: Royal Pavilion, Brighton (1815)

You remember the church of **All Soul's, Langham Place** that Pugin so disparaged? It was only one of many pristine Classical buildings erected by **John Nash**, making him the Georgian architect *par excellence*. But that was in London. When commissioned to do private houses in the country, he could let his imagination run free, creating the lovely Italianate villa at **Cronkhill**, or building a set of retirement homes for the former employees of a rich industrialist at **Blaise Hamlet near Bristol**, as a set of thatched cottages grouped around a village green—either the first planned **garden suburb** or the first Disney theme park, whichever way you want to look at it. And when he was commissioned to build a seaside retreat at Brighton for the then **Prince Regent**, he went all out with an Indian fantasy in the **Royal Pavilion** (1815–).

78. Some William Morris wallpapers
79. Philip Webb: *The Red House*, built for William Morris, 1859

Not all private commissions were an occasion for imaginative excess, however; sometimes it was just the opposite. One of the most influential artists in the mid-Victorian period was the poet and designer **William Morris** (1834–96), the leading figure in the **Arts and Crafts Movement**. He preached a return to simplicity, hand-crafted rather than machine-made objects, and inspiration taken directly from nature rather than adapting some previous style. The most innovative thing about the *Red House*, built to his specifications near London in 1859 by the architect **Philip Webb** (1831–1915), is its almost complete absence of stylistic quotations; I suppose it is closer to gothic than classical, but that's about all.

80. Nottoway and Longwood Plantations

So what about the USA? Most official and religious architecture was pretty conservative, as we have seen, but there were some exceptions in private architecture. One group of these are the antebellum plantation houses of the South, such as the two shown here; the octagonal house at **Longwood** MS might almost be a distant cousin of the Indian domes at Brighton. Another exception can be found in the properties of the ultra-rich of the Gilded Age, such as the Vanderbilt house at **Biltmore SC**, or the so-called "cottages" at **Newport RI**; I haven't time for them here, but will show more next week.

81. *Lucy the Elephant* and *Teapot Dome Service Station*

But I do want to mention that extraordinary American phenomenon of **fantasy architecture** or **roadside attractions**. Most of it belongs to the mid-20th century, but some of it is suprisingly early. This **Elephant** in Margate NJ dates from 1881, and the **Teapot Gas Station** in Washington State comes from 1920, when motoring was only just getting going.

I want to end with some images I have put together of something that falls between these extremes: the uniquely American interpretation of Victorian Gothic motifs, put together in wild effusion by carpenters rather than architects, and thus earning the nickname **Carpenter Gothic**. Also **Stick Gothic** and **Queen**

Anne Victorian. The music is the finale to the *Variations on "America"* for organ solo by **Charles Ives** (1874–1954). Enjoy!

82. American Gothic montage
83. Class title 3 (Remembrance of Lost Time)