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The Department of History, Division of Humanities and Fine Arts  
4239 Humanities and Social Sciences Building  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
Santa Barbara, California  
93106-9410

**Website**

<https://undergradjournal.history.ucsb.edu/>

**Email**

[Undergrad.journal@history.ucsb.edu](mailto:Undergrad.journal@history.ucsb.edu)

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**Cover Image**

On the cover, a protestor wearing nitrile gloves and holding his fist, 31 May 2020.  
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**Building the Empire:  
Neo-Gothic Architecture and the Creation of an Imperial Network of Architects**

*Sara Marcus*

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*You, the Patriot Architect,  
You that shape for Eternity,  
Raise a stately memorial,  
Make it regally gorgeous,  
Some Imperial Institute,  
Rich in Symbol, in ornament,  
Which may speak to the centuries,  
All the centuries after us.<sup>1</sup>*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson,  
*On the Jubilee of Queen Victoria*

Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 was a moment of high imperial sentiment that provided the context for the reveal of a plan to build an Imperial Institute of the United Kingdom, the Colonies and India.<sup>2</sup> What famed poet Alfred Lord Tennyson described as a "shape for eternity" and "Rich in Symbol" that will maintain its legacy for generations to come was a building in the style of the Gothic Revival. While the Imperial Institute, touted by Tennyson, was all but demolished in 1965, the Neo-Gothic architectural form dominated the European skyline throughout the nineteenth century. Architecture has been utilized for thousands of years to define eras, nations, cultures, and ideologies, and this understanding of the power of architecture was used to its full potential by the British Empire of the nineteenth century. During this time, European nations began to value their past and stake their current claims to greatness on their histories of ambitiousness. This nationalism extended to the art world, where men of great importance in England restored Gothic architecture to its former glory. Some architects and historians admired medieval artisanship for its honesty and quality in the industrializing world. At the same time, some artists and politicians interpreted a moral purity in the Gothic style that was used to further imperial pursuits. The empire's revival of the style would provide additional authenticity to British culture in the age of competitive European imperialism.

While opinions of politicians, architects, and historians on the role of the Gothic Revival in Victorian Britain are well documented, little attention is given to the pursuits of an empire-wide web of architects that spanned the globe. This paper traces this web of British Imperial architects, beginning with the shifting political tides of the metropole and the architectural competition for rebuilding the Houses of Parliament of the 1830s. This historical context is critical to understanding the episteme of the British government and elite employed. This paper thus demonstrates how this competition and subsequent selection of Charles Barry and A. W. N. Pugin helped catalyze the imperial architects' global network of building projects. This essay asks why the British government embraced the Neo-Gothic style in the mid-decades of the nineteenth century and how this decision led to an imperial network of architects who employed this specific style to design and build the apparatuses of the colonial state outside of the mother country.

The Reform Act of 1832 was crucial to this process as it established the political climate of Britain. This piece of legislation, coupled with the rise of the Gothic Revival, led to debates over the visual direction of the State. Already, men of influence in the political and art world were forming opinions on which forms of architecture they preferred based on connections to other men of importance. The 1834 fire that burned down the Houses of Parliament occurred during this pivotal time. The competitive process of rebuilding this essential structure became a stylistic battleground used to determine the new architectural character of the government. Knowing that the architectural form that the government-backed would elevate that style to the height of architecture, the selection of Charles Barry and A.W. Pugin's design for the Houses of Parliament in 1836 would have powerful, international effects. The Neo-Gothic would go on to facilitate the development of a web of architects throughout the colonies, most notably Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Pakistan, who are all connected to either staunch supporters of the Gothic Revival, high ranking members of the Royal Institute of British Architects, or Barry and Pugin themselves.

The meteoric rise of the Neo-Gothic in the British Empire is rooted in England's political and social situation in the 1830s. The 1830s was the decade of the Whig party. When Charles Grey was appointed Prime Minister in 1830, the abolition of slavery and the passage of the Reform Act swiftly followed. As historians, John Wetherell and Charles Phillips argued, "England's frenzy over the Reform Bill in 1831, coupled with the effect of the bill itself upon its enactment in 1832, unleashed a wave of political modernization that the Whig Party eagerly harnessed."<sup>3</sup> Due to the Whig majority, the Tory Party embraced these reforms, which quickly destroyed the political system that had been in effect during the reign of King George III. The new electoral system created by the Reform Act of 1832 led to drastic alterations to England's political fabric. The expansion of the House of the Commons and the redistribution of land affected power dynamics, giving rise to a "new" aristocracy in the House of Lords. The general population was paying more attention to the goings-on of parliament due to the newfound representation people had. What can we learn if we consider the Reform Bill's transformative power and its creation of new social dynamics alongside changes to the architectural world? The revolutionary network of architects that spawned from the embrace of the Gothic Revival would probably not have occurred without the changing of the guard in the art world brought on by shifting social dynamics stemming from the Reform Act.

Due to the 1832 Reform Act, concerns were beginning to mount, even before the fated 1834 fire that destroyed the Houses of Parliament, on the fitness of the House of Commons to hold the expanded number of members. The Reform Bill of 1832 drastically increased the number of members of parliament from about 400 to 658. Some members, including radical Joseph Hume, argued that if the government considered themselves modern and enlightened, an appropriate building would have to be constructed to solidify Parliament's image.<sup>4</sup> Historian George Weitzman explains that Hume led Radical Utilitarians in parliament to call for a new Parliament building to be built in the style of the Neoclassical.<sup>5</sup> The classical style associated the British seat of government with republican democracy, rationality, and a political system that prioritized functionality and efficiency.

Hume's commitment to utility was praised in the *Westminster Review* by Sir Henry Cole, an established member of Imperial College London and later the first director of the South Kensington Museum (Victoria and Albert Museum).<sup>6</sup> Cole was close to the Utilitarian Radicals and firmly backed Hume's campaign for a parliament building to represent Britain's new democratic aims. To powerfully govern in the state of the current Houses of Parliament was not only impractical but "barbarous."<sup>7</sup> He reasoned that a new parliament building that followed Utilitarian principles would demonstrate how far British society and civilization have

progressed. Built in the Neoclassical style, with its close association to modern science and reason, people would see how the government was both capable and credible of ruling the nation.<sup>8</sup> The historian Weitzman felt that the Utilitarian position was healthy and reasonable but ultimately coming too prematurely for the time.<sup>9</sup> I disagree with his conclusion because it fails to consider that the Neoclassical was not seen as uniquely British, a characteristic that was ultimately paramount in deciding the architectural identity of the empire. While the Neoclassical style exudes power, history, and European dominance, the British ties to the Neo-Gothic were that it also shared those traits and was seen as an English invention.

While an overwhelming political majority rejected Hume's 1833 Utilitarian for a new building, Whigs and Tories alike knew they had to proceed with caution from then on about how to represent the direction of government best. The leader of the oppositional Tory Party, Sir Robert Peel, spoke out against Hume's ideas for the parliament building saying that they were "the most imperfect and the most discreditable."<sup>10</sup> After Earl Grey stepped down as Prime Minister in July 1834, Peel took over the position from December 1834 until April 1835, when Lord Melbourne of the Whig Party assumed office until 1840. Even though the political make-up of Parliament was not profoundly different during the 1830s, the Reform Act provided this context of uncertainty over what Parliament should be and facilitated subsequent debates after the fire of 1834.

On 16 October 1834, a fire broke out that destroyed both Houses of Parliament, thus reigniting political debates on the rebuilding process and prompting architectural debates in the art world over the validity of the Gothic Revival. In the *Westminster Review*, Hume, with the assistance of Arthur Symonds, published a piece noting how he believed the fire had "removed the aching tooth of government."<sup>11</sup> Radicals stepped up their insistence that the Gothic did not appear as an appropriate style for an enlightened legislature, asserting that, unlike the Neoclassical, the Gothic was prone to the ill-effects of weathering due to the amount of ornamentation.<sup>12</sup>

The *Architectural Magazine*, edited by John Claudius Loudon and issued between 1834 to 1839, shared Hume's concerns with the Gothic's practicality and the meaning behind its style. Loudon used this magazine to promote a rational approach to architecture that focused on the materials and practices of construction with commentaries of pragmatic functionalism and the benefits of modern technology.<sup>13</sup> One main contributor to the journal was the Devonian architect and engineer Charles Fowler. Like Loudon, Fowler believed the new Parliament signified a new epoch "for the development of genius, and the exercise of the arts and science."<sup>14</sup> Parliament mattered because, as Fowler predicted, the visual style of the parliamentary buildings would influence architecture throughout the Empire. In a fashion on par with the radical Utilitarians, Fowler derided the Gothic as a third-rate style that is, in essence, ecclesiastic when he remarked that, "No Gothic Parliament could be modern in this enlightened age."<sup>15</sup> Outside of the *Architectural Magazine*, Fowler echoed his previous sentiments in his book, *On the Proposed Site of the New Houses of Parliament*, where he states, "Gothic was ignorant and that architecture was inherently connected to a nation's industry."<sup>16</sup> The Gothic style was controversial for men in politics and the architectural world alike. The proposed styles of the parliament buildings were subject to radical discussion, as Parliament was a marked place that men in politics and architectural spheres realized held the direction of Britain in the balance.

But why did these men, in particular, have such an influential voice in promoting the Neoclassical and a vehement dislike of the Neo-Gothic? The answer lies in the connections that all these men had to Sir Robert Smirke, the chief architect to the Office of Works and famed designer of the British Museum. A year before the fire, in 1833, Hume chaired a



committee to consider a new House of Commons. At this meeting, he suggested that benches that faced each other implied a two-party system, and thus the new building should present different options for the interior of the main chamber.<sup>17</sup> One of the first architects to submit a design following Hume's suggestion was Sir Robert Smirke. Through this interaction, it is clear that Hume realized Smirke was on board with his vision and thus sought to elevate the Neoclassical to make his ideas reality.

Radical Utilitarian Henry Cole had a clear connection to Robert Smirke as well. As Smirke spent over a decade designing and building the British Museum (1823-46), Cole worked with Radical Utilitarian parliamentarians such as Hume to institutionalize the arts, starting with the National Gallery. Cole argued that art had broad social, political, and educational value and was thus put on the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures board in 1835.<sup>18</sup> As Cole and Smirke both shared Utilitarian values and worked with Joseph Hume, it is no coincidence that Cole was showing his support for the Neoclassical along with these men. Moreover, Sydney Smirke, the son of Robert Smirke, would eventually work with Cole to design the South Kensington Museum.

Since John Claudius Loudon was an architectural writer, it is fair to assume that he would personally contact a man of Robert Smirke's notoriety. But the connection is deeper than that. When Smirke popularized Grecian style architecture and ornamentation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Loudon quickly lauded Smirke's architectural vision. In 1833 during the height of the Radical Utilitarian push for the Classical architectural takeover, he published the *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architectural and Furniture*. This book contained over 2,000 designs for houses in various Grecian, Georgian, and Old English styles.<sup>19</sup> He published this as a way of showing that Smirke, in his position as Chief Architect of the Office of Royal Works, was the man who would retain the conventions of authentic English architecture instead of descending into chaos through the Neo-Gothic. It is evident through the works of Loudon that his heavy bias in favor of Smirke design styles naturally pit him against architecture dissimilar to what they were both promoting.

It is unclear whether Charles Fowler had a personal relationship with Robert Smirke or not, but his architectural upbringing would have aligned him stylistically with the great architect. The three leading London architects of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were Sir John Soane, John Nash, and Robert Smirke. When Charles Fowler came to London in 1814 at the age of twenty-two, he went to work as an apprentice to the current Architect and Surveyor to the Customs, David Laing.<sup>20</sup> Laing had been a pupil of Sir John Soane before being granted this official architectural role. Fowler was trained stylistically by staunch Neoclassicists and developed crucial connections in government through his apprenticeship. When the London Custom House burned down in 1817, Laing put Fowler in charge of the rebuilding effort, which was done in the Neoclassical style and elevated his architectural status to the point where he managed to set up his own London practice a year later. In 1822, when Fowler initially won the contest for the design of the new London Bridge, Smirke was on the committee that chose him.<sup>21</sup> With the architectural influences and connections that Hume, Cole, Loudon, and Fowler had, their fight against the Gothic Revival is understandable. It provides the crucial context in understanding how webs of architects formed and functioned in Britain.

While the *Westminster Review* and the *Architectural Magazine* brought their anti-Gothic Revival sentiments to the public, Parliament was in the process of determining how they would make the most significant architectural decision of the nineteenth century and their tenures in office. Sir Robert Smirke immediately undertook supervision of constructing temporary quarters for the members of parliament, putting him in a delicate situation as a proponent of

the Neoclassical style. If his designs for rebuilding were in the Neoclassical style, he would keep the growing voices of the Radicals silent but would surely face instant hostility from Tories and Whigs. However, both the Tories and Whigs opposed anything that might fuel the growth of the radical opposition parties. This in and of itself represents the turning point that Britain was facing. Not only was this taking place in the dying moments of Grey's government, but it also exemplified Britain's lack of philosophical direction.

After King William IV summoned Sir Robert Peel to head a Tory administration, he approved the Whig's decision to hire Smirke, putting the government under real pressure to create a definitive plan to rebuild the Houses of Parliament. Peel told the Commons, "The present government approves of what the late government did in this respect," whilst speaking on the hiring of Smirke.<sup>22</sup> When the Prime Minister called a general election in January 1835, the House of Commons saw the Whigs and their allies fall from a two-thirds majority to a bare majority. With Radicals and Repealers gaining seats, the press began to attack Smirke's appointment. The main argument was that legislators should choose the architect who would design the new Houses of Parliament if the people were to be forced to pay the bills. These newspapers were capitalizing on public outrage over the cost of rebuilding Buckingham Palace just a few years earlier, in 1826. Historian W. J. Rorabaugh recorded that *The Times* supported an open competition judged by professional architects, while the *Morning Herald* and *The Morning Chronicle* also advocated for a similar contest.<sup>23</sup>

On January 31, 1835, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Edward Cust published a pamphlet urging Peel's government to hold a competition for the design of the new Houses of Parliament. With the backing from *The Times* and *Morning Herald*, Cust became instrumental in overturning Smirke's appointment. While Cust was in no way an architect, he felt that the respectability of his character provided him with all the professional requirements he needed. He discredited both Smirke and the Greek style by associating it with the Georgian corruption of the eighteenth century. He noted how "all of the public buildings of the last half-century have been behind the average architectural talent of their day" and that the old system of appointing architects had created a "poverty of taste."<sup>24</sup> An open competition would establish a new system that would publicly display the architects of the day. Instead of a commission made up of the old guard architects, an amateur committee made up of members of parliament would decide the finalists, with the king himself choosing the winner.

But why did Cust, a man who was a former member of parliament who dealt outside of the realm of architecture, care so much about blocking Smirke's design? Again, the web of architects rears its head, as Cust had a strong friendship with up-and-coming architect Charles Barry. Cust became acquainted with Barry after the latter won the 1829 Travellers' Club competition.<sup>25</sup> On 19 June 1835, it was reported that Cust was an honored guest at Barry's installation as an officer at the Institute of British Architects.<sup>26</sup> Not a week before, on June 13, House of Commons committee resolutions favoring a contest were released to the press.<sup>27</sup>

Unbeknownst to him at the time, the burning of the Houses of Parliament would become the turning point in the life of Charles Barry and the Gothic Revival, as it would elevate his status to one of the greats in architecture and that of the Neo-Gothic as the architectural symbol of the British empire. Charles Barry was born in 1795 to a stationer from a well-off family. In 1817, he embarked on the Grand Tour to study architecture before settling in London.<sup>28</sup> His father's death left him with enough wealth to establish his practice, and those he acquainted himself with on the Grand Tour gave him plenty of clientele to begin his firm.

The most important man Barry met on the Grand Tour was British painter, gallery director, and collector Charles Lock Eastlake because it would later put him on the radar of Eastlake's nephew, Charles Locke Eastlake.<sup>29</sup> Charles Locke Eastlake was one of the chief

revivalists of the Gothic style and was a prominent furniture designer. He published several influential books on furniture, decoration, and architecture that dictated the British style. From 1866-1877, he was the secretary to the Royal Institute of British Architects, and from 1878-1898, he was the Keeper of the National Gallery in London.<sup>30</sup> His relationship with his uncle, also a Keeper of the National Gallery from 1843-1847, made him a prominent figure in the British art and architecture scene.

Much of what we know of how Charles Barry was perceived comes from Eastlake's 1872 book, *A History of the Gothic Revival*. His book records the history of buildings and architects between 1820 and 1870 that were crucial to the development of the Gothic Revival in Britain. As a champion of the Gothic style, Eastlake undoubtedly wrote favorably of the architectural form but recognized the pitfalls of the early revivalists' works. Eastlake wrote that the early Gothic revivalists "reproduced...out of pure respect for tradition."<sup>31</sup> What Eastlake means is that even though early Gothic revivalists found success as architects, they could never bring the Neo-Gothic to full prominence because they did not add anything new to the design.

The original medieval building is cold in its formal arrangement, and it uses different proportions than those of the Classical style. It is detailed to the point of looking overstrained, and quite simply, artistically out of touch with modernity.<sup>32</sup> In other words, early revivalists produced buildings of sound quality but faulty artisanship for the period. That the Medieval Gothic style was predominantly used for ecclesiastical structures only added to the antiquated stereotyping. What made Charles Barry different from his predecessors was his abandonment of the imitation of religious architecture in his influence on his Neo-Gothic designs. Barry developed what became known as the Perpendicular style, which changed the general form, ornamentation, and constructive principles just enough to retain the traditional elements of the Gothic yet still be different enough to be perceived as a modern improvement to the current Neoclassical.<sup>33</sup>

With his artistic talent and zeal, Charles Barry became the perfect spark to launch the Gothic Revival to the upper echelon of architecture; all he needed was the right partner to sell it. In 1833, Barry was commissioned to design the exterior of King Edward's School in Birmingham. The man commissioned to design the interior of the building was a man named Augustus W. N. Pugin. Pugin, while twenty years younger than Barry, was already of considerable repute since his father worked under John Nash, one of the architectural "Big Three" of the age and responsible for the restoration of Buckingham Palace. Pugin would go on to be so famous that Eastlake called the early revivalist style "pre-Pugenesque." Pugin began to publish papers on the Gothic style at fifteen years old.<sup>34</sup> His artistic skills were lauded in the architecture community as he assisted Barry in sketching hundreds of designs for him to work with for the Houses of Parliament.<sup>35</sup> Overall, Pugin's design ideas for ceramics, sculpture, metalwork, stained glass, and other decorative and ornamental arts advanced those art departments and planted the seeds for the Gothic to penetrate other artistic spheres.<sup>36</sup>

It is crucial to bear in mind that Barry meeting Pugin and gaining notoriety together, the Reform Act and its political effects, and the Radical Utilitarian push for Neoclassicism were all happening simultaneously in the early 1830s. The burning down of the Houses of Parliament in October 1834 sped up this process of the government being forced to make a statement on the architectural direction of the state. Politicians, architects, critics, and journalists all had particular ties that dictated their stances on the Neo-Gothic and the Neoclassical.

Turning attention back to the competition, after the format was announced in June 1835, the most critical resolution regarding the future direction of architecture was reported,

limiting the stylistic choices to Gothic or Elizabethan. In the end, there were both practical and political reasons for this stylistic justification. Undoubtedly, with the location of the Houses of Parliament remaining the same, a building in the Gothic style would fit aesthetically with Westminster Hall and Abbey. Politically, the old Classical taste of King George IV's reign was declining in public favor, especially after the taxation increase to rebuild Buckingham Palace. Parliament wanted to make a decision that would increase its popularity.<sup>37</sup> But how does the Elizabethan architectural style fit into this explanation, especially when it had not previously been part of the parliamentary discussion? Because of the ultimate decision to crown Barry and Pugin's Neo-Gothic design as the winner, the Elizabethan style is often overlooked when discussing the plans for rebuilding this critical symbol of imperial power. However, as historian W.J. Rorabaugh notes, the Gothic and Elizabethan styles were specified because they were both styles that originated in Britain. With Parliament as the seat of the imperial government, there was no better way to represent the British power than with a style of architecture native to Britain. A national symbol must be rooted in English heritage, especially at a time of increased nationalism, historicism, and imperialism. This decision could solely be attributed to politics, as Edward Cust, the man who organized the competition, was a Tory but close to Charles Barry, who had Whig connections.<sup>38</sup> But, the significance of the government choosing to go in this direction began to demonstrate how the government's national image is evolving through architecture.

Of the ninety-seven candidates and fourteen hundred total drawings that entered the competition, three of the final four selected by the committee and approved by the Crown were Gothic designs, backing up the idea that the government already knew it wanted to go in the direction of the Gothic Revival. Eastlake wrote that "every age and every country have progressively formed to themselves each its peculiar style and character."<sup>39</sup> On April 28, 1836, the submission of Charles Barry and A. W. N. Pugin won the contest and the contract.<sup>40</sup> The judges attached themselves to Barry's design because it avoided unnecessary detail and stylistic choices associated with ecclesiastical designs.<sup>41</sup> This decision did face some public backlash. *The Times* wrote that they were "convinced the Committees of the Lords and Commons committed a great error in limiting the architects of England to the styles which they are pleased to call 'Elizabethan and Gothic.'"<sup>42</sup> Loudon, the editor of the *Architectural Magazine*, even went so far as to leave an anonymous review of Pugin's book, *Contrasts*, to accuse Pugin of utilizing the Neo-Gothic style to spread Catholic propaganda after his recent conversion.<sup>43</sup> But overall, Eastlake had an interesting point to make on ultimately selecting Barry and Pugin's design. He wrote,

Who knows how far the taste for Medieval Art might have been developed at all but for this timely patronage of the State? Is it not rather true that the decision of the Government as to the style of the new buildings gave an impulse to the Revival which could have been created in no other way — an impulse that has kept this country advanced before others in the earnestness with which ancient types of national Architecture are studied and imitated by professional men?<sup>44</sup>

While Eastlake is writing in hindsight, his point raises many ideas on the purpose of the Gothic Revival. This architectural form was brought to the forefront of architectural discourse through government intervention. Likewise, the British government recognized the purpose that the Neo-Gothic could serve for the Empire. It feels as if Eastlake was implying that this style best fits the ideology behind the imperial expansion. According to Eastlake, the Neo-Gothic had made the United Kingdom more advanced than the rest of Europe. Choosing any different form to represent the British Empire would just be imitating the past greatness of

other civilizations instead of continuing the legacy Britain had already forged. After knowing how they revitalized this style for rebuilding arguably the most important building in Britain, the selection of Barry and Pugin ushered in this new age of the Gothic while Britain was expanding its empire abroad.

Following the announcement of the winners for the competition to rebuild the Houses of Parliament, the Gothic Revival turned into the gold standard for building designs across the Empire. It seemed that every government building, Anglican church, and other imperial institutions were Neo-Gothic. These structures were designed by men who had connections to other men in power, specifically in the architecture world. The historical analysis of this phenomenon offered in this portion of the paper clearly outlines this network of architects, showing how there can be no doubt that this is deliberate and an observable trend rather than a coincidental phenomenon.

For the town of Perth in Australia, the erection of the Perth Town Hall between 1867-70 is a prime example of a colony looking to prove itself in the eyes of the mother country through the use of well-connected architects, new resources, and the imposing architectural form of the trending Neo-Gothic. In 1829, the Swan River Colony was created in Western Australia. By 1838, the colony's growth required establishing a local government. By 1842, a chairman and committee of six were drawn up, and the Perth Town Trust and City Council were inaugurated.<sup>45</sup> The town grew and with it the desire for an Australian identity within the greater British Empire. A decade later, the architect Richard Roach Jewell immigrated from England, bringing with him the style of the Gothic Revival as the architectural form represented the specter of Britain over the development of colonial towns and their political activities.

Richard Roach Jewell was the appointed colonial architect for the Western Australian Government from his arrival in 1853 from England to 1884. He was trained as an architect in Devon, eventually moving to Australia as a free settler. While Jewell would become responsible for most of the distinctive buildings of this period in Perth, he was appointed by the governor with only amateur credentials. However, his name carried a reputation, as he trained in the office of Sir Charles Barry back in London.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, he shared the quaint hometown of Devonshire with Charles Locke Eastlake, who would be the secretary of RIBA at the time of the construction of the Perth Town Hall. News of Jewell's arrival was reported in the *Perth Gazette*. The budget afforded to public works was minimal, and convict labor was the leading resource keeping construction on infrastructure afloat. It was written how "expenditure of a very considerable amount of public money requires the most careful supervision."<sup>47</sup> As the only qualified architect in the colony in Western Australia, Jewell was under significant scrutiny by the government in Perth and back in England. This quickly growing colony and the desire for a nationally conscientious and distinctive architecture served the local community.

The appointment of Richard Roach Jewell to construct the Town Hall and clock tower highlights how the Gothic Revival was viewed as an architectural marker for the growth of civilization and the designated central point of the town. While under construction, the *Perth Gazette* wrote, "The opening of such a building should be signaled by an event of no common occurrence in the annals of the province."<sup>48</sup> This building was monumental to Perth, for it could not even afford stone to build its town hall. The article says that an exhibition of all of the crafts and resources that the colony has to offer should be on display upon the completion of the town hall. This building was created as a symbol of Perth pride, community engagement and unity, and a grandiose statement to Britain that this colony is productive and key to the empire. It is already becoming clear how the appointment of Pugin and Barry for the construction of the Palaces of Westminster began to create a network of Gothic Revivalist architecture through which Britain could unconsciously spread its new age, imperial identity.

Upon opening the Perth Town Hall, the governor's speech and forthcoming infrastructure ventures suggest that this new Neo-Gothic building was fundamentally responsible for ushering in a new era of civilization in Western Australia. When the Town Hall was near completion, the *Perth Gazette* compared Perth to other British colonies and highlighted how before the Town Hall, Perth lacked "a notable landmark to judge by as to how far behindhand we are with the rest of the world."<sup>49</sup> This insinuates how the Perth Town Hall, which would open in June of 1870, was to remedy this lack of a signifier of civilization.<sup>50</sup> From an architectural standpoint, a Neo-Gothic building with distinctive medieval features such as arches, arcades, pinnacles, and tourelles, is being seen as the marker of civilizational progress in the same year that the new Palaces of Westminster back in London officially completed construction. This is further solidified in the speech given by the Governor of West Australia, Frederick Aloysius Weld, at the opening of the Town Hall. Weld picked up on this view of the Town Hall being a turning towards a new beginning of this colony when he hoped that the colonists "may live to see this little city, so beautiful already by its natural advantages, made worthy of this its principle edifice."<sup>51</sup> In the coming decade, a marketplace was established beneath the clock tower. A botanical garden and cricket ground were built nearby. The Perth Town Hall, in its Gothic Revival glory, became what Governor Weld hoped it would become. It was a venue that symbolized civic duty to the colony and empire. It was a building that glorified the ideals of the past and a reminder of the achievements of a colonial architect in the present with strong ties to the metropole.

Five thousand kilometers southeast, in Christchurch, New Zealand, the new Christchurch Cathedral was being built. Again, architects with the right social connections, raised by Gothic revivalists, utilized their positions of authority to oversee an official British architectural vision far from London.<sup>52</sup> Designed between 1864 and 1904 by George Gilbert Scott and Benjamin Mountfort, the Christchurch Cathedral heralded much praise upon its consecration. On 3 January 1863, the *New Zealand Press* explained that "The very general and warm approval with which the proposal to begin this great work has been greeted by the public, has convinced the Commission that the time has arrived when they may make this appeal with a certain prospect of success."<sup>53</sup> Christchurch became a city by Royal Charter in 1856, making it officially the oldest established city in New Zealand. It is evident by the quote that the people of the town wanted this Anglican cathedral erected, hinting at the religious affiliation of the citizens. "Complete plans for the whole Cathedral by Mr. Gilbert Scott are in the hands of the Commission; and they have determined to adhere rigidly to a design which is worthy of the great name of its author."<sup>54</sup>

The building commission held great affinity towards Scott and his status. Scott was a pupil of Henry Roberts, and Roberts had trained under Robert Smirke. With a connection like Smirke, there is no doubt your skills and reputation are to be taken seriously even before having designed anything. Scott also worked as an assistant for a short time to his friend Sampson Kempthorne, a specialist in Gothic works. It is documented that Scott wrote about how Pugin inspired him to participate in the Gothic Revival.<sup>55</sup> Scott was awarded the RIBA Royal Gold Medal in 1859 and was President of the association from 1873-76. Scott advocated using Neo-Gothic architecture for secular buildings, rejecting what he called "the absurd supposition that Gothic architecture is exclusively and intrinsically ecclesiastical."

The other designer, Benjamin Mountfort, was an early pupil of George Gilbert Scott (from 1841–46). He also studied architecture under the Anglo-Catholic architect Richard Cromwell Carpenter, whose medieval Gothic design style was to have a lifelong influence on Mountfort. He started reading Pugin at age 16 as well. Whatever the philosophy behind the Gothic revival, in London, the nineteenth-century rulers of the British Empire felt that Gothic

architecture was suitable for the colonies because of its strong Anglican connotations, representing hard work, morality and conversion of native peoples. Scott and Mountfort together were a powerful Gothic colonial force that stemmed from their connections to influential Gothic Revivalists that set the visual era and their links to other powerful men and institutions that allowed them to reach the positions of authority that they did.

In North America, the Cathedral of St. James in Toronto, Canada, is another Anglican church from the latter half of the nineteenth century designing central buildings in the Neo-Gothic style and employing architects with strong connections to well-known revivalists.<sup>56</sup> The St. James Cathedral is home to the oldest Anglican congregation in Canada. In 1849, the original cathedral was destroyed in a fire, prompting the creation of a competition to decide who would rebuild the new church specifically in the Gothic style.<sup>57</sup> The design by Frederick William Cumberland and Thomas Ridout eventually placed first. They would later be joined in the building process by William George Storm and Henry Langley. Cumberland and Ridout initially met when studying architecture at King's College, London, in the mid-1840s.<sup>58</sup> Storm was brought onto the scene when he began working under Cumberland. However, before he came to Canada, Storm apprenticed under William Thomas, who Barry and Pugin mentored.<sup>59</sup> Langley apprenticed under William Hay, an architect who specialized in the Gothic Revival.<sup>60</sup> While all of these men spent most of their architectural careers in Canada, only one was born there, and even he was sent abroad to study in London.

While the Gothic Revival was growing in popularity across the empire as architects moved from metropole to colony, the ties to Britain that St. James' Cathedral brought were much more profound. In 1856, the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada met to vote on specific bills and motions. One rejected ruling was "to remove all semblance of connexion between Church and State" and force St. James' Cathedral in Toronto to pay pew rent on specific items.<sup>61</sup> The failure of this bill to officially renounce the separation of church and state and granted the government the responsibility of providing financial support specifically for St. James' Cathedral. The construction of Neo-Gothic buildings across the colonies inexplicably represents loyalty and allegiance to the philosophy of the British Empire and the Anglican Church. Moreover, the web of architects responsible for facilitating this British ideology through architecture undoubtedly stems from the government's appointment of Barry and Pugin to rebuild the Houses of Parliament.

While it is unsurprising that Anglican churches were erected in the Gothic style, we see something more significant than the ecclesiastical buildings when focusing on the architects employed and their networks. So far, there has been an undeniable connection between all the architects mentioned, whether through Barry and Pugin or other famous architects and Gothic revivalists. Moreover, no matter if the Church of England commissioned these churches, none of these architects were employed for strictly religious structures. George Gilbert Scott even spoke out against the stereotypical belief that the Neo-Gothic was exclusively for religious institutions. He stated, "the great hindrance to the perfect success of our revival...is the absurd supposition that Gothic architecture is exclusively and intrinsically ecclesiastical."<sup>62</sup> Though the case studies in this paper are predominantly churches due to the well-kept digital records, this was by no means meant to be interpreted as the Gothic Revival being pigeonholed into a purely ecclesiastical role. The key orchestrators of this movement meant for it to be all-encompassing on a global scale. The network of architects that Scott addresses here was aware of their goals, thus purposefully delivering the British Empire into a new era of civilization through architecture.

Keeping George Gilbert Scott's words in mind, the last great Gothic Revivalist structure mentioned in this piece is the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection in Lahore.<sup>63</sup>

Lahore is currently the capital of the Pakistani province of Punjab. Still, in 1846, the British East India Company seized control of the city and was annexed to the British Indian Empire in 1849. The architectural landscape of Punjab began to be altered by the colonial forces in 1875 when British architects began deploying the Indo-Saracenic architectural style in new constructions. This style combined the Gothic Revival with traditional Indian architectural forms. The historians Aonghus Mackechnie and Florian Urban wrote in their analysis of Balmoral Castle that the strength of the British nation and nationalistic consciousness made the Gothic Revival in the colonies uniquely British. Britain's imperial cohesion and territorial integrity were unquestioned during the second half of the nineteenth century. Because of this, I agree with these historians that there was evident architectural flexibility in incorporating regional styles that could fit in with the nationally adopted Neo-Gothic.<sup>64</sup> As long as the building's grandeur was tied to the glory of the mother country and the monarchy, the inclusion of distinctly non-European horseshoe arches in the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection was permissible and even encouraged to keep the feel of the structure local.

Lahore's Mayo School of Art, the leading art institution in the city, promoted the new style under J.L. Kipling (Rudyard Kipling's father).<sup>65</sup> The British Indian government commissioned the creation of a fiat town, meaning a city where urban planners precisely map out every detail. Lahore's transformation into a model town was intended to create a perfect city with gardenscapes and modern comforts that included colonial institutions such as a university, government buildings, and of course, a giant Anglican cathedral. The Cathedral Church of the Resurrection was completed in the middle of the town in 1887. It was built by John Oldrid Scott, the son of Sir George Gilbert Scott, who was the man that created the Christchurch Cathedral in New Zealand.

Both John Scott and Kipling were born in England but spent most of their careers in colonies around the Empire. These men both perpetuated imperial ideologies across multiple generations and through the utilization of the Gothic Revival. When John Scott died, his obituary said, "He was not an architectural genius, for genius will not be confined within the limits of a formula."<sup>66</sup> Scott came from a line of well-connected architects and men of status in London, putting him in a position to carry out the ideologies of the metropole. He was one of dozens of architects, like his father, George Gilbert Scott, in New Zealand, Cumberland and Ridout in Canada, and many others in every colony, that was a part of this imperial network of architects inspired by the Gothic Revival because of the platform that the government gave Barry and Pugin over forty years earlier. While the Church of the Resurrection opened its doors in Lahore in 1887 – over 5,500 miles from London – Britain was celebrating Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. The announcement to unveil the Neo-Gothic design for the new Imperial Institute of the United Kingdom, the Colonies and India was announced in this celebratory context.

Charles Locke Eastlake wrote, "Before a national taste can be made effective, it must be instructed, and before it is instructed, it must be created."<sup>67</sup> The Reform Act of 1832 and the nearly decade-long dominance of the liberal Whig governments of the 1830s created a political and social environment ripe for a change in national identity. The rapidly developing taste for ancient English architecture with the growth of the Gothic Revival was predominantly overshadowed by the Neoclassicists both in Parliament and in the architectural world. However, as Charles Eastlake argued, the uniqueness of what Barry and Pugin brought to the table, along with increasingly nationalist sentiments in Britain, paved the way for the Parliamentary Committee to take a stand that all but stipulated that the Gothic would replace the Classical as the visual representation of imperial power.



As connections in the political and art world influenced the stances that men in positions of power took, these same networks were also responsible for putting Gothic Revivalists across the Empire in prominent roles that saw them create a Gothic architectural takeover that aligned with Britain's status as a world power. Barry and Pugin gave the nation a taste of what could be, and Parliament instructed and put them in a position to change the architectural world. Those that apprenticed under them or shared the same ideologies allowed the Neo-Gothic not just to be a national taste but a symbol of the global reach of British imperialism. The Houses of Parliament, the Perth Town Hall, the Christchurch Cathedral, St. James' Cathedral, and the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection all stand today in their original form, showing that the sun never set on the power of the Gothic Revival.

## Appendix



Stec, John C. *Houses of Parliament; Palace of Westminster from the west across the Thames Exterior*. 1980. Photograph. Society of Architectural Historians, UC Riverside and Gluck Program.



Harrison, JJ, *Perth Town Hall, Perth, Western Australia, Australia.* March 23, 2012.



*Christchurch Cathedral.* 1900-1940. Photographic lantern slide. Museum of New Zealand – Te Papa Tongarewa.



Paris, Simon, *St. James' Cathedral in Old Toronto, seen from the northwest on Church Street, August 7, 2016.* Photograph. Wikipedia.



*Cathedral Church of the Resurrection.* July 23, 2009. Photograph. Wikipedia.





<sup>1</sup> Alfred Lord Tennyson, *On the Jubilee of Queen Victoria*, (1887).

<sup>2</sup> Alex G. Bremner, "Some Imperial Institute: Architecture, Symbolism, and the Ideal of Empire in Late Victorian Britain, 1887-93," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62:1 (2003), p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> John A. Phillips, and Charles Wetherell, "The Great Reform Act of 1832 and the political modernization of England," *American Historical Review*, 100:2 (1995): p. 412.

<sup>4</sup> Edward J. Gillin, *The Victorian Palace of Science: Scientific Knowledge and the Building of the Houses of Parliament*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2017): p. 19.

<sup>5</sup> George H. Weitzman, "The Utilitarians and the Houses of Parliament," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 20:3 (1961), p. 103.

<sup>6</sup> Gillin, *The Victorian Palace of Science*, p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> Henry Cole, "Parliaments of our Ancestors," *Westminster Review*, Vol. XXI, (October 1834), p. 319.

<sup>8</sup> Gillin, *The Victorian Palace of Science*, p. 32.

<sup>9</sup> Weitzman, "The Utilitarians and the Houses of Parliament," p. 107.

<sup>10</sup> *House of Commons Debates*, 2 July 1833, Vol. 19, p. 65.

<sup>11</sup> Arthur Symonds, "New House of Commons," *Westminster Review*, Vol. XXII (January 1835), p. 164.

<sup>12</sup> Weitzman, "The Utilitarians and the Houses of Parliament," p. 105.

<sup>13</sup> Howard, Leathlean, "London's Architectural Magazine and the Houses of Parliament Competition," *Victorian Periodical Review*, 26:3 (1993), p. 146.

<sup>14</sup> Charles Fowler, "Remarks on the resolutions adopted by the committees of the Houses of Lords and Commons for rebuilding the Houses of Parliament, particularly with reference to their dictating the style to be adopted," *Architectural Magazine*, (September 1835), p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> *Architectural Magazine*, (September 1835), p. 34.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Fowler, *On the Proposed Site of the New Houses of Parliament*, London, (1836), p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> "Report from the Select Committee on House of Commons Buildings," (1833), p. 490.

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- <sup>21</sup> Taylor, "Charles Fowler," (1968), p. 58.
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- <sup>26</sup> *The Morning Herald*, 19 June 1835.
- <sup>27</sup> *The Morning Herald*, 13 June 1835.
- <sup>28</sup> "Sir Charles Barry." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, (19 May 2020). <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-Barry>.
- <sup>29</sup> The different spellings are correct. Lock is the uncle, while Locke is my main primary source.
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- <sup>34</sup> Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival*, (1872), p. 147.
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- <sup>38</sup> Rorabaugh, "Politics and the Architectural Competition," (1973), p. 167.
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- <sup>51</sup> "Governor's Address on Opening of Town Hall," *Perth Gazette*, 3 June 3 1870.
- <sup>52</sup> See Appendix for image of Christchurch Cathedral.
- <sup>53</sup> *Press*, Vol. 3, Issue 97, 3 January 1863, p. 7.
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