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Tracy of Toddington Manor

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By M. J. McCARTHY

Life and Character

THE Hanbury family derived their wealth from ownership of the Pontypool Ironworks, and resided at Pontypool Park, Monmouthshire. Charles Hanbury was born there on 28 December 1778, the third son of John Hanbury and Jane, *née* Lewis. He was educated at Rugby and Christ Church College, Oxford, where he matriculated in 1796. We also know that at one stage he was tutored by Mr David Williams of Cardigan.[1] He left Christ Church without graduating, and married on 10 December 1798 his cousin, Henrietta Susanna, daughter and heiress of Henry, eighth and last Viscount Tracy of Rathcoole, owner of the large estates of Toddington in Gloucestershire, and Gregynog, Montgomeryshire. A few days before his marriage, Charles added by royal licence the name Tracy to that of Hanbury.

Toddington Park, the seat of the Tracy family, became the residence of the newly-married couple. It was a Jacobean house, and suffered from dampness because of its low situation and a surrounding moat. In 1800 a fire destroyed the south wing, and this event first led Hanbury Tracy to consider rebuilding the entire house. At this stage, however, he contented himself with a reconstruction of the damaged wing, his architect being one Charles Beazley.[2] After some years, dry rot attacked the new part of the house, and in desperation at the consequent smell and continued dampness, he thought of leaving Toddington altogether. His eventual decision was to build a new house, Toddington Manor. In March 1820 he laid the first stone, on an elevated site in the park, some one hundred yards to the north-east of the old house. The work cost more than £150,000, much of which was defrayed by the sale of timber from the Gregynog estate. The building, which occupied Hanbury Tracy for the following fifteen years, will later be discussed in greater detail.

Hanbury Tracy always took an active part in county affairs, and led a busy public life. Appointed High Sheriff of Gloucestershire in

[1] John Britton, *Autobiography*, Vol. 1 (1849), f.n.
[2] Charles Beazley, *Dictionary of Architecture*.

1801, he filled the same position in Montgomeryshire three years later. In 1803 he took a leading part in the raising of the Montgomeryshire Legion, and became a Lieutenant-Colonel in the regiment. He entered Parliament in 1807 as Whig Member for Tewkesbury, representing the borough until 1812, and again from 1832 to 1837. In 1838 he was raised to the peerage as Baron Sudeley of Toddington. One year later his wife died. Their family consisted of seven boys (three of whom, however, had died before this date), and three girls. It is from the recollections of the eldest daughter, Henrietta, who was the constant companion of her father after the death of his wife, that we learn the reasons for Hanbury Tracy's decision to build a new Toddington.[1]

J. E. Jones, in his *Account of the Works of John Britton*[2] states that Hanbury Tracy: 'had long been distinguished by his extensive knowledge and critical judgement in all that related to Ecclesiastical Architecture', and his success at Toddington in adapting the Gothic style to domestic architecture attracted wide attention.[3] However, the only other Gothic building prior to 1830 in which we can prove that he took an interest is Cassiobury Park, remodelled by James Wyatt[4] for George Coningsby, fifth Earl of Essex. Hanbury Tracy was a cousin of the Earl of Essex, and appears among the list of subscribers to Britton's *Cassiobury Park* (1837). Britton mentions in this volume that the Earl had sold one of the Coningsby properties, Hampton Court in Herefordshire, to one Richard Arkwright, who: 'has lately made great additions and improvements to the house, from designs by Charles Hanbury Tracy, Esq.' The statement is confirmed by surviving documents.[5] Hanbury Tracy volunteered his services to Richard Arkwright's son, John, in 1834, when he learned of the latter's intention to remodel the old house, and was engaged on the building until 1842.

Hanbury Tracy's reputation as a knowledgeable and acute connoisseur of the Gothic led in 1835 to his appointment as Chairman

[1] Henrietta Tracy, *Notes on the Descent of the Barons Sudeley of Toddington.*

[2] J. E. Jones, *Account of the Works of John Britton*, published after Britton's death as Vol. 2 of the *Autobiography* (1849).

[3] Article in the March 1837 number of the *Gentleman's Magazine* (Vol. N.S. 7), is prefaced by the following: 'The curiosity of those who take an interest in architecture has been much excited by the erection of a magnificent mansion, not many miles from Cheltenham, the owner of which has been his own architect'. There follows an account of Toddington by Britton, which had previously been published in the *Cheltenham Annuaire*, and was to be used again by its economical author as Chap. III of his 1840 book on the manor, *Toddington.*

[4] After Wyatt's death in 1813, the alterations at Cassiobury were completed by his son, Sir Jeffrey Wyattville. In all, they lasted from 1799 to 1815.

[5] Arkwright Correspondence, Hereford County Records Office, A 63. A full account of Hanbury Tracy's part in the re-building of Hampton Court will appear in the next volume of *Transactions of the Woolhope Club.*

of the Commission to judge the designs for the new Houses of Parliament,[1] and he was inevitably involved in the disputes that followed upon the selection of the Barry-Pugin designs. In the House of Commons' enquiries on the subject the following year, he defended the Commissioners' choice stoutly, if not logically; and it was largely due to his persistence that Barry's plan was finally proceeded with. Thereafter, he seems to have left the Houses of Parliament severely alone, until in 1844 a Committee of the House of Lords was appointed to enquire into the delay in the completion of the buildings.[2] He was a member of this Committee (having been raised to the peerage in 1838), and objected strongly to changes Barry had introduced into the original plans. Hanbury Tracy produced a plan of his own for the remaining section of the buildings, which he proposed be substituted for that of Barry. The proposal was not accepted, and Barry was authorized to proceed as he had intended, but with greater speed.

This was Hanbury Tracy's last venture into the field of architecture. In 1848 he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of County Montgomery, a post he held until his death ten years later. In 1857 he published a pamphlet relating to the Bank Charter Act. He died in Toddington the following year, on 10 February, aged 79, and was buried beside his wife in the village Church. He had left £5,000 for the erection of a fitting memorial to himself and his wife, and this was later executed by J. C. Lough, who at the start of his career had provided some of the statuary for the new Toddington.[3]

The provision of such a costly memorial is an indication of the extent of the first Lord Sudeley's appreciation of his claim to the attention of posterity. He is described as 'clever and autocratic' by a member of the family.[4] Because of his addiction to the Gothic we might expect to find a romantic strain in his character, but he was far from being another Beckford. His enthusiasm for what was then considered the national style seems to have sprung primarily from a proper sense of the value of historical tradition, and it is interesting to note in this connection the motto of his arms, *Memoria Pii Aeterna.* He was moved to volunteer his services to John Arkwright for the renovation of Hampton Court by a fear lest the ancient castle lose its medieval character in the projected alterations.[5] To carry through to its successful conclusion a major building project like that of Toddington Manor required good business-sense and resolute purpose.

[1] J. E. Jones, op. cit. [2] *House of Lords Sessional Papers* (8 August 1844).
[3] See p. 171. [4] Henrietta Tracy, op. cit.
[5] Arkwright Correspondence (v. note 5, p. 162), letter of Hanbury Tracey to John Davenport, 18 March 1834.

It is evident from his correspondence with Arkwright regarding the alterations at Hampton Court that Hanbury Tracy had little patience with men of vacillating disposition.

He took great interest in country and county life. As we might expect from the generous provision he made for their accommodation in the new Toddington, he was a good manager of horses, and was reputed 'a considerable whip'.[1] His town life seems to have been that of the noted Whig M.P., a great friend of Lord Melbourne, and a member of Brooke's and the Fox Club. He was conscientious in fulfilling his parliamentary obligations, and the publication of the pamphlet on the Bank Charter Act indicates an intelligent and serious concern with national problems.

Our picture of Hanbury Tracy is now complete. The qualities which raise his life and character above the normal are his love for the picturesque in building and the accuracy of his knowledge of the Gothic style. He chose an elevated site for the new mansion at Toddington, and so planned the building that the scenic effects of broken wall-surface, contrasted mass, castellation and varied towers, should appear to the greatest advantage. The landscaping of Toddington was carried out later, but we are informed that this was an integral part of his scheme.[2] When objections were raised in 1836 to the inclusion of the Great Tower in the plans for the Houses of Parliament, Hanbury Tracy insisted that though this was undoubtedly a superfluous element to the design, it ought to be retained as forming: 'so magnificent a feature in the design.'[3] Indeed, in the Report of the Commissioners he places as their first principle of judgement: 'the beauty and grandeur of the general design'. In the same document he insists strongly upon the need for attention to detail in Gothic building, and we shall see in examining Toddington that he took great care to ensure the authenticity and correctness of the details.

We do not know when Hanbury Tracy's interest in the Gothic style started, but from the extent of his borrowings from the Oxford colleges, to be demonstrated later, we may suppose that the love of the picturesque and ancient style was born in his undergraduate days. Examples of Gothic details, taken mainly from Oxford, were published by the elder Pugin and E. J. Willson in 1821 and 1823, and it can be

[1] Henrietta Tracy, op. cit.

[2] By Thomas Charles Hanbury Tracy, second Lord Sudeley. 'After the death of his father . . . the summer months until his death in 1863 were spent at Toddington, where he took a great interest in landscape gardening, believing this a necessary development of his father's great building schemes'. Henrietta Tracy, op. cit.

[3] Thomas Hopper, *A Letter to the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Duncannon* (pamphlet, 1837).

shown that Hanbury Tracy owed much to these *Specimen* books.[1] His fidelity to the principles of the picturesque presupposes a knowledge of the publications of Price and Knight,[2] if not of the authors themselves. He probably had some formal training in architectural drawing, since there existed plans and elevations bearing his signature, but of this we have no certain knowledge. His general practice seems to have been to make large drawings of the proposed design and then take them to Thomas Cubitt's offices to have them reduced to scale.[3]

Toddington Manor

Toddington has frequently been ascribed to Sir Charles Barry. The legend seems to have been started by an anonymous contributor to *Country Life*, 30 April 1904, and though it was discounted by A. Oswald writing in the same magazine, 9 October 1937, it has since re-appeared frequently, notably in R. Dutton, *The English Interior* (1948), and R. Turnor, *Nineteenth Century Architecture in Britain* (1950). However, apart from its stylistic dissimilarity to any of Barry's other work, there is sufficient contemporary evidence to warrant the total attribution of the building to Hanbury Tracy. Mrs Arbuthnot visited the Manor in 1823, and recorded in her Dairy: 'He (Mr Hanbury Tracey) is entirely his own architect and, unlike other gentlemen architects, seems to have built what will be a very comfortable as well as a good house'.[4] The entry for the Parish of Toddington in *The British Gazetteer* by B. Clarke (1852) records of Hanbury Tracy: 'This gentleman was his own architect, and has produced one of the most beautiful and effective edifices in this county'. In his book *The Gentleman's House* (1864), R. Kerr, President of the R.I.B.A., states with regard to Toddington: 'This is one of the cases in which the proprietor was his own architect'. Moreover, the testimony of John Britton, in the *Cheltenham Annuaire* (1836), in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1837), and in the Foreword to his book *Toddington* (1840), is quite explicit: 'A mansion which has been designed by yourself, and superintended in its whole progress of execution, under your direct and special cognizance. I know not of any parallel instance where a house

[1] A discussion of the derivations of the details of Toddington will be found in the Appendix.

[2] Sir U. Price, *An Essay on the Picturesque* (1794); R. Payne Knight, *The Landscape, a Poem* (1794) and *Inquiries into the Principles of Taste* (1805).

[3] A. Oswald, in a *Country Life* article, 9 October 1937, speaks of plans signed C. H. T., then in the Manor. At present there survive in the Manor only two unsigned elevations. Mr M. Tunnard kindly drew my attention to Hanbury Tracey's relations with Cubitt. See A. Dale, *Fashionable Brighton, 1820–60* (1947), pp. 165–6.

[4] F. Bamford and the Duke of Wellington (ed.), *The Journal of Mrs Arbuthnot*, I, p. 251. I am indebted to Mr Howard Colvin for this reference.

of equal extent, diversity of parts, richness of decoration, and harmony of arrangement, has been the work of an amateur architect'.

The publication of this book by Britton is an indication of the importance which was then attached to the Manor as a vindication of the claim of the Gothic style to the serious attention of architects. Kerr, in the book mentioned above, though severely critical of its plan, spoke of it with a certain respect: 'which historically is its due' (p. 450). Yet Sir Charles Eastlake, in his *History of the Gothic Revival* (1876), ignored the existence of the Manor, and it is not mentioned in Kenneth Clark's study of the subject either. The neglect on the part of Eastlake can possibly be explained by the fact that Toddington belongs to that period of the Revival immediately preceding the advent of the younger Pugin and the formation of the Camden Society.[1] To Eastlake the later phase of the Revival, with its insistence on the necessity of restoring symbolism to art, and the desirability of a holy life in architect and bricklayer, must have seemed the really significant phase of the movement, that which led directly to Ruskin and the Arts and Crafts societies. With the spirit that produced these demands and visions Toddington has little in common. All the devotion and care spent in its construction had a purely secular and worldly end in view.

Hanbury Tracy's aim in building his new mansion in the Gothic style was to demonstrate the suitability of that style to modern domestic purposes. Writing to Davenport in 1834 on the proposed visit of John Arkwright to Toddington, he rejects the contrary opinion: 'the fact is quite otherwise—I will venture to say that the latter (Gothic) is better adapted to this climate for domestic architecture than Grecian, the beauty of which depends on Porticos etc., too well calculated to exclude the little sun we are favoured with'.[2] His contemporaries judged that he had succeeded in demonstrating the validity of his opinion. We have already quoted the tribute of Mrs Arbuthnot, made in 1823. In 1830 F. C. Hunt published in London his book *Exemplars of Tudor Architecture Adapted to Modern Habitations*, and included a plan of the ideal modern Gothic house which obviously owes a very big debt to Hanbury Tracy's disposition of Toddington, though the debt is not acknowledged in the text of the work. Robert Kerr, who has been mentioned earlier as the most severe critic of Toddington, nevertheless considered it: 'one of the best of those supposed amateur works which in great measure led the way to the Gothic Revival at that early stage'.[3]

[1] *Contrasts* (1836). This Cambridge Camden Society founded 1839, and published *Ecclesiologist* (1841). [2] Note 5 on p. 162.

[3] R. Kerr, *The Gentleman's House* (1864), Chap. XI. He is severe and heavily sarcastic in speaking of the planning of Toddington, but as professional architect, F.R.I.B.A., and Professor of the Arts of Construction at King's College, London, he could hardly look with favour on amateur enterprises.

Hanbury Tracy was insistent, however, that the provision of the domestic conveniences of a more leisured age was not to entail any sacrifice of correct and authentic Gothic detail. Earlier he had written of Wyatt's alterations to Cassiobury Park as :'beneath criticism' in this respect.[1] In the Report of the Commissioners on Plans for the new House of Parliament, he was to recommend that the architect's detailed drawings be submitted from time to time to competent judges of their effect, as: 'the beauty of the Style depends upon the attention to detail, for which the architect has no rule to guide him, but must trust to his practical knowledge and good taste'.[2] This insistence on his part is all the more impressive in that he recognized the merit of Pugin's drawings: 'It is impossible to examine the minute Drawings for this design, and not feel confidence in the Author's skill in Gothic architecture'. He might well have felt confident, for he had derived much of his own detailed work from the *Specimen* books of the elder Pugin. (cf. Appendix).

In plan, Toddington Manor consists of three rectangles, each ranged round an open court and connected diagonally one with another. This disposition ensures that from all sides except the West (to which there was no approach-road), the main part of the building could be seen in relief against the lower ranges of the offices and stables. This was thoroughly in accord with the principles of the picturesque as outlined by Sir Uvedale Price in his celebrated *Essay on the Picturesque* (1794): 'Nothing contributes so much to give both variety and consequence to the principal building, as the accompaniment and, as it were, the attendance of the inferior parts in their different gradations'. The main block is two-storeyed, except on the East wing, which has basement cellars, ground-floor, mezzanine bedrooms, first-floor, and attic bedrooms. Vaulted cloisters, 10 feet wide and 15 feet high, surround the court, but do not give access to it. The North Entrance has a cubic hall of 20 feet. On the South, the cloisters narrow to 5 feet in the central bays, which lead to the Great Staircase below the Tower. On the first floor, arched corridors correspond to the cloisters below as means of access to the nineteen bedrooms.

Determined to get the full benefit of 'the little sun we are favoured with', Hanbury Tracy disposed the principal rooms on the South and West, and introduced large, impressive bay windows, which provide admirable views of the landscaping. There are no rooms off the North cloister, which provides an Entrance-Hall and connection between the

[1] See Note 5 on p. 162.
[2] Hansard, Vol. xxxiv.

East and West ranges. On the East there is access only to toilets and the Billiard-Room, which differs from the other rooms in its comparative darkness and the severity of its plaster panelling. Presumably this was inserted to harmonise with the large Jacobean fireplace, which had been taken from the old Toddington, but had originally belonged to the Tracy house at Hailes Abbey, some 4 miles distant. However, the room is quite as spacious as those of the South and West. They average 38 by 24 feet, and are 20 feet in height.

The Offices' block is also large, and the individual rooms spacious. Except for the towers, containing three bedrooms each, it is one storey high. Adequate connection between the two blocks was secured only at an expense of space in large lobbies. It is also true that access to the Study has necessarily to be through the Private Library or the Records' Office, and Hanbury Tracy has been criticised on this account by Kerr and others. But it may well be that his intention was to secure thereby the privacy of these intimately-connected apartments. If one accepts that there is no objection to servants having to carry meals along 60 yards of corridor from the kitchens to the Dining-Rooms (and there is no reason to suppose that Hanbury Tracy was ahead of his time in consideration for domestics), the plan provides every amenity.

The third block consists of the stables, connected at the south-east of the offices by a covered passage which leads directly into the vast Ride, 500 feet in circuit, 20 feet high, and 10 wide. Inside the rectangle formed by the Ride, the stables and coach-houses were built to form a square court. A further rectangular block projects from the East of the Ride to provide more loose-boxes, and a hospital (for horses). This had the advantage of securing a separate and more speedy egress for post-horses.

In all, the buildings occupy an area of 7,804 square yards. Work commenced in 1820, and the main part of the house must have risen very quickly indeed to have been sufficiently well advanced by the summer of 1823 for Mrs Arbuthnot to comment on its comfort. Over the gateway to the right of the Entrance-Tower to the Stables is the date 1829, which probably marks the commencement of the building of the stables. Building was completed by 1835, though at the time of Britton's visit (1836?), the internal decoration had not been finished.[1] There were probably some hundreds of men employed on the works (200 were later engaged at Hampton Court), and we learn from the reminiscences of the Hon. Henrietta Hanbury Tracy that the

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. N.S. 7 (March 1837).

facing p. 168

PLATE VII Toddington Manor

Aerial Photograph
Donovan C. Wilson, A.I.B.P.

work was entirely carried out on the spot, even to the casting and rolling of the lead for the roofs, and the carving of the marble chimney-pieces.

Toddington is remarkable for the variety of its elevations. The severe, castellated appearance of the East range, with its broad ground-floor windows and prominent buttresses, its square towers and octagonal turrets, contrasts remarkably with the gaiety of crocketed pinnacles on the South front. There the large, traceried bay windows flanked by panelled turrets, and the decorative patterns of the castellation, present a rich and intricate appearance which reaches its climax at the South Entrance, or Chapel Wing (PLATE VII). The contrast is not the result of chance, for on the East it will be seen that Hanbury Tracy has prolonged that part of the Ride immediately to the left of the stables Entrance Tower to make it resemble a more humble chapel than that of the South, and the contrast is readily visible, though the stone cross which used to surmount the structure on the East is no longer there. The North Front seems to have been intended to serve as a transition between the castellated Gothic of the East and the flamboyant of the South. There is intricate stonework about the entrance, the buttresses, and the castellation. There are bay windows supported on fan-vaulted corbels and flanked by statues set in rich niches. Above rises the full glory of the Great Tower, with its statue of Henry the Eighth set between the tracery of the Grand Staircase Window and the replica of the crown of Magdalen Tower, Oxford.[1] Yet there is an impression of forbidding strength in the forward thrust of the side wings, in the broad, barred, ground-floor windows, and particularly in the simultaneous projection of the Entrance-Hall and the deep recession of the entrance itself, which is decorated at each side by the scene of the murder of Thomas à Becket in strong relief.[2] The figure of King Henry, fat and obviously prosperous, yet in an alert stance, with his hand set to the hilt of his sword, mediates very successfully between the austerity of the East and the luxury of the South fronts. The presence of this particular monarch as the guardian spirit of Toddington Manor calls for some comment, though indeed his admirable suitability in the context fully justifies Hanbury Tracy's choice. Possibly further explanation is found in the fact that Henry continued the building of Christ Church, Oxford, after the dismissal

[1] Not an exact replica. Here, as in the cloisters, Hanbury Tracy refined tastefully upon his model, omitting the central pinnacle evident in Magdalen Tower South, and inserting a variety of windows, using a fine rose window, for example, on the south side.

[2] The William de Traci who helped to murder Becket was believed to have been Lord of Toddington. The event is sculpted in the cloisters as well as at the entrance.

of Wolsey. Henry and Wolsey figure to either side of the ogee window of the chapel wing. More probably, the presence of the body of Catherine Parr in nearby Sudeley Castle accounts for his selection. The portraits and arms of Henry and Catherine figure in one of the stained-glass windows of the cloister. His presence at Toddington dates the building as decidedly pre-Pugin and pre-Camdenian. Hanbury Tracy had no interset in the religious implications of the Gothic, and he must have been amused at Britton's references (as early as 1840) to 'the royal monster' and 'that ruthless murderer', in his account of the Manor. Needless to say, Britton prefers not to mention the fact that Henry presides over Toddington, though he is shown in Plate V of the Britton book.

The West front of Toddington prepares us for the splendour of the South. It retains some traces of severity in the square-headed windows (derived from Christ Church Cloisters, Oxford), and in the decorative shields of the octagonal turrets at each end. However, we anticipate the intricate richness of the South elevation in the tracery and panelling of the West central bay.

In viewing Toddington Manor it is difficult to absorb all its qualities at once, the relations of mass to mass change so frequently about the one constant, stabilising element, the Great Tower. Particularly is this true of the roofline, where turrets and pinnacles appear in continually varying relationship to those of the Tower and to each other as one walks about the park or terraces. Only when the building has been viewed from all angles, and its extent and diversity allowed to settle in one's consciousness, does one come to appreciate the painstaking industry that was required for the accomplishment of this triumph of the picturesque; the integrity of its architect, who insisted constantly upon correct, though expensive, detailed work in stone and wood; and finally, the breadth and originality of imagination which first conceived this splendid architectural composition.

The very beautiful golden stone of the exterior was taken from the quarry known locally as 'Jackdaw Quarry', in nearby Stanway. The internal stone is a fine-grained grey, worked in the cloisters to a smooth finish. That too was obtained locally, from Pinnock Farm.

The contrast evident in the exterior between the Early and High Gothic forms of architecture is continued in the interior by the heavy vaulting of the lobby corridor, which leads from the offices through the South Entrance Hall, with its very fine stone screen, to the full delicacy of the cloister-vaulting. On these cloisters Hanbury Tracy lavished his particular care, and Britton ranks them, correctly, with ancient

examples of vaulting skill. The testimony of the author of many volumes of *Cathedral Antiquities* and *Antiquities of England* is valuable: 'It is not merely convenient, but peculiarly beautiful; it manifests something of the feeling and spirit which we may conclude influenced those ecclesiastical artists who raised the noble cloisters of Salisbury, Norwich, Gloucester, and Laycock, with many others; and in beauty of material and execution will bear comparison with the best of those old and justly admired works'. The cloisters of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, provided the model, but Hanbury Tracy has refined considerably upon these, eliminating the liernes, reducing the number of grotesques, and making the seat-ledges meet gracefully at an angle of forty-five degrees, where his original shows rectangular slabs (PLATE VIII).

Unfortunately, we do not know the name of the sculptor of the capitals, roof-bosses, and heads, which abound in the cloisters. He was a spirited craftsman, and achieved a virile energy of expression without descending to the sculpting of gargoyles. The large statue of St. Bruno at the foot of the Great Staircase is signed by J. C. Lough, and dated 1834. It has been suggested that Lough is responsible for the rest of the carving and sculpting in the Manor, but this is unlikely. He had entered the Royal Academy only in 1826, and the following year, at his first exhibition, he won so large a clientèle in London that it is improbable he should have spent much time in Gloucestershire. The Lough statue is traditionally known as *St Bruno*, and it bears sufficiently close resemblance to the Houdon *St Bruno* in S. Maria degli Angeli to warrant the retention of the name.[1]

The central section of the South range of the cloisters is narrower than the other wings by half, so that it seems very much higher. The illusion prepares us for the vast Grand Staircase, 10 feet wide in its lower flight, turning back upon itself with return flights to either side 5 feet in width, and giving access to the first floor by a short flight curving from each of the returns. There is a splendid stone banister of open trefoil design, and the roof is vaulted in imitation of Crosby Hall, London.[2] This vaulting, like that of the Dining-Room (done in imitation of the Hall of Christ Church), is of plaster, but this may have been caused by the inability of Hanbury Tracy to find competent workers in wood. Wood itself was readily available to him, and he spared no expense in securing the authenticity of the stonework and the

[1] For an account of Lough see the obituary notice in the *Art Journal* (1876), p. 203, and R. Gunnis, *Dictionary of British Sculptors*. The *St Bruno* is not mentioned in either account. Lough's works are on permanent exhibition at Bethnal Green Museum.

[2] Illustrated in Britton, *Architectural Antiquities*, IV.

windows. A model can also be found for the Entrance-Hall on the corresponding section of the North range, in the Red Mount Chapel, Lynn, Norfolk. The most likely source for the Entrance itself is the West Doorway of York Minster.[1]

Hanbury Tracy secured genuine stained glass of the 15th and 16th centuries for the windows of the cloisters, the Entrance-Halls, and the Great Staircase. The reader is referred to the 1901 volume of the *Trans. BGAS* for an authoritative account of the Toddington glass by W. St Clair Baddeley. Much of the glass was religious in theme, but in keeping with the strong sense of tradition that we have noted in Hanbury Tracy, much of it also was heraldic in nature.

Needless to say, the stained glass produces a gloom appropriate to Gothic cloisters; but this is instantly dispelled on leaving them to enter the rooms to which they give access. Here Hanbury Tracy entered fully into the spirit of the rococo Gothic introduced by Walpole in the Gallery at Strawberry Hill. Light floods through the large bay windows, and picks out the gold leaf liberally used on the roof-bosses and plaster vaults. This is particularly true of the Drawing-Room and the Music-Room. The Dining-Room and Library are more restrained, because of the panelling of the one and the shelving of the other. Except for the highly ornate cusping of the tops of the bookcases, these are in oak. Direct communication was provided between rooms, and the doors were doubled. These doors, like the fireplaces of Welsh marble, with their great mirrors, all reproduce Gothic forms. The change from the dark and relatively low cloisters to the lofty, bright, and brilliantly decorated rooms is a stimulating spatial and visual experience. Hanbury Tracy could legitimately be proud of the singularly beautiful and convenient home he had erected.

What Britton found particularly satisfying about Toddington was that, unlike previous essays in the Gothic, it resembled neither church, college, nor chapel, but the residence of a modern nobleman. And indeed, the severity of the East front, the confident boldness of the North, and the easy luxury of the South, combine to give the building a prosperous and well-established air, which must have been gratifying to its owner, who had joined to an untitled 'Hanbury' the very ancient name 'Tracy'. Apart from a general debt to the rococo spirit of the early Gothic in its interior, Toddington Manor owes nothing to Eaton Hall, Ashridge, Lee Priory, Fonthill, or Strawberry Hill. With admirable independence of mind, Hanbury Tracy had created an original

[1] The Red Mount Chapel is illustrated in Britton, *Architectural Antiquities*, III. The West Doorway of York Minster had been illustrated with exact measurements in J. Halfpenny, *Gothic Ornaments in the Cathedral Church of York*, plate 80.

form of the country seat, while preserving a fine sense of the picturesque and careful attention to authenticity of detail. He is a typical figure of the early phase of the Revival in his sense of the traditional rather than the symbolic or religious, in his love of the picturesque, and in his willingness to compromise with the rococo form of the Gothic. He is quite exceptional, however, in the extent and thoroughness of his understanding and practice of the style. He demonstrates how, by dedicated and intense study, a strong, individual sensibility can assimilate the style of a former period deeply enough to be able to use it with authority in expressing the taste and aspirations of his own age. His career and achievements merit greater attention from the historians and lovers of English architecture than they have hitherto received.

Appendix—The Influence of the Elder Pugin

Hanbury Tracy seems to have been very much influenced in his architectural opinions and practice by the work of the elder Pugin, a figure whose influence on the Gothic Revival in England has inevitably been obscured by the more spectacular career of his son, Augustus Welby. Pugin published in 1821, with the collaboration of F. Mackenzie, *Specimens of Gothic Architecture Selected from Ancient Buildings at Oxford etc.*, and this was followed in 1823 by *Specimens of Gothic Architecture Selected from Various Ancient Edifices of England*, the text of which was written by E. J. Willson. The second volume indicates most fully the thought and aims of its authors, and the parallels it affords with the thought of Hanbury Tracy, in so far as this can be judged from his work and the few writings on the subject that remain to us, warrant the surmise that he valued Pugin's publications as text-books. This was one of the aims Pugin proposed to himself in writing and publishing his *Specimens*: 'At the same time that it furnishes genuine materials for the Architect to work from, it supplies the amateur with criterion for reference, and to guide his judgement' (Preface).

Like Hanbury Tracy later, the Preface to the 1823 volume doubts Wyatt's claim (made for him by the obituary notice of the *Gentleman's Magazine*), to have revived 'the long-forgotten glories of Gothic architecture'. It asserts: 'his genius was fully gratified in florid details, without always attending to the antient rules'. Particularly noticed is the defect of the Lee Priory windows, which are mullioned, though, as the Preface insists ,'on (these), however, the whole beauty of Gothic building depends'. We may place alongside this an extract from a letter of John Arkwright to Hanbury Tracy, which refers to the Hampton Court windows: ' I should be satisfied myself to take out the sashes

and put in tracery like the lower windows, but I know you say that if altered at all, it should be differently and well done'. (H.C.R.O. A 63; 13 September 1841). The Preface also warns against the mistake, which the authors believed to have been made at Fonthill, of making the entire building resemble a Church, and we have seen that it was judged worthy of note by Britton and others that Hanbury Tracy had succeeded in avoiding this pitfall. In this connection it is worth quoting the first few words of the review of Britton's *Toddington* which appeared in the December 1841 issue of the *Gentleman's Magazine*: 'The house or rather Palace (Palazzo) of Toddington, described in this volume . . .'

Plate 25 of the 1821 volume showed a detailed sketch of the windows of the Cloister passage at Christ Church, Oxford (now sadly unrecognizable in the original) and it was used by Hanbury Tracy as the model for the West windows of Toddington, even to the angelic heads bearing shields. Plate 56, showing the parapet of St Mary the Virgin, is probably the source of the design of the banister of Toddington Great Staircase. The Oriel window of Balliol may well be the source for the two first-floor windows of Toddington North front, and the volume was particularly rich in specimens of niches for statues, of grotesques, and heads. It is probably not without significance also that the ceiling of Christ Church Hall, the model for the Dining-Room ceiling at Toddington, had been illustrated in 1814 for Ackermann's *History of Oxford* by the elder Pugin.

The possibility of a connection between Hanbury Tracy and Pugin must, in the complete absence of any papers referring to Toddington, remain an hypothesis. But it seems the most likely explanation of Hanbury Tracy's success. He certainly owed nothing to the professional 'gothicisers' of the day, least of all to Barry. But it is significant that Toddington should have been ascribed to Barry, for it seems indisputable (cf. R. Dell, 'Who was the Architect of the Houses of Parliament'? *Burlington*, VIII) that the elevations of the Houses of Parliament were the work of the younger Pugin.

(The Editors regret that, since this article was written, Toddington Manor has been severely damaged by fire. It is probable that the tower will have to be demolished.)