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Ann Davis

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tion, si bien que l'on note un passage du « contraint » au « libre », ou si l'on préfère du régulier à l'irrégulier, qui s'effectue à mesure que l'on s'éloigne du lieu de résidence.

La troisième étude se fonde également sur des documents de première main, ceux de Coleorton, maintenant à la Pierpont Morgan Library (Marcia Allentuck en a complété une édition commentée en 1973). Ces documents sont datés 1794–1828; ils consistent en cent six lettres addressées par Sir Uvedale Price à Sir George Beaumont et son épouse Margaret. Aux Coleorton Papers s'ajoutent l'ouvrage de Price *An Essay on the Picturesque, as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful : and on the Use of Studying Pictures for the Purpose of Improving Real Landscape*, qui remonte à 1794. Le goût a certainement évolué durant cette période puisqu'on trouve à propos du jardin d'abondantes discussions, dans ces sources, sur le *rugged and abrupt*. On ne peut s'empêcher de rapprocher ces discussions des descriptions admiratives des voyageurs du temps amateurs de pittoresque en présence de paysages réels. Témoin, J. T. Barber décrit le *Devil's Bridge* situé dans le pays de Galles : « This bridge bestrides a lane of almost perpendicular rocks... it leaves the *imagination free* [je souligne] to all the terrors of concealed danger ». L'influence de la nature insoumise devient de plus en plus évidente. On est en droit, je pense, de parler avec la venue du XIX^e^ siècle d'un effort d'ensauvagement du jardin. Le pays de Galles et la Suisse « réels » deviennent les modèles. La continuité des deux essais examinés ci-dessus n'est pas l'aspect le moins fascinant de l'ouvrage.

Il m'est difficile de commenter les deux derniers essais concernant la Hongrie, la Tchécoslovaquie et la Pologne faute de connaître suffisamment la littérature spécialisée et les réalisations paysagères de ces pays. Anna Zádor souligne d'ailleurs à propos de la Hongrie que les jardins dont elle parle sont postérieurs, l'évolution ayant suivi d'autres schémas eu égard à l'occupation turque. L'influence du baroque classicisant de Versailles a de plus tenu très longtemps, témoin le château Esterhazy, encore fidèle à ce modèle formaliste à la fin du XVIII^e^ siècle. Ce qui me semble intéressant, c'est que dans ces pays moins soumis à la rigueur classique du fait du contexte historique et géographique, c'est justement elle que l'on recherche, avec son appareil rationaliste; tandis qu'en Angleterre où cette rigueur a dominé depuis Inigo Jones, on cherche le non-rationnel.

Il aurait été intéressant d'autre part d'avoir un essai traitant de l'influence du jardin pittoresque anglais sur les réalisations nord-américaines : on pense immédiatement aux conceptions de Thomas Jefferson présentes sur le campus de l'université de Virginie à Charlottesville et à Monticello, conceptions que j'ai eu l'occasion d'étudier (*cf.* à ce propos « Thomas Jefferson et l'architecture métaphorique », RACAR, III: 2, 1976, p. 8-34). On pense également, entre autres exemples, à ces jardins de Dumbarton Oaks cités dans les remarques liminaires de ce compte rendu. Quoiqu'il en soit, cet ouvrage solide se doit de figurer dans la bibliothèque du dix-huitièmiste et l'on ne saurait trop recommander sa lecture.

GÉRARD LE COAT
Université de Montréal

JAMES LEES-MILNE *William Beckford*. Montclair (N.J.), Allanheld and Schram, 1979. 128 + v pp., illus., $18,50.

The life of William Beckford is an exaggerated combination of the romantic and the eccentric. He practised both with considerable panache, although not always with approbation. As an imaginative builder of precarious towers, as an early proponent of sublimity in landscape architecture, as a writer of the exotic tale *Vathek*, and as an active collector of decorative and fine arts, Beckford should be engaging material for a vivacious biography.

Reputed to be England's wealthiest son, William Beckford was the only legitimate child of Alderman William Beckford, a radical member of Parliament and twice Lord Mayor of London. Born in 1766, the younger William was brought up on his father's huge estate near Shaftesbury, named Fonthill, or, in recognition of its lavish scale and rich appointments, nicknamed Splendens. At his father's sudden death, William, only nine years old, inherited this vast property and an annual income from Jamaica of 70,000. Being of 'tender and delicate constitution,' he was educated at home by tutors and artists, including W.A. Mozart, who was three years his senior.

In 1777 he was sent to Switzerland to finish his education. This was the first of many continental visits. Before his second European trip he fell in love with William Courtenay, then aged eleven, a romance which eventually caused Beckford's social ruin. This dalliance was but one of many with both men and women. Partly in an attempt to save his social status he married, but his wife died days after the birth of their second daughter in 1786.

By the age of twenty, his general penchant was clear. Very much a snob like his mother, he was fascinated with royalty and high society; but he was also deeply serious, loving nature and cultivating seclusion. He was a prodigious reader, preferring, as a youth, books about the Orient. He learned Arabic in order to read the Arabian Nights in the original. By sixteen he had started writing, producing his satyrical *Biographical Memories of Extraordinary Painters*. In 1781 Beckford pithily remarked that 'I shall never be ... good for anything in this world, but composing airs, building towers, forming gardens, collecting old Japan and writing a journey to China or the moon.'

This perceptive analysis was prophetic. Apart from autobiographical writings, Beckford created two fascinating and daring architectural feats: Fonthill Abbey and Lansdown Tower. Fonthill Abbey, built over a twenty-two year period from 1796 to 1818, was a Gothic extravaganza, designed in part by its owner and in part by the architect James Wyatt. Fascinated all his life by heights and towers, Beckford determined to crown his gandiose mansion with a soaring tower that 'would command views near 80 miles every way.' After two unsuccessful attempts, for the tower twice collapsed, a precarous, soaring spire was raised 276 feet. (The tower collapsed a third and final time in 1825 after Beckford had sold the estate.) The total effect

was magical, melancholic, and magnetic.

Fonthill Abbey was widely noted at the time. Turner painted it from various angles. Constable felt that 'the entrance and when within is truly beautifull. Imagine the inside of the Cathedral at Salisbury or indeed any beautiful Gothic building, magnificently fitted up with crimson and gold, antient pictures, in almost every nitch statues, large massive gold boxes for relicks etc., etc., beautifull and rich carpets, curtains and glasses ... all this makes it on the whole a strange, ideal, romantic place, quite fairy land.'

Beckford, facing prodigious debts, sold his transitory abbey in 1822 and moved to Bath where, by 1827, he had created a second, very different tower, with the help of a hitherto unknown architect, H.E. Goodridge. The building, with an asymmetrical jagged plan topped by a square Italianate tower, was furnished as richly as, although differently from, Fonthill. Beckford's collecting of books, pictures, and artifacts was a life-long passion.

Beckford set his two imaginative structures in 'natural' gardens, amongst the first of the English picturesque landscape estates. Following Uvedale Price and his uncle Charles Hamilton, Beckford chose common, native shrubs and trees, planted as a wilderness, in preference to the fashionably orderly, formal garden. He endorsed Price's romantic linking of the work of old masters with the proper disposition of water and trees and agreed with Price's emphasis on roughness to provide animation, spirit, and variety. Believed to be influenced by Claude's panoramic landscapes, Beckford produced at Lansdown Tower a park even more virginal in feeling although thoroughly controlled in fact than that he had created for his earlier folly at Fonthill.

Beckford's aesthetic interests were certainly not restricted to exterior matters. Not only were his dwellings appointed with luxurious furnishings of unfashionably 'exotic crimson, scarlet, purple and gold'; they were also embellished with a prodigious and catholic collection of miniatures, bronzes, jade, Venetian glass, porcelain, and pictures. At least twenty of his old masters are now owned by the National Gallery in London, including Giovanni Bellini's *Doge Leonardo Loredan* and Raphael's *St. Catherine*. Yet the critic Hazlitt heaped venom on Beckford's collection, claiming that it contained 'not one great work by one great name.'

In Lees-Milne's biography the facts as well as some of the colour of William Beckford's life are detailed. With the help of numerous illustrations, we are led to Beckford's fantasies. But dynamism and excitement are sadly lacking, due undoubtedly to Lees-Milne's acknowledged 'copious' borrowings from secondary sources, especially Boyd Alexander's superior biography, *England's Wealthiest Son* (1962). *William Beckford* follows the other book in format and detail, yet omitting Alexander's penetrating psychological analysis.

There are at least two reasons for Lees-Milne's interest in Beckford. An extensively published diarist, Lees-Milne now lives at 19 Lansdown Crescent, Bath, a house once owned by Beckford. And the author has a fascination for historic architecture and, for a time, worked for the National Trust as, in his own words, its 'unqualified historic building secretary.' This explains Lees-Milne's focus on Beckford as a builder while virtually ignoring his writings. (In his book entitled *William Beckford*, Robert J. Gemmett redresses this balance by emphasizing the writings.) Lees-Milne's sections on Fonthill and Lansdown Tower are the strongest, while he gives only sketchy details of Beckford's collection and concentrates on its fiscal aspects. *William Beckford* is a general book intended for a general reader: it suffers from that consequence. In an attempt to 'point out briefly ... the significance of an extraordinary Englishman,' Lees-Milne has sacrificed excitement to brevity.

ANN DAVIS
Delaware, Ontario

RICHARD G. CARROTT *The Egyptian Revival: Its Sources, Monuments, and Meaning, 1808-1858*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978. 221 pp., 136 illus., $20.00.

This book has two drawbacks. Although one will find in it illustrations of Egyptian Revival monuments from England to the United States to Tasmania, the author claims that 'it is only in the United States that a significant number were constructed' (p. 3). In a footnote he adds 'roughly eighty monuments by thirty architects; not including European examples.' He further confines the scope of his study to the years 1800-58. 'That there were later ones both here [the United States] and abroad is not denied. But these are merely a few isolated instances of the picturesque, or, at least, of the attention-seeking. They cannot be considered as a serious part of the Revival' (p. 3).

Both of these faults stem from too narrow a focus on the subject. Is one to reject as merely 'picturesque' or 'attention-seeking' a building with battered piers such as H.B. Creswell's Queensferry Factory, Flintshire, of 1905? Pevsner has called this 'the most advanced British building of its date.' (See J. Physick and M. Darby, *Marble Halls*, London, 1973, no. 66.) Or what of Walter Allward's Canadian Great War Memorial at Vimy Ridge, France, with its splendid pylons, battered piers and walls, and monolithic masonry? It was designed in 1921 and unveiled in 1936, an eloquent testimony to the vitality of the Egyptian Revival style, at any rate in the funereal context, right down to the end of the Academic Tradition.

It is interesting to note that the author cites very few Canadian examples of the Egyptian Revival. Those omitted include Samuel Keefer's designs for the Union Suspension Bridge across the Ottawa River and his project for a suspension bridge at Bout de l'Île. Another omission is the very powerful Stuart Monument in St. Paul's Churchyard at Kingston, Ontario. There is no documentation on this monument (Fig. 6 reproduces a woodcut of 1894 by William James Thomson) but the stylistic evidence points very strongly to George Browne, the Belfast-born architect working in Kingston during its capital period, 1841-44.

One of the sources for the Stuart Monument was probably the great Trentham Park Mausoleum, Staffordshire, built in 1807-08 by C.H. Tatham. Its design was engraved. Pevsner, who called the Mausoleum