The Landmark Trust

THE BIRDHOUSE

History Album

The Birdhouse in 1837

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THE BIRDHOUSE - BASIC DETAILS

Built:	**c. 1783**
Architect:	***Attr.* James Wyatt**
Listed:	**Grade II**
Landscape:	**Grade II, Register of Historic Parks & Gardens** **Within Badger Conservation Area**
Restored as The Temple by:	**The Vivat Trust 1995-6**
Restoration architect:	**Andrew Arrol of Arrol & Snell**
Restoration contractor:	**Frank Galliers Ltd**
Demise of Vivat:	**2015**
Refurbished as a Landmark & reverts to its former name:	**2016**
Landmark tenure:	**Leasehold (also The Rotunda)**
Re-opened as a Landmark:	**October 2016**

Contents

Article: 'Edward Cheney of Badger Hall: a forgotten collector of Italian sculpture', *Sculpture Journal*, Vol. 16, Issue 1, 2007.

This image belies the apparently precarious position of The Birdhouse above The Dingle, which makes it a difficult building to photograph externally!

The Birdhouse – Summary

There are times when a single building can epitomise an entire aesthetic movement. The Birdhouse is one such, a Classically-inspired pavilion in an almost impossibly picturesque setting. Its design is attributed with confidence to James Wyatt (1746-1813), one of the most prolific and admired architect-designers of the Georgian period. It was commissioned by the owner of the Badger estate, Isaac Hawkins Browne, a wealthy Midlands coal and iron master with antiquarian tastes inspired by his travels on the Grand Tour. From 1779-83, Wyatt was called in to extend, refront and refurbish the interiors of Hawkins Browne's seat, Badger Hall, which then stood just north east of the church.

Around 1780, Hawkins Browne brought in landscape designer William Emes, who worked in the style of Capability Brown, to enhance the natural qualities of his grounds and of Badger Dingle, a deep ravine on the estate, through which flows a tributary of the River Whorfe. It is generally accepted that Browne also commissioned from Wyatt this pavilion to perch above the scene. Built of the local red sandstone, its Greek Revival style is entirely characteristic of Wyatt's style: exterior fairly plain, the saloon within elegantly decorated and with spectacular views along the gorge from a curved viewing platform. The saloon and service floor below were originally self contained spaces, with their own separate entrances. Behind the pavilion, buried into the hillside behind retaining walls and reached by external stone steps, was a small area, leading into cellar rooms where there was a copper and a range, and from where originally a hot air heating system based on a Roman hypocaust fed into flues in the rear wall.

In 1806 Hawkins Browne acquired the north bank of The Dingle to the west of the village and Emes' partner John Webb still further enhanced The Dingle, damming the stream to form three long pools, creating a network of paths and adding other features: an icehouse (now blocked off), Rotunda and caves. All these are there to explore today. In 1839, the Badger estate was inherited by Hawkins Browne's cousin's son, Robert Henry Cheney. Cheney and his brother Edward were fine art connoisseurs of some reputation. The family owned a *palazzo* in Venice, where in 1850 Edward struck up a friendship with John Ruskin and his young bride Effie. The Ruskins visited Badger Hall in 1850 and 1851 before their marriage came to a public and painful end, and it seems highly likely that one or both visited The Birdhouse (even if John Ruskin is unlikely to have approved of its design). Cheney and Ruskin were often rivals as art critics and collectors, though Ruskin had reluctant regard for Edward Cheney of Badger, who filled the Hall with fine sculpture and art, especially after he inherited the estate in his turn in 1866.

Edward Cheney died in 1884, and the estate passed to his nephew, Colonel Alfred Capel-Cure. His tenure is said to have been the inspiration for Sir Gregory Parsloe-Parsloe's Matchingham Hall in P. G. Wodehouse's Blandings Castle series. Certainly Col. Capel-Cure's own sad end, while dynamiting tree roots on the Badger estate in 1896, might have come straight from Wodehouse.

The Birdhouse remained in use until the 1930s under the Capel-Cure family, who maintained a tradition of an annual tea party there at which the family served their servants. The last Mrs Capel-Cure died in 1937. The Hall passed to a nephew and then stood empty. In 1944 the estate and Badger Hall were sold to a firm of London estate agents, John Swire & Sons. The fine contents and fixtures were then sold, and the house was demolished 1952-3. Only a few service buildings remain today, and these date from around 1700, the phase of existence that preceded Hawkins Browne's arrival.

The Birdhouse also fell into complete dereliction. The lead had been stripped from its roof during World War II and this soon fell in, followed by its floors. Vandals kicked out the columns. The building's saviour was not, this time, the Landmark Trust, but rather the Vivat Trust. Vivat was a buildings at risk charity founded in 1981 by architects Niall Phillips and Paul Simons, with a purpose and operation very similar to Landmark's own. The Temple, as the folly was then called, was a triumphant reconstruction and restoration by Andrew Arrol of Arrol & Snell architects in 1995-6, with fallen pieces of masonry salvaged from the undergrowth to restore the brick shell.

The form of the roof was reconstructed from fallen timbers using traditional techniques; today the dome is made of fibreglass rather than lead, after successive thefts. To adapt the folly for holiday use, a staircase was introduced to link salon and service floors, its bannisters for the inserted staircase based on those at Badger Hall. The exterior was rendered in imitation of the 'novel' cement render used by Wyatt.

All who knew Vivat were deeply saddened when, in 2015, the trust was declared bankrupt. Vivat's assets (including the contents of The Birdhouse) all passed to the liquidators. They held their Temple on a lease, and the owner of the remaining Badger estate was happy for it to pass instead to Landmark; given its provenance and the excellence of its restoration, we were equally happy to take it on, not least to help perpetuate the legacy of Vivat, such a worthy ally in the fight to preserve Britain's historic buildings.

Landmark has refurbished The Birdhouse inside and out. The sandstone walls have been repointed, the interior redecorated and refurnished, and a new kitchen has been fitted.

As Landmark already had several 'temples' in our portfolio, we reverted to the name by which the folly was originally known, The Birdhouse (as in an estate map of 1837). We think this was not due to any keeping of birds inside the building, but simply because it is such a fine avian perch, placing its occupants so perfectly among the birds and the trees.

The Birdhouse: Key Dates

1774	Badger estate bought from Clement Kynnersley by Isaac Hawkins Browne (1745-1818).
c. 1779-83	Browne employs James Wyatt to remodel 1719 Badger Hall. Park extended into The Dingle by William Emes.
c. 1783	Construction of The Birdhouse to designs by James Wyatt
1788	Browne m. Henrietta Hay (d. 1802)
1805	Browne marries a second time, to Elizabeth Boddington. No children.
1806	Browne acquires N bank of Dingle; further landscaping by John Web.
1818	Death of Hawkins Browne. Life interest in Badger Hall to his wife Elizabeth.
1820s	Gracilla Boddington living at Badger Hall.
1833-4	New church, St Giles, built for Elizabeth Hawkins Browne by Francis Halley of Shifnal.
1839	Death of Mrs Hawkins Browne, Col. Robert Cheney inherits Badger estate.
1850	John & Effie Ruskin in Venice. In August, visited Edward Cheney at Badger Hall, whom they'd met in Venice.
1866	Badger Hall inherited by Edward Cheney, brother of Robert, whose sister Frederica marries Col Alfred Capel-Cure.
1884	Death of Edward Cheney, Badger Hall passes to his nephew, Col. Alfred Capel-Cure.
1886	N chapel and porch added to St Giles Church.
1896	Death of Col. Alfred Capel-Cure, in an accidental explosion while dynamiting tree roots in his park. Col. Nigel Capel-Cure inherits.
1937	Death of Col. Capel Cure's wife, Alice.
1944-5	Badger estate sold to London estate agents, John Swire & Sons.
1953	Badger Hall demolished. Only the 17thC brick service hall remains, now refaced.
1995-1996	Birdhouse (then known as The Temple) reconstructed by Andrew Arrol of Arrol & Snell for the Vivat Trust.
2015	Vivat passes into liquidation.
2016	Landmark agrees a lease with the owner of The Temple; in October, The Temple reopens as a Landmark building, and reverts to its earlier name, The Birdhouse.

Isaac Hawkins Browne (1745-1818), who remodelled Badger Hall 1779-83 and commissioned The Birdhouse from James Wyatt. He also has a fine memorial in St Giles's Church, Badger.

Isaac Hawkins Browne & Badger Hall

Isaac Hawkins Browne (1745-1818) bought Badger Hall and its estate in 1774 from John Kinnersley. The Kinnersleys had lived at Badger since 1719, when they bought from the Pettits the original hall, a moated and half-timbered house west of the church. Clement Kinnersley demolished this house and replaced it with a new, stone fronted house some 150 metres north, a more prominent position with better views. This still rather simple seat was not, however, sufficient for Browne.

He was the second in his family by that name. His father Isaac Hawkins Browne senior (1706-1760) was the son of a wealthy clergyman who benefited from a private fortune and multiple good preferments. The family wealth can be traced back to his great grandfather, Isaac Hawkins, a canny lawyer in Stoke on Trent, who accumulated land piecemeal in Hanbury parish from the 1690s to his death in 1712. In 1701, Hawkins bought the manor of Malinsee, quite distant from his other holdings, and an especially astute purchase for the coal and iron that lay beneath it. Hawkins' estate was shared between his three daughters. One of these, Anne, married William Browne vicar of Burton on Trent, who also owned lands in Staffordshire especially round Hanbury. Only Anne had offspring among the sisters and so her son, Isaac Hawkins Browne (senior) inherited the lands of his maternal grandfather as well as his father.

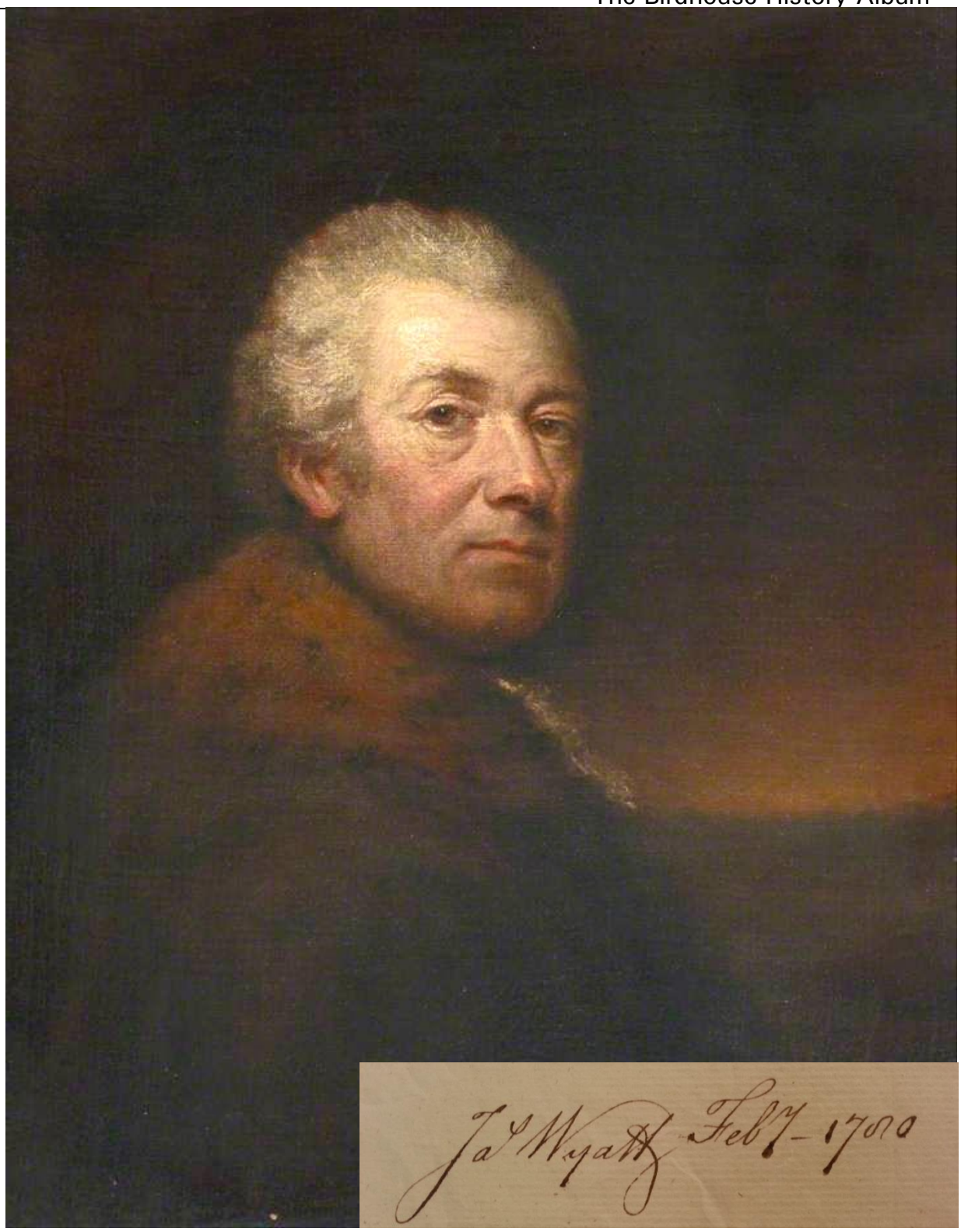
Hawkins Browne (senior) served as a Whig MP, and was also a poet, and a colourful character. He wrote a set of parodies called *A Pipe of Tobacco* (1736) and later a book of poems in praise of tobacco, *On Smoking*. Hawkins Browne had little aptitude for professional or public life; though he was a man of lively conversation, he was not a good public speaker. Dr Johnson told James Boswell that 'Isaac Hawkins Browne, one of the first wits of this country, got into parliament, and never opened his mouth.'

Badger Hall, demolished in 1953, stood NE of St Giles's Church. A smaller house built in 1719 (top) was greatly extended and remodelled for Hawkins Browne by James Wyatt in 1779-83. The large brick conservatory seen in the bottom picture was added in the late 19th century.

Boswell also recorded that Johnson told him 'Isaac Hawkins Browne drank hard for thirty years, and that he wrote his poem, *De animi immortalitate*, in the last of these years. I listened to this with the eagerness of one who, conscious of being himself fond of wine, is glad to hear that a man of so much genius and good thinking as Browne had the same propensity.'

His son, Isaac Hawkins Browne II of Badger Hall, was of a more serious cast of mind than his father. He kept his rooms in Oxford long after he graduated from Hertford College at 18 in 1763. Loyal to his father's memory, he published his father's last poetic oeuvre, *De animi immortalitate,* in 1768. After securing the purchase of Badger Hall in 1774, Hawkins Browne went on a Grand Tour to France, Switzerland, Italy and Germany from 1775-6. He returned with antiquarian tastes and aspirations, and sought a gentrified estate in his home county. Badger, Beckbury and Ackleton township in Worfield parish had been acquired in 1775, and in 1777 he added Stirchley adjacent to Malinsee to his inherited Shropshire lands.

Hawkins Browne settled down at Badger, serving as sheriff for Shropshire and as MP for Bridgnorth for 28 years from 1784-1812, consistently supporting industrial interests in the Commons. Like his father, Hawkins Browne seems to have had no gift for oratory but, according to one obituarist, on the rare occasion he did speak, 'his established reputation for superior knowledge and judgment secured to him that attention which might have been wanting to him on other accounts.' His lands in Malinsee and Stirchley were rich in coal and iron, providing much of his wealth: for a time in the early 19th century the Old Park ironworks were the largest in Shropshire and second largest in the country. Hawkins Browne is sometimes described as an ironmaster but from 1790s the ironworks were leased to the Botfield family who were in actual control and developed and extended the works.



James Wyatt (1746-1813) was one of the most prolific and admired architects and designers of the 18th century, and The Birdhouse may be attributed to him with confidence. The signature is from his design for 'A Pidgeon House at Badger.'

Hawkins Browne was married twice, to Henrietta Hay, grand daughter of an earl, in 1788 and to Elizabeth Boddington, daughter of a West India merchant of Clapton in 1805. Neither union produced any children.

In 1794 future Prime Minister George Canning thought Hawkins Browne 'a very sensible man, though queer in his manners—and a respectable though somewhat tiresome speaker.' Bishop Thomas Newton found him 'a very worthy good young man, possessed of many of his father's excellencies without his failings.' Hawkins Browne published two volumes of earnest essays in his later years, which reveal his seriousness of mind, exactness and capacity for taking pains. Hawkins Browne perhaps sought to express the same characteristics in his development of Badger Hall and its estate, for which he involved of one of the leading architects of his day, James Wyatt.

James Wyatt & Badger Hall

James Wyatt (1746-1813) was the great grandson of a Staffordshire yeoman farmer. He was born in Weeford, Staffordshire some 30 miles west of Badger, where he would eventually design St Mary's church (1802). The Wyatts are a dynasty 'unique in English history for its close association with the development of art and architecture over some two centuries....In large parts of England and Wales there is hardly a town, a country house or a church that cannot show some work by one or other of the Wyatts.'[1]

James Wyatt was an astonishingly prolific architect and designer, with no loyalty to any single style. He rose to sudden fame aged 26 with his design for The Pantheon (1772), a prodigy building based on the famous example in Rome that drew the crowds in London.

[1] Robinson, John Martin, *The Wyatts: An Architectural Dynasty* (1979), p. 4.

James Wyatt made his name with The Pantheon on Oxford Street in London (1772), assembly rooms based on the Pantheon in Rome. The building was demolished in 1937 to make way for the Marks & Spencer store that stands there still. Wyatt was an eclectic designer who worked in many styles.

Due in part to his early success, from the start Wyatt experienced both the fulsome admiration of the fashionable world and the jealous sniping of slighted rivals. 'His genius as a designer lies in the range and quality of his work. He was the first great English architect who thought that all styles were more or less equally valid. His choice was associational and depended on the setting and function of a particular building.'[2] Wyatt was eclectic, and equally at home in both Classical and Gothic idioms even though Gothic was perhaps his personal favourite. Horace Walpole called him a genius.

But Wyatt's energy and architectural self confidence in embracing new forms and techniques as he remodelled ancient seats and churches led some to label him 'Wyatt the Destroyer.' A. W. Pugin, writing fifty years later as he proselytised a more mono-focussed Pointed style and never one to mince his words, called him 'This monster of architectural depravity – this pest of cathedral architecture. Horror! Dismay! The villain Wyatt had been here, the west front is his. Need I say more? No! All that is vile, cunning and rascally is included in the term Wyatt.'

So a later age decries the success of a former. Wyatt was more criticised in his own time for perceived failings in his character than his output, which was widely admired. Setting aside his reputation as a drunk and a womaniser, Wyatt had four main professional failings: he lacked business acumen, was incapable of consistent application, was chronically unpunctual, and considered by his critics completely irresponsible. His papers were in a constant state of perpetual disorganisation to the despair of the clerks who worked for him. His appointment in 1796 as Surveyor-General of the Office of Works 'inaugurated a period of extravagance and confusion… His absenteeism began as occasional and ended up as habitual desertion.'[3] The most spectacular example of when all these factors combined was, perhaps, the final ignominious collapse of Fonthill Abbey in 1825, an ill-fated confection resulting from a longstanding collaboration between the haphazard Wyatt and an equally unreliable client in William Beckford.

[2] Ibid.
[3] *Kings Works*, Vol. VI, p. 49,50.

Heveningham Hall in Suffolk, also by Wyatt, was built in the same years as the remodelling of Badger Hall and shared some of the same master craftsmen: Joseph Rose for plasterwork, Robert Smirke for paintings.

Yet Wyatt dominated the field for forty years. He was above all a country house and estate architect, and while his work at Badger is in a provincial scale and setting, it is entirely representative of this mid phase of his career. Despite going down in history in part for his disorganisation, it is ironic that so many of Wyatt's drawings and papers have survived for posterity, and some of the drawings for the remodelling of Badger Hall are indeed in the RIBA Library at the V&A. They include an unexecuted design for a 'Pidgeon House' at Badger[4], based on the Tower of the Winds in Athens, which was intended to be placed near the stables.

Wyatt was engaged at Badger Hall intermittently over a period of four years, from 1779-83, and the works transformed the modest 1719 hall into a large, three-storey brick mansion, with rusticated pilaster strips and quoins. A substantial addition on its north side included a large dining room, library, staircase, drawing room and bedrooms – virtually a new house in itself. The plan had a central staircase lit by a lantern, innovatively made of cast iron from Abraham Derby III's foundry at Coalbrookdale just ten miles away, and so produced just as the same foundry was creating the famous Iron Bridge, finished in 1781. The segmental barrel vault of the dining room was a design used by Wyatt elsewhere and the stucco, fixed by master craftsman Joseph Rose, shared the same moulds as Heveningham, Suffolk, one of Wyatt's most renowned neo-Classical houses. The drawing room chimneypiece at Badger was also identical to the one in Heveningham library. Painter Robert Smirke added *chiaroscuro*[5] scenes to the library walls. Here was a mansion expressing all that exposure to the Grand Tour and antiquarian tastes backed by an industrialist's wealth could provide.

[4] See following chapter on The Birdhouse specifically.
[5] A paint technique that emphasises light and shade.

Watercolour dated 1837 showing The Birdhouse & its setting beside the Upper Pool in The Dingle (Shropshire Archives).

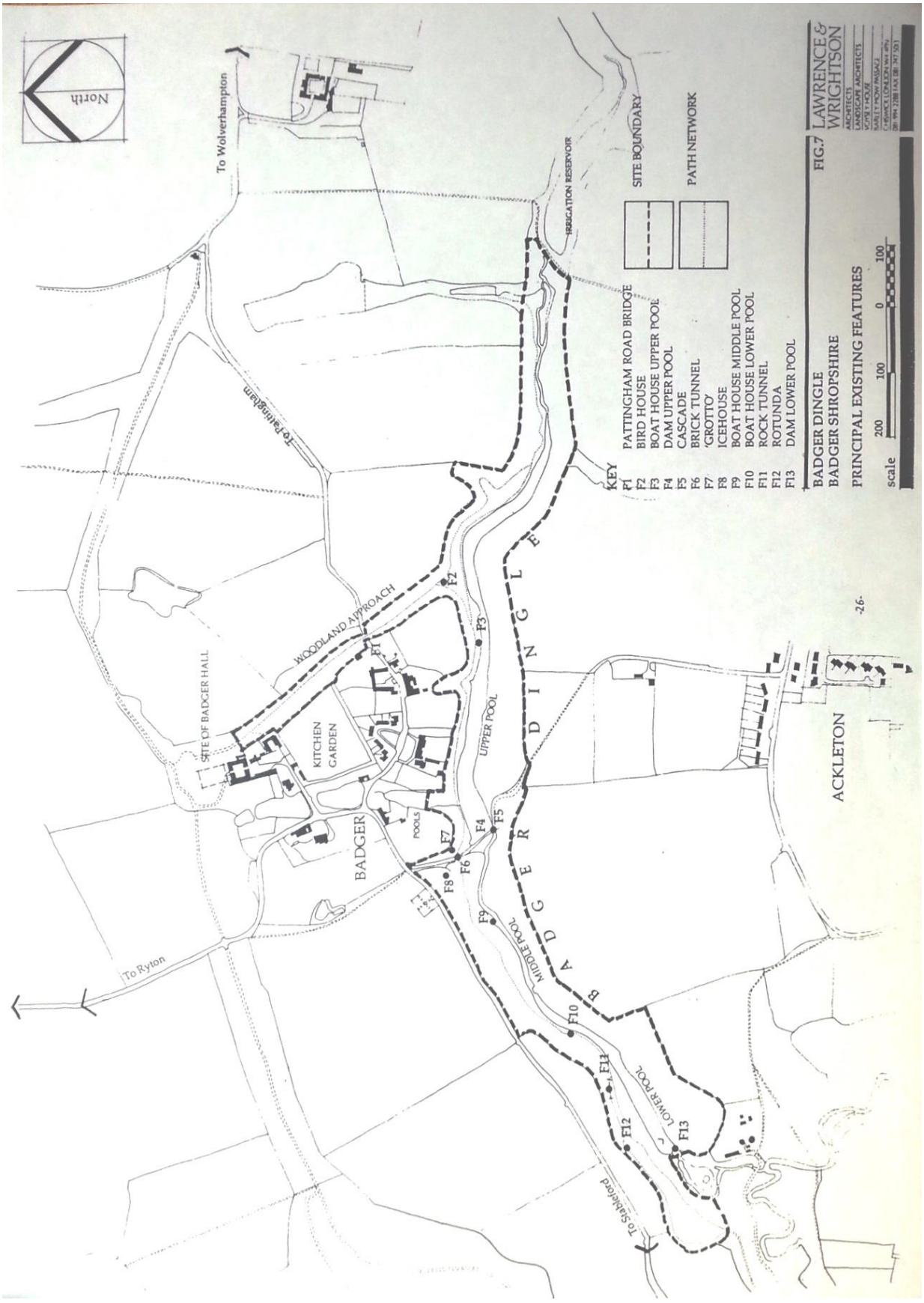
The creation of The Dingle & its features

At the same time as he was remodelling his country seat, Hawkins Browne was also considering his wider estate. Badger is skirted by the glorious natural setting of its Dingle, a natural steep sided wooded ravine scoured through millennia by the Snowden Brook, a tributary of the winding River Worfe, whose very name reflects the Old English for meandering. The ravine is some 20 metres deep in an otherwise flat landscape.

The underlying geology of The Dingle is Triassic, its sandstone laid down in desert conditions 200-250 million years ago and belonging to the Helsby group sandstones. The redness of the stone comes from the presence of iron, and it is sometimes interspersed by thick pebbly bands 100-450' thick. The rocky cliffs at The Dingle are natural features formed by a much greater quantity of flowing water than today, probably at the end of the last Ice Age.

Naturally beautiful already, The Dingle was ripe for Picturesque enhancement. Partaking of the passion for the paintings of Classical landscapes with ruins by 17th-century French artists like Claude Lorrain and Nicolas Poussin, Hawkins Browne was entirely representative of his class and his time in seeking to manipulate the aesthetic qualities of the natural features on his estate for picturesque effect, and in constructing garden features in the Classical style to heightened the sense of drama and as pleasant destinations. The archetypal features of the 'Picturesque' – dramatic scenery, deep chasms and surprise vistas in dense woodland – were present in unforced natural abundance at Badger. All that was lacking were surprise architectural elements.

The Dingle's development by Hawkins Browne seems to have occurred in two phases, both involving land acquisition. In the early 1780s, Hawkins Browne set about buying various parcels of land to consolidate his ownership of the east end of gorge and its southern boundary.



Map of the village of Badger and The Dingle in its fully developed form, based on an estate map of 1837. This is the earliest extant map of the estate

Until the fashion for such places as pleasure grounds, features like The Dingle were considered inconveniences rather than amenities in the landscape, and ownership was therefore scattered in small parcels of little value in separate ownership.

One such transaction came in May 1784 with the Misses Frances, Mary and Winifred Fletcher, and Miss Catherine Daubrie. Hawkins Browne bought from them 'that parcel of Woodland…being the South side banks of Badger Dingle situate in the Manor of Ackleton…bounded at the east end thereof by a hedge running across the said Dingle from a Piece of Land late of James Eykyn called the Lower Yard at the upper side of the said Dingle down to the Brook at the bottom of the said Dingle dividing the lands of the said Isaac Hawkins Browne lately purchased off James Eykyn from the Land hereby described…' Also included in the transaction is a plot called the Mill Bank, and also 'that little square bitt or Corner called the Mill Piece …in a direct line to a stump of a Maple tree cut down in the hedge of the said Lower Yard'.[6]

It may be that it was such homely transactions that actually gave Hawkins Browne direct access to The Dingle from Badger Hall, or at least to the ravine's eastern section from the Upper Pool to the Ackleton Road Bridge. The village of Badger lay directly between the Hall and The Dingle, and glebe land hems the village in to the west. Hawkins did not acquire the wooded North bank west along the Middle and Lower Pools until 1806.

For the pleasure grounds of Badger Hall itself, Hawkins Browne employed landscape designer William Emes (1730-1803). Emes, for whom some ninety commissions are known, worked mostly in the North Midlands and Wales. His early life is not known, but his career took off when he was appointed head gardener to Sir Nathaniel Curzon of Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire in 1756.

[6] Shropshire Archives, 513/2/13/3/1

It was perhaps at Kedleston that Emes' professional association with the Wyatts began, since Emes' landscaping often coincided with work on a main house by James Wyatt or his brother Samuel (Samuel Wyatt, a master carpenter, also got his lucky break at Kedleston where he became Robert Adam's clerk of works). At Kedleston, Emes started to alter the earlier formal nature of the park and constructed the upper lake.

There is a nice link too with another Landmark building, Ingestre Pavilion, since in the same year that Emes took up his position at Kedleston, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown was providing a plan for improvements at Ingestre Hall, Staffordshire. It was Emes who was eventually called in to implement much of Brown's plan at Ingestre. Capability Brown had left similarly left detailed plans with the Cliffords of Tixall too, site of another Landmark, this time an Elizabethan gatehouse. In November 1770, Emes sent his foreman to execute, more or less, the works specified by Capability Brown at Tixall.

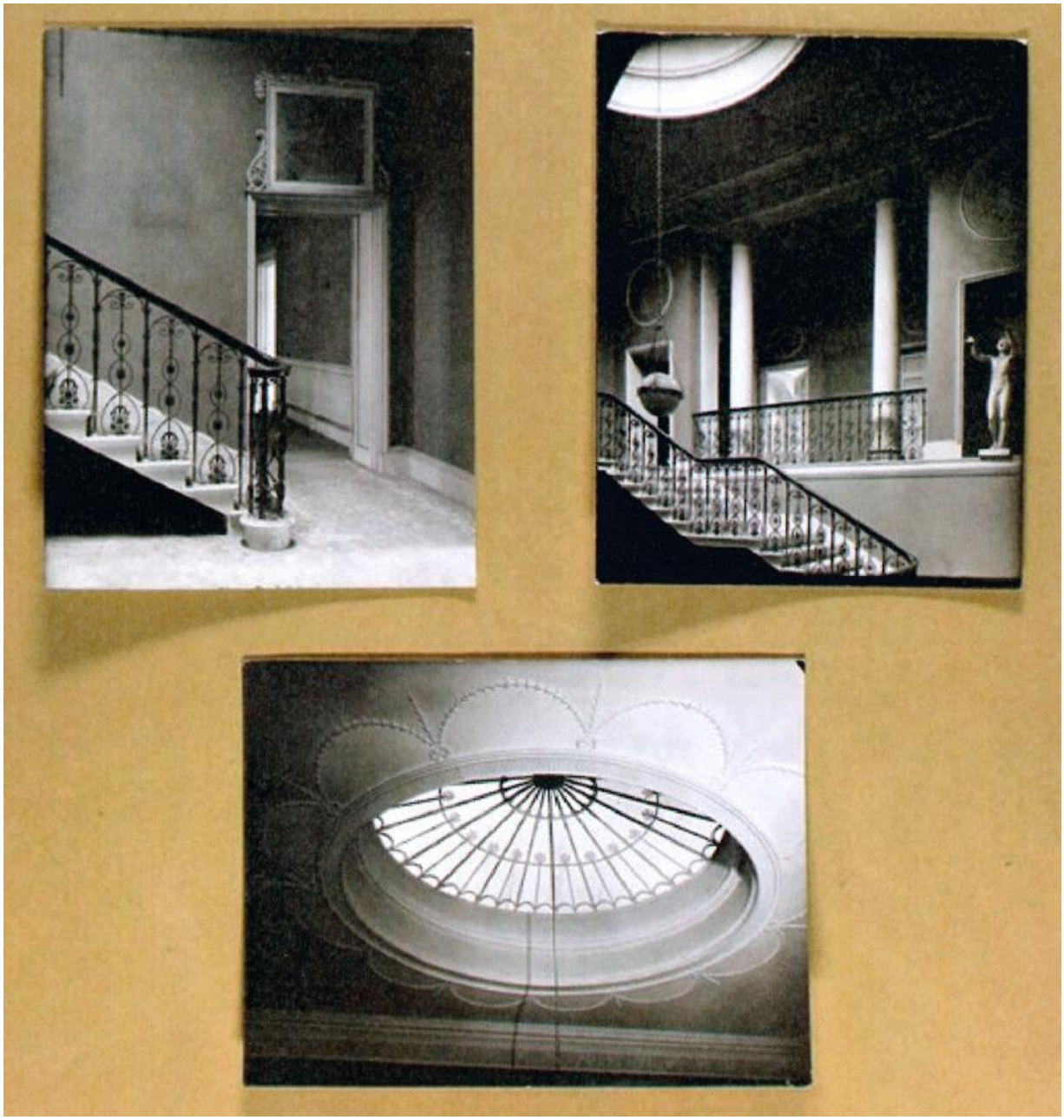
William Emes left his Kedleston post in 1760 when Robert Adam was given responsibility for management of the grounds, perhaps leaving no scope for ideas from anyone else. Emes set himself up as an independent landscaper, and did not lack for commissions. One garden historian assesses Emes thus: 'Emes did not achieve Brown's consummate skill in creating aesthetically pleasing spatial relationships between turf, trees and water. And yet Emes was reliable, reasonably priced, always in the area and not without initiative in saving threatened landscapes.' He moved his growing family to Bowbridge House, Mackworth, near Derby, where one account says that he became acquainted with Erasmus Darwin, a founding member of the Lunar Society.

These were the years when the Industrial Revolution was gathering pace. Richard Arkwright was building his factories in Cromford, and along with them the first industrial housing at North Street, another Landmark rescue.

Darby & Pritchard's iron bridge, as we have heard, flung its wondrous span across a different Shropshire ravine, and gave the town its name. It was an astonishingly fertile time of invention, and there was no more productive seedbed than the Lunar Society. Erasmus Darwin was a founding member and leading light in the Lunar Society, that club of curious men with wide ranging interests, industrialists and scientists, who met monthly on the Monday night nearest to the full moon (to light their ride home), and whose meetings and discussions precipitated so many of the breakthroughs of the modern age. Erasmus, who had his own theories on evolution, was grandfather of evolutionist Charles Darwin, and so part of the extraordinary Darwin-Wedgwood dynasty. Erasmus's son lived at Bowbridge House after the Emeses; the rising landscape designer may well have been known to some of the Lunar men.

Architect James Wyatt, a Staffordshire man himself, was also entirely alive to the technological advances of the age as they related to the building trades and some of these were devised by Lunar men. As well as the cast iron lantern from Coalbrookdale, Wyatt also aspired to use Matthew Boulton's mechanical painting at Badger Hall, an aquatint process that aimed to replicate painted panels that were virtually indistinguishable from the original. Boulton's mechanical painting was a process akin to Coade stone in seeking to replicate fine art through manufacturing process, but unlike Coade stone the technique proved too complicated and expensive to pursue and was not finally used at Badger Hall.

(The Coade stone manufactory – of particular interest to Landmark since our restoration of Mrs Coade's villa, Belmont, in Lyme Regis - was just hitting its stride in the years the Hall was being remodelled. Given Wyatt's widespread use of Coade stone elsewhere, one might have expected to find it at Badger. There is however no evidence that it was, and indeed its use in Shropshire and Staffordshire is surprisingly sparse. The notable exception to this is the bigger-than-life-size statue of Lord Hill that stands atop a column outside Shire Hall in Shrewsbury.)



The lantern of Coalbrookdale cast iron at Badger Hall. A detailed record of the hall was taken in 1952 before its demolition, now at the National Monuments Record in Swindon. The design of the bannisters for the inserted staircase at The Birdhouse was copied from the exact same design at Heveningham Hall.

The plans William Emes presented to his clients were, of course, elegantly drawn by hand rather than mechanically, in Indian ink on vellum, to show his proposed alterations to the landscape—typically introducing serpentine lakes whose ends were concealed in woodland, with single trees and clumps set in parkland and tree belts around the boundary. There was often a 'ride round the Improvements' winding through them, at The Dingle a footpath that clings to its sides.

It was said that 'Mr Eames [sic] excells in the laying out Water' and he was often called in to introduce it into landscapes where it was lacking, as at Hawkstone Park, Shropshire, where in 1786 he made the River Hawk into a lake 1½ miles long. He also anticipated the work of Humphry Repton and the 'gardenesque' movement championed fifty years later by J. C. Loudon, by creating flower gardens adjacent to a house. He and the Wyatts may indeed have worked together on managing the outlook from the reception room windows of the main houses, and Badger Hall was no exception. Some of Emes's commissions continued for many years; at both Chirk Castle and Erddig, Denbighshire, he supervised the landscaping for twenty-four years.

Estimates for improvements to Badger Hall's wider landscape were submitted by William Emes in 1781 and 1785.[7] The proposed works included levelling the ground (an estimated 70,000 cubic yards were to be moved) and the making of ha-has; planting a shrubbery east of the Hall and around the stables; adding scattered clumps of trees; altering the approach roads, and making walks linking Hall and Dingle. Emes's estimates are consistent in timing with making good around the house after Wyatt's remodelling. They include in 1781 'making a walk from the house through the churchyard etc to join those in the Dingle', and tulip trees and magnolias were planted to grace the shrubbery along the connecting walk to the East end of the Hall. Also submitting estimates for work relating to The Dingle in 1781 was one G. Beswick, who was working on the pools, so it may be that Emes was more involved with the Hall's grounds and the approaches to The Dingle than the ravine itself.

[7] Manchester John Rylands Library, Botfield Papers, Badger memo book 1779-89.

Watercolour of The Birdhouse and its setting by Hornes Smith in 1837 (Shropshire Archives). Sadly the building is too hidden in eth foliage to be able to make out its fenestration.

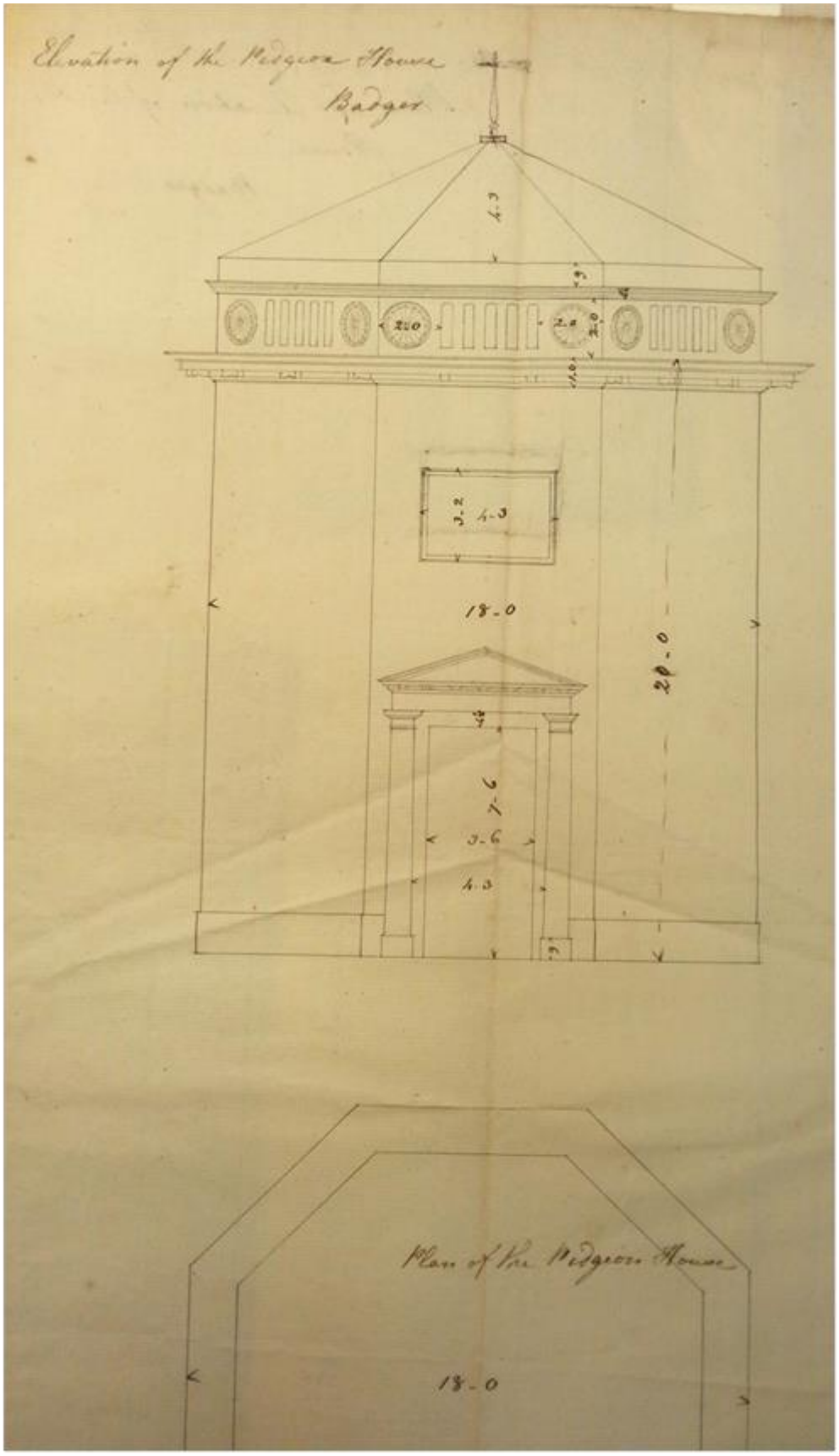
The Birdhouse

The scene of The Dingle set, then, it is time to return to the construction of The Birdhouse. While explicit evidence of its date of construction and designer has yet to emerge, there seems no doubt that it is by Wyatt, both on the grounds of its timing in relation to Wyatt's activity at Badger Hall (there is a known watercolour of it dated 1790, though now traceable only as a photocopy too poor to reproduce), and on account of its overall form: its geometrical plan and Greek Doric baseless columns are highly characteristic of Wyatt's style.[8] It therefore seems most likely that it was built 1783-5, when the works to Badger Hall were complete, and when William Emes was submitting his second set of estimates.

No drawings by Wyatt survive for The Birdhouse, although an unexecuted scheme for 'A Pidgeon [sic] House at Badger' by him does survive, signed and dated February 1780.[9] The Pidgeon House is described in the RIBA catalogue by the misleadingly antiquarian term of 'columbarium' and elsewhere this slides into 'a dovecote', but in fact the design is for a very fine little pavilion rather than a working dovecote. It is a close replication of The Tower of Winds in Athens, first published as an engraving in Volume I of Stuart & Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* in 1762. The tower became a fashionable and enduring architectural motif (echoes of it may be seen in the gilded belvedere at Beckford's Tower, another Landmark site built in 1827). Wyatt's Pidgeon House, which he drew and thought about in some detail, was 18 feet in diameter, octagonal with a domed decorative ceiling.

We do not know for sure what The Birdhouse interiors, or indeed its front elevation giving onto the colonnade, looked like originally. There is a local rumour that it was in fact used as an aviary at first, but no evidence for this has been found in the documents, and nor did the physical evidence support this. The following pages show the Pidgeon House and some similar buildings by Wyatt.

[8] *Pers. comm.*, John Martin Robinson.
[9] RIBA Drawings Collection SA55/2(1-7)



Wyatt's unexecuted design for 'the Pidgeon House at Badger.' This was another pleasure pavilion intended to go near the stables. The Designs for The Birdhouse have not survived. (RIBA SA552/1-7)

Fawley Temple, Henley-on-Thames, was built by Wyatt in 1771. Its interior decoration and fenestration survive. Paint analysis by the Vivat Trust revealed a similar green verditer colour at The Birdhouse, though no trace of wall paintings.

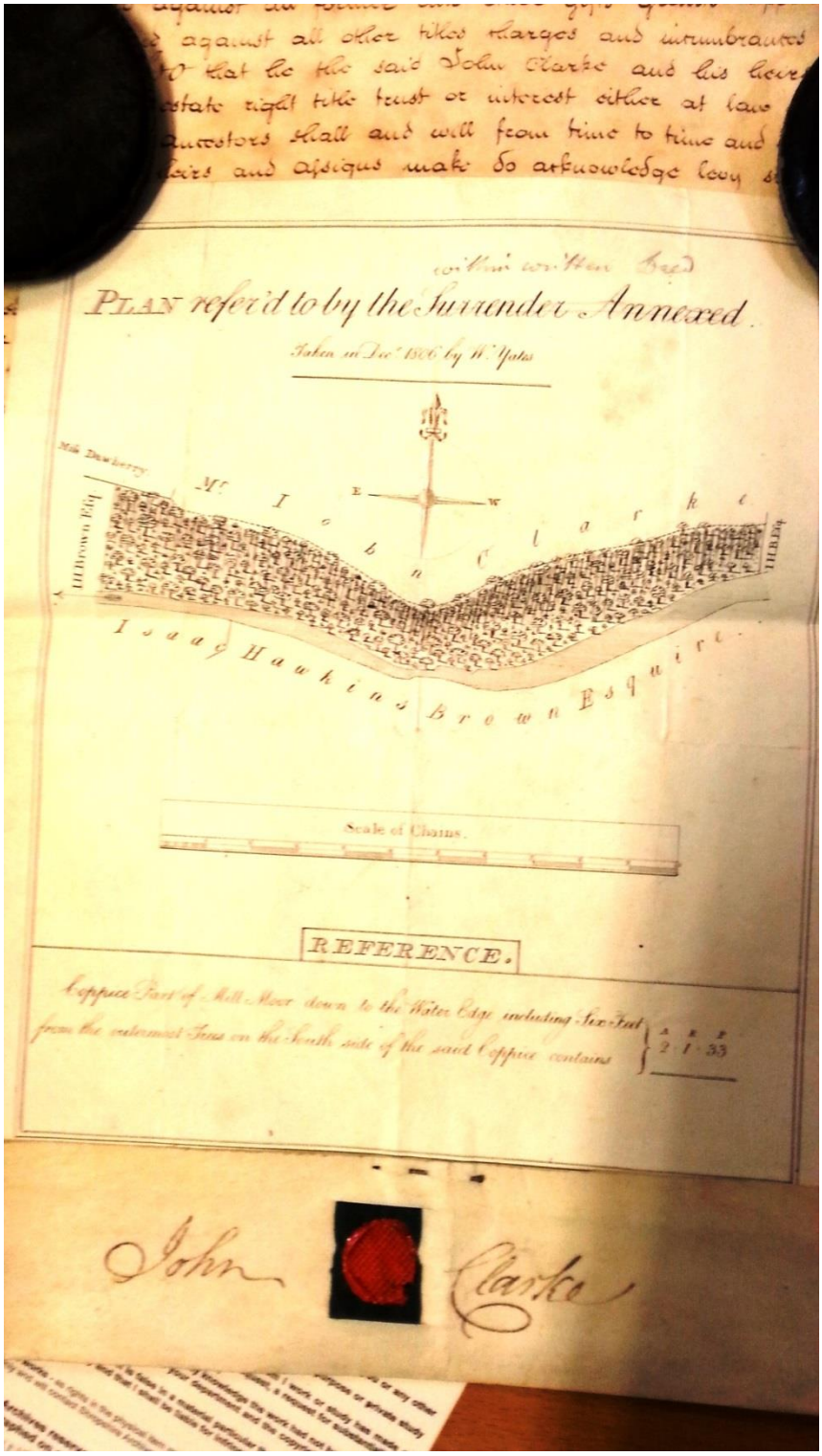
Bath Lodge, Doddington Park, Gloucestershire is another pavilion by Wyatt (who was active there 1796-1813). It shares with The Birdhouse Wyatt's characteristic baseless Doric columns. 'Wyatt's use of the Doric order is one of the keys to understanding his architecture and its easy and assured variation; his classical learning was worn lightly, producing a harmoniously eclectic and sophisticated synthesis.' (JM Robinson 2012, p.280).

The Orangery (1787) at Heveningham Hall. The form of its portico and use of flanking alcoves elaborates on the more bucolic version of the same features used at Badger Dingle.

The Birdhouse as built is perfectly placed, south facing at the shallow bend in the Upper Pool, to allow the visitor to take tea and gaze across the Dingle through a semi-circular colonnade among mature English broadleaf trees and surrounded by birdsong. The approach along the private road from Badger Hall provided the perfect foil for the moment of drama arriving at The Dingle, entering the folly by its front door and emerging onto the mock temple's colonnade. As we see it today, The Birdhouse is a careful but near total reconstruction by architect Andrew Arrol on behalf of the Vivat Trust, from the masonry shell that was all that survived the ravages of time and vandals. The front elevation and cornice and corner piers are all of local red sandstone, probably from off-site even though the Dingle is well supplied with many small or actual quarry spots, but the majority of these are unsuitable variations of the sandstone. The rest of the structure is good quality 18th-century brickwork, coated now as then in a cement render, one of many developments in building technique that Wyatt pioneered.

Beyond the later references to taking tea in The Birdhouse, there is only one clue to what it might have been like when in original use. A larger than life-size marble head was found in the debris during Vivat's restoration (see page 56). How this fragment of Ancient Greece came to be in the Shropshire undergrowth is a mystery, unless it was part of Hawkins Browne's or, later, one of the Cheneys' display in The Birdhouse. The 1837 watercolour of the building by Hornes Smith (see title page) hints at something larger in the one external alcove visible, perhaps a full size statue, but is frustratingly indistinct.

Pattingham Road Bridge, in its current form thought to date to c.1790, carries the Woodland Approach over the road. About 12 metres long and 4 metres wide, it is built of brick with sandstone coping. The Approach is an essential element in the experience of the Dingle landscape, providing a heightened sense of drama as it emerges, onto the sunny lip of the Dingle at the Birdhouse



In 1806, Hawkins Browne acquired a belt of woodland on the northern bank of The Dingle to the west of the village from one John Clarke. This allowed him to extend his development of The Dingle to its full length, and the timing of this acquisition probably provides the construction date of The Rotunda.

The Dingle revisited

Widowed in 1802, Hawkins Browne remarried in 1805 to Elizabeth Boddington. It was perhaps in response to a fresh burst of energy after this remarriage that he undertook further enhancements to The Dingle in 1806. This was preceded by the purchase, from one John Clarke, of a belt of woodland 2 acres 1 rood and 33 perches that runs along the North bank of The Dingle, shown by beautifully drawn site plans attached to the agreement, which also describes the land as 'the Coppice part of Mill Moor down to the Water's Edge and Six Feet from the outermost trees on the South side of said Coppice.'[10]

By now, William Emes had died, in 1803, having only recently completed the gardens at Dudmaston Hall (8 miles to the south in the Severn Valley and now in the care of the National Trust). This second phase of development in The Dingle was instead fulfilled by John Webb, formerly Emes' foreman. It was Webb who dammed the Snowden Brook to form the three narrow pools, known (rather prosaically) as the Upper, Middle and Lower Pools. Following the path west along the ravine, other features were created or newly appreciated: a boat house, a 'grotto' (a small alcove with a seat carved directly into the vertical sandstone cliff), an icehouse, a second boat house, cascades, natural caves and finally, towards the bottom of the Lower Pool, The Rotunda which still exists today, a hemicycle of Tuscan columns with a curved back seat, supporting a ribbed dome.

[10] Shropshire Archives 513/2/13/4/1

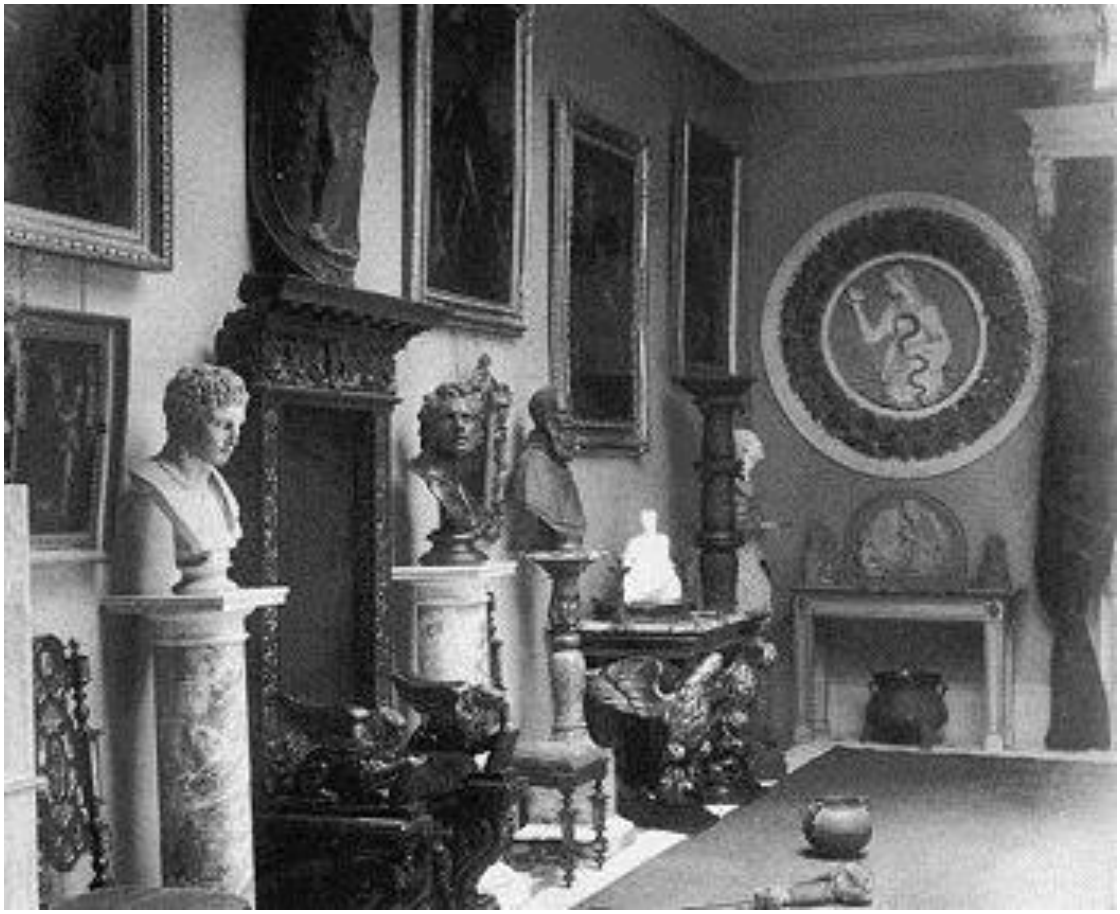
The Rotunda in 2015. Its architect is not known.

The date of The Rotunda has never been discovered, but its dome is covered with Roman cement, also used for the simulated lead rolls. While 'artificial cements' were in use from the 1770s or even earlier, Roman cement was developed in the 1780s by James Parker of London, and quickly became popular. Parker patented it late, in 1796, and this, as well as the fact that bricks used in its dome are also larger than those used at The Birdhouse, may suggest a later date for The Rotunda than The Birdhouse. This is consistent with the 1806 acquisition of the land along this north bank.

In 1828, the Upper Pool dam burst after a storm and 40 men from the coalfield manor of Malinsee, near Telford, were brought in to spend nine weeks reconstructing the dam. It is this later form that we see today, a masonry-faced earth dam some 6 metres high with a small, double-arched brick bridge at its south end. The bridge vaults split the overflow from the Upper Pool to create a cascade effect. The Lower Pool was much fuller until a dam at its lower end collapsed in the late 1970s.

The Dingle was further enhanced in the mid-19th century. Robert Cheney, who we introduce soon and who inherited the Badger estate from Elizabeth Hawkins Browne in 1839, opened The Dingle to the public in 1849. It soon attracted thousands of visitors seeking a day out from the ravaged industrial sites of the Black Country and beyond, arriving in every description of horse-drawn vehicles. Alpines, rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias were planted in Dingle. Isaac Hawkins Browne died in 1818, and was survived by his wife Elizabeth. She made her own contribution to Badger. In 1833-4 she commissioned a new nave of local red sandstone for St Giles Church from Francis Halley of Shifnal to replace the previous medieval one and possibly incorporating some of its materials. The chapel and porch were added 1886, and Hawkins Browne and Cheney memorials abound. In 1835, Elizabeth founded a library in the village, in part perhaps because there was not a single pub in the parish.

Edward Cheney (1806-1884). He inherited the Badger estate from his brother Robert Henry in 1866.



The Cheneys filled Badger Hall with their collections of fine art and sculpture. This was their Museum Room. A careful photographic record was taken of the Hall before its demolition in 1952-3. (NMR)

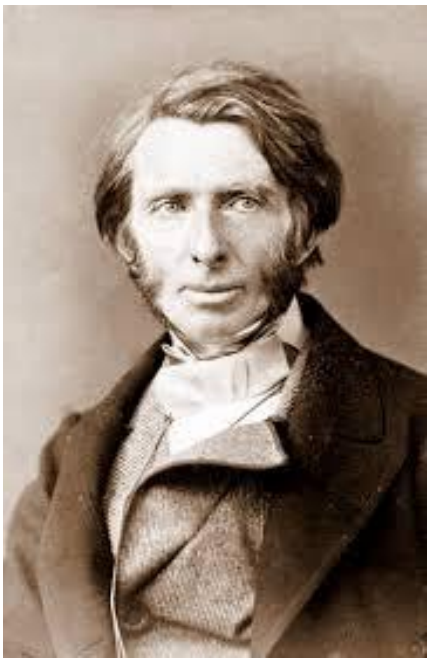
The Cheneys of Badger Hall

When Elizabeth Hawkins Browne died in 1839 the Badger estate passed to her cousin, Robert Henry Cheney. The Cheneys were a cultured family of Italophiles, headed by General Robert Cheney. General Cheney was a kinsman of Hawkins Browne, who left him the Badger estate at the death of Elizabeth Hawkins Browne. In the event, Elizabeth outlived the General, who died in 1820. The Cheneys therefore had to wait until Elizabeth's death to inherit the fortune and estate. The General had also directed that half the estate should go to Robert Henry as his eldest son, while the other half should be divided between his own wife Harriet and their four younger children.

Robert Henry Cheney was a talented watercolourist and pioneer of early photography, something of a dilettante who never pursued a career. His brother Col. Edward Cheney[11] served in India where he contracted a 'fever' that caused him to abandon his military career in 1826 and would plague him for the rest of his life. In 1827, the whole Cheney family moved to Italy with their indomitable mother Harriet, 'for economy, life in England [being] beset with mortifications.'[12]

When they finally came into the inheritance for which they had waited for over twenty years, both Robert Henry and Edward set about collecting (mostly Italian) art, with which they filled Badger Hall. Edward especially spent long periods in Venice, where he eventually bought the Palazzo Soranzo-Piovene on the Grand Canal, and he left detailed journals and note books about his time there. He became a historian of Venice (though never published) and was a pioneer collector of works by the Tiepolo family, as well as amassing a remarkable collection of Italian Renaissance sculpture and other works of art, much of it Venetian. Italy was in a turbulent state in the 1840s and 50s, and this offered many bargains to the knowledgeable collector.

[11] Not to be confused with his cousin of the same name and rank (1778-1848) who had five horses shot under him at Waterloo and was buried at Gaddesely in Leicestershire.
[12] Cit. Knox, 2007, p.6, n. 7.



Effie Ruskin/Millais (1828-1897) and John Ruskin (1819-1900) spent time in Venice with Edward Cheney. They visited him at Badger Hall twice, in 1850 and1851, and would almost certainly been shown The Dingle. Effie and Edward especially became good friends and Edward stood by her in her divorce of Ruskin in 1854.

The Cheneys brought many of their fine collections back to Badger Hall, where they created a dedicated museum room for their display.

Edward Cheney also became acquainted with the art critic and writer John Ruskin, one of the titans of Victorian Britain, an only child of overbearing and adoring parents who was both brilliant and neurotic. Ruskin first met the Cheneys in London in May 1844, when he noted a visit in his diary from Edward and Robert Henry: 'Cheney came out with his brother; he is a fine fellow, the brother quiet and commonplace. Didn't seem to like Turner.'[13]

In 1850 and again in 1851, Ruskin travelled to Venice with his young bride Effie to research *Stones of Venice*, published in 1851 and still a seminal text for anyone interested in the philosophy of the conservation of buildings. Ruskin's publisher John Murray had given Ruskin an introduction to Rawdon Brown, an eccentric scholar and Italophile who had lived in Venice for ten years, as someone who could help him in the Venetian archives. Brown and Edward Cheney were great friends, and Effie too became a close friend of both men. Ruskin, as so often, was more wary. For his part, Cheney distrusted Ruskin's Gothic tastes, being an admirer of the Baroque himself, but opened his library for him nonetheless. They also vied for position with the trustees of National Gallery back in London: Ruskin was trying to persuade them to buy two paintings by Tintoretto when they were already negotiating with Cheney, who Ruskin thought spiked the deal out of spite. Even so, Ruskin later drew on Cheney's own writings on Venetian Painters for his own work, and credited him with 'excellent judgement.'

In October 1851, for example, Ruskin wrote home to his parents:

[13] Gamble, Cynthia, *John Ruskin, Henry James & the Shropshire Lads* (2008), p. 78.

> *You ask if we see Mr Brown or Mr Cheney often. Very often – when we walked in St Mark's place, three times a week at any rate – now about twice – Their own houses are much more luxurious than ours – so it is a small compliment to ask them to come here – but they come to tea sometimes – and we sometimes to them. They are both as good natured as can be – but of a very different Species from me - men of the world – caring very little for anything but Men – Cheney is a kind of Beckford – I am not sure but that there is some slight affectation of resemblance only he lets people into his house, which I believe Beckford never would.'* [14]

Effie, meanwhile, who was gregarious and beautiful, created quite a stir in Venetian society, still thronged with soldiers after its siege and confirmed annexation to the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1848-9.

Back in London in 1850, Cheney and his brother Robert invited the Ruskins to stay at Badger Hall, which they did for a few days in August 1850. Badger is a far cry from the Grand Canal and Ruskin did not want to go, knowing the house would be full of what he considered the wrong sort of art and people. Lively Effie wanted very much to go: she knew by now that she was liable to be ignored in gatherings of the sort of serious men with whom Ruskin did want to converse, so the more convivial company at Badger appealed to her. It is hard to imagine Ruskin at ease in Badger Hall, refashioned in the neo-Classical style he hated, but the Cheneys would surely have taken their guests to take tea in The Birdhouse and to enjoy The Dingle.

In November 1853 the Ruskins were again invited to Badger but Ruskin declined. Effie wrote to Rawdon Brown in Venice: 'I would have very much enjoyed a couple of days with our kind friends at Badger, and they wished it, but John is not inclined.'[15]

[14] Bradley, John Lewis, *Ruskin's Letters from Venice 1851-2* (Yale, 1955), p. 35, Letter 34. Near the end of the Ruskins next stay in Venice in summer 1852, Cheney smoothed over a challenge to a duel made to Ruskin by an Austrian Count, accused over the theft of some of Effie's jewels. This time Ruskin wrote home: 'One thing I am very glad of among the other good consequences of a misfortune, it has brought out Mr Cheney's character; I believed him to be a man like Mr Beckford. I have found him active – kind and rightminded, in the highest degree, and he has been my chief support and adviser in this affair…' Ibid, p. 308 letter 272, 24 June 1852.
[15] Gamble (2008), p.110.

Soon after, Effie fell in love with the Pre-Raphaelite artist, John Everett Millais. In 1854, she divorced Ruskin on the grounds of non-consummation, and Edward Cheney stood by her through the very public and humiliating divorce proceedings.

In December 1866, Robert Henry Cheney died a bachelor, and Edward Cheney inherited the Badger Hall estate as his nearest kin. He continued to add to the collections there, still flitting between Badger and Venice, perhaps partly because of his uncertain health.

Edward Cheney died at Badger Hall on 16 April 1884. Also a bachelor, he bequeathed his property and collections to his nephew, Colonel Alfred Capel-Cure, whom he had appointed to manage his affairs as early as 1870, when Cure was described as being 'also of Badger Hall'. Some of Cheney's collection was sold at Christies and that of prints and drawings at Sothebys in April and May1885. A further sale was instigated at Christies in May1905, but not all Cheney's fine paintings were dispersed, three Tiepolos being embedded in the ceilings of Badger Hall. These remained at Badger Hall until they were sold by Alice Capel-Cure in 1932. Lord Faringdon bought some of the painted decorations of the library and re-used them in his remodelling of Buscot Park in Oxfordshire, now in the care of the National Trust.

Three Tiepolo ceiling panels at Badger Hall, acquired by Edward Cheney.

Wealth & Benefits of the Spanish Monarchy under Charles III (1762). Now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Marriage Allegory of the Cornaro Family *c.* 1740. Now in the National Gallery of Australia.

***The Triumph of Virtue and Nobility over Ignorance c.* 1745. Tiepolo famously included his own face hidden as a jest in his paintings – here in the sunburst on Virtue's breast. Now in the Norton Simon Museum, Colorado.**

Col. Alfred Capel-Cure (1826-96) inherited the Badger estate in 1884 from Edward Cheney. He served in the Crimean War in the 1860s and, like his uncle Robert Henry Cheney, became a photographer of some note.

The Capel-Cures

Col. Alfred Capel-Cure, by 1884 referred to as of Blake Hall, Ongar, was a hero of the Crimean War, wounded at the assault on the Redan in 1855. His uncle Robert Henry Cheney had introduced him to photography and he pursued it enthusiastically, also specialising in architectural subjects. It was Alfred Capel-Cure who added the private family chapel to the north side of the church. He is said to have been the inspiration for Sir Gregory Parsloe-Parsloe's Matchingham Hall in P. G. Wodehouse's Blanding Castle series; certainly his eventual demise is worthy of Wodehouse. A hobby was dynamiting tree stumps on his estate, in pursuit of which in 1896, he accidentally blew himself up.

His heir was his nephew, Major Francis Capel-Cure, another career soldier. He was married to Alice Newall and they initially devoted themselves to improving the conditions of their tenants on the estate. At the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899, Major Capel-Cure felt it was his patriotic duty to play an active part. He was captured early in the war at the battle of Nicholsons Nex just outside Ladysmith on October 30th 1899, and imprisoned by the Boers at a temporary camp at the Pretoria Racecourse. Later, the officers including Major Capel-Cure were moved to a prison camp where one of his fellow prisoners was the young Winston Churchill, there as a young journalist. Churchill escaped shortly before Christmas, but not so Major Capel-Cure, who would have had to wait until the Prisoner of War Camp was liberated by the British Forces when they reached Pretoria in June 5th 1900.

It was Alice Capel-Cure who initiated the custom of biannual tea parties in the Birdhouse at which the family served the staff. Only just out of living memory, older inhabitants in the village remembered how the butler and the footman would process from the Hall to The Dingle across the Pattingham Road Bridge, the approach then still well maintained, and swept clear of leaves in the autumn. On silver trays they carried all the necessary accessories for a tea party: no doubt a bone china tea set, silver tongs for sugar lumps, Victoria sponges and

cucumber sandwiches, another vignette where the world of Wodehouse merges with reality.

Major Capel-Cure died in 1933, and his wife Alice in 1937. The estate again passed to a nephew, Major Nigel Capel-Cure of Blake Hall in Ongar. By now Wyatt's vast mansion was falling into decline and was left empty as a secondary estate, which was a blow for the many villagers who worked at the Hall.

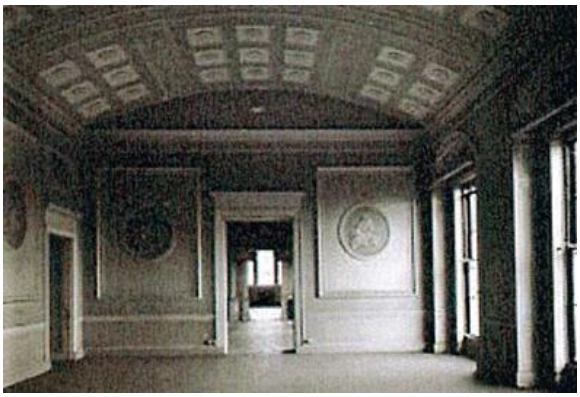
During the War, Badger Hall was briefly requisitioned as a school. The lead was stripped from the roof of The Birdhouse, which duly led to its collapse.[16]

Faced with crippling death duties, Nigel Capel-Cure sold the Hall and its estate in 1942 to a London estate firm, John Swire & Son, for £40,000. A sale of its contents followed, and 1500 lots of furniture, plate and pictures were disposed of. The Hall briefly became a paper warehouse, but by then its repair as a country seat was considered no longer feasible. Swire & Son applied to demolish the Hall; at first the Ministry of Local Planning & Government demurred. Swires then served notice on Shifnal Rural Council requiring them to buy the Hall if it was to escape demolition. When the council declined, a public enquiry allowed the demolition and Badger Hall became yet another casualty of the great changes in the lives of the English gentry after two World Wars. Its demolition in 1953 was preceded by another sale of contents in November 1952 by Perry & Philips of Bridgnorth, when 230 lots of its fine fixtures brought in £4,000. The Swire family still retain ownership of the wider estate, including the Dingle.

Today, all that remain of Badger Hall are some service buildings that date to the late 17th-century phase, now in use as private dwellings (one has been refaced with stone in recent times, and has adopted the name of the great mansion that once stood here). The Swire family retain the estate, including the Dingle, to this day.

[16] Vivat Trust leaflet.

A detailed photographic record was made of Badger Hall for the Royal Commission of Historic Monuments before its contents were dispersed and its walls demolished. These photos show all the layers of Badger Hall's existence: Wyatt's elegant Georgian interiors, filled with Hawkins Browne's books and the Cheneys' collection of fine art, and further decorated in late Victorian style by the Capel-Cures. They are now in the Historic England Archive.



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The foundation and demise of the Vivat Trust

With no one left to serve tea or to maintain it, The Birdhouse was left alone in the trees, and over the next four decades was progressively ravaged by nature and vandals. The lead was stolen from its domed roof, which eventually fell in. Vandals kicked down the pillars of the colonnade. It was reduced to a roofless, floorless brick shell.

It was in this condition that it came to the attention of the Vivat Trust. Vivat (1981-2015) was the closest comparable organisation to the Landmark Trust. It was founded by two beneficiaries of the annual Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings' bursaries, which enables small groups of young professionals and craftspeople (Scholars and Fellows) to spend 9-12 months travelling around the country to learn from differing conservation projects. The 1976 Centenary Scholars' cohort included two young architects, Niall Phillips and Paul Simons. Their programme was less well organised then than today; supposed to be in King's Lynn one day, they found their putative host absent in Cologne.

They decided instead to drive across the country to see Allt-y-bela in Monmouthshire, an important 16th-century house that was another *cause célèbre* in late 20th-century conservation, and then desperately ruinous. Phillips and Simons took up the challenge of dealing with its recalcitrant farmer-owner. Landmark's archives show that the house came onto on our radar since 1978 without any success persuading its farming owner to accept help. With the new burst of energy from Philipps and Simons, Landmark's founder John Smith's Manifold Trust gave £1,000 towards emergency scaffolding for Allt-y-bela. By 1980, and with a grant from Cadw in hand, an outline deal was brokered between Landmark and the owner, for Landmark to acquire Allt-y-bela, handing back the outbuildings to the farmer once repaired and making a holiday let out of the most of main house. Niall Phillips takes up the story:

> *'It was a spectacular deal for Mr Williams [the owner]. It got as far as the contracts being drawn up for the property sale, the works being tendered and contracts ready. The Landmark Trust sat with its solicitor in Lewis*

> *Williams' solicitor's office in Chepstow, along with Mr Williams and his even older father to sign the papers. But they wouldn't do it!*
> *I have never heard a solicitor being as rude to his client as he was when Mr Williams refused to sign at the final moment.'*[17]

Landmark would then have been happy to participate in a compulsory purchase order with the local authority to save this important building, 'but, being a rural authority stuffed with farmer members – most of whom drank with Lewis Williams in the pub after market – they wouldn't go through with it.'[18]

With so many other buildings clamouring to be saved, Landmark moved onto other projects. After some five years' campaigning, Phillips and Simons also gave up on Allt-y-bela as a personal project, but their campaigning bore fruit. Allt-y-bela was eventually restored by the Spitalfields Trust, another building preservation trust working outside their own London patch for the first time, and then sold as a private dwelling. Phillips wrote in 2010,

> *'we were so distressed at the condition of the wonderful vernacular buildings in Monmouthshire and Breconshire, and the limitation of the Landmark Trust only taking on a building on if they could acquire a freehold, that we decided to set up a charitable building preservation charity ourselves. Our trust was originally to be called the Black Mountains Trust, but as our Scholarship wore on we realised that the problems were not just confined to the Black Mountains, but were pretty much the same across the country.*
>
> *We changed the name to the 'Last Resort Trust' and, eventually, after deciding that the name was not very positive, we changed its name to the Vivat Trust.'* [19]

It is of course quite untrue that Landmark will only take on a building if it comes with its freehold, although for some reason this was a myth Vivat continued to propagate. Landmark has also held buildings on long repairing leases from the very beginning of its own existence. Our eventual withdrawal on Allt-y-bela had more to do with owner's recalcitrance, and then the eventual appearance of the Spitalfields Trust on the scene. Either way, it is clear that Vivat's and Landmark's

[17] Niall Phillips, 'When DIY scaffolding saved a gem,' *Cornerstone*, Vol. 31, No. 3, 2010.
[18] Ibid. The sensitivities of this scenario were all too familiar to Landmark in 2016, as we complete the restoration of another Monmouthshire farmhouse not far from Allt-y-Bela, Llwyn Celyn.
[19] Ibid.

existences as well as purposes were linked from the outset, and the two organisations continued to operate in complementary fashion to rescue buildings for the next 35 years. There were certain differences in approach (without the solidity of the Manifold Trust which backed Landmark until 1990, Vivat tended to be more open to letting on behalf of private owners, and to seek sponsors for their interior design, whereas Landmark followed its own internal furnishing approach) but together they became virtually synonymous as a solution for smaller historic buildings at risk.

Lacking the financial means of a founder like John Smith to provide critical mass, Vivat's achievement was almost the more impressive. However, longevity and ongoing growth depends on many factors. Some of these eventually unravelled for Vivat (It is to be hoped that one day a historian of their own will capture them fully. At time of writing, much is still unresolved.) Suffice to say that in 2015, Vivat went into liquidation, and their assets and files were put into the hands of the liquidators. As Vivat's buildings were generally on leases, most were simply reabsorbed by the owners on whose behalf Vivat had let them.

The Birdhouse is the glad exception. It has an impeccable pedigree and is a triumphant restoration; it and The Dingle still belong to the Swire family, who were happy to offer a new repairing lease with Landmark on this and the little Rotunda, west along The Dingle. Sir Adrian Swire especially has championed The Birdhouse's survival over the years.

The Vivat Trust called the pavilion The Temple; as Landmark already has several 'temples' in our portfolio, we have reverted to its original name of The Birdhouse, as shown in the estate map of 1837. The Birdhouse thus stands as a memorial not only to the Hawkins Brownes, the Cheneys and the Capel-Cures of Badger Hall, but also to a brave and pioneering example of building conservation in the second half of the 20th century, The Vivat Trust.

The Birdhouse was an overgrown, roofless shell when Vivat came to it. Vandals had kicked down the pillars.

Vivat's restoration of The Birdhouse

> *'In 1988 Andrew Arrol, an architect in Shrewsbury, wrote to the Vivat Trust to inform them he was advising a client on the structures in a hidden landscaped valley known as Badger Dingle. He enclosed a series of photographs that showed a magical, miniature gorge, densely overgrown with only the slightest glimpse of anything resembling a 'structure' appearing through the undergrowth…the Trust had never before been involved with a large historic landscape… The owner of Badger Dingle, Sir Adrian Swire, has a genuine interest in and concern for the future of this remnant of a once great estate…'* [20]

So the Vivat Trust set forth on its quest to save The Birdhouse (known to them as The Temple). Detailed accounts like this history album were not part of Vivat's offering to their guests, but a detailed album of photos came with The Birdhouse and from this the scale of the achievement of their architect Andrew Arrol's restoration can immediately be appreciated.

> *'The columns have all fallen, taking cornice, frieze and architrave with them. In spite of careful search, no blocking piece sections discovered, so it is tempting to believe there was no parapet, merely a lead flat, discharging rainwater all the way round the eaves…this has been noted as a common practice in Stafford and Lichfield, where the Wyatt family were builders, before James and his brothers commenced.'*

The column spacing was apparent only from the small stools along the base of the colonnade and fragments of the original capitals, but the architect was able to confirm that they represented a conventional but correct arrangement of Greek Doric.[21] . For the interior, the pieces of architrave, glazing bars and cornice that were found were carefully reproduced. Paint fragments suggested that the room was originally painted a green verditer, a favourite Wyatt colour.

Subsequently, it was decided that the domed roof should be of fibreglass rather than lead, which was stolen more than once after the restoration.

[20] Vivat Trust Chairman A. J. Byrne in the preface to *Badger Dingle, Shropshire: Proposed Conservation & Management: Feasibility Study* 1992.

[21] Some sources (including the 1992 Vivat study) give the columns as Greek Doric. The current *Buildings of Britain: Shropshire* (2006) corrects this to 'baseless Tuscan.' The absence of a base is puzzling, and may be a detail of the restoration rather than the original building. The only early illustration, the 1837 watercolour, is too indistinct and foliated to make out the bases.

The original king and queen posts from the collapsed roof were found on site, confirming that the roof structure had indeed supported a shallow dome. The new roof was formed offsite before its installation. The pitched rear section is tiled, while the dome at the front was originally covered in lead but Vivat later replaced it with fibre glass as now, after successive thefts of the lead. Lead theft is an increasing problem for historic buildings of all kinds.

A. – D. Hellenistic head from Badger Dingle, Shropshire; front, side, rear and top
(Photos: courtesy of the British Museum)

The Hellenistic head found in the debris of The Birdhouse during restoration, and thought to have been displayed inside the building. Standing some 28cm tall and made of marble, the piece is from a slightly over-sized figure and once had other sculptural elements pieced in, perhaps a veil or diadem. It is estimated to date from the 2nd century BC, perhaps from the east Greek islands or western Turkey, and is now deposited with the British Museum.
(*JBAA*, CXLIX, 1996, 72-77)

Elements of Wyatt's design for the staircase at Badger Hall were copied for the staircase that was inserted to link the two polite and service floors in adaptation of the building for holiday use. The Vivat furnishings included painted furniture based on examples by at Heveningham Hall, a Wyatt scheme in Suffolk contemporary with his work at Badger Hall, which is known to have shared many of its details This furniture was removed as part of the liquidation.

The Birdhouse as furnished by Vivat (then known as The Temple). The painted furniture reproduces examples by Wyatt at Heveningham. On the wall are reproductions of the Tiepolo ceiling panels from Badger Hall (much reduced in size).

Landmark's 2016 refurbishment

When Landmark took The Birdhouse over in 2016, it was still structurally sound and needed just a refurbishment. It was redecorated inside and out, with a new paint scheme. The railings between the columns would not have been there in the 18th century but are a requirement of our more risk averse times, which in 2016 require the further addition of the curved 'X'-shaped bars, done by local blacksmith Iain Seedhouse.

Stuart Leavy and Bill Barkley of Landmark's crafts team did various smaller jobs including repairing the glassfibre roof and repointing to the paving and the terrace wall. Our joiner Mark Smitten made a new kitchen, making the most of the small space available. The electrics were simplified; the pumped sewage system serviced and repaired; new lighting was installed in the kitchen, and new heaters installed. Internally, we have refurnished with a more neutral approach than Vivat's reproduction of Wyatt's furniture.

The agents for the Badger Estate also smartened up the walled garden gates for our arrival, and repainted the railings along the carriage drive over Pattingham Bridge.

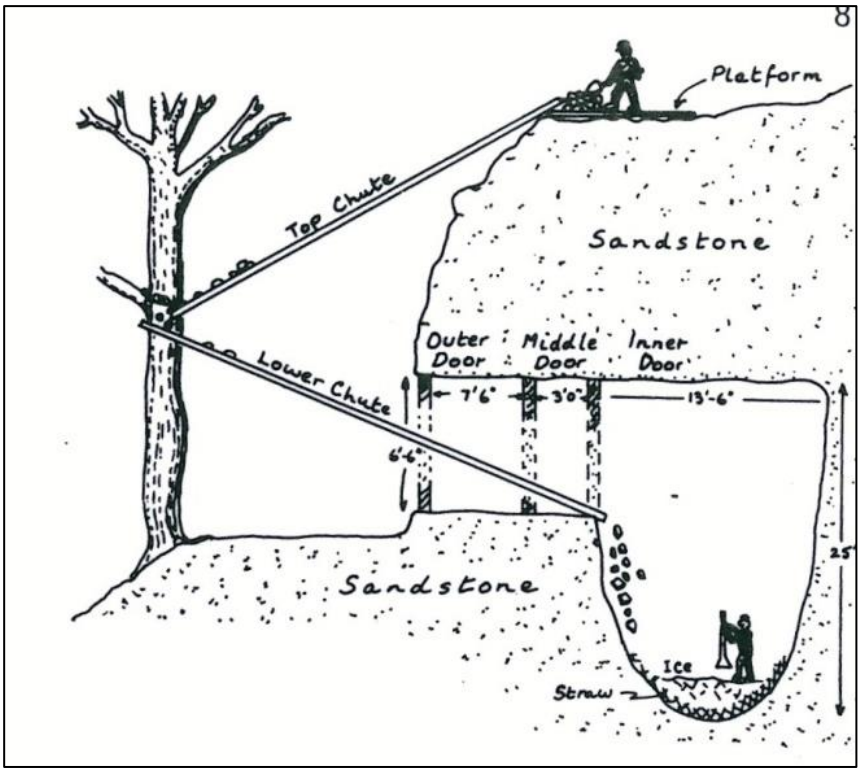

Diagram showing how the ice house was filled, and Harry White outside the ice house in the 1970s.

The Icehouse

Cut out of a solid perpendicular rock face some 3 metres high near the Ackleton Road bridge (but sadly sealed of necessity in 1978) is an ice house, which is shown in the 1837 estate map and quite possibly dates back to the 18th century or even earlier. The entrance led down a passage 5 or 6 metres long into a large egg shaped cavity, and in a time before mechanical tools it would have taken considerable effort to hew it out of the rock by candlelight. This curious feature was once an integral part of the seasonal round of Badger Hall and in 1974 Henry White of Badger, who left school at 14 to start work in the gardens of Badger Hall, gave his recollections of how the ice house was used.[22]

There used to be a shallow pool in front of Badger Hall known as the New Pool (notorious too for its 'toad crush' in spawning season). Once the ice on it was a few centimetres thick, it was broken up and transported in wooden barrows through the village to The Dingle.

It was then tipped down the bank to the ice house by an ingenious method involving two long linked wooden chutes some two feet wide, a handy tree acting as a pivotal point. The ice slid down the top chute into the lower one and then cascaded into the ice house. The base of the ice house had been lined ready with straw, and men then raked the ice level and then hammered it down. A poor cold boy was perched on a ladder to make sure the chutes didn't block, moving the ice along with his hands. Care also had to be taken that the candles that lit their work did not set fire to the straw and ruin the whole operation.

The whole process took several days, and then the chamber was then sealed with three heavy doors, each packed around with straw. The ice lasted up to a year; when some was needed, two men with a wheelbarrow trundled through the village to The Dingle and opened up the successive doors. They chipped off what was needed with ice picks and wrapped it in sacks before resealing the doors with their straw packing, presumably working quickly.

[22] From Robinson, D. H., *The Wandering Worfe* (1980).

They then pushed the laden barrow back to the Hall, where the ice was put in the pantry to help keep fish, meat and dairy produce cool. If the blocks were large enough, say 50 cm by 30cm, they lasted up to a week. Presumably blocks of ice could also have been used to freeze desserts and ice creams, although this use does not feature in Henry White's account. One wonders too if he was one of the 'poor cold boys'!

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Tim Knox

Edward Cheney of Badger Hall: a forgotten collector of Italian sculpture

The name of Edward Cheney, and his charmingly named seat, Badger Hall, near Shifnal in Shropshire, has scarcely been noticed by historians of English country house collecting. Although he was a pioneer collector of works by the Tiepolo family, much less well-known is Cheney's other great collecting interest, Italian Renaissance sculpture. Nor have the spectacular arrangements he devised to display his treasures at Badger Hall received much notice, despite their being carefully recorded in an evocative cache of photographs from the 1880s. Cheney's undeserved obscurity is due to the fact that no catalogue was ever published of his collection until it was dispersed by his heirs in a series of sales in 1905. Moreover, Badger Hall, a gaunt Neoclassical house, was itself almost wholly demolished in 1953 (fig. 1). However, the photographs of the interiors at Badger Hall, together with the 1905 sale catalogues, and Cheney's letters and other papers, now in the possession of the Capel-Cure family and mostly on deposit in the Essex Record Office in Chelmsford, throw light upon the life and activities of

1. Badger Hall, Shropshire, from the south-east, in 1952 – the year before its demolition. NMR AA52/9948
(photo: National Monuments Record)

this shadowy connoisseur and permit a partial reconstruction of his remarkable, though unexpected, treasury of Venetian art in the Shropshire countryside.[1]

Edward Cheney was born in 1803, the second son of Captain Robert Cheney, of Meynell Langley in Derbyshire, and his wife, Harriet. Cheney *père* had a distinguished military career, becoming Colonel of the 3rd Troop of Horse Guards and aide-de-camp to the King in 1805, rising to the rank of Major-General in 1810. He died in 1820 at Beverley in Yorkshire.[2] Edward followed his father into military service, purchasing a commission in 1824 as Ensign in the 97th Regiment of Foot, and undergoing military training at Sandhurst, Winchester and Gosport.[3] He is not to be confused with his cousin, Colonel Edward Cheney (1778–1848), who had five horses shot from under him at Waterloo and was buried at Gaddesby, Leicestershire in 1848, under a huge monument by Joseph Gott commemorating his exploits.[4] Our Edward Cheney had a rather less glorious term of duty in India, stationed in Madras and Villapooram, although he eventually attained the rank of Captain, a title he used throughout his life. Years later, in Burke's *Landed Gentry* for 1862, he is described as a 'Captain, unattached, in the army'.[5] The Journal of his friend Henry Edward Fox, later 4th Lord Holland, talks of reading Cheney's Indian journal and looking at 'his Indian drawings', and it was there that he contracted the 'fever' that was to plague him for the rest of his life.[6] It was ill health that caused Edward to abandon his military career in 1826 and return to England. In the spring of 1827, 'for economy, life in England [being] beset with mortifications', the whole family went to Italy.[7]

Cheney's residence in Italy – chiefly in Rome and Venice – is abundantly documented in a series of fifteen journals and eight notebooks which remain the possession of his descendants.[8] They cover the years 1825–73, with only two substantial gaps, one between October 1836 and February 1837, and another between December 1841 and December 1844. Cheney's journals are particularly strong on descriptions of the many places and people he visited and met, but say relatively little about his daily life or his activities as a collector. Nevertheless they are written in a lively style, with many percipient and humorous observations, and would repay closer study. Above all, they reveal Cheney as an inveterate traveller, passionately attached to Italy and in particular Venice, with a well-informed interest in art and architecture.

2. Edward Cheney (1803–84), portrait by his mother, Harriet Cheney (1771–1848). Watercolour, 33 × 25.4 cm. Private Collection (photo: Christies)

Another source of information about Edward Cheney is Henry Fox's Journal for 1818–30, published as *The Journal of Henry Edward Fox* by his descendant, the 6th Earl of Ilchester, in 1923.[9] It is illustrated with Cheney's portrait by G. F. Watts, showing him to be a sensitive-looking fellow with impressive side-whiskers.[10] The portrait is now lost, but a drawing by Watts survives.[11] Perhaps an even more appealing likeness is the glossy, Byronic, watercolour portrait by his mother (fig. 2).[12] Fox's

3. Vestibule off the entrance hall, Badger Hall, Shropshire, 1888, showing Bertel Thorvaldsen's relief *The Three Graces* and a pair of carved doors from 'a palace in Mantua'. NMR BB74/2926 (photo: National Monuments Record)

Journal charts their friendship in Italy, from their chance meeting in Genoa in the summer of 1827 to their parting in 1830. From it we know of Cheney's informed interest in art and antiquities,[13] and of the excursions they made together to such historic monuments as the Villa Borghese, the Tomb of Cecilia Metella, the Capitoline Museum, and to the collections of antiquities formed by, among others, Baron Bunsen, the Prince of Canino and Lord Northampton. Cheney appears to have had an interest in the work of contemporary sculptors, for they visited the studios of John Gibson,[14] Bertel Thorvaldsen,[15] Adamo Tadolini,[16] and Lorenzo Bartolini.[17] However, Fox's Journal gives no hint as to Cheney's career as a collector of paintings and sculpture, although Fox is known to have given bronzes to his friend,[18] and they mixed with other notable collectors then in Italy, including Thomas Hope.[19] We do learn, however, that Cheney's 'temper' was 'soured by perpetual suffering'. This eventually led to an estrangement between the two men. 'He affects more misanthropy than he has' wrote Fox in 1830, 'but his bad health and a natural disposition to be discontented is the cause of his extreme tartness and consequent unpleasantness'.[20]

Cheney was still resident in Rome in 1832, when the novelist Sir Walter Scott visited the Eternal City as part of his tour of Italy. According to Sir William Gell, 'The introduction of Captain Cheney was productive of great pleasure to Sir Walter, as he possessed at that moment the Villa Muti at Frascati, which had been for many years the favourite residence of the Cardinal of York [the youngest son of the Old Pretender, *de jure* King Henry IX of England]'.[21] Scott was entranced by the many relics of the last of the Stuarts that were preserved there, and Cheney became his regular companion while in Rome, introducing the writer to members of the Roman nobility. One of these was Don Michelangelo Caetani, eldest son of the Duke of Sermoneta and descendant of 'one of the most ancient and most turbulent of the Roman families during the Middle Ages' – which 'rendered him naturally a favourite with Sir Walter'.[22] Cheney's valuable memoir of Scott's visit was published in J. G. Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (Edinburgh, 1844).[23] Cheney's historical novel set in Sicily, *Malvagna, or, The Evil Eye*, which appeared in 1838, was possibly inspired by Scott's writings, but he published little else apart from articles in the *Miscellanies of the Philobiblon Society*.[24]

In 1838 Cheney's elder brother, Robert Henry, inherited the estates of Isaac Hawkins Browne MP, of Badger Hall, near Shifnal in Shropshire.[25] Browne had died in 1818, leaving his fortune and estates to his widow, on whose death they were to pass to his kinsman General Cheney or his heirs. Therefore, on Mrs Browne's death in 1838, the Cheneys came into the fortune for which they had been waiting patiently for over twenty years. Nor was Robert Henry, the eldest son, the only

beneficiary; General Cheney had directed that half the estate was to be divided equally between Mrs Cheney and her four younger children.[26] By this means Edward Cheney became possessed of one tenth of Browne's huge fortune and, living cheaply and stylishly in Italy, could embark upon his new career as an antiquary and art collector. As well as forming his own collection, Edward appears to have acted as agent for his brother, collecting works of art on his behalf, which were then despatched to Badger Hall. Augustus Hare, visiting Badger in the 1890s, was under the impression that both brothers were collectors: 'the Hall . . . contains many beautiful works of art collected by the brothers Henry and Edward Cheney, long well known to the *habitués* of Holland House: the water colour drawings of Henry Cheney have been unrivalled in amateur art'.[27] However, the letters from Robert Henry to his brother among the Capel-Cure papers in the Essex Record Office make it clear that Edward was the more adventurous and acquisitive of the two.[28] According to their descendant Alfred Capel-Cure, Robert Henry Cheney 'had no profession, became an artist and dilettante – travelled, sketched and read'.[29]

Although the Cheney brothers' correspondence about purchases of works of art begin in 1838 – the year of the inheritance – Edward Cheney's first important documented purchase was in 1842, when he bought an album of drawings by Giambattista Tiepolo in Venice.[30] In 1847 he bought a large marble relief by Thorvaldsen depicting *The Three Graces* from the sale of Dr Nevinson in London, who had purchased it direct from the sculptor.[31] It was later installed in a vestibule off the entrance hall at Badger Hall (fig. 3). The death of Cheney's mother, Harriet, in 1849 was commemorated by a marble stele, commissioned from John Gibson in Rome.[32] This too was eventually erected at Badger, in the Parish Church.[33]

4. Vestibule, looking towards the staircase, Badger Hall, Shropshire, 1888, showing the marble statuette of Sir Walter Scott, now attributed to William Scoular, on an Antique Roman funerary altar. NMR BB74/2924 (photo: National Monuments Record)

Thenceforth Cheney's acquisitions begin to gain pace. Between 1846 and 1852, Edward Cheney was living in Venice, at Ca' Soranzo Piovene on the Grand Canal, where he began compiling material for a history of Venetian churches and monuments which survives in manuscript among his papers.[34] During the 'Outbreak' of 1848 – the Venetian Revolt against Austrian rule – he purchased a bronze doorknocker, in the form of two entwined dolphins, from the side entrance to the Grimani Palace, Santa Maria Formosa.[35] Count Grimani was a regular source for Cheney. He bought a beautiful bronze '*vampire mask*' from him in 1852, which was later installed over a chimneypiece at Badger,[36] as well as ancient marbles from the famous 'Grimani Museum' – a torso of the *Venus Anadyomene* of 'Greek workmanship' and a life-size busts of *Vitellius* and *Lucilla*.[37] From the destroyed Church of Sant'Antonio di Castello he acquired a marble bust of *Cardinal Antonio Grimani*

5. The Museum at Badger Hall, Shropshire, from the south-east, 1888, showing one of the roundels by Luca della Robbia from the Certosa, near Florence, the walnut throne from the Doge's Palace, Venice, and, on the table, M. Rysbrack's terracotta model of Newton. NMR BB74/2928
(photo: National Monuments Record)

by Alessandro Vittoria.[38] The terracotta model for this bust was also in Cheney's collection.[39] Cheney was an ardent admirer of the work of Alessandro Vittoria and owned what he believed to be a terracotta *Self-portrait*, 'modelled for his own tomb in San Zaccharia, Venice', as well as bronze statuettes of *Melchisadek* and *Malachias*, 'from the Altar Tabernacle in the Church of the Frari'.[40] Cheney's attributions may not always withstand the scrutiny of modern art historical scholarship, but throughout this article I refer to works of art in his collection by the names he knew them by, and accept the often exalted provenances he claimed for them.[41] In any case, many of his stories are probably correct; due to the turbulent state of Italy at this time, Cheney had unrivalled opportunities for acquiring ancient and Renaissance works of art, particularly sculpture, of the highest quality.

Just as Cheney had introduced Sir Walter Scott to the scions of the old Roman families in 1832, his contacts with the impoverished Venetian nobility must have provided a fruitful source of acquisitions in the 1840s and 50s – a statuette of the *Virgin and Child*, attributed to the Lombardi, from the Orlandi Palace in Venice;[42] a Tintoretto portrait of Procurator Bartolomeo Capello, from the Palazzo Capello a San Polo;[43] entire Tiepolo ceilings from the Palazzo Dolfin Manin and the Palazzo

Corner Mocenigo.[44] When he bought the fine bronze doorknocker in the form of Neptune flanked by squirming dolphins from the canal entrance to the Palazzo Corner Mocenigo, he 'sat in a gondola while it was being removed from the door'.[45] Churches and suppressed religious institutions were another source, instanced by the Ardese marble bas-relief of the Virgin in Adoration, from the door of the Church of Sant' Agnese.[46] In his admiration of eighteenth-century Venetian artists such as Giambattista Tiepolo or Pietro Longhi, Cheney was well ahead of his time. In 1852 he bought two more albums of Tiepolo drawings from Count Algarotti Corniani.[47] Eventually, Cheney was to amass at least nine volumes of Tiepolo drawings and nearly thirty of his paintings, ranging from oil sketches to important ceiling canvasses, many of the former bought directly from a Signor Pagliano, who had married the painter's grand-daughter, and inherited many sketches and unfinished works.[48]

Then there were finds further afield; a colossal Antique bust, supposedly of the Rhodian Apollo, from the Moscardi Museum in Verona,[49] four bronze candelabra, each over six feet high, from the Ercolani Palace, Bologna;[50] and a fine bronze head of Hermes 'brought from Madrid by Mr Coesvelt and purchased in 1854, at Florence'.[51] A supposed Donatello, 'a life-size terra-cotta bust of Lucretia Tornabuoni, the mother of Lorenzo di Medici', was 'taken from the portico of the Villa Careggi, near Florence'.[52] His old Roman friends, the Anglophile Duke and Duchess of Sermoneta, occasionally presented Cheney with curiosities, including a sixteenth-century 'Lock plate and Hasp, moulded with trophies of armour' in 1856.[53] It was not just Antique and Renaissance sculpture that Cheney sought;

6. The Museum at Badger Hall, Shropshire, from the north-east, 1888, showing the Ducal throne. A bust of Lucretia Tornbuoni stands on a 'mosaic table' from the collection of the 'Count of Syracuse'. Above hangs Alonso Cano's *Dead Christ supported by Angels* from Louis Philippe's *Galerie Espagnole* and beyond is Alessandro Vittoria's bust of Cardinal Grimani. NMR BB74/2932
(photo: National Monuments Record)

7. The Museum at Badger Hall, Shropshire, from the north, 1888, showing statues by Luca della Robbia, and two of the four bronze candelabrum from Palazzo Ercolani in Bologna. NMR BB74/2930
(photo: National Monuments Record)

his richly framed Raphael School *Madonna and Child* came from the Verità Family Chapel at Verona.[54] He also bought Italian furniture: a handsome table supported by eagles with outstretched wings bearing a slab of Sicilan jasper came from the Gonzaga Palace in Mantua,[55] while another 'massive mosaic table-top' supported by amorini was bought from the 'collection of the Count of Syracuse'.[56]

By 1851 Cheney was such an authority on Venetian art and history that John Ruskin solicited his help while writing *The Stones of Venice*. Cheney and another British resident of Venice, Rawdon Brown, lent Ruskin books and accompanied him on expeditions.[57] Brown seems to have acted as an agent for Cheney during the latter's frequent absences in England.[58] It was probably through him that Cheney came to own a cast of the heraldic tomb slab of Thomas Mowbray, the 1st Duke and 'Jockey of Norfolk', who had died in Venice en route to Palestine in 1399 – which Brown had discovered being used as a paving stone during the Napoleonic occupation of Venice.[59] In 1852 Cheney was consulted by the Trustees of the National Gallery when they were negotiating, on the advice of Ruskin, to acquire Tintoretto's *Crucifixion* and *Marriage at Cana*. He thought the price asked too high, and advised against it – incurring the wrath of Ruskin who claimed he 'put a spoke in the wheel for pure spite'.[60]

By about 1856 Cheney was living in London, at 4 Audley Square, Mayfair, where Dr Waagen visited him and left an account of his pictures, published in

Galleries and Cabinets of Art in Great Britain (London, 1857).[61] 'This gentleman belongs to that class of the lovers of art who are guided by a general taste for the beautiful', Waagen writes, 'although, therefore, pictures constitute the chief contents of his collection, yet delicate specimens of sculpture in metal and ivory, and various ecclesiastical and secular objects, are scattered around. The pictures were chiefly collected during a residence of several years at Venice, and belong therefore principally to that school. Some Spanish masters, however, are among them.' The collection included five works each attributed to Titian and Tintoretto, as well as pictures by Zurburàn, Bellini, Longhi, and Tiepolo. Waagen also noticed the Venetian doorknockers, bronzes, medals, and particularly 'two seals of Cardinals, which decidedly belong to the most remarkable things of this kind', as well as a small bust of Cromwell in touchstone, but none of the larger sculptures, which were either still in Venice or at Badger Hall.[62] In the 1857 Art Treasures Exhibition at Manchester, Cheney showed 'A Chair or Throne' of walnut, painted and gilded, 'removed from the Hall of the Ambassadors, in the Ducal Palace, Venice . . . and afterwards made into a confessional box, for use in the Church of the Redentore, on the Guidecca, Venice, whence it was sold by the Capuchin Friars to Mr Cheney, through the offices of Monsieur Vincenzo Favena'.[63] It may be significant that Favena was the sculptor and designer who created a great carved bedstead for William Bankes of Kingston Lacy.[64] Bankes was living in exile in Italy by this time – probably in Venice or the Veneto – and it is tempting to speculate as to whether Bankes and Cheney knew each other; both men had a pronounced taste for Italian art, particularly sculpture and architectural salvage.[65] Cheney certainly knew other collectors of the period, such as George Cavendish Bentinck – another pioneer collector of Tiepolo.[66] He also assiduously attended the great sales of the era, those of Louis Philippe 'Egalité' in 1852, the Count of Syracuse in 1854, and the Naylor sale at Hooton Hall as late as 1875.[67]

8. The chimneypiece in the Museum at Badger Hall, Shropshire, 1888, made up of elements from the Ducal Palace in Mantua, and surmounted by an Istrian stone relief of the Virgin and Child. NMR BB74/2933 (photo: National Monuments Record)

On the death of his childless elder brother in 1866, Cheney inherited the family estates and fortune, including Badger Hall. However, he was back in Venice the following year and thenceforth appears to have returned there almost annually, noting with disapproval the restoration of the Ducal Palace, the increasing prevalence of whitewash, and the commercialization of the Lido.[68] In 1876–77, now reconciled with Ruskin, he helped with research for *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*.[69] Ruskin was by now wary of both Cheney's temperament and his essentially dilettante nature, writing to Rawdon Brown; 'What a lazy boy he is: why doesn't he write a history of Venice?'[70]

We know little of Cheney's activities after 1877 – apart from his lending bronzes to the Burlington Fine

9. The Bronze Room at Badger Hall, Shropshire, from the south-west, 1888. NMR BB74/2935 (photo: National Monuments Record)

Arts Club in 1879, where they are illustrated in the *Catalogue*.[71] Did he continue to oscillate between Shropshire and Italy because of his poor health, or did he retire to Badger Hall to superintend the installation of his treasures? Edward Cheney died in 1884, and is buried in the church at Badger.[72] His obituary makes no mention of his collections, merely noting 'Mr Cheney was renowned as a chess player'.[73] Cheney's possessions were inherited by a nephew, Colonel Alfred Capel-Cure, the son of Cheney's sister, Frederica, who married Capel Cure Esq. of Blake Hall in Essex.[74] Colonel Capel-Cure appears to have taken a scholarly interest in the collection, making improvements to its display.[75] A series of three major sales of some seventy pictures, including eighteen sketches by Tiepolo, as well as drawings, books, bronzes, medals, seals, rings and majolica, took place between 28 April and 1 May 1885, conducted by Messrs Christies.[76] Curiosities included the *corno* or cap of Doge Manin, the last Doge of Venice, 'on a cushion of crimson velvet', a carved and gilt caryatid, 'part of the Bucentaur', mounted as a bracket, 'Marshal Schulemburgh's baton', and Alfieri's snuffbox, as well as many portraits of Doges and Senators.[77] The sale appears to have been made up of selected contents of Cheney's London house,[78] for most of the collection remained at Badger Hall, where it is recorded in an extraordinary series of photographs.

The earliest photographs of the interior of Badger Hall are from an album in the possession of the Capel-Cure family dated 1888 – four years after the death of Edward Cheney. We can probably accept that they show the collection as it was displayed in his lifetime, arranged in the elegant Neo-classical interiors designed by James Wyatt for Isaac Hawkins Browne between 1779 and 1783. The illustrations to this article are taken from copies of the photographs in the National Monuments Record at Swindon, where they were placed through the good offices of Derek Sherborn.[79] The album is evidently a careful record of the house and its collections, as great pains were taken to record the rooms in sequence and from different angles. The following commentary can be made using the descriptions from the catalogue of the final dispersal of the collections in 1905.[80]

The entrance hall lay to the north of the house and was part of Wyatt's additions. It contained an elegant staircase at the foot of which stood Chantrey's statuette of *Sir Walter Scott*,[81] mounted upon a curious Roman funerary altar to Pedana (fig. 4).[82] This latter piece had a long and distinguished history, having been recorded in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome in the fifteenth century, later passing through the collections of Cardinal Cesi, the Earl of Bessborough and Richard Naylor of Hooton Hall, whence Cheney acquired it in 1875.[83] Here also stood a statuette of the Virgin and Child by Luca della Robbia on a

10. The conservatory at Badger Hall, Shropshire, 1888, with a Verona marble well-head. NMR BB74/2954
(photo: National Monuments Record)

square-shaped plinth, 'enamelled blue, white and yellow'.[84] To the west lay a vestibule with a pair of elaborately carved Renaissance doors, from 'a palace in Mantua', surmounted by Thorvaldsen's marble relief of *The Three Graces*.[85] Next comes the 'Museum', a three-bay top-lit corridor, which served as a sort of 'tribuna' for the display of Cheney's greatest treasures. The circular bas-reliefs at the ends of the room are by Luca della Robbia, 'with figures emblematical of Prudence and Faith . . . formerly in the Certosa, near Florence, and purchased by Mr Cheney from Monsieur Castellani Valbreque's Villa, Florence' (fig. 5).[86] The great walnut throne is from the Doge's Palace, while above is a 'pageant shield of hide and moulded gesso . . . representing the Milo of Crotona rending the oak', bearing the coat-of-arms of the Montauto family.[87] The other sculptures shown are, from left to right: a fine Antique bronze bust of Hermes, a marble head of Hermes, attributed to Praxitiles, mounted upon a column of *Fior di Persica* marble, a heroic bronze bust of Alexander the Great, the terracotta bust of Cardinal Antonio Grimani by Alessandro Vittoria on a baluster pedestal of Antique Brescia, a terracotta model for the figure of Newton by Rysbrack standing on the eagle table from the Gonzaga Palace in Mantua, and one of the four bronze candelabra from Palazzo Ercolani, Bologna. On the table below the roundel is the Lombardo Virgin from

11. The conservatory at Badger Hall, Shropshire, 1888. The lion mask fountain was from the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Split. NMR BB74/2953
(photo: National Monuments Record)

Sant' Agnese, Venice.[88] In the opposite view (figs 6 and 7), Donatello's *Lucretia Tornabuoni* stands on the mosaic table from the Count of Syracuse's collection, with Alonso Cano's *Dead Christ supported by Angels* from Louis Philippe's *Galerie Espagnole* above. Vittoria's marble bust of *Cardinal Grimani* and another Vittoria bust in terracotta stand on pedestals beyond.[89] Set into the tabernacle above the Renaissance chimneypiece, made up of elements from the Ducal Palace at Mantua, is an Istrian stone relief of the Virgin and Child (fig. 8).[90] Cheney evidently took great pride in displaying his principal treasures on old carved pedestals, or those composed of costly marbles. Two large Antique busts were mounted on wooden plinths set with Greek funerary stelae,[91] while the marble *Venus Anadyomene* perched on a huge Roman marble lion's paw.

The next room recorded in the sequence is the Bronze Room (fig. 9), which lay between the library and the conservatory. Some of Cheney's collection of bronzes are illustrated in the catalogue of the auction which dispersed them in 1905, and a few can be dimly made out in the photograph – including the 'vampire mask' from Palazzo Grimani on the chimneypiece lintel, the Grimani doorknocker on the lowest shelf of the arched recess, and a pair of andirons with figures of Hymen and Pomona.[92] Also here is a marble 'Torso of the Emperor Trajan, clad in armour, on a pedestal of African marble'. The small west sitting room was more conventional in character, with Italian views by Thomas Cromek and Neapolitan figurines,[93] while its larger neighbour, grained to imitate burr maple, contained little sculpture. Here were hung some of the finest paintings at Badger. In the niche was Titian's portrait of *Fiametta Avogardo*, Maid of Honour to Caterina Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus,[94] while on the south wall hung the Raphaelesque *Madonna and Child* from the Verità Chapel in Verona.[95] Over the chimneypiece

12. The Museum at Badger Hall, Shropshire, 1952. NMR AA52/9978 (photo: National Monuments Record)

13. The Bronze Room at Badger Hall, Shropshire, 1952. NMR AA52/9973
(photo: National Monuments Record)

was Giambattista Tiepolo's *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemene*.[96] It did, however, contain a 'pair of models, in plaster, of the Ludovisi Mars and the Barberini Faun, by the sculptor Volpato, bequeathed by him to the Cardinal Gonsalvi'. Nearby stood a bust of Cheney's beloved mother by Gibson.[97]

The Wyatt library was divided by scagliola columns into two sections, each of which had a ceiling by Tiepolo; one depicting *Nobility and Virtue overcoming Ignorance* from the Saloon of the Palazzo Dolfin-Manin in Venice, the other an *Allegory of the Foundation of the House of Corner*, from the Palazzo Corner di San Polo.[98] Here were two terracotta models by Giambologna. It opened into the drawing room, hung with Old Masters, many of them recognisable from the 1905 sale catalogue.[99] Then comes the conservatory, a lofty, apsidal structure projecting from the east flank of the house (fig. 10).[100] In the centre stood a Verona marble wellhead of exceptional quality with affronted harpies carved in high relief.[101] The planters are set with octagonal stamped terracotta plaques, copies of Renaissance originals in Cheney's collection. Interestingly the same plaques are also found on the terrace walls at Holland House – Henry Fox's house – and the Orangery at Panshanger, that other lost treasury of Italian Renaissance art.[102] The stone relief of St Barbara is late fifteenth-century Italian, while the lion's head came from Diocletian's Palace at Split (fig. 11).[103] Sadly there is no record of such rooms as the Venetian bedroom, with its ceiling set with canvasses by Veronese and Tiepolo, and walls hung with carnation-coloured silk, once the bedhangings of Doge Pruili.[104] Embedded in the ceiling of the adjoining dressing room was Tiepolo's oil sketch for *The Triumph of Spain* for the Throne Room of the Royal Palace in Madrid.[105]

The collections at Badger Hall were eventually dispersed by Francis Capel-Cure, Colonel Capel-Cure's nephew, who inherited in 1896. The sale took place in London on 4 and 5 May 1905, and was conducted by Messrs Christies.[106] The highest price achieved was £800 paid by Durlacher for a pair of bronze plaques in the manner of Andrea Riccio. These are now in the Louvre.[107] Chantrey's statuette of *Sir Walter Scott* – now demoted as the work of William Scoular – made 300 guineas and is now in the Lady Lever Art Gallery in Port Sunlight, together with its former pedestal, the grave-altar to Pedana. *The Three Graces* relief by Thorvaldsen sold for 120 guineas to Sir Thomas Sinclair. It now belongs to Rochdale Art Gallery and is on loan to the Judge's Lodgings in Lancaster. The big roundels by della Robbia made £195. Thus the Cheney collection was scattered far and wide. Edward Cheney's former treasures now turn up in public collections all over the world: a Vittoria terracotta bust donated to the Louvre in 1920,[108] and an oval relief in the style of Donatello, Rysbrack's model for Newton,[109] and two volumes of Tiepolo drawings are now in the Victoria & Albert Museum. Tiepolo oil sketches from

14. The conservatory at Badger Hall, Shropshire, 1952. The Verona marble well-head, the lion mask and a Greek altar still *in situ*. A cast of the grave slab of Mowbray occupies the place of a relief that had been sold in 1905. NMR AA52/9974
(photo: National Monuments Record)

Cheney's collection are in the National Gallery, London, Fort Worth and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. There are doubtless many rediscoveries still to be made.

However, because the sale took place in London, some of the less valuable or more cumbersome works of art remained embedded at Badger. Amazingly, three Tiepolo ceilings, those in the library, and the one in the Venetian bedroom, remained *in situ* until they were sold privately by Mrs Francis Capel-Cure for £3000 in 1932.[110] They are now in the Norton Simon Collection, Pasadena, and the National Galleries in Canberra and Washington.[111] On her death in 1937, Badger passed to Mrs Francis Capel-Cure's nephew, G. N. (Nigel) Capel-Cure, who, faced with double death duties, reluctantly sold the house and estate to John Swire and Sons for £40,000 in 1942.[112]

Badger's obituary is an evocative series of photographs taken by the National Monuments Record photographer G. B. Mason in 1952.[113] Following in his footsteps through the empty rooms of the doomed house, one can recognize the Museum (fig. 12),[114] and the Bronze Room (fig. 13),[115] with their ponderous Renaissance chimneypieces; while the cast of Mowbray's grave slab still clings to the walls of the conservatory (fig. 14).[116] The Lombardo relief now lurks in a disused summer house,[117] while an Istrian stone wellhead stands on the overgrown lawn.[118]

The house came down the following year. Externally Badger Hall was an astylar – almost barrack-like – edifice, so its loss did not excite much protest at the time.[119] The 2nd Lord Faringdon bought up some of the painted decorations of the library, and re-used them in his remodelling of Buscot Park in Oxfordshire, but it is not known what became of the other fittings.[120] Only a small portion of the former service wing survives today, refurbished as a private house.

Edward Cheney never published a catalogue of his collection, nor – despite Ruskin's rebuke – capitalized on his great knowledge of Italian art and history by leaving any substantial scholarly legacy. This, compounded by the fact that his collections were scattered in the sales in 1885 and 1905 – the latter in the name of his heir, Francis Capel-Cure – has ensured that he is all but forgotten as a collector and connoisseur. Moreover, the obscurity into which Cheney has sunk has been compounded by the destruction of Badger Hall, when the significance and importance of the remaining, built-in, items from his collection had long been forgotten. The collection of Italian sculpture and other works of art that Edward Cheney assembled at Badger Hall must be among the largest and most significant created in England in the nineteenth century. By reproducing these photographs of Edward Cheney's collection *in situ*, and publishing some of the surviving descriptions and documents connected with it, it is hoped that more objects from his collection will be recognized for what they are, as well as reversing the neglect into which his reputation has most unjustly fallen.

I would like to thank Edward Capel-Cure, Ronald Capel-Cure, Dr John Bold, Barbara Bryant, Harriet Drummond, Richard Harris and the staff of Essex Record Office, Professor George Knox, Ian Leith, Dr Edward Morris, Lucy Porten, Simon Stock, Dr Jeremy Warren and Gareth Williams.

1 Essex Record Office (hereafter ERO), Chelmsford, Capel-Cure Records, (D/DCc). Acc.A8403 and Acc.A8647. I am grateful to Richard Harris, Archive Services Manager for his assistance.

2 ERO, Acc. 8403, General Cheney's Box (Box 4), 1.

3 Ibid. See C. Sebag-Montefiore, 'Cheney Edward 1803–1884, rev.', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, 2004.

4 ERO, Acc.A8647, Drawer 1 (Box 1), 1. 'Memoir of the late Col. Cheney, C.B., of Gaddesby House, Leics.' (1848).

5 *Burke's Landed Gentry,* London, 1862, I, p. 256.

6 The Earl of Ilchester (ed.), *The Journal of the Hon. Henry Fox, afterwards fourth and last Lord Holland 1818–1830,* London, 1923, pp. 303, 353. See also ERO, Acc.A8647, Drawer 3, Box 3, Diary of Robert Henry Cheney with Ms history of Badger Hall inheritance by Col. Alfred Capel-Cure. Alfred Capel-Cure explains: 'Edward Cheney had left the army – after being in it 5 or 6 years – & lived chiefly abroad. Suffering much from fever – caught in India. He had literary tastes and artistic tastes but never used a brush or pallet – but had not had a college education.'

7 ERO, ibid. The 'mortifications' appear to have been financial. General Cheney's affairs appear to have been disordered. The real problem was, however, Mrs Browne, whose continued existence stood between the Cheneys and their promised fortune. See note 25.

8 Collection of Mr R. Capel-Cure. I am grateful to John Bold who has kindly shared with me his typescript survey of the diaries *Edward Cheney Diaries and Notebooks* (3 February 2003).

9 Ilchester, as at note 6.

10 Ibid., p. 304. This oval portrait was at Holland House, London; after destruction of the house during World War II, the portrait was removed to Melbury, Dorset. Barbara Bryant (private communication, 1 June 2003) tells me that it was sold from Melbury in 1967 and is now untraced. A portrait drawing of Cheney by Watts survives at Melbury

11 Reproduced in B. Bryant, *G. F. Watts: Fame and Beauty in Victorian Society* (exh. cat.), National Portrait Gallery, London, 2004, pp. 58–59, no.10.

12 In an album of 32 portrait studies of figures from the circle of the Cheney family in Italy; Christies, 12 October 2005, lot 44.

13 Indeed, it is as if Fox was infatuated with Cheney. During a brief excursion to Naples Fox wrote of him: 'I do so tenderly love him, that, feeling as I do quite renovated in health by coming here. I pant to return to him. I eat, drink, sleep, and feel in a state of positive enjoyment as to the physical existence ever since I arrived, but I do so feel the void of my second self's society, to which I have been accustomed daily and almost hourly for so many months, that I cannot take any interest or feel any pleasure in all around me, though this is the place on earth in which I am most capable of being happy'; Ilchester, as at note 6, p. 284.

14 Ibid., pp. 262–63, 23 January 1828; p. 325, 9 October 1828.

15 Ibid., p. 248, 8 December 1827, where they admired the sculptors' collections of pictures and antiquities.

16 Ibid., p. 279, 20 March 1828.

17 Ibid., p. 235, 24 October 1827.

18 Fox gave Cheney an eighteenth-century French terracotta head of the youthful Bacchus, and a gilt-bronze statuette of St Sebastian, attributed to Algardi, from the Zampieri palace in Bologna; provenance given in the sale catalogue; Christie, Manson and Woods, *Catalogue of the Collections of Italian Bronzes, Faience, Objects of Art and Furniture of the 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, also Statuary and Objects of Antiquity formed by Edward Cheney, Esq., of Badger Hall, Shropshire. The Property of Francis Capel-Cure Esq,* London, 4–5 May 1905, lots 95, 63.

19 Ilchester, as at note 6, p. 246, 24 November 1827.

20 Ibid., p. 377.

21 J. C. Corson (ed.), *Reminiscences of Sir Walter Scott's Residence in Italy, 1832, by Sir William Gell*, London, Edinburgh &c, 1957, pp. 25–36.

22 Ibid., p. 31.

23 J. G. Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, 10 vols, London, Edinburgh, 1839, X, pp. 175–97.

24 ERO, Acc.A8647, Wooden Box (Box 6), 7, c & e. *Miscellanies . . .* 1854–84, II, VII, XI, XIII, XIV. Cheney also formed a distinguished library and corresponded with the bibliophiles, Anthony Panizzi and Robert Curzon.

25 Browne had died in 1818, but his widow maintained a life interest in his estate until her death in 1839. Fox met Edward's mother and Robert Henry in Rome in November 1827, where he described them as 'humdrum sort of people' (Ilchester, as at note 6, p. 241). He came to actively dislike Robert Henry: 'I suppose he is clever, but his attempts at being refined and fastidious make him more ridiculous than agreeable, as he is totally unauthorized by face, figure, fashion or fortune, to give himself airs that are scarcely supportable to those that have some of those claims to be affected' (Ilchester, p. 242). Robert Henry's good fortune was not without its troubles. A diary of Robert Henry Cheney records his struggles with a Mr Botfield, Mrs Browne's former Agent, together with a manuscript history of the Badger Hall inheritance and its problems; ERO, as at note 6.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 A. J. C. Hare, *Shropshire,* London, 1898, p. 311. Robert Henry Cheney was a talented watercolourist, the patron and disciple of Thomas Hartley Cromek, and many pictures by both artists survive in the possession of the Capel Cure family.

29 ERO, Acc. A8647, Box 8. Henry Robert Cheney to Edward Cheney, 21 December [1838]; 22 April [1840] & n.d [c.1840].

30 See G. Knox, *Catalogue of the Tiepolo Drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, London, 1960, pp. 4–9. In his introduction to the *Catalogue*, Knox records an album of Tiepolo drawings 'with the Savile Gallery' in 1928 which bore Edward Cheney's bookplate and the inscription: 'This collection was made by G. B. Tiepolo himself and given by him and his son for the library of the Sommaso Convent (S Maria della Salute) at Venice where he was pro-

fessed. At the suppression of the convents the volumes fell into the hands of Cicognara by whom they were given in an exchange to Canova from whom they passed after his death to Mons. Canova his brother, by him they were sold to Sigr Francesco Pesaro & by him to me E.C. Venice 1842.' Cheney's collection of works by Tiepolo is discussed in an unpublished essay, 'Edward Cheney', by G. Knox (25 August 2002). I am grateful to Professor Knox for sharing his valuable work with me.

31 Provenance given as 'Dr Nevison's sale in Rome', 23 April, 1847; Christie's, as at note 18. According to Lugt, Dr Nevinson's sale was conducted by Philips, in London, on 22–23 April 1847; F. Lugt, *Repertoire des Catalogues des Ventes*, II, La Haye, 1953, no. 18581. The provenances given in the 1905 sale catalogue appear to be copied from an earlier, possibly manuscript, catalogue of the works of art at Badger Hall, probably begun by Edward Cheney himself and annotated by his nephew Alfred. A typescript copy of this catalogue survives among the Capel-Cure papers. The Thorvaldsen *Three Graces* relief is item 25 in the 'Vestibule'; ERO, as at note 24, L.

32 ERO, Acc.A8647, Drawer 2 (Box 2), 10. Red morrocco folder inscribed in gilt 'Letters from John Gibson, Sculptor'.

33 N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Shropshire*, London, 1958, pp. 67–68.

34 ERO, as at note 24, 2. '9 unbound booklets of architectural descriptions of buildings in Venice, 1846, by Edward Cheney'.

35 Christie's as at note 18, lot 56.

36 Ibid., lot 84.

37 Ibid., lot 199 (Venus), lot 203 (Lucilla), lot 87 (Vitellius).

38 Ibid., lot 229.

39 Ibid., lot 91.

40 Ibid., lots 90 (bust of Vittoria) and 130 (statuettes).

41 For instance, Cheney's Vittoria busts do not appear in T. Martin, *Alessandro Vittoria and the Portrait Bust in Renaissance Venice*, Oxford, 1998.

42 Christie's, at note 18, lot 219.

43 Christie, Manson and Woods, *Catalogue of the Collection of Important Pictures by Old Masters formed by Edward Cheney, Esq., of Badger Hall, Shropshire. The Property of Francis Capel-Cure, Esq*. London, 6 May 1905, lot 70.

44 M. Gemin and F. Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo: I Dipinti: Opera Completa*, Venice, 1993, pp. 391, 402–03.

45 Christie's, as at note 43, lot 83.

46 Ibid., lot 225.

47 G. Knox, as at note 30, pp. 4–9, records an inscription in the two volumes of Tiepolo drawings from Cheney's collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum: 'E.C/Venice May 31st 1852 bought at Venice from Count Algarotti Corniani'.

48 ERO, as at note 24, L. 'Venetian Dressing Room', item 81 (*Apotheosis of the Spanish Monarchy* bozzetto by G. B. Tiepolo), and 'Venetian Bedroom', item 67 (painted medallions by G. B. Tiepolo).

49 An antique head, mounted on a bust by Sir Richard Westmacott; Christie's, as at note 18, lot 206.

50 Ibid., lot 76. Modelled on antique marble candelabrum in the Church of S. Agnese, Rome.

51 Ibid., lot 187.

52 Ibid., lot 96 (illustrated).

53 Ibid., lot 69.

54 Christie's, as at note 43, lot 59.

55 Christie's, as at note 18, lot 101.

56 Ibid., lot 100.

57 J. Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, London, 1851–53, 3 vols. E. T. Cook *The Life of John Ruskin,* London, 1911, II, pp. 264–65.

58 ERO, as at note 4, 22; Letter from Rawdon Brown to Edward Cheney, Venice, 24 February 1854, mentions sale of Manfrin Collection, and sends him an incense burner and other trifles. Brown to Cheney, Venice 25 September 1852, information about the throne from the Ducal Palace in Cheney's possession. Brown to Cheney, Venice, 21 July 1856, requests details of measurements for a chimneypiece he is to order'. Brown to Cheney, Venice, 26 November 1850, reference to 'my Tiepolo purchase' many years ago. In return, Cheney sent Brown books.

59 E. T. Cook and A. Wedderburn, *The Works of John Ruskin*, London, 1904, pp. II, XXVII–VIII.

60 J. Ruskin, *Praeterita*, London, 1888, III, p. 60; see also Cook, as at note 57, II, pp. 279–80.

61 G. F. Waagen, *Galleries and Cabinets of Art in Great Britain, Supplemental Volume to the Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, London, 1857, pp. 170–75. No. 5 Audley Square (now demolished) stood almost opposite No. 75 South Audley Street, now the Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt. This was the house of the banker and connoisseur Henri Louis Bischoffsheim from 1873 to 1908, who installed here, by 1876, the famous ceiling painting by G. B. Tiepolo, 'Allegory of Venus and Time', from Ca' Contarini in Venice, now in the National Gallery, London. It is tempting to associate this Tiepolo ceiling with Edward Cheney, who appears to have returned to England at about this time. See *Survey of London*, XL, *The Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair*, part II, London, 1980, pp. 311–15.

62 One of the seals, the 'Copper-gilt seal of Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici' is now part of the Fortnum Collection in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; it had been sold 'to Whelan', for £68.5.0, 28 April, lot 172; Christie, Manson and Woods, *Catalogue of Works of Art from the Collection of E. Cheney*, 28 April 1885 (medals, plaquettes and seals); 29 April–1 May 1885 (drawings and books). The other, the model for the seal of Giuliano de'Medici, is in a private collection and was, in 2005, on loan to the Ashmolean Museum.

63 Christie's, as at note 18, lot 109. Cheney also exhibited majolica, and a pair of 'oviform blue glass vases bought from the Vendramin Palace, Venice', in 1841; Christie's as at note 62, lot 276.

64 *Kingston Lacey* (guidebook), National Trust, London, 1994, pp. 32, 71. Favena worked for Bankes between 1849 and 1855.

65 T. Knox, ' "Though it appears old and unaltered . . .": Hardwick Hall and Kingston Lacy as Repositories of Historic Panelling and Architectural Salvage, unpublished lecture for the Architecture and Salvage: The Archaeology of Reuse Conference, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 10 December 1999.

66 ERO, as at note 4, 22; Letter from Rawdon Brown to Edward Cheney, Venice, 24 February 1854, mentions George Bentinck. Also Brown to Cheney, Venice, 13 September 1852, 'the Bentincks are in Venice'.

67 Lugt, as at note 31, II, Louis Philippe's 'Galerie Espagnole', no. 21383, London, Sotheby's, 6–21 April 1853; Lugt, III; R. C. Naylor, Hooton Hall, Cheshire, no. 35820, on the premises, 2–12 August 1875. I cannot find a reference to the 'Count of Syracuse's' sale in Lugt.

68 Diaries, XV, 1844–73; as at note 8.

69 J. Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, London, 1894.

70 Cook, as at note 57, II, p. 298.

71 Burlington Fine Arts Club *Catalogue of Bronzes and Ivories of European Origin exhibited in 1879,* London, 1879. Cheney lent 29 works to the exhibition, all bronzes. My thanks to Jeremy Warren for lending me this publication.

72 Pevsner, as at note 33, pp. 67–68.

73 ERO, as at note 32. Newspaper cutting, no source recorded.

74 ERO, Acc.A8647, Box 'Misc B', 17 'Probate of Will of E. Cheney, 14 July 1884'. The gross value of the estate was £15,826.11.6.

75 Colonel Capel-Cure's annotations to the Inventory of the works of art at Badger Hall suggest an informed interest in them, notably in the Greek and Roman antiquities. Colonel Capel-Cure also made alterations and additions to the displays at Badger Hall, purchasing a large Florentine *pietra dura* table from Hamilton Palace at the Denison Beckett sale: 'The Old Hall' (item 8); ERO, Acc.A8647, Wooden Box (Box 6), 7.

76 Pictures (70), miniatures and enamels (77), bronzes and porcelain (39), objets d'art (203)); Christie's, as at note 62.

77 Lots 113 (*corno*), 84 (bracket), 380 (baton), 493 (snuffbox). The *corno* sold to Davis for £6.10.0; ibid.

78 Many of the objects noticed by Waagen in 1854 were sold in these sales. These include 'A statuette of St Gregory from the Church of that Saint at Venice. This is a remarkable example of painted and partially gilt Italian sculpture. On his drapery are paintings of saints. At the sides are four little black figures of monks receiving two books from St Gregory.' This sold as lot 89 to Davis for £44.2.0.

79 National Monuments Record/ English Heritage, Acc. BB74 / 2924–2954.

80 Christie's, as at notes 18 and 43.

81 A. Clay, E. Morris, S. Penketh and T. Stevens, *British Sculpture in the Lady Lever Art Gallery*, Liverpool, 1999, pp. 71–72, no. LL 711. It is now given to William Scoular (1796–1854).

82 NMR, BB74/2924 .

83 G. B. Waywell, *The Lever and Hope Sculptures: Ancient Sculptures in the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight*, Berlin, 1986, pp. 24–25, no. 13.

84 NMR, BB74/2925, 2927.

85 NMR, BB74/2925, 2926.

86 NMR, BB74/2928, 2928.

87 NMR, BB74/2928, 2932, 2943.

88 NMR, BB74/2928.

89 NMR, BB74/2932, 2930.

90 NMR, BB74/2933, 2934. Edward Capel-Cure tells me that this relief is now in the Church of St Germain, Bobbingworth, Essex, where it forms a memorial to Major Edward Capel-Cure of Blake Hall.

91 NMR, BB74/2933, 2934.

92 NMR, BB74/2935.

93 NMR, BB74/2937, 2936.

94 NMR, BB74/2942.

95 NMR, BB74/2940.

96 NMR, BB74/2941.

97 NMR, BB74/2939.

98 NMR, BB74/2945, 2951. The Tiepolo ceilings are not visible in these views. Gemin and Pedrocco, as at note 44, pp. 391, 402–03.

99 NMR, BB74/2948. Also a view taken in 1892, BB74/2946, which shows changes to the decoration and furnishings.

100 NMR, BB74/2952, 2954.

101 Mr Ranier M. Zeitz tells me that he recently purchased this well-head, unidentified, on the London art market.

102 For a detail showing similar reliefs set into a recess in the NW small courtyard at Badger Hall see NMR, BB74/2942. See also letter on 'Terra Cotta Reliefs' from Charles Handley Read who says that the Badger Hall and Holland House plaques were stamped 'I Onions' of Broseley, Shropshire, and bore the date 1847, and reputedly copies of terracotta reliefs made in c.1500 for one of Henry VIII's palaces. Seven or eight originals were (in 1960) set in a fireplace at Allington Castle, Kent;

Country Life, CXXVII, no. 3294, 21 April 1960, p. 879. Edward Cheney had a further group of 24, possibly original, reliefs set into the back of the fireplace of the Bronze Room at Badger, where they are still visible in a photograph taken in 1952 (NMR, AA52/9973). Cheney was a patron of the 'Salopian Works' at Broseley, and commissioned a copy of a basket of fruit and flowers in glazed clay by Luca della Robbia, displayed on the head of a statuette of *Abundance* in 'The Museum' at Badger (item 117); ERO, as at note 24, L.

103 NMR, BB74/2953.

104 ERO, as at note 102, 'Venetian Bedroom', item 65 (silk brocade), item 66 (Veronese), item 68 (Tiepolo medallions). There are, however, photographs of the Wyatt dining room (NMR, BB74/2949, 2950), and of an unidentified room on the first floor (NMR, BB74/2947).

105 'Venetian Dressing Room', item 81; ERO, ibid.

106 Christie's, as at notes 18 and 43.

107 The results are taken from a review of the sale in *The Times*, 6 May 1905, p. 15.

108 Musée du Louvre R.F.1701, given by Godfrey Braeur, 1920.

109 D. Bilbey and M. Trusted, *British Sculpture 1470 to 2000: A Concise Catalogue of the Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum,* London, 2002, pp. 133–34, no. 184.

110 ERO, as at note 74.

111 The ceilings were as follows. In the library, 'Nobility and Virtue banishing Ignorance' from the Palazzo Dolfin-Manin, Venice, now in the Norton Simon Foundation, Pasadena, Gemin and Pedrocco, as at note 44, pp. 402–03; 'Allegory of the Foundation of the House of Corner', from the Palazzo Corner poi Mocenigo da San Polo, Venice, now in the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ibid., p. 391; and, in the Venetian dressing room, 'The Triumph of Spain', bozzetto for the ceiling of the Throne Room in the Royal Palace in Madrid, now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, ibid., pp. 486–89.

112 For G. N. Capel-Cure's memorandum of his predicament, ERO, as at note 74, 15.

113 NMR, AA52/9939–9993.

114 NMR, AA52/9978–9979.

115 NMR, AA52/9973.

116 NMR, AA52/9974, 9977, 9976.

117 NMR, AA52/9995.

118 NMR, AA52/9941.

119 NMR, AA52/9939, 9945, 9948, 9954, 9950, 9952.

120 *Buscot Park: The Faringdon Collection* (guidebook), National Trust, London, 1990, p. 14.