

FOLLIES

The Newsletter of the Folly Fellowship

No. 4 £1.50

Autumn 1989

As seems to be the unfortunate case, I must again report the lamentable loss of several Follies. The contrary scenario is much more satisfying, and I take great delight in bringing our readers' attention to some new buildings.

The **Water Tower** in Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, adjacent to Admiral's Park, was pulled down by the water board earlier this decade. The concrete base survives as evidence of its position, but nothing else.

Remaining in Essex, Rayleigh's battlemented **Mill**, created by Bert Byford around 1910, must be removed from our lists. Not because it has been demolished, however, but because it has been fully restored to its former glory as a windmill. With new turret and sails, the battlements being removed several years back, it now stands resplendent atop a hill, superbly positioned for its original function.

Where is the copper urn that used to reside on **Soane's Column** in Colne Park, Essex?

According to one story from the Second World War, an American serviceman inquired of a local what was in the copper urn. Fed up with the exaggerated stories the GIs' told about themselves and their home country he replied, tongue in cheek, "It be filled with liquid gold, that's for sure". Following the sound of gun-fire some nights later, the urn was discovered to be riddled with bullet holes. Perhaps the urn has finally been taken down for repair.

Knowle Hall in Somerset now houses the splendid British Institute for Brain Injured Children. The **sham castle** has sadly gone, with only a few stone remnants telling of its demise. Having built the Hall, Benjamin Cuff Greenhill married for the second time in 1846. His nineteen year old wife, Pelagie, was a daughter of the Comte de Breville. The eyecatcher sham was probably built at her instigation as she used to visit the castle and look out over the Bristol Channel, in pretence that it was the English Channel which she used to survey from her former home in France during her childhood. Postcards survive to show how it once looked, together with a painting of c.1915 by H. Bawler, head gardener at Knowle at the turn of the century.

The history of St Osyth's Priory is well recorded but very little is known about the **Grotto** at the western extremity of the deer park. The grotto was built in the eighteenth century, and this and another building appear on a map in the County Records Office.

Unfortunately it was gutted by fire, started by vandals, some years back. The remains tell that it was probably more akin to a shell-lined summerhouse or retreat, situated to give spectacular views over the River Colne and its



creeks. Most of the shells have long since gone but their imprints abound on the plastered walls and the adjacent hut, built in the same style, would indicate that the grotto possessed a similar thatched roof at some time. This would appear to be the only 'surviving' grotto in Essex.

The present Walton Hall in Warwickshire was commissioned by Sir Charles Mordaunt from George Gilbert Scott, of Albert Memorial fame. One of Sir Charles' predecessors, of the same name, built a **Bath House** to the north east of the hall, in what is now known as Bath Hill Wood. Recently restored, the architect may have been Sanderson Miller as one of his two remaining diaries refers to work on the Bath House being carried out by his 'mason a latere' William Hitchcox. The sunken bath in classical style is in a 'grotto' chamber below a domed drawing room. The thought of bathing in ice-cold water, as was the practice of that period, is quite a chilling prospect today.

The **Priory** at Midford Castle, Avon, is not long for this world. Supposedly the setting for Henry Woolhouse Disney Roebuck's orgies, The Priory is best remembered from contemporary histories and best illustrated in Christopher Hussey's articles in *Country Life*, 1944. With only the staircase tower partially remaining

today, set amidst thriving wild garlic, the owner of the converted stables by the Castle can recall his first visit to The Priory in the seventies. The walls of the long room up to window level were still standing, just. Vandalism has waged war again. The scant remains are daubed with graffiti, some with sexual connotations befitting Roebuck's alleged former exploits!

At Halswell in Somerset, **Robin Hood's Temple** is being restored under the auspices of English Heritage. The **Rotunda**, now protected by plastic sheeting, and the nearby **Grotto** are to follow suit next year. New evidence in a recent article by Gervase Jackson-Stops has correctly re-attributed the design of the **Temple of Harmony** to Thomas Prowse, and the local district council is working to secure its survival. The **Temple of Pan** may well be part of a now-ruinous farm building at nearby Patcombe.

Although the dairy at Ponsbourne House, Hertfordshire, is cited in *Follies*, the adjacent **Grotto Room** has been missed. The house is now a management training centre, but it also caters for social functions and the room is frequently used for receptions. The grot work is magnificent and in complete contrast to the festooned ceiling and inlaid floor.

Bridget Cherry's extensively revised edition of Nikolaus Pevsner's **Devon** in the Buildings of England series has just been published; we've skimmed through and the following entries have caught our eye:

ALWINGTON, Yeo Vale Folly.

MARISTOW, Roborough Folly. Architectural fragment from the previous chapel, demolished by St Aubyn; also two Ionic columns, perhaps from the front door of the house.

MOLLAND, Petticombe Gothick Hermitage.

OXTON HOUSE, Gothick Hermitage.

STOWFORD, Haine Grotto.

TAWSTOCK, Circular folly tower with stair turret and Gothick windows.

TEIGNGRACE, Stover House Grotto & Temple.

TORQUAY, Teignmouth Road Folly.

ZEAL MONACHORUM, Reeve Castle.

We have also news of a small tower folly in the garden of a large Regency house in Victoria Park Road, St Leonard's, Exeter, Devon. More information please. Rev. Peter Blagdon-Gamlen has confirmed the continued existence of Tawstock Tower, and tells us of a sham church at Wray Barton, Moretonhampstead, for which the new Cherry/Pevsner writes only of 'Ruins of the late medieval house in the grounds'.

Any items suitable for 'Lost and Found' should be sent to the Membership Secretary at 61 Wheatsheaf Drive, Ware, Herts SG12 OXS.

FOLLIES

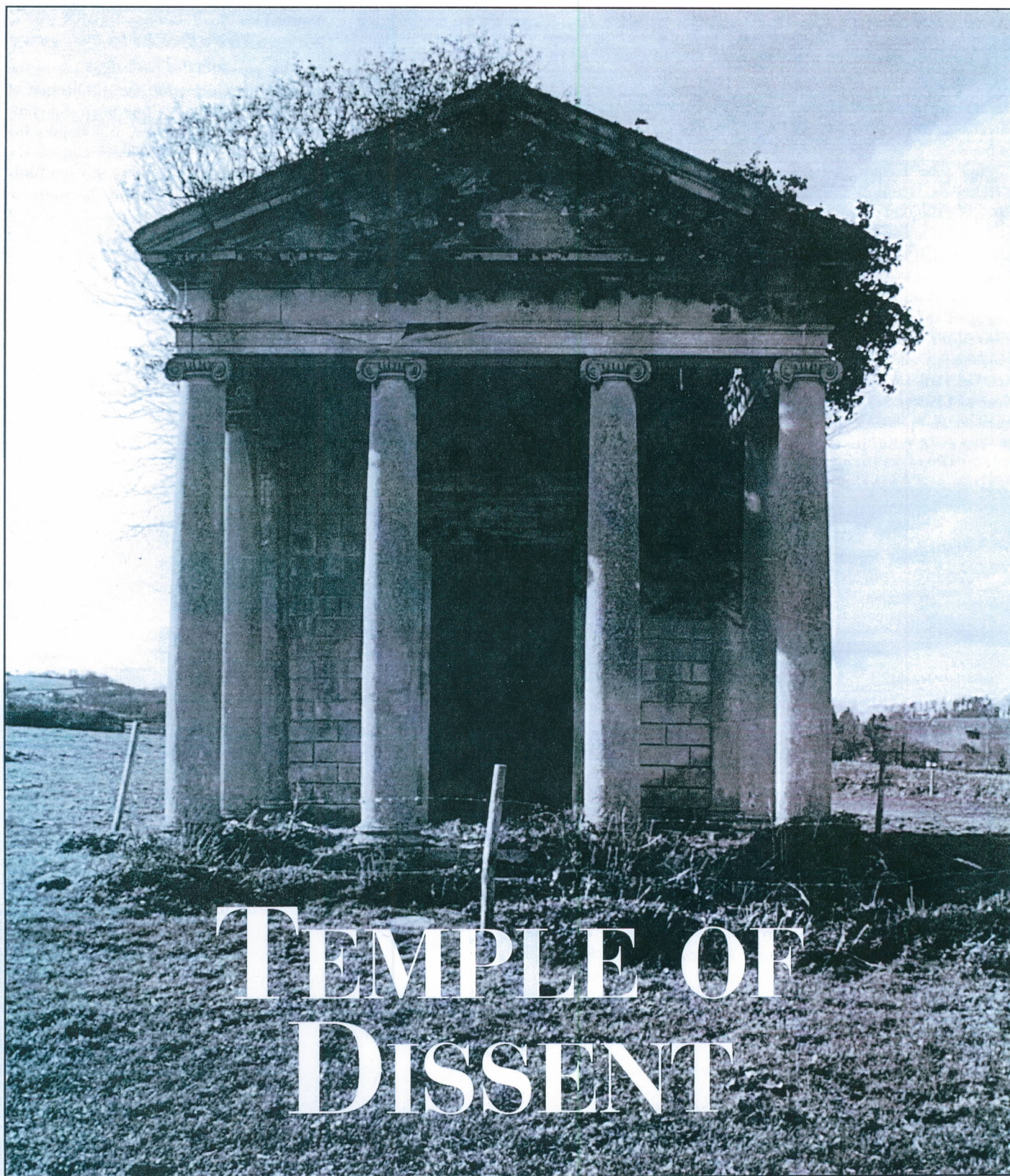
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Winter / Spring 1994



THE TEMPLE OF HARMONY AT HALSWELL, GOATHURST, SOMERSET. PHOTO: GWYN HEADLEY 1994



Editorial

OUR COVER STORY this quarter raises issues fundamental to conservation and heritage. The Temple of Harmony at Halswell, Gouthurst, Somerset is ruinous and decaying, but it can be rescued. Someone has put forward a rescue plan, but it is not a plan that conservationists want to accept. The issue is muddled by the fact that the once great Halswell estate has been partitioned and sub-divided into several different freeholds and leaseholds. The owner of the temple, Mr. G. A. Warren, has a statutory duty to repair it as a listed building. There is no benefit to him in so doing; he is a farmer who wants to farm his land without temples and interfering busybodies from London getting in the way.

Now John Taylor, the owner of nearby Cricket St. Thomas Wildlife Park, has offered £100,000 to restore the building, provided it is moved to his property. Feelings run high at Halswell; the tenants and owners are at loggerheads over other issues and the Temple of Harmony has been dragged into the ring as an unwilling contender. One of the residents feels passionately about the siting of the temple, and has rather worryingly threatened to go over to Cricket St. Thomas with a sledgehammer and pound it into rubble should it be removed from its rightful setting at

Halswell. He was told that this was not a constructive solution, but he is not the sort of man to be swayed by argument. We have given John Taylor room in this issue to put forward his point of view, which in the end would result in the rescue of the temple, but it is the remit of the Folly Fellowship as a charity to preserve, protect and promote follies, grottoes and garden buildings, and part of that role must be to preserve these erections in situ wherever possible. What do readers think?

Another eclectic review of park and garden buildings, grottoes and follies awaits you in this issue. News from the Netherlands, bits from Bristol, thoughts on thatching, wanderings in Wandsworth, and perhaps most excitingly, the discovery of a large collection of photographs of follies and grottoes taken round the turn of the century during the heyday of the picture postcard.

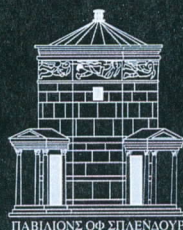
An update—for those of you who are interested—on the heritage consultancy Pavilions of Splendour. Your Editor is also a director of Pavilions of Splendour, and he is the only link between the Folly Fellowship and Pavilions of Splendour. The last three months of the year were hectically spent trying to raise money

through the Business Expansion Scheme to seed the venture; in the event the company did not raise the legally required minimum and the (not insubstantial) investments had to be returned. Keith Price and Gwyn Headley will be trying again; this time we hope to raise the small amount needed to get it properly up and running through the Enterprise Investment Scheme, which allows some investors a tax benefit. If you would like to be sent formal details in due course, please contact Gwyn Headley at 22 Mount View Road, London N4 4HX.

This possibility of paid employment for your editor means that the publication of this issue of FOLLIES has been delayed. Apologies to all readers, and thanks for your patience. You may have noticed the change in the issue date; as the sun beats through the windows and the tortoise gambols merrily in the garden it seemed illogical to put 'Winter' on the masthead. So Volume VI, No. 1 will be called Summer 1994, and it is intended to appear on May 19th. Please don't hold your breath.

Many thanks to our new freelance editorial assistant Ali Ismail, without whose help this issue of the magazine would have appeared even later, if at all.

Gwyn Headley



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Restoring Harmony

ALI ISMAIL

THE CONTROVERSY ABOUT the future of the Temple of Harmony at Goathurst, near Bridgwater in Somerset continues after a businessman proposed to move it. Wildlife park owner John Taylor has offered to buy the temple and set it up on the grounds of Cricket House, Chard where BBC film crews had built a cardboard temple for the set of the TV comedy series *To The Manor Born*. The Temple of Harmony was designed by Robert Prowse in 1764 but fell into disrepair after the Halswell House estate was split up. Sedgemoor planners want to form an Historic Garden Trust to restore and maintain the park building. Experts estimate the cost of repair at over £100,000. The roof is badly damaged and the foundations have been attacked by tree roots.

A meeting to discuss the formation of a garden trust has been planned for March. In the meantime the district council seeks the backing of Somerset County Council and English Heritage. A new architectural magazine planned a feature on the temple under the title 'Temple Loses Its Harmony' but repeated a feature on the Bankside power station instead.

JOHN TAYLOR'S VIEWPOINT

as told to Jonathan Holt

John Taylor is the owner of Cricket St. Thomas Wildlife Park near Chard in Somerset, one of the West Country's most beautiful parks where the public can enjoy nature unrestricted. Television viewers may remember the house and estate when they were the set of the hit BBC comedy series *To The Manor Born* starring Penelope Keith and Peter Bowles.

He is passionately concerned to preserve follies and other buildings which are falling into disrepair. So much so that he wants to move one of the garden buildings at Halswell some twenty-five miles south from its home in the Quantock Hills. This is the Temple of Harmony, a miniature version of the Temple of Fortuna Virilis in Rome, designed by Thomas Prowse for Sir Charles Kemeys-Tynte in

1764. Fortunately the statue of Harmony has been saved from the temple and is kept in the house, but the rest of the structure is in serious danger of collapse. Now a glorified cow-shed, it is strangled by a growth of ivy which long since ceased to be akin to designer stubble.

"I hope no one removes the ivy because it is basically keeping the tympanum together," says John Taylor. "It doesn't have much of a roof left, and it only needs a bad winter to see the whole thing come tumbling down. Every time I go to Halswell I see more vandalism so I made an application to Sedgemoor District Council to dismantle it and I'm still awaiting the outcome. They can't put up the money to restore it and it remains to be seen whether

they can propose an alternative. Until now it has been a case of two counsel arguing over a body that is about to expire.

"The architect of South Somerset District Council which covers Cricket St. Thomas is in favour of my plan to place it on a hillside over looking the park. It a perfect site for a folly—you can even hear people talking far below in the valley—and the BBC recognised this siting potential when they built a temporary folly in cardboard where Peter

Bowles gave dictation to his secretary Penelope Keith in *To The Manor Born*. Let us hope it was a sign of things to come.

"I am interested in any garden buildings that need saving to decorate my park because I believe in giving people as much pleasure as possible when they visit my estate—and I know they appreciate it because of the amount of letters I receive from the public whenever I add something like a statue.

"I also believe in allowing the public as much access as possible because it helps to bridge the gap between the town and country. It is satisfying to generate a new use for things that have become redundant."

Anyone with a folly to save or who would be glad to give a folly a new home can write to *John Taylor, Cricket St Thomas Wildlife Park, Chard, Somerset, Tel:(0460) 30755*



↑ IVY SUPPORTING THE TEMPLE
↓ DETAIL OF THE INTERNAL PLASTERWORK



HELP!

HALSWELL HOUSE GARDEN

This very important Somerset estate is badly in need of funds if its unusual follies are to survive. Local retired farmer John Tuckey and Bristol solicitor Timothy Davey bought the estate in 1984, since when they have been trying to restore the garden and its follies. English Heritage has made a grant to restore Robin Hood's Hut but Davey and Tuckey must find 20% of £38,500, i.e. £7,700, to be able to give the go-ahead to the architects Caroe & Partners of Wells. The 'umbrello', or central circular front room, has completely disappeared and what remains of the roof is in danger of disappearing too. Robin Hood's Hut stands forlorn at the top of the hill, while Mrs Busby's Temple lies like a wounded faun in the woods down below. A large black sheet flaps in the wind trying to keep the wicked rain from further damaging its roof. Davey and Tuckey have also agreed to buy The Temple of Harmony in a field near the foot of a series of lakes in a part of the estate separated by a vegetable field. This Palladian-style temple is now used as a cowshed and has grown a beard of vegetation around its crown. Can FF members put Messrs Davey and Tuckey in contact with any one who has some spare spondulicks? With the winter approaching the exceptional follies at Halswell badly need protection from the elements.

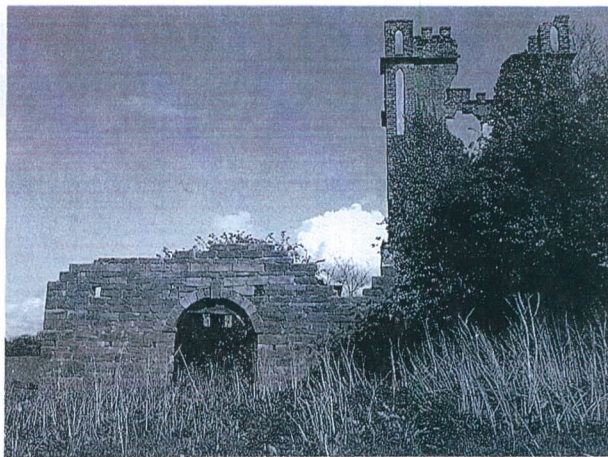
If you've ever been to any of the Ironbridge museums you've probably noticed a painting of Ironbridge in the 18th century which is reproduced on postcards and books, and which features what looks like a hexagonal prospect tower at the top of the view. Now although it has long since gone, a member was curious to know what its purpose was, as it seemed odd to have a prospect tower in what was presumably an industrial landscape. The Ironbridge librarian replied: *The engraving is by François Vivares (1709-80), is properly entitled 'The Upper Works at Coalbrookdale', and was published in 1758. The tower was situated in the gardens of Rose Hill House. One of the on-going projects of the Museum is to reinstate the gardens, and research for the project has not produced any concrete evidence for the purpose of the tower. Suggestions have included a windmill, a camera obscura, a pump house for cascades and fountains, or a prospect tower. If any member can shed light on the*

real purpose of the tower, the Ironbridge Museum would be delighted to know.

Can anyone provide more information about 'The Folly' in the Civil Parish of Tyrley, Staffordshire? One of our members has come across a reference to this grade II building, a 'curious 18th century structure in the form of a church. Tower of brick with tiled pyramidal roof + brickstacks. 2 sash windows with pointed heads. Ornament consisting of white panels. The rest is of stone with large arched opening'. On an old 1" O.S. map of Stoke-on-Trent (sheet 110) there is a patch of mixed woodland called 'The Folly' at grid ref 710376.

This sounds very much like Oakley Folly at Muckleston ('Muxon'), described on p. 306 of Follies — Ed.

ROBERT PILGRIM



OAKLEY FOLLY, MUCKLESTONE

Hagley Hall, west of Rugeley in Staffordshire: 'sealed up in 1949 and just revealed'. Can anyone find out more?

On a RADIO 5 interview with Gwyn Headley and James Howley presenter Liz Kershaw remembered a childhood folly at home in Whitworth, Lancashire, called Gormless End. We hadn't heard of it. Have you?

Jonathan Holt is writing a book on the follies of Wessex (Avon, Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire), to be published by the Redcliffe Press. Any help with tit-bits of information would be appreciated.

Did Bird's Folly in Bramshott, Hampshire (*Follies*, p. 80) ever get built? I managed to find Rectory Lane, but could see no sign of it. The only local resident I could find had never heard of it, but maybe it is tucked away in private grounds.

Alan Terrill.
Chapel House
High Halden, Kent TN26 3LY

As mentioned in the Spring issue of FOLLIES, I make ceramic architectural models, to scale, fully detailed and usually pure white, of follies, temples, monuments, gateways, mausolea, country houses etc.

I am currently looking for designs for new limited editions. I am particularly interested in the unbuilt, the destroyed, the ruined and the eccentric. I would welcome suggestions from readers (preferably with some illustrations) including possibilities for ruined / cut-through versions of complete buildings.

Hugh Colvin
Old School House
Llanfairwaterline
Knighton
Powys

Can any members of the Folly Fellowship throw light upon the history of the following follies?

1. Bottle Lodge at Tixall, Staffs.: three miles E of Stafford; OS Grid Ref. 983230 (Headley & Meulenkamp, *Follies*, p.313).
2. The Folly or Folly Farm, three miles WNW of Blandford Forum, Dorset, on the Durweston-Turnworth road; OS Grid Ref. 842083.

My interest arises from the circumstance that two of the illiterate farm-labourers who were my great-great-grandfathers lived in these evidently insalubrious dwellings in the early nineteenth century.

A. J. Sambrook
36 Bursledon Road

Hedge End
Southampton SO3 4BX

I am particularly interested in Palladian architecture, and I would love to find a temple or pavilion / tea room in a park setting. Perhaps you might have some suggestions as to where I might look for such a building to restore, or even where I may become involved in a current restoration project. While the classical form is my speciality, I should certainly not be averse to a dignified Gothic.

Suzannah Fleming-Bashford
8 Lichfield Road
Kew Gardens
Surrey TW9 3JR



charged with filling space.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Money to maintain the **Tyndale Monument** at North Nibley is running out, claimed Bill Thomas, chairman of Nibley Monument Trustees. At the moment the structure is in good repair, but Thomas said there was "not a cat in hell's chance" of having enough funds to meet the next repair bill. Cooling to his task, he went on to say that the monument may become a liability and that the trustees might resign. A week later he apologised for his defeatist attitude, having discovered quite how popular the monument is. Donations should be sent to the Tyndale Monument Trust, c/o A. G. Thomas, Waterley House, North Nibley, Gloucestershire.

A big fuss brewed up over **Rodborough Fort**, near **Stroud**, in July when it was revealed that its owner, Joanne Willies-Williams, was receiving £380 a week from Social Security to pay her mortgage. Just to prove that bureaucracy can move quickly when it feels like it, a new ceiling limit of £150,000 was imposed only days later. Mrs. Willies-Williams is trying to claim £10 million damages from the National Trust for stealing her land. Meanwhile an eighteenth century painting of the view from the folly by an anonymous artist of the English school fetched £58,000 at Sothebys in the same month.

HERTFORDSHIRE

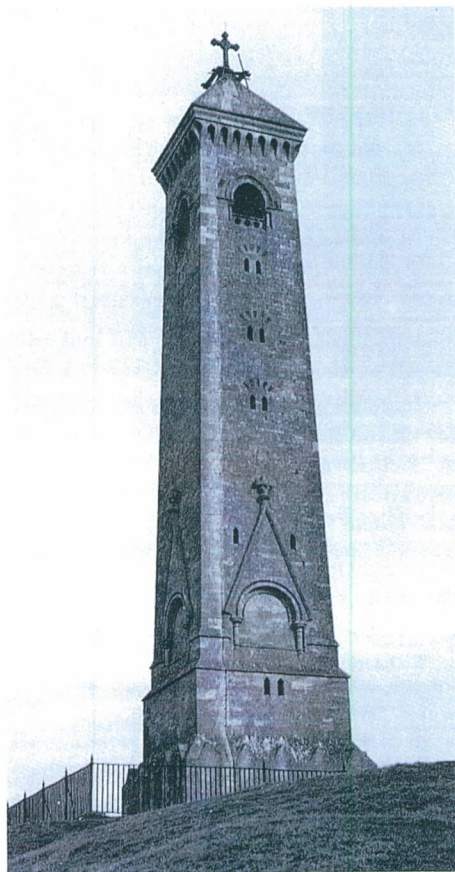
Capel Manor (just by junction 25 on the M25) has Gone Grotty. It is a 100 acre estate used extensively by one of the country's leading horticultural and environmental colleges. Some Pulham walling has been added next to the new visitors' centre and is the first feature of the guided tour. An information board reads: *'The use of Pulham walling material has been donated by Tesco Stores Limited when it was removed from Ponsbourne Park Hotel in 1991. Ponsbourne Park was built by the banking magnate James Carlile in 1876, on the site of a previous mansion. He commissioned the work from the local terracotta workmen, the Pulham Brothers, who were renowned in Britain at that time. This rebuilding was undertaken by Michael D. Chewter from Tunbridge Wells, Kent, a landscape garden contractor well known for building award-winning gardens at the Chelsea flower Show.'*

Also in the gardens are a maze, a copy of William Nessfield's Italianate design for the Great Exhibition in London in 1851, the Ruin Garden which contains a small Greek Temple, and a temple / summerhouse. On the summit of another mound, close to the motorway, a group of truncated columns are being erected in a ring.

LONDON

The **Albert Memorial** has been added to

GWYN HEADLEY



THE TYNDALE MONUMENT, NORTH NIBLEY

English Heritage's list of buildings at risk. This is a national disgrace—the structure has been swathed in scaffolding for nearly two years—but there are now so many national disgraces that one is nearly injured to them.

The **Temple in Wanstead Park** is a Grade II listed building, thought to date from 1720. Once used for banquets and receptions, its function today is less glamorous with only some of the rooms in use, as a workshop and toilets. Having been damaged by wartime bombing, the building has been ravaged by dry rot decaying the structural timbers, and the toilets have become targets for arson attacks. A £200,000 restoration plan is proposed with funds for the repairs already available from The Corporation of London. Some of the total cost may be met by a grant from English Heritage now that plans have been approved by The Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee who look after the park.

The **Jubilee Fountain at George Green** has recently undergone some repair and refurbishment work. Apparently this is in preparation for a forthcoming move—the fountain sits on the route of the M11 extension and at this point the road will be in a tunnel (probably the 'cut & cover' variety). In the proposed plan for the fountain it will be temporarily removed and resited, out of harm's way, on another corner of the green. According to an employee from the municipal authority they are undertaking to move it in one piece!

NORTH YORKSHIRE

The **Rocket Ship** at Aysgarth, together with its pals the **Pepperpot** and the **Folly Arch**, are to be consolidated (rather than restored—what good news) with the aid of a £3,208 grant from the Local Historic Features scheme of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee. They were apparently built for a Mrs. Hutton, owner of Sorrellykes Hall, in the nineteenth century, although Follies dates the cone / pepperpot to 1921.

Midsummer madness came to the **Druid's Temple** at **Masham** in June when a pig's head was found on the altar. Police thought it may have had something to do with inept devil worshippers who didn't realise the temple was a fake. As it's not connected to the spiritual grid, there seems little point in using it for a function it was clearly designed not to fulfil.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

A correspondent in the **Northampton Chronicle & Echo** wanted to know the connection between the follies in the Boughton / Moulton area, in particular the tower on the Leicester Road, **Bunkers Hill Farm**, **The Spectacles** and **Holly Lodge**. Answers please to **Trevor Cooper, Chronicle & Echo, Upper Mounts, Northampton NN1 3HR**.

SOMERSET

The **Temple of Harmony** at **Halswell House**, **Goathurst**, is collapsing through want of care. There is a proposal to rescue it. John Taylor, who owns the **Cricket St. Thomas** wildlife park nearby, has the permission of the farmer who owns it to move it to his park, where he wants to restore and reërect it on a hill above his estate. It appears that this hill was used by the BBC filming the TV sitcom *To the Manor Born*, when they erected a cardboard folly on the site. Taylor thought it looked well. Sedgemoor District Council, however, have refused to give consent, and it has the support of conservation groups who want the structure restored where it stands as part of the original landscape setting. Here is the dilemma: Unless something is done quite quickly, the building will collapse and be lost to us. If it is moved, the park, already mangled and mangy like a tired old lion, will be further diminished. Taylor says he is prepared to spend up to £100,000 restoring the temple, but understandably only if he can have it. Note that there is no financial gain to the park—just the loss of a beautiful old temple. We say—what does Penelope Keith say? We say—thank you Mr. Taylor, but that £100,000 of yours would probably pick up the entire Halswell estate. Why don't you restore it in situ?

SUFFOLK

The conversion of **Woodbridge Lodge** at **Rendlesham**, the 'world's smallest

Taff Ely Borough Council claim that the inscription on the monument relating to 'the earliest of the Pharaohs Osortseen' makes the obelisk a replica of another obelisk dedicated to the Pharaoh Osortseen in Cairo. The Cairo monument is the only surviving memorial to this now obscure ruler, who has escaped mention in our Egyptian guide books. Local historians at Pontypridd believe that the obelisk was built by the Crawhay family of ironmasters. The name 'CRAWHAY' in large lettering up the side of the obelisk would seem to bear out this theory.

MOW COP CASTLE'S ORIGINS FOUND

Mow Cop Castle stands on the eastern edge of the Cheshire plain. From it the intrepid climber can see The Wrekin, hills in Wales and Helsby Hill. A bit closer stand the Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope, Beeston Castle and Little Moreton Hall. In the North-East the Potteries can be seen.

The National Trust says that it was originally a two storey summerhouse and roofed with an inverted cone which could have been used as a beacon. Randle Baker Wilbraham, the Lord of the Manor, built it in 1754 in order to be a landmark in the view from his home at Rode Hall. The hill itself was used as part of the chain of beacons to warn of the approach of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

Most people know of it as an eyecatcher seen from the train travelling between Manchester and Stoke.

HAMPSHIRE

The unlisted rustic summer house at Stratfield Saye (*Follies*, p.88), built in 1846 to commemorate a visit by Queen Victoria, requires urgent repairs to the decorative facade that has been attacked by worms. The Duke of Wellington has approached Hampshire County Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council for a grant. Repair work has been carried out in the past with the roof being replaced by corrugated sheets, now to be replaced with oak shingles, and work will also be required to the pebble floor.

LONDON

There are hopes that the cascade at Chiswick House may become operational using modern-day technology—an electric pump. Lord Burlington and his architect, William Kent, originally planned to use a horse to pump it, first as a curtain of water falling beneath the main arch, before running under the path into the lake. Mr. Jeremy Benson, who is chairman of the Friends of Chiswick House, has said that such a system probably only worked for about 90 seconds.

Stoke Newington pumping station in London is the subject of negotiations between its present owner, Thames Water, and High Performance Sports who intend turning the site into the largest climbing centre in Britain. Unused and empty for the last few years, the

total cost of the project will be about £1.5 million.

WEST YORKSHIRE

Wainhouse Tower, Halifax, has been vandalised with seats being smashed, stone pavement slabs pulled up and a nearby run of dry stone wall destroyed. All of this happened just two weeks before it was due to be opened for the Easter holiday. The final cost of repairs to the council is estimated at £2,000.

WE'LL BE BACK AFTER THESE MESSAGES

Peter Dane writes: It seems that the advertising profession, always searching for new material to whet our jaded appetites, thinks that now is the time for follies to be dragooned into the noble cause of removing money from our pockets. Guinness advertise their famous stout featuring The Bath House at Walton Hall in Warwickshire; Audi use Worden Abbey in Bedfordshire. While it is not sensible to think of this as anything more than as a "flavour of the month" phenomenon it is gratifying to reflect that our beloved piles are considered worthy of inclusion at all in these massive money spinning crusades.

We've had a sherry label depicting a folly so it was just a matter of time before one was featured on a CD, cover that is. Josef Locke's *Hear My Song* (The Best of Josef Locke) features O'Brien's Tower in Ireland.

Our thanks to Dave & Jackie Martin, Christopher Humphries, Peter Dane, Jonathan Holt and Maurice Gould

UPDATE

WEST MIDLANDS

The Leasowes, Halesowen—half golf course, half public park and no magic left. Using a copy of the map from *The Works, in Verse and Prose*, of William Shenstone we traced the chain of pools down the wooded valley, which had large clumps of primroses on the banks, but not a folly in sight and everywhere very well trodden. We speculated on the positions of some of the follies; it must have been a most delightful place. Even the house has not escaped disfigurement. I felt great sadness to find it mown and featureless, but the mere fact that it has survived suburban sprawl and the motorway is a minor miracle. No sign posts either except two for public footpaths—one along the canal and the other to Mucklow Hill.

Barbara Hague

When last visited in November 1991, the two square towers of 'Castle Inn', Edge Hill, were separate from the octagonal tower, with no gate or immovable stone drawbridge, as described by Barbara Jones in the second edition of *Follies & Grottoes*. Much of the west face of the building was obscured by a

very old and large clematis growing on a metal poled pergola, and generally the place appeared run down. A new timber staircase, bridge with carved date—1992, and metal gate have been installed. The pergola and shrub gone and scaffolding, on part of the octagonal tower, suggested repairs to the stonework were being undertaken. The photograph on p.107 of Timpson's *Other England* shows the improvement.

Peter Dane

LETTERS

The dispute over the Temple of Harmony boils down to a very simple dichotomy—the English attitude versus the American one.

Whilst I dearly love my English brethren, I am often frustrated by the self-defeating attitudes of so many of your countrymen (exemplified by the hammer-wielding resident of Halswell). Far too often an Englishman will keep things going in a particular way for the sole reason that as long as he can remember, it was always done that way. Never mind that that way doesn't work, never mind that it is expensive and inconvenient, never mind that it accomplishes the opposite of what is desired. If it has been done one way in the past, then it ought to be done that way in the future. *Ergo*, the Temple of Harmony should stay put, even if that means its demise.

The American approach, on the other hand, is one of practical reality. Tradition and past history is important to consider and, if possible, to uphold. But the benefits of the status quo must be carefully weighed against the alternatives. One need not select the best alternative—merely picking the least objectionable will do very nicely. Forget about what would be ideal, because if it isn't an available choice then it might as well not even exist as an idea. Ideally, the Temple would be restored in situ. But that clearly isn't in the cards, so the choice is a simple one. Be English and let the building collapse where it has always been, or be American and give it new life and a wider audience a few miles away. Remember that while the squabbling is going on, some very rich real American might swoop down from the skies in his triple-rotor helicopter and carry the entire pile of stone off to Arizona to join the original London Bridge!

*Andrew Alpern JD, AIA
New York, New York*

Sedgemoor District Council have recently agreed to buy the Temple of Harmony and sufficient surrounding land to provide public access from the current owner. Having done so they will pass the Temple of Harmony and the land to the Somerset Building Preservation Trust which has undertaken to restore the Folly to its original grandeur. The Folly will then be handed over to a new charitable

LETTERS

There are five remaining follies on **Halswell Park** estate which are badly in need of restoration and are worth preserving. The Somerset Building Preservation Trust now owns the Temple of Harmony, a Grade II* building of 1764 designed by Thomas Prowse and Robert Adam. In the interior there stood a statue of Harmony or Terpsichore sculpted by Robert Walsh. We will shortly start the restoration of this folly which should be finished in about 12 months.

We have been offered the ownership of Robin Hood's Hut, a Grade II* folly, built about the same time and designed by Henry Keen. This has magnificent views over the English Channel and we hope soon to cover it so that it does not deteriorate further and start the restoration next year.

After that we will then tackle the Rotunda, a Grade II building with an ice house beneath and a grotto which was the outfall from a series of fish ponds.

There is a fifth folly known as Patcombe, a Grade II* building of 1771 designed by John Johnson. This was built as a Bailiff's House and was known as the Temple of Pan. Behind this building there is a substantial barn and a coachhouse and the three buildings together make an interesting complex. It is likely that the owning farmer will be given permission to develop these and they may not pass into our ownership.

When we have repaired each of the follies they will be passed over on a long leasehold to a new trust which we are in the process of setting up, to be called the "Halswell Park Trust." This new Trust will have the responsibility of maintaining the follies in the long run and for arranging public access.

I understand that one of the problems with some follies is access. In our case we have been lucky because either we have been granted access by the landowner, or a right of way exists which we will use.

Hugh Stafford

Secretary

Somerset Building Preservation Trust

I am Secretary of the Quex Park Society of Change Ringers and for several years I have been attempting to find out what I could of the design and building of the **Waterloo Tower** at Quex Park in Birchington, Kent. (Incidentally I do not classify the tower as a folly; the spire is definitely but the tower was built as a bell tower and is used as such!) Unfortunately not many records of the time have survived at Quex but interestingly I came up with the same idea as Headley & Meulenkamp about a possible architect. My starting point was the story of the connection with Faversham church tower. This was designed by Charles Beazley and built c.1797. I found William Fuller Pocock listed as one

of his pupils and then that WFP had done unspecified work at Quex in 1806. This was the date when the construction of Quex House started. The architect for that was Thomas Hardwick and a letter at Quex from a Mr. Johnston who seems to have been the building foreman refers to "Mr. Pocock, the Measurer." Faversham tower used to look more like Quex. It was built of brick but later faced in flint by Gilbert Scott.

The spire on the Waterloo Tower bears the date 1820. On each of the legs at the level of the gallery is a plate reading "John Clark Ramsgate 1820." John Clark was the head carpenter at Quex and as such seems to have had the task of making the patterns for the castings. He was also paid £10 in 1819 for taking a model of the spire to London. Entries in a small account book of the time record payments for iron castings for the ringing tower to W. & J. Mackney. Searches for ironfounders in directories and trade guild listings proved fruitless. I was sure the founder of such a structure must be of some substance.

Earlier this year a 'readers interests' listing in *FAMILY TREE* magazine caught my eye—"Mackney, London & Kent." A letter brought the information that the Mackneys were millwrights and ironfounders in Sandwich. I find this fascinating. The fabricators of this marvellous construction were the estate's head carpenter and a millwright from Sandwich. Surely this says much for the standard of work of the local craftsmen of the day.

As Headley & Meulenkamp rightly say the tower is not easy to photograph but the severe storms of a few years ago removed some of the surrounding trees and if a new edition of the book is planned sometime I will be pleased to supply a photograph. We try to open the tower once a month on Sundays for visitors to the Museum at Quex. We ring fairly regularly on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Saturdays at 7.30 p.m. We are always pleased to welcome interested visitors.

Hazel Basford

Broadstairs

Kent

Steve Graham has unearthed a story about the **Watlington White Mark** which is firmly in the Folly tradition. Morris Marples (White Horses and other Hill Figures), after dismissing tales of its origin as a Saxon phallic symbol, contents himself with writing that "the truth seems to be that it is only another eighteenth century 'folly' originally intended to represent an obelisk and was cut by Edward Horne in 1764." We can only quarrel with his use of the word 'only'.

Lawrence Dutton

Esmond Road

London W4

I found the last edition (Vol VI, 1) as fascinating as ever but one thing left me puzzled. It concerned the subject of your front cover—**Flounders' Folly**. You enclose a pic-

ture of the folly as it was in 1983 on page 12 but you don't explain how so much major damage has occurred within just the last ten years. It would appear that the tower remained virtually intact from 1838 when it was built up to the time of the 1983 photographs. Can you shed light on the cause of its recent demise? I'm sure other readers are equally puzzled.

Clive Juster

Axminster

Devon

Experts tell us that once one of the large coping stones which made up the parapet was removed, presumably by vandals, the tension which bound the others together would have been released and the rest of the stones would tumble shortly after—Ed.

Readers may be interested to know that at **Stanway House**, Gloucestershire (briefly mentioned in *FOLLIES* #11, page 4) there are now definite plans to reinstate the Cascade running down from the Pyramid and the Canal which was fed by it. The latter was at the same level as the roof of the house and, according to a guide, was filled in during the nineteenth century because it made the house damp. The guidebook to the house gives more details of the Pyramid and also mentions the Dog Graveyard, where numerous Stanway dogs are interred. Stanway has recently been used as the location for the forthcoming TV adaptation of Edith Wharton's *The Buccaneers*.

Charles Stiller

Charlbury

Oxfordshire

On page 18 of the Autumn 1994 issue of *FOLLIES* there is a reproduction of a picture postcard of **Greencroft Tower**. This is indeed part of Greencroft Hall near Lanchester. It gets a page in Peter Meadows's *Lost Houses of County Durham* (York: Jill Raines, 1993). The house itself was pulled down in 1960. The Tower (an eighteenth century Gothick arch and cottages) was to the east of the house, but was affected by subsidence and was demolished in 1955. However there is a surviving building: the stable block (also eighteenth century) has been reërected at the open air museum at Beamish, where it forms the visitor centre.

Charles A. Toase

Watery Lane

London SW20

Hello from Beautiful Nova Scotia!

Halifax boasts what may be the only surviving Royal Folly, which was part of the Duke of Kent's once splendid estate here. The mansion was destroyed by fire in the 1840s but thankfully the folly survived. It is a treasured building here as it is one of four 'Royal Round Buildings' to be found in Halifax, built between 1792 and 1800. Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, had a mania for round build-

Japan and the Byoboin Temple

PIETER BOOGAART

Reading Eric Denig's article about far-away follies (Australia and Malaysia) in a previous magazine made me think of the one visit to Japan my wife Rita and I made just over ten years ago. Follywise there is very little to enjoy in Japan, but architecturally speaking it is highly interesting. We soon came to love the neatness and efficiency in modern buildings and the loveliness of the old temples: made of wood, sometimes painted red and green and perennially peaceful, set in surroundings of subtropical gardens with gnarled trees, plants, water, bridges, walls, brightly coloured wooden ornaments, serpentine paths and neatly raked spaces. Even in the middle of city sprawls. Yes, we loved Japan, its contrasts and peculiar urban and rural architecture.

Holland has always had a special relationship with Japan. For a long time in the past we were the only country that had access to it. To honour that and to celebrate Holland's position as a quondam major seafaring nation a man called Kamichika Yoshikuni had hundreds of Dutch buildings copied and he put them together in a park near the city of Nagasaki. Nothing miniature, as you would expect, but everything life-size! The latest addition is a royal palace. A unique phenomenon in the field of architecture, I would think.

A few other architectural features now. In recent years a special building style of so-called Love Hotels has been developed. The more photographs you see, the more out-of-place they look. Pure kitsch. In the shape of a German Rhineland castle, a luxury yacht or an elongated mediaeval donjon. Eclectic architecture as an aphrodisiac. They are in various places in Japan. If you should put them together you would get a sort of Las Vegas. Japan also knows some anomalies like upside-down houses as a coffee shop (Fantastic Architecture) and a fish restaurant in the shape of a fish (in Kobe). There is also a tradition of sculpting ice palaces, but most people will agree that they are not ideal follies either.

And something else again: a few years ago the term folly was appropriated by some people to describe some futuristic / post-modern / deconstructivist and largely sculptural buildings. Modern architects and artists designed them in connection with an exhibition at Osaka. Few of us will actually have seen them. Better known perhaps are the very similar efforts of Bernard Tschumi in the Parc de la Villette in Paris (FOLLIES, #4), the follies for the Dutch floriade in 1992 and an exhibition in the city of Utrecht in the Netherlands some years ago (of

which some remnants can still be seen). They follow the same deviant path. Not that I begrudge these people their interpretation of the word folly too much. The meaning of the word folly is not protected as such. I may regret that, but it can't be helped, apparently. And any true folly-lover will appreciate and applaud departures from tradition. Every rule has exceptions and every culture its subculture and deviants. So follies, real follies in Japan and other countries in that corner of our world—they must be there.

I was just reflecting on how to remedy the situation that we know so little about the Far East in this respect, when someone sent me a few pages of the book *Lost Japan*. In the chapter 'The Road to Nara' the writer discusses the Phoenix Pavilion, or Byoboin (pp.191-3). It is on the back of the ten-yen coin. Designed to look like a phoenix alighting on water, it is a temple with a difference. It was built almost a thousand years ago in the Heian period. The photographs I have seen in guide-books and picture books show it from different angles. Unsurprisingly no single photograph can do justice to the plan and beauty of the building in its entirety. Part of the whole, looking like a bird's tail, stretches out into the water of the lake and has no apparent function. The first floors of the wings consist of a colonnade. The main body of the phoenix, the central hall with the shrine of Amida Buddha, has an upper level that looks useless as well. All of it under those intricately structured, sweeping Japanese wooden roofs.

Uselessness is considered sinful in Japan. All buildings and gardens are designed with specific functions in mind, even Zen gardens. Neatly raked, they are supposed to guide or aid meditation. Japan is above all a practical country. Functionlessness is a form of luxury or caprice that cannot really be expected here. The Phoenix Pavilion, according to the writer of this book on Japan, surprisingly breathes an air of freedom and is a folly. One gets the impression from his description that the building was designed purely for pleasure, but that the idea was so unheard-of that it was made into a temple to cover up the sin of luxurious waste. In that sense it would be very similar to a great number of buildings in our western part of the world, where folly-builders afterwards have often invented some sort of practical use for their creations.

Lost Japan, by Alex Kerr, ISBN 0-86442-370-5. Byobo-in was built in 1053. It is at Uji, 11 miles south of Kyoto. The figure of Amida, Buddha of the Western Paradise, was done by the artist Jocho in the eleventh century. Some parts of the building are hardly accessible. It is true that the bird's tail has been described as a fishing hall and the second floor of the main hall as a musicians' gallery, but that has been recognised as purely speculative, unfounded interpretation.

FOR SALE

The property market takes a bit of a dive following the recent flurry of folly properties on the market. **The Jungle** (listed Grade II) at Eagle, Lincolnshire, is for sale through Strutt & Parker in Market Harborough, at a guide price of £650,000. The extraordinary sham castle façade, dating from about 1820, formerly had a farmhouse attached to it, but this was replaced in the 1970s by a large modern house, which was further extended in the 1980s. Pevsner describes the folly as "spidery and vegetable-like, an ancestor of Gaudi if ever there was one." The property offers extensive accommodation, including seven bedrooms, offices, tennis court and indoor swimming pool, complete with jacuzzi and Italian



THE DAVE MARTIN COLLECTION

wall mosaic depicting the folly façade. The original builder of The Jungle, Samuel Russell Collett, kept a zoo, with a variety of animals, including kangaroos.

SOLD

The bargain this time around (depending on your love for a challenge in restoration and rebuilding work) seemed to be the auction of **The Temple of Pan** at Patcombe Farm, Broomfield, in Somerset—part of the Halswell estate of Sir Charles Kemeys-Tynte. The folly once formed part of a large group on the Halswell House estate. Dating from 1771, it is a pink brick classical building with a curved stone portico of Doric columns, and is currently in a very poor state of repair, the roof having collapsed and the windows devoid of glass. Reading accounts of the Halswell folly group by Barbara Jones and Headley and Meulenkamp, some considerable confusion seems to surround the individual buildings and their names. Headley and Meulenkamp could find no trace of the Temple of Pan, but this may be explained by the fact that it now stands on land that no longer belongs to the Halswell estate. In an article in *Country Life* (“Arcadia under the plough”, 2 February 1989), Gervase Jackson-Stops identifies the Temple of Pan as the bailiff’s house at Patcombe.

The Temple, on offer with 3.56 acres of land, and with a guide price of £50,000-70,000, already had planning consent for renovation and extension of the building to form a 4-bedroom dwelling. According to estate agent R.B. Taylor & Sons of Yeovil, the sale attracted an enormous amount of interest from the UK and overseas, and in the event was bought for £168,000 by Anonym Ltd. of Hinton St. George, Somerset. Two other follies on the Halswell House estate have been bought by The Somerset Buildings Preservation Fund (SBPF). According to a report in *The Times* (28 August), the **Temple of Harmony** has already been restored and is open to the public, and there are similar plans for the **Robin Hood House**. Unfortunately, the SBPF had insufficient funds to purchase the Temple of Pan. The planning permission apparently involves restoring the folly. Let us hope that any extension is carried out sensitively. More reports on this folly and those still on the Halswell estate would be welcome.



MICHAEL COUSINS

THE TEMPLE OF PAN, HALSWELL

although it is given a brief mention in the text. It is as if the authors have decided that the temples there had a real use, and it is other countries which have copied them in the form of follies. What of Bomarzo, Isola Bella and many other unique creations?

Malnic, who provided the text while Broquet photographed, structures the book into three parts: a short general introductory essay, a photographic gallery showing follies by type and a final section of various contents. The first has the title “Les constructions de l’inutile” which immediately makes one ask whether Malnic has fallen into the beginner’s trap of assuming that all follies are useless constructions. The style of this section is a bit gushy and light, and tends to emphasise the dream-like quality of follies. There is quite a long discussion of ruins, emphasising their roots in painting, and then Malnic makes the most controversial, though probably correct, statement of all: “Angleterre...le pays qui inventa les fabriques.” What is a ‘fabrique’? Is it different from a ‘folie’? The former is defined in a dictionary of 1756 as “any building of which painting offers a representation”, and so Malnic talks of the fabriques of Claude Lorrain—temples, broken columns, idyllic edifices. An early French definition of follies is “little constructions made with branches or leaves”, which Malnic admits has developed somewhat—the etymological discussion of ‘fabrique’ and ‘folie’ reaches few clear conclusions. In Malnic’s book, the inclusion of all sorts of benches, pergolas and fountains tends to make follies synonymous with garden architecture. In other folliogists’ books they may get little space, instead giving more discussion of those buildings which do not fit nicely into a garden setting, not too easy to approach or take in, or not part of any well-planned design.

Malnic’s inclusion of “Follies Inspired by Faith” again gets onto shaky ground with the idea that genuine religious belief can drive the building of follies. We generally balk at calling some churches follies because to do so would be sacrilege, but then there is the replica of St. Peter’s Basilica in the jungle of the Ivory Coast. Apart from that debate, most of the examples that Malnic gives us, such as the Temple of Surya at Sezincote, were not built out of religious devotion but are little more than decoration, and thus “genuine” follies. More care could have been taken with the proof-reading—some English counties are badly spelt, notably BERFORDSHIRE, COMBRIA and WORCES-TEIRSHIRE. Nevertheless, the book’s qualities outweigh its faults, and particularly useful are the addresses of places to visit, French folly designers and architects, dealers in new and antique follies of portable size, and, lo and behold, the Folly Fellowship and Follies magazine. Our efforts at promotion must be working!—JH

BOOK REVIEWS

Evelyne Malnic and Patrick Broquet, **Folies de Jardin**, Les Editions du Chêne (Hachette Livre), Paris, 1996, 144pp, 188Fr. Hardback

The appeal of this book is great—stunning photos of appetising follies almost beckoning you to come and visit them—a nicely designed product, which sits easily on any coffee table. But does it add anything to folly research, or offer new insights into buildings you may have known but could not find much information about? That may be the only major failing of the book which is aimed at the reader who knows a bit already about garden architecture but wants to learn a digestible amount more.

What do you compare it to? It’s certainly more than a bluffer’s guide à la Whitelaw, it is more in depth than *Follies and Pleasure Pavilions*, and it is less grandiose than *De Folie en Folie*, and a good deal cheaper. Perhaps its greatest quality is that it introduces us to a wide variety of buildings in parks and gardens which are not necessarily palatial or well-known, and gets us planning our next trip to the continent. British follies are there too—the inevitable Stourhead, Stowe and so on, but Malnic and Broquet are content to limit their peregrinations to France, Germany, Austria, the Poland, the Czech Republic and a bit of Spain. Italy is conspicuous by its absence from the photographs,

design was inspired by, or even a reworking of a design by Thomas Wright (Wright was very familiar with Wrest because he had since 1736 been a summer tutor to the de Grey children).²³ Returning to the main garden via the **American Garden**,²⁴ the tour ends at the Orangery. The original Green House was designed by Batty Langley but was demolished by the 2nd Earl in the 1830s. In its place the Earl designed the new **Orangery** in 1836 and turned it through 90° so that it faced east instead of south. It is, as is by now to be expected, in a continental style and moderately more accomplished than the main house.

Although Wrest is largely ignored by the academic elite, and is sometimes derided by others for being too formal, that bias is largely to be expected. Such opinions are prejudiced by the current fashion for Walpolian ideas about landscape garden design, and by the ever-growing desire for informality in British culture. And yet despite the continued criticism, Wrest has managed to maintain its stiff upper lip and continues to stand proud like a British Guard on parade. Whatever the fashion, Wrest Park will always remain an important example of early-eighteenth century English garden development. And who knows, after English Heritage have completed their ambitious restoration plans at the beginning of the new century, the gardens may at last be better understood and better appreciated.

NOTES:

- 1 Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis (ed.), *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, New Haven, 1941, vol.39, pp.139-40.
- 2 Paget Toynbee (ed.), "Horace Walpole's Journals of Visits to Country Seats &c.", *Walpole Society*, vol.xvi, 1928, p.71.
- 3 Ackers (sometimes spelt Ackres, Akers or Acres) also designed the gardens at Caversham Park, near Reading, Berkshire. He was George London's son-in-law.
- 4 The Duke's last heir.
- 5 Linda Cabe Halpern, "The Duke of Kent's garden at Wrest Park", *Journal of Garden*

History, vol.15, no.1, Jan-Mar 1995, pp.149-78.

- 6 Tim Richardson, "Wrest Park, Bedfordshire", *Country Life*, Feb. 13, 1997, pp.38-43.
- 7 Located at the end of the drive from Silsoe. The daily work of supervising the building was undertaken by Thomas Smith. The Brabury Lodges (1 km to the north east of the house) were added in 1816.
- 8 Now the Royal Institute of British Architects.
- 9 Now the Bowes Museum.
- 10 Wife of George II.
- 11 The Marchioness visited Studley Royal in 1744 and 1755; was a frequent visitor to Shugborough; and visited both Wroxton and Stowe in 1748.
- 12 The Chinese House was subsequently moved to Wotton in Buckinghamshire and then Haristown in Ireland, and has recently been returned to Stowe thanks to the work of the late Gervase Jackson-Stops.
- 13 Joyce Godber, "The Marchioness Grey of Wrest Park", *Bedfordshire Historical Record Society*, vol.xlvii, 1968, p.68. It was Stevens who returned to Wrest Park in 1769 to repair the Kiosk (*English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens: Part 2 Bedfordshire*, 1986).
- 14 Halpern, *op. cit.*, p.163.
- 15 Gwyn Headley, & Wim Meulenkamp, *Follies: A Guide to Rogue Architecture in England, Scotland and Wales*, London, 1990, p.204.
- 16 Toynbee, *op. cit.*, p.71.
- 17 Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Bedfordshire Huntingdon and Peterborough*, Harmondsworth, 1968, p.174.
- 18 Halpern, *op. cit.*, p.176.
- 19 Godber, *op. cit.*, p.45.
- 20 Halpern, *op. cit.*, p.168 (Bedfordshire CRO L30/8/43/1).
- 21 Batty Langley, *New Principles of Gardening*, London, 1728, p.vii.
- 22 Godber, *op. cit.*, p.45 (see also Bedfordshire CRO L30/9a/5/19, L30/9a/132 and L30/9/32/49); Bedfordshire CRO slides nos. 1666, 1669, 1672).
- 23 Bedfordshire CRO L31/318 (abstract of bills); Thomas Wright (edited by Eileen Harris), *Universal Architecture*, London, 1755, 1758. In Book II, *Six Original Designs of Grottos*, there are significant features of Plate I that bear a strong resemblance to the semi-ruined plunge-pool.
- 24 Added to commemorate Wrest's use as a weekend home by the American Ambassador.

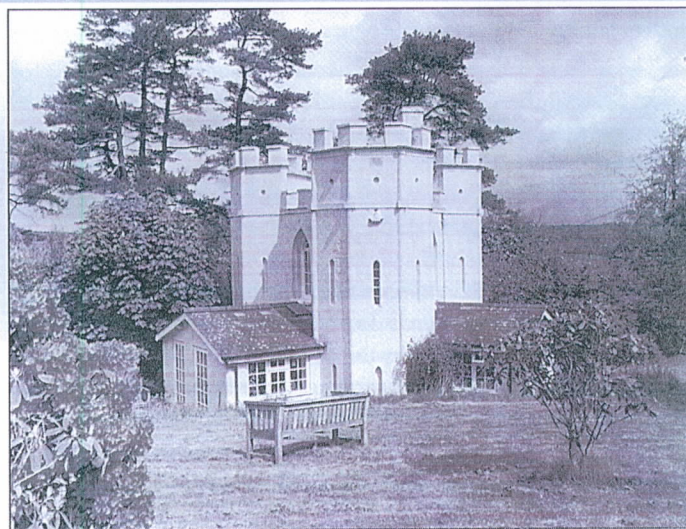
FOR SALE 'SPECIAL'

If you are a devotee of the Caliph of Fonthill then this one may be of interest. **Beckford's Cottage** in **Bath** is on the market, not that he ever lived there as it wasn't built until after his demise, but it stands next to the road in the shadow of Beckford's Tower on the Lansdown. The asking price is £150,000.

The eighteenth century **Deer Tower** (listed Grade II) at **Shillingee**, near Chiddingfold in Surrey, is available for rent at £8,750 a month through Hamptons at Guildford [*That's just over £10 an hour so I can just about afford an afternoon—Ed.*]. The Tower is set in 120 acres of garden and park. As the agent would no doubt say, this represents the discerning client with a unique opportunity to enjoy a truly individual and original property.

We mentioned the eighteenth century grotto at **St. Osyth's Priory** back in 1989 (FOLLIES #4, p.1), but now the property and estate is for sale, available in 5 lots, there has to be a question mark as to its future. If you want to save what is probably the only surviving grotto in Essex, please send Bidwells (01473 611644) a cheque for £2.3 million.

Pepperpot Castle near Taunton, Devon, is the most delightful of follies to come on the market for a long time. Billed as "possibly the smallest castle in England", this early-nineteenth century building functioned as a lodge to Lady Harriet Acland's drive (see FOLLIES, vol.6, no.1, pp.9-10) and was also once used as a Hunting Lodge and country retreat by Lord Carnarvon's Estate. The property, which is trefoil in plan with castellated hexagonal corner towers and sympathetic twentieth century additions, is listed Grade II and stands in five acres of land. Unless previously sold, it will have been auctioned by the time you read this—the guide price is £150,000.



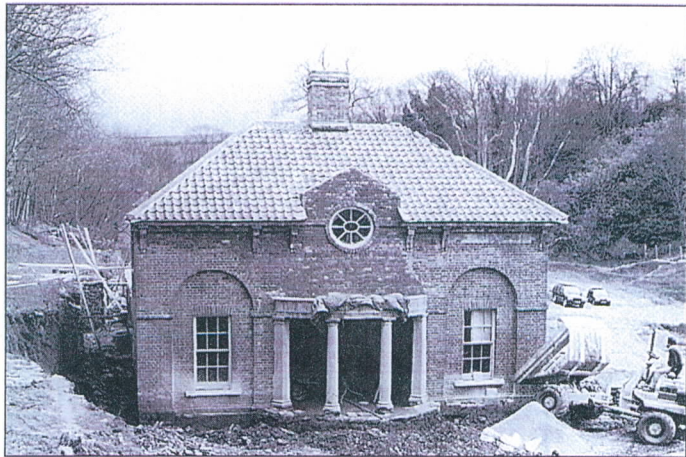
PEPPERPOT CASTLE, NR. TAUNTON

The Temple of Pan

SHARON MCGINN

The Halswell Estate near Goathurst in Somerset contains many buildings that are unique, and collectively form a fine example of a major folly group, despite their unfortunate decay. The Temple of Pan, although once an important structure within the garden landscape, has for many years remained lost and forgotten along its perimeter.

It is unclear who instigated the first phase of garden building at Halswell, but a formal garden was established in the early 1700s. However, a transformation occurred in the mid- to late-eighteenth century under



ABOVE: RESTORATION OF THE TEMPLE OF PAN
BELOW: RADLEY GAZEBO

the direction of the owner, Sir Charles Kemeys Tynte. Fortunately his steward, Richard Escott, compiled a long memorandum of all works undertaken, which remains as a most valuable source of reference. He mentions the Temple of Pan in 1771—the architect, however, was unnamed—yet seven years later, drawings by John Johnson entitled “Temple of Pan in the gardens of Sir Charles Kemeys... at Halswell” were exhibited at the Society of Artists. Many follies over the centuries have managed to acquire a collection of names, and the Temple of Pan is no exception, its other aliases being Patcombe Farmhouse and the Bailiff’s House.

Mr. Andrew Clark (a builder) purchased the property last autumn at auction, with agreed planning consent (including detailed plans) for restoration and extension. He has spent the last nine months restoring the Temple to a five-bedroomed luxury family home with four acres of landscaped gardens. At the time of the public auction the building had deteriorated to a very sorry state—little remained of the roof, and both floors and the staircase had disappeared long ago. The ground floor rooms were full of tons of leaf litter and other debris that had accumulated to just below the window case-ments. Using the visible evidence and advice from various professional groups, the Temple has now been reborn.

The original building contained two ground floor rooms leading from either side of the portico, upstairs, three small rooms were accessed by a central staircase—all have been fully reinstated. The only change has been the addition of a bathroom with a lovely view through the central rosette window. An outside furnace and chimney have been removed from the rear to allow the addition of the extension and being lower, is not visible from the front elevation. During excavations the original well was discovered, with a drop of over eighty feet, it still contains water, and until recently has been the property’s only source of drinking water. It too has been restored. Overshadowing the property is a most-imposing woodland, romantically named The Thickets Heronry. Originally you walked through its dark interior before arriving with the Temple as your backdrop, and greeted by a statue of Pan (now at Castle Hill, Devon). Even at the height of summer, the buildings remain cool and shady until mid-afternoon, so adding to its mystical ambience. A pre-war Ordnance Survey map clearly shows a small pond, fed from a nearby spring. This, unfortunately, has been totally lost. The spring

is still active, however, and so the pond has now been reinstated also. This unusual property is nearing completion and will be marketed in September with an asking price of £480,000. The agents are Jackson-Stops and Staffs (tel: 01823 325144).

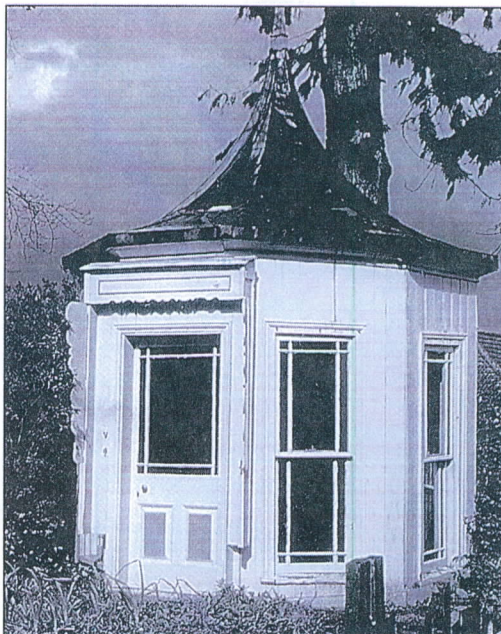
Radley Gazebo, Cheltenham

OLIVER BRADBURY

Radley is the name of a bungalow built in the garden formerly belonging to an extant house called Scoriton in Pittville Crescent, Cheltenham (Scoriton was formerly known as Fernlawn). In the south-east corner of Radley is Cheltenham’s sole surviving gazebo situated on a gentle mound surrounded by mature trees.

Little is known of the gazebo’s history, and in particular when it was built, but by examining old town maps one can narrow down its erection to between 1864-1884 (it is marked on the 1884 OS map). The

gazebo is a substantial wooden structure of nine sides over an underground cavity, and currently painted in two tones of light blue, with windows on five sides. The roof, constructed of lead, slightly projects away from the main body of the gazebo, but then sharply tapers back towards a pointed top. The most charming features of the gazebo are the windows and the front door, the bottom half of the latter being panelled. This is surrounded by an unusual construction above and to the sides, which probably once housed a sun blind. The sides are thin pieces of wood with a decorative profile on hinges connected to the above valance, again decorated with a cut profile, and a rectangular moulding with a tiny paterae within (probably once balanced by one on the left). The non-glazed areas of the gazebo are constructed of vertical planks. The interior is well lit with a high ratio of window to wall—the windows are unusually low to the ground and



DR. NIGEL TEMPLE, 1998

are handsomely constructed with pulley-opening mechanisms. The sides are filled with strips of red stained glass with blue corner squares, believed to be original. The windows and door are linked by a dado rail and skirting board, the floor is planked and ceiling flat and plain. An original door lock with a brass knob survives on the inside door.

The only known reference to the gazebo is from a 1909 sale particular for Fernlawn, as it was then known, describing: “one ornamental octagonal and two rustic Summer Houses”. The two rustic summer-houses have now disappeared from the once extensive grounds that have been subdivided four times. Near the gazebo is a pair of stone steps leading to an overgrown terrace. The gazebo’s owner can remember it being used to house deck chairs as a young man, but little else. I like to think of it being used for taking lime cordials in c.1900. He had it restored in 1979-80, but eighteen years later it is in a perilous condition with serious rot in places (especially the base), and needs a committed owner. It is further compromised by an overpowering modern neighbour. Despite a mid- to late-Victorian date of construction it exudes a lightness of touch more Regency than Victorian. It is for ‘sale’ if anyone would like to restore it—there is no set price and offers will be welcome. The gazebo is probably now too rotten to be taken down and reassembled, but it might inspire someone to perhaps recreate it in their own Arcadian landscape? If interested please ring (01242 254 952) or write to Oliver Bradbury at 32 High Street, Cheltenham, Glos, GL52 2NW.

FOR SALE

DRAUGHTY CONTRACT?

In late August, **Groombridge Place**, near Tunbridge Wells in Kent, was put on the market. The moated, seventeenth-century manor house, was the setting for Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes mystery *The Valley of Fear*, and the author was a regular visitor to the house. More recently, in the early 1980s, the Peter Greenaway film *The Draughtsman's Contract* was made there. It was purchased in 1993 by Andrew de Candole, a millionaire businessman and founder of CityGate Estates, who said at the time he planned to restore it to its former glory.

The formal gardens, originally laid out in 1674 by the owner Philip Packer with advice from John Evelyn, were restored, and an adventure trail, 'The Enchanted Forest', including a grotto and a number of fantasy theme gardens, were laid out in the nearby woods by Ivan Hicks. Increasing involvement in the IT sector have meant spending more time overseas than at Groombridge, the owner's reason for the reluctant sale. The 200-acre estate includes five cottages, formal gardens, and has an asking price upwards of £5m.

ACCOMMODATION FOR ASPIRING MOLES AND TOADS

Several people on the south-west visit to Belcombe in June confided they were thinking of building their own grotto, in one case in their cellar. If you hanker after a cellar to build a grotto, there are a number of suitable properties on the market. **Tudor Cottage, Somerton**, Somerset, is a seventeenth-century house in the heart of town—the two-chamber cellar is connected by a network of tunnels to the church and the inn. £175,000 from Jackson-Stops & Staff on 01935 474066.

Still with potential for grotto builders but moving north, **Marton House** in Cumbria has gone on the market. The house dates from the early nineteenth century and was built by Bonomi in classical Georgian style on the edge of the Eden Valley. Generous accommodation includes an orangery and vaulted cellars. There are walled and landscaped gardens, wonderful views, and a Romanesque folly in the grounds. Offers over £850,000 to Strutt & Parker on 01423 561274.

RUSTIC CHARM

The Grade I-listed **Convent House** at **Stourhead**, reported for sale in the last issue, was still on the market at £295,000 at the end of August. For this you get a thatched, three-bedroom house, an acre of wooded gardens, and an 81-year lease. Maybe the National Trust lease terms were fairly rigorous when it came to maintenance. For more information, contact Michael de Pelet on 01935 812 236.

A delightful thatched cottage orné on the Isle of Wight was also up for sale recently. The Grade II **Sweetwater Lodge** near **Calbourne** was built in the mid-1800s as a lodge to Westover Manor. Guide price is £250,000 from Wright's estate agency on 01983 822 122.

If you like colonial vernacular, then **The Lodge** (Grade II) at **Halswell Park**, Goathurst, may appeal to you. This is a bungalow-style property with a thatched roof pointed in African hut style and tree trunks supporting the verandah. Price £157,000. Contact Greenslade Taylor Hunt on 01278 425555 for details.

TRAILER

Finally for something really different. Most follies are fixed buildings, but in a variation on the theme, young artist Daniel Lobb has designed a **folly caravan** (featured in *The Daily Telegraph*

on 5 August 2000). Daniel was inspired by the remains of Northington Grange in Hampshire, an early nineteenth-century Greek Revival house by William Wilkins: as a student at Winchester School of Art, Daniel lived in a 1960s caravan nearby. He describes his creation as a contemporary folly. The structure is built from three second-hand caravans, held together with more than 1,000 rivets, and in the tradition of follies, it is not designed for living in. The balcony and sweeping staircase are from a demolished hotel in New Milton in Hampshire. 'The Grange' stood in the garden at the Red House Museum, Christchurch, Dorset (01202 482860) during the summer and now it is for sale: enquiries via the museum. Then again, I expect Daniel could make you another one, if it has been sold.

And finally: Graham Daw has identified the 'Romantically forgotten Regency mansion' for sale in the last issue as **Petticombe, Monkleigh**, south of Bideford.

BOOK REVIEW

The Artist & the Garden. By ROY STRONG. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 2000. 288 pp. £29.95. ISBN 0-300-08520-6

If you've already got *The Artist and the Country House*, then this work for the Garden is its twin, and if you can afford the former, you can certainly afford this.

Roy Strong makes the boundaries of his work quite clear in the introduction. The book starts with the first appearance of gardens, in portraits, and closes with the transition from gardens to landscape in the second half of the eighteenth century. The point should be stressed that this book is focused on gardens. Sir Roy's book differs from its companion in that he has opted to treat the subject thematically rather than chronologically—probably the more difficult of the two paths, but one that he manages in his practised style: erudite and entertaining. This inherently necessitates a degree of back-tracking, but not overly and not to the extent that it distracts. One could be tempted to jump straight in with the last two chapters—more familiar territory for follies—covering the garden panorama and the transition of the garden picture into landscape painting. But then you would miss out on two eye-catchers on pages 77 and 81! Sir Roy frequently reminds us, and quite rightly, that what was depicted in many of the views may have been imaginary: through artistic licence, or added at the wish of the patron—whims or projected schemes never carried through.

There are some extraordinary gaffes in the final production, quite unexpected of Yale, and these relate mainly to the plate numbering and captions. That aside, Sir Roy brings the whole subject to life at a level that whets the appetite. The task is helped extensively by numerous colour and black and white plates: barely a page goes by without one, leaving the reader wanting extra helpings. The book could have gone a lot deeper, and perhaps that is the price that has to be paid for reaching the maximum audience. Many of the sources are secondary, and with any research, what has gone before should not be assumed to be right. Sir Roy should have gone that extra yard to check the accuracy of some of these sources, e.g. Friedman and Hartwell. A bibliography, even a select one, is sorely missed.—MGC

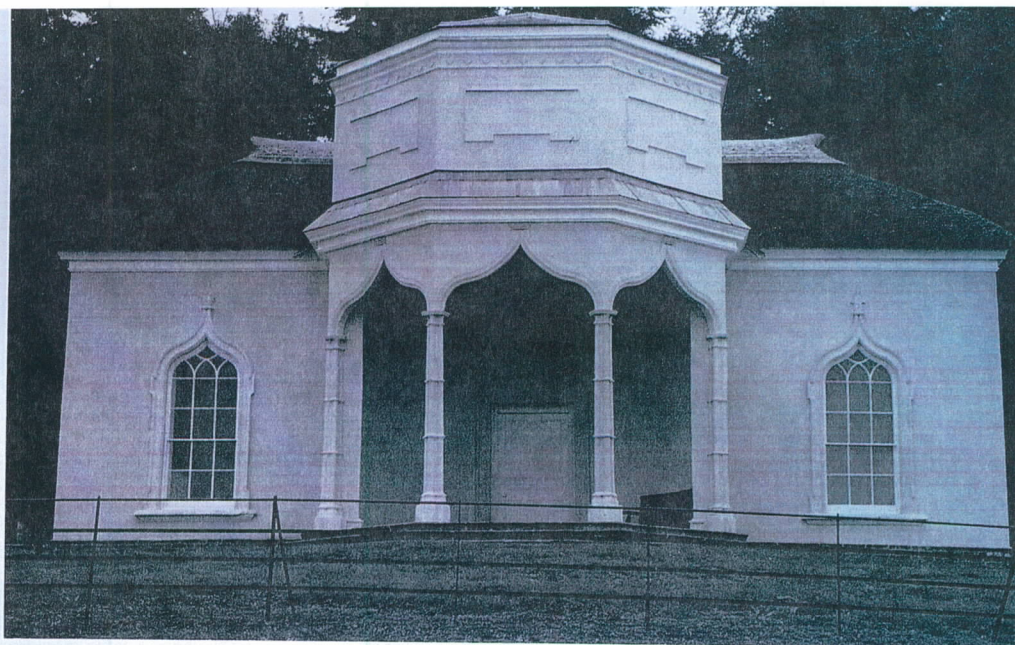
...and one that should be on your Christmas list, and will be reviewed in the next issue of FOLLIES...

Discover Dorset Follies, by Jonathan Holt

The Dovecote Press Ltd., £4.95 ISBN 1-874336-71

Robin Hood's Hut, Halswell, Somerset

ELIZABETH ANNE
WATERS



FRONT AND BACK OF
ROBIN HOOD'S HUT,
HALSWELL

It has been many years since I last saw Robin Hood's Hut, and then it looked forlorn and unloved. So it was with great excitement and anticipation I accepted the Landmark Trust's kind invitation to visit the newly rebuilt and restored building.

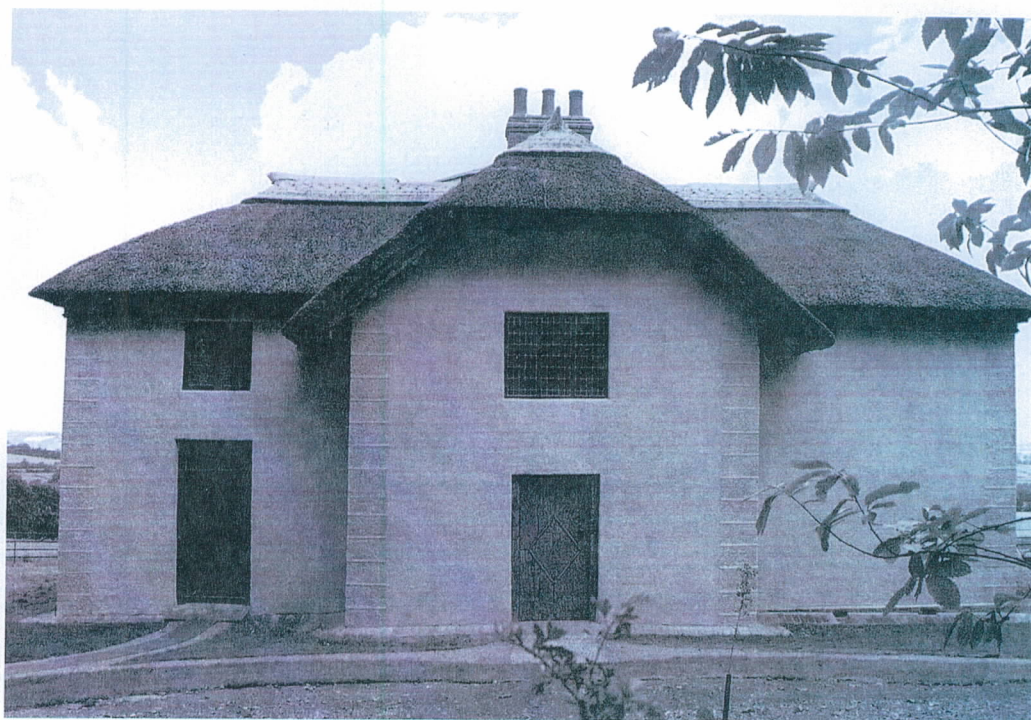
In the absence of any detailed directions for approaching the hut, I arrived via the main drive to the house. (The Goathurst Estate, for those of you who do not know, is divided up with various concerns holding interest in the house and outlying buildings, and now, as on my first visit, the residents value their privacy and so do not look kindly on the casual folly enthusiast). However, having been specifically invited on this beautiful June Summer's day, I drove past the house, down a field, and having spotted the Hut in the far distance by then, parked my car on the edge of a golden yellow field of rapeseed. Striding out across this in the glorious sunshine and up the hill I approached by what was the original route from the house (as I have since found out, in exactly the opposite direction to that now requested by the Landmark Trust). As I came closer I really could not believe the transformation from a collapsing ruin back to its former glory.

'The Somerset Building Preservation Trust' took on the building in 1997, and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage, carried out the extensive restoration work required before approaching the Landmark Trust in order to provide the building with a secure future. Too often we despair at the loss of buildings no longer loved, or even for those loved but with little chance of finance for important restoration work, particularly in the manner in which we would dearly love to see these buildings again. Here we have a splendid example of just what can be achieved. Those of you lucky enough to have actually stayed in a Landmark Trust building

will know the very high standards they attain for their rental properties.

I really would not have thought it possible to see this building, originally built c.1767, looking as it probably did back then; well, not exactly the same since the Landmark Trust obviously have to make their buildings suitable for accommodating their guests. Here they have done an excellent job and so if you recall the building's sad former state, and if you like to stay in Landmark Trust properties (and only need one double bed), go and enjoy this very special building. With its 'breathtaking panorama which still today gives uninterrupted views across the Somerset Levels towards the Mendip Hills and Bristol Channel', you will not be disappointed.

For further details contact 01628 825925 or visit www.landmarktrust.co.uk



GARDEN BRIDGES by MICHAEL SYMES. Wallington. 2007. 44pp. Pbk. £10.

The author, an acknowledged luminary on garden history, adds to his existing portfolio of works with a profusely illustrated and welcome study of garden bridges. One would have thought this an ideal candidate for a Shire publication – such specialised books are rare beasts, but the same rationale drives a limited market, which may account for why this is a self-published affair. That initiative alone deserves support, but the pricing is also attractive. This work goes much further than the only similar offering in recent years, Tim Mowl's *Palladian Bridges*, which has, by definition, a lesser scope.

Garden Bridges is very much a visual study, pulling together some sixty illustrations – mostly in colour – within its 44 pages (A4 format). The subject matter is a personal selection of bridges to best illustrate the genres of garden bridges that Michael Symes gives as: Palladian (with and without superstructures), Chinese, classical, folly, sham, picturesque, and those that he consigns under the title of twentieth-century eclecticism. In the latter I thought Charles Jencks's sinuous fractal bridge at Portrack was bound to feature, but sadly not even a whisper. Also, I am less certain about the author's distinction between folly and sham bridges, and feel that certain examples would sit just as well in either camp.



HALSWELL
BRIDGE

In the opening sections, the author successfully analyses the misuse of the term Palladian to describe various bridge types; and elsewhere whets the reader's appetite with the occasional foray abroad to cover some of the best examples of bridges, even imitations, that were considered *de rigueur* by such followers of the English garden as Catherine the Great. With not even a scent of a footnote – the few core references are given in the body of the text – the lack of sources invites the odd question. Yes, there are some slips, and regrettably a number of mistakes in Mowl's work, cited earlier, resurface here; a second edition will hopefully correct these. But that is not

the purpose of this work, which is a splendid source book/primer for anyone with even the slightest interest in the subject (and that does embrace follies!).

On the production itself, bridges are not always as easy to photograph as one might first imagine. Trust me, I've been there! Most of the images (bar seven engravings in the opening sections) are modern photographs, but looking at the colour reproduction, probably span many years. A few shots suffer from either being slightly out of focus or grainy through enlargement, and several images could be enhanced from some minor work in

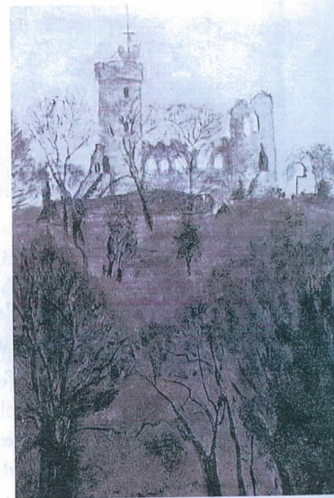
Photoshop, or a similar application. But the overall layout is admirable and makes for an easy, interesting read. Well worth investing in.—MGC

Copies of the book are available from: Michael Symes, 8 Woodcote Hall, Woodcote Avenue, Wallington, Surrey SM6 0QT, priced £10.00 plus £1.00 p&p. Cheques should be made payable to Michael Symes.

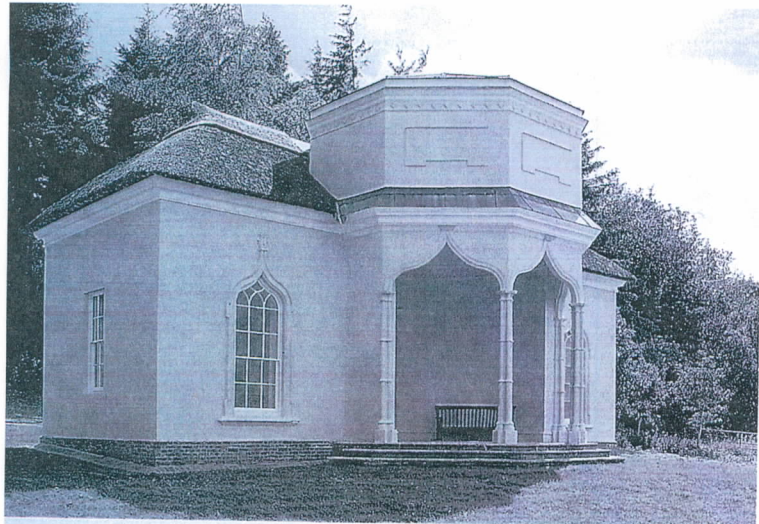
SOMERSET FOLLIES by JONATHAN HOLT. Bath: Akeman Press. 2007. xii + 130pp. Pbk. £10. ISBN 9780954613877

Somerset has to be one of the richest counties when it comes to follies, so Jonathan Holt has had his work cut out here in trying to tackle not only the extant structures, but some of the lost ones. But more on that anon, because we're actually going to start with the publisher: Akeman Press. I've never heard of them before, but they (and their printer, Short Run Press) have done such an outstanding job in reproducing the pictures, that in many ways they detract from the text, and at a 'must-buy' price. Similar publishers like Dovecote or S.B. Publications just don't come close. A bloody good book! But back to the grist. Unless you're intimate with *FG&GB*, the publications of the FF and the relevant Gardens Trusts, 'Pevsner' and the *EH Register of Parks and Gardens*, then many of the follies will be new to you, and then there is always that fine line as to when a structure is a folly and when it is a garden building ... but we're not going to go there. Nor am I going to go through the book in detail – that really would spoil your reading pleasure: suffice to say it's alphabetical, gives grid references (thank you!) and is copiously illustrated. The only way that I could tackle this impressive offering was to create a list and tick-off each site one-by-one. As well as a useful history or background to each folly, the mix of modern and old images is invaluable and to be applauded. Of the two places that were new to me: Monmouth Tower at Chaffcombe and the follies in Harridge Wood (Oakhill), the latter got my vote as the best discovery.

The author has included some 'lost' follies, such as the wonderful Hermitage at Lilliput, which dates from before 1748, but why not others like the tower at Knowle Hall (grid ref: ST 333 402), the 'mock ruin' at Ston Easton Park, the Gothic Shell Temple, Bonehouse, Hermitage, Summerhouse, Grotto and Root house at Hatch Court, to name just a few? And one or two others that appear in *FG&GB* have also been cast aside. ■



THE TOWER, KNOWLE HALL
BY H BAWLER c.1915



LETTERS

Dear Editor,

Having belatedly read issue 67 (summer) of the *FOLLIES* magazine, I think that the 2 photos of 'Cud Hill' Folly could well be mine (I think I sent you 2 transparencies a few years ago hoping you might be able to winkle out a bit more information). Sadly we know no more as yet. [see page 12 - Ed]

However, you may find the enclosed of interest - we certainly did, having spent 3 days there last week (Oct 07). The detached 'rustic' bathroom (underfloor heating) is certainly a 'hoot' - at midnight, with a few owls to accompany the torch-lit walk from the folly. As some wit wrote in the log book - 'how clever of the Landmark Trust to place the 'Little John' behind Robin Hood's Hut.'

The big house (Halswell) is now being converted into a conference centre (etc.) but it would seem that some of the remaining follies will be treated with due respect and restoration. We glimpsed the bell-roofed dovecote and the stepped pyramid; the Temple of Harmony (restored) seems not to be sending out its message to locals intent upon engraving the columns, despite a polite notice appealing to a better nature and sense of history.

(PS) I wonder if you know of 'The Tower' featured on Tower Farms' cheeses? near Lydiard St Nicholas - and just beyond a ruined lime kiln (I think) that makes a splendid grotto. Or was it?

Elaine Brading, Bristol

www.landmarktrust.org.uk to book Robin Hood's Hut

Dear Editor,

It's taken me 30-something years to notice that George Harrison's first album after the break-up of the Beatles contains a track called 'Ballad of Sir Francis Crisp (Let it roll)'.

The title refers to the man who, in 1896, had Friar Park built at the back of Henley-on-Thames town centre. If the gatehouse is anything to go by the house must have been breathtaking. Of course computer users will be able to use Google Earth to have a closer look.

What I don't know is what the song tells us. It's on 'All things must pass' so I hope someone will tell me more.

Iain K.S. Gray

Dear Editor

I have mentioned this to somebody before. There is a newish folly at Deene house, Deene, near Corby, Northants. It is a Tea Pot 3 foot high by 3 foot long, on top of a column about 50 feet high, in a field opposite the main gate to the house. It was put up fifteen years ago, at the cost of about £50,000. Why, nobody knows. The other folly, is in Ketton near Stamford: two - possibly Victorian - barked wooden-framed, thatched roofed, stone-chimneyed, childrens' play houses. Very unusual.

Russ Doyle

Dear Editor,

My son lives in Germany at Göttingen; don't know if this is a folly or not, but any way, here is the photo and description plaque (a translation of the German original follows) in case of any use.

Pavilion on the Schillerwiese. Erected in 1800 as a classical style garden pavilion. From 1807-1813 Göttingen belonged to the kingdom of Westphalia, whose King Jérôme Bonaparte was a frequent visitor to the city. In the 19th century, the pavilion was moved into the garden of the house at Grüner Weg 7 (today Wagnerstraße). In general parlance, it was called 'Jérôme pavilion', since people assumed a connection to King Jérôme. The Jérôme pavilion was added to the list of protected urban architectural monuments. The pavilion was made the property of the city, and moved to the Schillerwiese; it was restored, and according to the spirit of the age after 1933, renamed 'Scharnhorst-Tempel'. With further restoration, and by a resolution of the Council of Göttingen, it was renamed as the 'pavilion on the Schillerwiese'.

Ralfe Whistler, The Dodo House, East Sussex



ABOVE: ROBIN HOOD'S HUT
LEFT: SCHILLERWIESE