

'She enclosed & decorated this hall on the advice of John Ruskin': Pauline, Lady Trevelyan and the creation of Wallington Hall's Central Hall

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Introduction

On 13 May 1866 in a quiet bedroom in Neuchâtel, Switzerland – far from her home of Wallington Hall, Northumberland – Pauline Jermyn Trevelyan (née Paulina Jermyn Jermyn; 1816-1866) ([Fig. 1](#))* took her last breath. At her bedside were her husband, who was the eminent naturalist and geologist Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan (1797-1879), and John Ruskin (1819-1900), their trusted travel companion who was 'with her and Sir Walter to the last'.¹ Ruskin had been a continual presence in Pauline's life from their first meeting around 1843, becoming her drawing teacher from 1847 and whom she referred to as her 'Master'.² Their relationship was one characterized by mutual respect afforded by Pauline's privileged aristocratic and intellectual status. Indeed, their correspondence even reveals a certain level of dependency on Ruskin's part. He would frequently ask Pauline's trusted advice on subjects such as the names of flowers, a gap in his knowledge of which Ruskin was conscious: 'I am making some studies of plants for architectural purposes in which I again want some help from you for I have no one of whom I can ask the name of the commonest plants – or rather, I am ashamed to ask their names ...'.³

This article examines afresh how the intellectual and artistic association between Pauline and Ruskin affected the enclosing and decoration of the central hall ([Fig. 2](#)) at the Trevelyan residence of Wallington Hall. The predominant focus will be upon the central hall's genesis and the first years of work on it between 1852 and

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* The illustrations to this text may be found by clicking this link: [Illustrations](#).

¹ John Ruskin to Margaret Ruskin, 14 May 1866, as transcribed in John Ruskin, *Reflections of a Friendship. John Ruskin's Letters to Pauline Trevelyan*, Virginia Surtees, ed., London, Boston and Sydney: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1979, 280.

² John Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, London: Chatto and Windus, 2006, 70–72; Raleigh Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1978, 55.

³ John Ruskin to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 30 August 1853, Newcastle, Newcastle University Special Collections (NUSC), Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 38-56, 42/1. For transcription see also Ruskin, *Reflections*, 52–53.

around 1858. The project was developed during a fertile period in Ruskin's life, which witnessed the linked genesis of the Oxford Museum and the Oxford Union Building, along with the publication of some of his key works, such as *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), *Pre-Raphaelitism* (1851), *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53) and *Modern Painters* (1843-1860) – works which were read and even publicly reviewed by Pauline.⁴ This article examines the space of Wallington Hall's central hall in practice, asking questions of how Ruskin's contemporaneously developed precepts surrounding the socio-moral objectives of architecture provided a central philosophy for the scheme. Specifically, Ruskin's three principles of Gothic decoration, enumerated in correspondence with Sir Henry Acland (1815–1900) on the subject of the Oxford Museum, will be examined in relation to the central hall.⁵ Particular consideration will be given to the collaborative opportunities that the commission uniquely provided for female practitioners.⁶

Pauline herself was immortalised in the central hall in a marble roundel (Fig. 3) commissioned from the Pre-Raphaelite sculptor Alexander Munro (1825–70).⁷ The relief was in progress by 1855 and plaster versions seem to have arrived in Northumberland by May 1857.⁸ The roundel's border must have been inscribed following her death with the words 'Pauline Lady Trevelyan 1816–1866' above, and 'she enclosed & decorated this hall on the advice of John Ruskin' below (Fig. 4). Often overlooked, this inscription upon Munro's roundel visualizes the question which lies at the heart of this article concerning the agency and responsibilities of both owner and artist in the scheme. It enticingly offers the proverbial 'writing on the wall', evidence of Ruskin's central involvement in the project preserved, quite

⁴ See the *Library Edition* of Ruskin's works and quoted henceforth as *Works of John Ruskin*, followed by volume and page number. Edward Tyas Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds), *The Works of John Ruskin*, London: George Allen / New York: Longman, Green, and Co, 1903-12, 39 vols. For Lady Trevelyan's reviews generally, see Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, *Selections from the Literary and Artistic Remains of Pauline Jermyn Trevelyan*, David Wooster, ed., London: Longmans, Green and Co. / Newcastle: A. Reid, 1879.

⁵ *Works of John Ruskin*, XVI, 207–40.

⁶ For introductory information and illustrations see National Trust, *Your Guide to the Central Hall, Discover Wallington*, Hexham: Robson Print Ltd., 14–15.

⁷ Pauline did not feature in the hall's painted roundels which depicted eminent men of past and present who were generally connected to the local area or to the Trevelyan family. The absence of female figures was a source of chagrin for William Bell Scott: 'What a pity it is that we can't get a female head in.' See William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 1 February 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/33.

⁸ Pauline called at Munro's studio on her return from the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1855. Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 119. See also, William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 3 May 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/40. With thanks to Lloyd Langley, House and Collections Manager at Wallington Hall, for pointing out that a plaster version was set into the staircase plasterwork at Nettlecombe Court, Somerset, formerly the Trevelyan seat. See also Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 242. A plaster version, whether the same object is not yet clear, was also in the collection of Raleigh Trevelyan (1923-2014) and appeared at auction at Sotheby's in 2015: <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2015/19th-20th-century-sculpture-115232/lot.23.html> [accessed 4 February 2019].

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literally, in black and white. To acknowledge Ruskin's presence within the central hall project is not to diminish Pauline's autonomy, however: she was a woman from whom Ruskin himself was to learn much.⁹

The beginnings of the central hall project

Having met Pauline at the British Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Cambridge in 1833 and having spent their early married life in Edinburgh and travelling on the Continent, Sir Walter inherited Wallington Hall in 1846, a house built in the late seventeenth century, though already much altered by the nineteenth.¹⁰ What would become the central hall was then 'a damp inaccessible court', open to the elements and 'enclosed by high blank walls'.¹¹ By January 1852, Pauline and her husband had begun conversations regarding the roofing-over of the central courtyard with the architect John Dobson (1787–1865). A versatile architect working in the Gothic and neo-classical styles, Dobson's achievements included the design of Newcastle's train station, an example of his characteristic Italianate mode.¹² Dobson's Italianate design for the central hall, discussed with the Trevelyans, included a partly-glazed roof, often thought to have been Ruskin's suggestion.¹³ The hall's glass ceiling would allow daylight through in order to create a space where the Trevelyans intended to display objects of art, science and nature – a living space and private museum of sorts.¹⁴ By 1853, the Trevelyans had moved to a different house on Wallington Hall's estate to allow for the builders to transform the central hall into a covered Italian Renaissance courtyard. The structural work was complete by December 1854.¹⁵ Ruskin would later provide a template for the hall's balustrading.¹⁶

In 1856, the Pre-Raphaelite artist, poet, antiquarian, and headmaster of Newcastle's School of Design, William Bell Scott (1811–90), was commissioned by the Trevelyans to design and execute the decorative scheme of the central hall in artistic and intellectual collaboration with them. From the weighting of the correspondence surrounding the commission, it is clear that Pauline assumed a

⁹ John Batchelor acknowledges this latter fact in Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, 72.

¹⁰ The young Pauline lived at Swaffham Prior near Cambridge, and her father was a member of the Anatomy and Medicine Committee of the Association. Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 4. For an examination of Wallington Hall through the ages see John Cornforth, 'Wallington, Northumberland – I', *Country Life*, 147: 3813, 16 April 1970, 854–58; Cornforth, 'Wallington, Northumberland – II', *Country Life*, 147: 3814, 23 April 1970, 922–26; Cornforth, 'Wallington, Northumberland – III', *Country Life*, 147: 3815, 30 April 1970, 986–89.

¹¹ William Bell Scott, *William B. Scott's Mural Paintings ... Two papers read before the Institute of British Architects ... 2 December 1867, 6 January 1868*, Newcastle, Literature and Philosophical Society, Librarian's Room, TRACTFOL 042/4, 21:3, 1.

¹² Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 82; Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 68.

¹³ Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 67.

¹⁴ '... until a late stage the hall of Wallington would have displayed science as well as art.' See Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 66.

¹⁵ Cornforth, 'Wallington, Northumberland – III', 987.

¹⁶ *Works of John Ruskin*, X, 288 and pl. XIII, figs. 4-5.

leading role in this project. While a great friend of Pauline's, Scott would become an adversary of Ruskin's. Scott's decorative scheme (Figs. 2 and 5) included eight large, square canvases, illustrating heroic border histories of Northumberland in chronological sequence – from the building of Hadrian's Wall through to a vision of nineteenth-century industrial Newcastle – which were set into the lower walls of the courtyard by 1861. Pauline and her friends – including Ruskin – were responsible for painting native plants directly onto the stone pilasters which framed the canvases. The spandrels above were designed by Scott and painted by him, Pauline and her close childhood friend, Laura Capel Lofft (later Lady Trevelyan; 1804–79).¹⁷ They were composed of portrait medallions depicting notable men related to the region, from the Emperor Hadrian onwards, superimposed upon representations of trellis and foliage drawn from life. Between 1863 and 1868 Scott continued his mural paintings in the spandrels of the court's upper storey, which depicted an important fourteenth-century border battle – the Battle of Otterburn. After Pauline's death in 1866, the project floundered and Scott never fulfilled his plan for a Giottesque ceiling of gold stars on a blue background, a project recorded in his original watercolour architectural elevation.

Ruskin and the central hall

Ruskin's influence upon the central hall has been discussed in the literature, at times based on little more than anecdote and conjecture, and fuelled by interest caused by his reputation.¹⁸ The subject can, however, be illuminated by a wealth of primary material pertaining to Sir Walter and Pauline Trevelyan more generally.¹⁹ These sources have become better known through the publication of biographically-focused work by Raleigh Trevelyan and John Batchelor, among others, while Ruskin's correspondence with Pauline has been transcribed by Virginia Surtees.²⁰

While Ruskin's relationship with Pauline has been recounted in detail, his part in the central hall project at Wallington Hall has been consistently underestimated. John Cornforth, for instance, argued that 'there is nothing Ruskinian about its [the central hall's] design' and concludes that 'the time scale does not seem to allow for his participation ... he does not seem to have visited the

¹⁷ Lofft married Sir Walter in 1867, following Pauline's death.

¹⁸ For the debate see Cornforth, 'Wallington, Northumberland – III', 987–88; Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 68. Interestingly, the hall is described as a 'Ruskinian central living hall' on the National Trust's website: <http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/place/wallington> [accessed 16 October 2019]. See also National Trust, *Your Guide to the Central Hall*, 5.

¹⁹ The Walter Calverley Trevelyan papers, held in the Special Collections of Newcastle University, contain letters to the Trevelyans from many of the leading artists, writers, thinkers, and creative polymaths of the period, highlighting the impressive range of the couple's reputation and contacts. The diaries of Pauline, Lady Trevelyan are held in the Kenneth Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas. It has not been possible to consult the diaries for this article, but they are variously cited by John Batchelor in *Lady Trevelyan and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*.

²⁰ Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*; Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*; Ruskin, *Reflections*.

house until after 1853, by which time ... plans were complete'.²¹ Raleigh Trevelyan shared this opinion, likewise arguing that Ruskin was away in Venice when plans were first discussed with the architect and that there was 'nothing Ruskinian' about the design, except the balustrade which was taken from Ruskin's second volume of *The Stones of Venice*.²² Both scholars compare the central hall to the central saloon proposed for Bridgewater House in London by the architect Sir Charles Barry in 1849.²³ What has been generally neglected is a close reading of the central hall according to Ruskin's architectural principles and social criticism. While the space does not straightforwardly demonstrate the Gothic aesthetic which Ruskin was promoting at the time, through his writing and in projects such as the Oxford Museum, the central hall's ideological framework certainly served a Ruskinian mission.

Yet some obstacles to Ruskin's wholehearted involvement in the central hall's development should be taken into account. In 1856, when he forwarded to Pauline some advice on the project, he wrote, 'I am quite tired – but if I were not I should say no more but I like the plan much ... I have nothing to say to you – nor to anyone else – and I don't know where I am going'.²⁴ Regarding the depressed tone of Ruskin's note, it must not be forgotten that the genesis of the hall coincided with the strain of the very public annulment of his marriage to Euphemia ('Phemy'/'Effie') Chalmers Gray (1828–97), during which time Pauline was a source of support. Increasing artistic and personal antipathy between Ruskin and Scott was also of crucial importance in characterizing Ruskin's involvement with the project. Of a photograph taken of the pair in 1863, Ruskin later fumed, 'Mr Scott is also one of the more limited and peculiarly unfortunate class of artists who suppose themselves to have great native genius ... to my regret, he was once photographed in the same plate with Mr Rossetti and me'.²⁵

Nevertheless, important instances of Ruskin's active ongoing interest in the project pepper the Trevelyan papers – from promising to send a book in order to assist with the lower-storey spandrels, to praising Pauline's pilaster painting of poppies.²⁶ It is possible to chart Ruskin's involvement with the central hall in yet more detail through a few key episodes. He was at Wallington Hall in June 1853

²¹ Cornforth, 'Wallington, Northumberland – III', 987. However, Cornforth does acquiesce that Ruskin's influence may be more visible specifically in the hall's painted pilasters, arguing that they synthesised the Trevelyans' interest in botany with the discussions they had with Ruskin and Acland about the use of naturalistic ornament in Oxford, and Ruskin's own interest in flowers. See Cornforth, 'Wallington, Northumberland – III', 988.

²² *Works of John Ruskin*, X, 288 and pl. XIII, figs. 4–5. On the insertion of the balustrade see Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 78.

²³ Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 68; Cornforth, 'Wallington, Northumberland – III', 987–88.

²⁴ John Ruskin to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 17 May 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 38-56, 45/1. See also Ruskin, *Reflections*, 112.

²⁵ John Ruskin to the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 11 Jan 1875, as quoted in James S. Dearden, *John Ruskin: A Life in Pictures*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999, 66.

²⁶ John Ruskin to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, [probably November 1857], as transcribed in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 129–30. See also Henry Acland to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 19 April 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 84, 84/26.

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with Effie and John Everett Millais (1829–96), ahead of their fateful stay at Glen Finglas in the Scottish Highlands, and on this occasion viewed Dobson’s finished architectural plans, the commencement of construction importantly having been postponed to allow for his visit. It was at this point that he suggested that the balustrade around the upper gallery should be copied from an example at Murano, which he had included in *The Stones of Venice II*, published earlier that year, and the change was made accordingly.²⁷ Further instances of his involvement include Pauline petitioning a reluctant Scott to seek Ruskin’s advice on plans for the painted scheme, leading to correspondence between the pair in May 1856.²⁸ Finally, Ruskin executed a painting for one of the pilasters in the hall in 1857, rejecting the ‘Annunciation Lily’ which had been reserved for him and instead choosing to paint ‘wheat, barley, and other corn, with the cockle and other wild things of the harvest-field’.²⁹

Ruskin and William Bell Scott

Not far from Wallington Hall, in nearby Newcastle, a School of Art linked to the ‘North England Society for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in their Higher Departments and in their Application to Manufactures’ had been established in 1838. It had subsequently formed links with the central Government School of Design at Somerset House in London, an institution established to improve the design of British manufactured goods. By December 1843, William Bell Scott had been appointed headmaster of the official Newcastle branch of the School.³⁰ Scott certainly did not always agree with the purely design-oriented approach of the curriculum he inherited. Indeed, he rejected the ruling which banned fine art students from studying at the school and defied the ban on a life drawing class, with the result that the Board of Trade withheld the Newcastle School’s grant for 1849.³¹ Scott’s patrons – the Trevelyans – were also involved with art and design in Newcastle, Sir Walter having sat on the committee of the Exhibition of Arts,

²⁷ *Works of John Ruskin*, X, 288 and pl. XIII, figs. 4–5.

²⁸ William Bell Scott to John Ruskin, 12 May 1856; Pauline, Lady Trevelyan to William Bell Scott, 22 May 1856; John Ruskin to William Bell Scott, 17 May 1856 in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 275–76.

²⁹ William Minto, ed., *Autobiographical Notes of the Life of William Bell Scott, and Notices of his Artistic and Poetic Circle of Friends, 1830-1882*, 2 vols, London: James R. Osgood, McIlvaine and Co., 1892, II, 12.

³⁰ Stuart Macdonald, *The History and Philosophy of Art Education*, Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2004, 2nd edn, 107–08. See also Malcolm Quinn, ‘The pedagogy of capital: art history and art school knowledge’ in Matthew C. Potter, ed., *The Concept of the ‘Master’ in Art Education in Britain and Ireland, 1770 to the Present*, Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2013, (215–32) 215. For further information see ‘Hatton Gallery History’: <https://www.hattonhistory.co.uk/> [accessed 17 October 2019].

³¹ This occurred prior to the later reorganization of the Schools in 1853 into the Schools of Art superintended by Henry Cole (1808-1882) and Richard Redgrave (1804-1888). Ray Haslam, ‘“According to the requirements of his scholars”: Ruskin, drawing and art education’, in Robert Hewison, ed., *Ruskin’s Artists, Studies in the Victorian Visual Economy*, Aldershot and Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing, 2000, (147-165) 148; Macdonald, 107–08.

Manufacture and Practical Science which had taken place in Newcastle in 1848.³² A decade later, Scott sought Sir Walter's advice on teaching apparatus for the School's Drawing Class, asking him to complete a requisition paper to send on to South Kensington to apply for items such as a 'Box of Models', 'outlines of the Human Figure' and 'Redgrave's diagrams of colour'.³³ Clearly, Scott's patrons were no strangers to the workings of the School, and the dynamics of Newcastle's wider art networks.

As is well known, personal and artistic antipathy arose early on between Ruskin and Scott. From the time of Scott's early correspondence with Pauline, he outwardly disparaged what he held to be the Ruskinian method of artistic education. In the often-quoted letter written following his first meeting with Ruskin – arranged by Pauline – in July 1855, Scott wrote:

From his house we went to the Working Men's College, where they utterly repudiate copying and the ideal. Here every student has a piece of rough stick hung up three inches from his face, to copy, and after two or three sticks they are encouraged to draw the human figure and face in the same manner. The mind thus being uninfluenced, and the taste untrained by the antique or rules of art you cannot believe what hideous things are produced as pictures of children or other of God's creatures that sit to them ...³⁴

While it should be noted that Ruskin was not responsible for figure drawing or painting at the Working Men's College (WMC), Scott was hugely critical of the emphasis that he saw being placed there on working from abstracted nature and sources, understood by him to be merely fussing over details and divorced from an education in certain higher artistic principles, styles and histories.³⁵ He also felt that Ruskin was unqualified to teach.³⁶ In turn, Ruskin was strongly opposed to the Government Schools' framework which he saw as the founding of a system based upon the wrongful segregation of the applied and fine arts.³⁷ For Ruskin, the pursuit of both design and fine art relied upon carefully honed perceptual skills and an

³² *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Arts, Manufactures, and Practical Science, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, Newcastle: J. Blackwell and Co., 1848. A copy is held at Newcastle, Literary and Philosophical Society, Librarian's Room TRACT 042/4, v.431: no.3.

³³ William Bell Scott to Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, 5 May 1858, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 74, 74/8.

³⁴ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 25 July 1855, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/4–5.

³⁵ For Scott's comparison with the Government Schools' method of teaching see William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 8 October 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/19. For further context and Scott's views on Ruskin's use of the *Liber Studiorum* in his teaching see William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 12 September 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/53. For Scott's opinions on Ruskin's teaching methods see Donata Levi and Paul Tucker, *Ruskin didatta: il disegno tra disciplina e diletto*, Venice: Marsilio Editori, 1997, 173–74.

³⁶ Levi and Tucker, *Ruskin didatta*, 173.

³⁷ John Batchelor, *John Ruskin: No Wealth but Life*, London: Chatto & Windus, 2000, 127; Levi and Tucker, *Ruskin didatta*, 157–58.

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'innocent eye' which translated into a delicacy and veracity of technique. Unlike the Government Schools which encouraged students to copy from artificial, two-dimensional images before graduating to three-dimensions, Ruskin presented his students with objects from the outset, beginning with an illuminated plaster ball and moving on to natural specimens.³⁸ This rigorous method was an attempt to combat deteriorating amateur practice, which he saw as an effect of the Government Schools, confident that once having learned to draw correctly a student would be able to apply these skills to any subject.³⁹ Despite their apparent differences, there were numerous unacknowledged similarities between Ruskin and Scott's personal teaching philosophies, not least a shared belief in truth to nature and that good craftsmanship could be a force for social improvement.

However, on the subject of the WMC, Scott would further lament to the architect of the Oxford Museum, Benjamin Woodward (1816–61), that:

How a public institution for art education is to move without teaching the so called laws in colour, perspective construction, etc. I can't see. For my own part, the Department [at Newcastle School of Design] often appears to repress originality and make practical hands only, and I would willingly see many alterations, but yet on the whole I am certain that the masses must be guided and taught by all the ordinary means of furnishing the mind.⁴⁰

Although often critical of the School's methods himself, as headmaster of the Newcastle branch, Scott placed particular importance upon the need for students to receive a varied and well-rounded education in the applied and fine arts. Although Ruskin inevitably felt that he also provided students with well-rounded instruction, he was only really proficient in drawing and watercolour. A commission such as the Trevelyans' central hall required specialist knowledge in the arts of mural painting and particular experience of handling pigments, adhesives, grounds and painting supports, knowledge which Ruskin did not have and had little interest in possessing. Indeed, while Ruskin made the important conceptual contributions to the central hall's philosophy and genesis, Scott was largely concerned with the project's physical execution and practical details.

The central hall was executed during a time of contemporary experimentation and empirical research into the historical artistic techniques of fresco and mural painting. Further to his work at Wallington Hall, between 1865 and 1868, Scott was to execute another decorative scheme, in encaustic, at Penkill Castle in Ayrshire, which depicted the fantastical and chivalric fifteenth-century

³⁸ Levi and Tucker, *Ruskin didatta*, 146–47, n. 99. See also Thomas Sulman, 'A memorable art class', *Good Words*, January 1897, 547–51, esp. 548; John Philipps Emslie, 'Art-teaching in the College in its early days' in *The Working Men's College, 1854-1904: Records of its History and its Work for Fifty Years, by Members of the College*, John Llewelyn Davies, ed., London: Macmillan, 1904, 39.

³⁹ Levi and Tucker, *Ruskin didatta*, 157.

⁴⁰ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 8 October 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/19.

poem, *The King's Quair*.⁴¹ Other well-known contemporaneous decorative schemes, beyond Scott's work, included the challenging mural decorations of the Houses of Parliament, which had commenced with a first call to artists in 1842; the frescoing of a summer house, commissioned by Prince Albert, in Buckingham Palace grounds between 1843 and 1845; and the fresco representing *Justice: A Hemicycle of Law Givers* executed by George Frederick Watts (1817–1904) in the Great Hall at Lincoln's Inn between 1852 and 1859.⁴² Scott told Pauline of his visit to study Watts's frescoes in the summer of 1856: 'they are beautiful in invention and altogether fine, but he should not have done them in fresco, how uncertain his colour is'.⁴³

A knowledge of the art of fresco and of mural painting in general was the kind of education acquired from the Newcastle School of Design, as Scott's published lectures for students of the fine and decorative arts demonstrate.⁴⁴ Students from the School certainly went on to carry out this type of work. For example, in December 1856, when Scott visited the Sydenham Palace in London to view the deterioration of its mural decorations – caused by the plaster ground not having dried when painting was commenced – he found a former student of the Newcastle School working there as a decorator on the project of restoration.⁴⁵ This spirit of exploration into materials and techniques, and an often highly technical language, characterizes the correspondence between Scott and the Trevelyans, whether debating a specific shade from the local colour makers and exchanging colour swatches or discussing the merits of different painting surfaces.⁴⁶

In light of his contradictory opinions concerning wall paintings, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what Ruskin thought of the central hall's scheme. During the contemporaneous genesis of the Oxford Museum Ruskin strongly advocated a programme of interior frescoes and was supportive of large-scale, site-specific decoration expounding local themes and historical memory.⁴⁷ Caroline Ings-Chambers, in her recent work on Ruskin and Louisa, Lady Waterford's (née Stuart; 1818–91) mural cycle at Ford School, Northumberland, charts the former's varying

⁴¹ Clare A.P. Willson, *Mural Painting in Britain, 1840-1940. Image and Meaning*, Clarendon Studies in the History of Art, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 309–10.

⁴² Willson, *Mural Painting in Britain, 1840-1940*, 27–61, 259–61; Jonathon Marsden, ed., *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love*, London: Royal Collection Enterprises Ltd., 2010, 21–22.

⁴³ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 4 June 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/15.

⁴⁴ William Bell Scott, *Half-Hour Lectures on the History and Practice of the Fine and Ornamental Arts*, 2nd edn, London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1867.

⁴⁵ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 14 December 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/28.

⁴⁶ An example of this correspondence on artistic techniques occurred in August 1857 when Scott wrote to Sir Walter that he had 'observed the separating of the paper and linen on the spandrils [sic]' and resolved instead to use calico and linen. He hoped, however, that a hot iron might restore the cohesion of the deteriorating spandrels through re-activating the adhesive compounds. William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 8 August 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/49.

⁴⁷ Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 65.

opinions on the matter of wall paintings.⁴⁸ Any praise from Ruskin was inevitably tempered by his desire to direct attention to the preservation of historic frescoes which were decaying on the Continent and to the prominence which architecture itself took in his philosophy. This was in addition to his anxiety that modern frescoes lacked the pure religious sincerity of their historic counterparts.⁴⁹ Indeed, he believed architecture should not be merely the equivalent of 'artists' panels' and advocated in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* that he preferred wall paintings to be confined within borders in order to reduce their misleading, illusionistic potential.⁵⁰ Elements of the central hall at Wallington Hall did adhere to this desire for veracity, with Pauline executing painted borders around the pilaster flower paintings (Fig. 6).⁵¹ Ruskin surely would also have appreciated the fact that the flower paintings were painted directly onto the hall's visible sand-coloured stone – 'of a very light-coloured close texture, very agreeable in tone' – as he believed that 'the true colours of architecture are those of natural stone'.⁵²

Something that Ruskin and Scott did agree on was that contemporary British artists lacked the skills to accomplish fresco painting. As Ruskin stated, 'fresco does indeed afford glorious *room* for a man who wants it; it is a splendid sea for the strong swimmer, but you might as well throw a covey of chickens into the Atlantic as our R-A's into fresco'.⁵³ Scott was similarly concerned that British artists lacked experience and was also adamant that the nation's damp climate did nothing to help the durability of murals produced in the fresco technique. It was for these reasons that only the flower paintings at Wallington Hall were painted directly onto the stone (Fig. 6), while the Northumbrian histories, spandrels and upper-storey scenes were executed in oil on prepared supports of paper, linen, calico and canvas which were then later hung or adhered to the walls. In his report on the project delivered to the Institute of British Architects between December 1867 and January 1868, Scott concluded, 'I fancy we shall never take to fresco again in this country, unless it be on very carefully prepared interior walls, and after an apprenticeship on the part of the painter ...'⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Caroline Ings-Chambers, *Louisa Waterford and John Ruskin, 'For you have not Falsely Praised'*, London: Modern Humanities Research Association and Maney Publishing, 2015.

⁴⁹ Ings-Chambers, 105–41.

⁵⁰ Ings-Chambers, 124. See *Works of John Ruskin*, VIII, 74: 'In the Campo Santo at Pisa, each fresco is surrounded with a border composed of flat coloured patterns of great elegance – no part of it in attempted relief. The certainty of the flat surface being thus secured, the figures, though the size of life, do not deceive, and the artist thenceforward is at liberty to put forth his whole power, and to lead us through fields, and groves, and depths of pleasant landscape ... yet never lose the severity of his primal purpose of architectural decoration'.

⁵¹ 'Many thanks for your kindly taking the lines in hand': William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 15 March 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/38.

⁵² For description of the stone at Wallington Hall see Scott, *William B. Scott's Mural Paintings*, 2. For the quotation from Ruskin see *Works of John Ruskin*, VIII, 80.

⁵³ Quoted in Willson, *Mural Painting in Britain, 1840-1940*, 380; Ings-Chambers, *Louisa Waterford and John Ruskin*, 112. See John Ruskin to John James Ruskin, 30 September 1845 in *Works of John Ruskin*, IV, 393. The original letter is held in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven.

⁵⁴ Scott, *William B. Scott's Mural Paintings*, 20.

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The central hall and the Oxford Museum

The Trevelyans' contemporaneous involvement with the building of the Oxford Museum must be investigated in order to appreciate fully the rich context within which Wallington Hall's central hall project was founded.⁵⁵ A close friend of the Trevelyans and Ruskin, Sir Henry Acland – the tireless medical practitioner, campaigner for Oxford's sanitation, and holder of numerous prestigious University appointments, not least as physician to the Radcliffe Infirmary – was the driving force behind the genesis of the Oxford Museum, which was to house the collections, classrooms and laboratories of the recently established School of Natural Sciences. Following a competition for architectural submissions, Ruskin – who advised on the design of the Museum and funded the majority of its exterior decoration – was able to make the exaggerated claim to Pauline in December 1854 that:

Acland has got his museum – Gothic – the architect is a friend of mine – I can do whatever I like with it ... I shall get all the preRaphaelites to design me – each an archivolt and some capitals - & we will have all the plants in England and all the monsters in the museum.⁵⁶

The successful architects in question were the Dublin-based Deane and Woodward, who had submitted a Gothic design reminiscent of the thirteenth century.⁵⁷ Pauline would nurture a friendship with Benjamin Woodward of the firm, who visited Wallington Hall and was subsequently commissioned to design her a gabled house in the family's seaside town of Seaton, Devon.⁵⁸ This house – Calverley Lodge – was imagined as part of a Gothicizing scheme for Seaton's development and sanitisation. It was built with flint and other local materials and incorporated tall chimneys and trefoil windows on the exterior and a wrought iron staircase intertwined with lilies on the interior, no doubt influenced by the ironwork of the Oxford Museum.⁵⁹

The Trevelyans were intimately involved with the Oxford Museum. They gave generously towards the project, making monetary donations towards capitals, column shafts, the doorway and sculptures on the West Front, with Sir Walter later donating items from his own collection including geological specimens and birds'

⁵⁵ Pauline's particular association with the Museum has been examined by Batchelor. See Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, esp. 58–69, the main points of which are elaborated on here.

⁵⁶ John Ruskin to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, probably 13 or 14 December 1854, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 38-56, 44/6. See also the transcription in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 94–95. For Ruskin's contribution see Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 63.

⁵⁷ Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 64.

⁵⁸ On the exterior and interior design of Calverley Lodge at Seaton see Benjamin Woodward to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, [1855-58?] and Benjamin Woodward to Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, 3 September 1860, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 70, 70/11-12, 70/14. Following Woodward's death in 1861, the architect Charles Edwards carried out his designs. Raleigh Trevelyan, 'The Trevelyans at Seaton', *Country Life*, 161:4169, 26 May 1977, 1398.

⁵⁹ Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 125. For the Trevelyans at Seaton generally see Trevelyan, 'The Trevelyans at Seaton', *Country Life*, 1397-398.

eggs.⁶⁰ Pauline offered advice and plant specimens as sources for the capitals of the columns to be carved in the Museum. Acland's wife Sarah (née Cotton; 1815–78), who carried out some of this carving herself, wrote to Pauline to request 'the name of the lily which was so beautiful in the large china bowl at Wallington. Mr Woodward wants me to carve [it], and I have just been to the Botanic Gardens and find they have it not'; Pauline sent the specimen wrapped in wool.⁶¹ Having referred back to *The Stones of Venice* for inspiration, Pauline also designed a capital for the Museum inspired by passion flowers.⁶² She encouraged Scott to carry out his own designs, and to contribute frescoes to the Museum.⁶³ Pauline even assisted Acland with the design of the front cover for a volume, published in 1859, which combined Ruskin and Acland's lectures and letters regarding the genesis of the Museum.⁶⁴

Wallington Hall was not far from Pauline's thoughts when staying in Oxford. She was particularly struck by the linked project being carried out at the Oxford Union Debating Society Hall from 1857, where leading Pre-Raphaelite artists were painting its ceiling and upper storey with frescoes depicting Arthurian legends. She had discussed the frescoes with Ruskin, who thought them 'not decorative enough' and that the effect of light 'was not suitable', accusing the artists of vulgarizing the Gothic.⁶⁵ Pauline nevertheless wrote to Scott encouraging him also to visit, though warning him 'I don't think anything at the Union suggests anything to us about spandrils [sic] – or otherwise [at Wallington Hall].'⁶⁶ In January 1858, Scott offered advice – via Pauline – on the problems that employing water-

⁶⁰ For lists of donors to the Museum see Henry Acland and John Ruskin, *The Oxford Museum*, London: Smith, Elder & Co. / Oxford: J.H. and J. Parker, 1859, 103-110. For the nature of the objects donated see Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 125.

⁶¹ Mrs Sarah Acland to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, [undated], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, 84/65. For the receipt of the lily and confirmation that carving was complete see Benjamin Woodward to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 26 September [1855?], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 70, 70/5.

⁶² Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 66-67. For Woodward's instructions to Pauline on how to design the capital – either in clay or pencil – see Benjamin Woodward to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, [undated], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 70, 70/8.

⁶³ For confirmation of Acland's receipt of Scott's design see Henry Acland to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, [undated], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 84, 84/67. Woodward would later write to Scott to discuss some amendments to the design, in order to allow more liberty to the carver. See Benjamin Woodward to William Bell Scott, 25 March [?], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 70, 70/13. Regarding the frescoes, Scott seems not to have pursued this aspect of involvement at any great length. See Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 65-66.

⁶⁴ Henry Acland to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, [undated], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 84, 84/66.

⁶⁵ Pauline, Lady Trevelyan to William Bell Scott, 12 November 1857, as transcribed in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 277-78. On the vulgarisation of the Gothic see Robert Hewison, Ian Warrell and Stephen Wildman, *Ruskin, Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites*, London: Tate Gallery Publishing, 113.

⁶⁶ Pauline, Lady Trevelyan to William Bell Scott, 12 November 1857 in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 278.

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based paints on an irregular surface had caused in the already disintegrating frescoes at the Union Building.⁶⁷

It was also from the Oxford projects, that Pauline found other artists to assist her at Wallington Hall. She would commission Thomas Woolner (1825-1892) and Munro to work on sculpture for the central hall, these artists having carved figures for the Oxford Museum. She also enlisted Arthur Hughes (1832–1915) to paint a pilaster, who had executed a fresco for the Union Building.⁶⁸ Clearly, the two projects were intrinsically linked through the community of individuals and artistic techniques involved, a group which importantly brought together the Trevelyans and Ruskin.

Museum spaces at Wallington Hall

Before plans for a museum in Oxford were finalized, during which time the central hall scheme was also evolving, Ruskin and Pauline had corresponded about the nature of the 'ideal museum'. Ruskin had laid the foundations for such discussion in earlier discourse concerning improvements he thought should be made to the National Gallery's edifice and collection. Away travelling on the Continent, Ruskin wrote to Pauline from Paris in September 1854 – during which time the roofing-over of the central hall was nearly finished – describing his vision. He proposed, among many recommendations for an ideal museum, 'to have a room where anybody can go in all day and always, see *nothing* in it but what is *good* with a little printed explanatory catalogue saying *why* it is good; and I want to have a black hole, where they shall see nothing but what is bad'.⁶⁹ Thus not only was the central hall's development underscored by Pauline's close involvement with the evolving architecture and decoration of the Oxford Museum, it was also framed by conversations of a more theoretical kind with Ruskin on the nature of the ideal museum.

It is important to note that the central hall was first envisioned to be a kind of domestic museum and living space, in which to display art, plants and natural specimens from Sir Walter's collection.⁷⁰ This initial objective would subsequently change to a new focus on the display of painting and sculpture.⁷¹ Indeed, when, in

⁶⁷ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 9 January 1858, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 74, 74/2.

⁶⁸ Pauline had also supported Woolner towards his first major public commission at the Oxford Museum: his sculpture of Sir Francis Bacon. See Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 63.

⁶⁹ John Ruskin to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 24 September 1854, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 38-56, 43/11. See also the transcription in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 87–91.

⁷⁰ See Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 66: 'until a late stage the hall of Wallington would have displayed science as well as art'.

⁷¹ The hall may even have given the impression of being a sculpture court. My thanks to Jonathan Parker for sharing his memories of Munro's *Paolo and Francesca* being displayed across the central hall from Woolner's *Civilisation* – to be discussed – at least during the twentieth century. *Paolo and Francesca* had been displayed in the Great Exhibition's Sculpture Court of 1851, and was purchased by Henry Acland to be subsequently given by him to the

1857, the Trevelyans agreed with the local naturalist and ornithologist John Hancock (1808–90) that his specimens of taxidermic birds could be placed in a large glass case in the middle of the central hall, Scott was outraged.⁷² He wrote at once to Pauline:

this is entirely wrong, the artistic unity of the hall will be broken and in spite of the finest stuffing it will take a Museum character ... [Hancock] has ideas of Bird Stuffing as fine art which make him try always to put his stuffed birds with the painting and sculpture departments of public exhibition. Wax works and preserved animals are not and I hope never will be considered equal companions for ... painting and sculpture.⁷³

By September 1858, it had been agreed with Hancock that the case would instead be displayed, separately, in Wallington Hall's china room.⁷⁴ The disagreement with Hancock marks the beginning of the central hall project becoming focused solely on the fine and decorative arts. Indeed, Scott was much more delighted when he learned that Woolner had been commissioned to make a free-standing sculpture for the hall.⁷⁵ That Scott had come to view this as more of an art gallery than a wide-ranging museum space is shown by the comments on its lighting that he made in a lecture at the Institute of British Architects between 1867 and 1868. He concluded that the central hall demonstrated 'the perfect method of lighting pictures ... the light being admitted over the whole ceiling from twelve convex plates of ground glass'. It was a method which he recommended for other picture galleries due to its leaving 'no shine on any part of the wall'.⁷⁶

In fact, the original idea of a private museum was by no means alien to Wallington Hall. It had proved fertile ground for a long line of intellectual and artistic pursuits, and had even had a separate museum established within its walls in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. The museum was formed of the Cabinet of Curiosities collected by Lady Jane Wilson (1749–1818) of Charlton Park in Greenwich, south-west London, a dedicated naturalist, coleopterist and conchologist. The collection had been inherited by her daughter Maria Wilson (1772–1851), who had married Sir John Trevelyan (1761–1846) in 1791, through whom it had been brought to Wallington Hall.⁷⁷ A museum in which to house the

Trevelyans. For the catalogue entry see 'Paolo and Francesca':

<http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/584952> [accessed 11 February 2020].

⁷² John Hancock's collection today forms part of the Great North Museum, Newcastle.

⁷³ William Bell Scott to Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, 14 August 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/50.

⁷⁴ William Bell Scott to Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, late September 1858, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 74, 74/14.

⁷⁵ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 22 December 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/29.

⁷⁶ Scott, *William B. Scott's Mural Paintings*, 20.

⁷⁷ When Sir Walter's mother, Maria Wilson, died in 1851, the Cabinet of Curiosities was to be sold and proceeds given to her grandchildren. Sir Walter thus had to buy back the collection for the sum of £450. Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 60.

many specimens had been designed in the upper storey in 1819, again by Dobson.⁷⁸ Indeed, during Ruskin's stay at Wallington Hall in 1853, he was personally shown the best minerals in Sir Walter's museum.⁷⁹ The seriousness with which the Trevelyans regarded their inherited and evolving collection is evidenced by the fact that Sir Walter employed David Wooster (c.1824–88) – formerly the curator of the Ipswich Museum – as curator of the Cabinet of Curiosities.⁸⁰ Wooster, living at Wallington Hall by 1855, would also become involved in the execution of the central hall's decoration.⁸¹

In its original aim of creating a space for the display of objects, the central hall was functionally and ideologically linked to the Oxford Museum, despite clear aesthetic differences in their architectural styles. Certainly, core compositional similarities existed between the central hall and the Oxford Museum's intended decorative schemes. The Oxford Museum – like the Union Building – was supposed to have been adorned with frescoes depicting Arthurian battle scenes on the lower walls, and detailed plant and flower patterns on the upper walls.⁸² This plan appears to have gone awry by 1859, when Ruskin wrote to Lady Trevelyan that 'the museum is by no means so satisfactory in the way of colour and Henry [Acland] is in an excited state about it. Mrs Acland wants him to let it alone – so do I rather.'⁸³ As Batchelor has argued 'if those frescoes had been carried out, the compositions between the Museum and Wallington would be much closer. Both buildings would have been embodiments of two kinds of history: the written and painted recorded history of England and the history of the earth' in their combination of historical and natural subject matter.'⁸⁴

Beside their shared ideas for subjects for murals there were certain common architectural features. Although the Oxford Museum was Ruskinian Gothic and the Trevelyans' central hall was Italianate in style, both spaces were formed of a glass-roofed quadrangle surrounded by arcades of two storeys leading to further rooms. The Oxford Museum's interior courtyard arcades were punctuated by columns, described by Robert Hewison – who borrows a simile from the *Stones* – as '“like the pages of a book” for the shafts are individual examples of British rocks, and the capitals examples of British flora and fauna'.⁸⁵ The central hall, with its sandy-toned

⁷⁸ Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 60; Cornforth, 'Wallington, Northumberland – II', 926. See also the National Trust's current visitor interpretation *in situ* in the museum.

⁷⁹ Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 83.

⁸⁰ Wooster also acted as Sir Walter's personal secretary; see Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 67.

⁸¹ Wooster assisted in painting the bead moulding and the balusters of the hall; see William Bell Scott to Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, 8 August 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/49.

⁸² Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 65.

⁸³ John Ruskin to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 11 November [1859], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 38-56, 48/5. See also the transcription in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 138-139.

⁸⁴ Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 65.

⁸⁵ Hewison, Warrell and Wildman, *Ruskin, Turner and the Pre-Raphaelite*, 109. For the reference to 'like the pages of a book and shafts whose capitals we may touch with our hand' see Ruskin's examination of St Mark's Basilica and the Ducal Palace, Venice, in *Works of John Ruskin*, X, 365.

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stone pilasters painted with native plants, was comparably punctuated with a visual repertoire of floral specimens recorded with scientific accuracy.

Finally, a comparison of the time lines of the two projects reveals a strong sense of the networks of influence operating between them. When the design for the Oxford Museum was accepted in December 1854, the glass roof for Wallington Hall's central hall had already been installed. Nevertheless, while major structural aspects of the Trevelyan scheme pre-date the blueprints for the Oxford Museum, serving as a significant prelude, the central hall's interior decoration was still to be decided on by 1856, during which time that of the Museum was also being debated between Ruskin, Acland and Woodward, all three of whom kept in regular contact with Lady Trevelyan.

Ruskin's first principle of Gothic decoration

In correspondence with Acland, published retrospectively in 1859, Ruskin laid out the three key aims of Gothic Revivalists, building upon the concepts aired in his interrogation of 'The Nature of Gothic' in *The Stones of Venice* II. The first principle, discussed under the three headings of 'A', 'B' and 'C', called for art to be:

(A) ... large and publicly beneficial, instead of small and privately engrossed or secluded; (B) to make art fixed instead of portable, associating it with local character and historical memory; (C) to make art expressive instead of curious, valuable for its suggestions and teachings ...⁸⁶

In brief, this first principle saw Ruskin discouraging the employment of art as small curios to be pored over and hoarded by the private art collector, in favour of meaningful, site-specific, large-scale works.

Ruskin's ideology for the Oxford Museum, specifically regarding its socio-moral responsibility as a Gothic building, mapped onto the philosophy upon which Wallington Hall's central hall was built. Although it was neither Gothic in its aesthetic nor a straightforwardly public space, the central hall did go a long way towards satisfying these Ruskinian civic aims. Indeed, Scott's eight canvases depicting the histories of Northumberland were exhibited in a variety of public settings, including Newcastle's Literary and Philosophical Society's rooms and the Edinburgh Royal Academy.⁸⁷ All eight canvases were also exhibited at the French

⁸⁶ *Works of John Ruskin*, XVI, 214.

⁸⁷ Scott confirmed with Pauline that she would be happy for his first painting – *Saint Cuthbert* – to be exhibited in either Newcastle's 'Central Exchange room or in Philipson & Hare the booksellers' Gallery for a day or two', only for it then to be displayed in Newcastle's Literary and Philosophical Society's Rooms. See William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 6 November 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/24. For Scott's outrage regarding the hanging of his picture *Venerable Bede* at Edinburgh see William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 14 February 1858, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 74, 74/3.

Gallery on Pall Mall in London in 1861.⁸⁸ Woolner's later commission for a sculpture of a mother and child (Figs. 7–9) – discussed below – was displayed at South Kensington prior to its removal to the central hall in 1867. These moments of public exhibition, important for the artists' reputations, also allowed the Trevelyans to engage in cultural philanthropy. One is reminded of Ruskin's vision of the ideal museum, about which he had previously written to Pauline, where he encouraged the lending of art: 'I mean to lend out the Liber Studiorum and Albert Durers to everybody who wants them; and to make copies of all the 13th century manuscripts, and lend *them* out'.⁸⁹

Perhaps most significant in relation to Ruskin's first civic-minded principle, however, was the Trevelyans' decision to commission a large and site-specific scheme of mural painting. By representing Northumbrian histories and elucidating wider 'suggestions and teachings', the central hall is best seen as both a working out of Ruskin's ideas as well as a response to contemporary projects such as the decoration of the Houses of Parliament.⁹⁰ Scott's canvases – recounting local Roman, monastic, heroic and industrial histories – were importantly also packaged into an overarching Christian message, which evoked the divine order of civilisation achieved through pious discipline and moral acts. This Ruskinian message in the paintings was anchored by Woolner's sculpture (Fig. 7), commissioned for the centre of the hall, which depicts a mother teaching a child to say the Lord's Prayer, atop a tall pedestal. From Scott's letters to Pauline it is clear that Woolner's sculpture was to be seen as a climactic vehicle, embodying the 'grand completion' of the noble labours undertaken in the hall.⁹¹ Indeed, in his later address to the British Institute of Architects, Scott described the sculpture as aiming to 'embody or at least indicate the result of the whole'.⁹² Woolner's mother and child would thus come to embody a central point about which the central hall scheme revolved.

Upon the sculpture's pedestal are carved reliefs showing violent subjects which contrast sharply with the sculpture of the mother and child in tender embrace (Figs. 8–9). In the relief is a bare-breasted mother feeding her child flesh from his father's sword, 'praying that it will make him so ferocious that he may destroy all his enemies'.⁹³ The second of the base's three sides shows a druidic sacrifice where captives in cages are about to be burned alive, while the third depicts a brazen warrior riding his chariot. Woolner proposed that the sculpture in its entirety demonstrated 'civilisation', namely 'the contrast between our primitive habits and the ideal aims of our modern life as shown by the Lady's attempt to discipline her

⁸⁸ *Descriptive Catalogue of William Bell Scott's Eight Pictures of the History of the English Border painted for Sir W.C. Trevelyan, Bart.'s Hall, at Wallington*, London: E. Gambart and Co., 1861. A copy of this publication is held in London, National Gallery Archives, NGA2/3/2/14/10.

⁸⁹ John Ruskin to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 24 September 1854, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 38-56, 43/11. See also the transcription in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 87-91.

⁹⁰ For context, see Willsdon.

⁹¹ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 22 December 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/29.

⁹² Scott, *William B. Scott's Mural Paintings (...)*, 2.

⁹³ 'Mr Woolners [sic] description of his sculpture at Wallington', Wallington Hall, Northumberland.

child, by making him say his prayers before permitting his caresses.'⁹⁴ Woolner's sculpture thus provided a religious subtext for the hall's wider decorative scheme which, in addition to Christian scenes, also incorporated pagan, antiquarian and naturalist elements. Anchored by Woolner's vision of civilisation, these facets could thus comfortably coexist. Moreover, this noble and monumental image of a mother teaching her child to pray clearly evoked Ruskin's vision that art should be 'valuable for its suggestions and teachings', underscoring the scheme's wider educational and moralistic tone.

Ruskin's second principle of Gothic decoration

Ruskin's second principle of Gothic decoration for the Oxford Museum was that it should convey 'truthful statements about natural facts'.⁹⁵ While Ruskin acquiesced that 'it may sometimes merely compose its decorations of mosaics, chequers, bosses or other meaningless ornaments', he asserted that 'if it represents organic form (and in all important places it will represent it), it will give that form truthfully, with as much resemblance to nature as [the ornament] ... will admit of'.⁹⁶ This Ruskinian emphasis on truth to nature, a tenet also taken up by the Pre-Raphaelites, underlay the philosophy of Wallington Hall's central hall. Pauline actively supported the notion of truth to nature, a preference which she had formed through her reading of, and her being taught by, Ruskin. In her 1852 review of Ruskin's pamphlet *Pre-Raphaelitism* for *The Scotsman*, Pauline demonstrated the esteem in which she held the principle.⁹⁷ Notably, she praised the Pre-Raphaelites for being 'resolved to have truth only, whatever it costs them – copying no pictures, but such as nature paints on the face of creation, and not heeding any rules, but what they can read in her works'.⁹⁸ At an early stage in the central hall's development, Ruskin himself had specifically advised on the need for truth to nature to guide the project. In May 1856, Scott, prompted by Pauline, sought Ruskin's thoughts on the extent to which nature should pervade the ornamental sections of the hall, as opposed to artificial, decorative forms.⁹⁹ Ruskin's short reply was: 'incline to *All Nature* in the present case – if but for the experiment'.¹⁰⁰ Scott, in response, confirmed to Pauline that they would commence the ornamentation of the lower storey 'purely naturally', in order to have some work ready for Ruskin to 'criticise' ahead of a promised visit.¹⁰¹

⁹⁴ 'Mr Woolners [sic] description of his sculpture at Wallington', Wallington Hall, Northumberland.

⁹⁵ *Works of John Ruskin*, XVI, 214.

⁹⁶ *Works of John Ruskin*, XVI, 214–15.

⁹⁷ Lady Trevelyan, *Literary and Artistic Remains*, 84–90.

⁹⁸ Lady Trevelyan, *Literary and Artistic Remains*, 85.

⁹⁹ William Bell Scott to John Ruskin, 12 May 1856; Pauline, Lady Trevelyan to William Bell Scott, 22 May 1856; John Ruskin to William Bell Scott, 17 May 1856 in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 275–76.

¹⁰⁰ John Ruskin to William Bell Scott, 17 May 1856 in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 276.

¹⁰¹ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 4 June 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/15.

In some cases, putting truth to nature into practice proved rather difficult. In October and November 1856, when Scott was working on the portrait roundels depicting past and present Northumbrian worthies for the spandrel decoration, he expressed anxiety at not being able to copy the historic heads from life or from real portraits. He lamented to Pauline: 'if real portraits could be got how much more interesting they would be, certainly, but as it is we have only the choice of filling the whole circle with later men or taking typical heads to stand for portraits'.¹⁰² The desire to retain truth to nature pervaded all forms of ornament, no matter how small. The coloured rosettes, which appear in the border section running beneath the lower-storey's architectural moulding, were predominantly inspired by snow crystals, in addition to foliage, flowers and Saxon tracings.¹⁰³ The foliage forming the backdrop of the lower-storey spandrels was also drawn from life, Woolner having sent 'some splendid oak boughs' to Scott in November 1856 for that purpose. Scott's description of drawing from the 'noble' leaves as 'such delightful work!' is ironically reminiscent of Ruskin's method at the WMC, Scott having ridiculed the students who were making minute copies of lichen-covered sticks.¹⁰⁴

Scott also incorporated drawing from life within his eight canvases depicting Northumbrian histories. In his canvas illustrating the *Building of the Roman Wall* – in which a Roman centurion reprimands an idle builder reclining in the foreground – Scott used his antiquarian contacts forged through Newcastle's Literary and Philosophical Society to borrow a piece of Hadrian's Wall from which to draw. This enabled him to 'have a portrait of a veritable individual stone in my foreground'.¹⁰⁵ Scott also drew many of his figures from life, ranging from local personalities – whom he paid as models – through to portraits of Sir Walter and Lady Trevelyan which appear in the canvases of *The Descent of the Danes* and *Bernard Gilpin*, respectively.

The most striking manifestation of the natural world in the central hall's painted scheme is the series of tall, native plants painted in oil directly upon the sand-coloured stone of the lower-storey pilasters (Fig. 6). As early as December 1856 it had been decided between Scott and Pauline that Ruskin should paint a pilaster and that the noble lily would be reserved for him. Despite Scott's antipathy towards him, he encouraged Pauline and Laura Capel Lofft to 'try by all means to get him to undertake a pilaster ... give him up / Miss Lofft pray / the white lily or anything and let us add his initials to the hall'.¹⁰⁶ However, when Ruskin visited Wallington Hall in 1857, according to Scott's autobiography, 'the modesty of the professor would not

¹⁰² William Bell Scott to Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, 11 November 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/23.

¹⁰³ William Bell Scott to Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, 28 September 1856; William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 8 October 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/18; 73/19.

¹⁰⁴ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 25 July 1855; 4 November 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/4–5; 73/21–22.

¹⁰⁵ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 12 March 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/37.

¹⁰⁶ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 14 December 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/28.

allow him to take that sacred flower. No; he would take the humblest ... wheat, barley, and other corn, with the cockle and other wild things of the harvest-field, were selected, and he began, surrounded by admiring ladies'.¹⁰⁷

Counter to Scott's cynical memory of the event, however, Ruskin's selection of the wheat was highly significant. Inevitably, it assumes Christological importance, notably when bearing in mind that in Ruskin's description of a pulpit at Torcello in *The Stones of Venice* – an episode which also permitted him to examine the role of the preacher – 'scattered wheat' became a symbol of the sowing of the seed of God's word.¹⁰⁸ He is drawing from the Gospel of Matthew and Christ's parable of the wheat and the tares in which, during the harvest, the wheat and weeds were separated, representing the ultimate fate of saved believers and the condemned sinners, respectively.¹⁰⁹ Taken in this context, the wheat at Wallington Hall becomes a symbol of the biblical rhetoric that underpinned Ruskin's wider work.¹¹⁰

Wheat ultimately represented the nobility of nature for Ruskin. In his discussion of 'The Nature of Gothic' in *The Stones of Venice*, Ruskin presented the six internal qualities which – when combined with external, material and formal elements – rendered architecture more Gothic.¹¹¹ His reflection upon wheat fell within his discussion of the first quality of 'savageness' in Gothic buildings where he praised the imperfections and wildness arising from craftspeople exercising creative freedom and pursuing the unbridled study of nature. Ruskin thus employed wheat as an example through which to demonstrate this phenomenon:

For the finer the nature, the more flaws it will show through the clearness of it; and it is a law of the universe, that the best things shall be seldomest [sic] seen in their best form ... The wild grass grows well and strongly, one year with another; but the wheat is according to the greater nobleness of its nature, liable to the bitterer blight ... we are nevertheless not to set the meaner thing, in its narrow accomplishment, above the nobler thing, in its mighty progress; not to esteem smooth minuteness above shattered majesty.¹¹²

Certainly, the frailty of Ruskin's sparse stalks of wheat upon his central hall pilaster – insipid in contrast to the bright blue cornflowers around them – evoke this sense of nature's nobility, rising hopefully up towards the sky glimpsed through the ceiling's apertures, despite the 'bitterest blight'.

Finally, Ruskin's selection of wheat may have also reflected his interpretation of his own role as an artist. Indeed, in his discourse on the quality of 'naturalism', also in 'The Nature of Gothic', he expanded upon the ideal mission of the craftsperson to nurture a love of natural objects for their own sakes, and to

¹⁰⁷ *Autobiographical Notes of William Bell Scott*, II, 11–12.

¹⁰⁸ *Works of John Ruskin*, X, 82.

¹⁰⁹ St Matthew's Gospel, chapter XIII, verses 1-9.

¹¹⁰ Michael Wheeler, *Ruskin's God*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, 116.

¹¹¹ *Works of John Ruskin*, X, 180–269.

¹¹² *Works of John Ruskin*, X, 190.

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represent them frankly, unconstrained by artistic principles, in a quest for truth. He employed a metaphor of reaping wheat through which to outline three categories of artist ranging, in different measures, from 'good' to 'evil' in their practices – respectively, the 'Purists', the 'Naturalists' and the 'Sensualists'. For Ruskin, the 'Naturalist' artist struck the ideal balance: 'The three classes may, therefore, be likened to men reaping wheat, of which the Purists take the fine flour, and the Sensualists the chaff and straw, but the Naturalists take all home, and make their cake of the one, and their couch of the other.'¹¹³ For Ruskin, Naturalist artists perfectly synthesised good and evil elements in order to represent divinely ordered nature, and he counted Gothic builders as coming within this category also.¹¹⁴ In consciously choosing to reject the majestic lily and instead paint ears of wheat Ruskin thus appears to be underlining his own mission as a Naturalist artist at Wallington Hall.

Ruskin's third principle of Gothic decoration

Ruskin's third principle of Gothic decoration for the Oxford Museum centred upon the liberation of the craftspeople involved in its artistic creation. For Ruskin, in order to achieve this noble state of creative freedom:

all architectural ornamentation should be executed by the men who design it, and should be of various degrees of excellence, admitting, and therefore exciting, the intelligent co-operation of various classes of workmen; and that great public edifice should be in sculpture and painting, somewhat the same as a great chorus in music, in which, while perhaps, there may be only one or two voices perfectly trained, and of perfect sweetness (the rest being in various degrees weaker and less cultivated), yet all being ruled in harmony, and each sustaining a part consistent with its strength, the body of sound is sublime, in spite of individual weakness ...¹¹⁵

While intended to direct the *modus operandi* for the Oxford Museum, this passage well expresses the experimental and collaborative essence of the central hall project, which united progressive patrons with professional artists, amateur painters, architects and curators, as well as combining sculpture and painting within its walls.

Pauline's own views on the social responsibilities of art and the renewed need for the liberation of artists were cultivated from reading Ruskin's work. In her 1852 review of Ruskin's *Pre-Raphaelitism* pamphlet, published in *The Scotsman*, she disclosed her opinion on the matter:

The system, not the men, was in fault – that something was wrong few people could deny; as to what that something was, or how it should be

¹¹³ *Works of John Ruskin*, X, 225.

¹¹⁴ *Works of John Ruskin*, X, 224–31.

¹¹⁵ *Works of John Ruskin*, XVI, 215.

remedied, there was, and are, abundance of different opinions. The training of academies, the shallow criticisms of many who profess to instruct the public – the unenlightened patronage of a large portion of those who purchase pictures ... all, doubtless, have contributed to foster the production of works unworthy of the highest powers of the painters, and unimproving to those who admire and possess them. To these causes may be added the artificial state of society in which we live. The insatiable claims which it makes on the time and resources of the student, calling on him to paint pictures for profit, when he cannot rightfully spare an hour of thought from severe study, gauging his respectability by his income, instead of by his merits ...¹¹⁶

Like Ruskin, Pauline perceived a problem in the division and purpose of labour in the contemporary art world. For her, rather than being happy, healthy and ennobled, the contemporary artist was no longer a creator and merely a tool, increasingly enslaved by market-driven conditions. She opined that art had a social responsibility to improve the minds of the people who produced, viewed and owned it, contemporary social conditions having precluded this until the advent of the Pre-Raphaelites, who – she believed – let themselves be guided by the noble return to nature rather than profit. Pauline's article confirmed her Ruskinian belief in the nobility of labour and manufacture at the same moment in which plans for the central hall were first forming. Such ideas would be further crystallized in Ruskin's work on the political economy of art, as covered by his lectures given at the Manchester Art Treasures exhibition of 1857, and he would encourage Pauline to refer to his later work on the subject in their correspondence of 1860.¹¹⁷ Like Ruskin, whose precepts regarding the moralities of labour extended more widely to the industrial workforce, Pauline was committed to improving the conditions upon which the Honiton lace industry was built, particularly in Beer and Seaton – the latter being the place where the Trevelyans had inherited their familial manor house and dedicated themselves to developing the town. It was in the context of Pauline's support for the cause of artists and makers that she had first offered a disillusioned Scott the central hall commission as a stimulating and fulfilling project to be carried out alongside his day-to-day toil at the Newcastle School.¹¹⁸

Importantly, the central hall not only provided noble work for Scott, but also it created a space for other artistic and intellectual collaborations. In particular, it is an exceptional example of a commission involving a significant number of women occurring at a moment in the 1850s and 1860s when the issue was being debated of how female artists might fit within a sphere dominated by men. By 1857, the Society of Female Artists had been established and in 1861, as far as is known, the first

¹¹⁶ Lady Trevelyan, *Literary and Artistic Remains*, 84–85.

¹¹⁷ John Ruskin to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, [mid-October 1860], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 38-56, 49/9. See transcription in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 158–59. For Ruskin's views on the political economy of art see for example, *Works of John Ruskin*, XVI, 5-169.

¹¹⁸ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 27 March 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/12.

female artist – Anne Laura Herford (1831–70) – was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools.¹¹⁹ Pauline was supportive of the Female School of Art which had been founded in 1842. She ran a stall with the first director of the South Kensington Museum, Sir Henry Cole, at a bazaar in the School's aid in June 1861, which Ruskin's father attended.¹²⁰ However, Ruskin's own views on the training and potential of female artists were rather more limiting. As Pamela Gerrish Nunn has shown, not only did Ruskin fail to campaign for women artists publicly but the nature of the advice that he gave to them often restricted their wider success – from encouraging copying in watercolour through to advising them to stay away from major publishers and dealers.¹²¹ Furthermore, Nunn makes an important distinction between Ruskin's less helpful treatment of struggling 'women artists' and his greater validation of often more privileged 'artistic women' – 'the ones who were least likely to contend successfully for professional acceptance in the contemporary art market ... [or be] taken seriously as cultural contributors'.¹²² Ruskin's friendship with Pauline was seemingly more nuanced than this latter description; she was after all greatly respected in Pre-Raphaelite circles and beyond, contributed to major projects such as the Oxford Museum, published her writing in newspapers such as the *Edinburgh Review* and *The Scotsman*, exhibited work at the Edinburgh Royal Academy, made and sold lace designs, and importantly stood up to Ruskin. However, it must be acknowledged that it was her privileged, aristocratic position that afforded her the liberty, capital and social respect through which to conduct herself – and her circle – with artistic integrity, and to be taken seriously by important figures in the Victorian art world, especially Ruskin.

The central hall provided a veritable training ground for a group of artistic women which included Pauline, Laura Capel Lofft, Louisa ('Loo') Stewart-Mackenzie (later Baring, Lady Ashburton; 1827–1903) and Emilia Francis Strong (later Pattison, and subsequently Lady Dilke; 1840–1904).¹²³ As Wooster concluded

¹¹⁹ For an examination of the position of women in the arts during this period see Pamela Gerrish Nunn, 'The "woman question": Ruskin and the female artist', in Robert Hewison, ed., *Ruskin's Artists, Studies in the Victorian Visual Economy*, Aldershot and Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing, 2000, (167-83), 167.

¹²⁰ Receipt from the Bazaar in aid of the building fund of the Female School of Art on the 15, 17, and 18 June 1861, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 154, 154/16. For Ruskin's father's visit to the Bazaar see John James Ruskin to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 4 July 1861 in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 167. Sir Walter helped Pauline arrange the stall, but he was too afflicted with gout to attend the Bazaar on the final day. Ruskin, *Reflections*, 167, n.1.

¹²¹ Nunn, 174-75.

¹²² Nunn, 177.

¹²³ For illustrations of all of the flower paintings see National Trust, *Your Guide to the Central Hall*, 14-16. There is no evidence at this time that Stewart-Mackenzie executed a pilaster, but she is included here due to her frequent presence at Wallington Hall, notably during Ruskin's visit in 1857, when she received drawing lessons – to be discussed. See Batchelor's dedicated chapter on 'Loo' in Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 172-85; see also Trevelyan, *A Pre-Raphaelite Circle*, 46-7. For information on Emilia Francis Strong see Elizabeth C. Mansfield, 'Women, art history and the public sphere: Emilia Dilke's eighteenth century', in Temma Balducci and Heather Belnap Jensen, eds., *Women, Femininity and Public Space in European Visual Culture, 1789-1914*, Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 189-204; Hilary

in 1879, after Lady Trevelyan's death, '[Pauline's] quick discernment enabled her easily to discover latent power in her friends, and she knew well how to give it direction, and cause it to bear fruit'.¹²⁴ Between them the women executed a number of flower paintings for the pilasters in addition to foliage for the lower-storey spandrels, their latter contribution having hitherto been overlooked. Pauline and Lofft worked on the spandrels, the designs first having been completed on paper, and later calico, and stuck to linen before being applied to the walls. Indeed, writing from the Manchester Art Treasures exhibition in July 1857, Scott instructed Lady Trevelyan that 'there are two spandrils [*sic*] ready for painting – the heads being done and the ground laid. These I should send out to be work for you, Miss Lofft and myself as may be'.¹²⁵ While Scott designed the spandrels, the women did have a certain amount of creative freedom, for example, in choosing and executing the plants that they particularly desired for the background.¹²⁶ The collaborative spirit alive in the women's artistic practice is evoked in a painting likely drawn by Pauline and coloured by Lofft that depicts Strong at work on her pilaster of sunflowers (Fig. 10).¹²⁷

The women worked in the Ruskinian method characterized by close observation and truth to nature. However, this occurred in a domestic and leisured environment which gave them the space, time and opportunity to work ambitiously on a large and meaningful project, to paint in oil, and to experiment with the materials and techniques of mural painting – quite a different order of things from much women's output of the time, which comprised solely small drawings and copies in watercolour. From 1847, Pauline had been one of Ruskin's dedicated disciples, the latter providing detailed instruction regarding technical skills in drawing, the close observation of form, and the use of colour, light and shade.¹²⁸ Indeed, her 'Master' was certainly not afraid to critique her work. In 1860, having received a study from her, Ruskin wrote to Acland, 'I don't know whether Lady Trevelyan quite understood when we were talking of studies in *light and shade*', before descending into detailed analysis of the correct technique which he desired

Fraser, 'Emilia Francis, Lady Dilke (2 September 1840–24 October 1904)', 19: *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, (28), 2009, 1–2.

Later in the century Edith Mary Dorothy Isaac (later Collingwood; 1857-1928) executed a pilaster of dahlias at Wallington Hall. See Sara Gray, *The Dictionary of British Women Artists*, Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2009, 76. For a further entry on Pauline see Gray, 261.

¹²⁴ Lady Trevelyan, *Literary and Artistic Remains*, iv.

¹²⁵ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 1 July 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/47.

¹²⁶ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 4 November 1856, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/21: 'if you would like to exchange the ferns for holly'.

¹²⁷ See extended catalogue entry 'Emilia Francis (née Strong), Lady Dilke': <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitExtended/mw01864/Emilia-Francis-ne-Strong-Lady-Dilke> [accessed 12 February 2020].

¹²⁸ Batchelor further posits that Pauline's sketchbooks perhaps contain some reworked drawings by Ruskin from the 1840s. Batchelor, *Lady Trevelyan*, 70-72. See also Miscellaneous drawings, sketches and prints, possibly by Pauline, Lady Trevelyan and others, [no date], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 280.

her to follow.¹²⁹ Thus, while Pauline played a managerial role in the central hall project, her artistic practice – and more specifically her painterly contribution to the pilasters and spandrels – were indeed characterized by a Ruskinian training.

When he visited Wallington Hall in 1857, Ruskin cast a critical eye over the women's work, Scott having warned Pauline and Lofft in advance that 'Mr Ruskin must not consider your (and others) pilasters as ornament but as picture'.¹³⁰ It was during this same visit that Ruskin gave a drawing lesson to Stewart-Mackenzie in which he directed her to sketch a table, working carefully outwards from its corner (Fig. 11).¹³¹ Scott, as representative of the Government Schools, felt compelled by this to give a 'little lecture' on the 'the proper objects to be used as models' in order to show the 'sensible women' that 'spending so much time niggling over a small flat object with a pen was teaching nothing, but ruining the student for any application of art except that of retouching and spoiling photograph card portraits'.¹³² Another of Pauline's circle, Strong, was advised by Ruskin in 1858 to enrol to study drawing and painting at the South Kensington School of Art between 1859 and 1861.¹³³ Later, as Mrs Pattison, she made visits to Wallington Hall during the 1860s, when she was beginning to produce serious scholarship on art and cultural history, and perhaps completed her pilaster then.¹³⁴ After his actual visits to Wallington Hall, Ruskin's presence doubtless lingered on, cemented through the presence of his signed pilaster painting of *Wheat, Wild Oats, Cornflower and Yarrow*, yet tempered by a note of creative freedom afforded by the private nature of the project.

In many ways, Woolner's sculpture of *Civilization* (Fig. 7) crystallized the spirit of this community of artistic and intellectual women, present at Wallington Hall at different moments during the 1850s and 1860s. In his description of the sculpture, Woolner explained that 'a woman has been chosen as teacher, in preference to a man, because the position of women in society always marks the degree to which the civilisation of the nation has been reached.'¹³⁵ However, not completed until 1867, after Pauline's death, the sculpture assumed an inflected meaning. As Woolner lamented to Sir Walter: 'the lady I most wanted to admire it cannot now give the high honour of her applause; and my proudest hope is that it may henceforth be pleasantly associated in your mind with her most precious memory.'¹³⁶ Through this process of memorialization, the sculpture becomes

¹²⁹ This is the same letter in which Ruskin describes Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* as 'vinegar and water' for 'it has no nourishment in it'. John Ruskin to Henry Acland, [undated; 1860?], NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 38-56, 49/3.

¹³⁰ William Bell Scott to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan, 1 July 1857, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 73, 73/47.

¹³¹ *Autobiographical Notes of William Bell Scott*, 12.

¹³² *Autobiographical Notes of William Bell Scott*, 12.

¹³³ Mansfield, 190.

¹³⁴ See extended catalogue entry 'Emilia Francis (née Strong), Lady Dilke': <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitExtended/mw01864/Emilia-Francis-ne-Strong-Lady-Dilke> [accessed 12 February 2020].

¹³⁵ 'Mr Woolners [sic] description of his sculpture at Wallington', Wallington Hall, Northumberland.

¹³⁶ Thomas Woolner to Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, 1 July 1867, NUSC, Trevelyan (Walter Calverley) Archive, WCT 71, 71/61.

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evocative of Pauline's role in forming and nurturing the creative circle at Wallington Hall, in which figures including Ruskin played a central role.

Conclusion

This article has challenged the tendency to limit Ruskin's role in the enclosure and decoration of the central hall at Wallington Hall. By examining its genesis and conception through the lens of Ruskin's three principles for the contemporaneous development of the Oxford Museum, Ruskin can be seen to have provided an ideological scheme for Pauline's domestic commission. His tripartite framework is manifested in the large-scale, site-specific and instructive nature of the hall's decorative programme, its quest for truth to nature, and the project's commitment to the liberation of the practitioner and its endorsement of collaborative creativity. Consideration of the genesis of the Oxford Museum and linked Oxford Union Building projects has proven important in demonstrating the rich and formative context within which, and the community of individuals upon which, the central hall was built, having originally been envisaged by the Trevelyans as a kind of domestic museum and living space. In many ways the central hall demonstrates a more complete culmination of Ruskin's philosophy than he was able to achieve at the Oxford Museum, despite his vision being fettered in part by other practitioners working on the Northumberland project and the interventions of the Trevelyans in their over-arching role as active private patrons. As a whole, it satisfied the spirit of experimentation and creative liberty which Ruskin had hoped the Oxford Museum would achieve.¹³⁷

In many ways, the conclusion drawn here finds a parallel in Eve Blau's interpretation of Ruskin's influence upon Deane and Woodward's architectural design for the Oxford Museum. Blau has shown that 'Ruskin's writings not only served to articulate ideas already nascent in Deane and Woodward's architecture, but they also gave direction and form to these ideas'.¹³⁸ While Ruskin's vision was at the very heart of the philosophy informing the central hall, his influence was inevitably adapted as it came into contact with the ideas of others involved in its creation, whether William Bell Scott and the methods of the Government School of Design or Wallington Hall's community of artistic women, with Lady Trevelyan herself at its centre.

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¹³⁷ In early correspondence, Ruskin encouraged Scott to view the central hall as an experiment. John Ruskin to William Bell Scott, 17 May 1856 in Ruskin, *Reflections*, 275-76. See *Works of John Ruskin*, XVI, 215, where Ruskin acknowledged that the Oxford Museum project would not be without 'occasional failure' and 'serious discomfitures' due to the experimental nature of its mission.

¹³⁸ Eve Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic. The architecture of Deane and Woodward, 1845-1861*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, 138-39. Quoted in Hewison, Warrell and Wildman, *Ruskin, Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites*, 108-09.

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