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# AN AMBASSADOR'S HOUSE IN ESSEX

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The existence of eighteen Adam drawings for Ray Hall at Rayhouse in Essex in the archives of Sir John Soane's Museum, catalogued by W. L. Spiers, has been known for a long time, but it has generally been supposed that the house was never built.<sup>1</sup> Documentary evidence, including maps, an insurance policy and Sir James's bank account demonstrates that it was.<sup>2</sup> In Chapman and André's *Atlas of Essex* of 1777 (Fig. 1) the old house, an enclosed garden and the great octagonal walled kitchen garden are clearly visible.<sup>3</sup> The detailed map and description in the Plan of the Manor of Woodford, made in 1815–16 (Fig. 2) appears to show both an old house and a new house, connected by a wall, together with the 'Offices, Coachhouse, Stables, Cowhouse, Piggery, Yard, Farmyard, Gardens and Plantations'.<sup>4</sup> The co-existence of the two houses and the subsequent history of the buildings is indicated on a Woodford map of the 1820s, the tithe apportionment map of about 1840 (Fig. 3), the tithe apportionment Map of about 1860, and the 1871 estate plan of Woodford.<sup>5</sup> From the valuation and description in his Sun Fire Policy, dated 25 April 1781, Sir James's 'now dwelling House' was of quite considerable size.<sup>6</sup> A bill of 1774 for carriage of plank from the 'other hous' implies demolition of a house concurrent with the building but notes no location.<sup>7</sup>

James Wright, son of Thomas Wright of Coventry, was baptised on 18 January 1717, attended Mr Legiat's school in Warwick and then went on to Winchester College, where he was a Scholar from

1730 to 1734. At the age of 17 he became a Pensioner at Trinity College, Cambridge on 28 September 1734; he matriculated in 1735 but did not graduate.<sup>8</sup> Wright's sister was the first wife of John Moore, later Archbishop of Canterbury, his mother was a fine needlewoman, his uncle was Lord Northington (Lord Chancellor and later President of the Council) and Sir Richard Hill of Londonderry was a kinsman, which may partially explain the later Irish connection.<sup>9</sup> In 1754 Wright married Catherine Stapleton, who had inherited £30,000 from her father Sir William, fourth baronet, of Greys Court in Oxfordshire.<sup>10</sup> The first baronet, Sir William Stapleton, was made Governor of the Leeward Islands after the Restoration, so presumably the Stapleton fortune came from the West Indies.<sup>11</sup> Soon after their marriage the Wrights went abroad; their travels included Venice, Rome, Naples, Germany, the Low Countries and France. In Florence they spent some time with Sir Horace Mann, while staying at Hadfield's hotel, and later Mann bought *objets d'art* for Wright, including a rare intaglio.<sup>12</sup> By the autumn of 1760 they were enjoying a visit to Bath, and the next year they spent some time in London.<sup>13</sup> In 1762 James Wright was appointed a Groom of the Bedchamber, on 3 July 1766 he was knighted on his appointment as British Minister to Venice and in 1772 he was made a baronet.<sup>14</sup> The Wrights were on leave in England from late 1769 until early July 1771 because of illness:<sup>15</sup> his term as Resident ended late in 1773.<sup>16</sup>

'Our Minister at Venice, Sir James Wright, Nephew to Lord Northington; who is as obliging



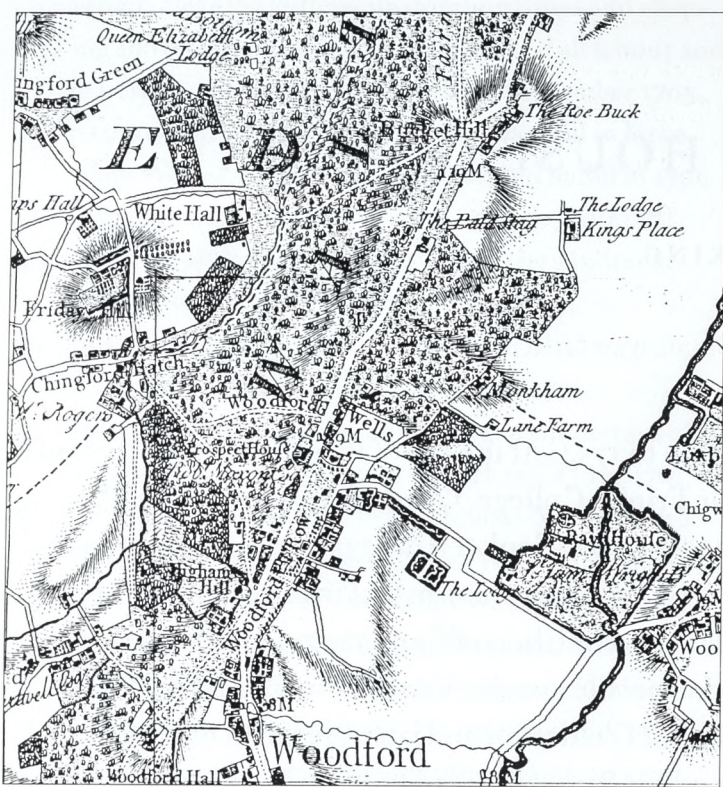


Figure 1. John Chapman and Peter André, *A Map of the County of Essex*, 2½" to 1 mile, surveyed 1772–4, published 1777. *British Library*.

and good-natured as his wife is well-bred and agreeable', wrote Sir Lucas Pepys to Sir William Weller Pepys on 12 April 1768.<sup>17</sup> Sir James was a well known connoisseur and patron, who had a 'capital and valuable collection' of pictures, most of which he had acquired in Italy.<sup>18</sup> Writing to Lord Bute on 1 September 1770, Symonds, who was a mutual friend and cousin to the Bishop of Derry, discussed Sir James's pictures, observing 'he has scarce suffered any one to see them, not even Lord Hertford; & he does not drop a Hint of selling them; nay on the contrary he shewed me the Plan of a large Gallery in his intended House for the Reception of them'.<sup>19</sup> The desire for privacy described by Symonds may be the reason why Ray House does not appear to have been engraved. At this time Sir James had the use of the rooms, presumably for his collections, adjoining the Lecture Room of the Royal Academy, but he vacated them

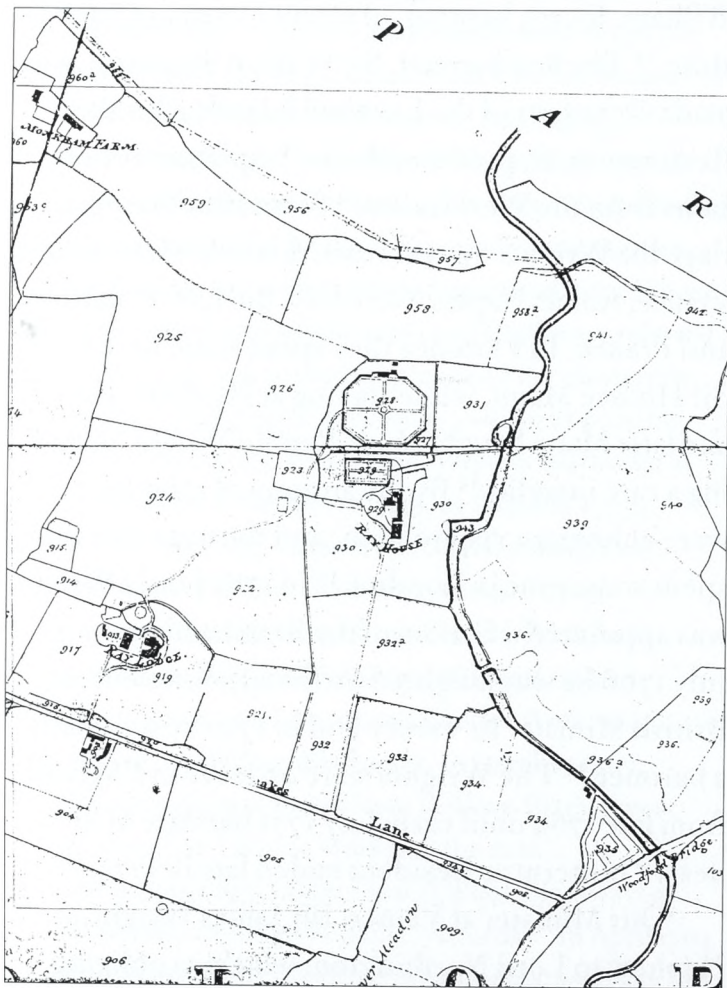


Figure 2. John Dooley, *Plan of the Manors of Wanstead, Woodford . . . [etc.]*, 1815 and 1816. *British Library*.

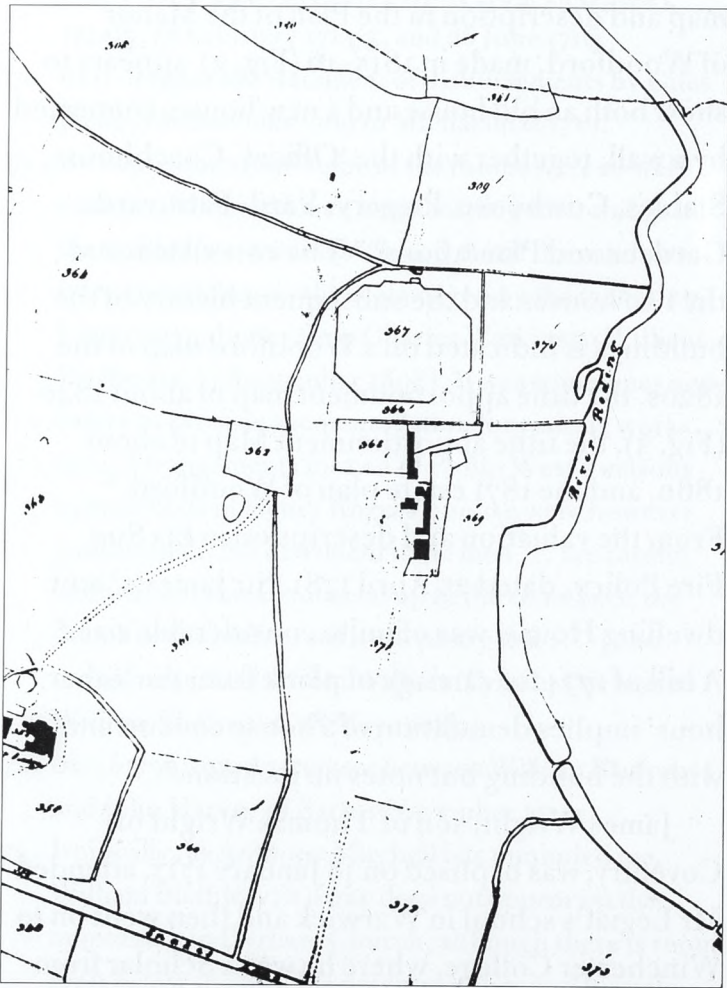


Figure 3. William Blamire and Richard Jones, *Tithe apportionment map, parish of Woodford*, c.1840. *Essex Record Office*.



during the summer of 1771 when requested. In 1796 Sir James gave the Academy a portrait of 'the late Mr Bromfield, Surgeon. Painted in Crayons, by the late Francis Cotes Esqr RA' which they accepted 'with much pleasure' and sincere thanks'.<sup>20</sup> Sir James had begun collecting when he and his wife went abroad some months after their marriage. During their eight years in Venice the Wrights were popular, as Sir Lucas Pepys said: 'This very agreeable family would be a great inducement to the English to make a longer stay than they usually do'.<sup>21</sup> Lady Mary Wortley Montagu had described Catherine Wright as 'a very pretty, sensible young woman', saying 'I am very happy in Mrs Wright's Conversation, who (notwithstanding her Youth) seems pleas'd with mine'.<sup>22</sup> On 19 July 1759 she wrote to Sir James Steuart: 'A propos of beauties

I know not why but Heaven has sent this way

A nymph fair, kind, poetical and gay'

named as Mrs Wright in her summary.<sup>23</sup> To Lady Bute Lady Mary wrote of James Wright, many of whose relations I know and esteem in England', going on to say of his wife: 'I think I may recommend her Acquaintance to you as one that you will be pleas'd with and need not fear repenting'.<sup>24</sup>

Sir James bought more pictures during the family's last tour of Italy, which began in 1790 when Lady Wright left for Venice with their son George, whose health was poor, Maria Cosway, who had been advised by her doctors to go abroad, and her brother George Hadfield, who had won the Royal Academy's travelling scholarship.<sup>25</sup> Sir James, with their daughters and George's tutor the Reverend Mr Ireland, joined them later.<sup>26</sup> In 1792 they visited Rome, Venice and Florence, returning to England the next year.<sup>27</sup> In about 1800 Sir James listed a hundred pictures in his own catalogue, not including the family portraits, although they were painted by several artists over the years.<sup>28</sup> Sir James was keenly interested in architecture as well as painting and sculpture, as his correspondence with Lord

Bute makes clear.<sup>29</sup> In 1795 he was referred to as 'eruditissimo'.<sup>30</sup> He commissioned George Hadfield to paint designs, plans, elevations and reconstructions of the Temple at Palestrina during the summer of 1792.<sup>31</sup>

During the course of Sir James's long life, he owned a number of houses, including Dowles Lodge, Hampshire, which he let to Robert Drummond, his banker, from Michaelmas 1767 to Michaelmas 1778 and then probably sold to him.<sup>32</sup> Sir James usually rented a house in London, although he did own a house in Brook Street in the 1790s.<sup>33</sup> During the same decade he owned Teignmouth House in Devon, 'close to the seaport'.<sup>34</sup> In 1796 Sir James referred to 'having resided for these last twelve years principally in Devon', although he had 'always kept a considerable part of my Essex estate in my own hands', and was 'of necessity obliged to pass a few months [there] every year'.<sup>35</sup> He described this estate: 'My principal landed property joins the two forests of Hainault and Epping in Essex, and . . . formerly I had uninterruptedly resided there many years'.<sup>36</sup> He bought the Rayhouse estate in Essex, with several adjoining estates, in 1770.<sup>37</sup> The principal house of the Rayhouse estate was called Ray House, the other larger houses were called Ray Lodge, Ray Villa (or Farm), and Monkham, and there were a number of cottages. Sir James owned well over three hundred acres near Woodford.<sup>38</sup> The estates were not far from some of his wife's family's land.<sup>39</sup> Woodford was accounted a healthy area, 'justly famous for its healthy air', with woody and umbrageous scenery.<sup>40</sup> In 1848 it was described as 'an enchanting place of retreat for the long pent-up citizens of London, especially during the summer months'.<sup>41</sup>

On 1 September 1770, Symonds wrote to Earl of Bute: 'I dined yesterday with Sir James Wright at his House in the Country abt. 9 miles from London – He is quite turned a Country Gentleman, has got a Plan both for a House and Paddock, &



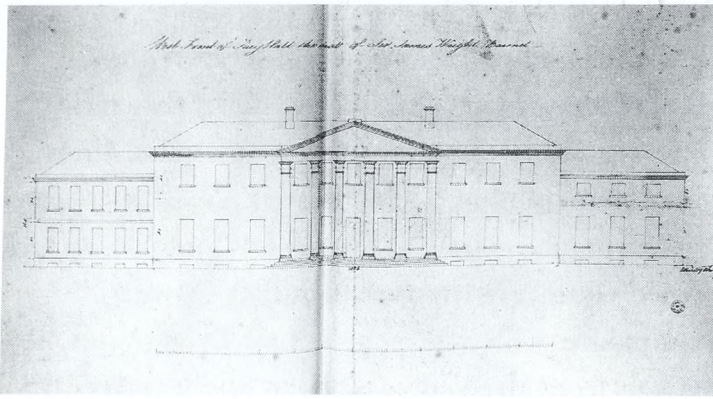


Figure 4. Robert Adam, proposed west elevation of Ray Hall, c.1773. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*

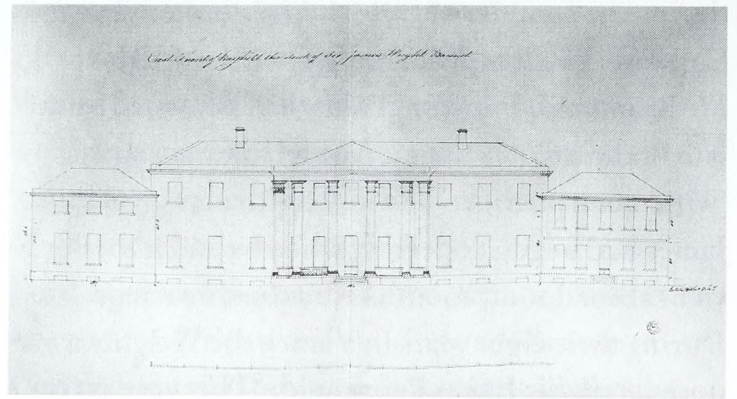


Figure 5. Robert Adam, proposed east elevation of Ray Hall, c.1773. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*

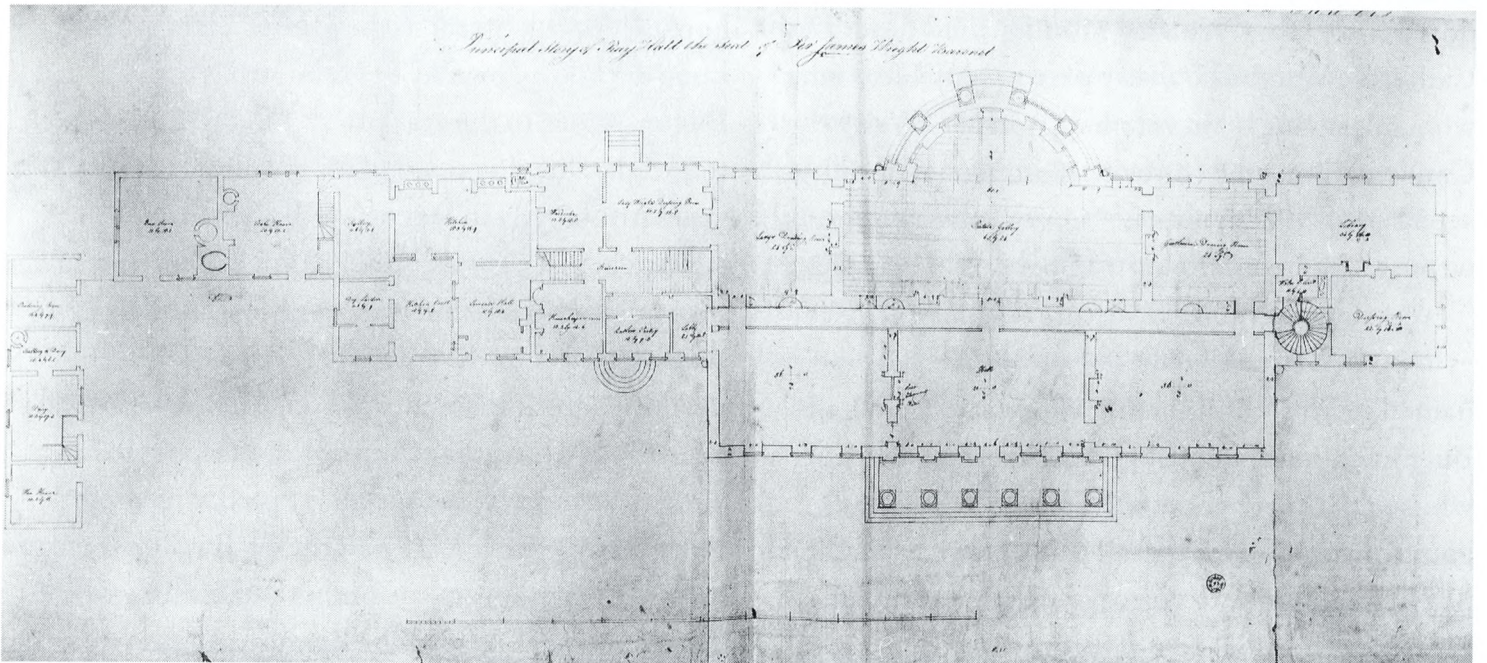


Figure 6. Robert Adam, ground floor plan (part survey, part proposal) of Ray Hall, c.1773. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*

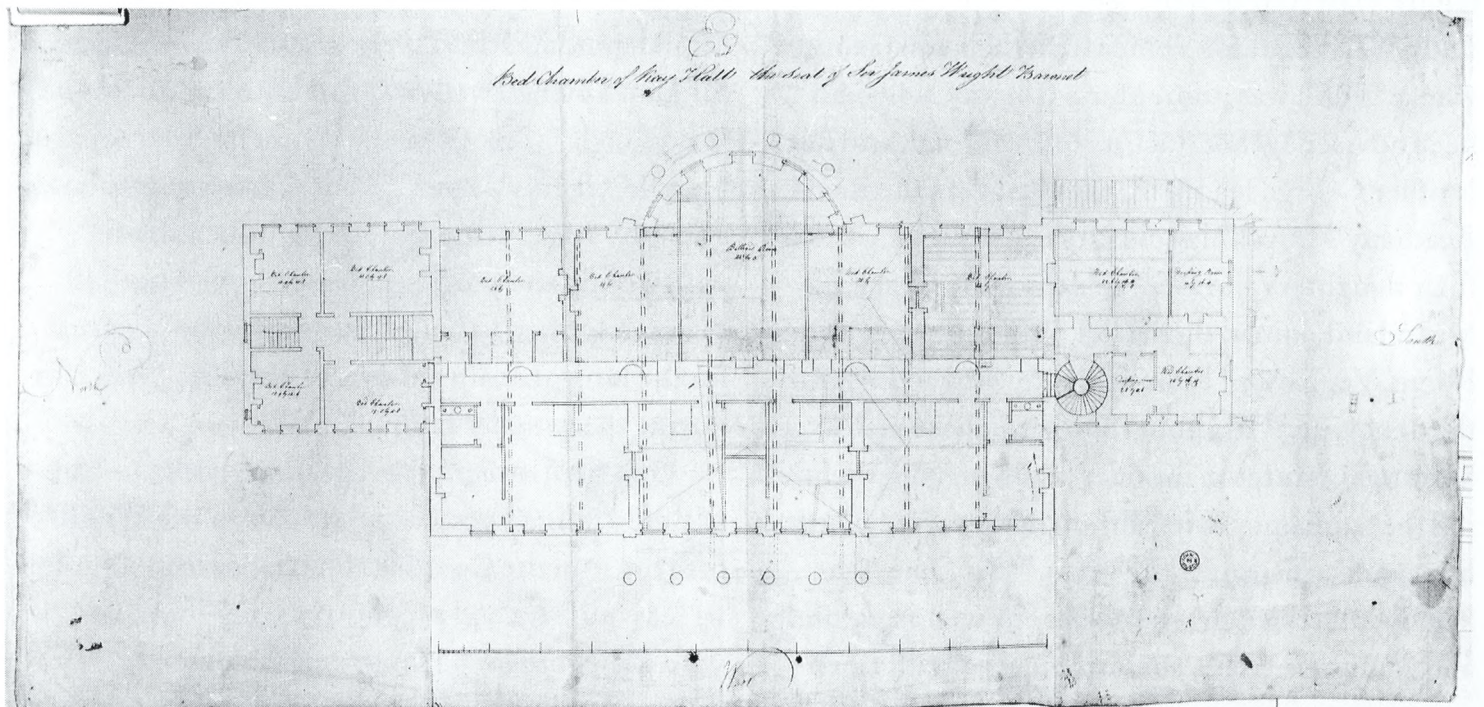


Figure 7. Robert Adam, first floor plan (part survey, part proposal) of Ray Hall, c.1773. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*



Plantations, which he seems resolved one Day to execute – the Water before his House is of good Colour, a constant running Stream, & may be enlarged at a small Expense – he says, that he is obliged to set out for Venice . . . & he has resolved to leave in England Lady Wright, who still suckles the Child' (their only son George).<sup>42</sup>

Sir James had subscribed to *The Ruins of Spalatro* in 1764 and some of his family, including Lord Le Despencer, and a number of his friends and acquaintances had employed Robert Adam. These included the King and Queen, Lord Bute, Sir James Lowther, Lord Queensberry, Lord Coventry and Robert Drummond.<sup>43</sup> It is perhaps not surprising that Sir James turned to the Adam brothers for the design of his new house.

Undated proposals for Ray House survive among Adam's drawings. One, for the house itself, is endorsed '1st Design for Ray House',<sup>44</sup> implying that what was built was a second or later design (Fig. 4). This drawing and another four form a set, and illustrate a house with a two-storey semi-circular bow on its east elevation; concentric with this is a giant peripteral portico with Tower of the Winds capitals<sup>45</sup> (Fig. 5). The estate map of 1871 reveals that this bow was not built, and thus confirms that the '1st Design' was a preliminary proposal.<sup>46</sup> It shows a plain two-storey central block, eleven bays wide, with lower flanking wings recessed from the west frontage line and breaking forward only slightly from the east frontage. The south wing is shown with three bays, and two storeys of 'Palladian' proportions. The north wing is shown with five bays and two storeys of equal height. The plainness of the main block, uncharacteristic of Adam, suggests that it could have been an earlier house to which Adam was proposing additions, doubtless including the giant pedimented hexastyle portico shown on his drawing of the west front.<sup>47</sup> In the plan drawings the wings and eastern pile of the main block have been pasted onto a different

sheet which shows the western pile alone.<sup>48</sup>

On the west of the central block the ground floor is divided into three large rooms with a north-south passage formed against the east wall (Fig. 6). Their functions are not identified, but the central room is obviously a hall and a 'stone chimney piece' is identified on its north wall. Another Adam drawing of a chimney piece captioned 'for Sir James Wright' may illustrate this.<sup>49</sup> Outstanding among Adam's proposed additions (if that is what they are) is an enormous ground floor picture gallery, 65 feet long, in the centre of the east front.<sup>50</sup> To its south he proposed a 'Gentlemen's Drawing Room', 24 feet square. From this a door would have led to the south wing, with a library on its east side, a dressing room on its west, an unlit water closet and newel stair in the middle, the latter leading to two first floor apartments.<sup>51</sup> North of the picture gallery a 'Lady's Dressing Room' answered the gentlemen's, with access to the north wing. Within this Lady Wright's dressing room was proposed, with three windows facing east, and her wardrobe, with two. The north side of the wing was to house the house-keeper and butler, and a straight flight of stairs is shown leading to four bedchambers on the first floor. The first floor of the main block was intended to hold two large and two small bedchambers, and a central billiard room, occupying the central  $\frac{3}{5}$  of the space above the picture gallery (Fig. 7). The rooms in the western (and possibly pre-existing) pile are not identified, although the representation of beds indicates four more bedchambers, with one dressing room each, and two water-closets.

A further and subordinate wing to the north is only shown on the ground floor plan. It was to contain domestic offices; a servants' hall, kitchen, scullery and dry larder nearest to the house surround a hidden internal court; a bakehouse with a room above it and a *serliana* on its east elevation is shown next northwards, succeeded by a brew-house. A detached wing returning westward from



the north end is shown with a powdering room, scullery to a dairy, dairy with room above it, and a hen house. There were cellars in the basement.

Another set of drawings (Figs. 8 and 9) shows an H-planned stable office.<sup>52</sup> The stables are shown in the two arms of the H, and coach houses are shown in the linking range. Stairs in extruded corner blocks lead to large unheated rooms above the stables, presumably lofts for hay and fodder, and to two heated rooms above the coach houses, presumably for grooms. These drawings may be proposals, but the offices were built, and still exist. One of the two plans in this set is endorsed 'Sir James Wright's Stables, Hot House, Farm House, Tool House, Pump & Pedestals & Bridge', revealing the extent of his ambitions and Adam's responsibilities. Drawings for two of these buildings exist, but not for the tool house, pump, pedestals or bridge.

Drawings for 'Farm Offices' also form a set.<sup>53</sup> This building, was evidently intended to combine a farm house with an ornamental dairy (Fig. 10). It too was built.<sup>54</sup> A sectional drawing reveals that it was a double-pile building, the eastern pile consisting of one storey rising the full height, the western one sub-divided into two storeys<sup>55</sup> (Fig. 11). The ornamental elevation faced east, and had five bays with a detached Tuscan portico occupying the centre three<sup>56</sup> (Fig. 12). Only the three centre bays of the west elevation rose the full height; the two end bays were one-storey with hipped roofs framed up to the west wall of the eastern pile.<sup>57</sup> The two ornamental rooms lay in the eastern pile.<sup>58</sup> One was a circular-planned lobby directly behind the portico; it had four niches on its diagonal axes, one of which appears to have had a circular-planned stove breaking into it. The dairy lay on its north side; it was a rectangular room with curved ends, also with niches. The north-south section shows a table with tapering legs built against at least the east wall.<sup>59</sup> These two rooms alone had moulded cornices and coved ceilings. The southern end

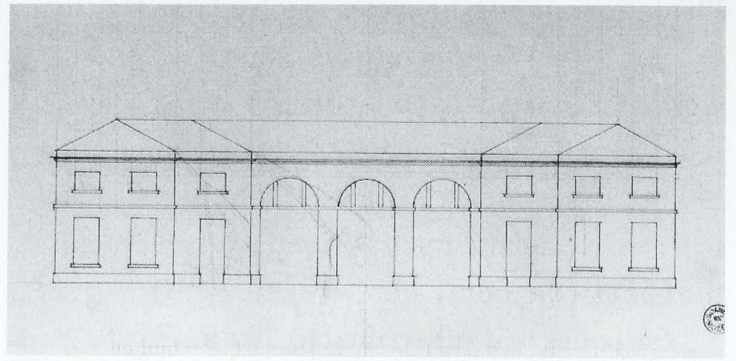


Figure 8. Robert Adam, elevation, proposed stable, Ray Hall, c.1773. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*

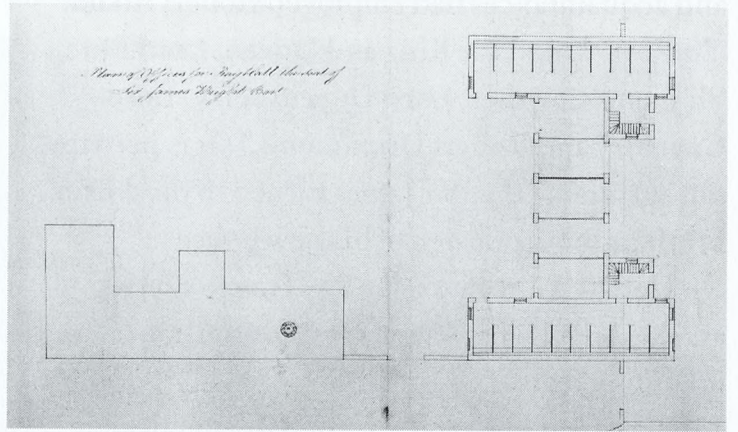


Figure 9. Robert Adam, ground floor plan, proposed stable, Ray Hall, c.1773. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*

of this pile was occupied by an unornamented brewhouse, with access to its own scullery in the western pile. The storeyed part of the western pile had two heated rooms, kitchen and parlour, with a central closet and stair to the first floor. The single-storey rooms at each end were, respectively, pantry and bedroom.

These drawings may date from c.1773, when payments to building tradesmen begin in Sir James's bank account, probably relating to work at Ray House. Apart from paying the Adam brothers £369.9s.4d (£60 of that just before he returned to Venice) from 1773 to 1777, he paid John Jordan the builder, of Long Lane, Southwark, £588 during the year from midsummer 1775. Jordan appears to have taken over from Thomas Dorchester who was paid £2,150 from 1773 to 1774. Other workmen included Mr Nasmith, the Adams' foreman, who was paid



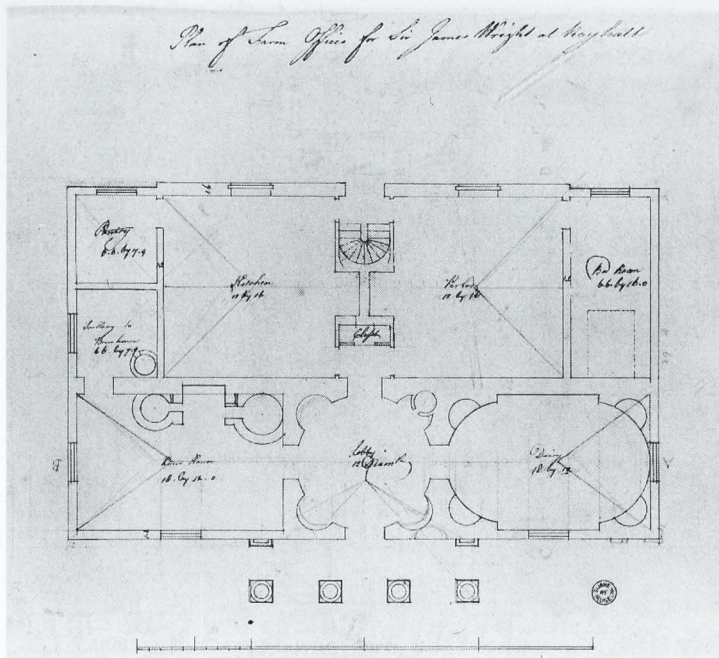


Figure 10. Robert Adam, ground floor plan, proposed 'Farm Offices', Ray Hall, c.1773. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*

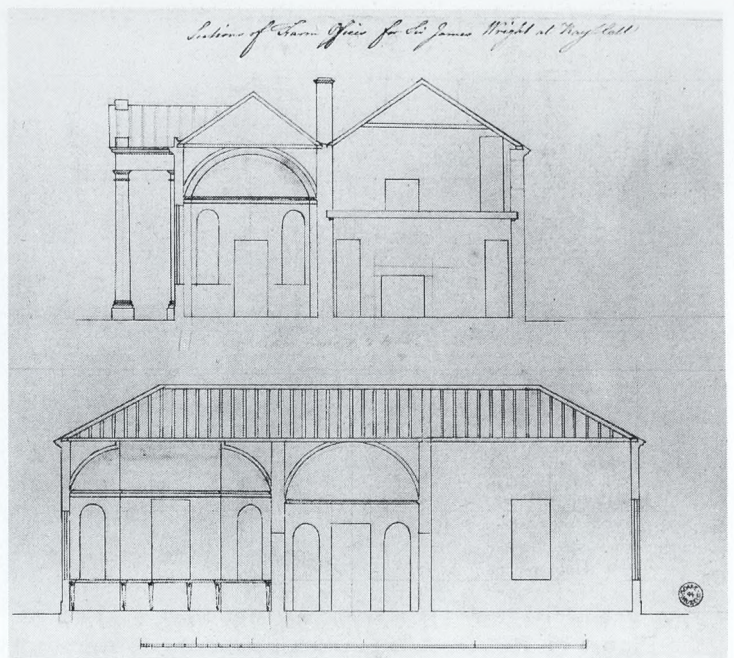


Figure 11. Robert Adam, section, proposed 'Farm Offices', Ray Hall, c.1773. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*

£33.18s.0d in all, James Price, bricklayer, 3 guineas, Joseph Hill, carpenter, £28, W. Williams, carpenter, £18.10s.0d, Mr Rose, plasterer (Nathaniel Richmond's son-in-law), £60, R. Robert, slater, £24, Richard Cann, glasscutters, £6.5s.0d, William Quarrill, colourman, £28 in 1779, Thomas Carter £76.8s.0d, Thomas Phillips, carpenter, £3.10s.0d, John Millard, plumber, £5.2s.0d, Henry Wood, carver, £20.8s.0d and James Nelson, gilder, £45. The suppliers included Ed. Cannon, papier machee manufacturer (*sic*), Thomas Carter, stonemerchant, [Coade and] Sealy, D. Woodward, mahogany merchant, Palmers, the stove grate and kitchen furniture manufactory, and Jacob Holme, timber merchant. Sir James owned the White Hart Inn at Woodford Bridge and, while the building work was going on, he paid the landlord regular sums, probably for the workmen's board and lodging. William Richmond seems to have acted as comptroller, paying some of the workmen directly. The building works went on for nearly three years, after which Sir James bought more furniture, clocks, upholstery, floorcloths, porcelain and pottery,

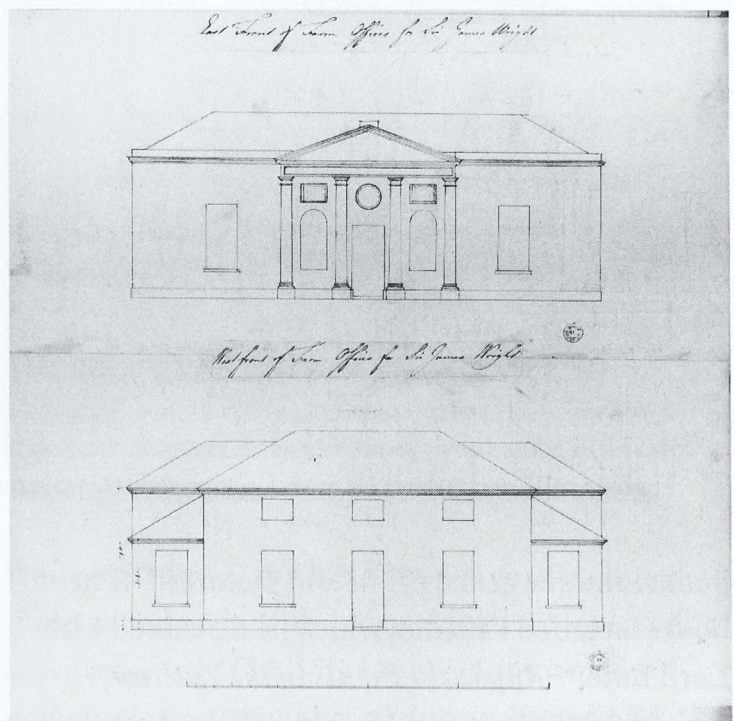


Figure 12. Robert Adam, east elevation, proposed 'Farm Offices', c.1773. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*



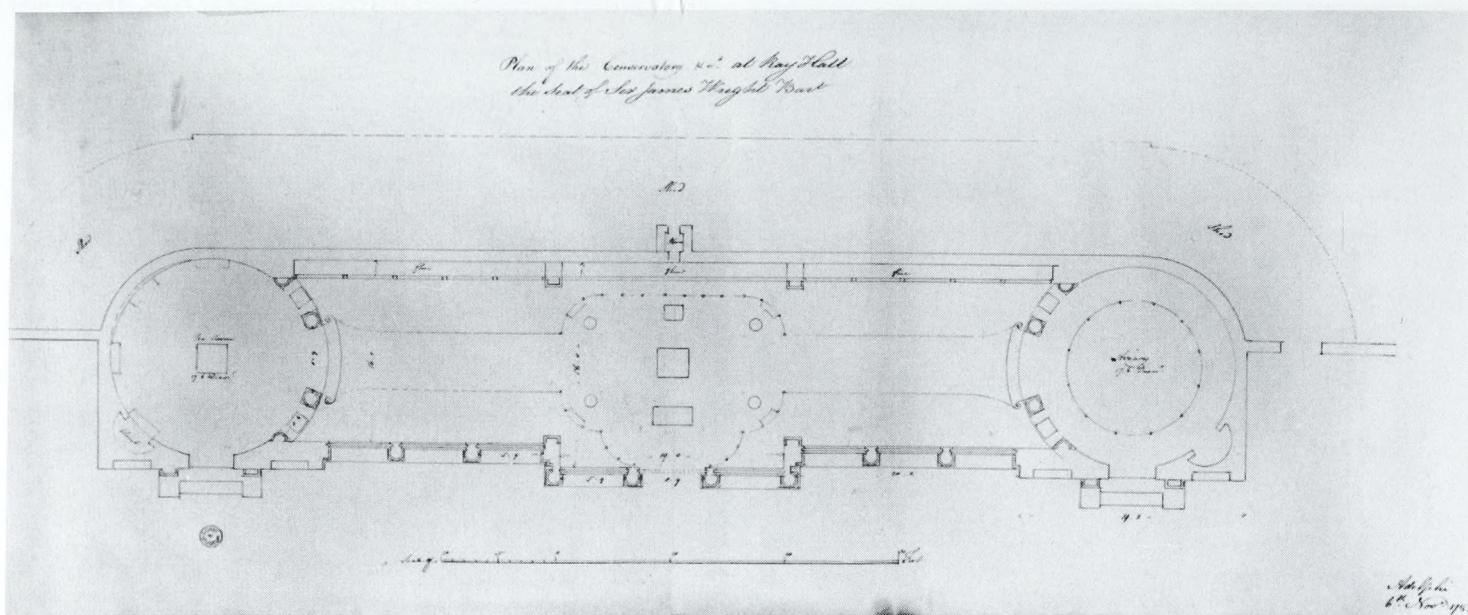


Figure 13. Robert Adam, plan, proposed conservatory, Ray Hall, November 1782. *Sir John Soane's Museum*.

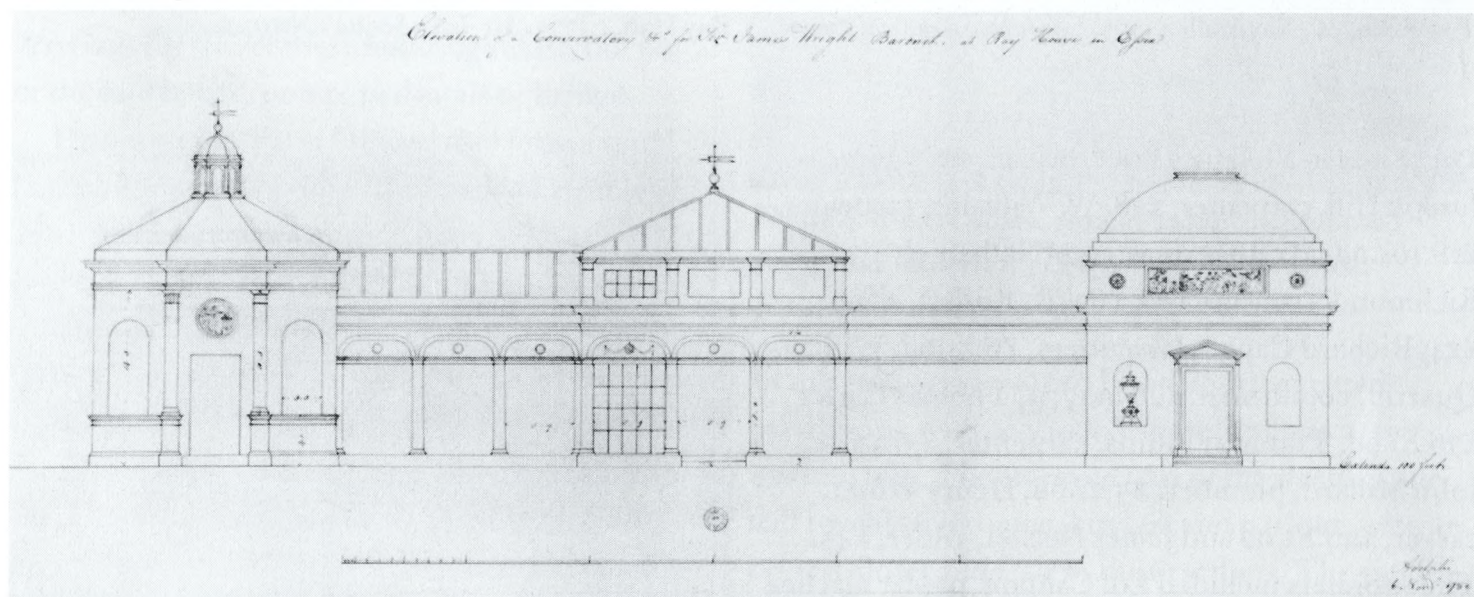


Figure 14. Robert Adam, elevation, proposed conservatory, Ray Hall, November 1782. *Sir John Soane's Museum*.

books, antique gems, prints and pictures.<sup>61</sup> The books included Palladio, which he discussed with Lord Bute,<sup>62</sup> *Raphael's Prints in the Vatican*, Cowper's *Anatomy* and Macartney's *Embassy*.<sup>63</sup>

However, Sir James evidently contemplated further buildings. A payment of £24. 2s. to Robert Adam in 1782 may have covered a further set of drawings inscribed 'Adelphi. 6th Nov<sup>r</sup>. 1782',<sup>64</sup> and another payment of £26.11s. in 1783 may relate to drawings which have yet to be identified.<sup>65</sup> The 1782 set illustrates a nine-bay conservatory with a

horizontal flue in the rear wall heated by a stove in a pent-roofed 'shed', an attic over the three central bays and pavilions at each end for an aviary and a tea-room. The plan shows these square-fronted with circular interiors (Fig. 13). The elevation shows the aviary thus, its roof a segmental dome, but the tea-room on an octagonal plan with a pyramidal roof and octagonal lantern (Fig. 14). Of the two sections in the set, the narrower one is consistent with the elevation drawing, and largely consistent with the plan (Fig. 15), but the wider one is not consistent



with any of the other proposals; representation of glazing in its roof space show that it must be a third proposal for the end pavilions (Fig. 16). The ornament is in the antique style which Adam derived from Lord Burlington, but one feature is unusual. This is the arcade of basket arches, glazed to impost level with *paterae* and drapery festoons above.

As well as works of art, the Wrights brought seeds and plants from Italy including 'the choicest fruit trees, brought from Italy in their natural earth, at an amazing expense'.<sup>66</sup> Sir James spent substantial amounts of money on trees, plants and seeds at the same time as the new house. The maps reveal that the estate was carefully designed, but no drawings have yet been found. Besides William Richmond, Benjamin and Joseph Richmond were employed at various times, and were presumably relations, as was a 'Mr Richmond', and it is possible that this was Nathaniel Richmond, the garden designer. There are similarities between this plan and others he is known to have worked on, including Danson Park, Marden Park near Bletchingley, Saltram and Shardeloes. The pleasure grounds included the Cascade on the river Roding, a small bridge (perhaps the one designed by Adam) and a pool (presumably the 'water of a good colour').<sup>67</sup> The lawns on either side of the house merged imperceptibly into farmland, looking over the river to the east and up to the Higham Hill woods to the west. There were clumps of trees on either side of the drive and an avenue on the west looking up towards Woodford Wells.<sup>68</sup> Near the house there was a lake with an island on it, beyond the elaborately-planted enclosed parterre which had a summerhouse on the south wall. The kitchen garden was octagonal and included a vinery, hothouses, toolshed and its own well. Sir James exchanged plants, grafts and seeds with Sir Joseph Banks and Horace Mann, among others.<sup>69</sup> Lord Bute was asked if he could obtain some roses for him. Maria Holroyd wrote in 1791: 'Sir James Wright who is a

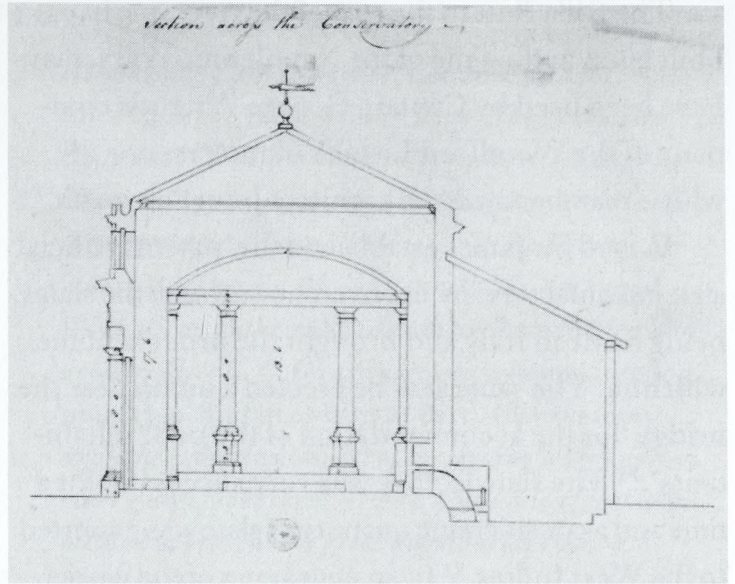


Figure 15. Robert Adam, section, proposed conservatory, Ray Hall, November 1782. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*

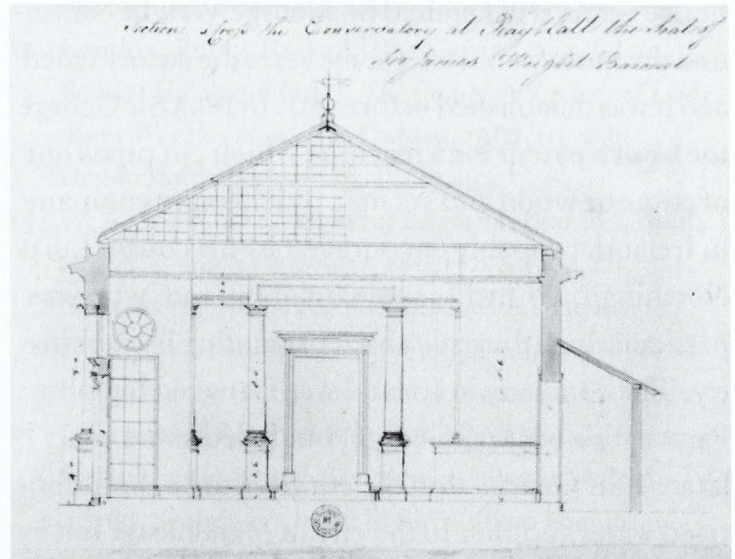


Figure 16. Robert Adam, section, proposed conservatory, Ray Hall, November 1782. *Sir John Soane's Museum.*

famous gardiner, and has a famous garden, dined there, consequently the one subject of conversation was gardening. The only observations worthy of communicating that I heard during dinner, and an hour after were, that when the King could not afford to buy Peaches from the scarcity and dearthness of them, Sir James Wright sent him sixty that weighed half a pound a piece, and some "I assure you ma'am, half a pound, and half an ounce;"<sup>70</sup> The remnants of the fruit trees that lined the octagonal kitchen garden can still be seen.



The Rifle Butt to the east of the river, perhaps built later, at the time of the Napoleonic Wars, may have been used by Captain George Wright's company of the Woodford Loyal Volunteers, one of whose members was the architect John Papworth.<sup>71</sup>

In 1776 Sir James established the 'patent artificial slate-manufactory' by the river; he had seen the slates being made in Italy and brought the process home with him. The same year he erected a pump near the bridge 'for the accommodation of the poor inhabitants'.<sup>72</sup> The slate factory was very successful for a time and a considerable quantity of slate was exported to the West Indies.<sup>73</sup> In an engraving of the works dated 1776 a five-bay brick house, which may be The (old) Lodge, is visible on the left and another house is merely sketched in. George Wright continued the business but after some years the factory failed and it was demolished before 1811. In 1805 Sir George took out a patent for a machine which cut pipes out of stone or wood and set up a pipemaking company in Ireland, probably encouraged by his cousin Lord Northington, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, who was particularly enthusiastic about promoting Irish industry. The company in Ireland was managed by John Papworth's brother George, but failed some years later.<sup>74</sup> Sir George won the contract to be the authorised water supplier to the city of Manchester but by the time the pipes failed, because they were both weak and porous, he had retired from business.<sup>75</sup>

In 1796, the year his son George and Rebecca Maclane were married, Sir James commissioned a house from Philip Norris, whose executant architect was John Papworth. Ray Lodge, which was the other side of Snakes Lane from Ray House, was a rebuilding of The Lodge, an earlier house, which is just visible in Papworth's drawing. Ray Lodge was a five-bay house with an attached three-bay lower block with a pedimented four-column portico.<sup>76</sup>

The Wrights had been living in Bath for some time before Sir James died at his son's house in Bathford on 8 March 1803, about a year after his

wife, who had died in her seventieth year on about 6 January 1802.<sup>77</sup> Some of the estate was auctioned in 1803 and then Sir George sold Ray Lodge (occupied by Sir William Fraser Bt.), Ray House (occupied by J. V. Purrier), the White Hart Inn, Farm Mead and Ray Villa (Ray Farm) and their gardens for £11,801 to Benjamin English in 1808.<sup>78</sup> Sir George died in 1810 in Hampshire, where they lived near his wife's family. Sarah Wright, Sir George's adopted sister, died unmarried in 1810. Ruperta Catherine Wright, his daughter, who was born in 1799, died sometime after 1814, and Rebecca Wright in 1819.<sup>79</sup>

In 1838, when Ray House was owned by Thomas Lewis, there was a considerable fire, 'the mansion enveloped in flames from its basement to the roof', and 'a little after seven o'clock the walls of the mansion fell inwards with a heavy crash'. The fire brigade managed to preserve the outbuildings with little damage.<sup>80</sup> The grounds of Ray House were farmed by Henry Benton by 1862 and his son George sold the land and the stables, one end of which had been rebuilt as a house in about 1870, to Bryant & May in 1924 as a club and sports ground. In 1958 it was all sold to the Borough Council which uses the octagonal kitchen garden as a nursery. In Ray Park at the end of the hot summer of 1995 it was possible to trace the cropmarks of the lost buildings and garden walls in the grass. Since the house and its famous garden existed for many years it may be possible to find hitherto unrecognised drawings or engravings.

I am grateful to Peter Draper, Richard Hewlings and Joseph King for their helpful comments on drafts of this article; Stephen Astley, Christina Hammond, Susan Palmer and Margaret Richardson of Sir John Soane's Museum, Philip Winterbottom, the assistant manager, archives, of The Royal Bank of Scotland, David Hill of the Sun Insurance Company; Georgina Green of the Woodford and Area Historical Society; David Brown for our correspondence about Nathaniel Richmond; Priscilla Wrightson; Peter Parker, former keeper of Ray Park, Redbridge Borough Council.



## NOTES

- 1 London, Sir John Soane's Museum (hereafter Soane), Adam volumes, 22/273; 41/80–95; 10/159; W. L. Spiers, *Topographical Index to the Collection of Adam Drawings* (appendix to Arthur T. Bolton, *The Architecture of Robert and James Adam*, London, 1922), 26, 92.
- 2 London, The Royal Bank of Scotland (Drummonds' Branch) (hereafter Drummonds), DR/427/33–37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 79, 83, 87, 91, 95, 99, 103, 107, 111, 115.
- 3 London, British Library, Maps 188.1.1, John Chapman and Peter André, *A Map of the County of Essex*.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 2420 (29), *A Plan of the Manors of Wanstead, Woodford, Ruckholt and Aldersbrook, forming the estate of Wanstead Park, in the parishes of Wanstead, Woodford, Leyton and Little Ilford: together with other land in the parishes of Barking and Dagenham*.
- 5 Reginald T. Fowkes, *Woodford Then and Now*, London, 1981, 19; Chelmsford, Essex Record Office (hereafter ERO), D/CT 408 B (Woodford Tithe Map); ERO, D/DCY P3, 90 (map with legal document); London, British Library, Maps, TAB 1A (Tithe award map, c.1840); *ibid.*, 188. e. 2 (Woodford Park map). Dates of survey and those of publication do not always correspond.
- 6 Sun Fire Policy no 442624
- 7 Chelmsford, Essex Record Office (hereafter ERO), D/DHT Z16
- 8 John Venn and J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I (IV), Cambridge, 1927, 473; W. W. Rouse Ball and J. A. Venn, *Admissions to Trinity College, Cambridge*, III, London, 1911, 117
- 9 *Notes and Queries*, 5th series, XII, 18; Sir Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical History of the Dormant, Abeyant, Fortifetted and Extinct Peerages of the British Empire* (repr. ed. London, 1883), Baltimore, 1978, 270; John Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies of England, Ireland and Scotland* (repr. ed. London 1841), Baltimore 1977, 272–3; Mary Delany, *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany: with interesting reminiscences of King George III and Queen Charlotte. Edited by the Right Honourable Lady Llanover*, London, 1861, VI, 153; Alice C.C. Gaussen, *A Later Pepys The Correspondence of Sir William Weller Pepys, Bart., Master in Chancery 1758–1825, with Mrs Chapone, Mrs Hartley, Mrs Montague, Hannah More, William Franks, Sir James MacDonald, Major Rennell, Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, and others edited with an introduction and notes by Alice C. C. Gaussen in two volumes*, London, 1904, 1335; Sir James Wright Bart., *Observations . . . upon the important object of preserving wheat and other grain from vermin, with a safe and efficacious method to prevent the great deprivations that are made on those valuable articles*, London, 1796, 24.
- 10 *The London Magazine*, December 1754, 579.
- 11 Charles Kidd and David Williamson (ed.), *Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage*, London, 1995, B 822.
- 12 London, Public Record Office, SP 105/293, fol.70.
- 13 Robert Halsband (ed.), *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, Oxford, 1967, III, 259; Drummonds, DR/427/43, 45, 47, 49.
- 14 W. A. Shaw, *The Knights of England*, London, 1906, II, 292; *London Chronicle*, 18–21 Dec. 1772, XII, 594. There were two James Wrights created baronet in 1772. The two men are conflated in numerous books including the British Library Manuscripts Catalogue.
- 15 Information from the files of the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art; British Library, Add. ms. 42069, Sir James's letter to Sir William Hamilton of 30 September 1771.
- 16 The Minister to Venice salary payments ended at the end of 1773 [Drummonds, DR/427/67 and information from the files of the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art.
- 17 Gaussen, *op. cit.*, 355.
- 18 Christie's Sale, 12 June 1804.
- 19 I am grateful to Francis Russell for this reference.
- 20 London, Royal Academy, Council Minutes, Vol. I, 106, 107; Vol. II, 301, 305, 313. Sir James's collections of pictures and his own catalogue of them [Victoria and Albert Museum 86. BB. 32], which I have transcribed, will be the subject of another article.
- 21 Gaussen, *op. cit.*, I, 355.
- 22 Halsband, *op. cit.*, III, 202, 239–40.
- 23 *Ibid.*, III, 215–6.



- 24 *Ibid.*, III, 239–40.
- 25 Elena Cazzulani [and] Angelo Stroppa, *Maria Hadfield Cosway Biografia, diari e scritti della fondatrice del Collegio delle Dame Inglesi in Lodi*, Milano, 1989, 20.
- 26 Cambridge, University Library ms, Add. 8670/1–40, Add. 8670/35; information from the files of the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art.
- 27 *The World*, January 5 1792.
- 28 Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland, 4061, Robert Fagan, *George Wright*; Sir Joshua Reynolds, information from the files of the National Portrait Gallery; Johan Zoffany, information from the files of the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art.
- 29 See note 19.
- 30 Pietrantonio Petrini, *Memorie prenestine*, Rome, 1795, 9.
- 31 This subject is fully covered in my forthcoming Ph.D. dissertation on George Hadfield and his life and works, University of London.
- 32 Drummonds, DR/427/57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 79; Hector Bolitho [and] Derek Peel, *The Drummonds of Charing Cross*, London, 1985, 95. The sale does not appear in this bank account but from internal evidence it seems clear that Sir James had a capital account elsewhere.
- 33 I am indebted for this information to John Greenacombe of the Survey of London.
- 34 Wright, *op. cit.*, 56.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 44.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 43.
- 37 'The estate was purchased of Bennet Hannot, Esq. about the year 1770, by Sir James Wright, Bart. the present proprietor'. In a foot note: 'from the information of Sir James Wright, Bart.' [Lysons, *Environs of London*, IV, 275, note 22]. The sellers were actually the Trustees of J. M. Hannot [ERO, D/DLC T47]. Sir James withdrew £2000 from his bank account on 8 March 1770, and went on adding to the estate for several years, buying some contiguous land from William Ross in 1776, for example [ERO, D/DGN 362]. In 1778 Sir James sold the manor of Hurstbourne Tarrant and other lands in the county of Southampton, arranged by Act of Parliament, and he agreed to buy equivalent lands and hereditaments [ERO, D/DU 357/15].
- 38 ERO, D/DU 357/14.
- 39 Lady Wright was greatniece of the [5th], 6th and 7th Earls of Westmoreland; the family owned land at West Ham and some of them were buried at East Ham [Halsband, *op. cit.*, 202; Nikolaus Pevsner, revised by Enid Radcliffe, II, *Essex*, Harmondsworth, 1979, 165].
- 40 Edward Walford, M.A., *Tourist's Guide to Essex, with some preliminary remarks as to its early history, antiquities, worthies, etc.*, London, 1882, 73.
- 41 W. White, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of the County of Essex*, Sheffield, 1848, 265.
- 42 see note 19.
- 43 Lady Wright painted the King and gave the portrait to Horace Mann as a present [W. S. Lewis (ed.), *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, XXIII, London, 1967, 500].
- 44 Soane, Adam volumes, 41 (81).
- 45 *Ibid.*, 41 (80).
- 46 The sale particulars of 1803 mention a 'Colonnade Entrance'. The portico on the east front is only shown clearly on the 1871 map [ERO D/DU 357/14].
- 47 Soane, Adam volumes, 41 (81).
- 48 *Ibid.*, 41 (83–4).
- 49 *Ibid.*, 22 (273).
- 50 *Ibid.*, 41 (83).
- 51 *Ibid.*, 41 (84).
- 52 *Ibid.*, 41 (85–7).
- 53 *Ibid.*, 41 (92–5).
- 54 The footprint of the building is visible on several maps including British Library Maps 2420 (29).
- 55 Soane, Adam volumes, 41 (94).
- 56 *Ibid.*, 41 (92).
- 57 *Ibid.*, 41 (93).
- 58 *Ibid.*, 41 (95).
- 59 *Ibid.*, 41 (94).
- 60 Drummonds, DR/427.
- 61 Christie's Sale, 8 June 1804.
- 62 See note 19.
- 63 Christie's Sale, 12 June 1804.
- 64 Soane, Adam volumes, 41 (88–91).
- 65 Drummonds, DR/427/95/1940; DR/427/99/2 140.
- 66 Georgina Green *Woodford Times*, Spring 1995. I am grateful to Georgina Green for this reference and for Ruperta Wright's birth date (in my penultimate paragraph).
- 67 E. A. Fulcher (ed.), *A Century of Woodford Memories*, [Essex], 1986, 61.
- 68 The route of Snakes Lane was changed in the 1820s to



- the west of Ray House in order to rationalise a neighbouring estate.
- 69 Warren R. Dawson (ed.), *The Banks Letters*, London, 1958, 882.
- 70 Gaussen, *op. cit.*, I, 354, note. According to Sir Horace Mann, the Wrights were friends of the King and Queen.
- 71 W. Papworth, *John Buonarroti Papworth Architect to the King of Wurtemberg: a brief record of his life and works*, privately printed [London], 1879, 12.
- 72 Margery M. Smith (ed. by Ernest A. Fulcher), *Woodford Village to Suburb*, [Essex], 1986, 33.
- 73 Daniel Lysons, *The Environs of London being an historical account of the Towns, Villages, and Hamlets, Within Twelve Miles of that Capital: interspersed with biographical anecdotes. Volume the Fourth. Counties of Herts, Essex & Kent*, London, 1796, 287. The artificial slate works will be the subject of another article.
- 74 London, RIBA, Archives, Pa.Fam. 1/2/1.
- 75 Lysons, *op. cit.*, IV, 287; *ibid.*, Suppl., 365; H[erbert] Arthur Doubleday, *The Victoria History of the County of Essex*, Westminster, 1903-, II, 417.
- 76 George McHardy, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Office of J. B. Papworth*, Farnborough, 1977, 92.
- 77 *Gentlemen's Magazine*, March 1804, 284.
- 78 ERO, D/DLC T47, Abstract of title.
- 79 *Annual Register* 1802, 494; *Gentlemen's Magazine*, March 1804, 284. A fragmentary letter to Sir James from William Richmond in a bundle mostly dated 1773 indicates that two small girls were being adopted [ERO, D/DHT Z 16]. George Wright is referred to as the 'only child' of James and Catherine Wright in a legal document [ERO, D/DLC T47].
- 80 The new house is shown on the map of 1872 as foundations only [British Library, Maps, o.s. Essex LXV. 8].