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INIGO JONES, ISAAC DE CAUS AND THE STABLES AT HOLLAND HOUSE

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When Sir Henry Rich, the second son of the Earl of Warwick, married Isabel Cope, the daughter of the wealthy landowner and courtier Sir Walter Cope, he became the presumptive heir to one of the most advanced and ostentatious houses in England. Cope Castle, subsequently renamed Holland House when Rich was raised to the earldom of Holland in 1624, had been built between 1606 and 1612, almost certainly to the designs of John Thorpe. With its open aspect, double-pile central block, shaped gables and prominent loggias, it was one of a group of new country houses which celebrated the Jacobean age by abandoning the courtyard forms of the previous generation (Fig. 1).

Cope died in 1614 and under the terms of his will the property passed to his daughter in 1621 when his widow remarried.¹ 'A handsome man of lovely and winning presence', the physical beauty of Rich won him rapid preferment at court but the basic flaws in his character ensured that he failed to take advantage of the opportunities that these presented and his public life was largely one of frustrated ambition. However, at the time that he entered into his wife's Kensington estate his star was very much in the ascendant. 'From the first James regarded him with favour which sometimes found expression in gifts of money, sometimes in displeasing caresses'.² A protégé of the Duke of Buckingham, he was appointed gentleman of the bedchamber to Prince Charles and in 1624 he helped to conduct the marriage negotiations with Henrietta Maria who remained a loyal supporter when she became queen until she finally turned against him in 1641. During

the 1630s he became a focus of opposition to the king and quarrelled with Strafford and the Earl of Newcastle amongst other influential peers. He was temporarily banished from the court in 1633 and in 1637 it was reported that he had 'retired to his house at Kensington in disgust' when he failed to gain the post of Lord High Admiral.³ There he consoled himself by embarking on an ambitious building programme of considerable architectural distinction. Between 1638 and 1640 he added a brick wing at right angles to the centre of the west wing of his father-in-law's house. It was three storeys high with an attic and contained a hall, a new dining room placed conveniently next to the existing kitchens, an armoury, a great chamber and a stone staircase situated in the re-entrant angle between the new apartments and the existing west wall of the house. That much can be deduced from a survey of the estate taken in 1695 and the description in the building accounts which are preserved in Leeds City Library;⁴ but we have no further information on its architectural form or detailing. It was demolished in May 1704 when the house was reduced to its original proportions and no illustrations of it survive.⁵ The recorded cost was slightly in excess of £1,800, but at the same time nearly £4,000 was expended on building a magnificent detached stable and coach house range some 200 yards to the west of the house. This was an enormous sum, the equivalent of a complete country house for a less ambitious courtier and more than a match for the other notable stables of the day such as those at Petworth for the Earl of Northumberland, Blickling for Sir Henry



Fig. 1. Holland House from an engraving of 1789.

Hobart and Burley-on-the-Hill for the 1st Duke of Buckingham.

Part of the fabric of the stable and coach house range survives and in combination with the description in the building accounts and other illustrative sources it is possible to reconstruct the form of the building and its architectural detail with a high degree of confidence. The earliest known representation is on a map of the manors of Earls Court and Kensington surveyed by Edward Bostock Fuller in 1695 and redrawn by J.Johnson and W.Brasier in 1734⁶ where it is shown as a long rectangular block on a north-south alignment with a

central projection on both east and west faces and flanking wings on the east side only. Subsequent surveys from the eighteenth century show the same plan form. From one of them completed in December 1796 it is possible to rescue the basic dimensions.⁷ It was an impressive 240 feet long and 34 feet wide. The central feature had a width of 25 feet and extended for 7 feet on the west front and 15 feet to the east. The flanking wings were recessed on the west front and projected for 20 feet on the east side (Fig. 2).

The building was erected by contract with individual craftsmen and the accounts consist of

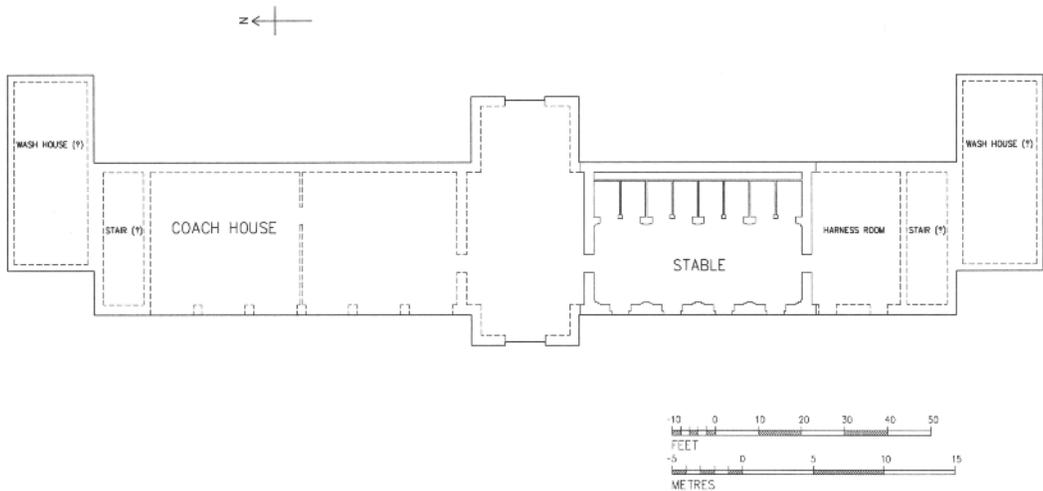


Fig. 2. Reconstructed plan of the stable and coach house range based on a survey of 1796.
Drawing by Mike Thrift.

their bills which are remarkably informative about its finished appearance. It was of brick with a tiled roof, two storeys high with an attic lit by dormer windows. The brickwork on the east elevation facing the house was painted in ochre to enhance its appearance but the principal elevation to the west was left untreated.⁸ The yard on this side was paved in ragstone and had a cobbled causeway leading up to the central gateway⁹ which had ‘Two paire of great Stable gates 13 foote high and 10 foote wide with wicketts in them’ costing £15 the pair.¹⁰

The coach house occupied the northern half of the building and its west front was dominated by ‘six paire of great coach-house doores with doorecases to them’ of similar dimensions.¹¹ They must have been less elaborately decorated than the central stable gates because despite the doorcases they only cost £8 the pair. There was a brick paved cellar beneath the coach house divided by a single boarded partition and a wooden ground floor of 1½" planks.¹² The ceiling of the coach house was plastered and the ground floor was divided into two compartments by a double-boarded partition.¹³ The impression is of a

simple plain structure with very little adornment, in contrast to the sumptuous stables which occupied the southern half of the building.

The stables were entered through the central archway and the west front was decorated by a blind arcade to match the coach house doors to the north. Internally, it was divided by a brick wall into two unequal compartments. The stalls were on the east side and were framed by a brick arcade separated by Doric pilasters with central keystones and a moulded cornice. The northern compartment had eight stalls within four arches and it is possible that there were a further four stalls within two arches in the southern compartment. Alternatively, this space could have housed the harness room and one of the staircases that gave access to the upper storeys. The walls and the piers were all panelled and the floors were of 3in. planks. The stalls had a double rack and manger

made of the best oken timber and the rack with a deep architrave freeze and cornish and having strong shutters to keepe in the strawe under the manger and turned bayles between the horses with substanciall posts with great turned balls att the heel turn...¹⁴

Bales are described by Gervase Markham in 1607 in the following passage:

And if the stable be for great horses, or young colts, then from each post to the manger, shall goe a rounde peece of timber, which hang either in writhen chaines, cordes, or strong thongs of lether, so that it may swinge which way a man will have it, which will keepe horses from striking one at another.¹⁵

Markham goes on to advocate boarded partitions for hunting horses but the stables at Holland House were undoubtedly intended for the great horses that would have been employed in hauling the coaches housed in the other part of the building. These were an expensive luxury and because of the poor quality of the English breed were often imported from abroad.¹⁶ They were used in teams of either four or six and Lord Holland provided luxury accommodation for at least eight of them. Not only were the walls and piers lined with moulded panelling but all the woodwork including the stable furniture, the great stable doors, the coach house doors and the panelling were painted in a muted finish of ‘a sad Timber color in oyle’.¹⁷ There was a ‘Great cornish within and without the stables’ of moulded brick and the architraves ‘about the Arches and windowes’ were similarly treated.¹⁸

The appropriate material for stable floors was the subject of much contemporary debate with some authors such as Markham advocating planked floors,¹⁹ and others, including Thomas de Gray in 1639, insisting on paved floors.²⁰ At Holland House they were of 3in. planks in conformity with a royal proclamation of 1624 which forbade the use of paved, pitched or gravelled floors in the interests of the collection of saltpetre for the gunpowder industry. All the other fittings in the stable complied with the best practice set out by Markham. There were fireplaces and chimneys ‘for drying horses clothes and making medicines’,²¹ 40 double rings set in stone for tying horses²² and 8 sturdy hooks also set in stone ‘to hang harness on’.²³ The complex contained separate wash houses served by a cistern

set on a timber frame with piped water, two pumps and three fireplaces.²⁴ They were presumably situated in one or both of the projecting wings which seem to have been only a single storey high.

The floor to ceiling height of the stables was an impressive 18 feet. Above this was probably a hayloft with direct access for the feed into the racks below and lodgings for the grooms. In the inventory drawn up after the death of the Countess of Warwick and Holland in 1732 ‘2 bedsteads, 2 beds, 2 Bolsters, Three Blankits’ were noted over the stables²⁵ and although this represents a fairly meagre provision by that date, the original complement of stable staff would have been provided for more generously. As Nicholas Morgan wrote in 1609,

Neere to the stable would the Groomes of the stable bee lodged, to be ready at all times, and upon all occasions, and ioyning to their lodging would be a convenient room with a presse therein to set all their Saddles, Bridles, Girthes and such like....²⁶

Access to the upper floors was by an unspecified number of staircases. 157 steps were paid for in the account which suggests there must have been three of them dispersed about the building. They were of timber with wooden ballusters all painted in the same colour as the rest of the interior woodwork.²⁷

The carpenter’s bill contains an item for 13 oval windows and it seems likely that these were disposed symmetrically along the first floor on the principal elevation to the west above the coach house doors, the blind arcade to the stables and the central projection.²⁸ The roof was lit by no less than 36 dormer windows which must have been placed on both sides and probably over the east and west projections as well.²⁹ In addition the carpenter also made 192 timber window lights, some of which would have been situated in the stable arcade where they were both glazed and shuttered in accordance with contemporary practice.³⁰ The head of the walls was marked by a moulded brick cornice³¹ surmounted by a coved timber eaves and wooden

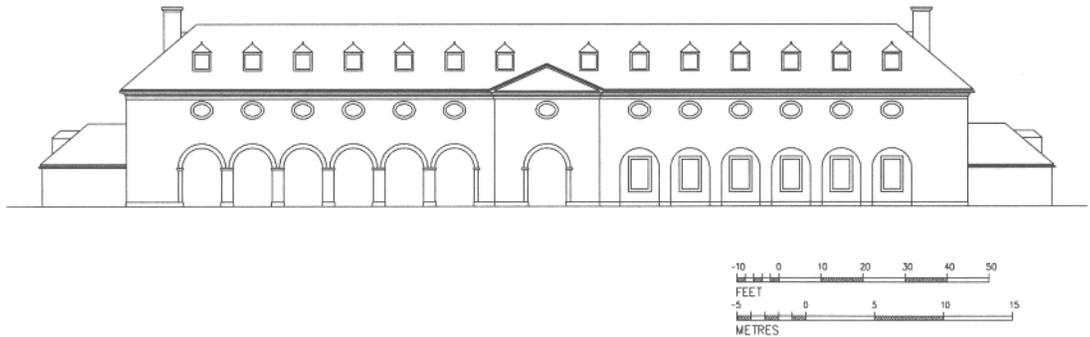


Fig. 3. Reconstructed west elevation with the coach house to the north and stables to the south.

Drawing by Mike Thrift.

guttering.³² All the external woodwork and the cornice were painted white to contrast with the red brickwork and the sad timber colour of the coach house doors (Fig. 3).³³

The fourteen trusses of the roof were of an advanced design. They are described in the carpenter's bill as each having 'Two punchions, the one being a crowne punchion and 4 bracs and a beame 34 foote long.'³⁴ Puncheons were the vertical timbers of the roof and the description is rather puzzling because the crown puncheon must have been what is now more usually called a king post rising from the tiebeam to the apex. If there were only one other puncheon the asymmetrical form could not have functioned properly and it is likely that this is a transcription error for two puncheons and one crown puncheon. Certainly such a truss would have been necessary to support the unusually wide span of 34 feet and had been used earlier in the decade by Inigo Jones for the original roof of St Paul, Covent Garden, which was of similar dimensions. The survey drawings of this roof, which was destroyed by fire in 1795 but was recorded by Batty Langley in 1736 and William Newton in 1782, show a central king post flanked by two secondary vertical posts all connected by four braces. Langley shows two additional braces but these are likely to have

been later repairs.³⁵ Richard Vesey, the carpenter who constructed the roof at Holland House, would have been closely familiar with Jones's innovative roof. In 1635 he had taken a building lease in Covent Garden Piazza and in the same year he was paid a large sum in excess of £1500 for the carpentry work on three of the Earl of Bedford's own houses in the same development.³⁶

Moreover, a significant number of the other craftsmen employed at Holland House had actually worked on the church itself. William Mason who executed most of the stonework in which the various hooks and hinges were set, as well as some Portland stone plinths and Kentish rag steps, had been the mason contractor for St Paul and had also taken a number of building leases on houses in the Piazza.³⁷ Thomas Bagley glazed all the windows on the stables and the new addition to the house. Either he, or his father of the same name, had glazed the church.³⁸ The smith, Erasmus Marsh, had worked at both sites³⁹ as well as Thomas Charley, the plumber,⁴⁰ and another mason, Thomas Stephens, who, although not involved in the original contract, subsequently carried out alterations to St Paul from 1645 to 1649.⁴¹ Most distinguished of all was the painter Matthew Goodrich who was the only craftsman accorded the courtesy title of 'Mr' in the accounts.⁴² He had



Fig. 4. The gate piers erected by Nicholas Stone in 1630.

painted the perspective grotesque on the ceiling amongst other work at St Paul but, as assistant to John de Critz, the Serjeant Painter, his list of royal commissions is long and impressive, including Holyroodhouse Palace in Edinburgh earlier in his career, and Whitehall Palace, St James's, Somerset House and the Queen's House in the 1630s.⁴³ Holland was not his only private patron at this period. In 1637 or 1638 he painted and gilded the woodwork of the great stairs at Ham House for the Earl of Dysart and in 1639 he painted the frame for the van Dyck portrait of the Countess of Middlesex at Cophthall.⁴⁴ It is a measure of the importance that Holland placed on the decoration of his stables and coach house that he was able to command a

craftsman of this quality for what must have been a relatively mechanical job although Goodrich was also responsible for the painted decoration of the new wing to the house.

In securing the services of a craftsman often employed by the officers of the Royal Works, Holland would have been greatly assisted by the influence of the man that he appointed to oversee the work. This was no less a figure than Thomas Baldwin, who served in the senior position of Comptroller of the Royal Works from 1606 until his death in 1641.⁴⁵ He, too, was given the title of 'Mr' in the accounts and was responsible for auditing the bills and making the payments. In addition he probably played a part in recruiting the labour force,

which was largely drawn from the senior ranks of the Works. William Dodson, who erected the carcass of the building, had been Master Bricklayer in the Works since 1634/5.⁴⁶ William Mason had been Deputy Mason under Nicholas Stone since 1624, and was to rise to the position of leading mason in 1643.⁴⁷ Thomas Stephens was another prominent royal mason who later became the principal clerk of the works.⁴⁸ Thomas Bagley was the Chief Glazier in the Works from 1634 in succession to his father,⁴⁹ and Hugh Justice was the Sergeant Plumber from 1631 to 1639. He also seems to have been involved in the Covent Garden development.⁵⁰ Although some of these men only carried out relatively small jobs on the project, their presence is a clear indication that Holland had access to the best available talent to execute the work. He had earlier demonstrated the power of his patronage in March 1630 when he had commissioned Nicholas Stone to build '2 Peeres of good Portland stone, to hang a pair of great wooden gates on for 100li.' These restrained classical features now stand to the south of the house although they have moved around the grounds since they were first erected.⁵¹ They confirm Holland's advanced architectural taste (Fig. 4).

There is no mention of a plan or any other architectural drawings in the account for the stables but it is possible that this, too, was prepared in the office of the Royal Works. Any payment to Baldwin must have been recorded in another account book which has not survived. However, he deserves consideration as the possible designer as well as the supervisor of the work. In 1623 he is known to have provided a 'devise' for the Jesus Hospital at Bray in Berkshire, and in 1632–3 he was consulted by the University of Oxford in connection with additions to the Bodleian Library, although whether he was anything more than a competent administrator remains unclear.⁵² A much more serious contender is the Surveyor of the Works himself, Inigo Jones. The advanced form of the trussed roof, which ultimately derived from Italy, might hint at his contribution,⁵³

but a stronger connection can be demonstrated by a plan and section of a stable in the *Designs of Inigo Jones and others* published by Isaac Ware in 1731 (Figs. 5 & 6). Although the stable is not identified by Ware, the dimensions and the architectural detail correspond almost exactly with the surviving fabric at Holland House and the descriptions in the accounts (Figs. 7 & 8). The jagged ends of the outside walls on the Ware plan indicate that it was only part of a larger building, and the elevation shows an arcade of four arches separated by Doric pilasters framing a double rack and manger with 'substanciall posts with great turned balls' dividing the stalls. There can be no doubt at all that both illustrations represent the northern compartment of the ground floor of the stable range at Holland House. Certainly, informed opinion within the architectural profession later in the eighteenth century was of this view; both Thomas Worsley, who was himself to become Surveyor of the Works, and John Carr of York annotated their personal copies of Ware's book to that effect.⁵⁴

On the title page of the book Ware states that 'most of these designs are already executed: & the rest, are at Burlington House'. The absence of any identification of the stables is not of itself significant. Only a few of the 29 plates devoted to features or buildings attributed to Jones are identified by place. They include Somerset House, but other buildings which must have been equally well-known to Ware are unidentified, such as the Barber-Surgeons' theatre and the staircase at Ashburnham House. Whether the stables were drawn from a survey by Ware or were copied from original drawings in the possession of Lord Burlington which have subsequently been lost is a difficult question to answer. The plan of the Ashburnham House staircase is a mirror image of the existing feature, which suggests that in this case at least Ware was working from an existing drawing by Jones or John Webb rather than from his own survey. Thus the survival of a similar drawing of the Holland House

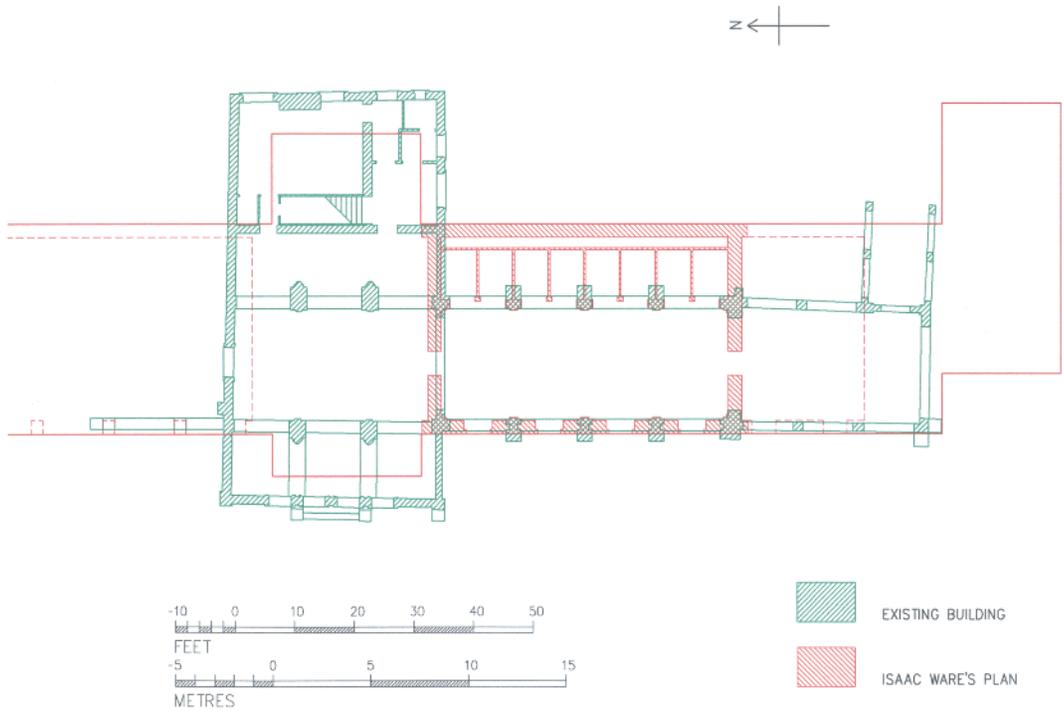


Fig. 7. The Isaac Ware plan superimposed on a survey of the existing fabric.
Drawing by Mike Thrift.

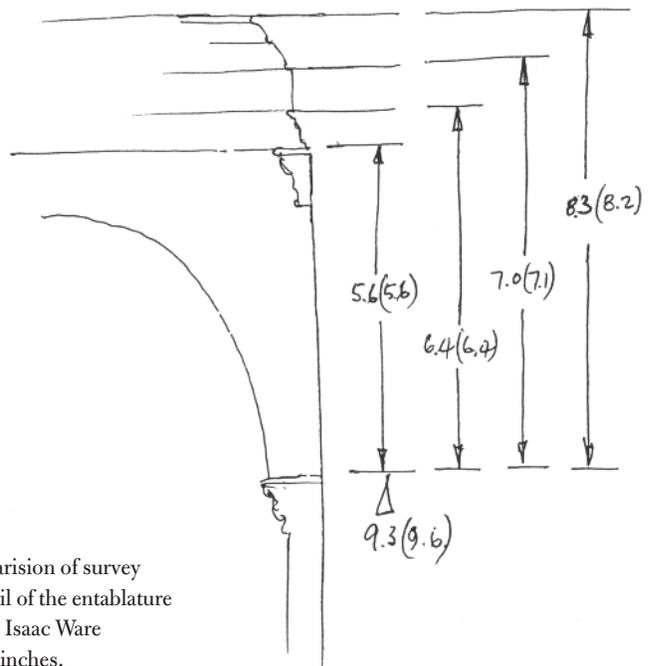


Fig. 8. Sketch comparison of survey dimensions of a detail of the entablature (in brackets) and the Isaac Ware elevation in feet and inches.

stables into the 1730s cannot be dismissed lightly.⁵⁵ As Giles Worsley has recently suggested, Jones had demonstrated an interest in grand equestrian buildings from the very beginning of his architectural career and his surviving drawings of c.1610 and c.1620 must now be re-assessed as altogether more ambitious than the small stables that they were once thought to be.⁵⁶ Ware's attribution of the Holland House stables to Jones, although it was made nearly a century after the event, carries conviction on the basis of the architectural quality of the elevation of the stalls. This is even more apparent in the clean lines of his original drawing in the Soane Museum, and the surviving fabric. Given Holland's position at court and the contribution of craftsmen both from the Works and Covent Garden, the balance of probability is that this is a genuine design from Jones's office. Against this proposition, it might be argued that the strongly royalist Jones would have been unlikely to have accepted a commission from a client out of favour at court. However, by early 1639 when the detailed designs for the stable compartment were probably being prepared, Holland had been reconciled to the king and had been appointed to a prestigious public office. Moreover, at this stage he remained deeply entrenched in the affections of the queen. She also had a very close relationship with Jones, which extended to the payment of a stipend to him as her own unofficial Surveyor of Works. Henrietta Maria might well have been the catalyst that brought Jones into the project. Another tantalising link is that Holland might have already established contact with Jones a decade earlier in connection with the gate piers made by Nicholas Stone. Horace Walpole certainly thought that they were from a design by Jones, as did Ware when he illustrated them in his *Complete Body of Architecture*. Their quality makes this a feasible attribution.⁵⁷

It is perhaps significant that Ware chose to illustrate only part of the building. From the accounts it is clear that special attention was paid to the architectural treatment of the stable and it is

possible that Jones only provided designs for this particular element of the whole project. At this period it would have been quite feasible for the overall design to have been by another hand and in considering the possibility it is worth exploring the claim of Isaac De Caus. Jones is unlikely to have provided the finishing touches to a building by a designer that he did not respect. His partnership with De Caus is well documented, starting with the Banqueting House in 1623–4 and continuing a decade later with the Covent Garden development before culminating at Wilton House.⁵⁸ At Wilton De Caus built a quadrangular stable block incorporating a fourteenth-century barn of the former abbey.⁵⁹ The most striking features of the north elevation facing the house are a central arcaded screen with six circular windows above the piers and paired *oeil-de-boeuf* windows at first floor level in the flanking pavilions. They are strongly reminiscent of the arcaded west front of the Holland House stables and the oval windows mentioned in the accounts, even though the proliferation of dormer windows is absent.

Even more striking is the similarity between the Holland House building and the contemporary stable at Bedford House built as part of the Covent Garden development where Jones and De Caus worked in partnership.⁶⁰ It was rectangular in plan with projecting wings at either end.⁶¹ The only known view is by Wenceslaus Hollar of c.1658–60, where it is shown fronting onto a stable yard to the east of the house. Although the detailed depiction of individual buildings in Hollar's birds'-eye views are not always reliable, the main elements of the southern elevation are probably accurate enough. It was a two-storeyed structure with a central pedimented doorcase flanked by the high rectangular windows characteristic of stable buildings. The first floor is lit by a row of oval windows similar to those at Wilton and Holland House, with what appears to be a central rectangular putting-in door for the storage of fodder. The roof is punctuated with dormer windows (Fig. 9).⁶² It was built sometime

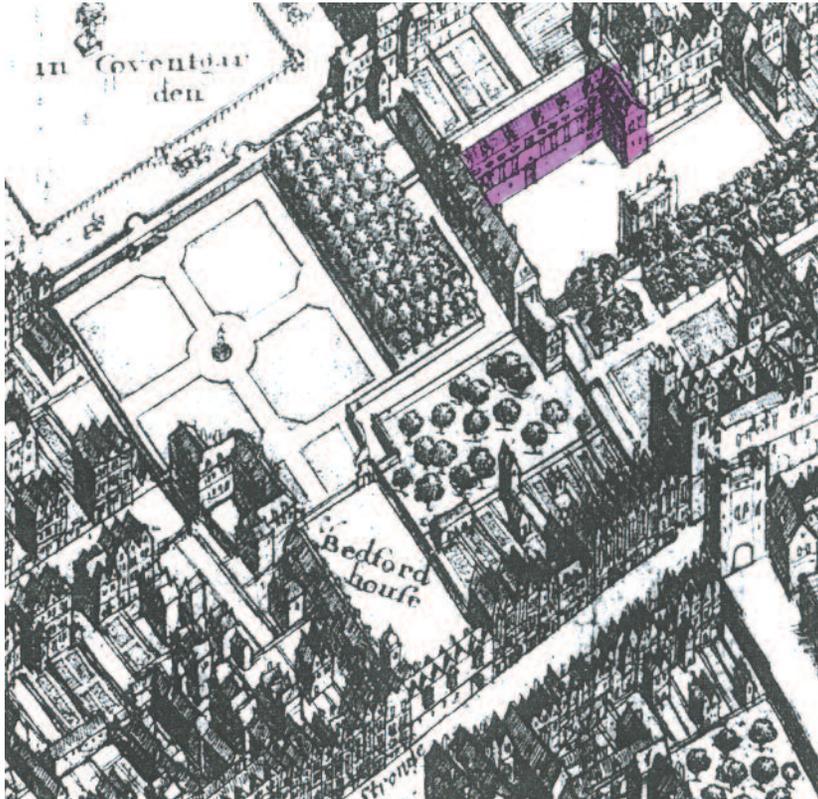


Fig. 9. The stables at Bedford House (top right) from a view by Wenceslaus Hollar.
British Museum, Prints and Design Department.

after 1628, and from what we know about the rest of the development it was undoubtedly designed by either Jones or De Caus. In essence it is the Holland House concept without the arcaded ground floor and the central projection. In combination with the known links between the two sites in the form of a common building team it is highly suggestive that Ware's attribution can be trusted.

The stable and coach house complex at Holland House survived in its original form for far longer than the new wing erected by the Earl at the same time. Repairs to the wooden guttering and the brickwork of the central entrance archway were carried out in 1709 and 1710,⁶³ but the basic plan

remained unaltered throughout the eighteenth century.⁶⁴ Its original use was finally abandoned and it was partially demolished around 1812 in connection with the creation of the Portuguese garden to the east, later called the Dutch garden.⁶⁵ Faulkner gives a valuable description of its condition in 1820:

This part of the garden stands on the ground formerly occupied by the stables, the half of which were pulled down as useless. The stalls were within lofty arches, which have been preserved, and present something similar to the ruins of an aqueduct, which has a remarkably good effect.⁶⁶

A new and smaller stable with two double coach houses, a single coach house and various workshops



Fig. 10. The remains of the coach house with the summer ballroom and the belvedere beyond.



Fig. 11. Detail of one of the coach entrances.



Fig. 12. The stalls arcade to the stables from the east.

was built in the form of an enclosed courtyard to the south-east and the surviving part of the seventeenth-century building was converted into a conservatory with an assembly room at its northern end.⁶⁷ By 1850 the conservatory had become the orangery and the assembly room had been altered in a Jacobean style to form the summer ballroom with a belvedere on its roof.⁶⁸ This is now a restaurant and the orangery is an exhibition gallery. The freestanding arches to the north of the restaurant are the remnant of the coach house and were retained to provide a picturesque backdrop to the fashionable garden parties which were such a feature of the social life at Holland House in the later nineteenth century (Figs. 10 & 11).⁶⁹ A vivid account of the company and the ambiance of these regular events is provided in a letter of 18 July 1867 from Mrs Cavendish-Bentinck:

I was at a charming party at H.H. yesterday afternoon. Royalty of all kinds, from the P. of Wales to the poor P. de Solmes. You could not go down a walk or alley without stumbling on a Prince or a Grand-Duchess. They say the first emotion the Vice-Roy felt since he has been in England was seeing those lovely gardens. Lady Duff-Gordon, too, is in raptures. She says she was greatly interested at seeing many persons whom she was not likely to see elsewhere...⁷⁰

Something of that glamour has returned now that the restaurant is being run by Marco Pierre White.

Despite the radical truncation and remodelling of the nineteenth century, a significant part of the original fabric remains, including most of the stable compartment recorded by Ware. The east wall and the area originally occupied by the stalls has been removed so that the brick arcade has become the outside wall with the openings fully glazed as part of the new



Fig. 13. Interior of stables looking north. Original fabric beyond the projecting piers.



Fig. 14. Interior of stables looking south. The area beyond the projecting piers is of later date. *Dianne Duggan.*

conservatory use (Fig. 12). However, the stub of the original wall can still be seen at low level in the eastern projection of the restaurant and the stone pads for the joists above the racks project at regular intervals above the piers and the centres of the east face of the arcade. The infill between the blind arcade of the west wall has also been replaced by conservatory glazing. Internally, the space defined by Ware is marked by short returns in the brickwork at the appropriate places even though the cross walls have been opened up. The moulded brick cornice at ceiling level confirms the integrity of the space and is itself a remarkable survival of the original decorative scheme (Figs. 13 and 14). The southern end of this range is of later brickwork and on a slightly different alignment. It presumably dates from the nineteenth century conversion. Elsewhere there are fragmentary stretches of early brickwork in parts of the Belvedere Restaurant representing all that is left of the central projection and a three-light window with ovolo moulded mullions on the south wall of the kitchen. The four arches to the north which are the most evocative feature of the complex incorporate seventeenth century bricks and three of them are almost certainly the surviving entrances to the coach house range.

Even though the whole of the upper storey and the roof have been removed, what remains is a precious part of what was one of the most ambitious equestrian developments of the court of Charles I. It might have had only a maximum of twelve stalls but these were not for ordinary horses. Rather they housed the magnificent Great Horses which would have pulled the earl's remarkable collection of coaches. It is now impossible to say whether he owned the full complement of six coaches for which he made provision. But even if half the spaces were left empty or were reserved for the coaches of his guests, as might be implied by the double-boarded partition, this was still expenditure on an exceedingly ostentatious scale. The first imported example of the heavy coach with its four big wheels and braced suspension had been introduced to

England during the reign of Queen Mary and within a generation it had become one of the most desirable objects of the aristocratic household.⁷¹ Queen Elizabeth, despite her legendary parsimony on building, took the lead in promoting this new luxury. She lavished vast sums of money on her fleet of coaches which by the time of her death had numbered ten vehicles either specially commissioned or presented as gifts.⁷² By 1617 Fynes Moryson was able to write that:

Sixtie or seventy yeeres agoe Coaches were very rare in *England*, but at this day pride is so farre increased, as be few Gentlemen of any account (I mean elder Brothers) who have not their Coaches, so as the streetes of *London* are almost stopped up with them.⁷³

Elaborately painted and gilded and luxuriously upholstered, the cost of a coach was enormous. As Worsley so graphically describes the phenomenon

The introduction of the coach was as significant a social development for the upper classes as the arrival of the motor car three centuries later, and it brought with it serious practical problems. Coaches were bulky and very expensive objects. The horses that pulled them (two, four or even six) were also very costly. Both needed careful housing – indeed the demands of this precious breed of horse led to a general revolution in stable design in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries – and together they significantly increased the scale of stable accommodation required by an aristocratic London house.⁷⁴

Pride of ownership is manifest in the prominent position of coaches in the foreground of so many of the views of country houses that were commissioned from the sixteenth century onwards. From Joris Hoefnagel's drawing of Nonsuch Palace of c.1568 to Jan Siberecht's paintings of the later seventeenth century of houses such as Longleat, Wollaton, Cheveley Park, Cambridgeshire, The Grove, Highgate and Bayhall, Kent, the traffic of coaches is a clear symbol of status and hospitality.⁷⁵

These views also provide much of the evidence that is available about housing these expensive vehicles and the exceptional nature of the provision

made by the Earl of Holland is immediately apparent. From the painting of c.1680 of the great stable quadrangle at Petworth of the 9th Earl of Northumberland, described after its demolition by Defoe as ‘the finest of their kind in all the south of England’,⁷⁶ it is not possible to tell how many coach houses, if any, it contained, but the Colen Campbell plan of the stable at Wilton shows no accommodation for coaches.⁷⁷ At Woburn Abbey, where De Caus was also engaged as well as Nicholas Stone, the stables with 20 stalls were converted from the former monks frater and the coach house was contrived from the Chapter House.⁷⁸ It contained sufficient space for only three coaches. At Longleat, where coach houses were added to the Elizabethan stables sometime before 1675, the accommodation was equally modest, as it was at Cheveley Park near Newmarket, painted by Siberechts in 1681.⁷⁹ It is an area which deserves further research but Worsley suggests that

The introduction of the coach house, as opposed to the coach horse, had little immediate impact on stable design. The first coaches at country houses were housed in an ad hoc fashion in lean-tos or simple gabled structures ... It was only towards the end of the [seventeenth] century that the different elements of the stable, including the coach houses and the barn, came to be integrated into one unified structure.⁸⁰

If he is right, then the sophistication of the Holland House complex sets it apart from all the other contemporary projects and reinforces the importance of its surviving elements.

Aristocratic equestrian buildings in the seventeenth century were something more than utilitarian structures to serve the needs of a great household. Like the banqueting houses, the terraces and walkways, the ingenious waterworks and *faux* fortifications which adorned so many aristocratic estates, they were potent symbols of display, hospitality and political ambition. This is a point made with convincing force by Lucy Worsley in her study of the Riding House at Bolsover which had also been built in the 1630s.⁸¹ William Cavendish,

Duke of Newcastle, who commissioned the Riding House, was well known for his obsession with the art of *manège* or horsemanship. In addition to Bolsover he owned the earlier riding house at Welbeck Abbey, probably created another out of Rubens’s studio while living in exile in Antwerp in the 1650s, and had plans to set up a riding academy next to his London house in Clerkenwell. The treatise that he wrote on *La Méthode Nouvelle...* (1657) is illustrated with engravings after Abraham Diepenbeke of his own houses as a backdrop to the equestrian exercises played out by the horses in the foreground. Truly, for him, as Lucy Worsley comments,

Horsemanship, like art collecting at the court of Charles I, was a political activity in that it was intended to impress the influential and win power.⁸²

It is perhaps significant, therefore, that both he and the Earl of Holland were rivals for the court post of General of the Horse in succession to the Earl of Essex in February 1639, just at the moment when the stable and coach house was going up at Holland House.⁸³ Even though Holland had briefly been Master of the Horse in 1628, Newcastle with his European reputation for horsemanship would appear to have had the better credentials and was bitterly ‘disappointed & thereby a little (with no little reason) discontented’ when he lost out to Holland.⁸⁴ The humiliation was no doubt still simmering when in June the same year he challenged Holland to a duel which was only prevented by the personal intervention of the king.⁸⁵

This raises the distinct possibility that the magnificence of Holland’s project was part of a strategy aimed at securing the post in which the extent of his influence with the Office of Works and its senior craftsmen could have played a part. At Bolsover, Newcastle built a riding house with local craftsmen to the mannered design of John Smithson, a provincial architect whose stature relies, at least in part, on the reputation of his father and the chance survival of documentation about his life. It celebrated the

masculine and chivalric art of *haute école* and provided accommodation in the adjacent stable for fifteen great horses. Both the stable and the riding house were decorated in a manner which suggests that they were intended as an extension of the state apartments where guests would come to admire the beauty of the horses and the discipline of their schooling.⁸⁶ There was no coach house in the riding house range at Bolsover. Such a provision belonged to an altogether different and more self-indulgent ethic.

The contrast with Holland's approach to display could not be greater. That new luxury of conspicuous expenditure – the coach – was the impetus for a building of sophisticated classical form designed in all probability by the king's architect and his trusted associate, erected by the cream of the London building world and overseen by one of the most senior officials of the Royal Works. The advanced decoration of the stables provided the appropriate setting in which to admire his achievement. There are two different aristocratic worlds symbolised by the two buildings. One is firmly metropolitan, suave and privileged, confidently at ease in court circles and dedicated to the sensual pleasures that physical beauty, personal charm and great fortune made available. The other is rooted in the feudal and family responsibilities of a great provincial estate, wedded to the traditional values of chivalry and patronage and desparately seeking royal favour and political office.⁸⁷

Ultimately the ambitions of both men were frustrated. Holland's tenure as General of the Horse was shortlived. During the Civil War he antagonised both sides and in March 1649 he was beheaded. Newcastle, despite his expertise in the martial arts, was humiliated in the Royalist defeat at Marston Moor and remained in exile until the Restoration. On his return he dedicated himself to his recovered country estates and spent little time in London. The equestrian buildings of both men remain as testimony to their aspirations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was commenced more than 30 years ago when the Works Section of the Historic Buildings Division of the Greater London Council carried out a programme of repairs to the building following a fire in 1971. As was the usual practice with that admirable organisation, the work was informed by a careful archaeological survey of the fabric and the detailed historic research which forms the basis for this account. During the course of the works, Norman Harrison acted as a challenging mentor in exploring the relationship between the documentation and the physical evidence, and I am indebted for the rigour to which he subjected my early arguments. At that time publication was not encouraged by the GLC and the lengthy gestation of

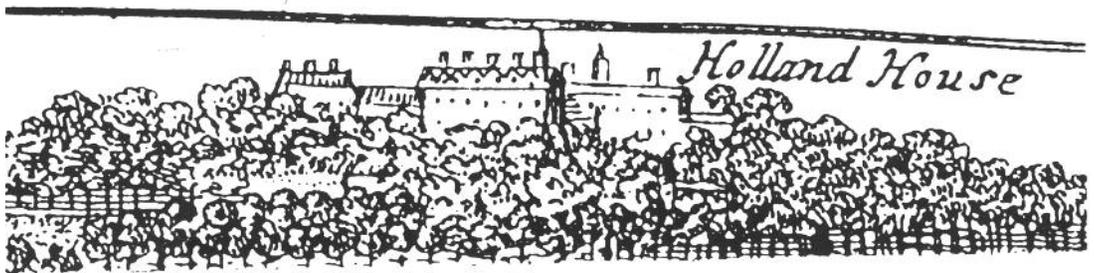


Fig. 15. Enlarged detail from the background to the plate (13) of Beaufort House, Chelsea, in Leonard Knyff and Jan Kip, *Britannia Illustrata* (1707). It is possible that the structure on the left represents the stable and the coach house.

this paper has enabled it to benefit from the recent research of many other scholars working on the period. In particular the work of Giles Worsley has provided both the equestrian and the architectural context within which this remarkable building must be assessed. I am especially grateful to him for first pointing me in the direction of Isaac Ware and for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper. Sir Howard Colvin, Paula Henderson and Julian Munby also read the draft which has been greatly improved by their helpful suggestions. The inspiration to complete the research was re-ignited by reading the doctoral dissertations of Lucy Worsley and Dianne Duggan. Both of them have been very generous with their constructive comments and the latter in particular has provided me with many relevant references, illustrations and supportive enthusiasm. I am grateful to Mike Thrift for his care and attention to detail in making the reconstruction drawings which have benefited from his architectural expertise. Finally, I must express my thanks to the President and Fellows of Kellogg College for granting me a sabbatical term which enabled me to finally complete the project.

NOTES

- 1 The Earl of Ilchester, *The Home of the Hollands 1605 - 1820*, London, 1937, 9. The precise date of the marriage between Isabel Cope and Henry Rich is uncertain but he was described as 'my trusty and well beloved sonne-in-law' in Walter Cope's will of July 1614.
- 2 The quotation is taken from his entry in *The Dictionary of National Biography* (compact edition), Oxford, 1975 (hereafter *DNB*), II, 1762, which paints a very unflattering portrait of his life.
- 3 Ilchester, *op. cit.*, 12.
- 4 'The generall accompts for all the Buildings of the right honorable the Earle of Holland att his Lopps. mannor of Kensington. Anis 1638, 1639, et 1640'. Leeds City Library TN/EA/13/74 (hereafter TN). They are amongst the papers deposited by Viscount Halifax of Temple Newsam in 1922 and were

- presumably inadvertently left at that house when the Earl of Holland was negotiating the marriage of his eldest son to the daughter of Sir Arthur Ingram which took place in 1641.
- 5 London British Library (hereafter BL), Egerton MSS. 1973, fols.3-4. 'Memo. Re pulling down W end of Holland House called the new building, and the staircase'.
 - 6 Kensington Public Library. Reproduced in Ilchester, *op. cit.*, facing 32.
 - 7 BL, Grace XXXVI, no. 72.
 - 8 TN, fol.4. See E. Mercer, 'The Decoration of the Royal Palaces from 1553-1625', *Archaeological Journal*, CX, 1953 for other examples of this common treatment.
 - 9 TN, fol.31.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, fol.8.
 - 11 *Idem.*
 - 12 *Ibid.*, fols.3 & 8.
 - 13 *Ibid.*, fol.8.
 - 14 *Idem.*
 - 15 Gervase Markham, *Cavelarice or The English Horseman . . .*, London, 1607, 5.
 - 16 Giles Worsley, 'The Seventeenth-Century Country House Stable' in Malcolm Airs (ed.) *The Seventeenth Century Great House*, Oxford, 1995, 103-4. This summary of the stable in the period is based on his definitive but unpublished PhD thesis, 'The Design and Development of the Stable and Riding House in Great Britain from the 13th Century to 1914', Courtauld Institute, University of London, 1989.
 - 17 TN, fol.13. I am grateful to Dr Ian Bristow for confirming that the term 'sad' was used to describe a subdued rather than a bright finish.
 - 18 *Ibid.*, fol.3.
 - 19 Markham, *op. cit.*, 3.
 - 20 Thomas de Gray, *The Compleat Horseman and Expert Farrier*, London, 1639, 11-13. See Worsley, *op. cit.*, 98-9 for a rehearsal of the arguments.
 - 21 Markham, *op. cit.*, 3 and TN, fol.3.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, 6 and TN, fols.18 & 23.
 - 23 *Idem.*, and TN, fol.23.
 - 24 TN, fols.4, 9, 24 & 29.
 - 25 BL, Egerton MS. 1973, fol.114.
 - 26 Nicholas Morgan, *The Perfection of Horsemanship Drawne from Nature, Arte and Practise*, London, 1609, 152.
 - 27 TN, fols.8 & 14.
 - 28 *Ibid.*, fol.7.
 - 29 *Idem.*

- 30 *Ibid.*, fols.8 & 15; Markham, *op.cit.*, 2; Morgan, *op.cit.*, 151; de Gray, *op.cit.*, 11.
- 31 TN, fol.3.
- 32 *Ibid.*, fol.7.
- 33 *Ibid.*, fol.13.
- 34 *Ibid.*, fol.7.
- 35 David Yeomans, 'Inigo Jones's Roof Structures', *Architectural History*, XXIX, 1986, 95-7. See also David Yeomans, *The Trussed Roof: its history and development*, Aldershot, 1992, 34-46.
- 36 Survey of London, XXXVI, *The Parish of St Paul, Covent Garden*, 1970, 284, 287 & 306-7.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 274 & 282 and TN, fol.23.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 279 and TN, fol.15.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 277 and TN, fol.18.
- 40 *Ibid.*, 279 & 287 and TN, fol.29.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 104n and TN, fol.26.
- 42 TN, fols.13-14.
- 43 Survey of London, *op.cit.*, 279; *Reg. Of the Privy Council of Scotland*, X, 593-4; H.M.Colvin (ed.), *The History of the King's Works*, IV, part II, 1982, 38, 39, 119, 249, 262, 263, 265, 268n & 336.
- 44 Maidstone, Centre for Kentish Studies, U269 A462/5.
- 45 Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840*, New Haven and London, 1995, 96.
- 46 H.M. Colvin (ed.), *The History of the King's Works*, III, part I, 1975, 410.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 144 & 161.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 151 & 162.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 412.
- 50 *Ibid.*, 411. Justice appears in a list of builders and speculators interested in leases in the King Street area [Alnwick Castle, Syon MSS,Y III 3a, B2]. I owe this reference to the kindness of Dianne Duggan.
- 51 The Earl of Ilchester, *Chronicles of Holland House 1820-1900*, London, 1937, 484-5.
- 52 Colvin, *Dictionary, cit.*, 96.
- 53 Yeomans, *op.cit.*.
- 54 The connection between the Ware illustrations and Holland House was first made by Giles Worsley and I am very grateful to him for sharing this suggestion with me many years ago and for confirming the annotations on Worsley's copy at Hovingham and Carr's copy in the Soane Museum.
- 55 I am very grateful to Sir Howard Colvin for his suggestions on these points and for passing on to me the observations of Tim Tatton-Brown on the Ashburnham staircase.
- 56 Giles Worsley, 'Inigo Jones and the Hatfield Riding House', *Architectural History*, XLV, 2002, 230-7.
- 57 Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, 4th edn., London, 1786, III, 49; Isaac Ware, *A Complete Body of Architecture...*, London, 1767, plate 122. I am grateful to Gordon Higgott for discussions about the possible involvement of Jones in the stable design, although he does not necessarily agree with my conclusion.
- 58 Colvin, *Dictionary, cit.*, 298-9.
- 59 John Bold, *Wilton House and English Palladianism*, London, 1988, 78.
- 60 Dianne Duggan, 'The Architectural Patronage of the 4th Earl of Bedford (1587-1641)', University of London, Courtauld Institute of Art, unpublished PhD dissertation, 2002, chapters 4 and 5.
- 61 See the map of Covent Garden in Crowle's extra-illustrated copy of Thomas Pennant's *Some Account of London*, 1790, reproduced in Giles Worsley, 'Inigo Jones and the Origins of the London Mews', *Architectural History*, XLIV, 2001, 90.
- 62 I am very grateful to Dianne Duggan for drawing my attention to this building and for supplying me with a very helpful enlarged image of the Hollar view. The form and details are very similar to the demolished stable built by Lord Cottington in the early 1630s at Fonthill House, Wiltshire, which has also been attributed to De Caus [John Harris, *The Artist and the Country House*, London, 1979, 262].
- 63 BL, Egerton MSS.1973, fols.87 & 89.
- 64 See the surveys of 1734, 1770 and 1796.
- 65 Ilchester, *Chronicles, cit.*, 491.
- 66 Thomas Faulkner, *History and Antiquities of Kensington*, London, 1820, 124.
- 67 1851 OS map, 10"=1 mile.
- 68 Derek Hudson, *Holland House in Kensington*, London, 1967, 108.
- 69 See Gustave Doré & Blanchard Jerrold, *London*, London, 1872, 88 and *The Illustrated London News*, June 1872.
- 70 Ilchester, *Chronicles, op.cit.*, 429.
- 71 Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (abridged edn.), Oxford, 1967, 258. The full history of the coach in England at this period is being researched by Julian Munby, but as yet remains unpublished.
- 72 Julian Munby, 'Queen Elizabeth's Coaches: the Wardrobe on Wheels', *The Antiquaries' Journal*, forthcoming. I am grateful to Julian Munby for

letting me see an advance draft of his paper and for discussing its contents.

- 73 Quoted in Worsley, *Inigo Jones, op.cit.*, 88.
- 74 *Idem.*
- 75 See the illustrations in John Harris, *The Artist and the Country House, London, 1979*, and in Leonard Knyff and Jan Kip, *Britannia Illustrata...*, London, 1707.
- 76 Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (Everyman edn.), London, 1962, I, 133.
- 77 Colen Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, II, London, 1717.
- 78 Duggan, thesis, *op.cit.*, and Woburn Abbey, archives, survey plan by John Sanderson of 1747.
- 79 Harris, *op.cit.*, 69–71.
- 80 Giles Worsley in Airs, *op.cit.*, 104–5.
- 81 Lucy Worsley and Tom Addyman. ‘Riding Houses and Horses: William Cavendish’s architecture for the art of horsemanship’, *Architectural History*, XLV, 2002, 194–229.
- 82 *Ibid.*, 217.
- 83 *DNB*, I, 337, and II, 1762.
- 84 Quoted in Worsley and Addyman, *op.cit.*, 224 from a letter of 4 July 1639 from Sir Gervase Clifton.
- 85 *DNB*, I, 337, and II, 1762.
- 86 This passage is based on Worsley and Addyman.
- 87 For an elaboration of this interpretation see Lucy Worsley, ‘The Architectural Patronage of William Cavendish, First Duke of Newcastle, 1593–1676’ (unpublished DPhil. thesis, University of Sussex, 2002).