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KENSINGTON PALACE: AN INCIDENT IN ANGLO-DUTCH ARCHITECTURAL COLLABORATION?

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William III was brought up in what is often termed the ‘Golden Age’ of Dutch culture, in a country whose intellectual and artistic singularity and creativity were recognised across Europe. He came, as King, to a country that Voltaire saw as having made, since 1640, ‘greater progress in all the arts than in all preceding ages’, and having the cultural influence to create in Europe the ‘Age of the English’.¹ The marriage of the two cultures in the person of King William was surely to hold great things for the state of English architecture. Yet, in reality, the English king who spent more on building than any other in the seventeenth century led court architecture into a cul-de-sac. The influences from Holland that he brought to his private residence at Kensington, and his Francophile tastes at Hampton Court, were respectively seen as old fashioned and debased. Despite this, a study of Anglo-Netherlandish architectural exchange at court in the age of William and Mary is valuable because it throws light on the nature of William’s kingship and the mechanisms of royal architectural patronage.

At first, it is necessary to consider William’s architectural experience in the Netherlands, and it is useful to gather together a brief account of his houses and how he used them as Stadholder (elected Viceroy) of the United Provinces. Broadly speaking there were two periods in which William’s attention turned to architecture. The first was immediately after his marriage to Princess Mary in 1677; in this phase he enlarged houses adding rooms or suites for his wife.

The second was after the death of Charles II in 1685 when William and Mary became next in line to the throne of England after James II. In this period William’s court, such as it was, was swelled by English visitors and his palaces were enlarged and made more magnificent, both to entertain them, and to reflect his increased status. These bursts of architectural activity were triggered by the practical requirements of a prince, rather than being the result of a love of building and architectural display such as that which drove his grandparents. In 1668 Jacob van der Does wrote of William’s grandfather, Frederik Hendrik, that he was ‘possessed by such a passion for building that he forgot all his cares through this pleasure’.² William, however, was first a soldier, second a huntsman and only third a husband and cultural patron. As the twists of European genealogy moved William closer to a kingdom, his residences increased in magnificence to accommodate his rising status. For William, both as Stadholder of a republic and King of England, architecture was a servant not a master.

What William did build in the Netherlands, after he became hereditary Stadholder in 1674, was not only a practical response to his dynastic requirements, but sat firmly within the prevailing French cultural hegemony. Just as the court of Charles II of England followed the fashions of Louis XIV’s court, so also did the house of Nassau; as early as 1634 an English visitor to The Hague noted that ‘The ladies and Gentlemen here all Frenchified in French Fashion’.³

William, as much as his grandfather, occupied a world in which the predominant cultural influences emanated from the court of France.⁴ The cultural background to William's promotion from Stadholder to King therefore remaining static, this essay will attempt to show how, against a common architectural milieu, William's buildings in England and Holland can be understood.

The Binnenhof was the seat of government, in English terms, the equivalent to Whitehall and Westminster, and was recognised as being as such by English travellers.⁵ Here were the Stadholder's quarters: a long range containing two suites of apartments, one above the other, for the Stadholder and his consort (Fig. 1). They had been extended and redecorated in 1632–4 by Prince Frederick Henry, and William III extended them further, by four bays, on his marriage to Princess Mary in 1677.

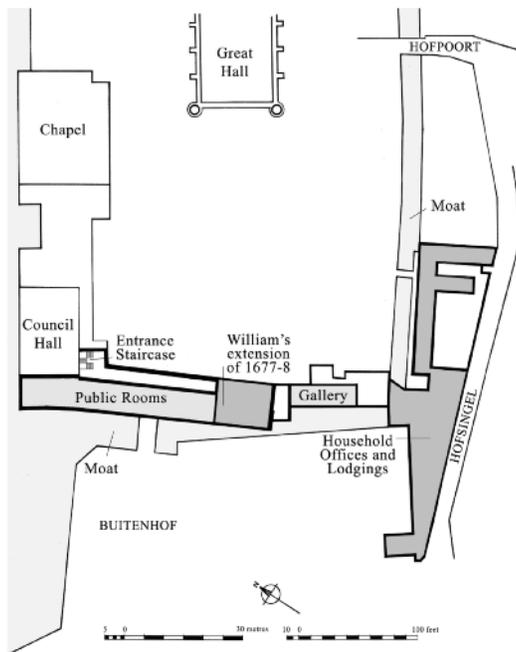


Fig. 1. Block plan of the Stadholder's quarters at the Binnenhof, The Hague, in the early eighteenth century. Drawing, Melissa Beasley.

There were a small number of reception rooms and a dining room as well as a bedroom and closets.⁶ Also at The Hague was the Oude Hof on the Noordeinde, a former merchant's house extended by Frederick Henry to accommodate his son William and his English bride Mary Stuart (daughter of King Charles I). This new town house was modelled on contemporary Parisian *hôtels* with a *cour d'honneur* on the street side.⁷

The Binnenhof, technically, belonged to the States of Holland. The ancient seat of the Nassau dynasty was at Breda, where a massive square, moated castle was begun in the 1530s and 40s but left incomplete.⁸ William III's increased status on the death of Charles II spurred him on to complete it and create the only building that the contemporary English might call a palace. It, with Honselaarsdijk, was the only residence to possess a throne room and, after 1685, a complete suite of royal apartments in the English style (Fig. 2). Off a great hall there were three ante rooms before a presence chamber with a throne. Beyond this were the state bedchamber, a cabinet and a dressing room. Beyond the backstairs there were more private lodgings. William furnished the castle with dynastic portraits and antique tapestries emphasising his lineage and creating the effect of an ancient family home.⁹ Whether this was in deliberate imitation of English royal houses he knew from his trips across the channel is unclear, but, after 1685, William did have one residence that in plan and decoration was similar to the palaces he would inherit in 1688.

As well as these two venerable residences, broadly equivalent in English terms to Whitehall and Windsor Castle,¹⁰ there were three modest country houses similar, perhaps, in function, to Tudor Hampton Court, Greenwich and Richmond. The oldest one of these William inherited from his grandfather, Prince Frederick Henry. Huis ter Nieuburgh was begun, just outside The Hague, at Ryijswijk, in 1630.¹¹ It was demolished around 1800, but it is well known from topographical sources.

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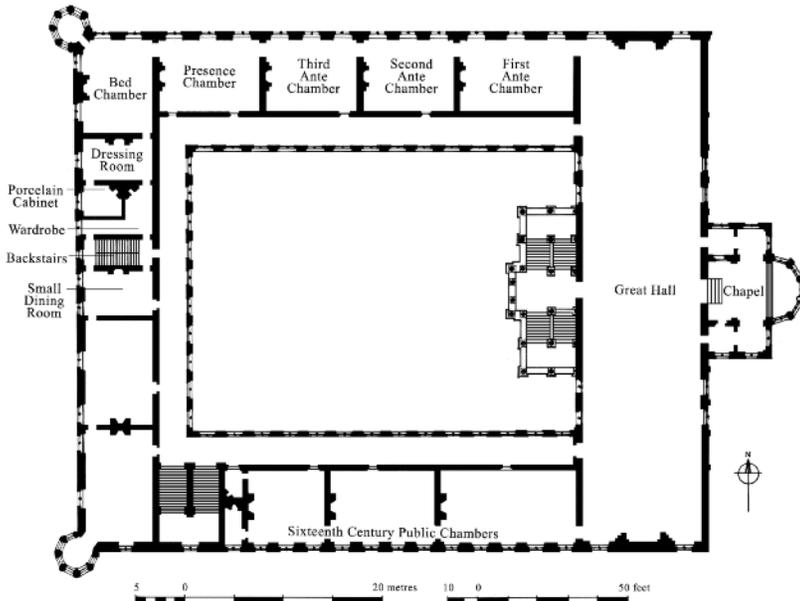


Fig. 2. First floor plan of the Palace of Breda showing the layout of William III's public reception rooms after 1685. *Drawing, Melissa Beasley.*

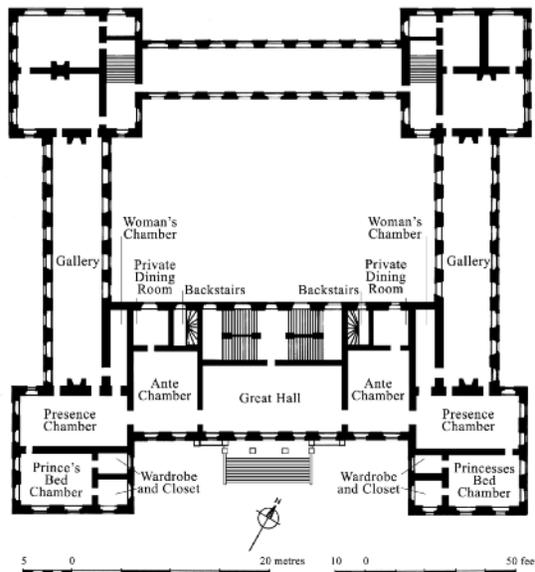


Fig. 3. Reconstruction of the plan of the principal floor of the palace of Honselaarsdijk near Naaldwijk based on a sketch by Nicodemus Tessin Jr and a survey by Pieter Post. *Drawing, Melissa Beasley.*

It was designed after the French Pavilion system but not in a courtyard – rather as a single range. Two remote pavilions were linked by galleries to a central block that contained the principal rooms. French influence was also the mainspring behind another country residence, Honselaarsdijk (Fig. 3).¹² This was seven miles from The Hague towards Delft and was William's father's principal house, built in the 1640s and 50s. A number of architects were involved in its design, including the French architect Simon de la Vallée and Pieter Post, who was appointed official architect to the Stadholder in 1645.¹³ It was completely demolished in 1816.

At Honselaarsdijk the main block was connected to two pavilions by galleries that made up three sides of a courtyard. A colonnade and gallery closed the fourth side. On the first floor were symmetrical apartments sharing a *salle* or hall and comprising an ante-chamber, an audience chamber, a gallery and closet. The bedchambers were sited next to the audience chamber on the south front. The plan was heavily influenced by the Palais de Luxembourg in Paris, and English contemporaries who visited it recognised this.¹⁴ We know that Marie de Medici was so proud of the Luxembourg Palace that plans of it were sent across Europe. Honselaarsdijk was one of its closest progeny, even to the extent that it contained massive portraits of Marie and Henri IV of France. This became William and Mary's principal country palace: the only residence, other than Breda, to have an audience chamber containing a throne. After 1685 it was densely hung with paintings of William and Mary's Stuart forbears.

Huis ten Bosch (literally House in the Wood) had been started by Amalia van Solms in 1645 as a country seat for her retirement and dowagership. It was designed by Pieter Post and by Jacob van Campen, a follower of Scamozzi, an admirer of Inigo Jones and the chief exponent of Dutch Classicism. The house was a square villa with a central domed hall after the villas of Palladio and Scamozzi. The central hall was a celebration of the Orange family in

the way that the Banqueting House at Whitehall was a celebration of the Stuarts. But the plan was French. Around the central hall were two sets of apartments each comprising an ante-room, used as a presence chamber containing a canopy, a bedchamber, containing a bed of state behind a balustrade, and beyond a large private closet, a smaller closet and a dressing room. Above, on the second floor, was an identical arrangement. In 1686 this house was made over to William III. In his tenure the east side apartment became Mary's, the west side his own. For William the rooms were redecorated and given fashionable new sash windows.¹⁵

William also owned three small hunting lodges. He was a passionate and obsessive huntsman but as the best hunting was seventy miles from his main residences near The Hague, he was eventually to build three lodges from which he based his energetic hunting trips. Two of these we know little about. The first, in the midst of the best hunting country, was his house at Dieren. This was a lodge inherited by William from his father who had purchased it in 1647. In the first part of his reign as Stadholder he spent much of his time here, and spent considerable sums on the gardens.¹⁶ The other was Soestdijk, acquired by William in 1672. The rebuilding of Soestdijk was William's first major building project in 1674–8, designed by his architect Maurits Post and incorporating the original house¹⁷.

By far the most important of these lodges was Het Loo. Not far from Dieren, the old house of Loo was purchased in 1684. William's new and larger house was built from scratch and was thus his chance to build what he wanted. True to form he turned to France and seems to have approached Louis XIV's Académie Royale de l'Architecture for preliminary designs, probably in late 1684. We do not know what he received, but we do know that he handed the task of supervising the work, and doubtless designing the details, to the sculptor turned architect Jacob Roman who in 1689 was to be appointed architect to William III. The work was

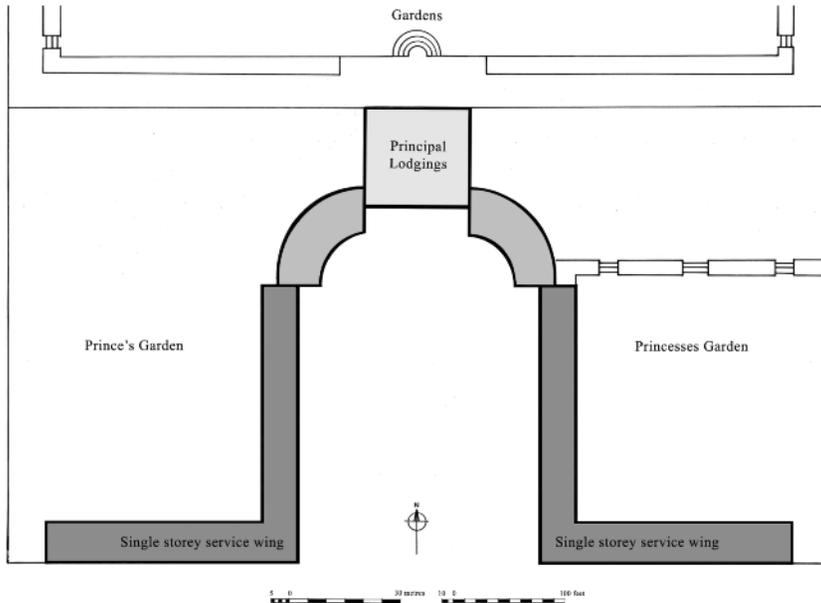


Fig. 4. Block plan of Het Loo in c.1687 before William III's new wings of 1691-4 (fig.10). Quadrant colonnades linked the main corps-de-logis to two long service wings enclosing a forecourt. *Drawing, Melissa Beasley.*

tendered in April 1685 and the date on the front of the central block is 1686. The house was essentially a Palladian villa like the Villa Thiene at Cicogna or the Villa Badoer at Fratta Polesine. The main block was square, and quadrant colonnades linked it to flanking service blocks (Fig. 4). The subtleties of its internal layout were again French. It was built around a central hall and stair leading up to a first floor hall either side of which were two identical sets of apartments, neat, symmetrical and compact. Identical in plan to any number of contemporary small French country houses, it was, in many ways, very old fashioned. It could have been designed at any time after 1650; the arcade in the hall, for instance, was based on that at Huis ter Nieuburgh.¹⁸

This brief survey of William III's houses in the Netherlands demonstrates that William was brought up in houses built by his grandfather on a French plan nothing like the vast, socially segregated,

palaces of England. William's uncles, Charles II and James II, were born into the most formal and stuffy court in Europe, obsessed with rules and regulations. They both had an acute and well-defined sense of their regality and much of their daily round was spent acting out the rituals and roles of monarchy. Life in Holland was very different. William was not a king and had never been treated as such. In England the court mainly comprised rich and powerful aristocrats who not only held numerous court offices, but were also provided with extensive lodgings. In Holland the nobility played a much lesser role and were politically far less influential. There was no pressing need for them to dance attendance on the Stadholder and so the court was smaller and less formal.

The design of seventeenth-century English royal palaces had sprung out of 180 years of experimentation in etiquette that had started in around 1500.

The rooms in an English palace were highly stratified and restricted, divided into zones with rights of access. Everyone had a set role and knew how it related to the rules of the court.¹⁹ To William this was foreign territory in every sense. Although he had visited the English court on three occasions (1670/71, 1677 and 1681) and was fully conversant with its cumbersome formality, he had never attempted to imitate it in the Netherlands. Indeed, during his visit in 1677, he was provided with a larger entourage by Charles II to enable him to be able to fulfil ceremonial functions at court.²⁰ His palaces were far more private and domestic. He quite simply did not need, or want, so much space: he had no fawning nobility; no hungry heir; no demanding mistresses; no pensioned off royal family; not even a royal council. The traveller Edward Southwell noted that at Het Loo William 'has hindered any increase of building, that soe the company may have noe accommodation or inclination to stay'.²¹ This was quite unlike Whitehall. William had no interest in a palace that was large,

dirty, overpopulated, public and urban: everything, indeed, calculated to turn him away from it. It was also damp and low-lying and surrounded by hundreds of belching chimneys. This was not the place for a chronic asthmatic like William. In response to this repulsion, within weeks of their arrival in England, William and Mary devised a new strategy for royal accommodation. It was radical.

Henry VIII had been responsible for uniting within one structure, in Whitehall Palace, the private apartments of the monarch and his public functions. This building, the privy gallery, was the architectural expression of personal government by a sovereign: the body politic unified in one person and one suite of rooms. This co-location of personal and state space in a single block of accommodation had been the hallmark of English royal buildings from his time to the time of James II.²² William and Mary's strategy broke this tradition. They resolved on a tripartite arrangement. They had to accept that they would need a fully equipped English-style royal palace for

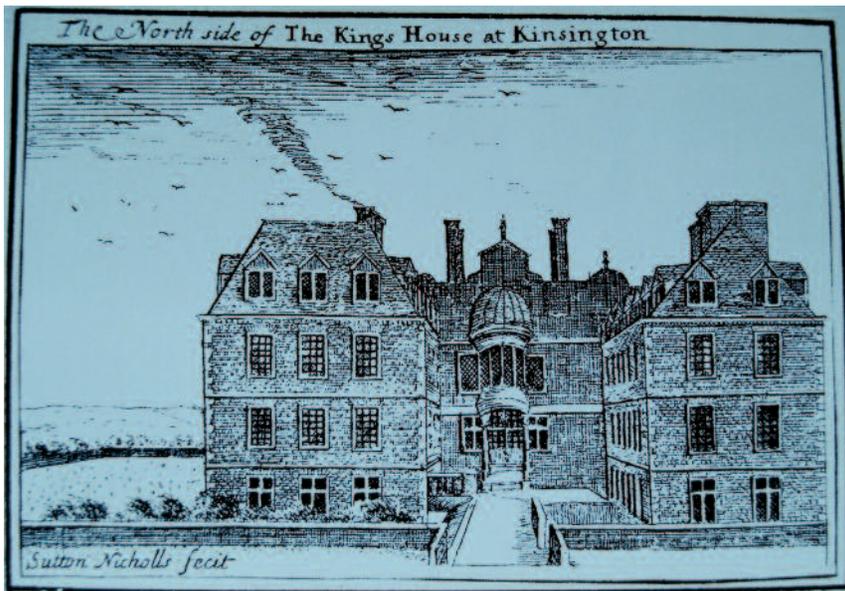


Fig. 5. The north side of Kensington Palace shown in an engraving by Sutton Nicholls executed c.1689–94. The pavilions added to the original house flank the earlier central block.



Fig. 6. Reconstruction of Kensington Palace as it might have been *c.*1690.
 © *Historic Royal Palaces*. Drawing: *Edward Impey*.

the great occasions of State; this was not to be Whitehall, but Hampton Court, which was to be rebuilt with all speed for the theatre of the English court.²³ Whitehall was not to be their residence; hereafter it would be the business palace. William and Mary resolved to live within easy commuting distance of the Whitehall ‘office’ at Kensington. A road was quickly built from Kensington to Whitehall, which was to be lit at night by street lamps. They moved in to Kensington within ten months of ascending the throne; William never moved into Whitehall. These arrangements were at complete variance with anything that had been built by the monarchy since the middle ages: three separate palaces functionally separating court ceremonial, governance and personal space.

Whitehall, thus, is not the subject of this article; William never lived there and built nothing of significance. After the death of Queen Mary in 1694 the queen’s apartments, which Mary had occasionally used while William was abroad, were handed over to Princess Anne while other apartments on the

queen’s side were converted into offices. When the palace burnt down in 1698 William showed little sign of emotion.²⁴ Nor does this paper focus on Hampton Court, in plan a re-creation of the Tudor buildings and in style, at William’s request, an essay in French Baroque. It became, within a decade, a byword for all that was bad about English architecture.²⁵ Rather, this paper seeks to reinterpret Kensington in the light of its function as the private residence of William and Mary.

Kensington House (as it was generally called in William’s time) was the aggrandisement of a villa purchased from Lord Nottingham.²⁶ In 1689 it was still a Jacobean house with a central hall and rooms to either side. It was clearly in need of enlargement, even for William’s modest requirements, and the scheme devised for this is of great interest. The idea was to extend Nottingham House by the addition of four corner pavilions and a long gallery connected to an entrance on the west. A print by Sutton Nichols shows this when first completed (Figs. 5, 6).

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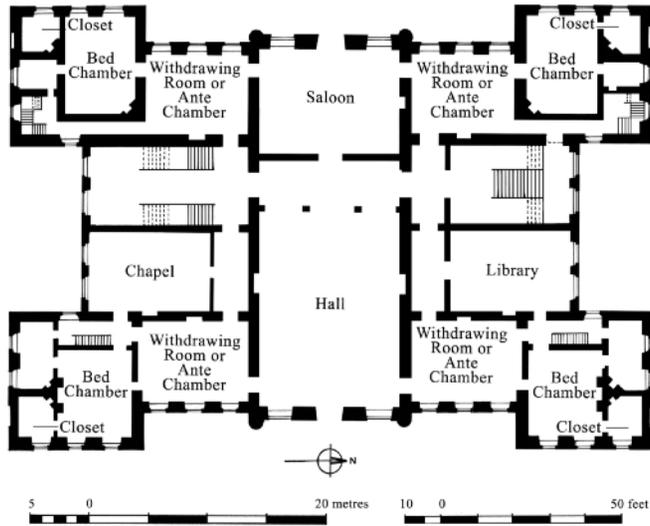


Fig. 7. Plan of the ground floor of Ragley Hall Warwickshire built for Edward, first Earl of Conway in 1681-3. *Drawing, Melissa Beasley.*

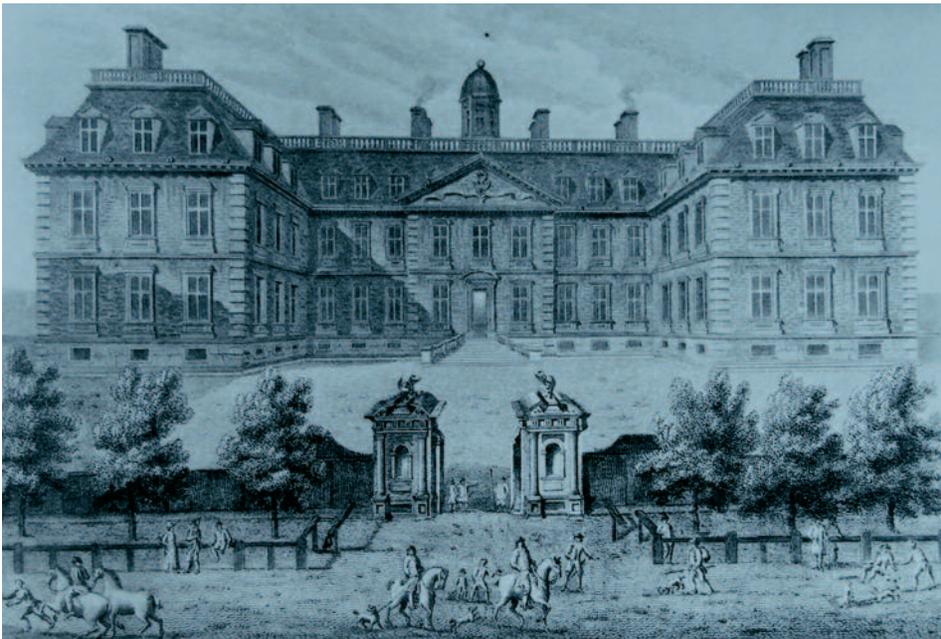


Fig. 8. Sir Roger Pratt, Clarendon House, Piccadilly 1664-7. Either side of the centre block were pavilions, two at the front and two at the back.

The south-east pavilion was the King's.²⁷ It was to be of three stories, with attics, linked by a privy stair that ran the full height of the building. On the ground floor were his privy lodgings, above, on the principal floor, his bedchamber and two closets and above these on the second floor more closets. The north-east pavilion was to contain the council chamber and the north-west pavilion was for the queen, arranged similarly to the King's pavilion. The south-west pavilion contained a stair leading up to the principal floor. In the old house was a shared presence chamber leading to the King's and Queen's pavilions.

Given William's fondness for the French pavilion plan in the Netherlands this should not be much of a surprise, yet in England its adoption was remarkable. Before the Civil War it cannot be said that any house, let alone a royal palace, was significantly influenced by the pavilion, nor indeed by French fashions in planning more generally. We do know, however, that the Office of Works was interested in French planning, or at least surveyors attached to it were. In the Jacobean architect, John Thorpe's *Book of Drawings* there are two plans, in his own hand, of the *Palais de Luxembourg* dated 1621.²⁸ His interest never led to a Jacobean building being modelled on it and, indeed, the first major building proposal influenced by the *Luxembourg* was John Webb's 1654 scheme for remodelling *Belvoir Castle*. *Belvoir* had been slighted in the civil war and the Earl of *Rutland* asked Webb to draw up a proposal for rebuilding it. Webb's ambitious, and unbuilt, scheme allowed for four neat symmetrical pavilions containing two or three room apartments connected to the main state apartments in the centre. In elevation the inspiration was from *Palladio* but in plan it owed a considerable debt to the *Palais de Luxembourg*.²⁹

After the Restoration at least two other courtier houses were built with similar pavilions. The first was *Ragley Hall* in *Warwickshire* for *Edward, first Earl of Conway*, Secretary of State to *Charles II*, 1681–3. In 1679 *Conway* turned to the successful *Warwickshire* architect, *William Hurlbutt*, to rebuild

his principal seat. Although *Robert Hooke* was later to advise on the house it was *Hurlbutt* who designed the central hall and four residential pavilions each with an ante room in the main block (Fig. 7).³⁰ But it was certainly *Hooke* himself who designed *Montagu House*, London, for *Ralph first Duke of Montagu* in 1675–9.³¹ This was a town house with four corner pavilions described by *John Evelyn* as 'a fine palace, built after the *French pavilion way*'.³² Not far from *Montagu's* house was *Lord Chancellor Clarendon's* house on *Piccadilly*. This too comprised a central block with four corner pavilions with hipped roofs containing pedimented dormer windows (Fig. 8).³³

But the immediate precursors to *Kensington* were probably royal schemes. In 1662 *John Webb* had designed an extension to the *Queen's House* in *Greenwich* using pavilions (Fig. 9). The *Tudor* palace there had been rendered unusable during the *Commonwealth*, and *Charles II's* initial intention was to rebuild it and bring it back into use as one of the monarchy's principal residences. Through lack of money this desire never came about, but not before a number of schemes had been designed, and partially executed by *Webb*. Amongst these was a plan to expand the *Queen's House* to make four apartments, one for the king, one for the queen, and one each for the *Duke and Duchess of York*. In 1662 *Webb* proposed that the house be extended by four self-contained pavilions with an anteroom, withdrawing room, bedchamber and closet. Each pavilion was linked to a presence chamber in the main building and had its own staircase for access to ground floor service rooms and upper closets and garrets.³⁴ This was a much more vigorous expression of the pavilion principle, with the new residential pavilions joining the main block corner-to corner rather than as at *Belvoir*, *Ragley* or *Montagu House* where they were partially absorbed into the main block.

Foundations were dug at *Greenwich*, but the pavilions were never completed. *Webb* slipped into retirement without ever introducing the concept of a pavilion apartment into a royal house. Yet the idea

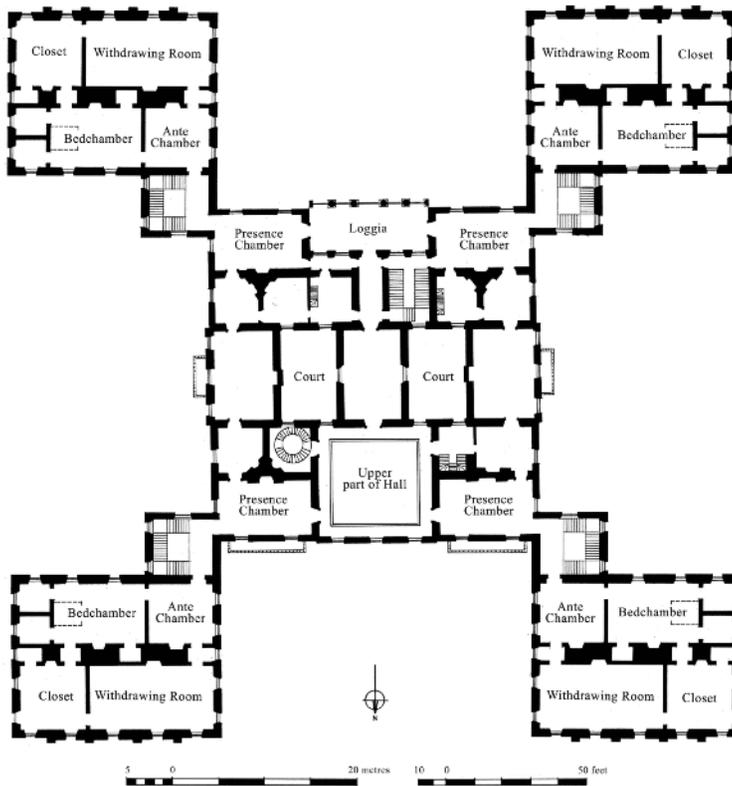


Fig. 9. Reconstruction of the first floor plan of the Queen's House in Greenwich as proposed and started by John Webb in early 1662.

did not die and was resurrected by (or for) Charles II at Newmarket in 1668–71. Newmarket was a summer retreat used by Charles to watch the races; it never accommodated the full court. Its building history is very surprising. In 1668 Charles invited the important and underrated architect William Samwell to design him a house to replace the one destroyed during the Commonwealth. Samwell designed a residence influenced by the French pavilion style. There were two fully formed pavilions, one for Charles and the second either for his queen or for the Duke of York. The king's pavilion was sited 150 ft away from the high street, approached by a long thin range with a corridor on the ground floor and a truncated set of reception rooms above.³⁵ That such a plan could be

adopted at Newmarket, was a consequence of its domestic function. In a royal palace that had to function ceremonially in the English sense, such a plan would be impossible. Linearity was the key principle, something that could never be satisfactorily achieved in a pavilion.

Against this background the re-appearance of the free-standing pavilions at Kensington in 1690 was a backwards glance to a fashion that had briefly flowered in the twenty years after the Restoration. In inspiration it was at variance with what was being built contemporaneously at Hampton Court, inspired by the Louvre and Versailles: the finest modern buildings in France and the architectural expression of the most magnificent monarchy in

Europe. Hampton Court was intended to provide the formal setting for English court life as expressed by William's Stuart forebears. Designed by Sir Christopher Wren and the Office of Works, the lineage of its plan can be traced back through Charles II's Whitehall and Winchester to Henry VIII's palaces of the 1530s. Indeed, when the new apartments were being planned in 1689, instructions were issued to arrange the new rooms on the King's side in the same way as those in the Tudor palace. Hampton Court was a royal residence built for state ceremonial in the fashionable style of European superpower monarchy.³⁶ Kensington was very different. Its ancestry lay in early seventeenth century France reinterpreted in Holland, and its purpose was a private residence, modest in scale and function.

Unlike Hampton Court, for which there are a large number of drawings dating from 1689–1694, no drawings survive for the initial phase of design work for the royal apartments at Kensington, i.e. before the construction of the King's Gallery in January 1695.³⁷ The Hampton Court drawings are in the hand of Nicholas Hawksmoor who was, by 1689, Wren's principal draughtsman, also undertaking most of the drawing for St Paul's. Hawksmoor was separately paid for his work at Hampton Court and St Paul's, but at Kensington, probably because he was Clerk of Works, no separate payments exist for draughtsmanship. This lack of evidence frustrates our ability to understand the genesis of the design and those involved in its conception. This is unfortunate, as the design of Kensington was clearly influenced by William's desire to build a private residence similar to those he enjoyed in the Netherlands.

At this point it is important to consider the position of the Office of Works in 1689. Its Surveyor, Sir Christopher Wren, had been its head for 21 years. He had faithfully served both Charles II and James II as a courtier and a Tory, that is to say a supporter of the Church of England and an opponent of the exclusion of Catholic James from the throne. His relationship with James II was close; within three

months of his accession to the throne Wren had started work on a major rebuilding at Whitehall. This included the construction of the new Roman Catholic chapel, a building on which he must have worked very closely with James and Mary of Modena. Thus in 1688 Wren was deeply implicated with the old regime; his sympathies lay firmly with the expelled James and his hold on power must have been, at best, uncertain. William and Mary's arrival caused a radical redistribution of government and court offices; over half of all court officials lost their posts, almost all being replaced by either William's Dutch compatriots or men who could loosely be described as Whig. Wren was neither.³⁸

In all this change and, it must be said, chaos, there was one strand of continuity: Mary. The new Queen had been brought up at the court of Charles II and knew how it worked both socially and politically. Her re-establishment of 'normal' Stuart court life was vital in establishing the legitimacy and efficacy of William's reign.³⁹ So too was the normal and efficient functioning of the Office of Works, including the immediate construction of two palaces and the completion of the Queen's privy lodgings at Whitehall. It is interesting to note that only two of the personnel of the Office of Works were replaced in the Williamite purge. Most importantly, their head, Sir Christopher Wren, survived. Wren's survival was due to more than a heavy workload; it was probably due to Mary's favour of a die-hard Stuart courtier and her admiration for the, now famous, architect of St Paul's. For Mary, the completion of the cathedral was a vital part of the spiritual reformation that she believed England badly needed. To a similar degree Wren was central to the cathedral's future, and everyone knew it.⁴⁰

Design work for both Hampton Court and Kensington therefore took place against the background of uncertainty at the Office of Works and Wren's concerted attempt to secure a fruitful and effective *modus operandi* with his new patrons. Into this mix we know that William and Mary introduced

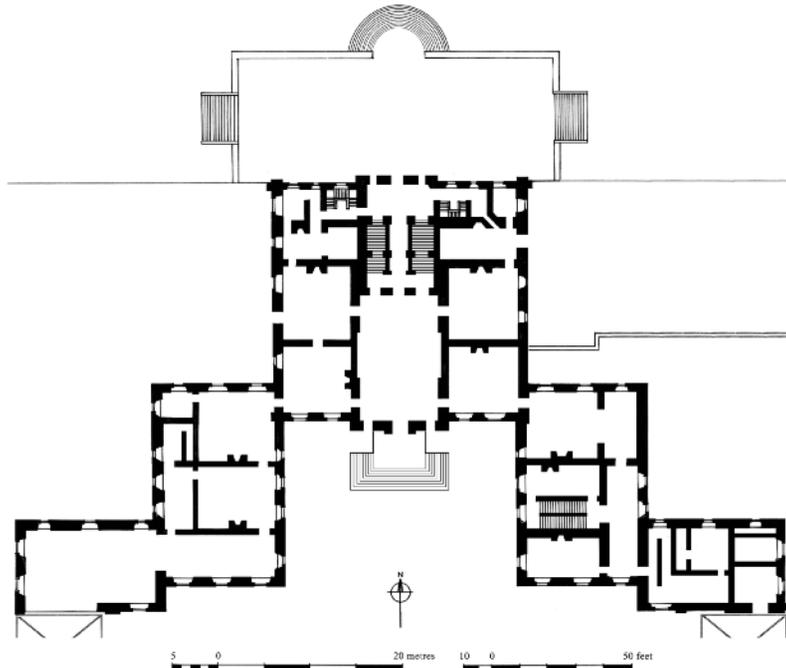


Fig. 10. Plan of the palace of Het Loo after 1694.

Drawing, Melissa Beasley.

their own architectural advisors. By December 1689 Jacob Roman, William's official architect, was already in London and soon afterwards so too was his principal interior decorator Daniel Marot.⁴¹ Roman was a carver and architect born in 1640 and appointed, in 1689, architect to King William III. Roman's promotion, at the precise moment that William was embarking on the most ambitious building projects of his life, cannot have been co-incidence. Nor can the fact that his annual salary was a thousand florins a year, four hundred more than his predecessor. Roman, it can be argued, had been promoted to oversee the development of the architectural image of the Stadholder's into a kingly one.

There is no direct evidence that Roman's views were sought on either the design of Kensington or Hampton Court, but he was entirely familiar with

how William and Mary liked to live, having worked for them at Honselaarsdijk, Dieren and Het Loo, and understood their liking for modest brick-built houses designed on the pavilion principle. The strong similarity of Kensington to their houses in Holland cannot be ignored, and it is entirely possible that its final appearance owed something to three-way conversations between Mary, Roman and Wren. If Kensington's layout was influenced by Roman to reflect the King's and Queen's domestic preferences, its interiors too reflected their Dutch tastes.⁴² The Queen's rooms were decorated with 787 pieces of porcelain listed in three inventories, which include details of where in the room the items were placed.⁴³ An analysis of the displays reveals that they were very similar to those created for Mary by Daniel Marot in her houses in the Netherlands. Whilst it is true that Henrietta Maria, for instance, had used porcelain as

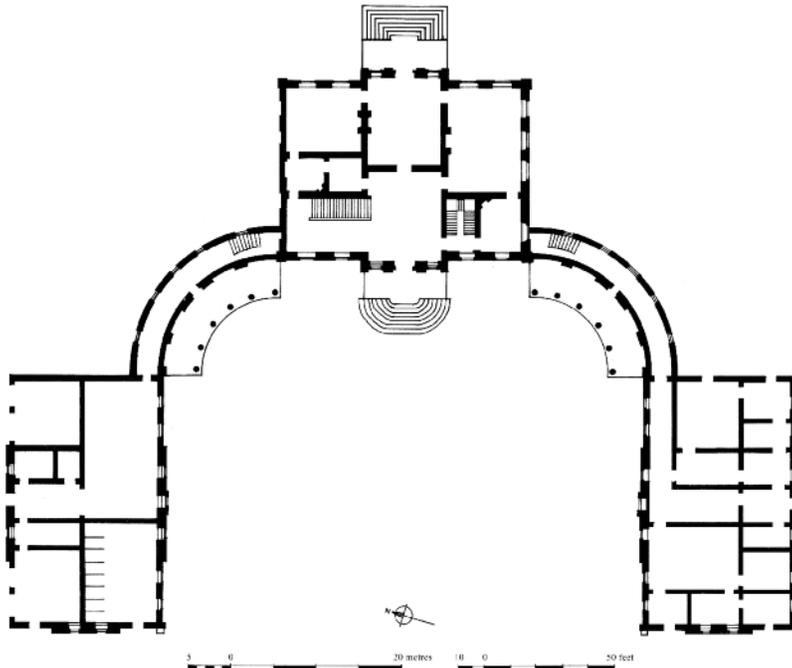


Fig. 11. Ground plan of Arnold Joost van Keppel's house, De Voorst, near Zutphen c.1700. *Drawing, Melissa Beasley.*

an architectural decorative element before the civil war, the scale and ambition of Mary's displays were something quite new in Britain. Therefore it seems likely that William's Dutch advisors played a role in the interiors at Kensington as well as its shell.⁴⁴

Perhaps this should be no surprise. Design work for William's houses in Holland and England was undertaken concurrently. Designs and models were prepared wherever William was and were sent back and forth. At Huis de Voorst, built between 1695 and 1700 by William III for Arnold Joost van Keppel (created Lord Albemarle in 1697), a wooden model seems to have been made in England in about 1695 under Jacob Roman's supervision for the approval of William and Lord Albemarle.⁴⁵ We know that in December 1700, while William was at Hampton Court, Charles Hopson, his master joiner, arrived bearing a model he had made of the staircases at Het

Loo.⁴⁶ But Kensington, as the private residence of William and Mary, was, it can be suggested, singled out for special attention from William and Mary's Dutch design advisors. This argument can probably be taken further by considering the stylistic relationship between Kensington and Het Loo.

Between 1691 and 1694 William decided to extend and improve Het Loo to reflect his increased status as monarch.⁴⁷ In considering its design Kensington was fresh in his mind and, in fact, provided the model. The original quadrant colonnades were removed and, exactly as at Kensington, Roman added two pavilions to the central block at its corners. He then added two further pavilions to link these to the service wings at the front. In plan he had reproduced Kensington, but in appearance, from the entrance front, he had recreated, in miniature, Versailles (Fig. 10). The effect

of gradually receding compartments focussing on the entrance front gave the palace grandeur and size that in reality it did not have. At the same time the interiors of the new rooms were given a much higher status. In the first phase the house had been very much a hunting lodge. Its interiors were all of painted timber. The ceilings were boarded and painted with simple clouds. The rooms were now given plaster ceilings with deep mouldings of fruit and flowers. Daniel Marot created a suite of remarkable painted and decorated interiors for the new apartments and for the principal rooms in the old building.

What is certain is that Roman had been influenced by what he had seen in England. As well as extending Het Loo he was engaged to design Huis de Voorst. This was in everything but name a royal residence, paid for by William, and designed by his own architect. Apartments on the first floor were for William, and on the ground floor for Keppel; a private stair connected their bedrooms. The plan

was unique, very different from anything else in Holland (Fig. 11). Edward Southwell, who visited the site of the house in 1696, thought that 'The main body will be like my Lrd. Ranelagh's at Chelsey, to which will be added two wings; with Corridor's or galleries to joyne them like Berkley House'.⁴⁸ Whilst neither Hugh May's Berkeley House of 1665 or the third Viscount Ranelagh's Chelsea mansion of 1688 provided the direct model for de Voorst, there is no doubt that Jacob Roman's inspiration for the house came from England.⁴⁹ Exactly contemporary with de Voorst was Burley-on-the-Hill, Rutland. This house was built for, and probably designed by, Daniel Finch the second earl of Nottingham. Nottingham had sold what was to become Kensington Palace to William III in 1689 and had taken careful measurements of Berkeley House and Montagu House before starting work at Burley-on-the-Hill. Here quadrant colonnades linked the main block with remote pavilions just as at de Voorst.⁵⁰

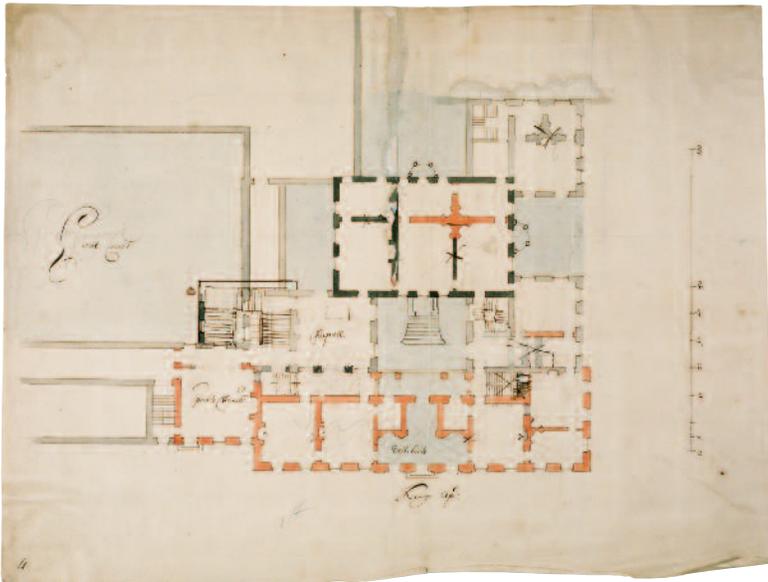


Fig. 12. Nicholas Hawksmoor, preliminary design for the ground floor of the king's gallery range at Kensington Palace c.1694-5: All Souls College, Oxford, ASIIL.4. Nottingham House is black, the existing palace with its corner pavilions (1689) is shaded grey and the proposed additions are red.



Fig. 13. Jacob Roman, the garden façade of Zeist, 1686.

In 1694 Mary died of smallpox. William was grief-stricken, but soon recovered his spirits and embarked upon a new life in which dining in public and attendance at council meetings would be regular. The architectural consequence of this was twofold. First, work stopped on Hampton Court. In reality it had only ever been possible because Mary had been supervising it. William was away for the entire building season each year and without the Queen to keep an eye on work it was impossible to continue with such a massive project. The second consequence was that without Hampton Court, and with his revitalised court life, William needed a residence larger than his pavilion at Kensington. Even before the Queen's funeral on 5 March plans had been prepared for the extension of Kensington. The proposal was to construct a new block containing a gallery across the face of two of the pavilions, giving the palace a new façade.

A small group of drawings in the hand of Nicholas Hawksmoor survive for the new gallery. One (Fig. 12) colour codes the building phases, making a distinction between the original structure of Nottingham House, the 1689–90 phases, and the

new gallery. Elevations for the scheme, now lost, seemingly survived until the 19th century; one drawing was for a much more florid, French-style façade than the austere façade eventually built.⁵¹ If so, this design was rejected in favour of one that is more austere and more Dutch. The gallery has motifs similar to those at Het Loo such as the tall flat brick pilasters and the attic topped with urns raised above the cornice. Other features of Kensington such as the bracketed cornice can be found at Roman's other buildings, in particular at Zeist, finished in 1686 for the Count of Nassau-Odijk (Fig. 13).⁵² The gallery comes from a very different stable from what was concurrently being designed by the Office of Works. Was Roman again asked to provide advice, or were the English asked to take note of his work at Het Loo?

William and Mary's determination to recreate in England a private domestic residence modelled on their houses in the Netherlands, and influenced by their architect and decorator, was not only personal preference; it reflected William's way of life in Holland, where he spent limited time at The Hague and preferred a more private and modest existence at his country houses. In English court and architectural

history William's lifestyle and architectural arrangements reverted to the arrangement before Henry VIII when medieval monarchs had bi-partite palaces with zones for court ceremonial and entirely separate parts as living quarters.

The Glorious Revolution of 1688 set in place the decline of court life. As the eighteenth century moved on, daily government and monarchical court ceremonial were to be parallel, but separate, parts of the body politic. William, by preferring his more private way of life, and physically separating his residence from the functions of government, laid the foundations for this process. Even more interestingly, for the buildings in which he would be forced to exercise the tedious rituals of the English court, he chose, and needed, English architects building in the tradition of English palace design. But for his private residence he probably called on the advice of his own architects, creating the type of house he was familiar with. In 1698 chance reinforced this process further. Whitehall burnt down and the offices of state previously co-located with the monarch were now housed in the remains of the west side of Whitehall. In the first months after the fire William proposed a small suite of royal apartments in what is now the Cabinet Office, but they came to nothing. Instead Queen Anne relocated the central London ceremonial functions of the monarch to St James's Palace. What William had started as preference became enforced reality. Queen Anne never lived in the same building as her ministers.

Kensington meanwhile was doomed to failure. It could never, without massive extension, be a principal palace for an English king; it simply did not have appropriate accommodation. It was too small for the ceremonial functions of the monarchy (even after George I's extension) and too close to St James's to be a country residence. Kensington was soon to join Hampton Court on the sidelines of English architectural and court history, and William III's reputation as an architectural patron took its place close by.

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NOTES

- 1 Voltaire, *The Age of Louis XIV*, trans. Martyn P. Pollack (London, 1961), pp. 40, 68.
- 2 Koen Ottenheim, "Possessed by Such a Passion for Building": Frederik Hendrik and Architecture', in M. Keblusek and J. Zijlmans, *Princely Display: The Court of Frederik Hendrik of Orange and Amalia van Solms* (The Hague, 1997), p. 105.
- 3 Peter Thornton, *Seventeenth Century Interior Decoration in England, France and Holland* (New Haven and London, 1978), p. 40.
- 4 Ottenheim, 'Possessed by Such a Passion for Building', pp. 105–6; Wijnand Mijnhardt, 'Dutch Culture in the Age of William and Mary, Cosmopolitan or Provincial?', in Dale Hoak and Mordechai Feingold, *The World of William and Mary, Anglo Dutch Perspectives on the Revolution of 1688–9* (Stanford, California, 1996), pp. 219–221.
- 5 Kees van Strien (ed.), *Touring the Low Countries: Accounts of British Travellers, 1660–1720* (Leiden, 1993), p. 191.

- 6 Ottenheim, 'Possessed by Such a Passion for Building', pp. 109–111; R. J. Van Pelt & M.E Tiethoff-Splithoff, *Het Binnenhof* (Dieren, 1984) *passim*.
- 7 Ottenheim, 'Possessed by Such a Passion for Building', pp. 119–110; W. Kuyper, *Dutch Classicist Architecture: A Survey of Dutch Architecture, Gardens and Anglo-Dutch Architectural Relations from 1625 to 1700* (Delft, 1980), pp. 66–8.
- 8 G.W.C. van Wezel, *Het Paleis van Hendrik III graaf van Nassau te Breda*, (Rijksdienst Voor de Monumentenzorg, Zeist Waanders Uitgevers, Zwolle). See plans on pages 267, 291 and 311.
- 9 Before and after descriptions of the interiors recorded by English travellers chronicle the transformation. William, Lord Fitzwilliam in 1663 noted 'an infinite number of little chambers, which were, at our being there, all ungarnished'. An anonymous visitor in 1700 saw a very different scene: 'There is a fine gallery where are painted many of the King's family with their alliances by marriage. There are four large rooms hung with tapestry very good though very old, in which are wrought the several princes and princesses of the house of Nassau since Adolph, who was Emperor, down as far as the King's father, all on horseback as big as the life...' (quoted in Kees van Strien, *Touring the Low Countries*, pp. 87, 92.)
- 10 The English traveller Edward Southwell wrote as much of Windsor in 1696: Katharine Fremantle, 'A visit to the United Provinces and Cleves in the time of William III', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, XXI (1970), p. 67.
- 11 Kees van Strien, *Touring the Low Countries*, p. 195; Ottenheim, 'Possessed by Such a Passion for Building', pp. 117–119; Vanessa Bezemer Sellers, *Courtly Gardens in Holland 1600–1650* (Amsterdam, 2001), pp. 61–77.
- 12 Kees van Strien, *Touring the Low Countries*, pp. 196–7, 201–2.
- 13 D. F. Slothouwer, *De Paleizen van Frederik Hendrik* (Leiden, 1945), pp. 39–88; Ottenheim, 'Possessed by such a Passion for Building', pp. 111–116; Sellers, *Courtly Gardens in Holland*, pp. 15–59.
- 14 For instance John Vernon wrote to Sir Joseph Williamson in 1671/2 that '... its like the Luxembourg in Paris, only much smaller': John Beresford, *The Godfather of Downing Street: Sir George Downing 1623–1684* (London, 1925), p. 254. For more English opinions of William's residences see C.D. van Strien, *British Travellers in Holland During the Stuart Period; Edward Browne and John Locke as Tourists in the United Provinces* (Leiden, 1993), pp. 148–55.
- 15 Marten Loonstra, *Het Koninklijk Paleis Huis ten Bosch Historisch Gezien*, (Amsterdam, 1985), pp. 8–61; Kees van Strien, *Touring the Low Countries*, p. 195; Ottenheim, 'Possessed by such a Passion for Building', pp. 121–3.
- 16 Kees van Strien, *Touring the Low Countries*, p. 81.
- 17 H Tromp, *Het Koninklijk Paleis Soesdijk Historisch Gezien* (Amsterdam, 1987), pp. 21–49.
- 18 W. Kuyper, *Dutch Classicist Architecture*, pp. 181–3; A. Vliegthart and A. Erkelens, *Rijksmuseum Paleis Het Loo* (Paleis Het Loo, Apeldoorn, 1988), pp. 3–5.
- 19 Simon Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England* (New Haven and London, 1993), pp. 113–144; Hugh Murray Baillie, 'Etiquette and the Planning of the State Apartments in Baroque Palaces', *Archaeologia*, CI (1967), pp. 169–199.
- 20 National Archives, LC5/201 p. 374. This reference was kindly provided by Dr Anna Keay, to whom I am grateful.
- 21 Fremantle, 'A visit to the United Provinces', p. 53.
- 22 Simon Thurley, *Whitehall Palace; an Architectural History of the Royal Apartments, 1240–1698* (New Haven and London, 1999), pp. 37–64; Simon Thurley, 'Whitehall Palace and Westminster 1400–1600: A Royal Seat in Transition', in David Gaimster and Paul Stamper, *The Age of Transition; The Archaeology of English Culture 1400–1600*, (Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph XV, 1997), pp. 93–104.
- 23 Simon Thurley, *Hampton Court; a Social and Architectural History* (New Haven and London, 2003), pp. 151–3, 204–6.
- 24 Thurley, *Whitehall Palace*, pp. 141–2.
- 25 Thurley, *Hampton Court*, pp. 208, 260.
- 26 For Kensington see H.M. Colvin (ed.), *History of the King's Works V* (London, 1976), pp. 183–192; Edward Impey, *Kensington Palace* (Historic Royal Palaces, 2003), pp. 11–43.
- 27 Pavilion is the term used in the accounts.
- 28 J. Summerson, 'The Book of Architecture of John Thorpe', *Walpole Society*, XL (1966), pls. 58–9.
- 29 John Bold, *John Webb; Architectural Theory and Practice in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 75–79.
- 30 Peter Leach, 'Ragley Hall Reconsidered', *Archaeological Journal*, CXXXVI (1979), pp. 265–268, where it is also noted that the pavilion plan enjoyed a revival in the Midlands after 1700.

- 31 Kuyper, *Dutch Classicist Architecture*, pp. 181–3; Giles Worsley, ‘Taking Hooke Seriously’, *Georgian Group Journal*, XIV (2004), pp. 1–25; Alison Stoesser, ‘The Influence of Dutch Classicist Architects on the Works of Robert Hooke, Scientist and Architect’, *Dutch and Flemish Artists in Britain 1550–1800*, (Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek, XIII, Leiden, 2003), pp. 189–203.
- 32 E.S. de Beer, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, IV (Oxford, 1955), pp. 344–5 (10 October 1683).
- 33 R.T. Gunther, *The Architecture of Sir Roger Pratt*, (Oxford, 1928), pp. 135–166.
- 34 Simon Thurley, ‘A Country Seat Fit for a King: Charles II, Greenwich and Winchester’, in E. Cruickshanks (ed.), *The Stuart Courts* (Stroud, 2000), pp. 214–226.
- 35 Colvin (ed.), *King’s Works*, V, pp. 214–217.
- 36 Thurley, *Hampton Court*, p. 206.
- 37 Anthony Geraghty has, however, identified two drawings in Hawksmoor’s hand for the outer courtyard dating from the late 1680s: A. Geraghty, *The Architectural Drawings of Sir Christopher Wren at All Souls College, Oxford* (Aldershot, 2007), p. 153. The other Kensington drawings are conveniently reproduced *Ibid*, pp. 154–160, and in *Wren Society*, VII, Pls., XVII–XXI. It should be noted that when William Benson was Surveyor of the King’s Works many of the Kensington drawings were lost, probably mainly those for his own alterations, but conceivably some earlier ones too: National Archives, Work 6/7 p. 193 (March 1719).
- 38 Andrew Barclay, ‘The Impact of King James II on the Departments of the Royal Household’ (Unpublished PhD thesis, Cambridge, 1993), pp. 205–15.
- 39 R.O. Bucholz, *The Augustan Court; Queen Anne and the Decline of Court Culture* (Stanford, California, 1993), pp. 31–3.
- 40 Colvin (ed.), *King’s Works*, V pp. 19–20; Craig Rose, *England in the 1690s; Revolution, Religion and War* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 203–5; Jane Lang, *Rebuilding St Paul’s after the Great Fire of London* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 147–151.
- 41 M.D. Ozinga, *Daniel Marot, de Schepper van den Hollandschen Lodewijk XIV-stijl* (Amsterdam, 1938), p. 92.
- 42 A.M. L.E. Erkelens, *Queen Mary’s Delft Porcelain* (Het Loo, 1996), pp. 9–34.
- 43 British Library, Add. MS 56078, transcribed in Mark Hinton and Oliver Impey, *Kensington Palace and the Porcelain of Queen Mary II* (Christie’s 1998), pp. 85–99. Two inventories in the town archives at Delft are transcribed in T.H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, ‘Documents on the Furnishing of Kensington House’, *Walpole Society XXXVIII* (1960–62), pp. 15–58.
- 44 Thurley, *Hampton Court*, pp. 173–176; Erkelens *Queen Mary’s Delft Porcelain*, pp. 13–34.
- 45 The attribution repeated in Kuyper, *Dutch Classicist Architecture*, pp. 123–4. The model is illustrated in John Harris, *William Talman* (London, 1982), pl. 7, where it is attributed to Talman.
- 46 Thurley, *Hampton Court*, p. 167.
- 47 K.H.D. Haley, ‘William III as Builder of Het Loo’, in J. Dixon Hunt (ed.), *The Dutch Garden in the Seventeenth Century* (Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture, XII, 1990), pp. 3–11. The English resented the palace, believing that it had been built from English taxes while in fact it was paid for from his personal fortune raised from his Dutch estates. The number of articles from the English royal collection that found their way to the palace caused resentment too. But, while in London it was dubbed England’s Folly in the Netherlands, it was a source of pride, and the Province of Gelderland gave William complete jurisdiction over the surrounding lands in 1695 as a mark of their gratitude: Henri and Barbara van der Zee, *William and Mary* (London, 1973), p. 412.
- 48 Fremantle, ‘A visit to the United Provinces’, pp. 54–5.
- 49 Kuyper, *Dutch Classicist Architecture*, pp. 145, 178–86; John Dixon Hunt and Erik de Jong (eds.), ‘The Anglo Dutch Garden in the Age of William and Mary’, *Garden History Society*, VIII (1988), pp. 192–3.
- 50 H.M. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600–1840* (New Haven and London, 2008), p. 329 and n.; James Lees-Milne, *English Country Houses: Baroque* (London, 1970), pp. 112–118.
- 51 *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1814 (2), pp. 133–4.
- 52 Dixon Hunt & De Jong (eds.), ‘The Anglo Dutch Garden in the Age of William and Mary’, pp. 186–7.