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# DAYLESFORD HOUSE AND WARREN HASTINGS

Andrew Ginger

‘**T**o lie beside the margins of that stream, and muse, was one of my favourite recreations, and there, one bright summer’s day, when I was scarcely seven years old, I well remember that I first formed the determination to purchase back Daylesford. I was then literally dependent upon those whose condition scarcely raised them above the pressure of absolute want; yet somehow or other the child’s dream, as it did not appear unreasonable at the moment, so in after years it never faded away (Warren Hastings.)’<sup>1</sup>

Daylesford House stands just under the brow of a wooded Cotswold hill (Fig. 1) and looks out over a terrain of rolling fields to its village of Victorian Gothic cottages. Built between 1788–93 it has claim to be the first house to display, albeit in modest form, the Picturesque Anglo-Indian style of the late eighteenth century, a style which led, ultimately, to the Regent’s Pavilion at Brighton. In strictly architectural terms Daylesford is curious as well as beautiful. Created largely by the first Governor-General of Bengal, Warren Hastings, Daylesford had a reputation and fascination which preoccupied its own age as it does our own. This was partly because the creation of the house was the attainment of a lifetime’s dream for Hastings, and coming as it did at the end of a very turbulent and famous career it is intertwined with the story of Hastings’ herculean struggle against the powers of his age. Always extravagant with money, he furnished the house with rich oriental fabrics and exquisite furniture. Amid the beautiful collection of pieces supplied by Ince and Mayhew



Fig. 1. Daylesford: an aerial view.

stood chairs and sofas of carved and gilt solid ivory, as well as bejewelled oriental souvenirs and mementoes. As such the house was an early embodiment of the Regency fascination for picturesque exotica.

On 24th April 1788 Thomas Knight, aged 73, agreed to the sale of an incomplete, unoccupied house and the 600 acres in which it stood for £11,424<sup>2</sup> to Warren Hastings: a princely sum for a ruin and a small estate, and one extorted out of the purchaser by manipulation of his all too apparent enthusiasm for the deal. The Hastings family had owned the estate from the time of Henry II, but in 1715 financial ruin forced Penyston Hastings, great-grandfather of Warren, to sell up and move in with his son, Penyston II, at the Rectory in nearby Churchill.<sup>3</sup> Penyston III, a reckless and dissolute fellow, having unsuccessfully studied Classics at Balliol College, Oxford, took Holy Orders and became vicar of Bledington. Against his family's wishes he married a local girl, Hester Warren, who bore him two children — Anne in 1731, and Warren in 1732. Hester died after the birth of her second child, and Penyston, abandoning the children to his father's care, absconded to Barbados, eventually becoming Rector of Christchurch. Warren grew up playing in the fields around Daylesford, hearing of his family's former glories, while the unfinished building erected by Jacob Knight (father of the vendor of 1788) on the Hastings estate fuelled his ambition to restore the family fortunes and return in a blaze of glory.

Hastings' career began in the service of the East India Company in 1749, in the days of Lord Clive, and represents an important chapter in British eighteenth century history, for he single-handedly laid the foundations for the British Empire in India. Appointed the first Governor-General of Bengal in 1773 (Fig. 2), with authority over the whole British domain in the sub-continent, he quickly demonstrated his outstanding intelligence, cool tactical strategy, and uncanny ability to gauge a political situation. At a time when the East India Company was dogged by exploitative, corrupt self-seekers, who extorted their personal fortunes from the Indians whilst effectively breaking down the social infra-structure, Hastings' determined belief in integrity, honesty and plain dealing put him in opposition to almost all the Company servants. Moreover his attention to national interests above those of personal advancement singled him out from his peers. He taught himself fluent Urdhu and Persian, he befriended the Nawabs, Maharajahs and Peshwabs, and he alone saw the benefit of an imperialism which respected native custom, tradition and authority, enriching both the Indians and the Company. Hastings' qualities aroused the suspicion and contempt of his fellows, who resented any 'interference' in their business. Nonetheless his Governorship proved that his reasoned approach and broad experience worked.

Unfortunately for Hastings the malice of the various jealous parties was made flesh in the person of Philip Francis, who was appointed to the Calcutta Council, through which Hastings ruled, and whose personal mission was to obstruct and defy Hastings at every turn and ultimately to succeed him as Governor-General. Denouncing Hastings as the 'evil genius' of India, and poisoning minds against him both in the colony and at home, Francis would have succeeded were it not for Hastings' dogged persistence and determination never to be beaten. Affairs deteriorated to such an extent that in 1780 Hastings agreed to face Francis in a duel. Neither party was the least bit experienced with firearms, and not surprisingly both missed on the first shot. On the second Hastings was successful and wounded Francis, but unluckily for Hastings it was only a flesh wound. Francis promptly returned to England to stir up further resentment against Hastings.

With Edmund Burke, Francis was preparing to impeach Hastings on his return from India. Public opinion against the Nabobs, who returned to England as millionaires and were frequently disdained as 'nouveau riches', was growing ever more violent and echoed a growing feeling in the Government that the Company was no longer capable of managing the affairs of India and should be taken over by the nation. The situation was a fertile ground for



Fig. 2. Warren Hastings, from a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Francis' and Burke's slanders and as a result Hastings, having left the colony at peace and producing a profit on revenue, was arrested in 1787 and tried before the House of Lords on twenty charges of embezzlement, abused power and cruelty. Fox, Burke and Sheridan led the prosecution with attacks of such exaggerated melodrama that the public, which had clamoured initially to see the most famous trial of the day, soon lost interest. The trial lasted seven years, and ultimately the integrity of Hastings' self-conducted defence and the evidence from rulers and staff in India resulted in his acquittal and the disgrace of his persecutors in 1795. Regarded by many as 'the great world figure of the day',<sup>4</sup> who had bravely borne a terrible injustice, Hastings settled down, his health and spirit broken, to twenty-five years of rural seclusion at his home at Daylesford — finally purchased, to his great delight, from the difficult Knight family during one of his periods of bail in August 1788.

Hastings had paid £1,000 for the house on the site, noting in his accounts in 1777 'There is the shell part only of an intended Mansion House upon the Estate'.<sup>5</sup> It had already been stated by his agent, Thomas Walford, at the beginning of negotiations that 'with regard to the house it will doubtless save you near if not the whole of that sum in your intended building, but should you think it proper to finish and make a Mansion House of it, you shall save much more than that sum, for Mr Knight avows it cost his father, erected as it now stands, near £3,000'.<sup>6</sup> This was clearly a substantial structure and must have been the bones of a fairly ambitious house, for £3,000 would have finished a more modest dwelling. Hastings commissioned Samuel Pepys Cockerell to draw up plans for its rebuilding, and states in

September 1788 that '[I] set Mr Cockerell to work on a plan for finishing the House, made my own plan for Kitchin [sic] Garden, shrubbery and other improvements'.<sup>7</sup>

Samuel Pepys Cockerell (1753–1827) was probably recommended to Hastings by his brother Sir Charles Cockerell, who lived nearby and for whom the architect was to design the greatest Anglo-Indian house, Sezincote, in 1805. Much weight is often given to Cockerell's position as Surveyor to the East India Company, but he did not assume this post until 1806. It is quite possible that Hastings had encountered him through his splendid refurbishment of Admiralty House in Whitehall, where he designed an oval flying staircase, not too dissimilar to the beautiful one at Sezincote, in 1786–8. Sezincote is a mature work and the first masterpiece in the Anglo-Indian or Moghul style which was such a delightful reflection of the movement toward Picturesque exotica in the early nineteenth century. Cockerell was the pupil of Sir Robert Taylor, a distinction he shared with John Nash, and a founder, together with Holland, Wyatt and Dance, of the Architects' Club.

The quest to discover the true nature of Cockerell's work at Daylesford is hampered severely by a dearth of information. There are no drawings, records or schemes for the house, and no way of gauging how he approached the project. All we have are Hastings' accounts and diaries, which, true to the man as they are, are tantalisingly terse and abrupt. Remarks which were perfectly clear when recorded in context hang in the bare text heavy with unfathomable meaning. Nonetheless, from this scant source, and from the archaeology of the house, it is possible to construct a hypothesis which may begin to explain some of Daylesford's more apparent peculiarities.

It has always been assumed that Cockerell built Daylesford from scratch. This notion begins in the earliest biographies of Hastings, starting with that by Revd Gleig in 1841,<sup>8</sup> and continues through Pevsner to the current DoE listing. However, as Gleig recalls, 'it was a conspicuous trait in Hastings' character that he never put the smallest value on money'<sup>9</sup> and the result of his moral standing with regard to corrupt trading in India,<sup>10</sup> together with the effect of funding his expensive defence over seven years, meant that the fortune of £80,000 with which he returned (modest compared to Clive's million, or indeed Philip Francis' £150,000) was soon spent. He faced chronic debt and was constantly stretched for money, and it is therefore doubtful that he would have been rash enough to demolish what was probably a robust shell.

This suspicion is strengthened by a close examination of the house as it appears today. The west front (Fig. 3), glimpsed through trees from the long carriage drive, is the most beautiful. The golden Cotswold stone produces a glowing effect in even the most minimal sunshine. Rising from the two lower, balustraded wings is the central block of seven bays, consisting of two storeys and an attic above the boldly detailed cornice. A simple 2–3–2 fenestration in unarticulated ashlar, ornamented in the centre by a broad curved bay, is approached by a semi-circular flight of steps from the garden. Long French windows stand between the giant Composite columns which support an entablature of garrya husk swags draped over bosses. Above the cornice are three circular, garlanded and ribboned windows, and the bay is capped by a shallow dome ornamented with an inverted Coade stone lotus, a copper ball and a spike. The single window-bay which links the central block to the wings is articulated by an 'oeil-de-boeuf' window, swagged and ribboned, and supported by a shaped apron, with a single arched window beneath. The composition seems to work with excellent grace and the various French neo-classical motifs — garlanded oeils-de-boeuf and entablature — mix unselfconsciously with the exotic dome and spike. Cockerell was well known for his advanced French taste, and the west front is not far removed in spirit from Rousseau's Hôtel de Salm (1787–85) (Fig. 4) or Boullée's Hôtel Alexandre (1763–6) in Paris, of which Cockerell was probably aware.

So successful is the west front that at first one does not notice that the side wings, with



Fig. 3. The centre of the west front (photo: RCHME).

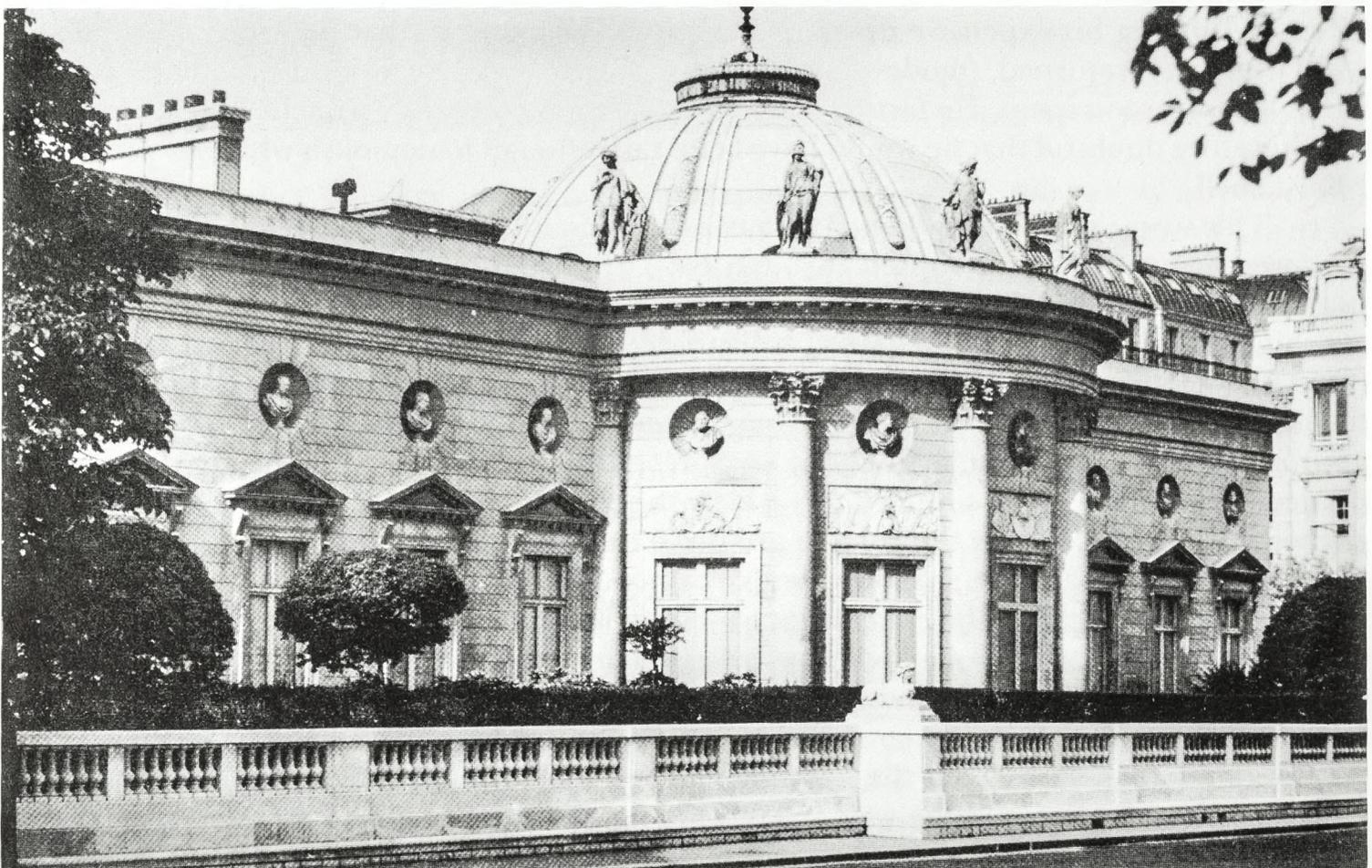


Fig. 4. The garden facade of the Hôtel de Salm, Paris (by Antoine Rousseau, 1784).



Fig. 5. Daylesford, the south front (photo: Roger White).

their ornamented ground floor windows with floating cornices supported on corbels, and half windows above, introduce a new tone. As the ground falls away a rusticated basement becomes visible, which is the ornamented basement section of the south front. This elevation (Fig. 5) presents a very different prospect. Framed by two canted bays rising from the rusticated base, the proportions of the composition are simple and strictly neo-Palladian. The principal window of each bay is enlivened by an architrave with a floating cornice, while the central bay of the elevation has a triangular pediment and a splayed architrave. The three central half-windows have been lengthened and open onto mid-nineteenth century wrought iron balconies. The broad, flat façade is topped with balustrading surrounding a roof-terrace in a manner redolent of the houses of Nabobs in Calcutta. The façade is framed by a Victorian square-cut balustraded terrace garden. This elevation is a perfect neo-Palladian façade, highly reminiscent of work of the 1750s and 1760s, especially that of Sir Robert Taylor (there is a strong similarity to Taylor's Sharpham, Devon, of c.1770 (Fig. 6)). The combination of these two patently different façades is one of Daylesford's most unusual features, and one might almost imagine that they belong to two completely different houses. Seen from the south-west the house presents a most perplexing spectacle.

The east elevation (Fig. 7) is different again, and its lack of ashlar would indicate that this was conceived as a rear elevation. Two more *oeils-de-boeuf* ornament the links to the main block and stand above two segmental-pedimented windows. Ashlar appears on the ground floor where a flat-roofed section breaks forward, and is articulated by simple 'lambstongue' panel mouldings and two broad-arched windows. In the centre a robust and slightly Italianate Victorian Tuscan porch stands as the main entrance.

There are no records of how Daylesford looked under the ownership of the Knight family, and only two paintings of the house under Hastings from which to construct an explanation of the building's unusual composition (Figs. 8 & 9). If Cockerell was responsible for the south wing, it was the work of an uncertain architect, unconfidently reacting to the



Fig. 6. Sharpham House, Devon: the south front (photo: Roger White).



Fig. 7. Daylesford, the east front (photo: Roger White).

difficulties of the falling ground and the two inter-relating façades; the south wing is in fact a direct quotation from the work of his illustrious tutor Taylor. Such a hypothesis does Cockerell no credit. He had, in the same year of Daylesford's creation, completed the up-to-the-minute refurbishment of Admiralty House in Whitehall, and it is unlikely that he would have been so deliberately retrospective.

Recent work at Daylesford has brought to light three hitherto unseen blind windows (Fig. 10), visible in the well on the north side of the house. The small courtyard originally separated the staff wing and kitchen from the main building. The windows are Baroque in detailing, with segmental heads, ovolo moulded surrounds and pronounced keystones and cills. Where this internal north elevation meets the curtain wall with its sham *oeil-de-boeuf* window, heavily rusticated quoins are visible in the ashlar. This suggests the remains of an elevation of Knight's house of c.1720, formed in a simple 1-3-1 arrangement, the three central bays breaking forward. The boldness of the details suggests a house of some quality, built in ashlar up to the level of the principal cornice. From this it is possible to conclude that Cockerell's main block is still the Knight house (a conclusion confirmed by the extremely thick internal walls made of rubble stone in this part of the house). Cockerell removed the keystones (an alteration which has left its subtle mark in the tone of the ashlar around the west elevation windows), and erased the cills, quoins and other details to fashion out of the Baroque house a more modern, smooth façade. The three-bay centrepiece was demolished and replaced with Cockerell's single imposing bay. The discovery of a similar window (but without a keystone) and an ashlaréd façade in a void next to the Saloon, and yet more of the same type behind the plaster of the Gallery's south wall, indicates conclusively that the central block is the full extent of the Knight house. The attic storey is constructed in a greyer variety of stone and must be assumed to have been added by Cockerell.

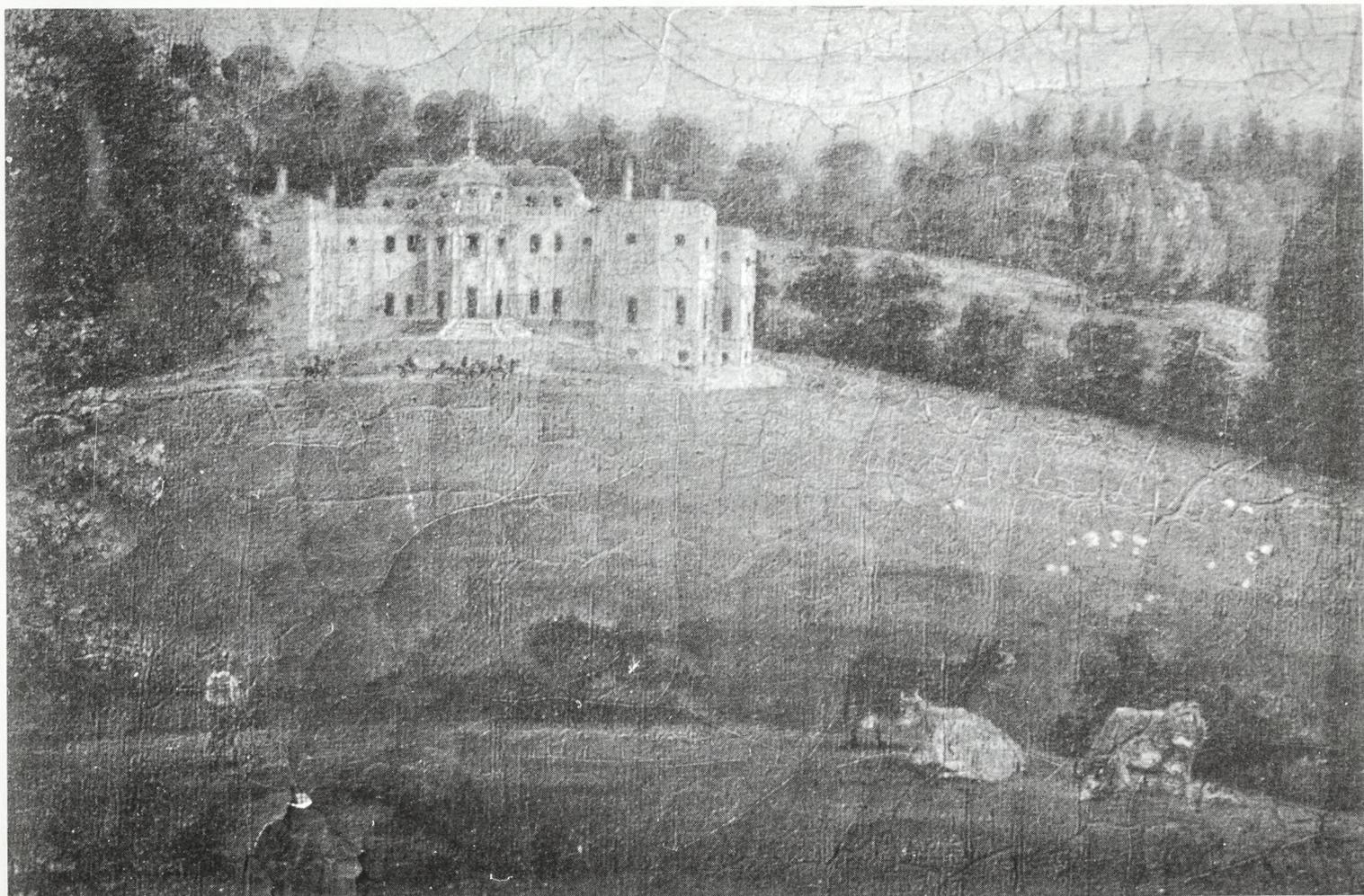


Fig. 8. Daylesford from the west, c.1805, showing the original drive (from a painting by an unknown artist, now in the Victoria Memorial Museum, Calcutta).

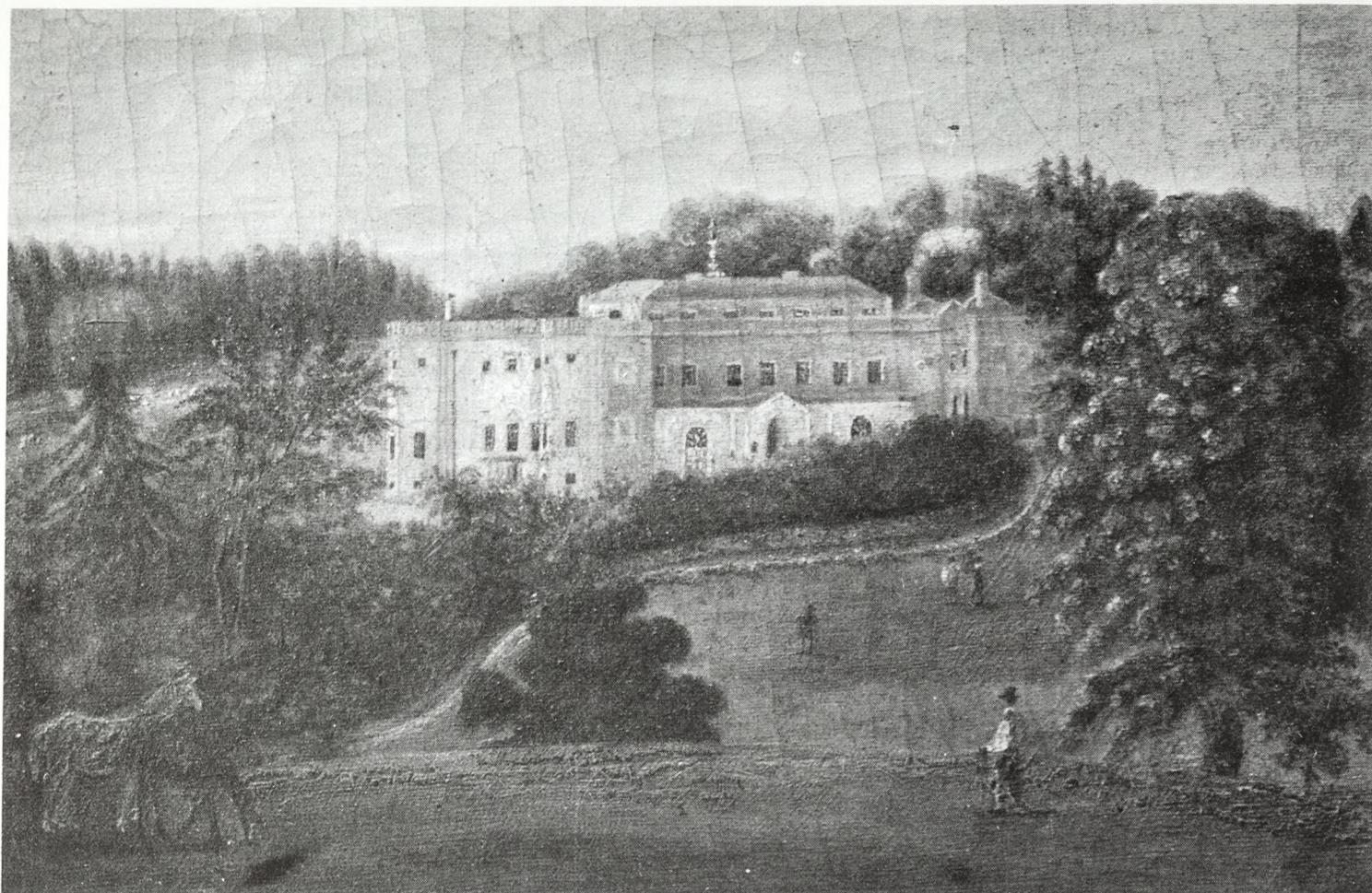


Fig. 9. Daylesford from the east c.1805 (Victoria Memorial Museum, Calcutta).



Fig. 10. Blind windows of c.1720.

These revelations concerning the development of the house throw up important questions as to the age of the south front. Was Cockerell simply bringing together the disparate elements with which he was presented, and was there another phase of building under the Knights in the 1750s or 60s? Could it be possible that Thomas Knight, rather than finish his father's house, struck out in a new direction which, like the earlier project, fizzled away to nothing? It is even conceivable that, if this were the case, Knight consulted Sir Robert Taylor himself for the project.

The only evidence to support this hypothesis is the estate map of 1786, now in the Gloucestershire Record Office. Drawn two years before Cockerell's work began it shows the house clearly, but crudely, as a rectangle with a square at each corner — more or less the layout of the house as it appears today. It may be that Cockerell, under Hastings' brief to keep as much of the old structure as possible, was faced with the task of unifying as best he could a Baroque house shackled to a Palladian one, and chose to do so by making a fresh statement on the west front and then doing all he could to minimise the stylistic differences with the south front. The oeil-de-boeuf with its ornamentation fills the visual space of a first floor full-height window, yet by its shape prepares the eye for the half window which appears on the west elevation of the south wing (and is matched by that to the north). It could be the case that it is Cockerell's tact and sleight of hand we should be praising rather than his total conception. There are two references in Hastings' diary which are relevant here, apropos the extent of Cockerell's work. True to form Hastings is terse: 'Sat 11th April 1789: foundations of house to begin Monday or Tuesday'. 8th December 1789: 'columns of dining room half raised: kitchen roofed. Mr Cheney promises to cover south front in February; Library only 13 feet high'.<sup>11</sup> We have no idea as to the extent of the new foundations Hastings mentions, but it is highly probable that Cockerell built the north service wing, and this remark may refer to that. The 'columns of the dining-room' refers to the giant Composite columns on the outside of the dining-room bay, and the reference to the Library is the most frustrating of all. We know that Hastings' Library occupied the principal room on the south front. The walls being only thirteen feet high would take them to the top of the existing windows. This could imply that Cockerell was indeed responsible for the wing, the foundations of which could have been laid in April 1789, with the roof following in February 1790. To date the archival evidence does not conclusively prove the theory that Cockerell adapted, rather than built, the south wing of Daylesford House.

Cockerell's best work at Daylesford may well have been inside the house, but the extensive rearrangements of the 1850s, which at first sight do not seem so great, effectively removed most of this work. Suspicion is first aroused by a consideration of the plan of the building as it appears today (Fig. 11). Not only does the circulation not 'flow' — the visitor having to walk through a number of rooms to reach, one feels, the extremities of the house — but until the very recent changes there was an inadequate staircase behind the dining-room, and the main entrance is now located on what was intended as the rear elevation. Answers to how Cockerell organised the entrance of the house and to what became of his staircase were elusive and conjectural until the discovery, by Miss Susan Morris, of *A Vindication of Warren Hastings*, a biography published by one of Hastings' family descendants, G. W. Hastings, in 1909. He, with the authority of an eye witness, states:

' . . . it is not to be supposed that the place as it now exists is altogether the Daylesford of Warren Hastings . . . much is changed. The fine façade of the house is virtually gone; the (south) elevation . . . has been dwarfed to about half its original height by the lofty terrace erected in its front. That has also obliterated the portico with its two grand pillars, and closed up the noble staircase which ascended from the outer hall. The present entrance, at the back of the house, is quite recent and comparatively poor . . . It is an eyewitness who speaks, and he, 66 years since, approached Daylesford House by the drive which swept round where the

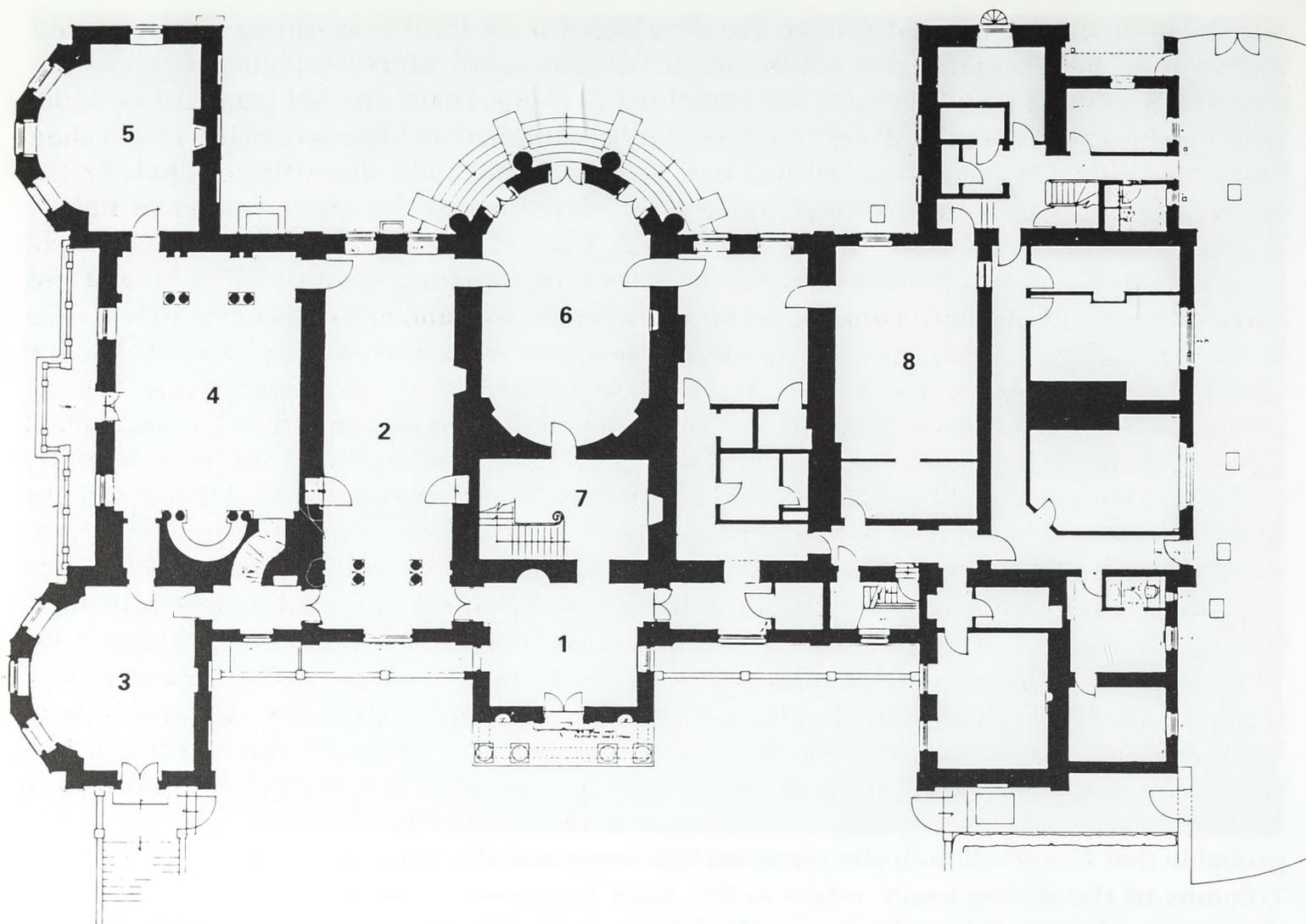


Fig.11. Plan of the principal floor (north is at right).

1. The Entrance Hall. Added by Trollope in 1853, in the fashionable Italianate style.
2. The Gallery. Formerly two rooms, that to the east containing the staircase which arose from the basement. The south wall is the extent of the original Knight House (1710–25).
3. The Morning Room. Formerly the Drawing Room, in which stood Hastings' ivory furniture and hand-painted satin curtains as listed in the 1853 sale catalogue.
4. The Saloon, formerly Hastings' Library, enlarged by a colonnade and apsidal end by Trollope in 1853.
5. The Library, formerly the Study or Saloon.
6. The Dining Room.
7. The Staircase Hall, where the oak staircase by Trollope stood, and where now the new Portland cantilevered staircase has been recently constructed.
8. The Kitchen, formerly an open courtyard which separated the house from the staff wing.

terrace now stands, entered by the portal which the terrace now wholly obscures, and ascended to the reception rooms above by the staircase now made impossible.<sup>12</sup>

Clearly Cockerell's house was entered at the centre of the south front through the Rustic, where some kind of imposing classical porch was constructed. The visitor then proceeded into an octagonal hall (Figs. 12a & 12b), now referred to as the Round Hall,<sup>13</sup> from whence the 'noble staircase' ascended into what today is the Gallery. There is evidence that the Gallery was once two rooms,<sup>14</sup> which would imply that the staircase came up on the east side toward the large arched window on that side. We know from the inventory of 1834 that it had two landings — upon which lamps stood on reeded tripods — and extended to the first floor (a secondary staircase within the central block must have risen into the attic storey).<sup>15</sup> If the staircase at Daylesford was as remarkable as Cockerell's two other extant staircases, then the loss to the house is probably very great. G. W. Hastings exaggerates as to how the south front has been 'dwarfed to about half its original height', since we can see from contemporary paintings that the Victorian terrace kept all the rustication intact; it merely removed the dramatic sweep of lawn that fell away steeply from the house.

The staircase at Daylesford is not the only feature lost to us today. It is very difficult to piece together the series of exotic and beautiful rooms which Hastings and his wife furnished. The two inventories that survive in the British Museum archives date from 1799 and 1834 respectively, and they contain an unexplained series of room titles, most of which are difficult if not impossible to identify. In 1853, on the death of Hastings' stepson, Sir Charles Imhoff, the house and its contents went to auction. The sale catalogue, which lists the rooms and their contents more or less as Hastings knew them,<sup>16</sup> together with the further reminiscences of G. W. Hastings, is our only true guide to the Daylesford that was.



Fig. 12a. Daylesford: the 'Round Hall'.

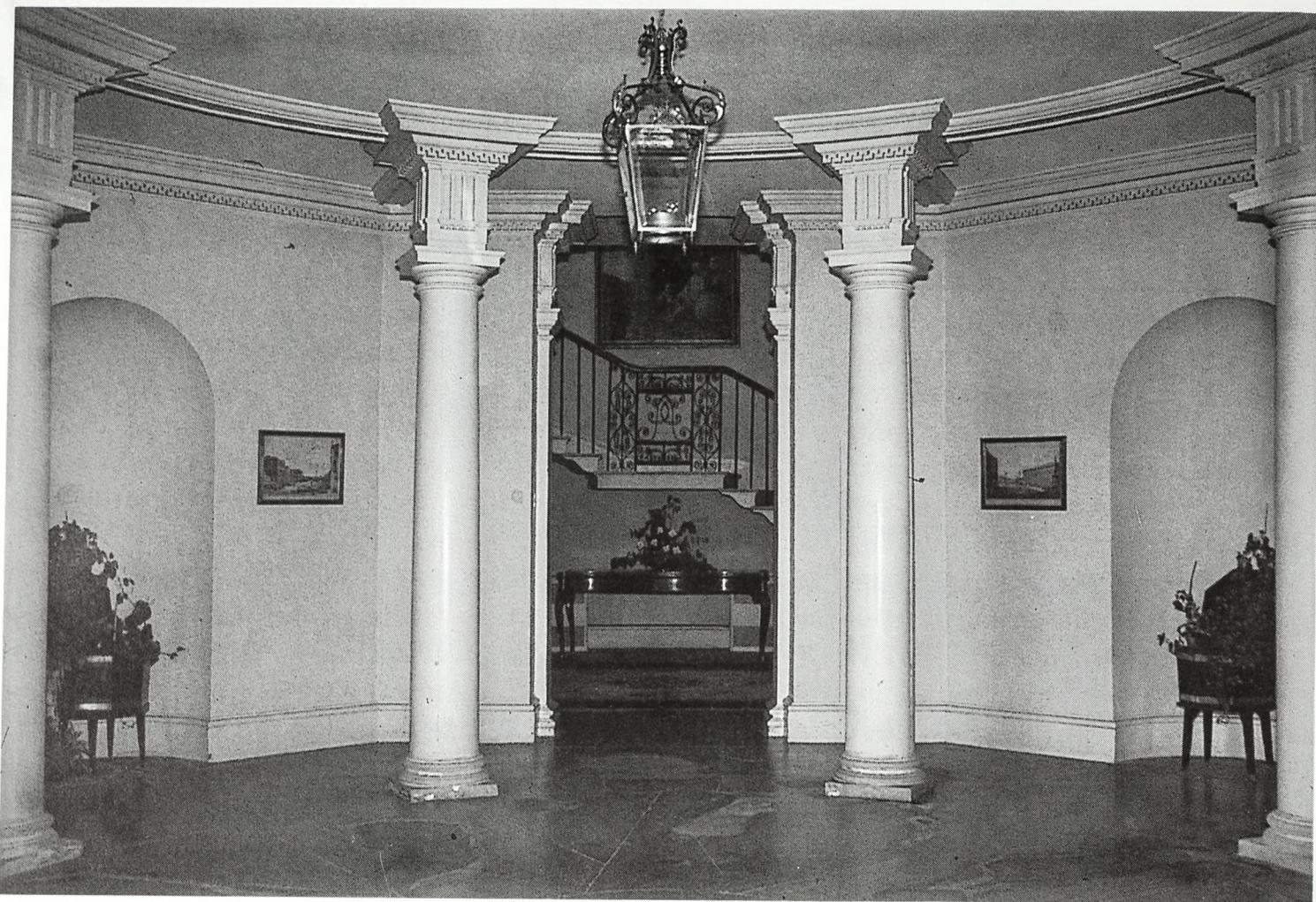


Fig. 12b. Sharpham House, Devon: the entrance hall (photo: Roger White).

As yet the only accurately identifiable rooms are those occupying the south front, which G. W. Hastings named as the Saloon, Library and Drawing Room. The Saloon occupied the south-west bay. It is not referred to as a Saloon in either the inventories or the sale catalogue. G. W. Hastings goes on to add that the room contained a painting of an 'Indian fortress captured by the brilliant exploit of his favourite officer, Major Topham [sic]'.<sup>17</sup> He was referring to the fortress of Gwalior, the scene of a major military success engineered by Hastings and carried out by the gifted and loyal Major Popham. The painting was by William Hodges and the 1834 inventory states that it hung in the Study. It is possible that this was the same room. The room today has an ornamented acanthus leaf cornice, a fine chair rail and architraves. It was here that the chimneypiece known as 'Old Father Thames' stood until recently. Consisting of a fine overmantel tablet (Fig. 13) carved exquisitely in high relief to resemble a river god (his exotic shells suggesting a domain somewhat more tropical than the Thames), it is attributed to John Bacon, and may have been that referred to in 1796 in a notebook of Hastings as costing 225 gns.<sup>18</sup> The intimate scale of the chimneypiece did not suit the room and it has now been moved to the Dome Room, where it achieves far greater effect. The chimneypiece which replaces 'Father Thames' in this room is one of the several supplied by the master sculptor Sir Thomas Banks (1735–1805) in the early 1790s. Its central plaque shows two robustly formed elephants pouring a libation over a glamorous goddess. On close comparison with photographs taken in the 1930s it was discovered that the original plaque had been replaced at some point with a poor copy. The brilliance of Banks' original conception is now being restored by the sculptor J. L. Thornton. G. W. Hastings informs us that it was in this room that Hastings actually died: 'During his last illness . . . he was carried down to the saloon, where a bed had been prepared for him, probably for the purpose of more convenient nursing. The head of the bed was placed against the south wall of the room;



Fig. 13. John Bacon's overmantel relief of 'Old Father Thames' (photo: Roger White).

and it was there that . . . the true founder of the British Indian polity gave up his soul to God'.<sup>19</sup>

The Drawing Room occupied the balancing bay on the south-east side of the south front. It is quite in character for Hastings and his wife that the reception rooms are small by eighteenth century standards, for neither placed much importance on grand sociability. The glory of the room is the famous chimneypiece by Sir Thomas Banks (Figs. 14 & 15) depicting an Indian sacrificial scene supported by two beautifully formed Indian maidens in the shade of palm trees — one on her way to, the other returning from, the Ganges.<sup>20</sup> It is a work of exceptional grace and skill, and the detail of the central plaque is astonishing. The source may have been a painting by the Indian topographical artist William Hodges, although George Cumberland in 1827, in an essay claiming credit for having introduced the idea of using Oriental subjects into general artistic circles, wrote that 'having years ago introduced these objects to a worthy artist and friend, Mr Banks, the Sculptor, he was so well convinced of these hidden excellencies, that he executed for a chimney piece a long frieze for Governor Hastings, from one of these ancient paintings, representing a Theatrical performance, on which he engrafted nothing of modern art, but a little more expression and grace than was to be found in the original, — Grecianising, if I may be allowed the expression, these Persian Peruginos'.<sup>21</sup>

This unrivalled work must surely stand as one of the great chimneypieces of the late eighteenth century. It was delivered on Thursday 4th October 1792<sup>22</sup>, but, not unusually for Hastings, he deferred payment until 1795.

Above the chimneypieces stands a white and gilt overmantel with delicate applied carving, topped by a classical oval relief draped with gilt oak leaf swags and framed by laurel sprays. This was probably supplied by Ince and Mayhew along with the other quality furnishings.

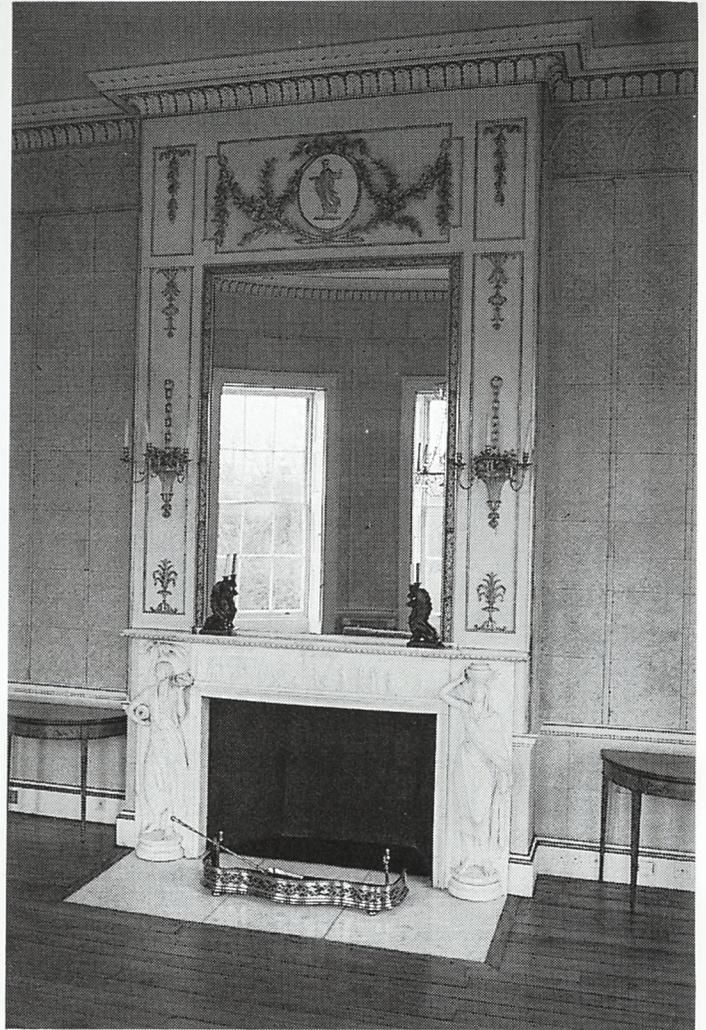
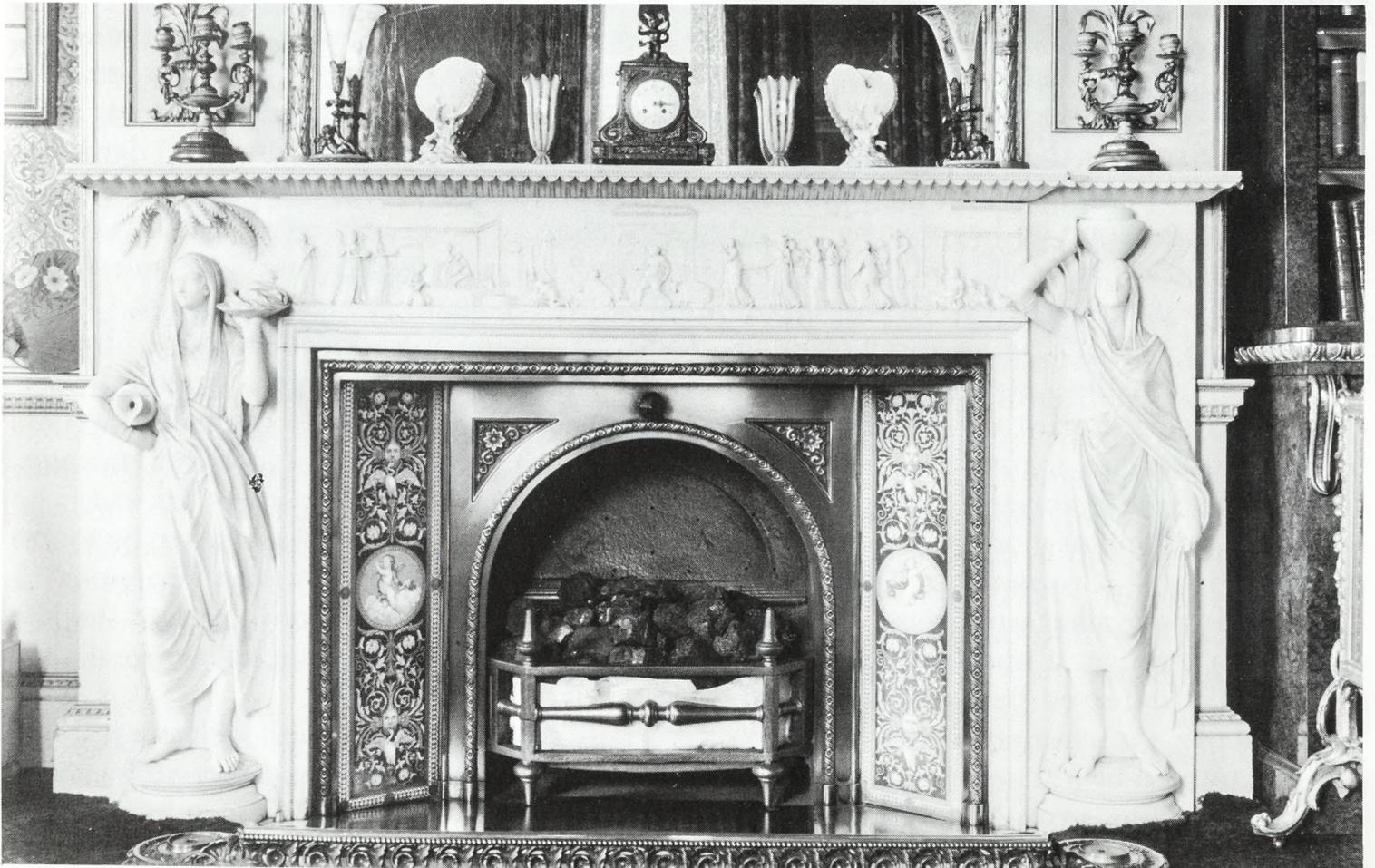


Fig. 14. The Drawing Room chimneypiece (photo: Roger White).

Fig. 15. The Drawing Room chimneypiece (photo: RCHME).



The sale catalogue allows us a special glimpse into this room, packed as it was with the richest of Hastings' gilt ivory furniture. He was given two suites of ivory furniture by the Begums of Oudh. He wrote to his wife from Calcutta in 1784 saying: 'There are two couches, eight chairs and two footstools, all of the former patterns, except two of the chairs, which are of buffalo horn, most delicately formed, and more to my taste than the others, not designed for fat folks or romps'.<sup>23</sup> These beautiful chairs were described in 1853 as 'in the richest style of oriental magnificence, superbly carved and richly gilt, the elbows finished with tiger heads'.<sup>24</sup> Further examples of Indian magnificence appear in the 'Oriental agate jewell casket, mounted in gold . . . with a single stone diamond',<sup>25</sup> and the 'oriental flytrap, the handle composed of the finest jade stone, mounted and inlaid with gold, set with rubies and emeralds'.<sup>26</sup> The sense of lavishness which the sale catalogue attempts to convey seems to have affected every detail of the room. The curtains were of a sea-blue silk satin, ornamented with a deep off-white satin border, hand-painted with garlands of flowers and edged with green embroidery and lines of bright, sparkling brass sequins, the whole edged by silver thread. With its cornice of gilded lotus leaves, this room must have been a riot of glitter and elegance. These curtains, together with a great number of the Ince and Mayhew satinwood pieces, remain in the family collection of the private collector who purchased them in 1853.

As one would expect from Hastings, the largest room on the south front was given over to his Library. This room was altered subsequently to form a Saloon (G. W. Hastings states 'long since turned into a drawing room by another taste'.<sup>27</sup>) 2,500 volumes were accommodated here in large bookcases, whilst chairs upholstered in Indian chintz filled the spaces between the two large library tables. The walls were hung with specimens of Persian chain armour, eight Indian landscapes by William Hodges and Zoffany's famous group portrait 'Colonel Mordaunt's Cockfight at Lucnow'. It was here that a suite of painted armchairs by Ince and Mayhew was kept. These beautiful chairs are painted in green and pink, with ribbons, bows and a painted wreath of flowers surrounding a grisaille portrait of either King George or Queen Charlotte. Here also, on a marble pedestal, stood Banks' bronze bust of Hastings, which was regarded as 'an excellent likeness'.<sup>28</sup>

The Dome Room (Fig. 16) is perhaps the only room which still captures the undiluted spirit of Hastings' Daylesford. Situated under the central dome and looking out onto the west front, it is a large circular room rising to a domed ceiling. Conceived in Cockerell's light, elegant, French neo-classical style, the room is an unexpected surprise. The walls are enriched with slender, reeded and bound colonnettes, which rise to ostrich plume capitals. Above these runs a delicate frieze of anthemions and acanthus. The dome itself has a variety of shaped panels separated by spiralling leaf mouldings, leading to an oculus at the centre. Above this a further ceiling can be glimpsed, painted to resemble the sky. This is cleverly and secretly lit by the three circular attic windows on the façade. The dome is purely decorative, being nothing more than a plaster shell occupying the space beneath the external dome, which is also false. The room is something of a 'tour de force' and has an exotic air, with its recesses and colonnettes, whilst remaining purely classical in style. Its Pantheon dome effect is quite theatrical and by all accounts exactly what Hastings would have enjoyed.

The furnishings supplied for this room seem to have lived up to the challenge of the architecture. It seems reasonable to identify the room as that called 'Mrs Hastings' study' in 1834 and 'the Boudoir' in 1853, for it held another suite of splendid ivory furniture and a large quantity of the finest ornamental items. In Hastings' diary for 3rd and 6th November 1795 he records: 'Mr Hill painting sky over cabinet'.<sup>29</sup> This gives us no clues as to the use of the room, but since no other room on the first floor warranted such lavish furnishings it seems logical to deduce that by 1834 it was the room Mrs Hastings was using as a Boudoir. The 1853 catalogue records green cloth bound with silver lace for two curtains — probably the outer windows — crossed with ornamental muslin curtains drawn in the opposite direction.



Fig 16. The Dome Room (photo: Roger White).

The central window seems to have had 'a pair of India muslin curtains, with valance edged with silver spangles and beetle wings'.<sup>30</sup>

The work Hastings set in progress in the house was matched with equal industry in the garden. He was a zealous gardener, interested in anything unusual or exotic. In February 1788, before Daylesford was begun, a friend wrote to him from Alipore, explaining how he was 'often recollecting the great Partiality you possessed for your garden here and the Pains you bestowed to collect unusual and valuable Exotics in it from all Quarters'<sup>31</sup> and resolving to send Hastings seeds and a cinnamon tree. A matter of days after Cockerell had been instructed to begin the house, plans were drawn up for a hot house and two new lakes. The Gothick Greenhouse or Orangery (Fig. 17) is a delightful building and stands no more than fifty yards from the house, overlooking steeply sloping lawns to the upper pond. A long, rectangular building, ornamented with crenellations and Gothick finials, the façades take the form of glazed arcades of pointed lancet windows separated by ornamental buttresses. To either side of the central pediment, which has a circular motif in imitation of a blind rose window, are two semi-circular bays with curved central lancets. To either side, curved flanking walls sweep up, crenellations and all, to circular turrets which contain store rooms. Each turret has a bold cruciform blind window, complete with leaded glass for added effect. It is a perfect composition, and this, with its crisp, delicate detailing, makes it an outstanding example of the late Georgian Gothick style. Reminiscent of the light, whimsical Gothick of Nash, the Orangery is all the more remarkable for its early date. We know from Hastings' diary that it was begun in January 1789 and completed by spring 1790.<sup>32</sup> It therefore predates Nash's Clytha Castle in Gwent, begun in 1790,<sup>33</sup> which has striking points of similarity.

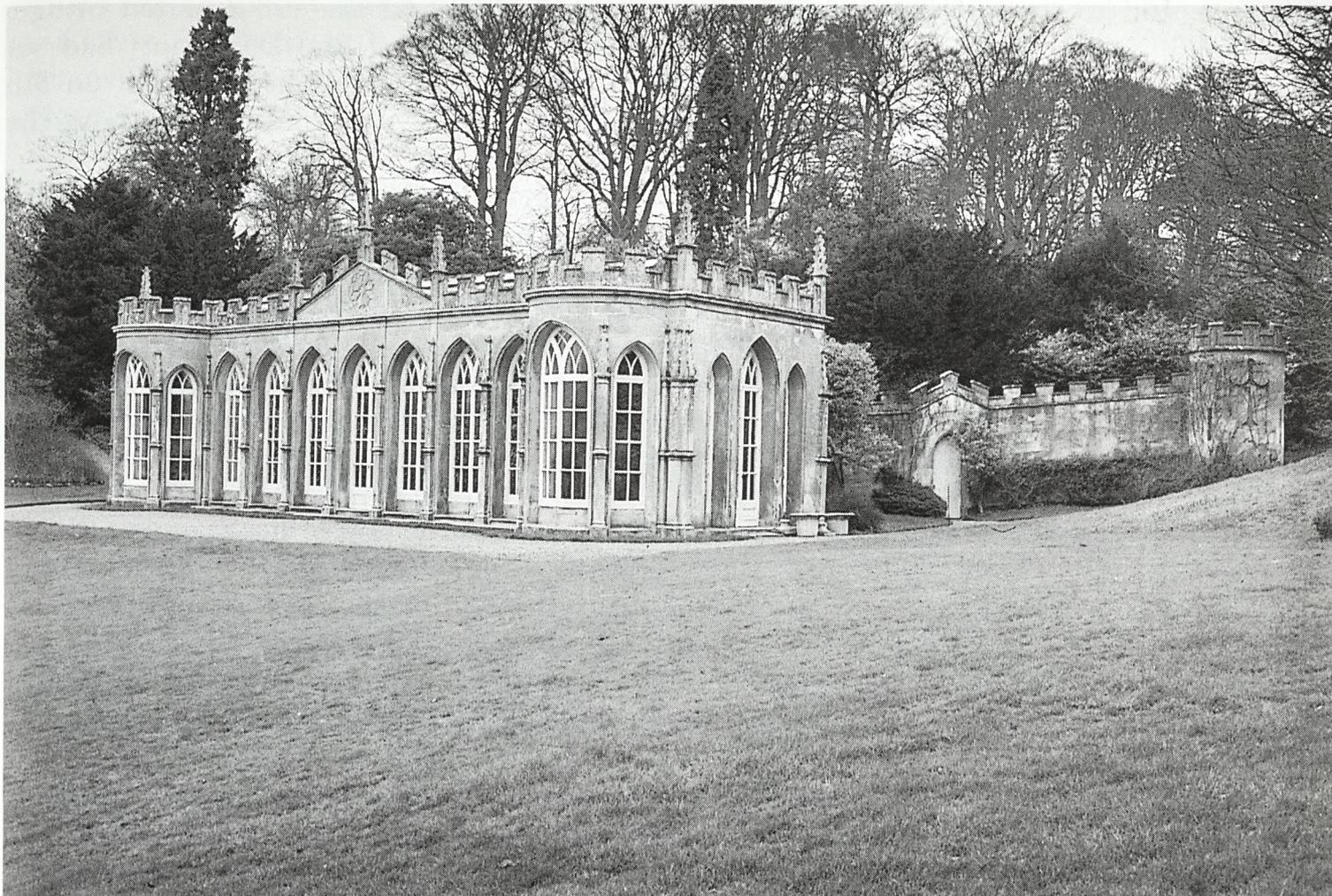


Fig. 17. The Orangery (photo: Roger White).

It has long been supposed that the Orangery was Cockerell's work, but the archival evidence discovered by Miss Susan Morris has now proved otherwise. Hastings employed one John Davenport as his landscape gardener, and first met his foreman at the house on 8th September 1788,<sup>34</sup> only ten days after having gained possession of the site. On 26th September Hastings settled the route of the drive, park perimeters, stables, kitchen garden and flower garden with Davenport at Daylesford, and Cockerell met him in mid-October.<sup>35</sup> On 12th January Davenport was instructed to build the 'garden walls, hot house [and to] hurry to start on the pleasure and flower gardens'.<sup>36</sup> The work was substantially complete by March 1793, but it continued on the lake, stew ponds and the stream, which runs through the garden, until 1795.

Davenport's work for Hastings was fraught with difficulty and disagreement. Through the strained correspondence one senses that Davenport was rather too prone to run away with his schemes, committing Hastings to unagreed costs, whilst being continually touchy and disagreeable about interference. Matters deteriorated when he fell out with Thomas Walford, Hastings' land agent, who wrote to Hastings in London on 7th October 1790 declaring that he was preparing to get rid of the troublesome gardener, who had been disobeying orders and vastly overspending on his grandiose schemes. The final straw was over the necessity of having a cast iron bridge over the upper pond to carry a path to the Walled Garden. Although Hastings claimed not to want it, it does appear on a naive depiction of the house painted by Anne Rushout in 1805. We do not know if the bridge was ever actually built, but Walford wrote again to Hastings on 17th October 1790 to complain of Davenport's misinterpretation of instructions leading to yet greater expense in the matter of laying out the path, and he claimed that in three weeks' time he would put a stop to Davenport's 'Vast Expenses'.<sup>37</sup> Davenport, oblivious to Walford's disquiet, wrote to Hastings in November to proclaim his

innocence and to forward his schemes for entrance lodges and the still-disputed bridge. Almost simultaneously Walford's patience crumbled and, finding that Davenport had yet again changed the design of the upper pond without permission, he sacked him on 5th November and requested a final bill (a request he had made continually throughout the summer, and one which was studiously ignored by Davenport).<sup>38</sup>

A highly aggrieved Davenport wrote to Hastings on 22nd November. The long self-justification includes hurt remarks about the interference of others in his work, in addition to protestations that he had always intended to comply with Walford's wishes. In reply to the accusation from Walford that he did not understand such buildings as the hothouse, Davenport retorted 'I do — as they are all my own plans and designs — and not take [sic] from any others'.<sup>39</sup> He added 'the Duke of Bedford spoke very highly in praise of these and your other Improvements, in a large company of gentlemen lately were [sic] he was at Dinner in Monmouthshire and said he had been at Daylesford — and that the Green House greatly exceeded anything of the kind he had seen . . .'.<sup>40</sup> Davenport went on to point out: 'I am employed in considerable Buildings of Houses for gentlemen, as well as their grounds etc — Hot Houses, Green Houses, etc'.<sup>41</sup> Cockerell, he claimed, only disapproved of him because of envy, and that in twenty-two years of work he had never quarrelled with anyone, and was presently on his way to do work for Lord Fawkes at Fearthingwell Hall,<sup>42</sup> where he was working on a bridge with a single span of 122 feet. Davenport completely failed to realise his redundancy at Daylesford, and pestering letters followed, criticising the decisions taken by Walford in his absence.

In February 1791 Walford complained again to Hastings that Davenport was still being a nuisance and refusing to keep out of affairs. Walford declared: 'he acts so differently from other People, I know not how to deal with him'.<sup>43</sup> A bill for Davenport's trouble, expenses and plans (for schemes Hastings had never commissioned) was submitted in July. Walford was keen to pay him off for the sake of peace and quiet, and on 28th August Davenport was paid £372.8.6 for outstanding accounts, as well as 15 guineas for unused drawings and journeys.<sup>44</sup>

Despite the complaints which marked Davenport's employment, there can be no question that the monument that he left in the Orangery at Daylesford singles him out as an architect of some merit. He clearly worked on a number of quite challenging projects (if his boasting is accurate) and for distinguished clients. His hitherto anonymous contribution to late eighteenth century landscape gardening awaits further exploration. By June 1795 the garden he created at Daylesford was in full bloom, and the Orangery was rich with grenadillas, lychees, custard apples, alligator pears and mangoes, while the Walled Garden produced peaches, cherries, nectarines, plums, strawberries, gooseberries, currants, raspberries and grapes.<sup>45</sup>

Hastings died in 1818 at the age of 86, after more than twenty-five years of contented rural retirement. He was buried in Daylesford churchyard under a classical monument bearing the simple inscription 'Hastings 1818'. His wife Marian lived on at the house until March 1837, when she died at the age of 90. Her son, Hastings' step-son, General Sir Charles Imhoff, and his wife Charlotte, lived at Daylesford until his death in 1853 and it was at that point that the house and its contents were sold and dispersed. The estate was purchased by a Mr Harmen Grisewood, a stockbroker, who immediately set about modernising the property. It was Grisewood who altered the building to its present form, and in many ways his alterations are understandable, if not altogether forgivable. The house Grisewood bought was built to the needs of the socially relaxed Hastings, and was incapable of meeting the needs of full-blown Victorian hospitality. There were no major reception rooms, the largest room of the house having been given over to a dusty library.

Grisewood's alterations were carried out by the architect Robert Trollope (of Trollope and Colls fame). His work, partly in the fashionable Italianate style, is at times so tactful and

wide-ranging that at first it is very difficult to sift what is original from the later Trollopian tinkering. To begin with, the drive which swept past the west front to the south front was removed and the present drive instituted, which takes the visitor to the former rear elevation. Here he built a Tuscan entrance porch of robust detailing to replace the pedimented subsidiary entrance, which can be seen on this elevation in the painting of c.1805. The porch fits comfortably with Cockerell's simple ashlar walls with their two broad-arched windows. The whole axial focus of the house was distorted by this change, and a balustraded terrace was constructed around the south front to make an enclosed garden. Cockerell's 'noble staircase', which was presumably in stone and rose from the Rustic basement into what is now the Gallery, was removed and the porch and vestibule from which it had sprung altered. The Gallery, which was probably two rooms originally (one half being the staircase hall) became a rather long empty space, and it may be that the four stone Ionic columns which now stand at the east end were involved in some way in the staircase or entrance vestibule below. Hastings' Library was transformed into a Saloon for formal entertainment, and it is likely that rich Corinthian columns supporting a rather abrupt frieze were added, together with an apse. The old Library was always referred to as being forty feet long,<sup>46</sup> something it could only be without the present apse and associated vaulted lobby.<sup>47</sup>

To replace Cockerell's staircase Trollope added a small, wooden stair, of singularly little virtue, which rose in a partitioned space behind the Dining Room. The Dining Room itself may have been lengthened by the addition of two large niches with crude plaster details and seems to have been decorated in a Pompeiian style not unlike the manner of J. D. Crace. By turning the house about-face, Grisewood was doing little to complement the plan. The rear of the house was clearly never intended as the entrance front; and the Victorian entrance hall, with its tessellated marble floor, was doomed to look like an afterthought, for it presented the visitor with a large blank wall on entering, with a door on each returning wall leading to either side of the house. Moreover, such an arrangement made the internal plan seem muddled and confused and the general circulation exasperating. The work currently being undertaken by Sibyl Colefax and John Fowler Ltd, under the design direction of Stanley Falconer, has addressed these illogicalities and has solved the fundamental peculiarities by opening up the staircase hall to a proper proportion and linking it by an arch to the entrance hall — so that now the visitor reaches the centre of the house immediately. A new Portland stone cantilevered staircase, Cockerellian in inspiration and designed by Robin Samuel and Vincent Matthews of Colefax & Fowler Design, has been added to create a fitting progress up to the splendid Dome Room. The story of these changes will be published later in 1990 when the work is complete.

A model of the altruistic squire, Harmen Grisewood rebuilt the parish church at Daylesford in 1868 in high Gothic Revival style. He also built the many Gothic cottages on the estate and in the hamlet for the tenants. In 1874 R. Nichol-Byass (of the sherry family) acquired the house, and on his death it was purchased by Charles Edward Baring Young MP, of Baring Brothers bank. Charles Young died in 1928 and left the estate to his brother Arthur. Arthur Young's death in 1936 produced yet another auction and a period of ten years of emptiness for the house. Falling rapidly into decay, and having been occupied by the US Army for a few years during the war, it was in very dilapidated shape when purchased by the 2nd Viscount Rothermere in 1946. He embarked on a full restoration, employing John Fowler for a sumptuous redecoration between 1960 and 1963. Rothermere acquired a considerable amount of Hastings' possessions, affected as he was by the character of the house and its history. Between 1978 and 1988 Daylesford was owned by Baron Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, who effected yet another, not altogether sympathetic, transformation. Today Mr and Mrs Anthony Bamford, inspired by the life of the ex-Governor General of Bengal, have instituted extensive works of restoration and research to return Daylesford finally to the splendour and comfort of its prime.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to acknowledge my gratitude to Miss Susan Morris for access to her excellent archival research on Daylesford; to Mr Paul Drury of English Heritage for his archaeological deductions about the building; to Mr Roger White for suggesting the possible links with Sir Robert Taylor, John Nash and the Hôtel de Salm, and for allowing access to his exceptional photographic library; and to Dr David Watkin for assistance and advice. Finally, I would like to thank Mr & Mrs Anthony Bamford for their kind cooperation, without which this article would not have been possible.

## NOTES

1. Warren Hastings, quoted in Revd G. R. Gleig, *Memoirs of the Life of the Rt Hon Warren Hastings* 1841, Vol 1 pp 8–9.
2. British Museum, Additional Manuscript 39889, Diary 1788–9, f. 33r.
3. Revd Gleig first caused confusion over whether it was Samuel or Penyston Hastings who actually sold Daylesford. Sir Charles Lawson in his article ‘Where Warren Hastings Rests’ in the *Journal of Indian Art and Industry* (an undated copy of which is in the Gloucestershire Records Office) sets the record straight convincingly, p. 12.
4. The words of Lord Thurlow, the Lord Chancellor, Hastings’ supporter who campaigned for a peerage for him. Quoted P. Turnbull, ‘Warren Hastings’, 1975, p. 193.
5. BM Add MSS 29232, f. 211v.
6. BM Add MSS 39871, Correspondence 1775–1818.
7. BM Add MSS 45418.1, Letters from Warren Hastings to David Anderson, 11th September 1788. f. 27v.
8. Revd G. R. Gleig, op cit.
9. Revd G. R. Gleig, op cit.
10. Mr Larkins, Accountant General to the East India Company, stated at Hastings’ trial that he had ‘the entire management of everything that bore a relation to the private fortune of Mr Hastings . . . on no one occasion had Mr Hastings done any one act, either with an immediate or remote view to his own personal advantage’. Quoted by Turnbull, op cit, p. 212. The majority of Hastings’ fortune in India seems to have come from the legitimate trading of diamonds. The payment for work at Daylesford was largely from this source.
11. BM Add MSS 39882, Diary 1789–94, f. 8v–9r, 8th December 1789.
12. G. W. Hastings, *A Vindication of Warren Hastings*, 1909 p. 198.
13. This reference is written in the margin of the 1853 sale catalogue next to the section on the Entrance Hall.
14. During the most recent work a second sealed fireplace was discovered between the present chimneypiece and the west door on the north wall of the Gallery.
15. Gloucester Record Office, D4084, Box 52.
16. The Daylesford Sale Catalogue, 1853, British Museum.
17. The picture — ‘A View of Fort Gwallior, from the north west’, by William Hodges — sold as lot 920 in 1853. It fetched £25-15-0d.
18. BM Add MSS 39890, Notebook D, f. 25v.
19. G. W. Hastings, op cit.
20. C. F. Bell, *Annals of Thomas Banks* 1938, pp. 88–9.
21. George Cumberland, ‘An Essay on the Utility of Collecting the Best Works of the Ancient Engravers of the Italian School’, Introduction, quoted by Bell in ‘Annals . . .’
22. BM Add MSS 39882, 1789–94, 4th October 1792, 105r.
23. 14th November 1784, letter from Hastings to Marian quoted by Lawson, op cit, p. 24.
24. Sale catalogue 1853, Lot 396.
25. Ditto, Lot 415.
26. Ditto, Lot 422.
27. G. W. Hastings, op cit.
28. An opinion expressed by Mr E. Babers of Park Street, London, who acquired a cast of Banks’ bust of Hastings (BM Add MSS 29 Vol XLIII, 27th June 1796, f. 332). The original bronze is now at the National Portrait Gallery.
29. BM Add MSS 39883, f. 58v.
30. Sale Catalogue 1853, Lot 265.
31. BM Add MSS 29, 171. Correspondence Vol XL 1787–9, f. 104, Turner, Allapoor to Warren Hastings, 10th Feb 1788.
32. BM Add MSS 39889, 1788–9, f. 63r, and 39882, Diary 1789–94, f. 16v.

33. John Davenport, whose work in the garden at Daylesford is described below, was the architect of the Orangery. He interrupted his work at Daylesford to work at Clytha Court in Gwent. He first refers to his having to work there in a letter of 22nd July 1790 (BM Add MSS 29, 172, f. 99r), and the last reference seems to be 21st December 1790 (f.226). The similarities between Davenport's Orangery and Nash's Castle, which were pointed out to me by Roger White, may therefore be more than coincidental.
34. BM Add MSS 39889, Diary 1788–9, f. 33v.
35. Ditto, f. 44r, 14th October.
36. Ditto, f. 63r, 12th January 1789.
37. BM Add MSS 29, 172 — 1790–92 f. 146v. Davenport wrote regarding the bridge from Sir Walter Blunt's house, Mawley Hall, saying: 'down from that narrow part of the water near the house and a little way from the Spring, which runs into the Lake — I propose throwing over a lite and handsom Bridge' (f. 98v.).
38. Ditto, f. 161v.
39. Ditto, f. 200r.
40. Ditto.
41. Ditto, f. 200v.
42. Ditto, f. 201v, 210–11v.
43. Ditto, f. 251r.
44. BM Add MSS 29,173, Vol XL11, 1793–5, f. 189r–190v.
45. BM Add MSS 29,172, f. 326r–v, f. 103r–106v.
46. G. W. Hastings, *op cit*.
47. The similarity of the painter's and plasterer's accounts for this room with its present appearance cannot be completely discounted. BM Add MSS 29231, f. 558v, lists the plasterer's work on the Library cornice as '102 [feet] 6 [inches] of enriched Modillion Cornice Cima with / Indented leaves and Tongued Between Modillions / with enriched Cap and Stop and Raffle Leaf / on face of Do. of Roses in Sunk Coffers between / Modillions ovolo Egg and Tongue of Bead . . .' Whilst the more elaborate plaster floral festoons have certainly gone, the painter's reference in BM Add MSS 29231, f. 2v, to 'No. 8 Corinthian Capitals to Columns / 2 whole, 4 half, and 4 Quarter faces of do. to Pilasters . . .' may well be the eight columns and associated responds presently in this room.



Fig. 1. Packington Hall, the Pompeiian Gallery (photo: *Country Life*).

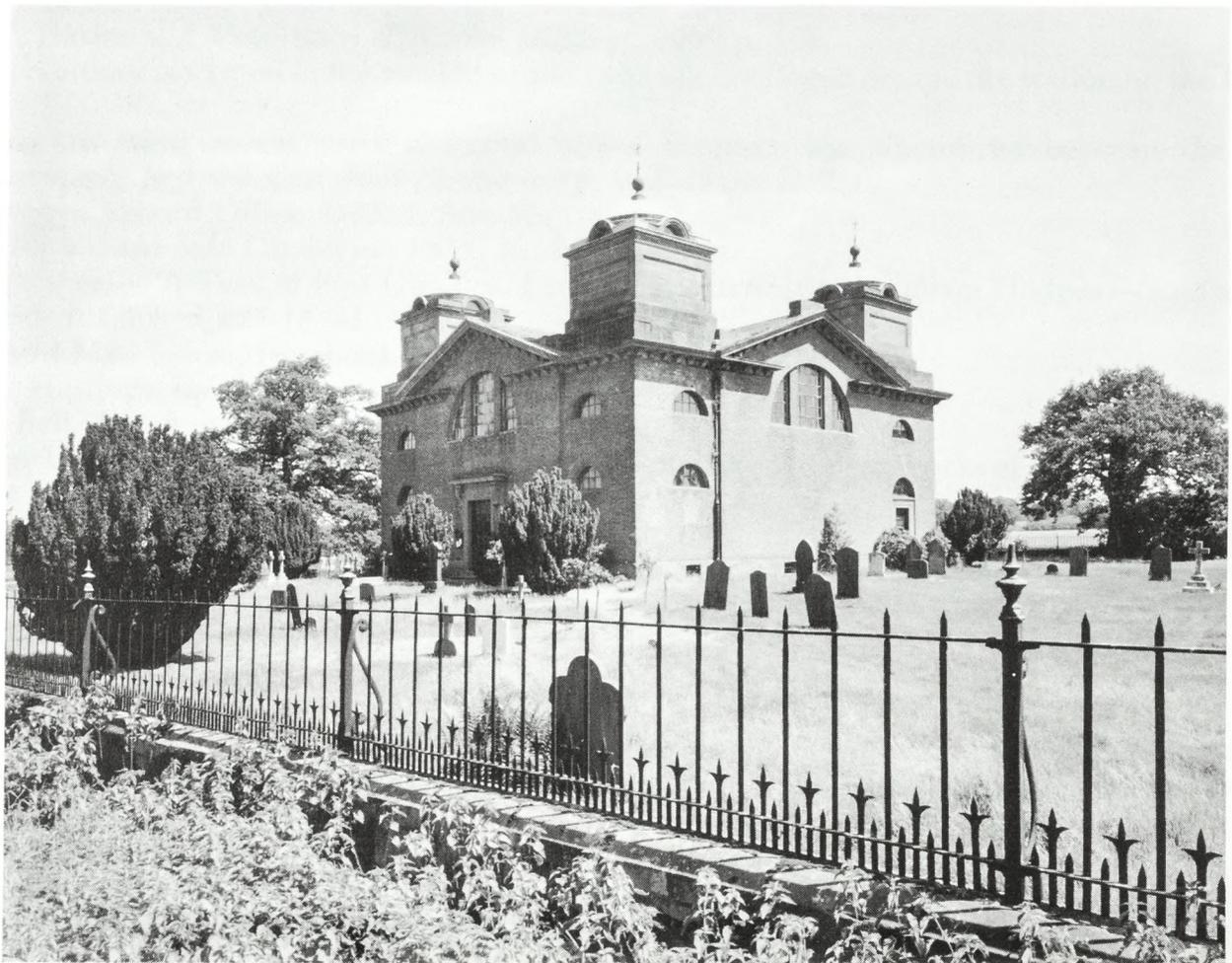


Fig. 2. Great Packington Church (photo: RCHME).