

Julians Park, Rushden, Buntingford, Herts. SG9 0TD.

Historic building recording and analysis of the House. Recorded 08 05 2024.



Page | 1

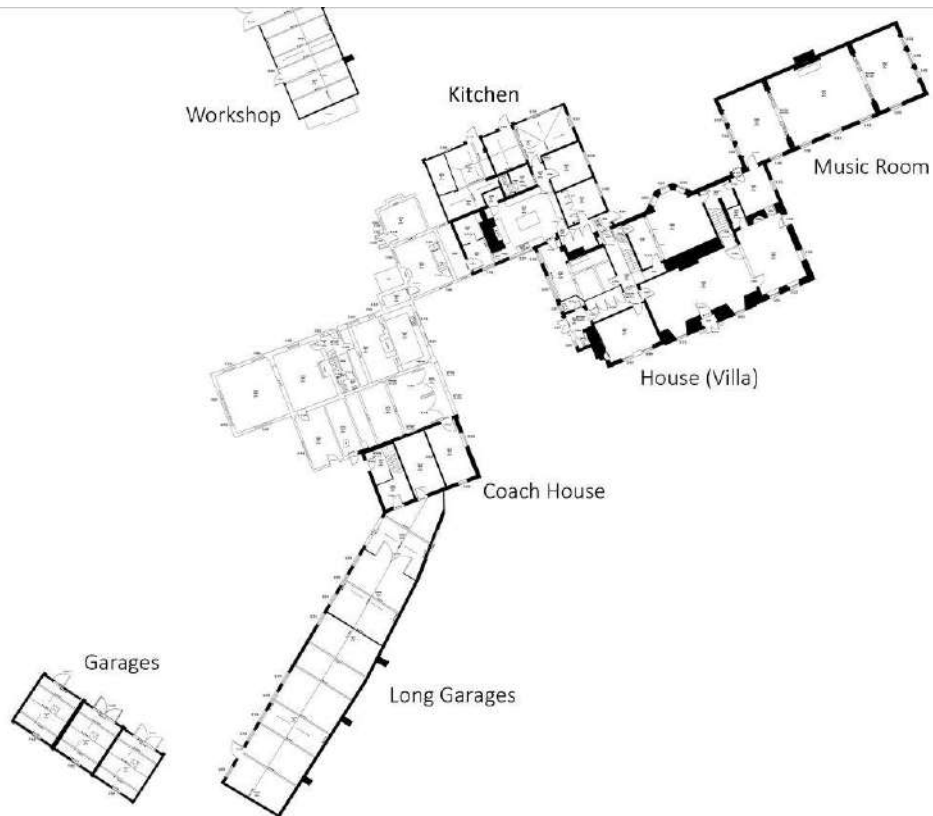
2022 Google earth. Layout of the site.



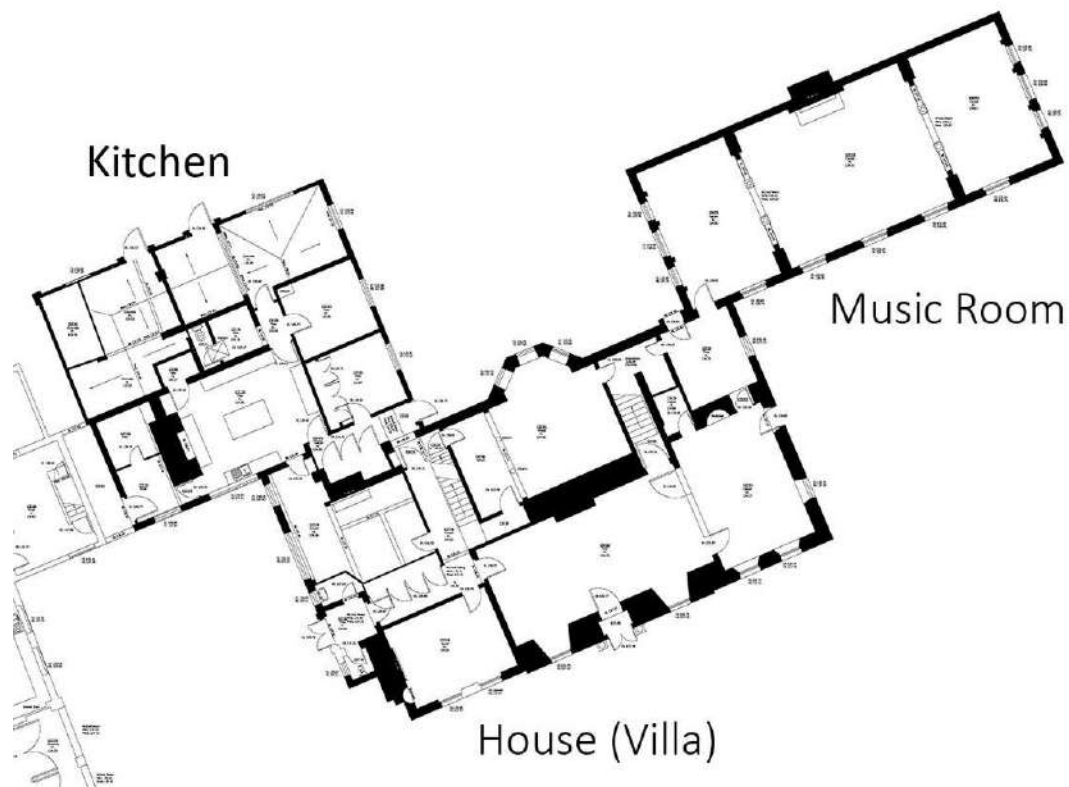
2022 Google earth. Detail of the site showing the building under study.

Location

Julians Park, Rushden, Buntingford, Herts. SG9 0TD. The House is set to the SE of the dwelling complex and is centred on TL3079232548. The topography of the site is described in the Listing.



2023. Location of the House (Villa) of Julians Park.



2023. Detail of the Ground Floor of the House.



2021 Sales Catalogue. Plans of the First and Second Floors with the Cellars.



2021 Sales Catalogue. Plans of the Ground Floor.

Listing



BJHC 26 05 2023. South elevation of the House.



BJHC 26 05 2023. North elevation of the House with the Kitchen.



Entry Name: Julians **Listing Date:** 9 June 1952 **Grade:** II* **Source:** Historic England **Source ID:** 1347370 **English Heritage Legacy ID:** 162347
County: Hertfordshire **District:** North Hertfordshire **Civil Parish:** Rushden **Traditional County:** Hertfordshire

RUSHDEN JULIANS TL 33 SW 7/24 Julians 9.6.52 GV II* Country house. c.1605 for W. Stone. Refronted and remodelled c.1710 for A. Meetkerke, altered early C19. **Again refronted, remodelled and extended 1937-9 for Col. R. Cooper.** Red brick, largely cement rendered. Portland stone dressings. Tiled roof. Neo-Georgian Style. 2 storeys and attics. 2:3:2 front with centre breaking forward. Plinth, angle quoins. Central entrance: paired 8 panelled doors, Ionic pedimented doorcase. Early C18 thick glazing bar sashes in reveals with C20 architraves. First floor centre, 9 panes, lugged architrave with scrolled jambs. Central pediment with Meetkerke arms in cartouche with putti and swags. Cornice with coped parapet over outer bays. Roof hipped to front, 2 light segmental headed dormers at each end. Central valley has main stack and tall C20 clock turret, round arched openings to octagonal belfry, copper ogee head with weathervane. Left end: projecting at angle with front is evidence of C18 refronting in an earlier section of wall with 2 offsets. Projecting again is 2 storey 4 bay secondary entrance elevation. Large door with integral semi-circular fanlight, rendered surround. Scattered 1, 2 and 4 light casements and a sash. Moulded eaves. Right end is 3 bays, glazing bar sashes. Central entrance, half glazed door in reveal with early C18 pseudo-Ionic pedimented timber doorcase, removed from front. Attached to rear and extending to right is a C20 5 bay 1 storey music room with tall 18 pane architraved sashes, parapet to hipped roof, central round headed windows in both ends, extruded stack to rear. Rear elevation is largely C18 red brick. 3 storeys. 3 bays to left project slightly. Ground floor: entrance to left, early C19 canted bay to right. First floor: large round-headed staircase sash with gauged brick head. 2 sashes with gauged brick flat arched heads. Plat band to second floor with three 2 light small pane casements. Coped parapet. To right irregular fenestration, stack at angle. Attached to rear left a lower 1 and 2 storey kitchen range, square on plan with a hipped roof. Segmental headed 2 and 3 light casements and a sash. Ridge stacks. Passageway through to rear. External stack with offsets on left end which has an entrance. Right end and rear to garden is 1 storey, an entrance with a leaded semi-circular fanlight, scattered casements and a horizontal sliding sash, dentilled brick eaves. 2 light dormer with a moulded flat head. Interior: early C18 dog-leg staircase, barley twist and fluted colonnette balusters arranged 2 to 1, fluted colonnette newels, open string with cheek pieces, moulded ramped handrail, dado panelling. Early C18 dog-leg secondary staircase with slightly bulbous balusters, closed string, moulded handrail. Late C18 panelling and columnar screen in dining room. Neo-Georgian 'hall'. Julians was formerly known as Rushden Place. (East Hertfordshire Archaeological Society Transactions, Vol. 4, pt. 1, 1908-9: RCHM 1910: VCH 1912: Country Life, 20 and 27/6 and 4/7/47: Pevsner 1977: RCHM Typescript).

Page | 5

Listing NGR: TL3079232548

A country house with C17/C18 walled gardens remodelled in the 1930s, surrounded by an C18 landscape park.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1603 William Stone and his brother bought a farmhouse called Julians in the manor of Rushden. Here William built a house, c 1605(10. By 1700 the house (also known as Riseden or Rushden Place) was fronted by a symmetrical enclosed court, flanked by a service yard giving access to a porch on the west front, and a kitchen garden partly enclosed by orchards (Chauncy 1700). Adolphus Metekerke, who had married Penelope Stone in 1699, remodelled the house c 1715. It was again altered in the early C19.

Page | 6

Colonel Reginald Cooper remodelled the house and gardens from 1937 to 1939 (CL 1947). Amongst other things, Colonel Cooper reinstated the enclosed court, which by the late C19 had been replaced by an informal carriage sweep (OS 1883), and remodelled the gardens to the north of the house, adding a swimming pool set in one of the walled gardens. The estate was bought by the Honourable Mrs P Pleydell-Bouverie in 1940, and remains (1999) in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Julians lies 6km east of Baldock, at the north boundary of the village of Rushden. The 90ha site is bounded to the south by Rushden, to the west by the lane from Rushden to Redhill, to the north largely by the lane leading north-east to Roe Green, and on the other sides by agricultural land and woodland. The ground is largely level, with a slight slope down to the west. The setting is rural.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main approach enters 600m west of the house, off the Rushden to Redhill lane, through a narrow belt of trees. The west drive extends east across the park, flanked by an avenue of trees. A spur 200m from the house leads north-east to the stable yard on the west side of the stable block. Some 40m south of the house the drive turns north to arrive at the forecourt on the west front, where a porch shelters the main entrance to the house. A stone gateway in the east side of the forecourt, south of the house, supports an iron gate and overthrow which gives access to the courtyard on the south front. The courtyard (walls, gates and railings 1937-9, listed grade II) is laid out with a central stone-flagged path flanked by two panels of lawn and is enclosed to west and east by brick walls. In the east wall a further gateway, in similar style to that in the west wall, gives access to a lawn beyond overlooked by the east front. The south side of the courtyard is bounded by a low brick wall supporting iron railings flanked by two stone piers, in the form of a clairvoie. At the centre a gateway, flanked by further stone piers in similar style, supporting iron gates, gives access from the park to the path leading up to a broad, stone-flagged terrace running along the whole of the south front, and the central, pedimented front door. The structure of the courtyard, laid out in 1937-9 by Colonel Cooper, is based on the court shown in Chauncy's engraving of 1700, which had disappeared by the late C19 (OS 1883).

The former south drive, now (1999) a farm track, enters 1km south-west of the house off the Rushden to Redhill lane, at a single-storey, white-painted lodge in Gothick style which is set back off the lane. From here the track extends north-east through the park, flanked by park trees, joining the west drive 150m south-west of the house.

These two drives were in existence by the early C19 (Bryant, 1822). During the C19 (Bryant; OS 1883) a drive continued north-east from the south front of the house across the park to

what is now (1999) a track just beyond the east boundary of the park, marking the site of a former lane linking Roe Green and Offley Green.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Julians (c 1610, remodelled c 1715, listed grade II*) stands towards the north of the site, enclosed, together with the gardens, by the park. The two-storey, rectangular, red-brick and rendered house was originally built with five Dutch-style gables on the south front (Chauncy 1700) and was remodelled in Classical style in the early C18. It was thoroughly restored by Colonel Cooper (1937/9), who added a central clock turret and long, single-storey room to the east front. A garden door stands at the centre of the east front.

Page | 7

The red-brick stable block (C18, listed grade II) stands adjacent to the south-west of the house. The east front of the stable block overlooks the west front of the house, across the entrance courtyard, with the kitchen block forming the north boundary of the courtyard. The stable yard lies adjacent to the south-west of the stable block, bounded to the south-east and south-west by two further ranges of buildings. The stable court opens on its north side onto a further courtyard, enclosed to the north and east by buildings and to the west by pleasure grounds.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens and pleasure grounds lie to the north and west of the house, sloping gently up to the north. The garden door on the east front leads to a broad lawn, bounded to the west by the forecourt wall and partly to the north by the 1930s single-storey extension. A door in the north front of the house leads to the formal north gardens (walls and piers listed grade II), remodelled by Colonel Cooper 1937-9, using late C17 or early C18 structures and garden compartments, and further developed in the later C20. A sunken, stone-flagged north terrace extending along the north front leads up via a flight of semicircular stone steps from the house to a rectangular lawn enclosed by brick walls. The lawn is divided into two sections, with a further semicircular flight of stone steps flanked by a border linking the two. The southern half of the lawn, lying adjacent to the north terrace and flanked by further borders, is dominated by a circular stone pond, aligned with a gateway set in the east wall. This gateway, flanked by brick piers, gives access to the walled former kitchen garden.

The higher, northern half of the main lawn, also surrounded by borders, leads to a gateway set in the northern garden wall flanked by stone piers giving access to a further brick-walled enclosure containing a mid C20 swimming pool surrounded by stone flags.

West of the house and service courtyards lies a wooded area of former pleasure grounds (OS 1883), containing a further pond, with an orchard lying adjacent to the north.

PARK The park overlies undulating ground, divided by a valley running from west to east through the centre. Of mixed arable and pasture, it surrounds the house and contains scattered specimen trees (including some exotic species) and clumps, with a belt of trees running along the west boundary. An icehouse lies in a wooded former chalk pit in the centre of the park, some 350m south of the house.

KITCHEN GARDEN The brick-walled former kitchen garden lies north-east of the house and is laid to lawn planted with shrubs. A stone set in one of the walls is dated 1823. It was, in the 1940s, an exuberant herbaceous garden, set out in four main rectangular panels of borders.

These were separated by a cruciform pattern of paths (CL 1947), the east/west path being aligned on the western gateway and pond in the walled garden beyond. In the late C19 (OS 1883) the area was under cultivation as a kitchen garden. A further compartment lies adjacent to the north and contains a rectangular pond, formerly a fishpond.

REFERENCES

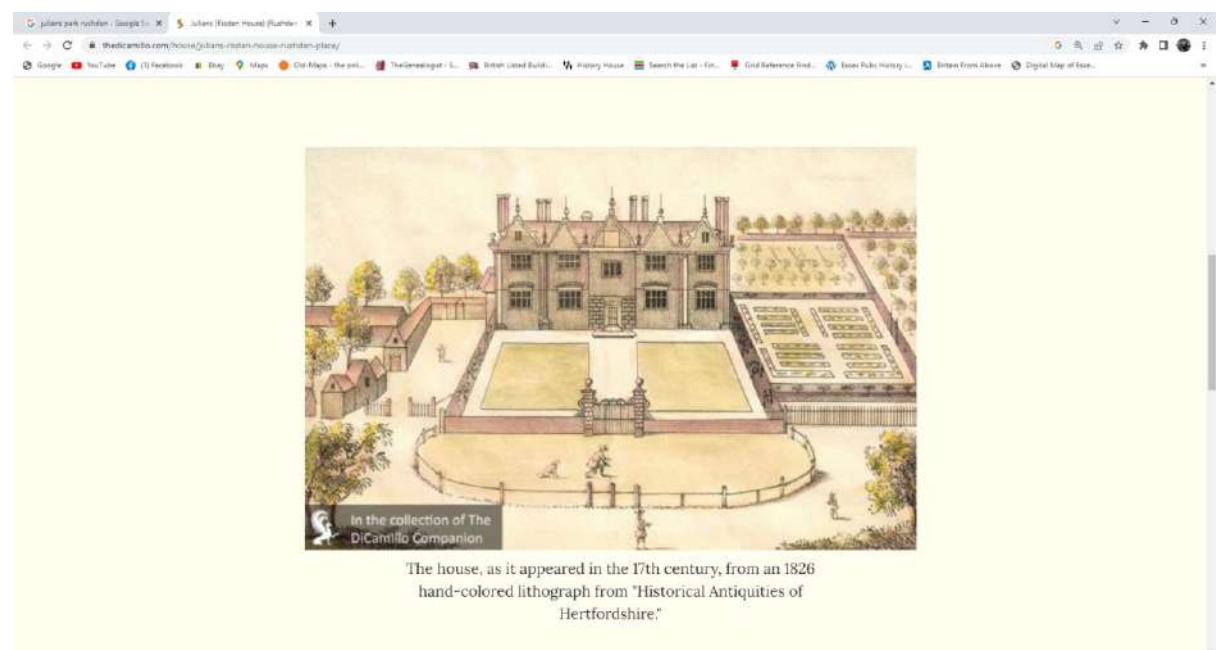
Page | 8

Chauncy, Historical Antiquities of Hertfordshire 1, (1700) Victoria History of the County of Hertfordshire 3, (1912), pp 266-8 Country Life, 101 (20 June 1947), pp 1160(3; (27 June 1947), pp 1210-13; 102 (4 July 1947) pp 28-31 B Cherry and N Pevsner, The Buildings of England: Hertfordshire (1977), p 286

Maps Dury and Andrews, A topographical Map of Hartford-shire, 1766 A Bryant, The County of Hertford, 1822

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1883 2nd edition published 1899 3rd edition published 1925 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1898

Description written: August 1999 Register Inspector: SR Edited: October 2000



An article by Christopher Hussey in *Country Life* (June 20, 1947) sets the scene of 'Julians, in the arable country near Buntingford':

'It is an old house, originally built in Jacobean times and reconstructed during the 18th century. But its present appearance, setting and internal character are barely 10 years old. As we see them today, they are due to Mrs Pleydell-Bouverie, since she came to live here in 1940, and during whose time the garden has come to maturity. But the actual restoration of the place was done during 1937-39 by Col Reginald Cooper, whose remarkable flair for discovering and resurrecting derelict houses has already been illustrated at Cothay Manor, Devon (Country Life, October 22/29, 1927).'

Col Cooper reinstated the enclosed court, which had been replaced by an informal carriage sweep, remodelled the gardens to the north of the house and added a dramatic, Roman-style swimming pool set in one of the walled gardens.

He also created the single-storey wing at the side of the house that contains the magnificent, 59ft-long music room.

The current owners have been there since the 1940s and the house remains much as it was then, apart from the addition of a new kitchen and the conversion of part of the stable block to a comfortable, four-bedroom house.

Page | 9

Julians as recorded in 1912

The mansion-house of Julians is situated about half a mile north of the church. It was erected by William Stone about 1610. The house was entirely recased about the beginning of the 18th century, but the old walls appear to have been left standing, so that the general arrangement of the house is very little changed. The present front is cemented and is very plain. The doorway is in the middle, entering into the hall. The staircase opens directly off the hall, and probably at one time formed a back projection, but considerable additions have been made to the house. The stair is a very good example of the Queen Anne period, with delicately twisted and fluted balusters and carved ends to the steps. The details are very similar to the stair at the Great House, Cheshunt, which belongs to the same period, though the arrangement of the returned ends of the steps is somewhat different. There are wide folding doors at the foot of the stair, to shut it off from the hall when desired. To the right of the hall on entering is the Morning-room—no doubt the old parlour, and to the left is the kitchen wing, which still contains a little 17th-century panelling and an oak chimneypiece. The site of the old Bury can be traced in the park, immediately to the north of the church.

'Parishes: Rushden', in *A History of the County of Hertford: Volume 3*, ed. William Page (London, **1912**), pp. 265-270. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/herts/vol3/pp265-270> [accessed 25 May 2023].



BJHC. 08 05 2024. Entrance gates and clair-voie

Entry Name: Forecourt Walls, Entrance Gates and Claire-Voie Immediately South of Julians **Listing Date:** 29 January 1986 **Grade:** II **Source:** Historic England **Source ID:** 1102664 **English Heritage Legacy ID:** 162349 **County:** Hertfordshire **District:** North Hertfordshire **Civil Parish:** Rushden **Traditional County:** Hertfordshire

RUSHDEN JULIANS TL 33 SW 7/26 Forecourt Walls, Entrance Gates and Claire-Voie immediately S of Julians GV II Forecourt walls, entrance gates and clair-voie to Julians (q.v.). 1937-9 for Col. R. Cooper. Red brick walls about 2m in height with moulded Portland stone coping extend away from house with a low stone coped brick plinth to wrought iron clair-voie facing house. Quadrant spur walls away from far angles. Flanking side gates, entrance gate, at far angles and terminating spurs are ashlar piers, rebated corners except to side gate piers which are panelled, moulded caps and bases, ball finials to side and entrance gate piers, urn finials at ends. (Country Life, 20/6 and 4/7/47). Listing NGR: TL3079232503

Page | 10



2023 Google earth. Walled Garden.

Entry Name: Garden Walls and Gate Immediately North of Julians

Listing Date: 29 January 1986 **Grade:** II **Source:** Historic England **Source ID:** 1175998

English Heritage Legacy ID: 162350 **County:** Hertfordshire **District:** North Hertfordshire

Civil Parish: Rushden **Traditional County:** Hertfordshire

RUSHDEN JULIANS TL 33 SW 7/27 Garden Walls and Gate immediately N of Julians CV II Walls and gate to terraced formal garden and swimming pool at Julians (q.v.). C18 origins, laid out 1937-9 for Col. R. Cooper. Red brick walls about 2m in height extend in 3 sections away from house to enclose a rectangular garden. Brick piers with moulded stone caps, opening to E has vase finials, ball finials to S, eagle finials to N. Rectangular wall to N encloses swimming pool. To garden wrought iron gates with rusticated ashlar piers with bulbous vase finials, vase finialed piers opposite, ball finials at corners, apsidal changing room to W, open apse to E. To NE a stone bearing the inscription 'AM/MM/WAM/1823' is incorporated into a part of the wall once enclosing the C18 kitchen garden. (Country Life, 20/6 and 4/7/47). Listing NGR: TL3075732591.

Scope of this Report

This report records and analyses the fabric of the buildings under study. This report adheres to Historic England Level 4 as outlined in Historic England. Understanding Historic Buildings – A guide to good recording practice. 2017. Page 27.

Page | 11



North elevation of the Kitchen.



The Outbuildings looking from the west near the pond.

The Kitchen and Outbuildings have already been recorded separately.

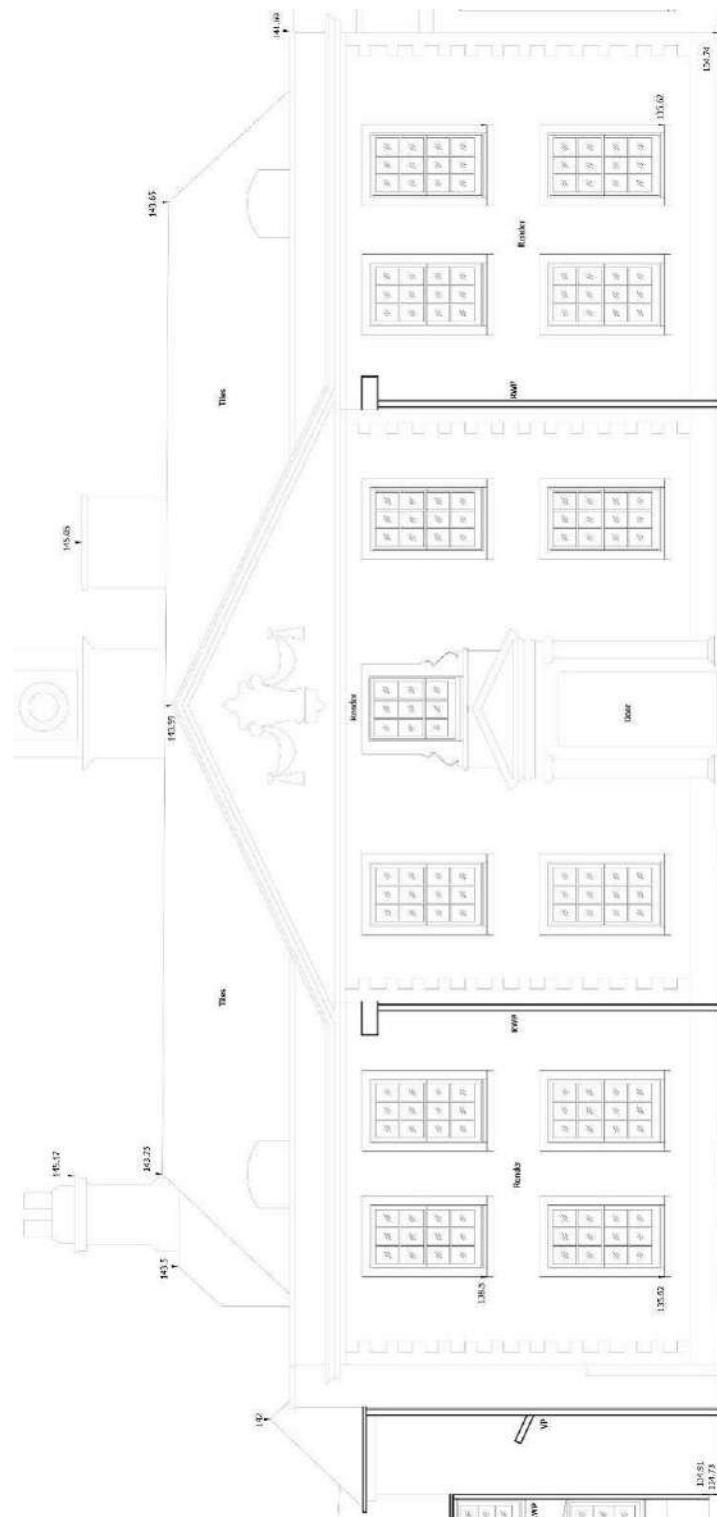
Julians Park, Rushden, Buntingford, Herts. SG9 0TD.

Historic building recording and analysis of the Kitchen. Recorded 26 05 2023.

Julians Park, Rushden, Buntingford, Herts. SG9 0TD.

Historic building recording and analysis of the Outbuildings. Recorded 08 05 2024.

Description – External



2023. South Elevation – Main façade.



The south elevation from the terrace.



The south elevation from the gates.

South Elevation

The south elevation is the main facade of the House and overlooks the terrace with its tall wrought iron railings and gated enclosure which the 1999 addition to the 1952 Listing describes as a 'clairvoie'. A Claire Voie is usually a small opening in a wall that allows an external view of the grounds beyond. It also means clerestory. This term has been borrowed from the 1947 edition of Country Life.



Detail of the west half for the south elevation.



Detail of the entrance porch south elevation.

The south elevation has been rendered in a hard lime based cement and the Listed description notes that this was carried out in 1939. There are large sections of subsequent repair using a harder cement that is more deeply ruled to resemble stone blocks. There is a handsome central doorcase which is not shown on the 1826 (1699) engraving.



Detail of the horned sash window above the porch.

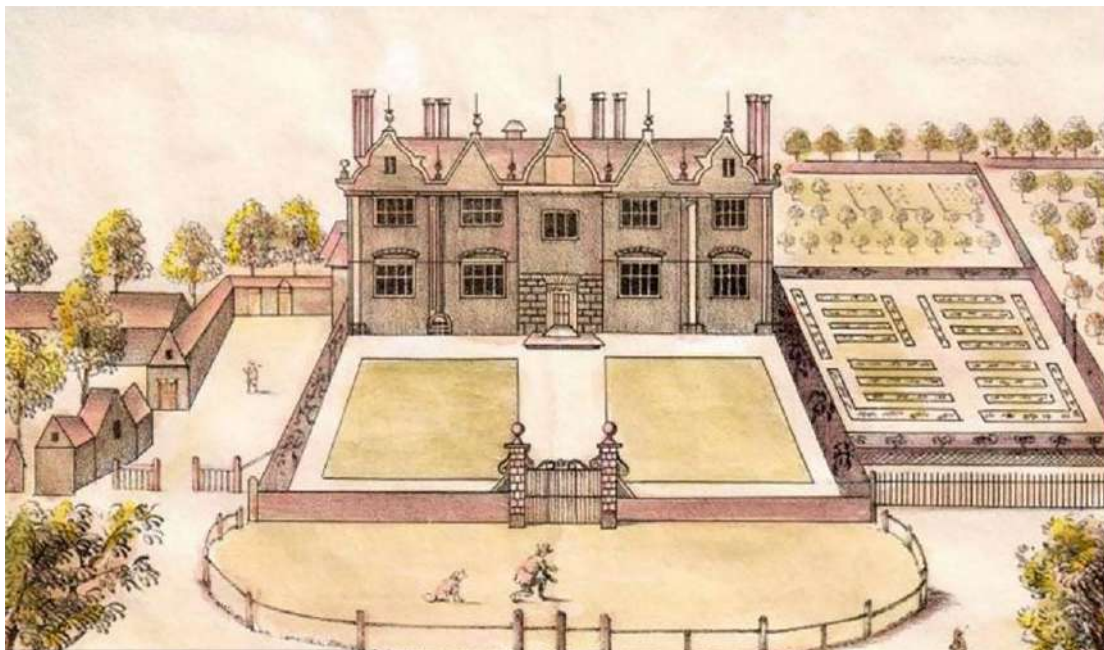


Detail of the eastern half of the south elevation.

All the windows have simple horns (joggles) in Victorian style and clear window panes. Contrary to the Listing description, the crispness of the joinery and clarity of the glass show that all the windows were replaced as part of the 1939 works. The window surrounds and decorative quoins and other elements are also very crisp and were added by Cooper as stated in the 1947 Country Life article.



Detail of the Meetkerke coat of arms with crossed swords.



1826 version of the 1699 lithograph.

The 1699 lithograph indicates the many changes made in the EC18th and in 1939 to the south elevation. The Dutch gabled roofline, fenestration, chimneys stacks and general proportions have all been changed. Nearly all of the visible fabric now dates from the 1939 works with the exception of some of the older render. The coat of arms is that of Adolphus Meetkerke who was resident in 1848 (Tithe Award for Rushden) but has been sunk in later render. The 1947 Country Life Magazine article claims this was done by Col R. Cooper. The same article also notes that the eastern doorcase was moved by Cooper from the south elevation and the grander one added. The front door itself appears to be a replica dated to 1939 as is the internal lobby and door to the Grand Entrance Hall. The window surrounds are described as being Portland stone.



The south and east elevations of the House.



The east elevation of the House. To the RHS is the 1939 Music Room.

East Elevation

The east elevation is set out as a symmetrical facade about a timber doorcase with doric columns and an open tympanum decorated with modillions. Above is a blanked off window as part of the 1939 works to suit changes inside. The sash windows and half glazed door are all 1939 replacements. The render is patchy and in poor condition with large cracks under the cornice which also shows signs of opening joints.



The west elevation.



Modern repairs to the render on the ground floor.

West Elevation

The west elevation has the service wing and this is of a much lower hierarchy than the south and east elevation as the symmetry is loose and has somewhat random fenestration. There is a wide stucco doorcase with flat pilasters which is either remade or a new feature from 1939. The flat hood above is heavily eroded and clearly older. The hard render has deep cracks that have been caused by the insertion of the lower windows which serve the WC's.

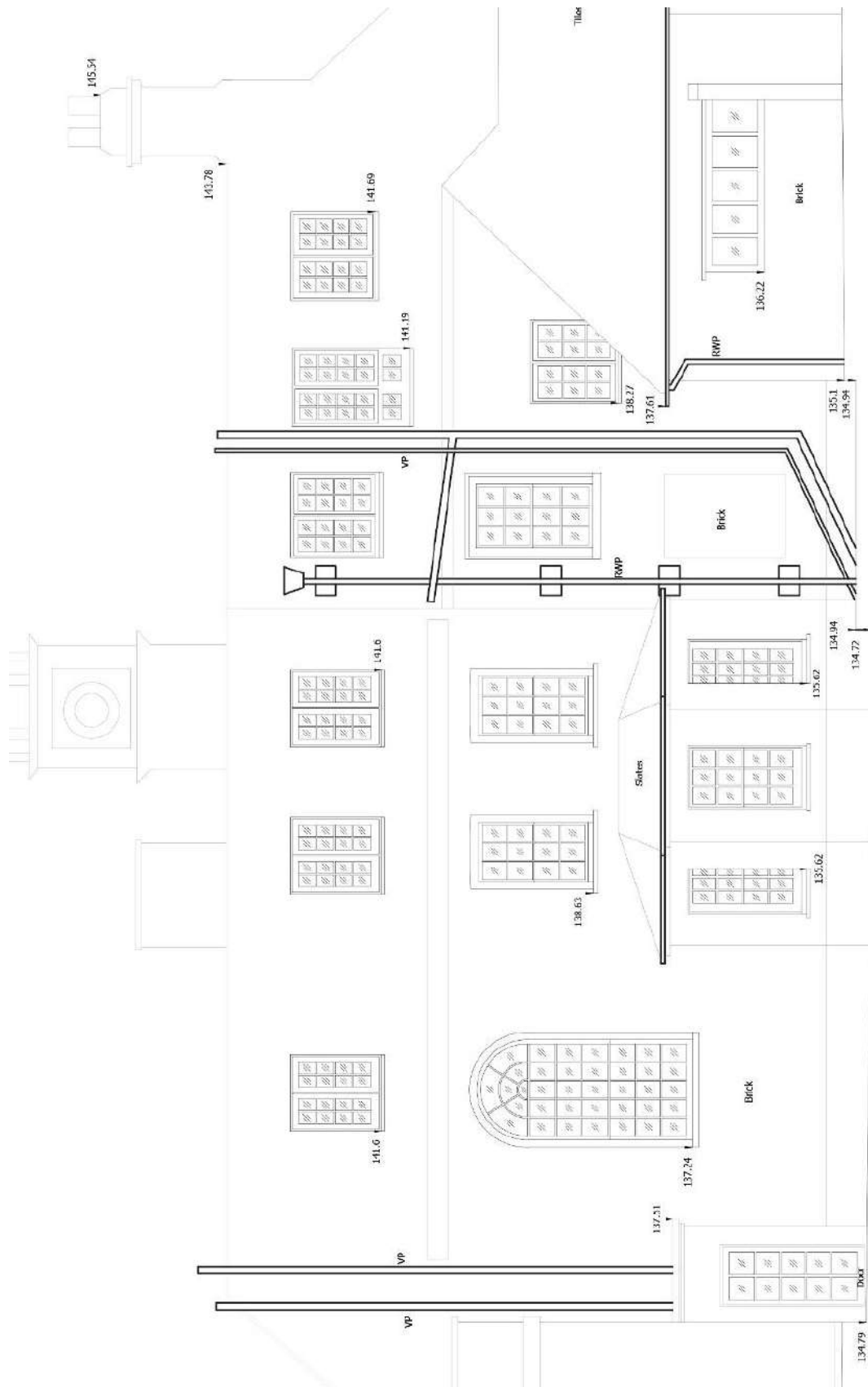


The water cistern on the west elevation.



Cobbled surfaces with drainage trenches for MC20th drains.

An interesting feature is a water cistern set in the corner of the House with the Kitchen. It is fed by water pipes from the 1939 works and seen inside are the stopcocks connected to it. There is a modern style float valve but it has rotted away. As all the render is flush to the input pipes it can be inferred that this is a feature added in 1939. The yard is cobbled with several recent patch repairs and the service trenches for the drains and rainwater were cut through so it must predate the 1939 works and is probably Victorian.



2023. North Elevation – facing the garden.



The north elevation of the House.



1947 Country Life. North elevation.

North Elevation

The north elevation has several phases of brickwork and altered fenestration. It can be seen that all the top floor windows have been replaced since the 1947 County Life photograph. Some of the discolouration of the brickwork can be attributed to the foliage now removed.



1939 inserted porch.



1939 inserted arch headed window is part of a suite used in the Music Room.

The large arch headed window lighting the main staircase matches the windows in the Music Room which was built by Col. R Cooper in 1939. The Country Life Magazine article notes that these windows were taken from Cothay Manor, Somerset where they were originally placed in an identical building erected in 1927. There is a small porch leading to an atrium that connects the house to the Music Room.



Victorian style canted bay window for the Dining Room. Note gault brickwork above.



Doorway blanked off in two episodes, first to a window and now the Dining Room wall.

There is a Victorian style canted bay window with C20th 6/6 horned sashes with modern float glass panes. Above is a large section of white gault brickwork which suggests there was a two storey structure here previously. Adjacent is a blocked doorway which was reduced to a window under a rowlock course lintel and then bricked up for the Dining Room wall.

Description – External – Music Room



Page | 24

The 1939 Music Room in context with the House.



The east elevation.

The elevations are formed from Fletton brickwork coated with a thick cement based render which has suffered cracking and water ingress.



Detail of the render on the east elevation with serious cracks.



The windows and half door on the east elevation.

There is a long passage in the 1947 Country Life Magazine that details the history of the Music Room and its design and fabric. The windows and interior date from 1927 and were removed from the Music Room at Cothay Manor, Somerset when Col. R. Cooper sold it and the new owners converted it to bedrooms. See article following.

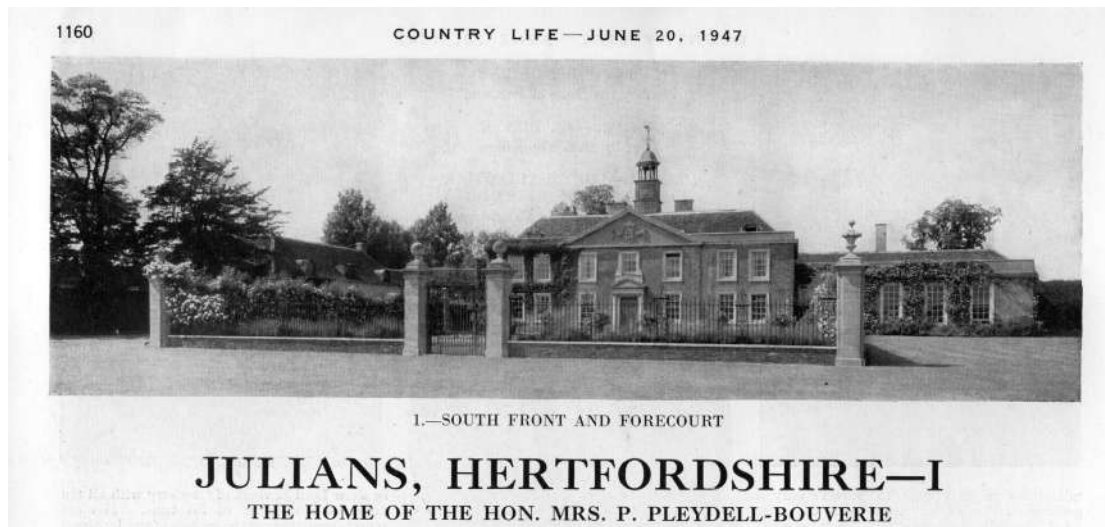
But in the case of Julians the origin of the big room goes back to Col. Cooper's occupation of Cothay, an early mediæval manor house of limited accommodation. After Cothay was illustrated in COUNTRY LIFE an identical room to this one was added, for the reasons given, which, when the house was sold, the new owner determined to convert into bedrooms, etc. The big sash windows

and internal fittings thus became available for re-use, and it so was possible to reproduce the room exactly at Julians. In each location it was a very handsome apartment, with five lofty windows (in this case a sixth in one end, Fig. 9), coved ceiling, a full length Lely portrait surrounded by carving above the chimney-piece, and the great softly hued Brussels tapestries. At Julians its extent also served to balance the outbuildings to the east, as seen from the front. But it was always a room added for particular requirements and, since her acquisition of the house during the war, Mrs. Pleydell-Bouverie has used it for storage, and it is unfurnished.

It was wisely decided not to try to regiment the undisciplined north side of the house where the big staircase window, the bay window of the dining-room, and the old yew hedge screening the outbuildings made any prospect of achieving a balanced design, short of complete rebuilding, out of the question.

1947 Country Life Magazine. Christopher Hussey.

Description – External – Forecourt and Claire Voie



Page | 27

1947. The forecourt at Julians Park.



The added curved plinth, pillar and railings.

The structure of the courtyard, laid out in 1937-9 by Colonel Cooper, is based on the court shown in Chauncy's engraving of 1700, which had disappeared by the late C19 (OS 1883).

The forecourt railings have been extended to the east and west since 1947. The newer railings have extra horizontal bars and scrolls between each vertical railings.



The west end of the railings with added curved section.



Looking W along the terrace wall.



Detail of the Fletton brickwork.

Description – Internal – Music Room



Page | 29

Looking NE after entering the Music Room from the Atrium.



Looking E in the Music Room.

It is worth reviewing the Music Room because it sets the standard of décor and fabric for the rest of the House. As noted above the Music Room was built in 1939 using reclaimed materials from a building of 1927. All the panels are made from plywood and hardboard with machine made mouldings and the elegant columns are timber replicas of period styles with Ionic capitals with embellished volutes.



The green marble fire surround is a reclaimed piece.

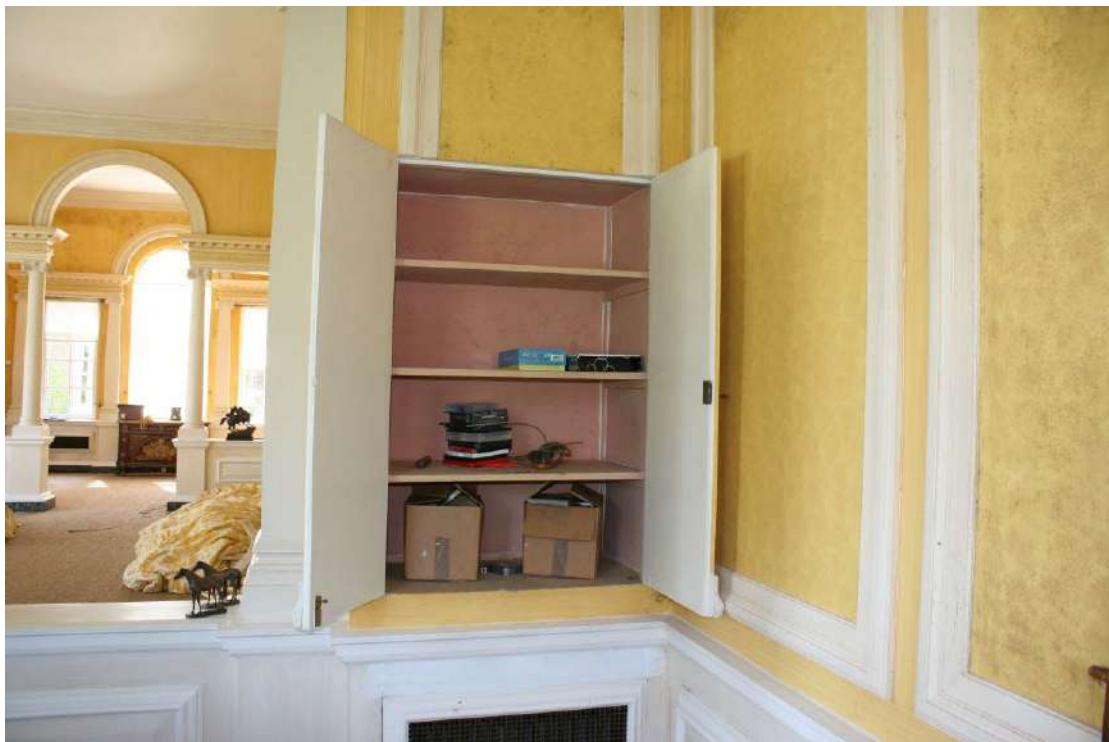


Detail of the fire surround, moulded beads and architraves. Central heating control.

The fireplace is noted in the 1947 Country Life Magazine article as having a carved overmantel with a full length Lely portrait which is now removed. Sir Peter Lely (1618 – 1680) was a Dutch painter famous for portraits. The room is outfitted with central heating which has outlet ducts built into the pedestals of the columns.



Looking NW in the Snooker Room.

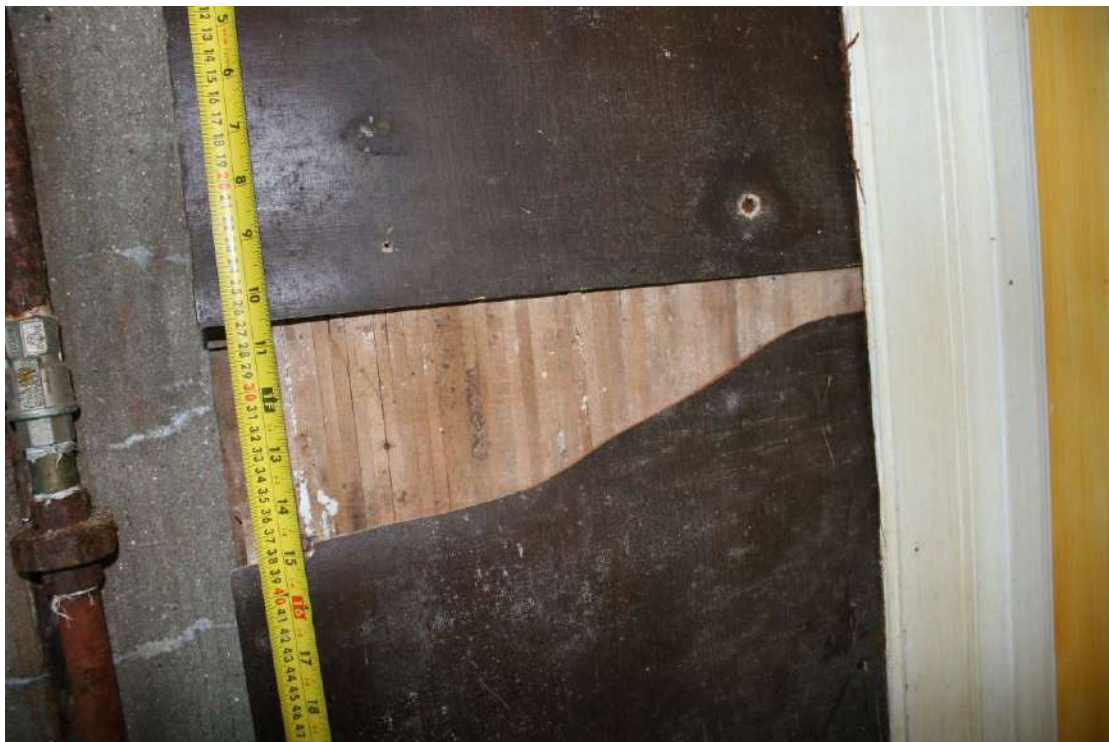


There are closets built in to the false walls at both ends of the room.

The dividing partitions are hollow and are fitted with closets. At the east end the room is outfitted with a snooker table (rather than billiards) and the closets still contains the set of snooker balls. The score board and snooker cue rack are still on the walls. These are all LC20th fittings.



Removed panel in the SE corner.



Detail of the plywood sheathing and insulation sheet hidden under the hardboard surface.

A panel has been removed in the SE corner to access a buried water valve which is late C20th or EC21st and this shows the construction details of the walls which are decorated with painted hardboard sheets fixed on battens applied over a linoleum type insulation sheet which is fixed to a plywood sheet which is presumably applied to battens on the Fletton brick wall.



The wall panels on the NW corner wall looking N are loose.



Detail of the suspended pine floor.

The wall panels on the NW corner wall are loose due to the fixings failing from water ingress and a comprehensive renovation is require. There is a panel cut in the suspended pine floor for access to the services and the Fletton brick piers can be seen with typical vent holes along their length.



The entrance door is disguised as part of the panelling.

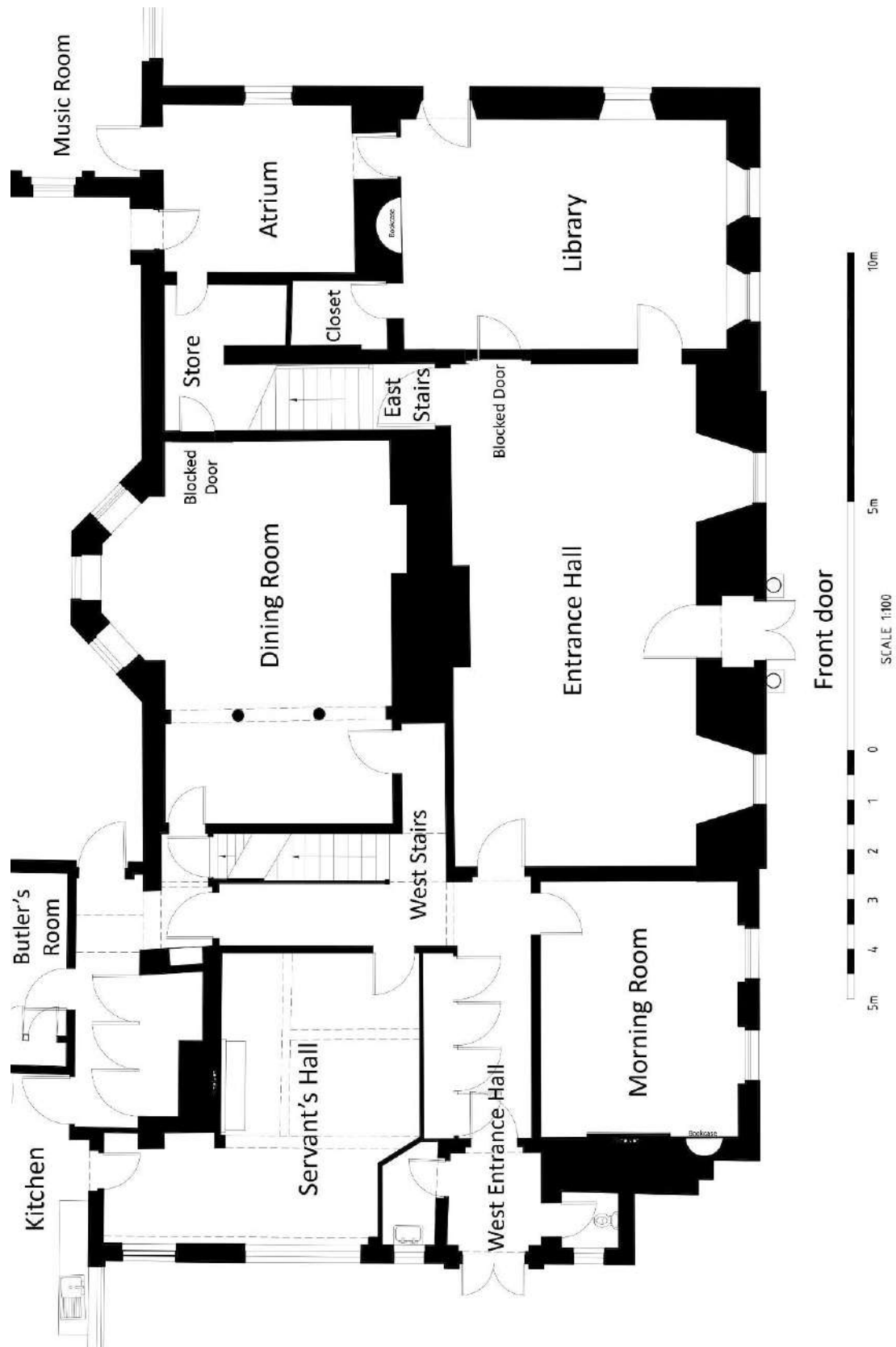


Water pipes concealed in the pelmet.

Features of interest are the corner door disguised as part of the panelling and water pipes concealed in the architraves, hollow walls and pelmets as part of the heating system. The House has an integrated water heating system with some interesting 1939 period radiators normally seen in industrial settings.

Description - Interior – Ground Floor

Page | 35



2023 Ground floor plan of the House.



Looking N in the Atrium towards the Music Room. Note the door to the Store.



The marble tiled floor of the Atrium.

Atrium

The Atrium was created in 1939 and has some reclaimed stone doorcases with open tympanum hoods. The beautiful marble floor has been recently restored.



Looking W in the Store. Note the blockwork insertion and the very old door.



Looking E in the Store. The Atrium wall is made from Flettons set in cement.

Store

The Store shows the MC20th construction materials with a Fletton wall forming the Atrium and a blockwork insertion to create a closet. A vertically boarded door is hung on pintles against the west wall.



The upper part of the vertically boarded door in the Store.



Detail of the bolt on the vertically boarded door.

The vertically boarded door is stiffened with nailed on ledgers and hung on pintles with broad, hand wrought pintle hinges with arrow headed terminals. There is an interesting lock plate fixed with wrought iron nails which can be operated by hand or with a key from the other side. The doorway is blocked and would lead into the Dining Room. The door has been battened across for shelving and has a light fitting screwed to it. The door is likely C17th and part of the original building dated to 1610. However, it is now a relic and out of place.



Looking N in the Library.



Looking S in the Library.

Library

Created by Col. R Cooper in 1939 the walls are lined with contemporary shelves with variable height brackets set in brass strips. In the north wall is a barrel backed display cabinet that has lost its glass fronted doors. To the left of the cabinet is a secret door built into the shelving for a hidden closet.



The upper part of the display cabinet.



The lower shelves and doors are MC20th additions.

The display cabinet is of a type popular in the C18th and EC19th and was used to display glassware and decanters behind glass doors which could be locked. Some variations had solid doors painted for display when opened. The upper barrel backed part is authentic to the C18th but the lower shelves and doors are from 1939. Probably installed by Cooper.



Looking W in the Grand Entrance Hall.



Looking E in the Grand Entrance Hall.

Grand Entrance Hall

The Grand Entrance Hall is designed to the symmetrical tastes of the Georgian period with four matching doors in each corner, two of which have been blanked off. The six panel doors have open tympanum doorcases and wide moulded architraves. There are arched door heads and doors into the Dining Room (blocked) and East Staircase. The panelled walls are in pristine condition and have either been refinished or more likely are part of the 1939 works. The green marble fire surround also show no appreciable wear and the marble chequerwork floor has been recently restored. Underneath is a reinforced concrete floor from 1939.



Detail of the doors to the West Entrance Hall and Dining Room (now blocked). Looking W.



The west side of the Hall West Entrance Hall door.

Interestingly, the doors have Victorian brass lock boxes which are unusually set on the outside of the rooms. This would mean they could be locked from the Hall using the thumb slider without the need for a key, locking someone in the rooms. There are two arched doorways leading to the main East Staircase and to the Dining Room. The six panel door to the West Entrance Hall is undecorated on the west side and the design and fabric indicates it is a genuine C18th door.



Looking W in the Morning Room.



Looking NE in the Morning Room.

Morning Room

Named on the 1939 Services Plan, the Morning Room lacks any real ostentation and has mean skirting and covings and no plaster features. There is an elegant grey veined bolection moulded marble fire surround but the fireback is made of large sheets of ribbed metal and must be from 1939. Adjacent is an Art Deco barrel backed cabinet.



Detail of the marble fire surround. The cabinet is a secure gun cabinet.



Detail of the glass barrel backed cabinet.

The fire surround is very likely a reclaimed Georgian bolection moulded surround as it lacks a Victorian style mantel shelf (which has been added with a thin slip of timber). The display cabinet echoes the one in the Library but is made of glass and modern machined components and was not equipped with doors for security. Out of place in a Morning Room is a gun locker set in a wooden cabinet. In this room the matching brass lock box is on the inside of the door.



Detail of the lock box in the Morning Room.



Detail of the lock box to the Library.

The suite of locks on the ground floor have some intriguing features. The brass lock boxes are engraved with a variety of acanthus swirls and have thumb slides with smaller turned knobs (missing in the Morning Room). The Morning Room lock has an elegant drop handle which has an exact pair on the mortice lock in the Atrium door added by Cooper in 1939. It is likely they are all reclaimed or replica items.



Looking W in the West Entrance Hall.



Looking W in the West Entrance Hall at the inner door.

West Entrance Hall

The West Entrance Hall sits in the oldest part of the House, which extends north towards the Kitchen. One side is the wall common with the Morning Room but the north side is equipped with a series of coat closets put in place as part of the 1939 works. They have machined softwood battens and in places there are redundant terminals for electrical wiring. Of interest is the horizontally boarded inner door which appears C18th or earlier.



Older timber post inside the closets.



Detail of the construction of the closets with 1939 period electrical terminals.

Inside the SE corner of the closets is a much older timber post that sits in line with the west range and is part of an early frame. Other parts of the frame are visible in the Servant's Hall. The electrical terminals are marked Main Bedroom, Stair Heads & Flower Room, GRD Floor only. A terminal box has been removed TR Blue, R Orange, T Green, Spare. A period grey metal power switch remains but the wiring has been cut.



The inner door has been plated over to look Georgian. Detail of the cast iron lock box.

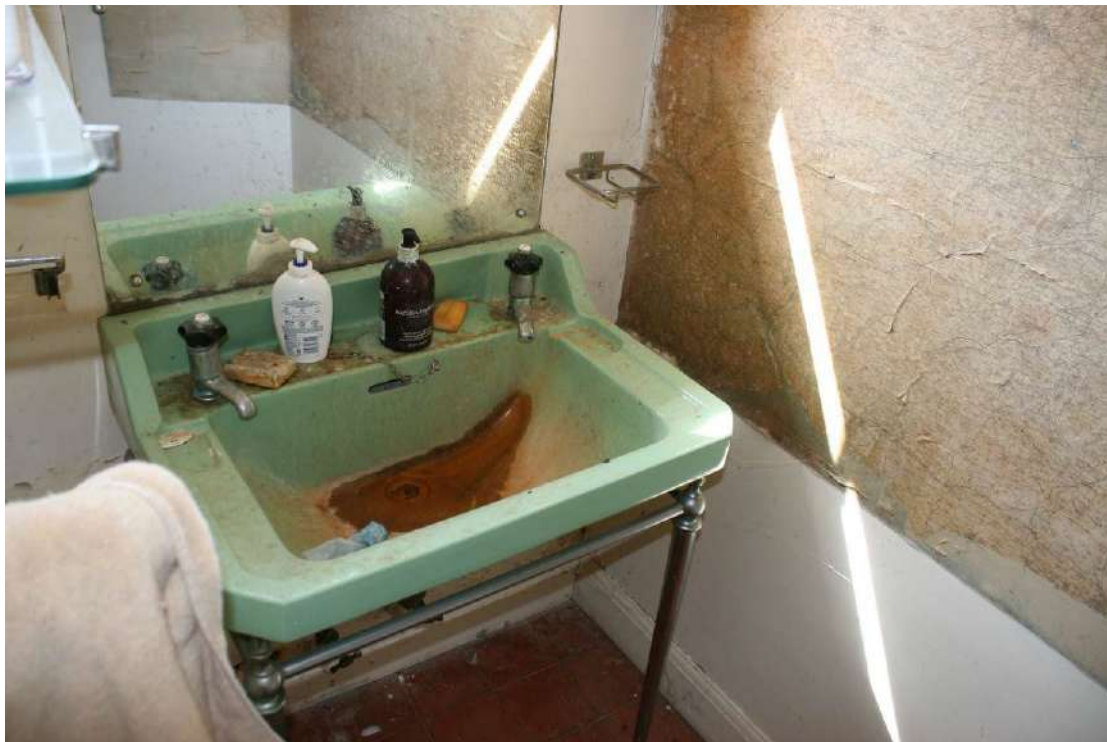


The worn stone threshold by the west door.

Of interest is the horizontally boarded inner door which appears C18th or earlier. The inner door is hung on IL hinges nailed to the frame with wrought iron rose headed nails dating it to before 1800 and probably before 1760 when screws were more easily available. There is a cast iron Georgian era lock box and a later slide bolt. The door also has a Suffolk latch to allow it to be opened from both sides. The threshold is made from worn and time polished stone slabs and indicate the West Entrance was long established before 1939 when a WC and Wash Room were put in either side.



WC on the south side of the entrance lobby.



1939 period wash basin on the north side of the entrance lobby.

The WC and Wash Room contain 1939 period fittings with a Bolding pan and cistern and a typical square style wash basin. There is only one toilet facility on the ground floor.



Looking S in the Servant's Hall from the Kitchen.



Looking SE in the Servant's Hall. Note the ceiling beams.

Servant's Hall

Noted on the 1939 heating system plan as the Servant's Hall, this room connects the Kitchen and Butler's Pantry to the rest of the House. There are exposed and boxed in beams in the ceiling that indicate an earlier timber-frame but the other features date to the 1939 refit. There is a four panel Victorian style door with a pressed steel lock box and brass knob.



Looking NW at the axial main joist and bridging joist for the firestack bay.



MC20th fireplace selected from a catalogue.

The volume of the earlier frame can be seen in the ceiling where there is a main axial joist and a bridging joist for a smoke bay in which the very large firestack now sits. The small fireplace is one selected from a catalogue for the 1939 refit and was a popular type in the period. The other side of the firestack retains the original wide open fireplace with its original bressummer still in place. This is detailed in the report on the Kitchen and now is fitted with cupboards.



Detail of one of the boxes containing the 1939 plumbing.



Detail of the 1939 stopcocks. One takes water from the well in the garden.

The House has an extensive water and heating pipe system hidden in boxes and cabinets. Each stopcock (large tap) is numbered with a metal disc and there is a handwritten Services Plan for the Kitchen that shows those in the Servant's Hall as *No1 Cold water service from the well – shuts of whole cold supplies* and *No2 Controls supply to Cottages*.



The front and rear of the Servant's door into the West Staircase Hall.



Electrical cabinet with modern heating controls.

There is a traditional leather bound 'Green Door' in four panel Victorian style that connects the service rooms with the West Staircase Hall. The service side is covered with green baize. There is a 1939 period Yale closer complete with a slot cut into the wall to allow it to operate. Set into the side of the firestack is a cabinet to house the electrical controls for the heating system which are now modern digital units.



Looking N at the West Staircase.



Detail of the newel post and spindles.

Described in the 1952 Listing as *Early C18 dog-leg secondary staircase with slightly bulbous balusters, closed string, moulded handrail*. The staircase has a heavy square newel post and exposed pine wall panelling. The carcase and the passage wall are also panelled with C17th style panelling. The staircase ascends to the Attic rooms.



The soffit of the West Staircase. Looking SE.



The back of the West Staircase panelling with C20th reinforcements to the staircase.

The carcase panelling is made from oak and is likely also EC17th but it is clear that it has been resited, probably when the staircase was repaired and reinforced in the 1939 works. Bandsawn softwood supports have been added and the panels moved.



Looking W from under the West Staircase into the Dining Room.



Looking SE in the Dining Room.

Dining Room

The Dining Room has some original C18th features with timber columns and flat pilasters against the walls painted to resemble marble supporting a heavy ceiling beam on Ionic capitals. The six panel Georgian style door leads into the Grand Entrance Hall and there is a more modest four panel Victorian door into the servant's passage.



Looking W in the Dining Room.

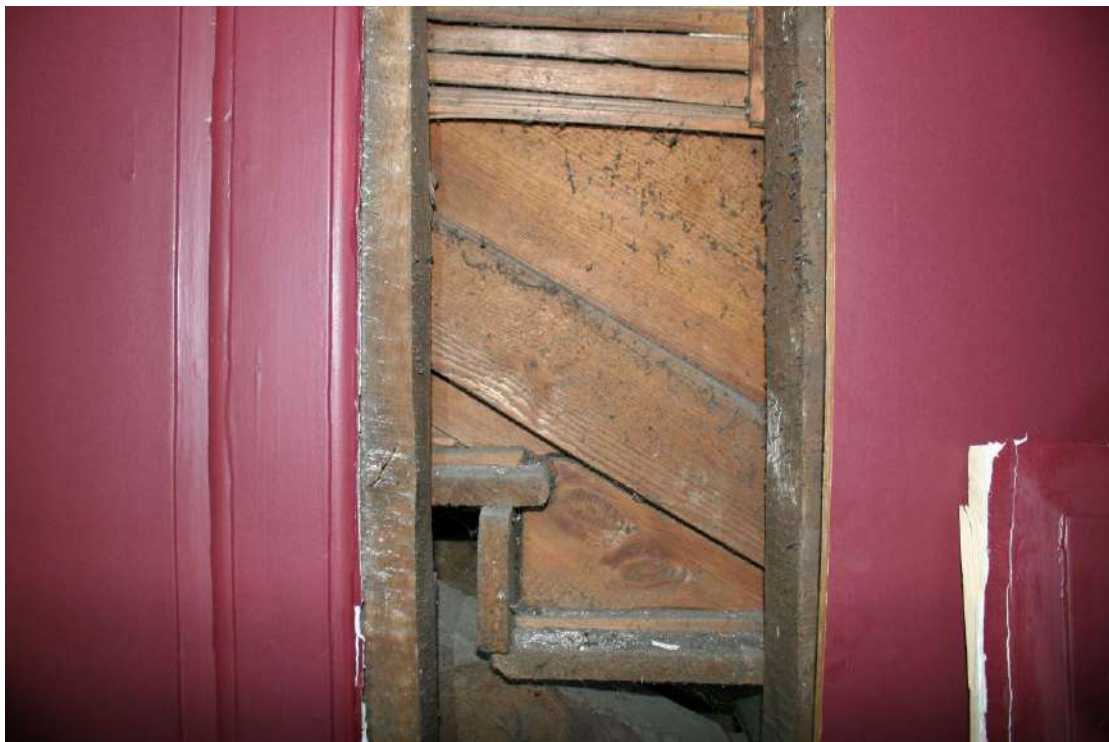


Detail of the marble fire surround and timber mantel shelf.

The room is panelled with large, fielded panels and wainscotting all of which fit correctly. There is a wide fireplace with an 'eared' grey marble fire surround and C18th style timber mantle with a central plaque and modillions to the mantel shelf. Like the other fireplaces the back has been sheathed with cast iron plates as part of the 1939 works and show little wear.



Looking E in the Dining Room. A panel has been removed.

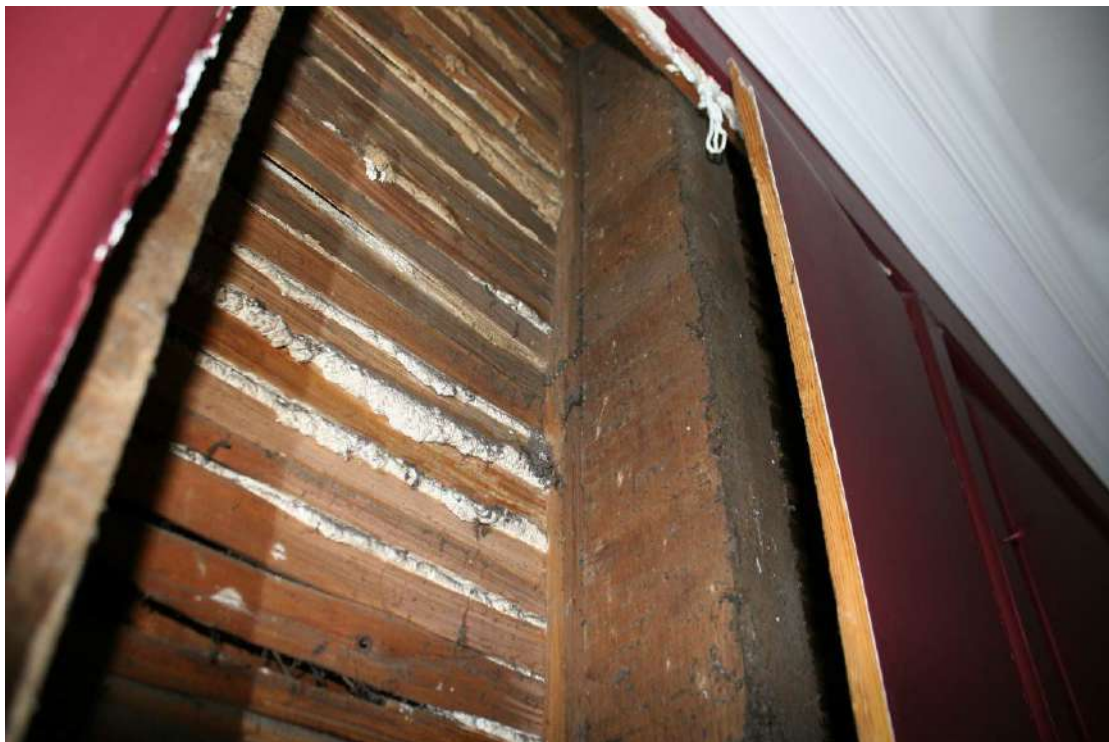


Detail of the side of the East Staircase and wall studs.

One of the wall panels was removed to reveal the side of the East Staircase. This shows the string, risers and treads to be made of clean, fresh machined pine. The walls studs are also softwood but are greyed with age and bear saw marks from a powered reciprocating saw rather than being pitsawn.



Detail of the bearer for the East Staircase and older riven laths.



Detail of the cedar laths above the stair treads and the machine cut studs.

There is an early bearer under the staircase of aged oak and section of older lath and plaster with grey lime plaster snots. Above the stair treads, the laths are made from riven cedar and have clean white snots where the wall has been thickly replastered. The panels are made from tongue and grooved clean pine, machine mouldings and plywood sheets.



Looking W in the Dining Room bay window.



Detail of the shutter in the Dining Room Bay window.

The bay window is a LC19th addition and has well made shutters with iron shutter bars with turnbuckles and H hinges on the folding section. They are designed so that a narrow shutter can be opened to give light without the whole shutter being drawn back. The fielded panels match those on the walls and it can be concluded that the panels are either LC19th or from 1939. C20th cast iron radiators are set under each 6/6 sash window which are LC20th replacements.

Description – Internal – First Floor



Page | 61

The East Staircase accessed from the Grand Entrance Hall. Looking NE.



Looking N up the West Staircase.

East Staircase

This described in the 1952 Listing. *Interior: early C18 dog-leg staircase, barley twist and fluted colonnette balusters arranged 2 to 1, fluted colonnette newels, open string with cheek pieces, moulded ramped handrail, dado panelling.*



Recesses in the wall for the lock box and knob for the folding doors. (Now removed).



Hasp for a door bar and catch for a Suffolk latch.

It was seen in the Dining Room that the string, treads and risers have been replaced with machined softwood. There is a hasp for a door bar and catch for a Suffolk latch and on the other side recesses in the wall for the lock box and knob for the folding doors described in VCH 1912 and probably removed by 1952. None of the records mention the wall paintings.



Trompe l'oeil wall painting by Martin Battersby in 1952. West Wall.



Trompe l'oeil wall painting by Martin Battersby in 1952. East Wall.

All the walls and ceiling have been decorated with Trompe l'oeil wall paintings by Martin Battersby in 1952. They depict various aspects of life associated with Mrs Pleydell-Bouverie (Audrey Evelyn James Coats) and have a certain air of Salvadore Dali, with whom the lady was acquainted.



The ceiling has water damage.



The east wall has serious cracking in the render.

From the fabric seen in the Dining Room it can be assessed that the render on the walls is either from 1939 or later, perhaps 1952 when the paintings were made. There are some deep and extended cracks in the render and the ceiling paper has peeled off due to water ingress from leaking bathroom fixtures above.

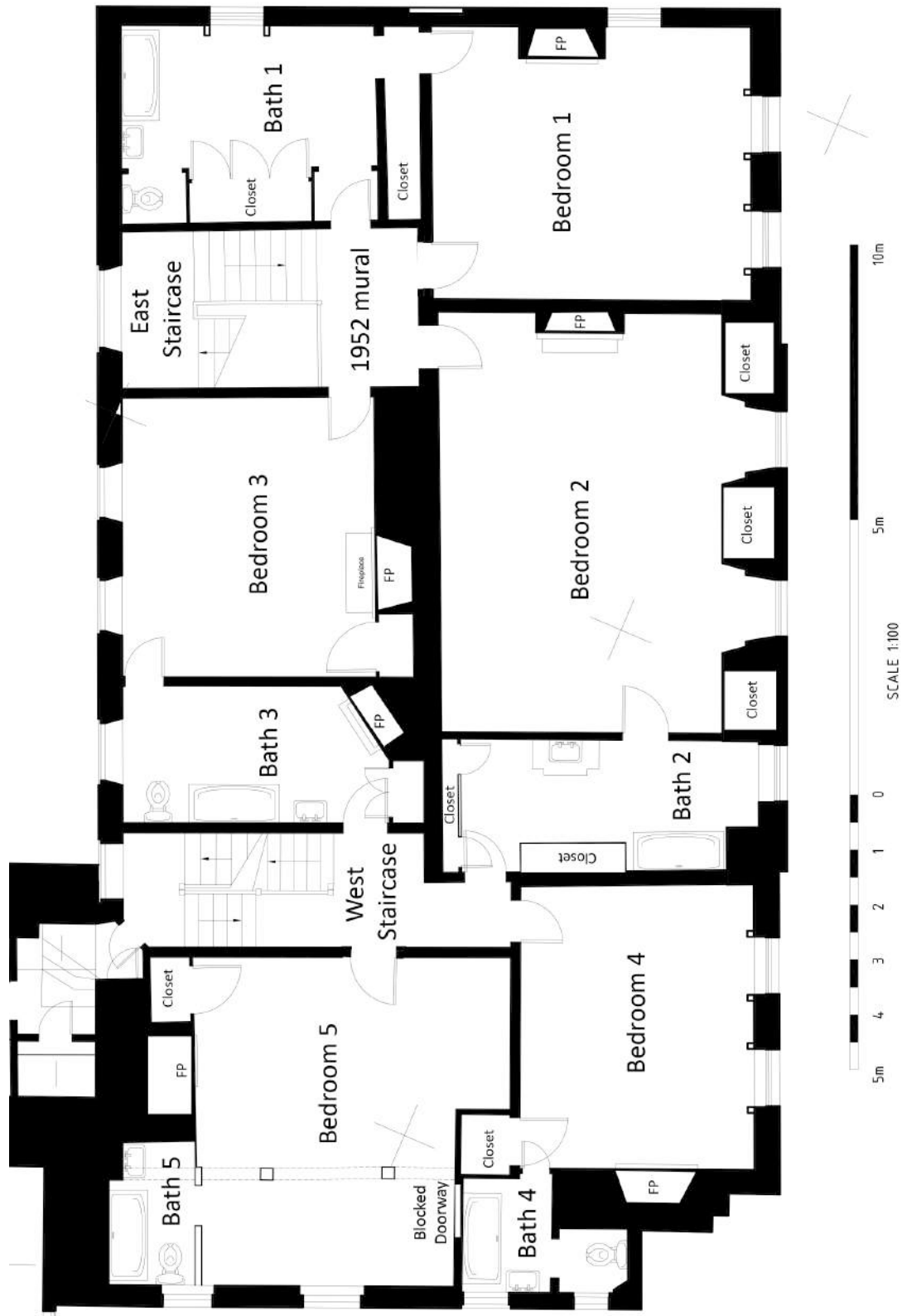


Deep visible crack in the east wall.



The work is signed with a painted label.

The mural is signed by Martin Battersby and dated 1952 and was one of his earliest mural commissions, his first being in 1950 for Lady Diana Duff Cooper. George Martin Battersby (12 February 1914 – 3 April 1982) was a British artist and theatrical set decorator who became an expert on Art Nouveau and the style of the 1920s and 1930s.



2023. First floor plan.



Looking N in Bath 1.



The glass fronted wardrobes conceal custom made valet drawers.

Bathroom 1

Bathroom 1 can be entered from the Landing and from Bedroom1 which also has a doorway on the Landing. This may have been for the convenience of the servant's to access the valet.



Elegant, fitted shelves in the glass fronted wardrobes.



Original 1939 Art Deco style avocado sanitary wares.

Bathroom 1 is decorated to 1939 standards and has Art Deco style avocado sanitary wares original to 1939. The wash basin matches that in the Wash Room by the West Entrance on the ground floor. There is a set of glass fronted wardrobes concealing custom made valet drawers and hanging rails. The walls are plainly finished as part of the 1939 refit.



Looking SW in Bedroom 1.



Looking NE in Bedroom 1.

Bedroom 1

Bedroom has panelled walls with large, smooth, plain fields and a panelled wainscot. Comparing the design to the rest of the House, where the panels are seen to be of hardboard or Essex board it is assessed that the fabric is of 1939. The fireplace has a handsome grey veined marble surround and overmantel on console brackets and a cast iron plated fireback matching others put in as part of the 1939 works and is purely decorative as there is no firestack above or below it.



Looking E in Bedroom 2.



Looking W in Bedroom 2

Bedroom 2

Given its position at the front of the House it is expected that Bedroom 2 is the principal bedroom. Like all the rooms it has no great decorative features. The ceilings are very flat and plain with small covings and the skirtings are moulded but shallow. The panelled walls are of the 1939 works and the window splays are fitted with closets which show how the walls are constructed. The fireplace appears to be a 1939 addition and has no firestack above or below. The original fireplace was probably in the north wall and remains hidden.



Looking S in Bedroom 2. The radiators are in the window seats.



Closet containing the water cistern for the WC in Bathroom 2.

There a large number of features fitted into the walls that were put in during the 1939 works or later. There is a closet with fitted shelves, a hanging closet and a closet containing the cistern for the WC in Bathroom 2. In the hanging closet there is a vertical chain and spring with electrical connections for a front door bell.



Closet with fitted shelves.



A fragment of the earlier lath and plaster panels above the shelves.

Looking up in the closets there are fragments of the earlier lath and plaster panels and where there are electrical sockets and light switches the panels are made of hardboard or Essex board.



Plywood closet to conceal the cistern for Bathroom 2.



1939 original bidet and WC with original 1939 pipe work.

Bathroom 2

Bathroom 2 is a large well-appointed room with the luxury of a bidet, a feature not common in English homes as well as a WC with hidden cistern. The partition wall is inserted as part of the 1939 works as it is clumsily set against the window splay.



Looking S in Bathroom 2.



Looking N in Bathroom 2 at the fitted closets.

The room is outfitted for the use of a woman and has a wide marble topped basin useful as a dressing table. There is a set of fitted closets with gentle curved front and more conventional set of closets. A small remaining label is in French and notes – combinaisons.



The plywood and softwood timber carcase hiding the 1939 plumbing.



Detail of the leadwork pipes.

All the plumbing is hidden in plywood and machined softwood carcasses and boxing. The floor joists are also machined softwood but are much older and discoloured with age. There is a large baulk of timber that has been hacked back for the plumbing that may be older still.



Looking NW in Bedroom 3.



Looking SW in Bedroom 3.

Bedroom 3

Bedroom 3 is a panelled room with the same format as Bedroom 1. This room was outfitted as part of the 1939 works and the panels are made of plywood, hardboard and Essex board.



Looking E in Bathroom 3.



Looking N in Bedroom 3.

Bedroom 3

Outfitted as part of the 1939 works all the fabric is of that year except for the hob grate cast iron fireplace. The walls are clad with plywood and hardboard.



Water damaged hardboard panels concealing the lead water pipes.



Machined softwood carcase for the cast iron bath.

All the bathroom fixtures are of the period 1939 and the cast iron bath is marked Made in Britain 27. The square Art Deco basin is branded Bolding 'Julia' London. John Bolding & Sons Grosvenor Works were situated at 56-58 Davies Street, London from 1891 to 1969. They were manufacturers of high end sanitary appliances, brass founders and metal merchants.



Looking SW in Bedroom 3.



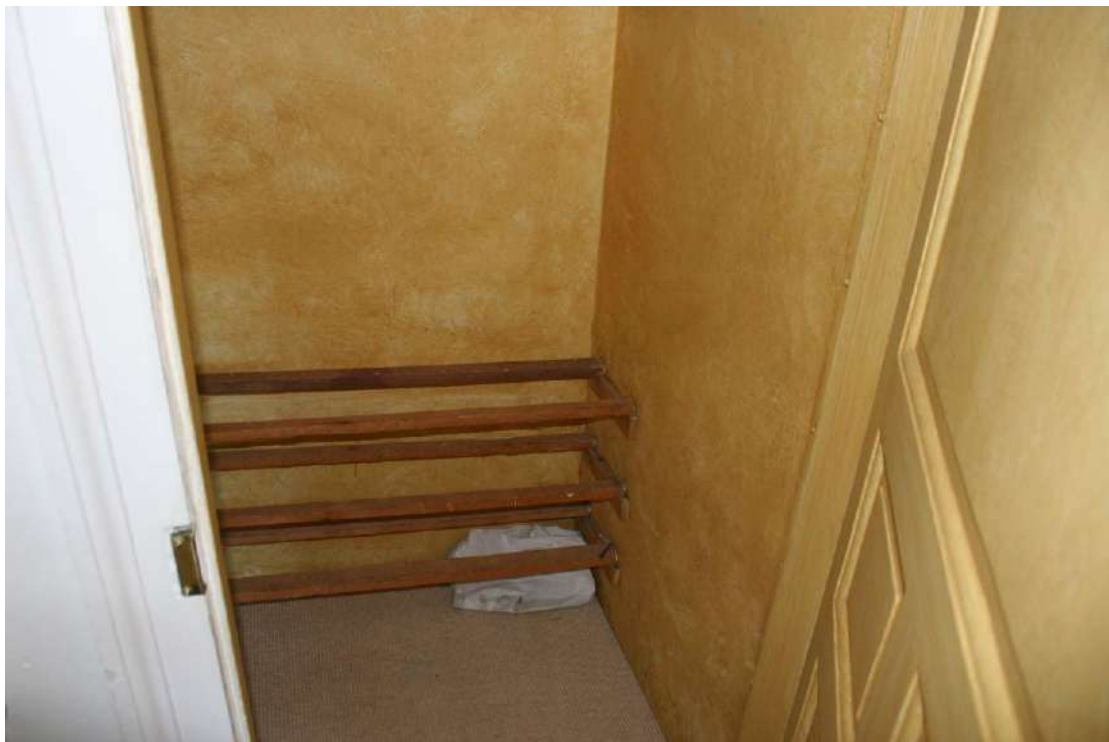
Looking E in Bedroom 3.

Bedroom 3

Bedroom 3 has a two panel door and so was probably for the staff and is on the service side of the House. The panelling appears to be the same as in the other rooms. There is a removable panel presumably to service the bath on the other side.



The fire surround and overmantel is resin fake.



The corner closet has a sponged paint effect.

There is a C18th style eared fire surround with a panelled overmantel also with ears and two small volutes. These are made of a resin compound which may be fibreglass. Again, the fireback has cast metal sheets. In the corner is a closet with a panelled door and a sponged paint effect inside. All these features are of 1939 or later.



Bathroom 4 looking W.



LC20th WC and cistern.



Blocked door from Bedroom 5 into Bathroom 4.

Bathroom 4

Bathroom 4 is concealed in the NW corner of Bedroom 4 but was originally accessed from Bedroom 5. The Georgian style panelled door is still in-situ in Bedroom 5. The bath and basin are from 1939 but the WC has been replaced in the LC20th.



Looking NW in Bedroom 5.



Looking SE in Bedroom 5.

Bedroom 5

Bedroom 5 is set in the older wing of the building and the upper wall has been removed and pillars inserted. The walls are all panelled the same as in the other rooms.



Looking NE in Bedroom 5 at the fireplace and closets.



C19th hat and coat pegs in the closet.

The fireplace has a flat grey marble surround of Art Deco style and all the panelling is cut to respect it. Of interest are the narrow closet doors which are 1/2/1 panel doors with brass lock boxes. Inside there is a batten with C19th style hat and coat pegs as well as a MC20th clothes rail.



Looking N into Bathroom 5.



1930's style bath and basin in Bathroom 5.

Bathroom 5

Bathroom 5 is outfitted with 1930's Art Deco style white bath and Bolding 'Julia' London basin.

Description – Internal – Attic Rooms



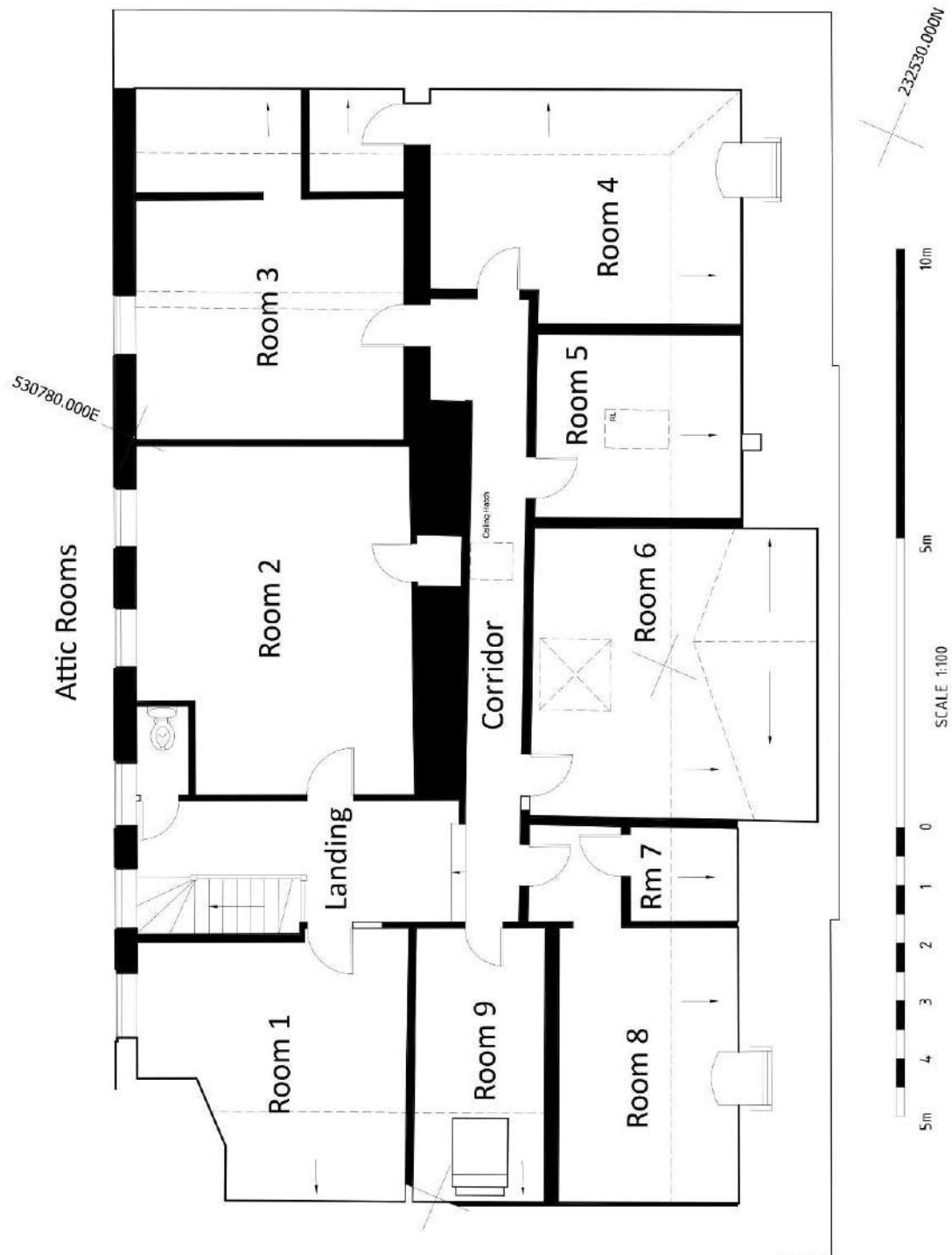
Page | 85

The West Staircase continues to the Attic floor reinforced with iron pillars.



Detail of the balusters at the top of the stairs.

The West Staircase continues up to the Attic floor. An iron pillar has been added to support the upper floor but the balustrade was cut through to insert it.



2023. Attic Plan.



The Landing on the Attic floor.



Detail of the floor joists on the Attic Landing.

The Attic floor is made from straight cut softwood and has 3.5x4.75in joists set at 16in centres and those on the Landing appear mechanically cut rather than from a pitsaw. The floorboards are 10in wide pine boards with some narrower inserts. The ceiling below is old laths over boarded with Essex or plasterboards.



Looking W in Room 1.



Looking N in Room 1.

Room 1

Room 1 could have been a bedroom or sitting room as there is a corner fireplace (hidden by sheets in the photograph). It exhibits a waney roof purlin and is the oldest part of the House.



Looking S in Room 1.



Looking at the SE corner where the old bell pull wires ran.

Room 1 has a typical Georgian style two panel servant's door with a Bakelite knob and is part of a suite of doors on this floor.. This room was used by servants in the C19th as there is a wire guide for a servant's bell in the corner. These were replaced by electric wires in the C20th which were then painted over before being pulled out.



Looking E in Room 2.



Looking SW in Room 2.

Room 2

Room 2 was outfitted for staff use and the electric bell is still over the Landing door. A bathroom has been removed from the NE corner and some older wallpaper remains where the stud wall was added.



The floor has been water damaged where bath was fixed to the floor. Looking N.



The ceiling has been repaired and has plasterboard sheets.

Where the bathroom was situated, the bath has leaked and the floor is damaged. This may have contributed to the damage to the mural. The ceiling above is also damaged and there is a large repair section of recent plasterboard that replaces earlier plasterboard that may indicate an ongoing problem. The previous layer may well date to 1939. Period steel joists have been inserted to support the main timber joist.



Unusual industrial radiators are used on the Attic floor.



The small closet served as a pantry and coat cupboard.

The Attic is heated with unusual heavy duty industrial style slab radiators that may be military in origin. There is a small closet equipped with shelves covered with plastic patterned sheet and 20 cup hooks as well as coat or apron hooks. This looks like a small pantry for the staff.



Looking N in Room 3.



Looking S in Room 3.

Room 3

Room 3 was a bedroom and has a large walk-in closet. There is a boxed in ceiling joist indicating an inserted steel joist known to be in place. The two panel door has a wide doorcase but has a LC19th box lock. The walls are lath and plaster and have been stripped of their wallpaper. A wooden box duct is run along the west wall for pipes and electrical sockets.



Looking N in the closet of Room 3.



Looking S in the closet of Room 3.

The closet is a lightweight construction and most likely part of the 1939 works retaining an original clothes rail. A water pipe from the roof passes through the wall.



Looking S in Room 4.



Looking E in Room 4.

Room 4

Room 4 was a bedroom with a small closet in the NE corner. Extensive work has been done to the floor and the common joist are machine cut from softwood.



C20th steel joists parallel to a large oak joist.



LC19th box lock.

There are C20th steel joists set in the floor that run under the partition wall with Room 3. In Room 4 the two panel door appears to be MC20th copy with a Victorian box lock branded with a small brass plate Wolfeson Rawlett Patentees – Dieu et Mon Droit.



Looking S in Room 5.



Wooden closet in Room 5.

Room 5

Room 5 retains a 1939 set of wooden closets but the room is otherwise featureless. Two lights have been inserted.



Looking SE in Room 6.



Looking NE in Room 6. The cradle supports the 1939 clock tower.

Room 6

Room 6 is an unusual shape set under the tympanum part of the roof. In the north wall is a large timber cradle that supports the 1939 clock tower. There is a skylight directly above.



The industrial radiator in Room 7.



Two types of door lock.

The room has one of the industrial radiators and exposed pipework and a downpipe which seems unlikely to have been visible when first installed as all the other services are boxed in. The room originally contained water tanks feeding the exposed pipes. The four panel door is a MC20th copy of a Victorian door and has both a Victorian lock box and MC20th pressed steel lock.



Looking N into Room 7.



Detail of the LC20th and C21st pipework and MC20th studs and lath and plaster.

Room 7

Room 7 was probably an airing cupboard for water cylinders as part of the heating and hot water supply.



Detail of the machined softwood joists behind the studwork walls.



Detail of the roof structure with C20th red bracking marks.

The walls are lined with machined softwood studs and lath and plaster covered with a geometrical brown wallpaper. The laths are very clean but fixed with wrought iron nails and with bright white haired plaster are probably Victorian. Behind the studs, the ceiling joists are also made from machined softwood. The structure of the roof dates from the 1939 works by Col. R. Cooper (Country Life 1947) and the machined pine boards have red paint bracking marks. There is also a cotton backed asphalt membrane that indicates a roofing repair between 1965 and 1985. The ceiling panels are made from grey cement on EML mesh. Hussey notes that 'He (Cooper) substituted the old red tiles for slates on the roof' but he must have meant the opposite as the roofs all have red tiles.



Looking SW in Room 8.



Looking NE in Room 8.

Room 8

Room 8 is outfitted as a linen store with slatted shelves and the walls are lined with exposed pipes to keep the linen warm and dry.



Looking W in Room 9.



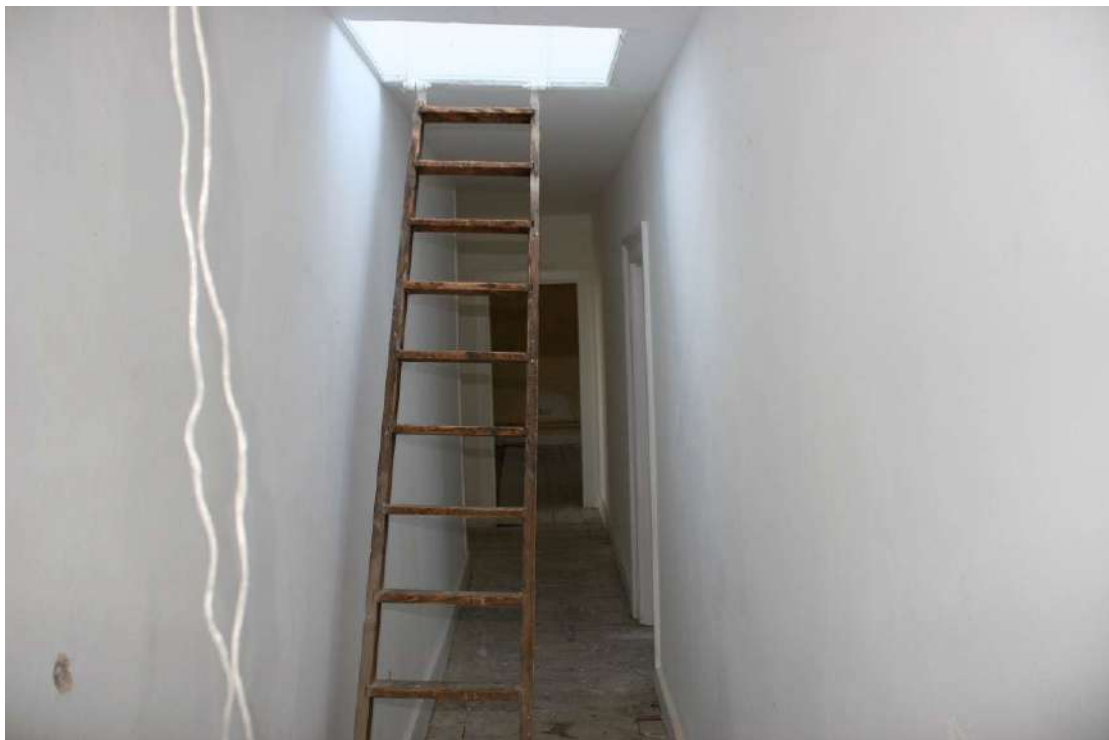
Looking E in Room 9.

Room 9

Room 9 is outfitted as a bathroom and retains a cast iron bath while all the other fittings have been removed. Modern plastic plumbing is connected to the 1939 system and the garish red decor is LC20th and passes behind the bath.



Looking E in the corridor.

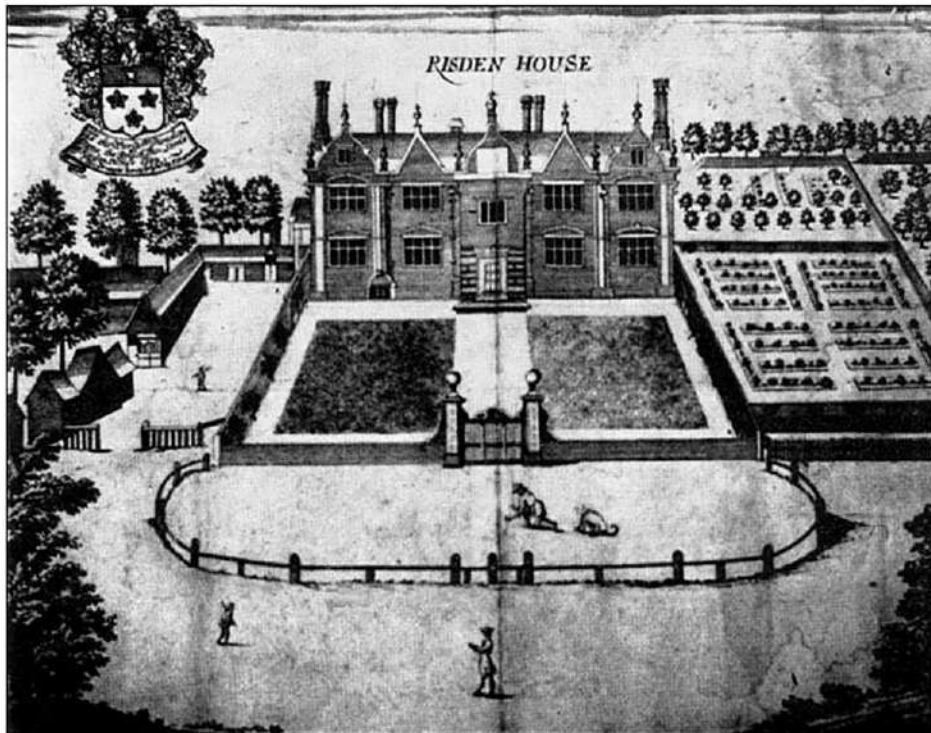


The ladder is set on a pulley and is used to service the clocktower.

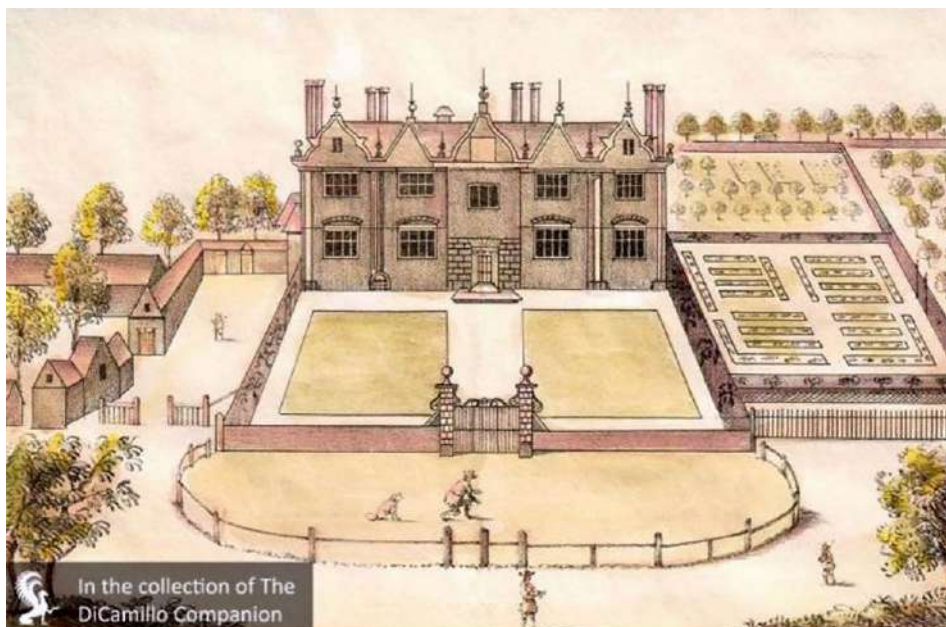
Corridor

The Corridor has a ladder with a cable pulley that can be used to service the clocktower but the climb is very difficult and means going outside the roof. The clock tower also houses a water tank for the central heating.

Historic Imagery



Risden House (now Julians) from Chauncy 1699 with the arms of Thomas Stone.
1699. The south elevation attributed to Thomas Stone.

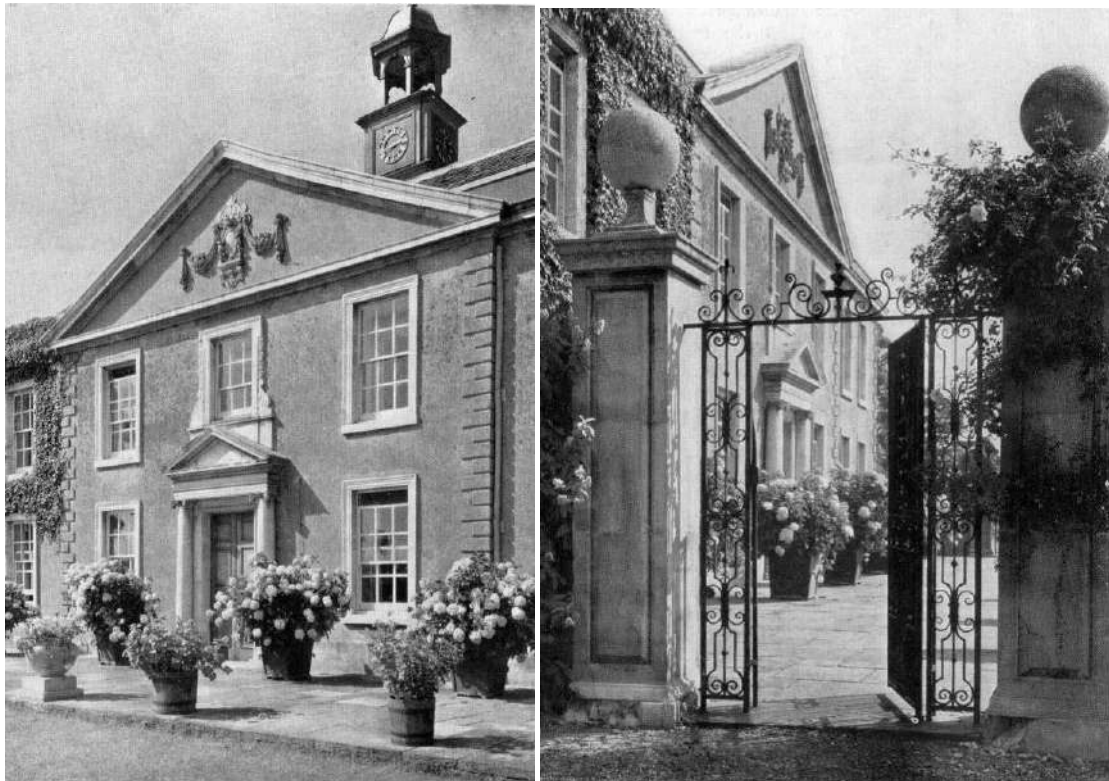


The house, as it appeared in the 17th century, from an 1826
hand-colored lithograph from "Historical Antiquities of
Hertfordshire."

1699 reworked in 1826 with different details and figures.



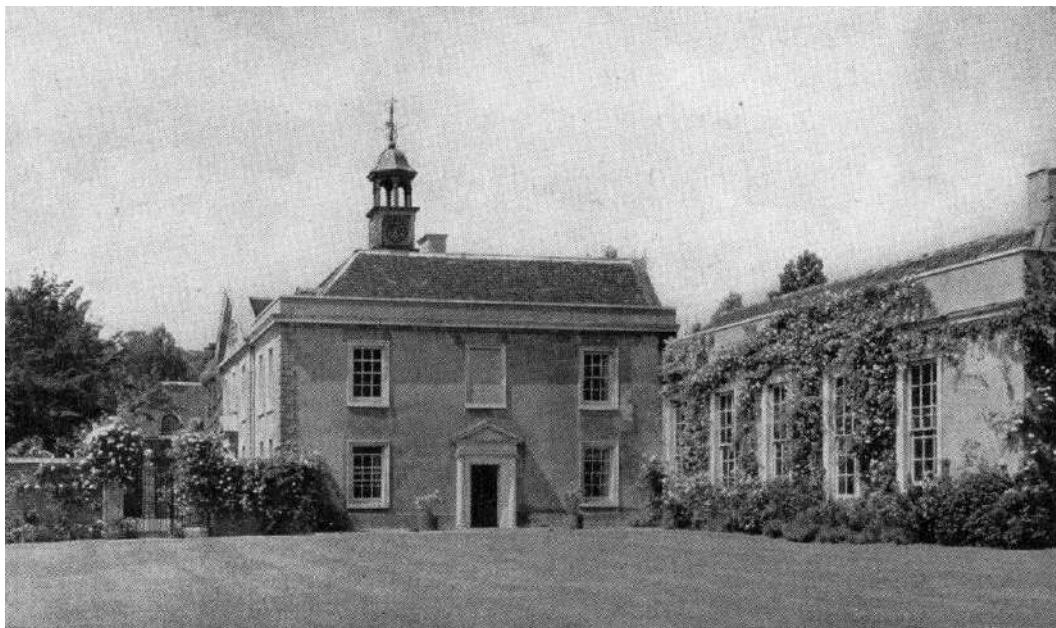
1947 Country Life. North elevation.



1947 Country Life. South elevation. Looking NW and then E.

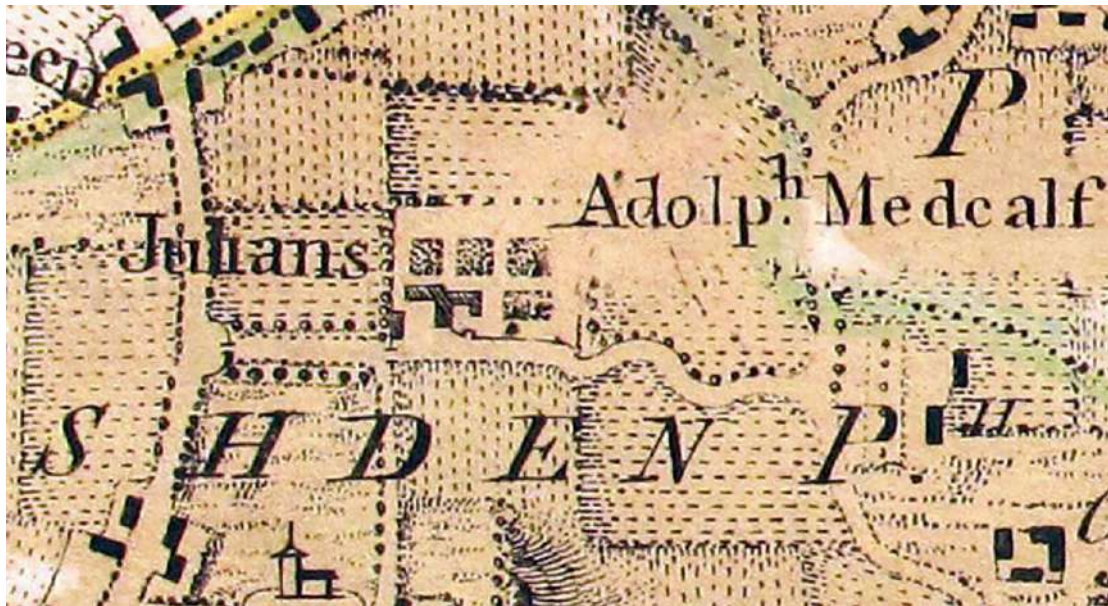


1947 Country Life. West elevation of the Music Room.



1947 Country Life. East elevation of the House and south elevation of the Music Room.

Topographical Survey from Maps



Page | 108

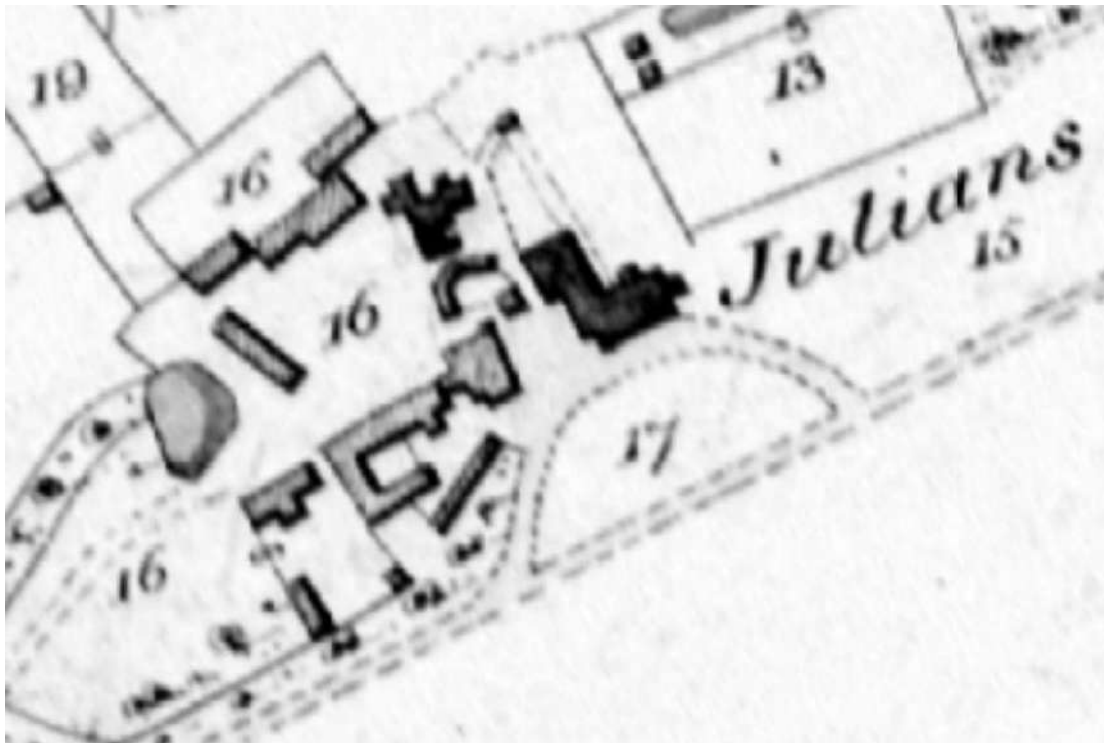
1777 Dury and Andrews Map of Hertfordshire.

The 1777 map does not concur well with the known form of Julians.



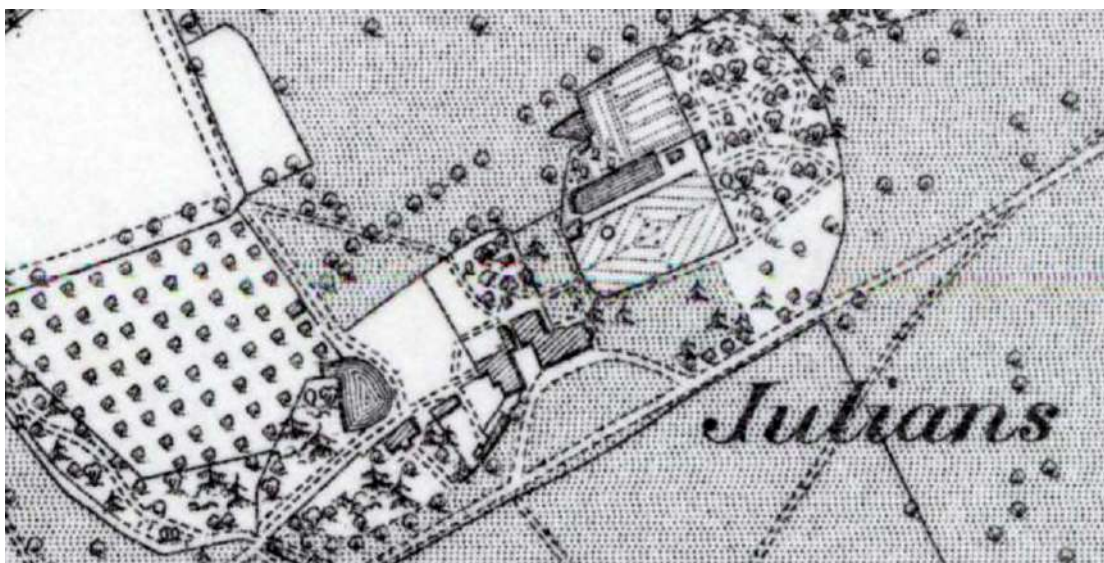
1805 Ordnance Survey.

The 1805 OS is known to more schematic than accurate but it does show the House in the correct disposition with the Kitchen wing and farm buildings.

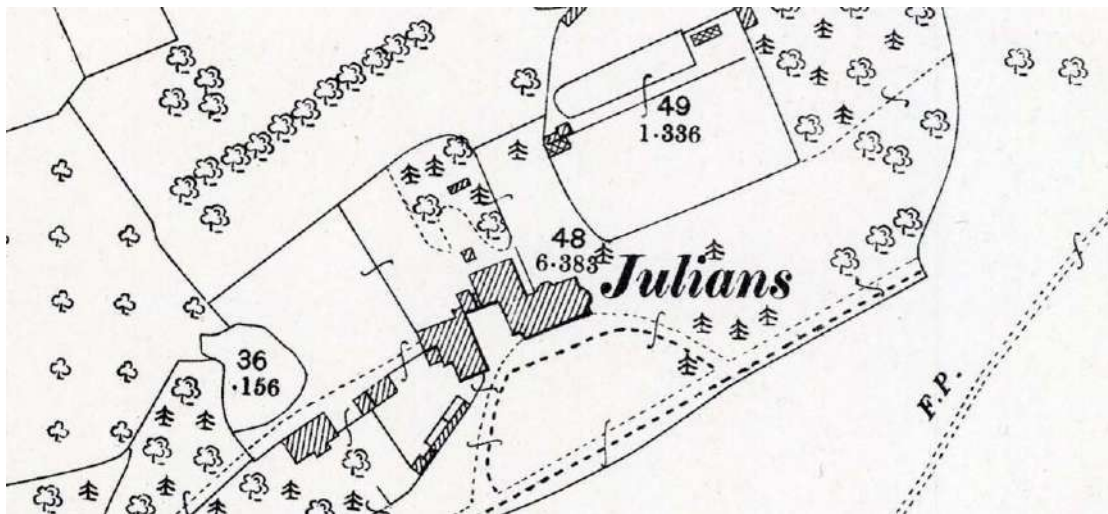


The 1845 Tithe Map for Rushden. IR29/15/81.

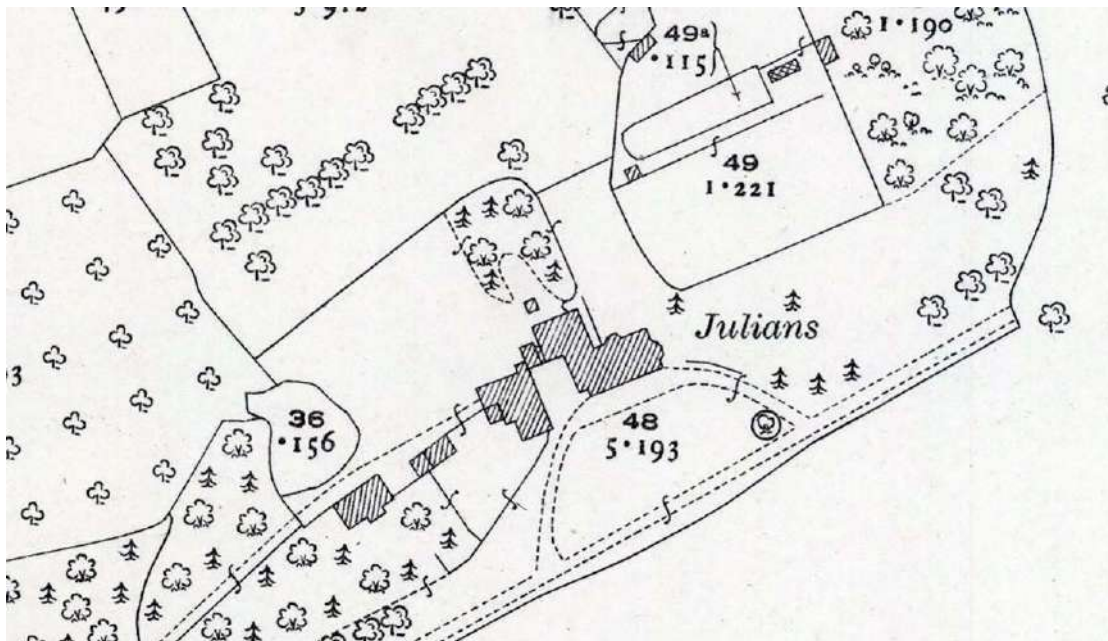
The site is Plot 16 Mansion Farm and Yards owned and occupied by Adolphus Meetkerke Esq. Plot 17 is Grass plot and indicates there was no formal garden in front of the House. Plots 12 and 13 were the Kitchen Gardens. *Royal National and Commercial Directory and Topography of Herts*, Pigot & Co., London, 1839 has Adolphus Meetkerke Esq as the Lord of the Manor of Baldock.



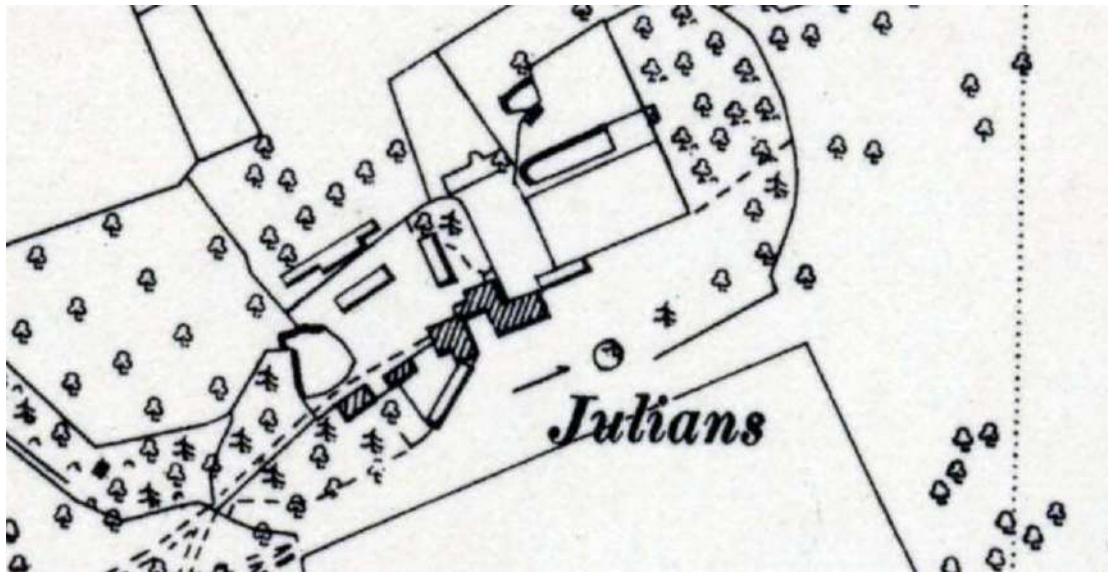
1877 Ordnance Survey Map.



1896 Ordnance Survey Map.

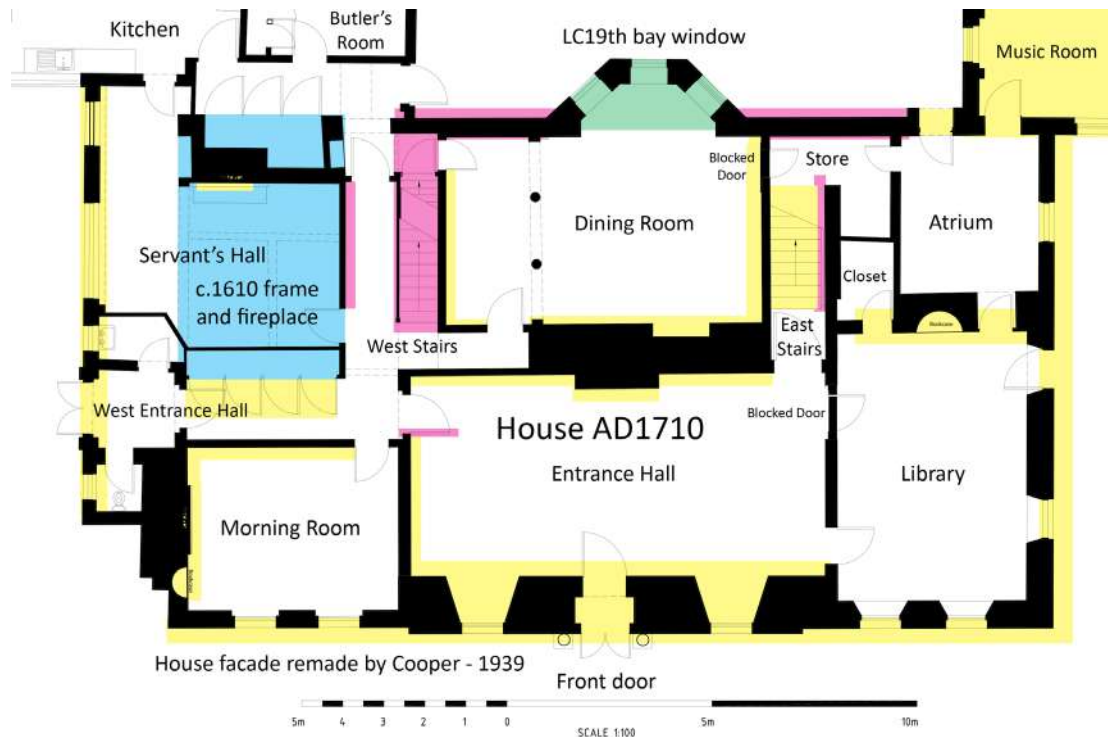


1922 Ordnance Survey Map.



1947 Ordnance Survey Map.

Phasing and Discussion



Page | 112

General Phase Plan showing area of activity.

Phase 1 – AD1605 or AD1610. Frame and fireplace from original house for Thomas Stone.

Julian's Park, formerly Riseden or Rushden, is believed to have been first put up in AD1605 for William Stone. The Victoria County History of 1912 has the date as AD1610. The only visible elements that could date to this period are the timber frame and large firestack seen in the Servant's Hall. The open side of the huge inglenook fireplace is to the north and has been closed in with closet doors. The south side has been closed up and a MC20th brick fireplace inserted. The C17th panels in the stairwell are all resited.

Phase 2 – AD1710. Adolphus Meetkerke remodels the House.

The Listing notes that Adolphus Metekerke, who had married Penelope Stone in 1699, remodelled the house c 1715. It also notes that Adolphus Meetkerke remodelled the house in c.1710. The Victoria County History of 1912 also notes; *The house was entirely recased about the beginning of the 18th century, but the old walls appear to have been left standing, so that the general arrangement of the house is very little changed.*

During the survey there was no evidence found of any structures earlier than the c.AD1710 walls and few features remain. The East Staircase is described as; *The staircase opens directly off the hall, and probably at one time formed a back projection, but considerable additions have been made to the house. The stair is a very good example of the Queen Anne period, with delicately twisted and fluted balusters and carved ends to the steps. The details are very similar to the stair at the Great House, Cheshunt, which belongs to the same period, though the arrangement of the returned ends of the steps is somewhat different. There are wide folding doors at the foot of the stair, to shut it off from the hall when desired.*

However, it can be seen that the treads and risers have been replaced in a later phase with machined softwood and only the balusters remain.

The West Staircase is complete and in original condition save for some supporting struts in the Cellar and cast iron pillars supporting the trimmer beams. It has very similar features to the East Staircase and is well described in the 1952 Listing: *Early C18 dog-leg secondary staircase with slightly bulbous balusters, closed string, moulded handrail*. What is not noted however is that the West Staircase ascends to the Attic floor which by deduction must have been established at the same time.

The Main Entrance Hall is noted as Neo-Georgian implying that it is a post 1880 re-imagining of the period. (Historic England – The Historic England Blog). The only feature easily identified as from c.1710 is the door from the West Entrance Hall into the Main Entrance Hall.

Phase 3 – LC18th Dining Room columns.

The 1952 Listing notes . *Late C18 panelling and columnar screen in dining room*. While the columns may well be of LC18th style and genuine items, the panels appear to have been replaced in the 1939 works and their modern construction is shown in the east wall where one was removed for access. The brickwork blocking the Dining Room window is set under a rowlock course and matches much of that used in the remodelling of the Kitchen walls by Cooper in 1939.

Phase 4 – LC19th Bay window. 1838 – 1877.

Mapping shows the bay window in place by the time of the 1877 OS map. The 1838 Tithe Map shows a much larger footprint and the wall above the bay window has been clumsily remade with white gault bricks where a two storey tower has been removed. The interior panelling and shutters appear original to this period but the sash windows have been either very skilfully renovated or, more likely , replaced.

Phase 5 – 1937 -1937. Col. R. Cooper remodelling of Julians.

Col. R. Cooper, known as Reggie Cooper, made his architectural name when he renovated Cothay Manor which featured in Country Life in 1927. He was a personal friend of Christopher Hussey, a notable architectural historian, who wrote the articles on Cothay Manor and on Julian's Park in 1947. The articles are written almost as anecdotes but do give accurate details of the work undertaken by Cooper and detail the immense amount of restoration (by way of complete replacement) undertaken.

Of most importance for analysing the fabric is the Music Room that Cooper added in 1939. The windows and interiors were actually robbed out of Cothay Manor where they had been installed in 1927 as new fabric and the patterns used throughout the rest of the house. Nealy all the fine looking panelling is made from plywood and hardboard with machined mouldings to create the fields.

The June 20th 1947 Country Life Magazine article states:

These and all the features that give character to the present elevation (south) are due to Col. Cooper. He substituted the old red tiles for slates on the roof, (this cannot be true) put up the belfry and clock, introduced the cartouche with the arms of Metekerke into the pediment, provided all the windows with Portland stone entablatures, gave the front its cornice, substituted the present front door entablature for the old one, which was slightly smaller and which he moved to the east side.

Page | 114

He also formed the forecourt with wrought iron claire-voie and gateway, the latter a contemporary example hung between suitably designed piers.

Internally, nearly all the visible fabric can be assigned to the 1939 works. The fireplaces, marble floors, panelled walls, plasterboarded ceilings, built in closets, quality bathroom fittings and their pipework and installations are all of 1939. It is a testament to the quality that they have remained in good working order.

All the windows have been replaced or renovated to an extent that they are no longer authentic and there is no historic glass panes or catches and stays.

Most of the doors have been replaced or renovated and it is noted in the Kitchen (separate report) that Cooper reused and rehung many of the older doors, often reversing them. It is a peculiar feature of the four Main Entrance Doors that the handsome brass lock boxes are on the wrong side of the doors. The Attic rooms have some LC19th lock boxes but in some rooms, they are doubled up with MC20th pressed steel locks.

Cooper installed the library, reused the top part of a genuine C18th barrel backed cupboard and also created the Atrium with its marble floor and stone tympanums over the doors.

Phase 6 – Post 1947 changes.

The June 20th 1947 Country Life Magazine article contains good quality photographs of the exterior that show that all the Attic windows on the north elevation have been changed since then.

The mural on the walls in the East Staircase was made by Martin Battersby in 1952.

The curved walls were added to the forecourt

Some of the bathroom fittings have been updated in the LC20th.

Significance

Julian's Park is Grade II* Listed building with a well-documented history tracing its ownership and development. It is a multi-phase building with origins in the first decade of the C17th of which only a small portion of the original frame and a large inglenook fireplace remain. The building was substantially changed in c1710 under the ownership of Adolphus Metekerke (MeetKerke). Today, nearly all of its visible fabric can be attributed to a refit finished in 1939 under the direction of Colonel Reggie Cooper.



Acknowledgements

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Page | 115

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