

**Patronage and the Architectural Profession: The Country House in
Nineteenth-Century Northamptonshire**

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
University of Leicester

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2016

Abstract:

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This thesis analyses the architectural development of the nineteenth-century country house by considering the importance of relationships in the complex history of country house building. It reconsiders traditional assumptions concerning country house ownership, aristocratic patronage, the building process and the architectural profession during the period 1800–1900 which hitherto has received comparatively little attention from country house historians. Whilst considerations of style have, to a limited extent, been addressed, the importance of country house alteration and the role of patrons in determining the form these alterations took has been neglected.

The patronage, design, and construction of a country house and buildings on the country house estate was a collaborative process. It was the consequence of a series of decisions and conversations. Negotiation and renegotiation of professional and personal relationships between architect and patrons, and between patrons, usually husband and wife, resulted in redesigns and compromises. On the country house estate these conversations might also include prominent residents, such as the local clergyman. Accessing these relationships and negotiations is a difficult task for the historian as they are often un-recorded. It is therefore hard to define the roles and impact of individuals in the design and construction process. This thesis attempts to recover these complex relationships through an exploration of alterations to four Northamptonshire country houses: Laxton Hall, Lamport Hall, Haselbech Hall and Overstone Hall.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would have been impossible without the financial support of the Lamport Hall Preservation Trust and the AHRC. I am especially indebted to staff at Lamport Hall for their constant enthusiasm. In particular, I would like to thank George Drye, Vicki Howlett and Neil Lyon.

My supervisors Professor Phillip Lindley and Professor Roey Sweet have offered endless encouragement and guidance. Thank you for going above and beyond to support me during my research and writing.

I am grateful for all the help I have received at the various archives used during this PhD. In particular I would like to thank the Northamptonshire Record Office. Special note also needs to be given to the owners of various country houses who opened their homes to me and individuals who have shared their archival collections. I am particularly grateful to Robert Boyle, Alan Teulon, Lucy Page and the staff at Laxton Hall. I would also like to thank members of the local communities I have researched for their enthusiasm and suggestions.

Numerous friends have helped during the research and writing of this PhD. In particular I am grateful for the constant encouragement of Steve Ling, Emma Harris and Miriam Cady. No matter how far apart we lived you were all always there. I would also like to thank my finance Ray Strach. I could not have completed this thesis without your reassurance, friendship and invaluable advice.

My biggest thank you, however, has to be reserved for my family and most especially my parents. Day or night you have always been there and have offered continual support throughout my academic career. Without you both this would have been impossible.

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Abbreviations

BL – British Library

D.L. – Deputy-Lieutenant

J.P. – Justice of the Peace or Magistrate

LP – Lambeth Palace Archives

LH – Lamport Hall

NHLE – National Heritage List for England

NRO – Northamptonshire Record Office

PRONI – Public Record Office of Northern Ireland

RCHME – Royal Commission of the Historic Monuments of England

R.N. – Royal Navy

SHL – Senate House Library

Introduction

This thesis explores the experiences of men and women when altering their country houses. The origins of this study lie in an AHRC collaborative doctoral award between the University of Leicester and the Lamport Hall Preservation Trust.¹ The project was created to explore gender, patronage and architecture in the nineteenth-century country house. Lamport Hall has been used as a springboard for the research, which as a consequence focuses on Northamptonshire. It analyses the country house as the product of a set of relationships in which the protagonists negotiated the design and construction and highlights the extent to which engagement with architecture, whether as design or as built form, was influenced by considerations of gender. In doing so, this thesis draws on approaches to the history of country house design and construction, including the legal, emotional and practical implications, that have not previously been considered together and discusses the insights these provide in the context of research into the archives of the country houses of nineteenth-century Northamptonshire.

The study reconsiders traditional assumptions concerning the gendering of patronage, architectural design and country house construction during the nineteenth century, hitherto little explored by country house and architectural historians.² Whilst considerations of style have, to a limited extent, been addressed by existing scholarship, the role of patrons, and particularly female patrons, in determining the form of country houses has been neglected. This thesis attempts to recover the complex relationships which evolved during the building process in a series of Northamptonshire country houses including: Laxton Hall, Lamport Hall, Haselbech Hall and Overstone Hall. The introduction will discuss the approach and methodology used in this thesis, in particular, towards gender and design history before considering literature on the Northamptonshire country house in the nineteenth century more generally.

¹ When this project was created it took, as a starting point, research from an MA thesis by Garwood which was later written into an article: R. Garwood, 'Hidden Patronage: Mary and Emily Isham and the Remodelling of Lamport Hall', *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, 65 (2012), pp. 31–46.

² Although there are a number of publications focused on the nineteenth-century country house these are relatively few in comparison to works devoted to earlier periods of country house building and in particular the Georgian country house. Key reference works on country house construction during the nineteenth century include: M. Girouard, *The Victorian Country House* (Oxford, 1971); M. Hall, *The Victorian Country House from the Archives of Country Life* (London, 2009); C. H. Hussey, *English Country Houses, Late Georgian, 1800–1840* (Woodbridge, 1955); J. M. Robinson, *The Regency Country House from the Archives of Country Life* (London, 2005).

Gender Patronage and Architecture

The country house has commonly been understood and discussed in masculine terms.³ In the *Victorian Country House* Girouard introduces his subject with a portrayal of the Duke of Westminster, the ‘great Victorian gentleman’. At his principal seat, Eaton Hall in Cheshire, the Duke benevolently built schools, village halls and churches. He was the patron of architects and craftsmen, a great horseman and entertained on a grand scale, although living modestly in private. Girouard confidently states that the ‘Victorian country house was built for the Victorian country gentleman’, of which the Duke of Westminster was the ‘beau-ideal’.⁴ Only a few pages later Girouard reproduces *The House Builders* (1880), a painting by Frank Dicksee showing Lady Welby-Gregory seated at a table grasping an architectural plan of Denton Manor, Lincolnshire.⁵ Her husband stands beside her, overlooking the scene. In spite of the obvious suggestion of female engagement with design that this painting provides, women are almost absent from Girouard’s analysis beyond an indirect impact on the country house plan, increasingly designed along gender lines in the period.⁶

Since *The Victorian Country House* was published in 1971, the growth of fields of study such as social history, women’s history, material culture and gender history has prompted the publication of a series of studies which have shown that not all houses were built for or by men.⁷ Walker’s research on female architects has highlighted that although women were not necessarily considered professional architects in the

³ For example see, R. G. Wilson and A. Mackley, *Creating Paradise: The Building of the English Country House, 1660–1880* (London, 2000); M. Girouard, *Life in the English Country House* (New Haven and London, 1978); P. Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home* (New Haven and London, 1999); J. Franklin, *The Gentleman’s Country House and its Plan 1835–1914* (London, 1981).

⁴ Girouard, *The Victorian Country House*, pp. 2–5.

⁵ To this date there has been no comprehensive study of the role Lady Welby-Gregory played in the design of Denton Manor suggested in the painting.

⁶ Girouard, *The Victorian Country House*, pp. 34–38.

⁷ For example see R. Baird, *Mistress of the House: Great Ladies and Grand Houses, 1670–1830* (London, 2004); R. Larson, ‘Dynastic Domesticity the Role of Elite Women in the Yorkshire Country House, 1685–1858’, University of York PhD thesis (2003), pp. 64–87; L. Worsley, ‘Female Architectural Patronage in the Eighteenth Century and the Case of Henrietta Cavendish Holles Harley’, *Architectural History*, 48 (2005), pp. 139–162; A. T. Friedman, ‘Architecture, Authority, and the Female Gaze: Planning and Representation in the Early Modern Country House’, *Assemblage*, 18 (1992), pp. 40–61; H. Hills, *Architecture and the Politics of Gender in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, 2003); R. Thorpe, *Women, Architecture and Building in the East of Ireland, c. 1790–1840* (2013, Dublin).

nineteenth century, they often engaged with design in an amateur capacity.⁸ Widows, heiresses and single women, unrestrained by common law or with enhanced status due to wealth, were often patrons of architecture. Lewis has given the example of Frances, Viscountess Irwin who, in her widowhood in the late eighteenth century, remodelled Temple Newsam, Leeds, and Worsley, of the widowed Henrietta Cavendish Holles Harley who, between 1741 and 1755, remodelled Welbeck Abbey, Nottinghamshire.⁹ In *Mistress of the House* Baird describes the architectural experiences of Elizabeth, Duchess of Rutland, among others. Even though married, the Duchess took a leading role in rebuilding parts of Belvoir Castle after a fire in 1816.¹⁰ As well as acting as patrons and engaging with architectural design, historians have increasingly recognised the role of women in household management. This could encompass practical aspects attached to building such as the management of accounts or supervision of the execution of designs.¹¹ It is reasonable to assume that this sometimes presented opportunities to contribute towards decisions that influenced design and construction. It is evident, therefore, that women could be active participants in the building of a country house. However, the search for female engagement with architecture has also formed part of a wider literature which has sought to find evidence of female agency in traditionally masculine contexts.

The period described by this study has been understood as a key moment in the development of domesticity. In *Family Fortunes* Hall and Davidoff argue that a concept of ‘separate spheres’ was central to middle-class identity formation. They drew a binary

⁸ L. Walker, ‘Women Patron Builders in Britain: Identity, Difference and Memory in Spatial and Material Culture’ in D. Cherry and J. Holland (eds.), *Local/ Global: Women Artists in the Nineteenth Century* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 121–136; L. Walker, ‘The Entry of Women into the Architectural Profession in Britain’, *Woman's Art Journal*, 7, no. 1 (1986), pp. 13–18; L. Walker, *Drawing on Diversity Women: Architecture and Practice* (London, 1997), pp. 1–26.

⁹ J. Lewis, ‘When a House is Not a Home: English Elite Women and the Eighteenth-Century Country House’, *Journal of British Studies*, 48, no. 2 (2006), pp. 336–363 (p. 352); Worsley, ‘Female Architectural Patronage’, pp. 139–162. See also J. Lennox, ‘Temple Newsam: A Woman’s Domain’, in R. Larson (ed.), *Maids & Mistresses, Celebrating 300 years of Women and the Yorkshire Country House* (Dorchester, 2004), pp. 89–105.

¹⁰ Baird, *Mistress of the House*, pp. 232–253.

¹¹ C. Ridgway, ‘Isabella, fourth Countess of Carlisle: No Life by Halves’, in Larson (ed.), *Maids & Mistresses*, pp. 35–51; A. Vickery, *The Gentleman’s Daughter: Women’s Lives in Georgian England* (London, 1998), pp. 127–160; Worsley, ‘Female Architectural Patronage’, p. 114. T. Lummis and J. Marsh, *The Woman’s Domain: Women and the English Country House* (London, 1993).

between the public masculine sphere and the private feminine sphere.¹² This separation of spheres located women within the context of home, predominantly concerned with the family, and men in the world of business and politics. The negotiation of ‘public’ and ‘private’ spheres has been an important focus for studies of women and agency, studies which vary in their emphasis on the importance of ‘separate spheres’ in determining women’s lived experience.¹³

A number of historians have shown how, through the language of domesticity and by acting within familial contexts, women could engage in a range of activities associated with the masculine public sphere but without necessarily transgressing gendered boundaries. Chalus and Vickery have discussed the role of women in politics and a number of scholars have shown that women could play an important role in estate management.¹⁴ To this end, Friedman has argued that it was through becoming experts in all matters domestic that women could claim a level of independence in their own lives.¹⁵ Reynolds has observed that if the family is given a central position in the study of the nineteenth-century aristocracy, the role of women within that unit becomes apparent.¹⁶ While recognising the relevance of gendered spheres and of domestic ideology in framing women’s actions in the nineteenth century, this thesis will show how within the family unit women had the scope to renegotiate the boundaries of their domestic roles to participate in activities centred in the home, such as interior design or household management, but also activities that were, arguably, part of the public realm, for example architectural design and estate management. It will argue that the ability to negotiate these roles depended upon the nature of women’s relationships with other family members.

¹² L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle-Class, 1780–1850* (London, 2008).

¹³ A. Vickery, ‘Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women’s History’, *The Historical Journal*, 36, no. 2 (1993), pp. 383–414; S. Morgan, ‘Between Public and Private: Gender, Domesticity, and Authority in the Long Nineteenth Century’, *The Historical Journal*, 54, no. 4 (2011), pp. 1197–1220; R. B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society 1650–1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (Harlow, 1998).

¹⁴ E. Chalus, ‘Elite Women, Social Politics, and the Political World of Late Eighteenth-Century England’, *The Historical Journal*, 43, no. 3 (2000), pp. 669–697; A. Vickery, *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present* (Stanford, 2001); A. Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 2009), pp. 106–128; K. Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain* (Oxford, 1998).

¹⁵ A. T. Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House* (New York, 1988), p. 16. See also Larson, ‘Dynastic Domesticity’, p. 19.

¹⁶ Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, p. 16.

This thesis does not attempt to discover female architects in the nineteenth century as, in the strictest sense, very few, if any, existed. It also does not focus on single female or male patrons. Instead, it considers the experiences of married men and women and how far their interaction with architecture was determined by gender, the nature of the architectural profession and personal inclination. This thesis takes a critical look at aspects of the design process where there is no evidence for the impact of women, considering why sources may not be so readily available or why women were not active in those fields. However, it also actively seeks areas where there is evidence of female participation in the architectural process. One way this is achieved is by drawing on studies which look at the relationships between men and women during design.

Friedman has argued that ‘the critique of social relations and of ideology is inherent to the study of built form’.¹⁷ Following from Friedman’s argument this thesis will interrogate the relationship between husband and wife within the context of domestic ideology described above. Baird has argued that ‘in the building or decorating of a house, everything depended on the dynamics of the marriage: whether she controlled the purse strings, who was the stronger character, who had the better eye, who was the most interested.’¹⁸ In exploring the relationships between women and men and in particular their interactions, or lack of interaction, during the design process this thesis attempts to re-introduce women into, rather than abstract women from, wider narratives of building at the four houses discussed.

The roles of women in building have been discussed above; however the positions adopted by men were equally varied. Men described in studies of the country house and country house building by Girouard and Wilson and Mackley were seen as powerful heads of the estate who viewed their country houses as expressions of political power and status. Whilst this was undoubtedly true, through in depth archival research, this thesis will consider how men related to their homes on a personal, individual and emotional level. This draws on the work of Lewis and Smith who have described the importance of emotional attachments and concepts of home to women as well as

¹⁷ A. T. Friedman, ‘The Way You Do The Things You Do: Writing the History of Houses and Housing’, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 58, no. 3 (1999), pp. 406–413 (p. 407). See also Friedman’s approach to the study of Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby family discussed in the introduction to A. T. Friedman, *House and Household in Elizabethan England* (London, 1988), pp. 1–11 which has been especially influential in establishing the methodological approach of this thesis.

¹⁸ Baird, *Mistress of the House*, p. 3.

Roper's discussion of male subjectivity.¹⁹ Roper has suggested the importance of emotional histories in understanding the experiences and actions of men.²⁰ Building was as much a consequence of personal familial circumstances, individuals' impulses and interior emotions as it was an assertion of power, presence, fashion or wealth.

However, an analysis of the roles of women and men in the construction of their homes is challenging as a result of a lack of sources. Cunningham has highlighted the difficulty of differentiating between the taste of men and women who often presented a collective identity to the public.²¹ Once married, women's lack of legal identity has tended to obscure their position in legal documents such as contracts and bills. Thus, this thesis will draw on a wide selection of sources including accounts and plans but also letters, journals and poetry which offer insight into the motives, ideas, thoughts and emotional responses to architecture. This approach not only highlights the agency of women as well as men but reveals how power, authority and gender shaped architecture, spatial experience and responses to buildings. Most importantly this will argue that women's and men's engagement with architecture can only be understood when located within a specific set of personal relationships.

Interpreting the Country House: The Country House as an Architectural Process

A second focus of this thesis is patronage and the process of architectural design. Jenkins, Wilson and Mackley, and Herert and Donchin have shown that the patronage, design, and construction of a country house was a collaborative process.²² It was the consequence of a series of decisions and conversations. Negotiation and renegotiation of relationships between architect and patrons, and between patrons, often husband and wife, resulted in redesigns and compromises. Thus not only are the gendered

¹⁹ Lewis, 'When a House is Not a Home', pp. 336–363; K. Smith, 'Imperial Families: Women Writing Home in Georgian Britain', *Women's History Review*, 24, no. 6 (2015), pp. 843–860; M. Roper, 'Slipping Out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History', *History Workshop Journal*, 59 (2005), pp. 67–72.

²⁰ Roper, 'Slipping out of View', pp. 67–72.

²¹ C. Cunningham, "'An Italian House is my Lady': Some Aspects of the Definition of Women's Role in the Architecture of Robert Adam", in G. Perry and M. Rossington (ed.), *Femininity and Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century Art and Culture* (Manchester, 1994), pp. 63–78.

²² F. Jenkins, *Architect and Patron: A Survey of Professional Relations and Practice in England from the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day* (Oxford, 1961), pp. 119–227; Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, pp. 109–145; G. Herbert and M. Donchin (eds.), *The Collaborators: Interactions in the Architectural Design Process* (Aldershot, 2013), pp. 1–5.

relationships discussed above a central concern of this thesis but also relationships between architects and patrons which, in turn, can shed light on the architectural profession. The period of this study has traditionally been associated with the growth of a professional culture among architects as well as a growing distance between patrons and the architectural process.²³ This thesis will argue that the break between the architect and patron was not quite as distinct as has been previously suggested by considering the construction of the country house as a process.

Darling and Whitworth have argued that ‘buildings, environments and things are made from ideas, performances, uses of space, patronage, and criticisms perhaps more than they are made through the production of plans and prototypes.’²⁴ In doing so, they argue that analysis of structures should extend beyond buildings and objects themselves to include, for example, text, speeches, or the uses of spaces after construction. When taken together, these constitute architecture. Similarly, Whyte has argued that the message and meanings of architecture changed when experienced in different ‘genres’: as an idea, plan, picture, structure or description.²⁵ These studies recognise that architecture was a process where meaning and intent were in a constant state of flux and could be interpreted differently in different contexts or when viewed by different people.²⁶

This inclusive view of ‘making’, experiencing and interpreting built space as opposed to ‘designing’ or ‘building’ a structure moves the focus away from a traditional canon of a singular ‘genius’ designer, builder or patron to a wider range of participants.²⁷ It also extends the reach of study beyond descriptive architectural analysis. Formal analysis of structures reveals very little about the intentions of architects, builders or patrons whose ideas could continually change as a project progressed.²⁸ It also restricts the historian’s field of vision and lends itself towards the analysis of male architects and

²³ See Chapter Four.

²⁴ E. Darling and L. Whitworth (eds.), *Women and the Making of Built Space in England, 1870–1950* (Aldershot, 2007), p. 4.

²⁵ W. Whyte, ‘How Do Buildings Mean? Some Issues of Interpretation in the History of Architecture’, *History and Theory*, 45, no. 2 (2006), pp. 153–177.

²⁶ Similarly, in his study of women and the eighteenth-century garden Bending explores the changing meaning of gardens through Dixon Hunt’s concept of a garden’s ‘afterlife’. See S. Bending, *Green Retreats: Women, Gardens and Eighteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 12.

²⁷ For more on the concept of ‘making’ see Darling and Whitworth, *Women and the Making of Built Space*, p. 4.

²⁸ Whyte, ‘How do Buildings Mean’, p. 154.

patrons, their drawings and designs. It is in these sources where the influence of women is least likely to survive.²⁹ Thus, the absence of women from scholarship on building is, in part, a consequence of a lack of sources describing women's agency in traditional studies of building design. Viewing architecture as a process rather than an end product has been viewed as a useful method for finding female agency in gender studies.³⁰

The methodology used in this thesis draws on the work of Whyte, Darling and Whitworth, Lawrence, Hills and Friedman. It uses a wide variety of source types found in estate archives in an attempt to consider the building process, as far as possible, as a whole: from conceptualisation, to design, to construction, to interpretation. Accessing the conversations, motivations, emotional responses and relationships which shaped each of these stages of the architectural process is a difficult task as these were often un-recorded. However, diaries, letters, and circumstantial evidence all contribute to a better understanding of the less tangible aspects of the architectural process. These need to be understood within the context of gender ideology and professional and legal frameworks. The way property was transferred, responses to existing architecture, patronage, power relationships and gender could all effect the design of, and responses to, architecture.

The Country House in Nineteenth-Century Northamptonshire

A lack of scholarship on the Northamptonshire country house in the nineteenth century is reflective of wider trends in country house research. The reasons for this are well versed: a twentieth-century bias against anything un-classical and in particular, the 'ugly' self-aggrandizing 'monsters' of Victorian design, some of which have been tarred as extravagant and excessive as a result of their nouveau riche origins.³¹ As a consequence, there are very few publications which deal with the Regency and Victorian country house. However, with the publication of *The Victorian Country House* in 1971 Girouard proved that there was significant country house building in the

²⁹ See also T. F. Gieryn 'What Buildings Do', *Theory and Society*, 31, no. 1 (2002), pp. 35–74; A. T. Friedman, 'The Way You Do The Things You Do', pp. 406–413; A. Laurence, 'Women Using Building in Seventeenth-Century England A Question of Sources?', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 13 (2003), pp. 293–303.

³⁰ Darling and Whitworth, *Women and the Making of Built Space*, pp. 1–6.

³¹ For example see K. Clark, *The Gothic Revival* (Harmondsworth, 1962); J. Mordaunt Crook, *The Rise of the Nouveaux Riches: Style and Status in Victorian and Edwardian Architecture* (London, 2000).

Victorian era and that these buildings were worthy of study.³² This interest was continued in house biographies published in *Country Life*. *The Victorian Country House* considered five hundred Victorian houses; however, only three of these were in Northamptonshire: Castle Ashby House, Finedon Hall and Overstone Hall. Of these, only Overstone Hall can be considered a Victorian country house as Castle Ashby House and Finedon Hall were significantly altered rather than built in the nineteenth century.³³ Northamptonshire is equally poorly represented in Hussey's *The Late Georgian Country House 1800–1840*. Hussey discusses no Northamptonshire houses in the main text, and only five are mentioned in the index of significant architects and their commissions.³⁴

Yet, in recent years Northamptonshire has been the subject of renewed interest as a result of work completed by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) and published in a condensed form in Heward and Taylor's *The Country Houses of Northamptonshire*.³⁵ As a consequence, in his new edition of the Northamptonshire Pevsner, Bailey wrote that due to the research conducted by the RCHME 'the time seemed right' to embark on a revised edition.³⁶ *The Country Houses of Northamptonshire* describes the architectural phasing of fifty nine country houses as well as listing a further twenty two houses recorded in the National Monuments Record but which did not match the criteria for inclusion in the publication. Among these twenty two houses are some of the most interesting country houses in nineteenth-century Northamptonshire. For example, Knuston Hall altered c. 1865 by the great grandson of the inventor of the Spinning Frame Sir Richard Arkwright.³⁷ Houses were included on the basis of being the seat of a peer, baronet or sheriff before 1700; having

³² Girouard, *The Victorian Country House*.

³³ J. Heward and R. Taylor, *The Country Houses of Northamptonshire* (Swindon, 1996), pp. 136–139; N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Northamptonshire* (New Haven and London, 2002), p. 210.

³⁴ Both books have been updated in the twenty-first century by *Country Life*. See Robinson, *The Regency Country House* and Hall, *The Victorian Country House*.

³⁵ Heward and Taylor, *Country Houses of Northamptonshire*. This was an offshoot of the RCHME's county inventories; wider surveys which encompassed other historic buildings and archaeological sites. See Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England), *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire* (London, 1975–84).

³⁶ B. Bailey and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Northamptonshire* (New Haven and London, 3rd ed., 2013), p. xvii.

³⁷ J. Long, *Knuston Hall: A Northamptonshire Saga* (Irchester, 1989), pp. 13–14; Rubinstein, 'New Men of Wealth', p. 128.

received a royal visit; or having 17 hearths or more in the 1660 to 1674 Hearth Tax.³⁸ The selection process highlighted seventeenth and early eighteenth-century country houses as important centres of government and wealth. Nineteenth-century alterations were only included when they had a profound effect upon the earlier structure of the house.

Like the RCHME, the early twentieth-century historian and architect, Gotch, focused on the eighteenth century in his publications on the Northamptonshire country house.³⁹ To Gotch and even Pevsner writing the first edition of *Northamptonshire* for the *Buildings of England* series in 1961, the nineteenth-century country house was not beyond the realm of living memory.⁴⁰ None the less, the wealth of information which Gotch, the RCHME and other sources provide forms an invaluable base for this thesis. As a whole Northamptonshire country houses are comparatively well researched and recorded even if the focus of this research has not been on the Northamptonshire country house in the nineteenth century.⁴¹

In his seminal work *An Open Elite?*, Stone describes Northamptonshire as ‘for the most part a hidebound, dull, inward-turned, and stuffy society, obsessed with horses, dogs, and hunting. Their architectural lethargy matches their inactivity in other spheres of life.’ He asked ‘Why were the Northamptonshire squierarchy so totally unenterprising in building between 1740 and 1860?’ and ‘What did they do with their money in the times of unparalleled prosperity for the landed classes?’⁴² From this description Northamptonshire would seem an unlikely county for a study of country house building in the nineteenth century.

³⁸ Heward and Taylor, *Country Houses of Northamptonshire*, p. ix.

³⁹ A. J. Gotch, *Squires' Homes and Other Old Buildings of Northamptonshire* (Batsford, 1939), p. xi; A. J. Gotch, *The Old Manors and Manor Houses of Northamptonshire* (London, 1936).

⁴⁰ N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Northamptonshire* (London, 1961).

⁴¹ Northamptonshire also benefits from two early county histories: J. Bridges, *The History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire* (Oxford, 1791) and G. Baker, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Northampton* (London, 1822–41) as well as a visual record of the county created by George Clarke of Scaldwell; an amateur artist and headmaster of Lamport and Hanging Houghton School between 1818 and 1833. His sketches include country houses, churches and scenery around Northamptonshire. These drawings are held by the Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO, GCPS).

⁴² L. Stone, *An Open Elite? England 1540–1880* (Oxford, 1984), p. 385.

Commentators from the time – and many before and since – have remarked that Northamptonshire was proverbial for its ‘spires and squires’.⁴³ In 1852 John L. Barker explained that ‘squires’ were ‘attracted to Northamptonshire in more variable and troublous [sic] times, no less by the snug seclusion and security of an inland retreat than by the fertility of the soil, and still more, perhaps, by the presence of extensive forests well stocked with wild animals and game, wondrous tempting to the hunting propensities of the true Englishman’.⁴⁴ The famous agricultural writer Arthur Young was known to grow ‘almost poetical in his contemplation of the large grazing farms’.⁴⁵ Thus, it has been estimated that just over ninety per cent of Northamptonshire country houses were built before 1800 and Heward and Taylor have commented that of the small number built after 1800 very few were ‘of any size and importance’.⁴⁶ A solid stock of buildings built in the more ‘variable’ times described by Baker, was ample to the needs of the landed classes.⁴⁷

However, as the subsequent analysis will suggest, the impression of inactivity given is an illusion; undoubtedly Northamptonshire was a county obsessed with hunting and in comparison to other counties, there was no boom in country house building in the nineteenth century. Country house building, however, was anything but non-existent. New houses on virgin sites were a rarity but extensive building work was undertaken in the period on *pre-existing* houses. Yet, due to the difficulty of describing what constitutes an alteration, studies showing wider building trends generally concentrate on new builds, rebuilds or substantial additions.⁴⁸

Girouard identified a peak of building activity at the beginning of the 1870s. The reasons for this boom have been established as agricultural and industrial success which created what Girouard termed a ‘Golden Age of Victorian Country House Building’.

⁴³ J. L. Baker, *An Essay on the Farming of Northamptonshire* (London, 1852), p. 2; C. Knight, *Knowledge is Power* (London, 1866), p. 247; C. Knight, *The Popular History of England* (London, 1814), vol. 7, p. 10; *Longman's Magazine*, 12 (1888), p. 50.

⁴⁴ Barker, *An Essay on Farming*, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Knight, *The Popular History of England*, p. 10.

⁴⁶ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 208; Heward and Taylor, *Country Houses of Northamptonshire*, p. ix.

⁴⁷ Stone, *An Open Elite?*, pp. 375, 173.

⁴⁸ Some statistical surveys of country house building do recognise the prevalence of alteration in the nineteenth century. However, due to the difficulties of quantifying these for statistical analysis, alterations have not been studied to the same degree as new builds. For a general chronology of country house alteration from 1660–1880 see Fig. 3, in Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 221.

After 1874 there was a rapid decline of building which reached a low in 1885–9.⁴⁹ This decline corresponds with the agricultural depression. Using a sample drawn from Pevsner of buildings built or substantially rebuilt in Dorset, Kent, Wiltshire and Northamptonshire, Lubbock records booms in building in the first two decades of the nineteenth century and in the 1850s and 1860s.⁵⁰ Using information on Cheshire, Gloucestershire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Suffolk and Yorkshire, Wilson and Mackley have described relatively steady levels of building between 1810 and 1880.⁵¹ These surveys, however, can only ever suggest building patterns as a result of the different counties, types of houses and owners included. Applying general building trends to Northamptonshire in the nineteenth century is particularly problematic as only two substantial new houses were built: Overstone Hall in 1860 and Whittlebury Lodge in 1850.⁵² At a slightly lower level Boughton Hall – not to be confused with Boughton House – was built in 1844.⁵³ If almost complete rebuilds are included as well as new builds Norton Hall is a good example, but beyond this it becomes very hard to expand the sample with any real sense of certainty.⁵⁴ This is an issue recognised by Wilson and Mackley who argue that alterations were an almost constant process and as a result hard to quantify in statistical studies.⁵⁵

Stone, Wilson and Mackley, and Clemenson have all observed regional variations in levels of country house building. From the information known about Northamptonshire it is possible to suggest that the county had an above average number of large ‘aristocratic’ estates; 30 estates of 10,000 acres or above.⁵⁶ From information extracted from Bateman it has been argued that Northamptonshire had one of the densest concentrations of principal seats in England and Wales.⁵⁷ From this it could be inferred that few houses were likely to be demolished due to ancestral associations or as a consequence of the principal family living there. To this end, Wilson and Mackley have

⁴⁹ Girouard, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 9.

⁵⁰ J. Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain, 1550–1960* (New Haven and London, 1995), p. 50.

⁵¹ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 205.

⁵² *Ibid.* p. 218.

⁵³ Bailey, *Northamptonshire*, p. 120.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p. 502; J. P. Neale, *Jones’ Views of the Seats, Mansions, Castles, etc. of Noblemen and Gentlemen in England* (1825), vol. 2, p. 2; B. Botfield, *Stemmata Botevilliana* (London, 1858), vol. 1, pp. ccxxix–ccxxx.

⁵⁵ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 222.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁵⁷ Stone, *An Open Elite?*, pp. 36, 62.

calculated that sixty four per cent of pre-1660 houses were not recorded as ever being rebuilt. In other words, only 13 houses out of the 39 in their sample were rebuilt or almost completely rebuilt after 1660. This is compared to 21% of houses in Suffolk which were not rebuilt.⁵⁸ With this in mind, it is no surprise that studies of Northamptonshire have paid little attention to the period after 1800.

Stone offers a slightly different way of describing building which is perhaps more sensitive to alteration. He recorded the entrance of thirteen new houses into his ‘sample’ of Northamptonshire country houses between 1800 and 1879.⁵⁹ The criterion for entry into the sample was 5,000 square feet of floor space devoted to family rooms; at this point the building was considered a country house which could support an aristocratic lifestyle as opposed to a smaller house in the country.⁶⁰ These were Laxton Hall, Welton Place, Little Houghton House, Pipewell Hall, Moulton Grange, Whittlebury Lodge, Weston Hall, Flore House, Grafton Regis House, Bragborough Hall, Wadenhoe House, Mears Ashby Hall and Moreton Pinkney Manor House.⁶¹ Though the number of entrants is below that of Hertfordshire and Northumberland, also considered in his study, it is the only county of the three to show an increase in entrants in this period, and the only century in which Northamptonshire experienced an increase in entrants after 1540.⁶² Stone’s analysis shows that although the Northamptonshire aristocracy were not building as many new houses as other counties, they were investing in the enlargement of their country homes. This corresponds with Clemenson’s observation that from the 1790s investment in ‘alterations, adaptations and extensions’ across the country rose to a peak in 1830 and endured across the nineteenth century.⁶³ As Stone identifies himself, his analysis does not, however, show alterations which did not change the amount of floor space in the family rooms and as a result it is likely it drastically underestimates building activity.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, pp. 206–207.

⁵⁹ Stone, *An Open Elite?*, Table 11.2.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 437–442.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 432–433.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 360.

⁶³ Clemenson, *English Country Houses*, p. 9.

⁶⁴ Despite recognising that 27 houses were enlarged in nineteenth-century Northamptonshire and that no fewer than 31 large service blocks were added from 1800–1870, service wings are not included in Stone’s sample for calculating total building activity. Stone, *An Open Elite?*, pp. 383–386.

Irregular documentation of when alterations were executed and their often piecemeal nature makes pin pointing a commission or building date problematic, and the subjective decision by the historian of what constitutes a significant alteration complicates any conclusions.⁶⁵ In this context, Beckett among others has argued that ‘simply counting the number of houses at any one time gives a misleading impression of the level of building activity.’⁶⁶ From the houses identified in this thesis with concrete alteration dates and discernible phases of building, a very simple observation can be made: country house alteration was occurring consistently in nineteenth-century Northamptonshire accompanied by low levels of country house building on new sites.⁶⁷ Several reasons explain this. The obvious conclusion is that there was no need for new country houses. Instead, existing houses were remodelled or enlarged. A solid stock of sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth-century buildings was ample for the needs of the landed classes.⁶⁸

The struggle to decide which houses enter statistical samples of building activity is part of a wider difficulty in establishing what constitutes a country house. The problem of defining the country house has been a continuing concern of historians and has been approached in many different ways: from social and political status to economic status. The nineteenth-century country house has principally been written about as part of wider studies. As a result definitions of the country house are often used universally over a long period of time and consequently can appear contrary to changes in the British aristocracy in the nineteenth century. The dominant approaches in studies considered in this introduction include differentiation by the owners’ status, by the size of the country house, or by the size of the estate. A key assumption made by historians discussing the first approach is that country houses were owned by those with titles, and of the latter two categories, is that the size of a house and size of the estate equated to levels of prestige. Some studies focused on architecture have only included those houses considered stylistically worthy and others have simply included any country house that seemed justified.⁶⁹ The need for creating thresholds, however, is evident; no study can be holistic. Yet, to every definition there are exceptions. If title was to be a

⁶⁵ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, pp. 221–222.

⁶⁶ Beckett, *Aristocracy in England*, p. 328.

⁶⁷ Stone, *An Open Elite*, p. 370

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 361–375.

⁶⁹ For example see Franklin, *The Gentleman’s Country House*, p. 4.

precondition for consideration as a key country house, Lewis Loyd who purchased Overstone Hall in 1844 would not be included. Yet, Lewis Loyd was one of the wealthiest men in the county in the mid-nineteenth century, even if his family would not receive a title until the next generation.

Although categories such as the size of an estate, size of a house or possession of a title might be useful prior to the nineteenth century, they are not so useful for analysis after the turn of the century. The final few decades of the nineteenth century have traditionally been considered as marking a transition in the fortunes of the landed elite. In the nineteenth century the landed aristocracy were losing their pre-eminence in terms of wealth as industrialists and bankers became the new plutocracy. New money meant new means of supporting the country house which did not necessarily include the ownership of a large estate. Curtailed of their land, the houses have been described as ‘the house in the country’, an ambiguous term. The wealthy were buying houses as centres for entertainment rather than as centres of agriculture. These buildings are most typically associated with newcomers to the landed gentry.⁷⁰

As established above, there was little building on a large scale or on virgin sites in Northamptonshire and it has been argued elsewhere that there was little movement of new families into the county.⁷¹ This has often led to the impact of newcomers remaining unnoticed by scholars or being side-lined as statistically insignificant.⁷² Rubinstein’s *Men of Property* discusses three half millionaires who acquired land in Northamptonshire in their lifetimes or in later generations during the nineteenth century.⁷³ These included the banker Lewis Loyd who purchased Overstone Hall in 1844 and whose son’s building activity will be discussed later in this thesis.⁷⁴ Jesse Watts-Russell, the son of the half millionaire and London soap maker Jesse Russell,

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁷¹ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 219; Stone, *An Open Elite?*, pp. 181–210.

⁷² For a discussion on the statistical significance of new money in country house and land purchase see E. Spring and D. Spring, ‘The English Landed Elite, 1540–1879: A Review’, *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 17, no. 2 (1985), pp. 149–166; W. D. Rubinstein, ‘New Men of Wealth and the Purchase of Land in Nineteenth-Century Britain’, *Past and Present*, 92 (1981), pp. 125–47 (p. 127).

⁷³ W. D. Rubinstein, *Men of Property: The Very Wealthy in Britain Since the Industrial Revolution* (London, 2nd ed., 2006).

⁷⁴ The building activity of Lewis Loyd’s son, Lord Overstone, will be considered in the main body of this thesis. Rubinstein has calculated that by the time the fourth edition of Bateman was published in 1883, Lord Overstone was the twenty-first richest landowner in Britain. *Ibid.*, p. 240.

purchased Biggin Grange.⁷⁵ Watts-Russell was a merchant trading with the East India Company.⁷⁶ At Biggin Grange he added a fashionable mansard roof. However, it seems that Biggin Grange was simply a secondary seat and that the social and financial investment by Watts-Russell was in his Staffordshire home, Ilam, altered by Shaw the Elder between 1821 and 1826.⁷⁷ The third was the nephew of Henry Hope a Dutch merchant, who purchased the large Rushton Hall estate in 1828 but re-sold it in 1857. Rubinstein recorded only the very wealthy. However, there were further nouveaux-riche entrants into Northamptonshire society. Lewis Loyd and his son Samuel Jones Loyd, Lord Overstone, were not the only bankers in Northamptonshire. Richard Christopher Naylor purchased Kelmarsh Hall in 1864.⁷⁸ Naylor was a Liverpool banker, cotton trader and, importantly, an enthusiastic hunter. Northamptonshire was thus the perfect location to purchase a country house. Norton Hall was purchased by Thomas Botfield, an ironmonger.⁷⁹ Knuston Hall was let by various persons, all from new money including Richard Arkwright, great grandson of the inventor of the Spinning Frame, and a succession of opera singers.⁸⁰ There was new money in ‘stuffy’ ‘inward turned’ Northamptonshire.

The extent to which categories of buildings and hierarchies of importance developed by historians match the perceptions of the nineteenth century has yet to be established. In spite of all the considerations already mentioned, little attention has been given to wider less quantifiable issues such as concepts of ownership. The person living in a country house did not necessarily have to be the owner to derive prestige from the building. For example, taking a lease on a house would suffice for inclusion in Walford’s *County Families* which did not differentiate between houses owned outright or let.⁸¹ Walford’s ‘who’s who’ was written with the intention not to show who owned the most land but rather to list those of importance in the different counties.⁸² This reinforces the notion

⁷⁵ E. Walford, *County Families of the United Kingdom* (London, 1860–78), p. 1012.

⁷⁶ *A List of the Names of the Members of the United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East-Indies* (London, 1825), p. 85.

⁷⁷ N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Staffordshire* (New Haven, 1974), p. 152.

⁷⁸ F. Whellan, *History, Topography and Directory of Northamptonshire* (Northampton, 1874), p. 831.

⁷⁹ Botfield, *Stemmata Botevilliana*, vol. 1, pp. ccxxix–ccxxx; Stone, *An Open Elite?*, p. 206.

⁸⁰ Long, *Knuston Hall*, pp. 13–14.

⁸¹ Stone has noted the lack of available documentation on the letting of houses. *Ibid.*, p. 169; Rubinstein, ‘New Men of Wealth’, p. 144.

⁸² Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 5; Rubinstein, ‘New Men of Wealth’, p. 235.

that the small numbers of the elite classes were expanding to include those without large houses, estates or titles.

The picture of Northamptonshire provided by general studies is an important framework for research on country house building. However, Clemenson has argued that a focus on wider trends in country house construction and land purchase obscure the significance of houses at a regional level, within a county, and at the level of the family and individual.⁸³ Outside the straightjacket of definitions previously used by historians Northamptonshire offers many country houses in the nineteenth century ripe for a study. Of the sixty houses considered when selecting case studies for this thesis, almost all were altered in some shape or form in the nineteenth century.⁸⁴ To this end, in his introduction to *The Victorian Country House* Hall argues that historians should study the country house in the Victorian era as well as the Victorian country house itself. The distinction may seem simple, but it is an important one. It recognises that extensive building was completed to pre-existing houses as well as new houses. With only a handful of nineteenth-century country houses, this is particularly pertinent to a study of Northamptonshire. Hall has also taken a far more inclusive stance on what constitutes a country house: ‘the country house was in essence a matter of image as well as economics’. He argued that any study of the Victorian country house should include houses of any size and estate size but which projected the image of a country house.⁸⁵ The selection of houses in this thesis has primarily centred upon the availability of primary source material, predominantly found in the estate collections at the Northamptonshire Record Office.

Selection of Case Studies

Using secondary sources and archival material at the Northamptonshire Record Office, architectural alterations to over sixty Northamptonshire houses in the nineteenth century were identified. However, this study focuses on detailed research on just four of these country houses and their estates: Laxton Hall owned by the Evans, Lamport Hall owned by the Ishams, Haselbech Hall owned by the Foljambes, and Overstone Hall owned by

⁸³ Clemenson, *English Country Houses*, p. 13.

⁸⁴ Case studies were selected after a comprehensive search of Pevsner, Heward and Taylor, Gotch and the estate collections of the Northamptonshire Record Office.

⁸⁵ Hall, *The Victorian Country House*, pp. 8–9.

the Overstones, and their respective estates Lamport, Laxton, Haselbech and Sywell.⁸⁶ These houses and estates are not necessarily exceptional or out of the ordinary but have been chosen on the merit of their extant archival material, the presence of significant building work in the nineteenth century and evidence of both male and female agency during alterations. Architectural plans, accounts, legal documents, letters and journals, among other documents, have been used to shed light on the houses' architecture, architects, patrons and the architectural process which resulted in their construction. Documents in the Northamptonshire Record Office have been supplemented with material from various other archives. For example, letters in this thesis relating to Overstone Hall are from Lord Overstone's correspondence held at Senate House Library, London.⁸⁷



Figure 1: Pre-1974 boundaries of Northamptonshire, R. Wilkinson, *The British Isles*, 1812 © British Library Board (BL, Maps 177/d/2[15]).

⁸⁶ Sywell is situated just outside of the park wall at Overstone Hall. The Overstones also owned Sywell Hall.

⁸⁷ A large number of these letters have been transcribed by O'Brien however the originals in Senate House Library have also been consulted. See D. P. O'Brien (ed.), *The Correspondence of Lord Overstone*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1971).

This thesis uses the pre-1974 boundaries of Northamptonshire which included the Soke of Peterborough [Figure 1]. The houses used as case studies are in the north of the county. This concentration can, in no small part, be attributed to the rich supply of high quality stone in the region.⁸⁸ Although the introduction of rail in the mid-nineteenth century facilitated the transport of materials from outside of the county, it did not result in changes of site. As already discussed, many of the houses were built before rail transport and were simply altered or rebuilt.

The date range of this thesis has been determined by the dates of surviving archival material, which stretches across the nineteenth century. Although the building projects discussed were completed by c. 1880 the inclusion of responses to buildings has extended the date range. This period marks a key moment in the changing fortunes of the landed elite. Cannadine has argued that there was a falling away of the landed tradition after 1880 as a result of agricultural decline, a transition in political power from the country to the cities and the accumulation of wealth derived from sources other than land.⁸⁹ This is certainly evidenced in surviving archival material for the houses in this study. In 1880 Lord Overstone wrote: 'I have recently opened two new Columns in my Rent Book. Vis: – Arrears of Rent – and Capital advanced on Farming in hand - Till within the last 12 months, these were unknown quantities'.⁹⁰

The houses discussed in this thesis cannot be claimed to be representative of country house building as a whole; however they do highlight the high levels of building and in particular alteration in nineteenth-century Northamptonshire and the varied roles of men and women in the architectural process. The houses included have been analysed in detail so that the nuances of the complex design process can be revealed. The themes of each chapter have been led by the surviving archival material. Due to the different amounts and types of surviving evidence, in the majority of chapters there is a dominant case study.

This thesis consists of three main sections. The first section introduces the houses, their owners, and architects. In Chapter One alterations executed at each property are described, as well as the specific nature of country house alteration. In Chapter Two the

⁸⁸ Bailey, *Northamptonshire*, pp. 2–7.

⁸⁹ D. Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (Harmondsworth, 1992), pp. 88–181.

⁹⁰ O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 1329, Lord Overstone to Sir Charles Wood, first Viscount Halifax, 20 November 1880.

owners of the properties and their legal position are explored, highlighting how the ability to transfer or alter a property was constrained by gender norms before considering the importance of inheritance and purchase in stimulating building. Chapter Three considers how familial, societal and professional networks contributed to the decision to employ architects at different sites.

Section two questions the idea of an overall presiding genius who controlled building projects as well as an unchanging and unwavering vision of the building work after it was first conceived. In doing so the section deals with questions of intent and agency, feelings of confidence and anxiety, and the negotiation and renegotiation of familial and professional relationships. It does so by exploring a complex series of interactions between protagonists in the design process through the writings of men and women, architectural designs and building accounts. Chapter Four focuses on the relationship between the architect and patron. It considers the extent to which designs were determined by the architect, his ideas, his style and his experience, and the extent to which the patron's influence resulted in compromise and reconceptualisation. Through discussion of letters between the architect and patron the hazards of misunderstanding and miscommunication are highlighted. Chapter Five adds a further layer of complexity to the decision making process described in Chapter Four by considering the engagement of different members of the family with country house design and their roles in the decision making process. The chapter will identify the agency of husbands and wives in specific design decisions and will attempt to discern if these were made collaboratively or individually and how this, in turn, influenced responses to and understandings of the architectural end product.

The final section of the thesis is an exploration of buildings subject to the patronage of the country house owner, but not included within the immediate country house grounds. Using letters between land agents, clergymen and patrons, Chapter Seven attempts to paint a realistic image of agency and patron investment in the estate. The chapter will discuss the building of cottages, buildings related to the church and schools. It will identify how these buildings related to the country house in terms of patronage, design, and control of the country houses owners.

Chapter One

Altering and Rebuilding the Northamptonshire Country House

A new house and an altered house are only theoretically similar;
practically there is in the altered house certain elements of contrivance
which are entirely novel, namely, the necessities of compromise.⁹¹

Robert Kerr, 1865

In his second edition of *The Gentleman's House* (1865) Kerr introduced twelve new chapters on the problems and challenges of altering an existing building.⁹² Even though the guiding principles of design were the same as a new build, he argued, alterations presented unique problems as they were governed and shaped by existing structures. This often resulted in discussion, compromise, and 'novel' architecture. The reasons to change a house could be many. However, Kerr surmised that there were five different ways, and thus five different reasons, to execute alterations. A house could be rearranged, enlarged, or a combination of the two. It could also be diminished and rearranged or a new house built incorporating old material.⁹³ The reasons why alterations were executed and the conversations and negotiations which shaped them will be addressed in various ways throughout the remainder of this thesis. For now, this chapter will outline the alterations executed at Laxton Hall, Lamport Hall, Haselbech Hall and Overstone Hall and how these related to wider trends in country house building. All of the houses roughly fall into Kerr's broad categories. At Lamport Hall, the primary purpose of alterations was to rearrange the existing structure to create larger and more convenient accommodation. Laxton and Haselbech were enlarged, and Overstone, at least initially, fell into the last category: building a new house but incorporating an older structure.

Just as Kerr noted that alteration presented a unique set of issues for the architect, the study of alteration equally creates a series of interpretive problems for the historian.

⁹¹ R. Kerr, *The Gentleman's House or, How to Plan English Residences, From the Parsonage to the Palace; With Tables of Accommodation and Cost, and a Series of Selected Plans* (London, 2nd ed., 1865), p. 279.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. iii and 'Supplement: Notes on the Alteration of Existing Houses', pp. 279–299.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

There is no consensus over how much of an original structure needs to be retained before it is considered something new; a completely different building. There is also no agreement on what constitutes an alteration rather than a simple tweaking or adjustment.⁹⁴ Girouard divides the different kinds of building which could take place into eight categories: addition, alteration, rebuilding, remodelling, reconstruction, restoration, demolition and garden alterations. He only defines one of these, reconstruction, as ‘something more than a remodelling, resulting in a virtually new house’.⁹⁵ Wilson and Mackley differentiate between a thorough rebuilding and a simple re-casing and Stone makes a distinction between ‘builders’ and ‘major builders’.

‘Builders’ consisted of owners who made any alterations or additions to the house, exterior and interior, grounds or offices. ‘Major builders’ were those who added 5000 square feet or more of additional building for family accommodation. Stone’s category of ‘Major builders’ does not include country house offices and as a result, it is likely it drastically underestimated the extent of building.⁹⁶

Yet, service areas were vital to the functioning of the country house and should be considered as part of, rather than distinct from, main programmes of alteration or building. Service areas were commissioned by the same patron and often designed by the same architects employed to build or alter public or family areas of the house.⁹⁷ However, this part of the country house has not often been regarded as a significant object of study and has suffered by the prioritising of family and public spaces.⁹⁸ The house, gardens, and pleasure grounds of country houses have also often been studied in isolation from each other. Yet, the nineteenth-century architectural and garden theorist and designer John C. Loudon believed that one of the greatest flaws in architecture was the division between buildings and gardens and his contemporary Beresford Hope argued for a united approach to garden and architectural design.⁹⁹ This was practiced by

⁹⁴ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 222.

⁹⁵ Girouard, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 436.

⁹⁶ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 204; Stone, *An Open Elite?*, pp. 269–272.

⁹⁷ Hall, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 17.

⁹⁸ As part of his study on the country house plan Franklin has discussed the relationship of service areas to staff numbers. See J. Franklin, *The Gentleman’s Country House*; Girouard has described the increasing specialisation of service areas in *The Victorian Country House*; J. Gerard and P. Horn have described not only the material structure of the house and servants’ rooms, but the household structure and behaviour. See J. Gerard, *Country House Life: Family and Servants 1815–1914* (Oxford, 1994); P. Horn, *Ladies of the Manor* (Stroud, 1991).

⁹⁹ J. C. Loudon, *An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture* (London, 1846), p. 771.

architects such as Charles Barry, who believed ‘the definite artificial lines of a building should not be contrasted, but harmonized, with the free and careless grace of natural beauty.’¹⁰⁰ Although these two components may have been designed by different people, when executed at the same, or a similar time they all contributed to a wider remodelling and re-conceptualisation of the house. A more useful perspective is not to consider if a house was rebuilt or altered or if the alteration was large or small, but to consider what the effects of these changes were on the houses’ use and appearance and how these fitted into, or even prompted wider programmes of alteration.

Kerr’s additions to *The Gentleman’s House* suggest the importance of alteration in the nineteenth century. Architects became experts in planning as a result of the need to adapt buildings to new conditions, technologies and changing social mores.¹⁰¹ In particular, William Burn, who will be encountered throughout this thesis, was famous for his ability to ‘rationalise’ any house. The most common alterations in Northamptonshire and more generally were the addition or alteration of servants’ areas, the construction of rooms and spaces for entertaining such as dining rooms, smoking rooms, conservatories, orangeries and fashionable gardens. Rooms for entertaining were often located around a hall or vestibule for circulation and entered from the principal entrance.¹⁰² The form alterations took responded to changing architectural conventions. Kerr argued that the most important aspects of the nineteenth-century country house were privacy, comfort, convenience, spaciousness, compactness, light and air, salubrity, aspect and prospect, and cheerfulness.¹⁰³ The country house plan as described by Kerr was expressive of gender ideologies and concepts of private, domestic feminine spaces and public masculine spaces. New technologies were introduced to increase houses’ convenience both for the families and servants. In the present day, however, these improvements have often been seen as retrogressions and as a result, many of the nineteenth-century ‘improvements’ have been removed.¹⁰⁴ Hall has argued that a study of the country house in the nineteenth century has to recognise ‘that every country-

¹⁰⁰ A. Barry, *Memoir of the Life and Works of the Late Sir Charles Barry* (London, 1870), p. 113.

¹⁰¹ See Chapter Three.

¹⁰² These match general trends in nineteenth-century country house alteration. See Hall, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 9 and Girouard, *The Victorian Country House*, pp. 27–34.

¹⁰³ Kerr, *The Gentleman’s House*, p. 279.

¹⁰⁴ For a discussion of the various reasons why parts of country houses were demolished see Clemenson, *English Country Houses*, pp. 113–150 and Stone, *An Open Elite?*, pp. 367–8, 375.

house architect and interior decorator of the time worked on both old and new houses'.¹⁰⁵

Looking at each house considered in this thesis in turn, this chapter will describe how the house was altered and the effect these changes had on the building's appearance and plan. This does not encompass every modification executed during building but highlights particular elements within wider building programmes.¹⁰⁶ This chapter also does not analyse why building took place or look in detail at the evolution of designs during the design process. These topics are reserved for the remainder of the thesis.

Instead, it aims to give the necessary context to understand themes considered elsewhere by describing the house prior to alteration, the modifications executed and how these related to wider nineteenth-century architectural conventions. In particular, it will highlight aspects of the architecture which were the direct product of alteration and which, in a new build, might have been executed differently. It will also expose the similarities and differences between the types of alterations executed and the way these were achieved. Before entering this discussion it is worth noting that, to date, of the four houses considered here, Overstone Hall and Haselbech Hall have not been studied in detail elsewhere and as a result are described at length.¹⁰⁷ The difficulties of researching these two buildings are increased by the loss of much of the historic fabric. The interiors and service wing at Haselbech Hall were destroyed by a fire in 1917 and a large proportion of Overstone Hall was lost to a fire in 2001.

Laxton Hall

After their marriage in 1806 George Freke Evans (1772–1829) moved to Laxton Hall to live with his new wife, Lady Carbery (1770–1828). His arrival marked the beginning of

¹⁰⁵ Hall, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 9.

¹⁰⁶ In particular, this introduction does not look at alterations to the interior decoration of the houses in detail. This will, however, be considered in Chapter Five.

¹⁰⁷ For Lamport Hall see J. Bold, *John Webb, Architectural Theory and Practice in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 81–89 ; G. Isham, 'The Architectural History of Lamport Hall', *Reports and Papers of the Northamptonshire Architectural and Architectural Society*, 57 (1951), pp. 13–28; A. Oswald, 'Lamport Hall, Northamptonshire – I', *Country Life* (26 September, 1952), pp. 932–935; A. Oswald, 'Lamport Hall, Northamptonshire – II', *Country Life* (3 October, 1952), pp. 1022–1025; A. Oswald, 'Lamport Hall, Northamptonshire – III', *Country Life* (10 October, 1952), pp. 1107–1109. For Laxton Hall see RCHME, *Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire*, vol. 6, *Architectural Monuments in North Northamptonshire* (London, 1984), pp. 106–115.

a programme of alterations and additions to the Hall only thirty years after it had been built by George Evans, fourth Baron Carbery (1766–1804).¹⁰⁸ To execute these modifications the Evans hired Humphry Repton (1752–1818) and his son John Adey (1775–1860).¹⁰⁹ Designs were produced for landscaping the grounds, extending and altering the existing eighteenth-century mansion, altering and adding to the offices, a new stable block, an arch and lodges at the principal entrance, a bridge and dam, church, and for erecting various other buildings on the estate.¹¹⁰ Thus, it was intended that the whole site and surrounding village would be remodelled. The chronology and details of the alterations to Laxton have been described in detail in *The Inventory of the Historical Monuments* and as a result only a brief introduction is given here.¹¹¹

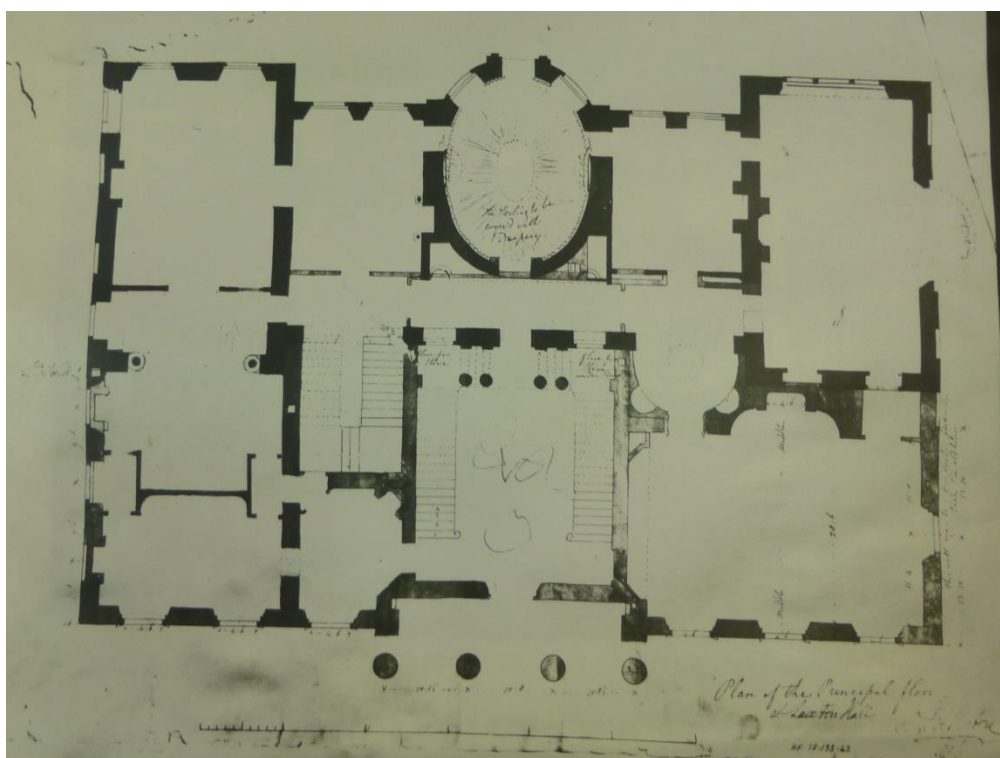


Figure 2: Photocopy of proposed plan for the principal floor, Humphry Repton, 1806. The slightly darker areas at the top of the plan show the eighteenth-century structure (NRO, Map 5053). Reproduced with permission of the Northamptonshire Record Office.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Heward and Taylor, *Country Houses of Northamptonshire*, p. 263.

¹⁰⁹ A comment in a letter suggests that Mr Legg of Stamford drew up plans prior to the Reptons' commission and that these were adapted by the Reptons. On 22 September 1806 Humphry Repton wrote to George Freke Evans 'you will send to me by the Stamford coach the plans of Laxton house drawn by Mr Legg of Stamford'. See NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/32–33.

¹¹⁰ See Chapters Six and Seven.

¹¹¹ RHCME, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire*, pp. 106–115.

¹¹² For a reconstruction of the eighteenth-century floor plan see *Ibid.*

The original eighteenth-century structure had rubble stone walling and consisted of three principal floors and two basement floors but was only four bays wide.¹¹³ A number of designs from 1806 by Humphry Repton survive to illustrate the proposed alterations to the eighteenth-century house.¹¹⁴ However, from a comparison between the plan of the building today and Repton's drawings, it is evident these designs were not followed exactly [Figure 2].¹¹⁵ In 1808 and as a result of a series of arguments between the patron and architects, Repton was dismissed and replaced by the architect and surveyor William Carter.¹¹⁶ At this stage, alterations to the house had already commenced and 'the walls were in fact carried up'.¹¹⁷ However, to finish the programme of building Carter chose not to follow Repton's plans exactly, but to alter the scheme and make up his own drawings.¹¹⁸ In the event, the final result was not dissimilar to the building intended by Repton.

The structure of the existing house was retained and a new neo-classical range with a large portico was built along the south front.¹¹⁹ This, in effect, doubled the size of the building. A series of new public rooms was created in the new range including a grand central entrance hall with a music room to the west and dining room to the east. The entrance hall was the new focal point to the house. To design the interior of the hall, the Evans hired George Dance the younger.¹²⁰ A surviving preliminary design c. 1812 shows a top lit double height hall with a rusticated basement, round arches and Ionic screen across the upper floor of the south wall.¹²¹ In execution, minor alterations were made to the door heads, and the ornamental lions guarding the entrance below the ionic screen were omitted [Figure 3]. Although the structure of the eighteenth-century house

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ The original designs have been lost since the writing of *An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire* however low quality photocopies are held at the Northamptonshire Record Office. It is not known if all of the original drawings were copied.

¹¹⁵ There have been relatively few structural alterations to the house since the early nineteenth century. Laxton Hall is currently used as a Polish old people's home staffed by the Polish Sisters of Mary Immaculate.

¹¹⁶ See Chapter Four.

¹¹⁷ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/3, William Carter vs George Freke Evans, 20 January 1815.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ The portico was filled in to make an entrance vestibule in 1845 however the original columns can still be seen on the interior.

¹²⁰ G. Isham 'Laxton Hall near Corby, Northamptonshire', *Reports and Papers of the Northamptonshire Antiquarian Society* (1969), pp. 18–21.

¹²¹ Sir John Soane Museum, Slider 3, Set 7, George Dance, 'Design for a new staircase, hall & passage for George Freke Evans', c. 1812.

was retained the plan was altered. A large library was formed by the demolition of partition walls between the oval room [Figure 2] and its ante-rooms. To either side of the new library were drawing rooms.¹²² The remodelled Hall was lavishly decorated with rich fabrics and ornamented with detailed plaster work and marble fireplaces.¹²³



Figure 3: Entrance Hall to Laxton published in J. P. Neale *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in England, Wales, Scotland Ireland*, 2nd ser. (London, 1824), vol. 1.

¹²² This was not part of the proposed interior layout illustrated by the 1806 Repton design [Figure 2].

¹²³ For more on the interior decoration see Chapter Five. A number of fire places are easily identified by letters to George Freke Evans and in accounts. This has been described in the RHCME *Inventory of Historical Monuments in the Country of Northamptonshire*, plate 111.

To ensure the old and new parts of the building harmonised, the south and west fronts of the original eighteenth-century building were refaced in ashlar drawn from the Evans' quarry. Although not an expensive alteration, it made a noticeable difference to the unity of the design. If the old window surrounds were kept, Carter argued, the 'alteration is comparatively trifling being confined to lab[ou]r only as we have so much fine stone in the quarry and it is my opinion that to...repair and clean down the old front &c. will cost more than one half the proposed alteration.'¹²⁴ The old structure was given a new finish to create the impression that the different elements of the main house had been built simultaneously. However, the east elevation of the Hall belied the house's neo-classical shell. The original facing of the eighteenth-century house is still evident [Figure 4]. Interestingly, even where this facade was part of the new build it was constructed of rubble stone walling, as was the new service wing. This suggests a hierarchy of elements and a prioritising of spending.¹²⁵ This kind of re-facing was not uncommon in the nineteenth century. Among other examples, East Carlton, Leicestershire, was refaced to create a French appearance and Highclere Castle, Hampshire, was re-faced in an 'Anglo-Italian' style.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/3, William Carter to George Freke Evans, 4 November 1809.

¹²⁵ RHCME, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire*, pp. 105–106.

¹²⁶ Girouard, *The Victorian Country House*, pp. 130–136.



Figure 4: North section of the east elevation where the rubble wall of the original house is still visible. To the right of the picture is the ashlar faced north facade of the new building.

Not only were the public areas of the house increased in size but the service provision was extended by the erection of a substantial new service range to the east. This was sunken and screened from view by trees to both the north and south thereby ensuring that the structure would not interrupt the symmetry of the new neo-classical facade. All of the service rooms appear to have been located in this wing and included a new kitchen.¹²⁷ The positioning of the wing in the landscape to ensure it would not disrupt the view of the house was part of a wider proposal to landscape the grounds and which is shown in a watercolour sketch by Repton from 1806 [Figure 5].¹²⁸ Proposed

¹²⁷ RHCME, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire*, pp. 112–113.

¹²⁸ In the correspondence used to describe alterations to Laxton Hall in this thesis there is very little mention of alterations to the landscape and, as a result, they do not feature extensively. Correspondence does suggest that Humphry Repton did complete at least some of his proposals. In a letter regarding payment in 1810, Repton notes that he was engaged marking out roads, plantations and water. See NRO, Freke, Bundle 5/1, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 28 June 1810.

alterations to the Hall and the site of the offices are shown, as well as a rotunda to the south of the house. An engraving from J. P. Neale's *Views of the Seats of Noblemen* published in 1824 shows a similar garden building to the east of the north front, suggesting this feature may have been completed but in a different position.¹²⁹ To the north of the Hall a sweeping carriage drive was proposed which, on approach, would provide views of the house, neo-classical stables and serpentine river to the east [Figure 34].¹³⁰



Figure 5: Watercolour showing proposed alterations to the grounds at Laxton Hall, Humphry Repton, 1806 (Private Collection).

¹²⁹ J. P. Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen, in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland* (London, 1824), vol. 1.

¹³⁰ See engraving in H. Repton, *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (London, 1816), p. 113.

Lamport Hall

In 1818 Sir Justinian Isham, eighth Baronet (1773–1854), inherited Lamport Hall and soon moved in with his young wife, Mary (1788–1878).¹³¹ The house was a patchwork of structures which had not been updated since the 1740s.¹³² As a result, it retained much of the inconvenience of an old house added to and altered in a piecemeal fashion.

An engraving by James Blackmore shows the north west front prior to any nineteenth-century alterations [Figure 6].¹³³ The lower block [left] comprises a house built in 1568 and extended in 1610 and 1611.¹³⁴ There was a second detached kitchen range to the south. To the east John Webb constructed a classical pavilion from 1654 for the second Baronet, Sir Justinian Isham, to create a grand space for entertaining but also to please Sir Justinian's new wife [Figure 7].¹³⁵ Blackmore's engraving also shows the side of a tall Italianate block [right] built by Francis Smith of Warwick in 1732 and which attached the sixteenth and early seventeenth-century buildings to the pavilion built by Webb.¹³⁶ A matching wing was built in 1740 to the south of the Webb block [Figure 7].

¹³¹ Two generations of the Isham family are discussed in this thesis. To avoid confusion Sir Justinian Isham, eighth Baronet is referred to as Sir Justinian and his wife Mary Isham (née Close) as Mary. Sir Charles Isham, tenth Baronet, is referred to as Sir Charles and his wife Emily Isham (née Vaughan) as Emily. Where there is any possible ambiguity full names are given; In her journal Mary recorded moving to Lamport Hall in September 1818. Although she recorded arriving at Lamport with her two children, Justinian Vere (later the ninth Baronet) and Charles, only Sir Justinian Vere was born at this date, suggesting it may be incorrect. See NRO, IL 3278, Journal of Mary Isham.

¹³² Heward and Taylor, *Country Houses of Northamptonshire*, p. 260; Garwood, 'Hidden Patronage', p. 34.

¹³³ This image is on display at Lamport Hall. There is a similar drawing by an unknown artist in the Northamptonshire Record Office. See NRO, IL 3079/D5.

¹³⁴ When the site was acquired by John Isham, first Baronet (1582–1651) in 1568 there was a parsonage house on the site. Parts of this were retained in the building of 1568. See Heward and Taylor, *Country Houses of Northamptonshire*, p. 257.

¹³⁵ G. Isham (ed.), *The Correspondence of Bishop Brian Duppa and Sir Justinian Isham 1650–1660* (Northampton, 1955), vol. 17, p. 83; Isham 'The Architectural History of Lamport Hall', p. 17.

¹³⁶ For more on the early architectural development of the house see Heward and Taylor, *Country Houses of Northamptonshire*, p. 257; Isham, 'The Architectural History of Lamport Hall'.



Figure 6: Lamport Hall, James Blackmore, 1761. At the centre is the north west front of the house prior to alterations in the 1820s. The classical four bay structure was constructed by the Smiths of Warwick in 1732. Flanking the courtyard are two stable ranges which, at the time this was drawn, framed the main approach to the house (LH). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

Unlike the other houses considered in this thesis, Lamport Hall had already been subject to two major building programmes which had altered both the appearance and size of the earlier house. This was clearly visible in the variety of styles present in the house's facade when Sir Justinian Isham, eighth Baronet, inherited in 1818 but also the plan of the house. For example, the seventeenth-century stair of the Webb pavilion was retained even though a new stair leading to the same place was erected in the new wing built by Francis Smith of Warwick seventy seven years later.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ It is possible that the two staircases led to two separate suites of private apartments however there is little evidence to suggest this.



Figure 7: South west front of Lamport Hall, James Blackmore, 1761, showing the John Webb pavilion and Smith of Warwick wings (NRO, IL 3079/D63). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.



Figure 8: South east front of Lamport Hall, George Clarke, c. 1820–1842. To the left is a wing constructed by the Smiths of Warwick in 1740, the porch was constructed by Henry Hakewill in 1821 and the low structure to the right is part of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century building (NRO, IL 3079/D70). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

Sir Justinian and Mary rationalised the layout of the Hall and updated the service and family accommodation, before refurnishing the Hall in the latest Regency fashion. The architect employed to complete these alterations was Henry Hakewill (1771–1830). The building programme began with the removal of the west stable block in 1819 [shown in Figure 6]. Soon after, Hakewill rebuilt the north west range in a neo-Jacobean style sympathetic in appearance to the original building [Figure 10]. A plan of proposed alterations from 1821 [Figure 9] reveals that the Tudor Hall was intended to be retained. In execution and almost certainly as a result of its poor condition, this was demolished. It may have been this original intention, however, which determined the front's style. Once it was apparent that the Hall would have to be demolished it was decided that the new north west front would be realigned at ninety degrees to the existing south east building.¹³⁸

Thus, the remodelled north west entrance to the Hall was no longer the principal entrance but a side entrance and the Gothic porch was not used by adult members of the kinship family but servants and children accessing the service areas and nursery. This construction of a separate domestic area was increasingly common and separated family spaces from areas for entertaining. It also provided privacy for the country-house owners and servants who now had their own separate domains.¹³⁹ A new bedroom suite was added above the 'Summer Drawing Room', now the Cabinet Room, transforming the space from a two floor high open summer room to an upstairs bedroom and downstairs billiards room. To access this bedroom a new curved Tuscan porch was erected at the garden front [Figure 8]. More space was created downstairs by reorganising the system of stairs. Sir Justinian and Mary commissioned a single staircase to be constructed where the staircase from the Webb building was built but rotated so it started on the opposite wall. The new service areas were further added to in 1825 when a wash house and laundry, tool, wood and coal store, dairy and scullery were erected to the west of the house.¹⁴⁰ These measures rationalised the house but also created a home suited to nineteenth-century ideals of comfort, convenience and family.

¹³⁸ This realignment is illustrated in two later plans from 1821 drawn to show the layout of storm drains. See NRO, IL 3079/D11 & D12.

¹³⁹ Hall, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 17.

¹⁴⁰ For plans see NRO, IL 3079/D22, Henry Hakewill to Sir Justinian Isham, 19 February 1825 and NRO, IL 3079/D32, John Goldicutt to D. Hewlett, 1 March 1825.



Figure 9: Ground floor plan of Lamport Hall showing proposed alterations in red, Henry Hakewill, October 1820. The Tudor Hall is labelled 'Old Hall'. Steps from the newer parts of the Hall show that this was on a different level and the plan clearly shows the whole range was on a different alignment (NRO, IL 3079/D7). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.



Figure 10: Elevation showing new wing in a style sympathetic to the previous structure, Henry Hakewill, 1820 (NRO, IL 3079/D6). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

The Ishams redecorated Lamport Hall in the latest Regency fashion. Accounts record practical family items being purchased, such as a child's bed. Furniture was purchased to fill newly built rooms such as a billiards table, purchased and set up for £45 19s 16d in a new billiard room designed by Hakewill. Others were to furnish old rooms in need of updating, such as a large amount of furniture brought for the old library.¹⁴¹

In 1842 a second phase of alterations was executed by Henry Goddard (1792–1868) which focused on the south east range of the Hall [Figure 8]. The north east end of the Webb building was seamlessly extended by a bay and the Elizabethan kitchen wing was re-fronted to create a flat, rather than stepped, facade.¹⁴² This extended the drawing room and kitchen on the ground floor and above, a bedroom and series of store rooms was created. The ghost of the previous facade is evident in the style and detailing of the new front. The banding across the facade was present on the original Elizabethan house as were hood mouldings over the windows. Even though rebuilt further forward, the round heads of some of the windows were also retained, even if the number of lights

¹⁴¹ NRO, IL 2328, Summary account book, 1818–1836.

¹⁴² The plans drawn by Henry Goddard do not show if any of the old front was actually retained during the rebuilding however, elements of the Elizabethan house do still survive at basement level.

was reduced. Garwood has noted the effect the re-fronting would have had in creating bright open rooms and providing a broad view across the gardens.¹⁴³

Justinian Vere Isham, ninth Baronet (1818–1846), inherited in 1845 on the death of his father. He suffered so greatly from his father's death that, upon medical advice, he moved to Cheltenham to avoid the stresses of day to day business and seems to have left the running of the family home to his mother and younger brother. Almost a year and a half later he committed suicide, aged 29.¹⁴⁴ In his short tenure he left little mark on the material fabric of Lamport Hall. The only building work undertaken before his death was the construction of an ice house in 1846.¹⁴⁵ His younger brother Sir Charles (1819–1903) unexpectedly inherited the house his mother and father had updated. However, with his wife Emily (1825–1898), he continued to adjust and enlarge the Hall.

In 1848 and 1853 a conservatory and green house were built and in 1850 a lodge was erected at the entrance gate by J. G. Bland, though evidently influenced by Sir Charles.¹⁴⁶ This had always been intended by Hakewill but had never been completed.¹⁴⁷ It was not until 1857, over ten years after his inheritance and after his marriage to Emily, that any alterations were made to the house itself. At this time, minor alterations were executed by the Goddards. The scullery and dairy scullery were enlarged and a still room added. Three years later the architect William Burn (1789–1870) was hired to execute major changes to the house. These centred on the creation of a new entrance to the house by moving the principal entrance back to the north west front.

¹⁴³ Garwood, 'Hidden Patronage', p. 39.

¹⁴⁴ In Mary Isham's diary (Sir Justinian Vere Isham's mother) she wrote '1846, Aug. 25. My lamented son Justinian Vere died at Cheltenham, Funeral took place at Lamport, sorrow after sorrow'. See NRO, I 1384, Diary of Mary Isham. Mary had lost her only daughter to measles on 15 March 1828, her husband had died in 1845, and now her eldest son had committed suicide. See also 'Suicide by a gentleman of fortune', *Morning Post*, 28 August 1846, p. 4; 'Suicide of Sir Justinian Vere Isham, Bart.', *Leicestershire Mercury*, 5 September 1846; NRO, I 13/1–3, Items relating to the death of Sir Justinian Vere Isham.

¹⁴⁵ NRO, IL 3086, Mary Isham 'Memorandums taken from old papers'.

¹⁴⁶ NRO, IL 136, Estimate and bill for erection of a conservatory, 1853; NRO, IL 3086, Mary Isham 'Memorandums taken from old papers'; Bailey, *Northamptonshire*, p. 385. J. C. Bland was used by the Ishams elsewhere on the estate. In 1848 he was employed to build Lamport Home Farm, known today as Lamport Manor Farm. See NRO, IL 3079/D71–75.

¹⁴⁷ In a letter of 1824 Hakewill wrote that a lodge would be necessary 'to prevent intrusion from the road' and that planting should be included to screen it from view. See NRO, IL 3079/D20.

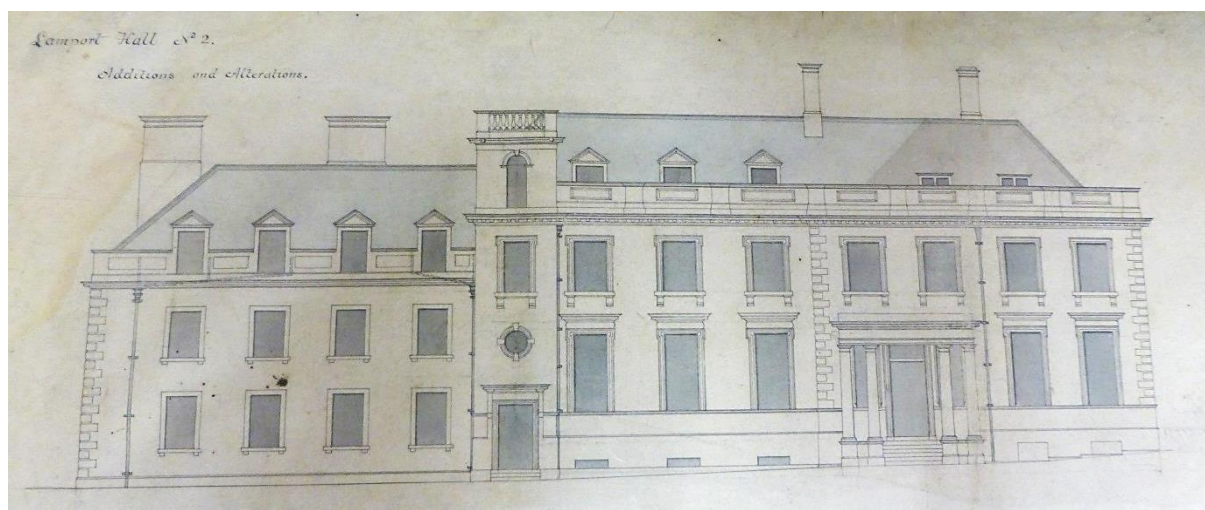


Figure 11: Detail from sheet of designs for Lampport Hall showing the proposed re-facing of the north west front, William Burn, 10 April 1860 (NRO, IL 3079/D56). Reproduced with permission of the Lampport Hall Trustees.

The existing entrance on the Webb front led straight into the hall. The new entrance porch led into a small entrance hall and vestibule [Figure 9]. Thus, the hall could now be used solely for dancing and the new vestibule provided appropriate space to greet guests as well as easy access to all the public rooms.¹⁴⁸ Without moving any walls, the layout of the house was transformed and the old rooms given a new lease of life and new purposes. The drive was re-routed in 1862 to terminate outside the new entrance. All sense of confusion as to the location of the main entrance was solved by the construction of a balustrade terrace to cut off carriage traffic to the previous entrance in the Webb wing; a common technique used when moving entrances. However, as a result of the reorientation of the house, carriages now swept past the grand entrance built by Webb c. 1654–57 to what looked like the side of the house. The appearance of the front was not suitable for an impressive entrance to the Hall. The project grew and resulted in the complete restyling of the front.

The first design for the new appearance of the front is dated 10 April 1860 [Figure 11]. The fashionable ‘Italianate’ style harmonises with the style of the existing Smith of Warwick block. Burn included an entrance porch but also added a small lateral tower, as an entrance for visitors’ luggage. Carriages could now pass directly from the main entrance porch to the luggage porch. Unlike the other examples of re-facing described thus far, the front of Lampport was entirely removed and when rebuilt, the whole of the

¹⁴⁸ Garwood, ‘Hidden Patronage’, p. 46.

building left of the Smith of Warwick wing was constructed 6ft further forward. This enlarged the dining room and service areas. More space for servants was also created by adding servants' attic rooms across the whole of the front. All these alterations created a space better suited to entertaining.

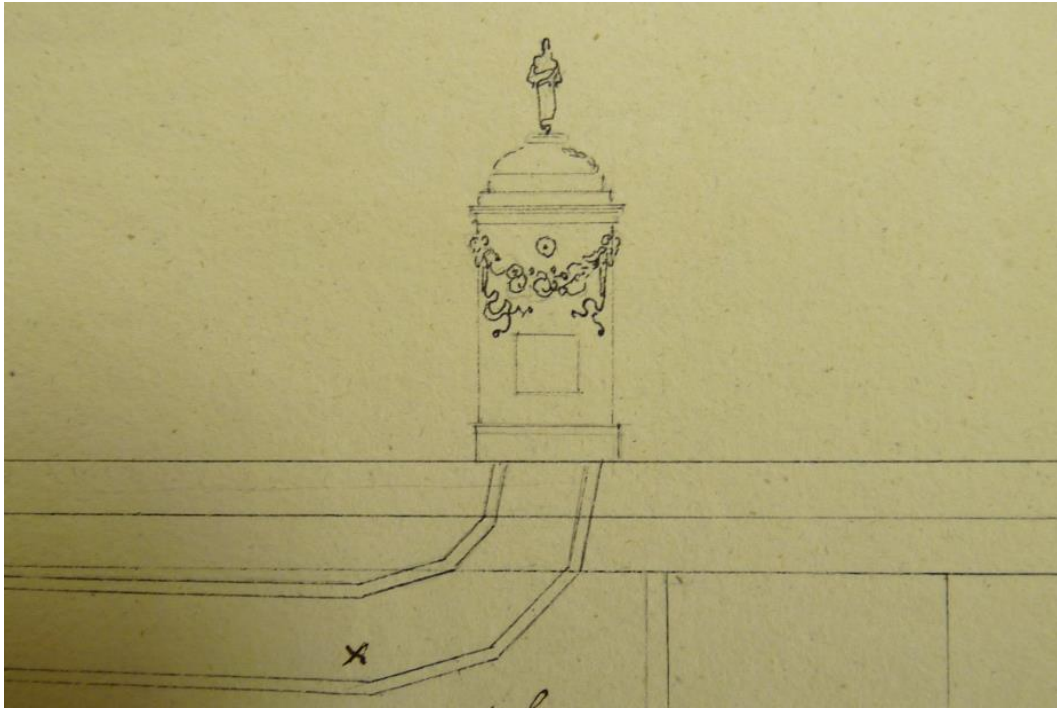


Figure 12: Detail from sheet of designs for a hall stove and flues at Lamport Hall showing ornamental stove, Henry Hakewill, 9 October 1821 (NRO, IL 3079/D16). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

Across the designs and alterations executed by Sir Justinian and Mary and Sir Charles and Emily new technologies were implemented at the Hall to increase ‘comfort’ and ‘convenience’. Designs by Hakewill of the vestibule which led to the new dining room, best stairs, drawing room, library and ‘cabinet room’ include an ornamental ‘hall stove’ [Figures 12 & 9], popular from the early eighteenth century.¹⁴⁹ This acted as a focal point to the room but also heated the space.¹⁵⁰ During Sir Charles and Emily’s tenure a coal and luggage lift was installed in 1861 at a cost of £140. From September 1861 to

¹⁴⁹ C. Handymen, *Home Comfort: A History of Domestic Arrangements* (London, 1992), pp. 156–157.

¹⁵⁰ In a plan of 31 March 1821 this room (now the entrance Hall to the house) is labelled as the ‘cabinet room’. This is most likely because it contained the collection of Flemish cabinets brought to Lamport by Sir Thomas Isham, third Baronet (1656–1681). See NRO, IL 3079/D11, Henry Hakewill, Plan of Lamport Hall showing storm drains, 31 March 1821.

February 1862 bells were hung in the stables and house costing £166 4s and a new hot water system installed by Mr Perkins in May 1866 at the cost of £72 19s 8d.¹⁵¹

Haselbech Hall

When Viscountess Milton (1812–1883) purchased Haselbech Hall from William Franklin in 1856 she did not buy a house which was ready to live in, but a building project. In the contract for sale it was stated that ‘all and singular the fittings & materials now on the premises provided by and belonging to the vendor and applicable towards the completion of the mansion house stables & other buildings in course of erection on the estate shall belong to the purchaser’.¹⁵² Thus, Viscountess Milton was not only buying a house, its grounds and associated buildings, but the means to complete any unfinished works.¹⁵³ In a valuation completed by the Leicester Banking Company it was estimated that these works would cost £1480 to complete and, when finished, would create a ‘residence of the first character’.¹⁵⁴ In spite of the unfinished nature of the house and stables they concluded Haselbech was a good investment.¹⁵⁵

The alterations to Haselbech Hall can be divided into several phases. The first was a building programme started by Franklin and completed by Viscountess Milton. This included alterations to the existing seventeenth-century house, the construction of a service wing and the erection of a stable block with a coach house, brewhouse, and aviary or ‘poultry roost’ attached. A specification of unfinished work made before the sale suggests that the vast majority of structural alterations to the house and stables were finished but the interiors and fixings remained to be executed in both the house

¹⁵¹ NRO, IL 136, Bundle of receipts including receipt for a new hot water system, 18 June 1866; NRO, IL 2771/C, Letter discussing estimates for a lift, 24 October 1861; NRO, IL 3079/D60, Plan of the position of the lift, n.d.; NRO, IL 2785, Clerk of the works ‘Journal of the Works Executing at Lamport Hall’, 1861–1862.

¹⁵² NRO, FS 24/2, Smith of the Leicester Banking Company to Viscountess Milton, c. 1855.

¹⁵³ The letters from Smith to Viscountess Milton also mention designs which had been passed on to Viscountess Milton as part of the purchase. See *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ NRO, FS 24/2, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 2 September 1856.

¹⁵⁵ William Franklin was anxious to make a quick sale, most likely due to poor finances. However, there is also evidence to suggest that he was reluctant to sell the estate and even more reluctant to leave the village. When the sale was being finalised, Franklin assumed that he would be able to remain on the estate at Home Farm and to keep a large portion of the land. Viscountess Milton did not agree to this arrangement. See NRO, FS 24/2, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 6 February 1856; FS 24/2, Edward K. Fisher to Bennett, Field and Dawson, 5 March 1856.

and stables.¹⁵⁶ A long list of repairs was also made for the coach house, brew house and aviary.¹⁵⁷ The finishing of the outstanding alterations and repairs to the Hall appear to have been the responsibility of Henry Goddard.¹⁵⁸ A second phase of work was started after Viscountess Milton purchased the Hall. This included updating the house's plumbing, landscaping the grounds, and building an extension to the service wing. To complete the landscaping of the grounds and additions to the service wing Viscountess Milton hired the London architect Ambrose Poynter (1796–1886). Although these alterations can broadly be divided between those started by Franklin and those started by Viscountess Milton, the exact dating of elements of the structure is not easily ascertained.

Little evidence survives to describe alterations to the Hall during Franklin's ownership (1853–1856). However, these, and subsequent alterations by Viscountess Milton, can be establish through surviving accounts, maps, letters and bills, as well as a series of drawings and photographs which illustrate the evolution of the gardens and south facade. Little is known of the nineteenth-century interiors of the house after these were destroyed by a fire in 1917.

¹⁵⁶ NRO, FS 24/4, 'Specification of unfinished work at Haselbech Hall', August 1856.

¹⁵⁷ A plan of proposed alterations to the stables by Cecil Foljambe in 1868 shows that the coach house was attached to the north west of the stables and that the 'poultry roost' (possibly the aviary referred to in contemporary letters) and brew house were to the south west of the stables. See NRO, FS 24/46.

¹⁵⁸ See Chapter Three for more on the exact role of Henry Goddard.



Figure 13: Haselbeeche [sic] Hall prior to William Franklin and Viscountess Milton's alterations, George Clarke, c. 1830 (NRO, I 909). Reproduced with permission of the Northamptonshire Record Office.

An ink sketch by George Clarke of Scaldwell from c. 1830 [Figure 13] shows the appearance of the south front of the seventeenth-century Hall built by Henry Jones for Randolph Wykes c. 1678 and before any alterations by Franklin and Viscountess Milton.¹⁵⁹ The house had a hipped roof with a heavy cornice, bay and dormer windows and the main entrance, marked by a simple pediment, was approached from a short drive. To the north, and just visible in Clarke's illustration, was a series of outbuildings which ran in front of the north elevation.¹⁶⁰ This was a modest house which shared many characteristic features of early seventeenth-century properties designed by provincial architects.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ RCHME, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments*, vol. 3, *Archaeological Sites in North-West Northamptonshire*, pp. 100–102.

¹⁶⁰ These were likely to have been farm buildings. The buildings were separated from the main approach by a wall which ran from the west end of the house to the perimeter of the property ensuring visitors would pass to the south front of the Hall. See NRO, Map 648, Map of the parish of Haselbech by Albert Pell, 1850.

¹⁶¹ E. V. Chew, 'A Mockery of the Surveyor's style?: Alternatives to Inigo Jones in Seventeenth-Century Elite British Architecture' in B. Arciszewska and E. McKeller (eds.), *Articulating British Classicism: New Approaches in Eighteenth-Century Architecture* (Aldershot, 2004), p. 60.

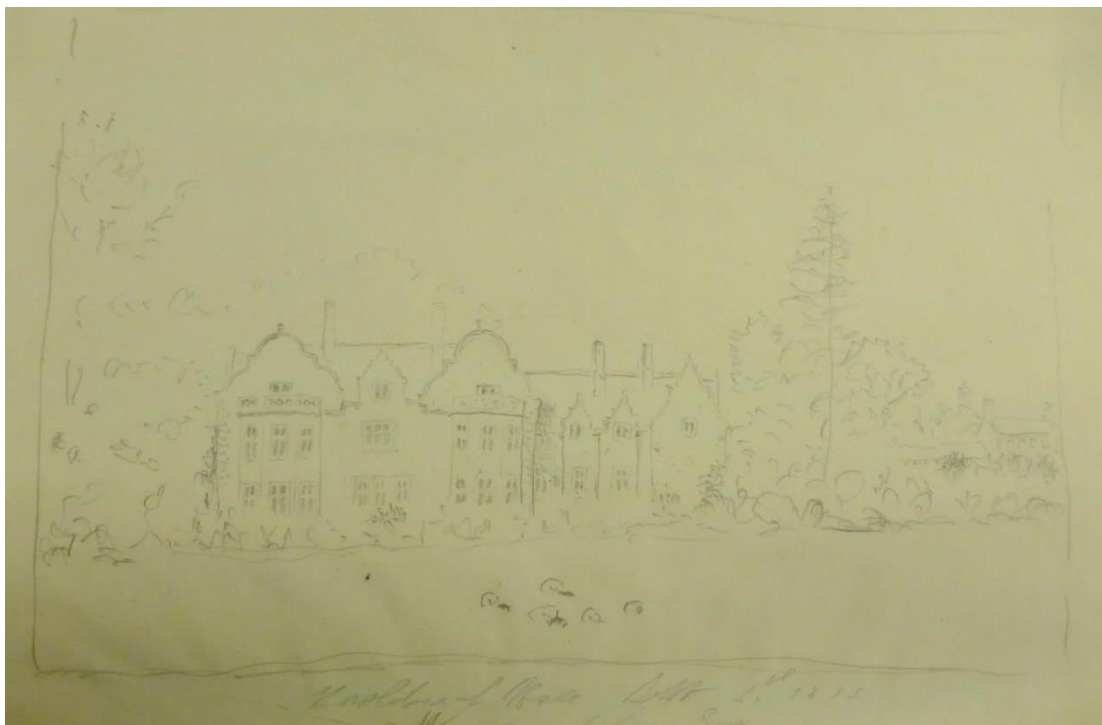


Figure 14: Sketch of Haselbech Hall, George Clarke, 4 September 1855, showing the new gables, service wing and the stable block in the distance to the right (NRO, GCPS Bk 30 pg. 57). Reproduced with permission of the Northamptonshire Record Office.

However, by the time Clarke visited again in 1855, the style of the south facade was transformed [Figure 14]. The bays were topped with Elizabethan parapets, the windows ornamented with hood mouldings and the dormers surrounded by curvilinear gables.¹⁶² This new ornamentation was extended across the building. Although it cannot be securely dated it is highly likely that during this programme of alterations the entrance to the house was relocated to the north front and the outbuildings which had previously screened the elevation, demolished to accommodate a new approach.¹⁶³ To mark the new entrance an imposing two story canted porch with decorative strapwork was almost

¹⁶² Bailey has described this gable type as the ‘Northamptonshire gable’. See Bailey, *Northamptonshire*, p. 324. In the 1973 edition of Pevsner’s *Northamptonshire* these gables were attributed to Crawley, the architect who rebuilt the Hall after the fire in 1917. This has since been corrected in the 2013 edition.

¹⁶³ A plan of the Hall c. 1850–53 shows a large circular drive to the south of the house. See NRO, ZB 291/388/1, Map of the parish of Haselbech by Albert Pell, c. 1850–53. The exact date of the relocation of the entrance drive and the demolition of the buildings across the north front is not clear. However, in a letter of 29 August 1856 to Edward K. Fisher, Viscountess Milton mentions ‘pulling down of the part of the farm buildings behind the stables’. See NRO, FS 24/2, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 29 August 1856.

certainly erected at this time [Figure 15].¹⁶⁴ The new neo-Jacobean finish to the structure created an imposing facade using a revival style which was increasingly fashionable in the mid-nineteenth century. This kind of alteration was not uncommon and had a similar impact to the re-facing of Laxton and the building of a new elevation at Lamport.

However, remaining traces of the seventeenth-century mansion including corbels which had previously held the heavy eaves and quoining on the returns of the house are still evident. There is also evidence in the archives to suggest some of the difficulties accompanying alteration of a structure in terms of matching new materials and recycling old ones. In March 1857 Poynter went in search of an appropriate stone to build in but which would also match the existing structure. The bed which the house was built from was exhausted. Fortunately a different course of action was found: ‘the bed the house was built from seemed really to be run out...not knowing the locality another plan was shown me where there is some good stone to be had (I mean it was good) but it is not exactly the same colour now I do not think this of any importance, & it may be worth while to get some to see how it turns out’.¹⁶⁵ Whether this relates to the alterations of the facade of the house is unclear, though likely. Similarly, in October 1856 Viscountess Milton requested that when the windows were taken down, the workmen should be careful not to break the plate glass so it could be used again. This could refer to the alteration of the dormer windows of the eighteenth-century mansion.¹⁶⁶ Separate accounts were also made to prevent any confusion over the costs attached to using recycled as opposed to new materials.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ This attribution has been made upon stylistic grounds; however, it is possible that parts of the porch were from the Crawley rebuild after the fire in 1917. The wooden door has been attributed to this phase by Bailey, *Northamptonshire*, p. 324.

¹⁶⁵ NRO, FS 24/12, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 2 March 1857.

¹⁶⁶ NRO, FS 24/6, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 27 October 1856.

¹⁶⁷ NRO, FS 24/6, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 8 October 1856.



Figure 15: New porch on the north elevation of Haselbech Hall. The door and lower part of the bay look like twentieth-century restorations however the second floor seems to accord with the rest of the structure.

Not only was the exterior refashioned and the house re-oriented, but, similarly to Laxton, a new service wing was constructed to the east of the house.¹⁶⁸ It is not clear

¹⁶⁸ This wing and a later addition were demolished after a fire in 1917. Although the wing was rebuilt by Crawley in a similar style to the original structure, it suffered a similar fate and was demolished. All that survives today is a very small section of the twentieth-century wing.

whether these offices were built by Franklin or Viscountess Milton.¹⁶⁹ However, the date of Clarke's drawing [Figure 14], 1855, suggests the wing was complete before Viscountess Milton's purchase in 1856. Further, in a letter of 1853 discussing a valuation of the estate Viscountess Milton wrote of her surprise at the low figure she had received for 'the house & offices the unfinished apprehend so very inhabited & good'.¹⁷⁰ This chronology is, however, complicated by a plan on the deeds for sale dated in the month before purchase, August 1856, and which does not show any evidence of the new wing.¹⁷¹

Viscountess Milton did not just finish the alterations already in progress but commissioned new designs to extend the house further. In November 1856 Poynter wrote to Fisher that a plan for the 'addition to the office' was not quite ready after Viscountess Milton had 'suggested some alterations, much to its improvement'.¹⁷² Preparations for 'new buildings' started in January 1857 by clearing trees to the south east corner of the house and building commenced in the following month.¹⁷³ These references almost certainly refer to an extension to the service wing, illustrated in a sketch from 1861 [Figure 16]. Letters between Poynter, Fisher and Viscountess Milton discuss the purchase of a Kitchener oven for the 'new kitchen' and it is possible that this was housed in the new structure.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ A map of the parish of Haselbech by Albert Pell from 1850 shows the form of the house without the new wing and thus suggests that the alterations were completed after 1850, most likely during the occupation of William Franklin or Viscountess Milton as opposed to an earlier occupant. See NRO, Map 648.

¹⁷⁰ NRO, FS 24/2, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 4 October 1855.

¹⁷¹ NRO, ZB 291/388/1, Copy plan on deed for Matilda Constance Ismay, 25 August 1856.

¹⁷² NRO, FS 24/6, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 8 November 1856.

¹⁷³ The contract for building was given to William Clifton. See NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 11 February 1857; NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 9 January 1857.

¹⁷⁴ A new kitchen was erected with a Kitchener and brick oven in the scullery. However, Viscountess Milton was not satisfied with the oven. It had been designed for use with faggots instead of coals. She noted that this was not how they did it in Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, Shropshire or Sussex and required the oven to be changed. See NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 12 Nov 1857.



Figure 16: Sketch of Haselbech Hall showing the altered gardens, George Clarke, August 1861 (NRO, GCPS Bk 30 pg. 57b). Reproduced with permission of the Northamptonshire Record Office.

As well as modernising the kitchen Viscountess Milton also updated the plumbing at the Hall. In 1857 a house without a functioning toilet was, to Poynter, inconceivable.¹⁷⁵ water closets required a constant water supply and thus one of the first priorities after purchase was to ensure a supply to the house. To install this Viscountess Milton hired Benjamin Fowler who recommended the removal of the old pumps in favour of a hand engine which could be worked by a small steam engine and which would cost in the region of £300.¹⁷⁶ Not only did the house need to be plumbed but also the stables and the gardens in order to install a new ornamental fountain.¹⁷⁷

The sketch from 1861 [Figure 16] also illustrates alterations to the grounds executed by Viscountess Milton. Sweeping lawns were replaced with a terrace across the south front and constructed from material removed when creating the foundations to the new service areas. To create this Viscountess Milton sent her gardener from Osberton to Haselbech and a labourer, Mr Fox, to level and clear the grounds.¹⁷⁸ Paths were created along the terrace which led to a new sunken kitchen garden and stone steps designed by

¹⁷⁵ When Ambrose Poynter heard of Viscountess Milton's intention to visit the works at Haselbech Hall and to stay in the Hall, he was concerned. He could not see how the house could be habitable especially as there was no working W.C. See NRO, FS 24/12 Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 18 March 1857.

¹⁷⁶ NRO, FS 24/6, Benjamin Fowler to Edward K. Fisher, 9 October 1856.

¹⁷⁷ NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 9 January 1857.

¹⁷⁸ NRO, FS 24/2, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 15 August 1856.

Poynter which passed from the parterre to a fountain.¹⁷⁹ These alterations were typical of nineteenth-century garden design which favoured the re-introduction of parterres and flower gardens which had been previously swept away by the craze for sweeping lawns led by Capability Brown. The whole of the grounds was also enclosed by a boundary wall marking the extent of Viscountess Milton's pleasure grounds.

By February 1857 internal fittings were being ordered for the house and Poynter wrote that he hoped 'to be able to give final instructions for every thing outside'.¹⁸⁰ This included bookcases for the library.¹⁸¹ The addition to the service wing contracted to the builder William Clifton was reportedly more or less finished as was John Mason, who had been constructing the walls to the grounds.¹⁸² All that was left to do by April 1857 was for Viscountess Milton to visit and settle the finishing touches including the painting and papering of the drawing room.¹⁸³

A constant theme throughout the letters between Viscountess Milton and those she employed to alter the site was economy. Estimates for the completion of works were met by a request from Viscountess Milton to use cheaper chimney pieces in the bedrooms and to erect less costly gates.¹⁸⁴ Instead of new furniture, useful furniture was purchased second hand from the Kelmarsh sale.¹⁸⁵ This house was not intended to be a primary seat or a show house. The emphasis on economy at Haselbech will be explored at various points throughout the remainder of the thesis.

Overstone Hall

Overstone Hall is an exceptionally important house in the history of nineteenth-century Northamptonshire. It is the only example explored in depth in this thesis of a house demolished and completely rebuilt. It also provides the only example of a family whose wealth was initially derived from the professions, in this case, banking. Emblematic of this is the meagre 1000–1500 acres attached to Overstone Hall when purchased by Lewis Loyd (1767–1858); this was a house with no immediate agricultural land to

¹⁷⁹ NRO, FS 24/6, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 9 May 1857.

¹⁸⁰ NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 27 June 1857.

¹⁸¹ NRO, FS 24/7, William Clifton to Ambrose Poynter, 2 February 1857.

¹⁸² NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 21 April 1857.

¹⁸³ NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 23 April 1857.

¹⁸⁴ NRO, FS 24/2, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 29 August 1856.

¹⁸⁵ NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 3 September 1857.

sustain it.¹⁸⁶ However, this did not remain the case for long. At his death in 1883 Lewis Loyd's son, Lord Overstone (1796–1883), was one of the top five land owners in Northamptonshire.¹⁸⁷

Overstone Hall was built by Lord and Lady Overstone (1799–1864) from around 1860 to 1864 and replaced a modest eighteenth-century mansion built by Edward Stratford [Figures 16 & 17] in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.¹⁸⁸ In May 1864 *The Building News* reported that the structure of Overstone Hall was complete. In approximately four years the builders had constructed a mansion of over 100 rooms at a cost of around £87,520 for the house and stables.¹⁸⁹



Figure 17: West front of Overstone Hall, c. 1830 (University of Reading Archive Service, Overstone 1H/412/493). Reproduced with permission of the University of Reading, Special Collections.

¹⁸⁶ *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 28 December 1881, p. 3.

¹⁸⁷ J. Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1883).

¹⁸⁸ Overstone Hall was built on the site of a mansion built by Henry Strafford and purchased by Lewis Loyd from its then owner, John Kipling. See J. Birdsall, *The History of Northamptonshire and its Vicinity: Brought Down to the Present Time* (Northampton, 1815), p. 127; Whellan, *History, Topography and Directory of Northamptonshire*, p. 236; RHCM, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments*, vol. 2, *Archaeological Sites in Central Northamptonshire* (London, 1979), pp. 120–123.

¹⁸⁹ Between 1861 and 1865 Lord Overstone's ledgers record a total of £87,520 spent on the new house and stables at Overstone. Further costs were incurred under the header of furniture in 1866 and 1869 totalling £3680. See SHL, MS 804/2165, Lord Overstone's Ledger; 'Overstone Hall, Northamptonshire', *The Building News*, 11 (13 May 1864), p. 300.



Figure 18: East front of Overstone Hall, c.1830 (University of Reading Archive Service, Overstone 1H/412/493). Reproduced with permission of the University of Reading, Special Collections.

In 1862, when Overstone Hall was under construction, *The Builder* wrote: ‘the style adopted is claimed to be that, in a simple form, of the age of Francis I; but the treatment, as a whole, has been suggested, to a great extent by the exigencies of the case; a great part of the former house having been intended to remain at the time the original design was made’.¹⁹⁰ The style of Overstone Hall will be analysed in detail in Chapter Three. For now, the focus of the present discussion will be the impact of the proposed incorporation of the original eighteenth-century structure into the new build designed by the architect William Milford Teulon (1823–1900).

Stratford’s mansion was a simple U-plan Palladian structure nine bays long and five bays wide. Pilasters stretched the height of the building on the north, east and south facades and the main front to the south was punctuated by windows ornamented with key stones and an entrance marked by stacked pilasters [Figures 17 & 18]. There are no known surviving plans of the eighteenth-century structure and no known original plans by Teulon. However, it is possible to suggest how Teulon intended to incorporate the original mansion into his designs from an elevation, ground floor plan and description published in *The Builder* in 1862 and which were most likely adapted from Teulon’s

¹⁹⁰ ‘Overstone Hall’, *The Builder*, 20, no. 995 (1 March 1862), p. 149.

own designs.¹⁹¹ These suggest that the north west corner of the original mansion was intended to form the north west corner of the new structure [Figures 19 & 21].



Figure 19: Design of Overstone Hall showing the north and west fronts, Northamptonshire, William Milford Teulon, in *The Builder*, 20, no. 995 (1 March 1862), p. 151.

Entered from a heavily embellished porch newly located on the north front, visitors would have passed through the vestibule and entrance hall to the principal stairs of ‘massive carved oak work...ornamented with carved oak-leaf and apple designs’ and from thence to the principal public rooms [Figure 20].¹⁹² *The Builder* describes that rooms were to be added to the east of the original structure including a billiard-room, dining-room, serving room and, leading off from an entrance to the east gardens, a gun room [Figure 21]. The pre-existing service wing to the south east of the Hall was also altered and expanded.¹⁹³ This comprised of specialised rooms, for example a brushing

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, A descendant of Teulon believes Teulon’s designs were lost in a house clearance.

¹⁹² NRO, SC 138, *Sales catalogue for Overstone Park Estate and Hackleton House Farm* (1921), p. 27.

¹⁹³ The correct alignment and positioning of the building is shown in a comparison of a map from when Lewis Loyd purchased the Hall and another when it was sold in 1921. In the plan of c. 1831 a rambling service wing is shown with what appears to be a stable block and walled garden to the north and further designed garden to the south. An undated plan, most likely drawn at some distance from the house’s completion, shows a walled garden to the south with a vinery, peach houses, plant houses and conservatory. These are described in detail as the kitchen gardens in the catalogue of 1921. See NRO,

room and lamp room and, like Lamport, included a lift. These alterations created the spaces and services needed to accommodate nineteenth-century modes of entertaining on a grand scale. However, accommodation for the family was also considered.



Figure 20: Photograph of the entrance to the Hall which is now in a ruinous condition, n.d. (NRO, P 8087/78). Reproduced with permission of the Northamptonshire Record Office.

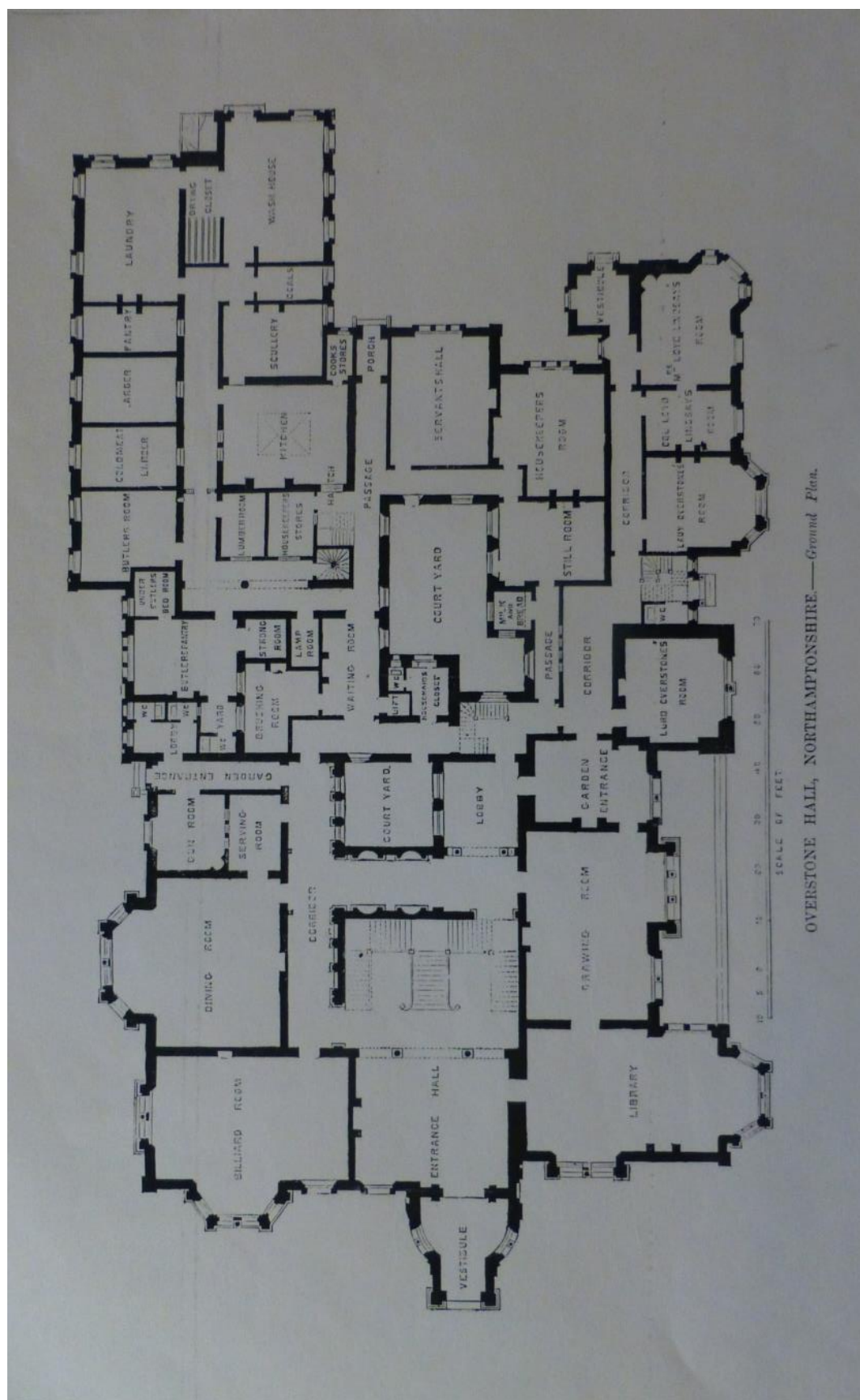


Figure 21: Ground floor plan of Overstone Hall, Milford William Milford Teulon in *The Builder*, 20, no. 995 (1 March 1862), p. 151.

South of the dominating north tower the house only has two floors. This would have marked the transition from the old to new structure if the original house had been retained. The tower and garden facing rooms to the south west overlooked a terrace and ornamental lake developed by Lord Overstone, and consisted of a new suite of private rooms. Although connected to the more public spaces these could be closed off to guests and accessed independently by a terrace entrance or small lateral tower on the south front [Figures 19 & 21]. As well as the plan and elevations of the Hall, Teulon was also responsible for the design of some of the fittings and fixtures in the new rooms.¹⁹⁴ For example, he designed bookshelves for the library which were made by a London craftsman, marble mantel-pieces and stoves [Figure 22].¹⁹⁵ The exterior architecture of Overstone Hall will be discussed in depth in Chapter Three. Thus only a brief account will follow here.

The skyline and two towers are defining features of the exterior of Overstone Hall [Figure 19].¹⁹⁶ Arguably, it was this skyline which suggested the Francis I influence to the design suggested above. The central tower of the north front creates an easily readable facade: north of the tower were the public rooms and south, private family rooms. However, it is also clear that throughout Teulon's design exterior ornamental treatment was borrowed from the eighteenth-century mansion. In the elevation published in *The Builder* the windows of the principal floor have raised architraves and key stones and on the ground floor, they extend the full height of the ground story. These are heavily reminiscent of the Stratford mansion. Equally, quoining at the south east and south west corners resembles that of the original structure and the heavy cornice, entablature and balustrading across the top of the second floor mirrors the height of original Hall. The intention to retain the eighteenth-century structure goes some way to explaining a seemingly superficial treatment of surface ornament.

¹⁹⁴ Although the interiors of Overstone Hall do not survive, very similar interiors by Teulon were executed in c. 1882 at Rossington Hall. These survive and offer a useful comparison. There are also numerous twentieth-century photographs of the interiors in private collections.

¹⁹⁵ The bookshelves were made by Messrs. Caldecott. See 'Overstone Hall, Northamptonshire', *The Building News*, 11 (13 May 1864), p. 300. Messrs. Caldecott had exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851 and again in 1862 where they received an 'Honourable mention for good design and workmanship'. They were evidently well thought of in the profession. See The Royal Commission, *Official Catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations 1851* (London, 1851); J. B. Waring, *Masterpieces of Industrial Art and Sculpture* (London, 1863), plate 238.

¹⁹⁶ The present copper pyramidal roof of the smaller southern tower is an addition from c. 1840–50.

As the quote above has suggested, in spite of the desire to integrate the old mansion and new structure when Teulon's designs were executed the eighteenth-century house was not retained. Heward and Taylor have suggested that this was the result of the collapse of the original structure.¹⁹⁷ Even though Teulon was no longer constrained by the eighteenth-century building there is no evidence to suggest he significantly changed his design beyond, as *The Builder* describes, 'minor alterations and extensions'.¹⁹⁸ Overstone Hall and the decisions which determined its design must not necessarily be considered in the same view as a new build. This is crucial to understanding the architecture and has been overlooked in previous accounts.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Heward and Taylor, *Country Houses of Northamptonshire*, p. 44.

¹⁹⁸ It is difficult to determine how far the 1862 plan was followed due to the current ruinous state of the building and consequent lack of access. It is also not evident if the plan shown in *The Builder* in 1862 already includes changes made by Teulon as a result of the decision not to retain the original structure. Later plans and descriptions do, however, suggest that the internal plan of the house was executed with very few changes to that of the 1862 plan.

¹⁹⁹ The architecture of Overstone Hall has baffled commentators from the nineteenth century through to more recent scholars. For more on responses to the style of Overstone Hall see Chapter Three.



Figure 22: Bookcases designed by William Milford Teulon in a similar style to the staircase, but no longer extant after a fire in 2001. The design of the bookshelves was possibly inspired by seventeenth century panelling yet decorated with ornament adapted from the capital types of the exterior of the house (Private Collection).

Conclusions

This chapter has only touched upon some of the alterations executed at the houses included in this thesis, a number of which will be described in greater detail in the following chapters. Even within this relatively small sample of houses several themes have appeared. It is apparent that alterations were often responsive and design programmes expansive. The movement of an entrance and re-arrangement of the internal plan of a house might require changes to the route of a drive and consequently alterations to the grounds. At Lamport it also resulted in the alteration of the appearance of the north west front to create an appropriate entrance facade. Equally, a seemingly

small and inexpensive modification could have a significant effect on a building's appearance or use of space. The alteration of window treatments or the addition of external ornament on a simple eighteenth-century structure like Haselbech Hall could considerably change the impression of the house's style. However, as Kerr observed, the nature of alteration presented unique problems. Most notably in the examples given, the harmonising of the exterior aspect of different phases of building and the structural difficulties encountered when working with older structures.

At Lamport and Overstone problems with the structural integrity of the original houses prevented their incorporation into new builds. Importantly, however, it did not necessarily prevent their influence over the subsequent building's design. Plans by Teulon for Overstone and by Hakewill and Goddard at Lamport were all, to an extent, determined by structures which were intended to be incorporated into the new build but which were ultimately demolished. This influence of a previous structure upon design was common and other examples exist in Northamptonshire. Norton Hall, owned by Thomas Botfield, an ironmonger from Dawley, Shropshire, was altered in 1808. All that remained of the original sixteenth and seventeenth-century mansion was part of the north facade and possibly part of the south wing, however, these elements led designs.²⁰⁰ Important for the understanding of how designs developed and architecture was created is the recognition that the preservation and incorporation of elements of original buildings could determine design decisions and that this could still occur even if the original structure was not retained.

This presents a new set of questions: why was the decision made to incorporate these elements and why were designs not revised when this was possible?²⁰¹ To this end Kerr observed: 'To some persons, the sweeping idea of the entire demolition of an old house commends itself too readily; to others the notion of saving it, either in the whole or part is equally too attractive.'²⁰² For some, one of the most significant factors must have been cost. However, for a number of the patrons considered here, including the Overstones and Evans, this was unlikely to have been a limiting factor. Mandler has

²⁰⁰ Botfield, *Stemmata Botevilliana*, vol. 1, pp. ccxxix–ccxxx.

²⁰¹ Stone notes the reluctance of country house owners to alter the external appearance of family seats but offers little explanation on why. See Stone, *An Open Elite?*, p. 346.

²⁰² Kerr, *The Gentleman's House*, p. 115.

suggested that the rebuilding of a previous structure was a form of preservation.²⁰³ The character and connotations of the building were retained even if the structure was demolished. These issues will be addressed further in Chapters Two and Five.

²⁰³ P. Mandler, 'Faust Comes to Town: The 'Creative Destruction' of the Victorian City', paper delivered at the North American Conference on British Studies (8 November 2013).

Chapter Two

Inheriting a House; Making a Home

From the walls that held them living still their pictured faces shine,
Breathing on their children's children the old spirit of their line...

Such were they who dwelt within thee, such be those who yet may come.
Down the path of time, and call thee by the sacred name of home...

Love, in life, thy pleasant places, pass from there when life shall cease,
Through a cloud of golden memories to an everlasting peace.²⁰⁴

H. A. Perry, 1895

In a poem dedicated to Sir Charles Isham, H. A. Perry described Lamport Hall as a 'recorder of an unforgotten past'. Owned by the Isham family since 1560, the built form and contents of the house were tangible links to the family's history.²⁰⁵ Paintings on the walls chronicled generation after generation of Ishams 'long nursed' in the Hall.²⁰⁶ However, Lamport was not simply a record of generations past but, Perry wrote, a repository of 'golden memories', a home in the present and, he ventured, in the future. This chapter explores two aspects of ownership and possession. First it will consider the legal structures which determined the transfer and purchase of property and which determined if a family line would continue at a house. Second, it will explore how country houses were adapted to meet the needs and ambitions of a new generation or owner after inheriting or purchasing a new home.

An understanding of the legal possession of the country houses in this thesis provides a broader context in which to understand men and women's engagement with the properties they owned. The assumed consequences of their subordinate legal position, has undoubtedly been a contributory factor in the frequent exclusion of women from the history of architecture and country house building. This chapter responds to recent

²⁰⁴ H. A. Perry, "'Ostendo non ostento'" – In things transitory resteth no glory' (1895) in Sir Charles Isham, *Emily* (Horsham, 1899), unpaginated.

²⁰⁵ There is little evidence to suggest the connection between Sir Charles Isham and H. A. Perry. Several photographs labelled Harry and Rose Parry [sic] show a couple in the gardens at Lamport Hall. Harry could very well be the same person who wrote the poem. These photographs are held at Lamport Hall.

²⁰⁶ Perry, 'Ostendo non ostento'.

scholarship which has demonstrated that women, although not free agents, were not as restricted by law as previously suggested. Not only this, but in outlining how properties in this thesis were transferred and purchased the chapter provides an important contextual framework to explore how and why country houses were altered.

Inheritance and the ability to transfer or alter a property were constrained by gender norms. Until 1870 and the passing of the Married Woman's Property Acts, in common law, a married woman's real property and income belonged to her husband and until 1882 wives could not make a will or devise real property without their husband's consent. Such consent could be withdrawn at any time before the will was proved.²⁰⁷ In spite of this, scholarship has increasingly shown that, for a limited number of women, property law was not as restrictive as previously suggested.²⁰⁸ Although primogeniture was the default position for the transmission of real property this could be circumvented in equity law.

In equity law women could own property separately from their husbands through pre-nuptial or post-nuptial marriage settlements, deeds or testamentary devices.²⁰⁹ These written instruments usually stipulated that a woman's separate property was free from a husband's 'debts, control, interference or engagements' and was most commonly held in trusts managed by male trustees.²¹⁰ By placing property in a trust it was protected from incompetent husbands and overseen by male trustees who, it was evidently perceived, would manage the property better than the female owner. Once placed in a trust, the freedom women had to control property depended on conditions set out in settlements. As will be evidenced later, in theory, women could have considerable control.²¹¹

The creation of women's separate property offered scope for individual choice within the letter of the law and, Crosswhite has argued, enabled fathers, husbands and brothers

²⁰⁷ L. Holcombe, *Wives and Property* (Oxford, 1983), p. 21.

²⁰⁸ This has been a subject of considerable debate among scholars of Early Modern England. For example see A. L. Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London, 1993); L. Bonfield, *Marriage Settlements, 1601–1740: The Adoption of the Strict Settlement* (Cambridge, 1983); S. Staves, *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660–1833* (Cambridge, 1990).

²⁰⁹ Holcombe, *Wives and Property*, p. 40.

²¹⁰ Staves has highlighted that by the mid-eighteenth century married women could own separate property without recourse for male trustees. Staves cites a court case from 1725 where a married woman was allowed to hold separate property without trustees. Staves, *Women's Separate Property*, p. 133.

²¹¹ Holcombe, *Wives and Property*, p. 39.

to respond to immediate desires as well as patriarchal goals.²¹² Men could ensure their female relatives were well provided for, protect property from negligent husbands or ensure property was transmitted to direct heirs. However, it is important to acknowledge that decisions could also be made which hindered women's property ownership.

Not only was a woman's ownership of property determined by law but also, in the strictest sense, a woman's ability to alter a property could be restricted by their inability to sign contracts. This could, however, be overcome. The law of common necessities meant women could pledge credit in their husband's name for items considered necessary for their station in life.²¹³ Equally, with their husband's consent, women could essentially act as their husband's agents.²¹⁴

The ways that women could circumvent the restrictions of law need to be understood with a note of caution. Even when women were entitled to separate property in law, their legal ownership did not always equate with control. As already noted, this could depend on the wording of settlements but also how closely this was followed. Staves has cautioned that even when women owned separate property they might be unwilling to retain it or forced from ownership or control. Quoting contemporary sources, she notes that women could be 'kissed or kicked', 'bullied or coaxed' out of their property. Physical or emotional control over women could render their legal ownership redundant.²¹⁵ Nonetheless, Perkin has argued that the multiple ways by which men and women received and held property could still be a determining factor in the extent of female influence and goes on to suggest that women with separate estates were the most liberated of the nineteenth century.²¹⁶ As Chapter Five will show, men and women with a variety of different legal relationships to property exercised different degrees of authority when altering their country houses.

²¹² A. B. Crosswhite, 'Women and the Land: Aristocratic Ownership of Property in Early Modern England', *New York University Law Review*, 77, no. 4 (2002), pp. 1119–1155 (p. 1122); L. Bonfield, 'Seeking Connections between Kinship and the Law in Early Modern England', *Continuity and Change*, 25 (2010) pp. 49–82 (p. 52).

²¹³ M. Finn, 'Women, Consumption and Coverture in England, c. 1760–1860', *The Historical Journal*, 39, no. 3 (September, 1996), pp. 703–722 (p. 709).

²¹⁴ Holcombe, *Wives and Property*, p. 28.

²¹⁵ Staves, *Women's Separate Property*, p. 135.

²¹⁶ J. Perkin, *Women and Marriage in Nineteenth-Century England* (London, 1989), p. 76.

Even within a relatively small sample, this chapter will show that married women's property rights were not as black and white as might first appear. With the legal relationship of men to property relatively well established in scholarship, this chapter will begin with an in depth consideration of two women and their legal entitlement to their Northamptonshire country houses. Both Lady Carbery and Viscountess Milton were heiresses, both were widowed, both remarried, and both owned real property independently from their husbands. In spite of their similarities, the origins of their wealth, the means by which they became possessed of separate property and the uses to which they put their Northamptonshire houses were markedly different. As later chapters will illustrate, they also wielded different levels of control over the architectural alterations to their homes.

Susan, Lady Carbery (née Watson): 'The Orphan Heiress'

Susan, Lady Carbery (née Watson) was the only daughter and heiress of Lincolnshire born Col. Henry Watson (1737–1786). Watson was chief engineer to the East India Company in Bengal and was heralded as a mathematical 'genius' and engineer of unparalleled talent.²¹⁷ He was credited with the improvement of fortifications at Fort William, Calcutta, as well as other military structures in the East Indies. Whilst working in Bengal, Watson invested in the region of £100,000 in the building of docks at Kidderpore near Fort William which were intended to be handed over to, and paid for by the East India Company on completion. He also invested in the opium trade, ship building and other property holdings.²¹⁸ As a result, Watson amassed an extraordinary fortune, reportedly in the region of £300,000.²¹⁹ Although Watson married whilst in India, he did not alter his will to include his new wife, Maria Theresa. As a result, when he died in 1786, the majority of his fortune passed to his illegitimate child Susan, a sizable legacy to her guardian in England Mrs Richardson, later Mrs Schreiber, and nothing to his wife.²²⁰

²¹⁷ 'Obituary of Considerable Persons; With Biographical Anecdotes', *Gentleman's Magazine*, 56, no. 2 (1786), p. 996.

²¹⁸ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/1, Bundle of documents relating to Watson's estate in the East Indies, 1827–1831.

²¹⁹ 'Obituary of Considerable Persons', p. 998.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 998.

In a letter to Susan, by then Lady Carbery, from 1816, Maria Theresa wrote that she had been ‘left totally unprovided for and destitute’.²²¹ After Watson’s death Maria Theresa had returned to India to administer her late husband’s estate. As compensation for her work she kept the interest on the property, as was the custom in the East Indies.²²² The right to do so was questioned by Lady Carbery and her second husband, George Freke Evans. This led to a Chancery Case being brought against Maria Theresa, by then Mrs Nowell, in 1805 and documented in a series of letters between Lady Carbery, her husband, and Mr and Mrs Nowell.²²³ Lady Carbery also inherited a court case to recoup damages from the East India Company who had reneged on their agreement to buy her father’s docks and demolished them instead.²²⁴

In spite of the multiple difficulties accompanying her inheritance Lady Carbery was still a very wealthy and very desirable heiress. As De Quincey observed of Susan and her companion, Miss Smith, both ‘appeared under a combination of circumstances too singularly romantic to fail of creating an interest that was universal. Both were solitary children, unchallenged by any relatives. Neither had ever known what it was to taste of love, paternal or maternal.’²²⁵ Aware of his daughter’s future, Watson required that when educated she should not learn feminine ‘accomplishments’ such as music or drawing but should learn knowledge of the world, ‘and the integrity for keeping at a distance all showy adventurers that might else offer themselves with unusual advantages, as suitors’ and with ‘manners exquisitely polished.’²²⁶ The suitor Susan married was George Evans, fourth Baron Carbery, the owner of Laxton Hall and a large landed interest in Ireland. In 1789 it was reported ‘Lord Carbery it is said will certainly get Miss Watson, who is very pretty, and a vast fortune’.²²⁷ He did, however, at the risk of forfeiting his English estate and any right to Susan’s fortune on default of an heir.

²²¹ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/1, Mrs Nowell to Lady Carbery, 8 August 1816.

²²² A document signed by William Burroughs, previously one of the justices of his majesty’s supreme court of judicature at Fort William, Bengal, described the custom in the East Indies. This document was prepared as proof of the custom for use in court. See Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/1.

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/1, James Cressey to George Evans, fourth Baron Carbery, 11 November 1799.

²²⁵ Thomas De Quincey, *The Works of Thomas De Quincey*, vol. 19, *Autobiographic Sketches* (London, 2003), p. 353.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 351.

²²⁷ R. Thorne (ed.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1790–1820* (London, 1986), vol. 3, p. 716.

Susan's inheritance was safeguarded by a pre-nuptial marriage settlement. In this settlement she secured a life interest in Laxton Hall, a £2000 jointure and freedom to dispose of her inheritance after her husband's death if there was no heir.²²⁸ As a ward of Chancery the settlement was negotiated on Susan's behalf by Lord Thurlow who, as Lord Chancellor, spent part of his days, one commentator wrote, 'in giving pretty girls away.' Susan evidently valued Thurlow's negotiating skills and in spite of his recent resignation was adamant he should negotiate on her behalf: 'On my knees I emplease [sic] your Lordship not to leave my state to be decided by another. But suffer my happiness to be confirm'd by you alone.'²²⁹

George Evans, fourth Baron Carbery, died in 1804 with no male issue. His will upheld the terms of his marriage settlement with Lady Carbery, and gave her, 'his beloved wife', a life interest in Laxton Hall. Two years after her first husband's death Lady Carbery married George Freke Evans, cousin of the fourth Baron Carbery, and presumptive heir of the sixth.²³⁰ A second marriage settlement was drawn up which protected Lady Carbery's life interest in Laxton Hall through the creation of a trust.²³¹ Not only did Lady Carbery have a life interest in the Hall but also all of the 'sundry household goods books plate linen pictures furniture horses cattle farming utensils stock and property in upon and about'.²³²

Lady Carbery gained a title from her first marriage which she retained even after her husband's death, as well as the knowledge that she would never be without a home of her own.²³³ If there was no male heir she would receive a sizable jointure, her property

²²⁸ The marriage settlement of Lady Carbery and George Evans, fourth Baron Carbery is held at PRONI. However, as a result of fire damage these are not available to be viewed. See instead *Gentleman's Magazine*, 145 (January 1829), p. 2; A. P. W. Malcomson, *The Pursuit of the Heiress: Aristocratic Marriage in Ireland 1740–1840* (Ulster, 2006), pp. 18–19.

²²⁹ W. P. Courtney, 'Fighting Thurlow: His Foes and Friends', *Temple Bar: A London Magazine for Town and Country Readers*, 107 (1896), p. 46.

²³⁰ George Freke Evans (1772–1829) was the second son and third child of Sir John Evans Freke, first Baronet (d. 1777) and Lady Elizabeth Gore of Bulgaven Hall, County Limerick. The fourth Baron Carbery died without an heir and as a result the title reverted to his uncle, John, fifth Baron Carbery (d. 1807). The fifth Baron died with no male issue and the title devolved upon his cousin, Sir John Freke Evans elder brother to George Freke Evans, second husband of Susan, Dowager Baroness Carbery.

²³¹ PRONI, D/20487, Articles on the intended marriage between the right honourable Susan Baroness Carbery and George Freke Evans Esquire, 10 January 1806.

²³² *Ibid.* p. 3.

²³³ Prior to her marriage Lady Carbery was Susan Watson, after her first marriage (1792), Lady Carbery, and after the death of her first husband, Dowager Lady Carbery (1804). For the sake of clarity and continuity she will be referred to as Lady Carbery during the remainder of this thesis.

and a life interest in Laxton Hall. This was something which she ensured was protected. Malcomson has argued that the very favourable marriage settlement negotiated with the fourth Baron Carbery on Lady Carbery's behalf and protected in her second marriage settlement was the result of the fourth Baron Carbery's poor finances and heavily indebted estate.²³⁴ For the fourth Baron Carbery, Lady Carbery's wealth presented the possibility of overcoming his financial difficulties. However, in spite of her favourable settlement, Lady Carbery did not receive all the property she was promised. Staves has recognised that the right to a jointure or property did not always mean that women received these allowances. Lady Carbery's jointure is an illustrative case. Lady Carbery was entitled to a jointure of £2000 per annum after the death of her first husband. However, the estates which had been allocated to provide the funds did not cover this sum and Lady Carbery never received any of the money she was entitled to.²³⁵

Selina, Viscountess Milton (né Jenkins): A House of her Own

As the second of three daughters of the third Earl of Liverpool, and with no male issue or collateral relatives in the male line, Lady Selina Jenkins (later Viscountess Milton) was co-heiress to extensive landed estates.²³⁶ A will dated February 1841 directed that, on his death, the Earl of Liverpool's estates were to be distributed equally among his daughters.²³⁷ Lady Selina would inherit Felbridge and the Evelyn estates in Surrey as well as her father's London home, Fife House, Whitehall Yard.²³⁸ Her elder sister, Lady Catherine Julia would inherit Buxted Park (the principal family seat) and her younger sister, Lady Louisa Harriet would receive Pitchford, Co. Shropshire.²³⁹ As Lady Selina Jenkins, she married William Charles Viscount Milton (1812–1835) on 15 August 1833. Viscount Milton was due to inherit the Fitzwilliam estates on the death of his

²³⁴ Malcomson, *The Pursuit of the Heiress*, pp. 18–19.

²³⁵ J. F. Waller, *Irish Equity Reports, of Cases Argued and Determined in the High Court of Chancery, the Rolls Court, and the Equity Exchequer During the Years 1849 and 1850* (1850), vol. 12, pp. 455–462.

²³⁶ 'Sudden Death of the Earl of Liverpool', *The Standard*, 4 October 1851; *The Morning Post*, 6 October 1851, p. 5.

²³⁷ BL, PROB 11/2142/171, Will of The Right Honourable Charles Cecil Cope Earl of Liverpool; Mosley, C. (ed.), *Burke's Peerage* (Delaware, 107th ed., 2003), p. 2092.

²³⁸ The Evelyn estates were inherited by Viscountess Milton's grandmother, Julia Anabella (married to Sir George Shuckburgh), daughter and heiress of James Evelyn, and transmitted through her mother, Julia Evelyn Medley.

²³⁹ J. J. Howard and F. A. Crisp (eds.) *Visitations of England and Wales* (Privately Printed, 1893), vol. 1, p. 48.

father Charles William Wentworth, fifth Earl Fitzwilliam.²⁴⁰ The match was viewed positively by both families. In a letter to Earl Fitzwilliam in September 1833, the Earl of Liverpool wrote 'I really believe that few marriages have united so many ingredients of happiness & I only pray that nothing may occur to prevent its continuance.'²⁴¹ The Earl of Liverpool's hopes were dashed when, only two years after Viscount Milton and Lady Selina's marriage, and two months before the birth of their only child, Mary Selina Charlotte, Viscount Milton died.

In 1845 Viscountess Milton remarried.²⁴² Her second husband, George Savile Foljambe (1800–1869), was landed but untitled, was established in Nottinghamshire politics, the owner of Osberton Hall, Worksop: a 'commanding country mansion, rich in archaeological treasures' and Aldwark Hall, York.²⁴³ Within a year after her second marriage Viscountess Milton gave birth to a son, Cecil George Savile. The presence of a new husband and male heir resulted in changes to the will of the Earl of Liverpool. A codicil was added which devised that Viscountess Milton's third of her father's property was to be held in trust by her two sisters' husbands, Francis Vernon Harcourt and John Cotes.²⁴⁴ As a result, Viscountess Milton was denied direct access to the family property and the real and personal estate of the Earl of Liverpool was protected against the possibility of devolution upon the male heir of Foljambe by his first wife. This ensured the accumulated property of the Earl of Liverpool would remain in the hands of his direct heirs.²⁴⁵

In the terms of the codicil it stated that the trustees and trustee were able to dispose of the property at any time and in any manner and that the monies from such a sale could be invested in the trustee or trustees' names. The right to alienate property was increasingly written out of wills in the nineteenth century in an attempt to stop the breaking up of estates. Thus, Viscountess Milton was in an unusual position. She sold Felbridge in 1855 and the following year (March 1856) purchased Haselbech Hall.

²⁴⁰ Prior to her marriage Viscountess Milton was called Lady Selina Jenkins, after her first marriage (1833), Viscountess Milton, and after the death of her first husband, Dowager Viscountess Milton (1835). For the sake of clarity and continuity she will be referred to as Viscountess Milton during the remainder of thesis.

²⁴¹ Sheffield Archives, WWM G69/8, Lord Liverpool to Lord Fitzwilliam, 29 September 1833.

²⁴² *Burke's Landed Gentry* (London, 18th ed., 1972), vol. 3, p. 338.

²⁴³ C. Brown, *A History of Nottinghamshire* (London, 1896), p. 215.

²⁴⁴ BL, PROB 11/2142/171, Will of The Right Honourable Charles Cecil Cope Earl of Liverpool.

²⁴⁵ George Savile Foljambe's first wife was Harriet Emily Mary, eldest daughter of the fourth Baronet of Nun Appleton.

During her ownership of Felbridge Hall, it was leased out and there is no known evidence to suggest why Viscountess Milton decided to sell.²⁴⁶ Viscountess Milton purchased Haselbech with money loaned by the trustees of her father's estate on the security of a mortgage of the Haselbech estate. The deed of indemnity releasing these funds was clear that the property was purchased with money possessed by Viscountess Milton separate from her husband, and that the rents and any profit would be received and held solely by her and for her own use.²⁴⁷ As a result, Viscountess Milton was in a relatively unusual position in comparison to many of her married counterparts. With the approbation of her husband and the trustees of her father's estate, she had been given financial control over her own property. In doing so, Viscountess Milton invested in a house and estate that was in practice, but not necessarily in theory, her own.

Even after the death of her husband, legally, Viscountess Milton, like Lady Carbery, retained the title of Viscountess and continued to use the Milton name. She also maintained a close relationship with the Fitzwilliams. Her second marriage even took place at their country mansion, Wentworth Woodhouse.²⁴⁸ Viscountess Milton had status independent from her second husband's through her natal family and that of her first husband. Thus, in her second marriage she was perhaps not concerned with title. After Foljambe's death in 1869 Viscountess Milton continued to be a prominent figure in Northamptonshire and even continued to purchase properties, including the ruined Kirkham Priory in 1878.²⁴⁹ Her status within county society is also evidenced by her inclusion in Walford's *County Families*, a compendium of 'who's who' in England and, more accurately, an indicator of who was perceived as important in each county.²⁵⁰

When the Earl of Liverpool wrote his will, he not only ensured the well-being of Viscountess Milton but also safeguarded the family line by placing his property in trust.

²⁴⁶ Howard and Crisp, *Visitations of England and Wales*, p. 48.

²⁴⁷ NRO, ZB 291/153, Deed of Indemnity, 19 September 1856.

²⁴⁸ Lord Hawkesbury, 'Notes on Osberton, Scofton, Rayton, Bilby, Hodsock, Fleecethorpe etc.', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, 5 (1901), pp. 11–32 (p. 18).

²⁴⁹ It seems that Viscountess Milton resided at Haselbeech Hall for a limited time, if at all. After her husband's death in 1869 Viscountess Milton lived in Amisfield House, East Lothian (1876–9) and afterwards at Kirkham, Yorkshire (at this time Amisfield House was owned by the Earls of Wemyss). Viscountess Milton purchased Kirkham Priory in 1878 (Also known as Kirkham Abbey). See T. Bulmer, *History and Directory of East Yorkshire* (Preston, 1892), p. 229. The priory itself was in ruin and Viscountess Milton lived in Kirkham Hall, an early nineteenth-century country house of moderate size. See TNA, RG 11, Census Records for Kirkham, 1881.

²⁵⁰ E. Walford, *County Families*, p. 685; Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 5; Rubinstein, 'New Men of Wealth', p. 135.

Haselbech Hall was never a home to Viscountess Milton and it is likely that when she purchased the building she never intended to live there.²⁵¹ Instead, there is evidence to suggest that Haselbech was predominantly occupied by Viscountess Milton's stepson Francis John Savile Foljambe and his wife, Gertrude.²⁵² The Foljambe men were keen hunters and the house provided an ideal base for participating in the Pytchley hunt. George Savile Foljambe bred hounds and was described as one of the 'master-minds' of the day when handling them.²⁵³ However, it is likely that the house was always intended to pass to Viscountess Milton's first son with George Savile Foljambe, Cecil George Savile Foljambe. Thus, whilst the Foljambe estates went to George Savile Foljambe's eldest son, the estates of Viscountess Milton, as planned, were inherited by Cecil George Savile Foljambe. Cecil George was created Baron Hawkesbury in 1893 and the first Earl of Liverpool of the second creation in 1905. Between them, the third Earl of Liverpool and Viscountess Milton succeeded in reviving the Liverpool earldom a generation after its extinction and provided an appropriate seat for the new Earl.

Although this chapter has shown that legal restrictions upon property were, under the right circumstances, not necessarily absolute, this in no way suggests that men and women's experiences were not gendered. From the type of documentary evidence which survives and has been used in this analysis it is hard to ascertain the exact motives behind the distribution of property. It is also difficult to ascertain if Lady Carbery and Viscountess Milton played an important part in the negotiation of their marriage settlements to their second husbands. Nonetheless they both managed to gain or ensure continued ownership of separate property in their second marriages. The motives to remarry are equally unclear. Through her second marriage the 'orphan heiress' Lady Carbery once again gained a family. In fact, this was the same family she had married into originally. Viscountess Milton had a male heir through her second

²⁵¹ Viscountess Milton spent the majority of her time at Osberton Hall, her husband's ancestral seat.

²⁵² Knowing that Francis John Saville Foljambe and his wife Gertrude were going to be living at Haselbech a number of letters refer to meeting their needs and desires when altering the house and managing the estate. For example, Viscountess Milton wrote that a laundry was not needed as 'Mr Francis' did not intend to keep laundry maids. Viscountess Milton also describes one of the rooms as 'Lady Gertrude's Morn[in]g room'. See NRO, FS 24/6, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 24 November 1856 and NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 23 August 1857.

²⁵³ 'The late Lord Henry Bentinck on Foxhunting', *Bail's Magazine of Sports & Pastimes*, 19 (February, 1871), p. 295. Foljambe does not ever appear to have kept his hounds at Haselbech but at his Nottinghamshire seat, Osberton, and during the hunting season, at Eaton, Retford. See 'Mr George Savile Foljambe, his Hounds and Country', *The Sporting Magazine*, 22, no. 128 (1840), p. 178; Cecil, 'Hunting Gossip', *The Sporting Magazine* (January to June 1876), p. 372.

marriage to continue the Liverpool line. Increase in status was evidently not a factor, as neither married titled men. Thus, it is possible that a combination of personal and dynastic factors contributed to the decision to remarry. These uncertainties aside, it is notable that Lady Carbery and Viscountess Milton were both eligible heiresses who could bring significant wealth to a marriage; this created the impetus to protect the natal family's property in lieu of a male heir and was used as a valuable bargaining tool when making a marriage settlement.

Although not considered in as much detail as the two previous examples, here, it is worth outlining the means of transmission for other houses considered in this thesis, Lamport Hall and Overstone Hall, and introducing the main protagonist considered in the remainder of this study. As described previously, Lamport Hall was inherited by Sir Justinian Isham, eighth Baronet, from his father in 1818. Sir Justinian was a military man and it was in this capacity that he had met Mary Close whilst deployed in Ireland with the Northamptonshire Militia.²⁵⁴ They married only seven months later. Mary was 15 years younger than Justinian and outlived him by 33 years.²⁵⁵ The will of the sixth Baronet, Sir Justinian's grandfather, left considerable sums to his widow and charity and had left the family in financial difficulties.²⁵⁶ Garwood has argued that the £5,000 dowry Mary brought to her marriage with Sir Justinian may have been an incentive for the match, in the hope it would alleviated the Isham's strained financial situation.²⁵⁷ Justinian Vere Isham, ninth Baronet (1816–1846) inherited in 1845 on the death of his father. However, as previously mentioned, after moving to Cheltenham he seems to have left the running of the family home to his mother and younger brother, Sir Charles. Almost a year and a half later he committed suicide, aged 29.²⁵⁸ Thus his younger brother Sir Charles unexpectedly inherited the Hall in 1846 and a year later married

²⁵⁴ Mary Close was the daughter of Samuel Close (1749–1817) and Deborah Champagne (d. 1815). NRO, IL 3278, Journal of Mary Isham; S. Barden, *Elm Park, 1626–1954* (Ulster, 2004), p. 8.

²⁵⁵ Garwood, 'Hidden Patronage', p. 34.

²⁵⁶ G. Isham, 'The Historical and Literary Associations of Lamport Hall', *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, 1 (1948), pp. 12–28.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 34; NRO, IL 3046, Marriage settlement of Sir Justinian Isham and Mary Close (later Isham), 30 April 1812.

²⁵⁸ NRO, I 13/1–3, Documents relating to the suicide of Sir Justinian Vere Isham; NRO, IL 3278, Journal of Mary Isham; 'Suicide by a gentleman of fortune', *Morning Post*, 28 August 1846, p. 4; 'Suicide of Sir Justinian Vere Isham, Bart.', *Leicestershire Mercury*, 5 September 1846.

Emily Vaughan. Emily was the daughter of Sir John Vaughan, a Leicestershire judge, and one of eight children by his two wives.²⁵⁹

The final house considered in this thesis was owned by Lord Overstone and had only been purchased a generation earlier by his father Lewis Loyd. Lewis Loyd had married Miss Jones (1759–1821), daughter of the Manchester Banker, John Jones (1713–75) and was admitted to the Jones' firm. On his marriage, Lewis Loyd had little money and a small farm, Court Henry, which he had inherited from his father. This is a stark contrast to the inheritance his son would receive. At his death in 1858 Lewis Lloyd left £701,000 in securities, £1,172,091 worth of land and £5,639 in personal effects.²⁶⁰ At the age of 16 his son, the future Lord Overstone, became a partner in his father's firm and in 1829, kept the tradition of marrying into banking. His wife Harriet was the daughter of Ichabod Wright, a Nottingham banker. Before inheriting Overstone Hall, Lord Overstone resided at Wickham Park, purchased for £20,000 in 1836, seven years after his marriage to Harriet.²⁶¹ Lord Overstone went to live at Overstone Hall in 1853 after his father became ill and inherited the property in 1858.²⁶²

The four properties studied in this thesis were each inherited by their owner in different ways. Viscountess Milton gained the financial independence needed to buy Haselbech Hall from the property she inherited from her father. Lady Carbery had a life interest in Laxton Hall which she secured through a marriage settlement created in her first marriage and protected by a trust in the second. Sir Charles was never due to inherit Lamport Hall but did so as a consequence of his elder brother's death. Finally, Lord Overstone directly inherited Overstone Hall from his father. These examples show the very different and complicated ways by which country house owners came to hold their homes and how this can be influenced by gender. Legally, the most obvious gender divide is that men considered in this thesis held their property directly and woman held theirs in trusts. However, legal possession of property is only one aspect of ownership.

²⁵⁹ 'Watford: Manors' in W. Page (ed.), *A History of the County of Hertford* (London, 1908), vol. 2, pp. 451–464.

²⁶⁰ O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, pp. 13–14.

²⁶¹ The acquisition consisted of a house and some of its contents, 236 acres of land and a farm. Lord Overstone consolidated his holdings in Wickham by the purchase of a further farm, land, a house, beerhouse, cottages and meadow at 'Elmers End' in 1847. SHL, MS 804/2165, S. J. L. account book, 1823–81.

²⁶² O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 566, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 13 February 1853.

The personal and emotional ownership of country houses will be considered in greater detail in Chapter Five.

Marriage, Inheritance and Purchase: Reasons to Build?

Marriage, inheritance, and purchase were significant moments of transition in an individual and family's life and often prompted building to mark the arrival of a new family and to create a house which met the family's needs, ambitions and lifestyle. These important events in a family's lifetime can suggest why building was executed at a particular moment. Combined with the analysis of alterations discussed in Chapter One it can also begin to suggest some of the motivations behind building.

The marriage of Lady Carbery to her second husband prompted building at Laxton Hall. Although there is no evidence of a large building programme at Laxton during her first marriage, there are a number of suggestions that the Hall was in need of alteration. In 1803 the fourth Baron Carbery paid for drawings and estimates to be made for 'alterations' to the servants' hall and passage which were, at this time, almost certainly located in the basement.²⁶³ Unlike the fourth Baron Carbery, who was frequently at his properties in Ireland, Evans used Laxton as his primary residence. Marriage, the small size of the present Hall and the fact it was to be used as a principal seat would have all contributed to the desire to build. The enlargement of the house described in Chapter One, created rooms appropriate for entertaining and marked the arrival of Evans to the area.

In other instances building was inevitable. The purchase of Haselbech Hall resulted in the completion of a building project already in motion.²⁶⁴ However, Viscountess Milton did not simply complete the project but expanded it to ensure the house had all the modern conveniences of the day. As well as creating a convenient residence Viscountess Milton created a building which marked her presence in the village. This sign of status was especially important in light of her absence from Haselbech on a day to day basis, discussed in Chapter Seven.

Inheritance, marriage, Mary's dowry, and the need to update Lamport Hall prompted Sir Justinian and Mary to remodel the Hall. The alterations described in Chapter One

²⁶³ Bisbrooke, T/2966/C/3, Bill from J. Hames to George Evans, fourth Baron Carbery, 1803.

²⁶⁴ See Chapter One.

can be broadly divided into two parts: a practical updating of the house and a re-assertion of the Isham dynasty in the area. The rebuilding of the service areas, addition of outbuildings, and creation of more sleeping accommodation in the Smith of Warwick wing all ensured the house functioned as a convenient property whereas the creation of a new entrance, the opening up the prospect of the park and redecoration of the Hall in the latest regency fashion was a marker of the Isham's dynasty, status and family name.²⁶⁵ The timing of building was not, however, simply a consequence of the arrival of a new generation, the ability to build, or architectural conventions, but could also respond to shifting family circumstances.

In 1846 Sir Charles, inherited the house his mother and father had updated. Sir Charles immediately indulged his passion for gardening by making alterations to the grounds, however, initially, the house seems to have met the family's needs. It was not until 1857, over ten years after his inheritance and after his marriage to Emily, that any alterations were made to the house itself. Sir Charles and Emily enlarged the Hall by the addition of attic rooms and the establishment of a nursery floor to accommodate visits from extended family. After the death of her brother's wife, Emily's thirteen nieces and nephews frequently stayed at the Hall.²⁶⁶ The alterations in the 1860s were also completed in the years before the coming out ball of Sir Charles and Emily's eldest daughter, potentially marking the desire to entertain at the Hall on a grander scale.²⁶⁷ As Chapter One has described, the alterations to the Hall created a logical progression of rooms upon entering the house so that guests no longer had to enter into the hall where dancing took place. Thus, at Lamport, some of the alterations were made to meet the immediate needs of the family.²⁶⁸

Once moving to Overstone Hall, Lord Overstone attempted to improve the eighteenth-century mansion 'without venturing upon the gigantic effort of building a new house.'²⁶⁹ However in 1858, after his father's death, the decision was made to build a new mansion, or at least to expand.²⁷⁰ Overstone Hall was not large enough to

²⁶⁵ See Chapter Five for more on the dynastic aspects of the design at Lamport Hall.

²⁶⁶ J. Summerson, *Lamport Hall: Catalogue of Exhibition of Architectural Drawings* (London, 1975), p. 13.

²⁶⁷ *Northampton Mercury*, 23 February 1867, p. 7.

²⁶⁸ For more on the types of entertainments held at Lamport Hall see Chapter Five.

²⁶⁹ O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 572, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 24 August 1853.

²⁷⁰ Lord Overstone's father died on 13 May 1858 at the age of 90.

accommodate many guests. This was amply proven when Lord and Lady Overstone attempted to allocate the ‘limited extent of accommodation which this house affords’ to various visitors in 1850 with little success.²⁷¹ From the London papers it is evident that Lady Overstone was a well-established figure in London life. Her London home was a centre for musical entertainment and a hub for liberal thought across the 1850s.²⁷² This is further suggested by the Overstones’ daughter, Harriet Sarah Loyd-Lindsay, Lady Wantage (1837–1920), who, after inheriting, continued the lively rounds of activities which took place in their London home, Carlton Gardens. This included the ‘time-honoured institution’ of an open house at the luncheon hour.²⁷³ Lady Overstone’s panache for entertaining on the London scene may have been something she hoped to continue when in the country in a new and enlarged home. Her frequent appearance in the newspapers and desire to entertain in the 1850s may also, however, have been a response to an important change in the family’s status. In October 1849 Lord Overstone was offered a peerage by Lord John Russell which he accepted with some reluctance. The *Manchester Guardian* wrote:

The Banker Lord must have his name destroyed;
The Peerage must be pure, no peer a (l)Loyd;
No longer by his City title known –
Lord Overgold is now Lord Overstone.²⁷⁴

After being elevated to a peerage in 1850, the expansion or rebuilding of Overstone Hall could be read as a physical expression of his new status, if a rather delayed one. By

²⁷¹ O’Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 502, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 24 October 1850.

²⁷² The newspapers reported a variety of gatherings at Carlton Gardens in the 1850s. These included select dinner parties, balls and concerts. For example see ‘Lady Overstone’s Assembly’, *London Evening Standard*, 15 March, 1855, p. 3; ‘Lord and Lady Overstone’s Entertainments’, *London Evening Standard*, 11 April 1856, p. 1; ‘Lady Overstone’s Concert’, *London Evening Standard*, 28 June 1856, p. 3; ‘Lady Overstone’s Concert’, *The Morning Post*, 8 July 1856, p. 5; ‘Lady Overstone’s Ball’, *The Morning Post*, 18 July 1856, p. 4; *The Morning Post*, 4 June 1857, p. 5; ‘Lady Overstone’, *The Morning Post*, 9 July 1857, p. 5; *The Morning Chronicle*, 23 March 1858, p. 5.

²⁷³ In the memoir of her husband Lady Wantage wrote: ‘Their London home at Carlton Gardens was also the centre of much hospitality; and open house at the luncheon hour a time-honoured institution since the days of Lord Overstone, when his friends, men of weight and learning, were wont to forgather, and linger long in conversation, round the sociable table in the bay window opening on to the green terrace garden.’ See H. S. Loyd-Lindsay, Lady Wantage, *Lord Wantage: A Memoir* (London, 1907), p. 349.

²⁷⁴ Grindon, *Manchester Banks*, p. 168 and *Manchester Guardian*, 20 November 1883 quoted in O’Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 31.

this stage Lord Overstone had removed himself from business.²⁷⁵ This process was painful but welcome to Lord Overstone who was reluctant to give up the reins but excited at the prospect of a more leisured existence. He owned considerable quantities of land across the country and, as an only child, stood to inherit the whole of his father's vast estates. A new and extensive country seat was all that was required to complete his elevation. However, whilst the additions to the house evidently accommodated entertaining on a grand scale and were a statement of the family's status, they were also designed to meet the specific needs of the family.

When writing the memoir of her husband, Lady Wantage recalled the warm welcome her mother and father, Lord and Lady Overstone, had given her new husband to their family. After their daughter's marriage, Lord and Lady Overstone spent much of their time at Lockinge House, Berkshire. This, and an extensive landed estate, had been a wedding present from Lord Overstone, and it was here that the two couples enjoyed an 'even tenor of...joint family life'.²⁷⁶ The plan for Overstone Hall included apartments designated for the use of Lord and Lady Wantage in the new south west range, described in Chapter One [Figure 21]. It is quite possible this was designed with the intention of creating a home which could accommodate the same lifestyle the family had become accustomed to in Berkshire. Thus, Overstone Hall provides an example of how family life and the behaviour of family members within a built space could have an impact upon the form of a building project. Chapter Five will consider the alterations to Overstone Hall further and in particular the role of Lady Overstone as the motivating force behind building.

Conclusions

The legal identity of married women shaped the ways they held property. A detailed analysis of Viscountess Milton and Lady Carbery has shown that, principally through the actions of male relatives, women were able to own real property in their own right. In the examples considered, it is evident that this ability was a consequence of Viscountess Milton and Lady Carbery's natal family's wealth as well as their position

²⁷⁵ On this matter Lord Overstone wrote to Lord John Russell, 'The honour which you propose to confer upon me would involve the immediate relinquishment of my present pursuits and a great change in all my established habits of life.' See O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 455, Lord Overstone to Lord John Russell, 23 October 1849.

²⁷⁶ Wantage, *Lord Wantage*, p. 147.

within the family. In both instances, there were no male heirs. However, how much control women had over the way property was transferred is subject to debate and not necessarily recoverable in the types of documents used in this chapter. Although married women were not able to own property in their own right in common law, Holcombe has argued that when applied to real property, as opposed to personal property, common law afforded women a degree of protection.²⁷⁷ For example, husbands were not allowed to dispose of their wives real property without their wife's consent.

The legal relationship of individuals to property also had an impact upon their personal and emotional relationship to property. More often than not women moved into the houses of their new husbands. Lamport Hall was the childhood home of Sir Justinian and Sir Charles but the adopted home of their wives, Mary and Emily. Even though few married women owned property in the eyes of the law, this did not necessarily prevent emotional and physical investment in a property. As Wynne has argued, 'feelings of ownership were not challenged by law'.²⁷⁸ If this were the case, the majority of married women would forever feel like guests in their husband's houses. Women, Erickson has argued, 'did not, in their daily lives, operate on the premise that the entire marital household belonged to their husbands. Regardless of the law, the great majority of married women had to handle property continuously...Married women must therefore have regarded property in their possession as belonging to them even when it was not legally theirs.'²⁷⁹ This will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

²⁷⁷ Holcombe, *Wives and Property*, p. 23.

²⁷⁸ D. Wynne, *Women and Personal Property in the Victorian Novel* (Aldershot, 2010), pp. 9–10.

²⁷⁹ A. L. Erickson, 'Possession—and the Other One-Tenth of the Law: Assessing Women's Ownership and Economic Roles in Early Modern England', *Women's History Review*, 16, no. 3 (2007), pp. 369–385 (p. 370).

Chapter Three

How to Hire an Architect

DEAR MR TEULON – As formerly President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and in other ways I have frequently had the pleasure of meeting you, and of seeing your designs; and I have great pleasure in bearing witness to the high position which you occupy both personally and professionally among our Architects, and to the regard and respect which your many friends feel for you.²⁸⁰

A. J. B. Beresford Hope, 1870

When applying for the position of architect to the London School Board in 1870, the architect of Overstone Hall, William Milford Teulon, compiled a series of testimonials gathered from previous clients and colleagues.²⁸¹ Notable by its absence, however, was any recommendation from Lord Overstone. In the letters of patrons who did offer testimony several qualities consistently appear. Teulon was praised for his ability to stay within a budget or as one correspondent wrote, even to reduce the estimate. His skill in planning the layout of buildings to make comfortable and convenient spaces was noted as well as his attention to detail and readiness to ‘attend to the wishes and suggestions of those who employ him’.²⁸² Patrons valued Teulon’s integrity and ability to listen and to even anticipate their needs as much as his practical skills and knowledge of design and building. The qualities identified in the letters of recommendation form a conspectus of the desirable attributes of a Victorian architect. They also highlight the weight which recommendations carried within the profession as the position was

²⁸⁰ LP, Tait 211 ff. 305, Testimonial letters, A. J. B. Beresford Hope, 12 April 1870.

²⁸¹ The London School Board was looking for an architect in 1870 after the passing of the Elementary Education Act and in anticipation of an expansion in schools in the capital. Even though Teulon did not win the position this did not prevent him from entering competitions run by the London School Board to erect some of the new schools. The collection of testimony described above also included letters received when applying for the position of Surveyor to the County of Flint in 1864.

²⁸² LP, Tait 211 ff. 305, Testimonial letters, Rev. H. Mackenzie, 26 December 1870.

decided solely on testimony.²⁸³ On this occasion, Teulon lost out to the architect and architectural author Edward Robert Robson.²⁸⁴

By the nineteenth century the basis of architectural patronage had been greatly extended from the previous century to include a huge number and range of public buildings; this was to become the great period of public building construction. Positions, such as the Architect to the London School Board, were increasingly common. These provided new opportunities to gain salaried work for architects who had hitherto worked from commission to commission and without the guarantee of a constant income.²⁸⁵ Further opportunities to gain commissions came with the rise of architectural competitions which gave both established and novice architects the chance to compete to construct some of the largest buildings of the age, as well as smaller buildings such as schools, banks or churches.²⁸⁶ Success in these competitions, Harper has argued, acted as a 'certificate of confidence' before the existence of formal controls on private architecture.²⁸⁷ The successes and failures of these competitions were reported in journals such as *The Builder*, which emerged with the expansion of the periodical printing press in the 1840s. Print created a new forum for architectural discussion and debate as well as new opportunities to share knowledge and advertise architects' work.²⁸⁸ To this end, Jenkins and Kaye have argued that a once strong tradition of private patronage was being replaced by more varied sources.²⁸⁹ It was perhaps this widening of the field of architecture and different forms of patronage which prompted J. C. Loudon to comment in 1835: 'the time for building palaces, castles, and cathedrals is

²⁸³ LP, Tait 211 ff. 303, Testimonial letters, William Wilding Jones, n.d.

²⁸⁴ Robson went on to write one of the most important publications on school architecture in the nineteenth century. See E. R. Robson, *School Architecture: Being Practical Remarks on the Planning, Designing, Building and Furnishing of School-Houses* (London, 1874).

²⁸⁵ R. Pears, 'William Newton (1730–1798) and the Development of the Architectural Profession in North-East England', University of Newcastle PhD thesis (2013), p. 30.

²⁸⁶ R. H. Harper, *Victorian Architectural Competitions: An Index to British and Irish Architectural Competitions in The Builder, 1843–1900* (Mansell, 1983), pp. xi–xxvi; C. Webster (ed.), *The Practice of Architecture: Eight Architects 1830–1930* (Reading, 2012), p. 10; E. K. Morris, 'Architectural Style and the Government Offices Competition', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 31, no. 2 (November, 1978), pp. 8–13.

²⁸⁷ Harper, *Victorian Architectural Competitions*, p. xvi.

²⁸⁸ B. Hanson, *Architects and the "Building World" from Chambers to Ruskin, Constructing Authority* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 91–127; H. Long, *Victorian Houses and their Details, The Role of Publications in their Building and Decoration* (Oxford, 2002).

²⁸⁹ Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*, p. 69; B. L. B. Kaye, *The Development of the Architectural Profession in Britain: A Sociological Study* (London, 1960), p. 13.

gone by, or nearly so'.²⁹⁰ However, country houses were still an important feature of many architects' oeuvres and in spite of the evolving architectural scene described above, from the point of view of the examples considered in this thesis, traditional methods of patronage continued.

This chapter discusses the process by which patrons chose their architects. After deciding to build, one of the first decisions a country house owner had to make was which architect to commission. This decision was based on a complex set of circumstances and as Kaufman has argued, rested upon a fluid and interacting set of factors including the type of building programme, cost, location, taste and the meanings attached to a structure.²⁹¹ However, there is often limited evidence to suggest the exact thought process or motives behind an architect's employment as these were not frequently committed to paper. As a result, this chapter will describe how architects came to the attention of patrons through geographical proximity, personal and professional networks, or as a result of an architect's reputation.²⁹² In turn, the particular skills and knowledge which architects brought to a commission will be highlighted to suggest why an architect was hired as well as how these influences may have determined designs. It is worth noting here that it is outside the scope of this thesis to provide a comprehensive study of each architect's patronage network; rather, this chapter will locate the houses and patrons it considers within the wider context of an architect's oeuvre and the wider context of the country house owners' patronage networks. This chapter will begin with a brief introduction to the reasons why architects were employed at Lamport Hall, Haselbech Hall and Laxton Hall before an in depth case study discussing the decision to hire William Milford Teulon to rebuild Overstone Hall.

²⁹⁰ P. J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain, 1700–1850* (London, 2000), p. 184.

²⁹¹ E. Kaufman, 'E. B. Lamb: A Case Study in Victorian Architectural Patronage', *The Art Bulletin*, 70, no. 2 (June, 1988), pp. 314–345 (p. 318).

²⁹² Levy Peck identified a similar set of factors in her discussion of the establishment of patron-client relationships in seventeenth century politics; appeal to mutual friends, to kinship ties and to neighbourhood bonds. See L. Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* (London, 1990), p. 3.

Accessing Patronage: Geography, Networks, and Reputation

There was a range of architects employed in country house building across Northamptonshire whose client bases varied from local to national in extent. Although advances in travel made it possible for architects and gardeners, such as Humphry Repton, to work on commissions across the length and breadth of the country, local architects working in a relatively small area and for a comparatively small group of clients still made up an important component of the architectural profession.²⁹³ The impact and number of these regional architects has often been underestimated by scholarship.²⁹⁴ These men frequently gained employment through the nurturing of a positive reputation within an area and by fostering local professional or social networks. For example, Edmund F. Law became known for restoring many Northamptonshire churches. His employment on the majority of these jobs was the result of his prominent position as architect to the Northamptonshire Architectural Society as well as his reputation as a man of ‘great practical knowledge, sound judgement, and long experience in his profession’.²⁹⁵ Even though his work was chiefly confined to churches, Law was employed at several country houses owned by members of the Architectural Society.²⁹⁶ There were also architects who worked across a relatively large area but who also built close ties with specific locations where they started their career, had family connections or had gained access to networks of patrons united by geography or personal ties.

Although having worked across the country, in the latter part of his career Henry Hakewill’s commission base was centred on Warwickshire and the surrounding counties.²⁹⁷ Within Northamptonshire he worked on the stables at Dingley Hall in 1790 and was architect to Rugby school, a relatively short distance from Lamport Hall,

²⁹³ S. Daniels, ‘On the Road’ in *Humphry Repton, Landscape Gardening and the Geography of Georgian England* (Yale, 1999), pp. 27–60.

²⁹⁴ Pears, ‘William Newton’, p. 28.

²⁹⁵ *The Reports and Papers Read at the Meetings of the Architectural Societies of the Diocese of Lincoln, County of York, Archdeaconries of Northampton and Oakham, County of Bedford, Diocese of Worcester, and County of Leicestershire* (Lincoln, 1882), vol. 16, p. cix; A. Saint, *The Image of the Architect* (New Haven, 1993), p. 168.

²⁹⁶ Law altered Finedon Hall, Northamptonshire, between 1835 and 1859 and re-cased East Carlton Hall, Northamptonshire. Dolben, the owner of Finedon, and Palmer, the owner of East Carlton, were members of the Architectural Society. See Bailey, *Northamptonshire*, pp. 275, 244.

²⁹⁷ R. Hakewill, ‘Henry Hakewill, 1771–1830: Architect and Occasional Surveyor’, *Warwickshire History*, 11 (2001/2002), pp. 227–234 (p. 227).

between 1809 and his death in 1830.²⁹⁸ There is little evidence to show how Hakewill came to be employed at Lamport Hall in the 1820s, however it is quite possible that he was known to Sir Justinian and Mary Isham through his connection with Rugby.²⁹⁹ Over a decade of working at the school and within the surrounding counties was unlikely to have gone unnoticed by the landowning classes, many of whom sent their children to study at Rugby.³⁰⁰ A further connection between Lamport Hall and Rugby school is evidenced in the architecture itself. The perpendicular Gothic porch of the new north west wing built in 1821 [Figure 10] is an almost exact reproduction of the porch to the new master's house at Rugby, built c. 1809–13 [Figure 23].³⁰¹ As a whole, stylistically, the buildings were very similar and are indicative of the ability of Hakewill to transfer styles between building types. This was not necessarily an unusual trait, as many architects in the nineteenth century adapted to the needs of the market by building in numerous styles. There is no documentary evidence to suggest if the reproduction of the porch from Rugby at Lamport was at the behest of the patron or architect.

²⁹⁸ Bailey, *Northamptonshire*, p. 232; Hakewill's appointment at Rugby School also resulted in appointments further afield for example Farnborough Hall, Oxfordshire, in 1815 which was commissioned by one of the school's trustees, William Holbech.

²⁹⁹ Hakewill, 'Henry Hakewill', p. 227.

³⁰⁰ Sir Charles Isham was educated at Rugby School from 1834. T. L. Bloxham, *A Companion to the Rugby School Register from 1675 to 1870 Inclusive* (London, 1871), p. 60. His older brother Sir Justinian Vere Isham was sent to Eton. See NRO, IL 3091, Diary of Sir Justinian Vere Isham.

³⁰¹ Hakewill, 'Henry Hakewill', p. 229; W. H. D. Rouse, *A History of Rugby School* (London, 1898), p. 198; Rugby Borough Council, *Rugby School Conservation Plan Appraisal* (June 2010) [file:///C:/Users/Megan/Downloads/Rugby_School_Character_Appraisal%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Megan/Downloads/Rugby_School_Character_Appraisal%20(1).pdf) [accessed 7 May 2015], p. 38; Summerson, *Lamport Hall*, p. 11; Garwood, 'Hidden Patronage', p. 36; T. Uwins, *The Costume of the University of Oxford* (London, 1815), p. 24.



Figure 23: School Masters House at Rugby School built by Henry Hakewill, c. 1809–13 and showing the porch which was replicated almost exactly on the rebuilt north west front of Lamport Hall, built 1821.

Although Hakewill had a concentration of commissions in the Midlands he also kept an office in London.³⁰² He worked on a number of other country houses during his career, won the silver medal at the Royal Academy Schools in 1790 and received an architectural education when articled to John Yenn. The training in neo-classical architecture he would have received is evident in some of the designs he presented to the Ishams at Lamport Hall [For example, see Figures 29 & 36].³⁰³

Sir Justinian and Mary were evidently pleased with their decision to commission Hakewill as, in a bill dated 1824, Hakewill thanked the Ishams for recommending his

³⁰² Hakewill, 'Henry Hakewill', p. 227.

³⁰³ In 1821 Henry Hakewill proposed an elegant neo-classical design for the entrance gates to Lamport Hall and included neo-classical elements on further designs for a drawing room fireplace, garden porch and dairy. Of these design, only the fireplace was executed with all its neo-classical features, suggesting these were in Hakewill's taste and not his patrons. See NRO, IL 3079/D9, 10, 23, 24, 26 and 27. See also Chapter Five.

services to Sir John Palmer at East Carlton Hall.³⁰⁴ The Palmer and Isham family were linked by two marriages: Sir Justinian's sister, Sophia Isham, married Thomas Palmer, the elder brother of Sir John Palmer, in 1793 and Mary Isham's brother, Col. Robert Close married Sophia, Thomas Palmer's daughter c. 1827.³⁰⁵ The Isham's kinship network was a powerful tool for creating a steady flow of commissions within a locality. It was a different branch of this network, however, which was the most likely reason for Henry Goddard's employment at Lamport Hall just over two decades later.

In 1842 Sir Justinian and Mary employed Goddard, an architect who worked almost exclusively in the counties surrounding Leicestershire.³⁰⁶ Unlike Hakewill, Goddard's career was built on his demonstrated practical skills and knowledge learnt when articulated to his father a 'Carpenter, Joiner and Cabinetmaker' rather than an architectural education.³⁰⁷ His practice was not simply confined to architectural work but also included surveying, valuations and estate agents work.³⁰⁸

Two years before his employment at Lamport Hall, Goddard was commissioned by the Rev. Robert Isham to alter a house in Shangton, Leicestershire.³⁰⁹ It is possible this commission led to Goddard's employment at Lamport Hall. This started a tradition of patronage from the Ishams. Goddard was employed at Lamport Hall again in 1857 by the next generation of Ishams to live at the Hall, Sir Charles and Emily. It is perhaps of note that one of Goddard's previous patrons, Mary, was still living at Lamport at this time. Goddard extended the south east front by the addition of a new scullery, dairy scullery, still room and an extension to the housekeeper's room, described in Chapter One. The principal advantage of hiring Goddard in this instance must have been his

³⁰⁴ There is little evidence to suggest what the recommendation was for. See NRO, IL 2393, Bill from Henry Hakewill to Sir Justinian Isham, January 1824.

³⁰⁵ Sophia Isham (1772–1851) was the daughter of Sir Justinian Isham, seventh Baronet (1740–1818). She married Thomas Palmer (1771–1810) in 1793. Their daughter, Caroline Sophia Palmer, married Major Robert Henry Close in 1827. C. Mosley (ed.), *Burke's Peerage* (Delaware, 107th ed., 2003), vol. 2, p. 2066.

³⁰⁶ For a list of selected works see G. Brandwood and M. Cherry, *Men of Property, The Goddards and Six Generations of Architecture* (Leicester, 1990), pp.106–113; J. D. Bennett, *Leicestershire Architects 1700–1850* (Leicester, 1968), unpaginated.

³⁰⁷ Brandwood and Cherry, *Men of Property*, p. 15.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³⁰⁹ Brandwood and Cherry, *Men of Property*, p. 17; Summerson, *Lamport Hall*; 'Shangton', in J. M. Lee and R. A. McKinley, *A History of the County of Leicestershire*, vol. 5, *Gartree Hundred* (London, 1964), pp. 293–297.

knowledge of the building and ability to seamlessly extend the wing in the same style and faced in the same stone as the wing he had built fifteen years earlier.³¹⁰

Known amongst the Leicestershire and Northamptonshire gentry and with experience and knowledge of building in the area, Goddard was also a convenient architect for Viscountess Milton at Haselbech. Goddard appears to have been responsible for finishing outstanding work at Haselbech: he organised the purchase of materials, supervised some of the building, checked accounts and measured the works once complete.³¹¹ He also offered a number of designs, for example, improving the appearance of the chimney by raising the chimney case, guards for the cellar steps, standings in the stables and altering the appearance of the steps of the principal stair.³¹² Although his exact role at Haselbech is not clear, it is likely he took on responsibilities of an architect as well as a more general contractor.³¹³ With many of the designs already underway or completed, Goddard's skills were ideal. He knew local builders and suppliers, measured and surveyed work but also had the skills to correct and alter designs.

It is evident from this brief introduction that the geographical proximity of architects and patrons interacted with local and personal networks. To this end, Pears has argued that the use of familial patronage networks by provincial architects was fundamental to their success.³¹⁴ However, the recommendation of an architect within these networks could also serve a means in itself for the patrons. The brokering of the employment of an architect by family members and across kinship networks not only ensured that architects came with a recommendation but also confirmed and secured family ties through the sharing of knowledge. This sharing of knowledge, although partly created by location, was not limited by it.

³¹⁰ An undated plan by the Goddards of Leicester shows storm drains and pipes supplying water to the Hall from a ram, back up hand pup and rainwater tank. The water supply at Lamport was most likely to have been updated at the time the extension was built in 1857. Mary Isham's journal notes 'ram and fountain' against the date 1857. See NRO, IL 3079/D45.

³¹¹ See Chapter One.

³¹² NRO, FS 24/6, Henry Goddard to Edward K. Fisher, 17 September 1856; NRO, FS 24/6, Henry Goddard to Edward K. Fisher, 21 September 1856; NRO, FS 24/4, Henry Goddard to Edward K. Fisher, 22 September 1856.

³¹³ It is likely that Goddard was employed at Haselbech after Viscountess Milton purchased the Hall. He criticised and altered a number of designs for works which had already been completed suggesting he had not been involved in their original conception.

³¹⁴ Pears, 'William Newton', p. 10.

The London architect Ambrose Poynter was hired to landscape the grounds and build an extension to the service wing at Haselbech Hall. The first mention of Poynter is made in a letter of October 1856 where Viscountess Milton instructs her agent Fisher to supply Poynter with a ground plan of the house, evidently to suggest any necessary alterations or additions.³¹⁵ Poynter was no doubt chosen as architect to Haselbech as a consequence of his employment at Osberton Hall, Nottinghamshire; Viscountess Milton's husband's principal seat. George Savile Foljambe hired Poynter in 1847 two years after his marriage to Viscountess Milton to construct a new kitchen wing, add an extra floor to the existing service wing and a bay window. This was not the first time Foljambe had used Poynter. He had been employed seventeen years earlier to build Scofton Church, Nottinghamshire, as a monument to his first wife, Harriet Emily Mary.³¹⁶ From 1845, after their marriage, Viscountess Milton and Foljambe resided together at Osberton and even though the couple were in Dusseldorf for the majority of the alterations, Viscountess Milton would have had first-hand knowledge of Poynter's work.³¹⁷ It is not unreasonable to assume that when choosing an architect to work at Haselbech, Viscountess Milton or Foljambe chose Poynter based on a tradition of previous patronage. With Viscountess Milton's level of engagement with all other aspects of Haselbech it is also not unreasonable to suggest that it was Viscountess Milton, as opposed to Foljambe, who directly appointed Poynter. It was thus her marriage into her husband's family and his patronage network which determined her choice of architect.

The patronage networks surveyed so far have been centred on the family and have been extended through marriage or kinship. Employment of an architect could have been the

³¹⁵ NRO, FS 24/6, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 4 October 1856.

³¹⁶ Ambrose Poynter was also hired to erect cottages at Scofton in 1850. H. A. Johnson, 'Architecture of Osberton Hall, Nottinghamshire', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire*, 87 (1983), pp. 61–70 (pp. 65–68); Lord Hawkesbury, 'Notes on Osberton', pp. 11–32.

³¹⁷ A study of Osberton Hall is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, a paper using the surviving drawings of the scheme and accompanying correspondence has been published. See H. A. Johnson 'Architecture of Osberton Hall, Nottinghamshire'. In his study Johnson mentions that correspondence regarding the commission was sent to Dusseldorf where George Savile Foljambe and Viscountess Milton were staying between 1847 and 1848. On this visit Viscountess Milton gave birth to a daughter. See *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 28 (December 1847), p. 630. It is thus likely that Foljambe maintained some control over the project from a distance.

³¹⁷ E. Chalus, "'To Serve my Friends': Women and Political Patronage in Eighteenth-Century England" in A. Vickery (ed.), *Women, Privilege, and Power, British Politics, 1750 to the Present* (Stanford, 2001), pp. 57–88.

result of word of mouth recommendations between family members and friends or the result of inspiration found on visits to properties within personal networks. These were not exclusively male networks but relied on women both as patrons and sources of information and connections. These connections were not necessarily passive links created through marriage but could be actively sought and used.

In her study of women and political patronage Chalus has argued that, like men, women had extensive social and personal networks which they used to gain valuable information and contacts.³¹⁸ It is reasonable to assume that similar personal networks could be used in the patronage of architects. There is little evidence to suggest the individual agency of women, or indeed men, in the choice of architects in the case studies considered by this thesis, however, numerous examples exist elsewhere. The Duchess of Rutland recommended James Wyatt to her close friend the Duke of York to build Stafford House.³¹⁹ Women also kept abreast of architects' reputations. Harriet Sutherland described Blore as 'the *cheap* architect' and portrayed Wyattville as temperamental in her correspondence.³²⁰ The person who was recommending an architect occupied an intermediate position in the patronage process. They were not necessarily in a position to offer a commission but gained their power from access to individuals and information.³²¹ In this regard, even if wives were not the ones paying the architect's bills it was certainly in the architect's best interest to keep them on his side.

The series of recommendations made within personal networks described so far not only reveal the ways that architects came to a patron's attention but also the benefit to the architect of gaining a good reputation within personal networks. Architects established a reputation through work carried out and, where successful, found further work through being recommended by former clients amongst networks of friends and families of those clients.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ H. Colvin, 'The Architects of Stafford House', *Architectural History*, 1 (1958), pp. 17–30; D. Arnold, 'Defining femininity: Women and the Country House', in D. Arnold (ed.), *The Georgian Country House: Architecture, Landscape and Society* (Stroud, 1998), p. 85.

³²⁰ M. Leconfield (ed.) *Three Howard Sisters: Selections From the Writings of Lady Caroline Lascelles, Lady Dover and Countess Gower, 1825 to 1833*, completed by J. Gore (London, 1955), pp. 156, 147; M. Leyland, 'Lady Harewood (1801–59): Patronage, Agency and Representation at Harewood House', University of York MA dissertation (2011).

³²¹ Chalus, 'To Serve my Friends', pp. 57–88.

Virtual Networks and Reputation

Regardless of whether networks of kinship existed or not, a good reputation amongst groups of people connected, for example, by political allegiance, social standing or class were equally important in creating patronage. In 1860 the architect William Burn was hired by Sir Charles and Emily Isham to alter Lamport Hall. With no evidence to suggest a personal connection it is highly likely that Burn was hired on reputation alone. Burn's architectural practice executed upwards of 700 commissions in a career that spanned more than half a century.³²² A large part of his practice was devoted to building country houses for a notoriously difficult to please upper class clientele. In spite of this in 1869 T. L. Donaldson commented that Burn had succeeded in maintaining an excellent reputation throughout his career.

In hiring Burn the Ishams were confirming their membership of a group of patrons which contained many of the wealthy landowners of the day. Burn's initial commissions were received through friends, family and his master, Smirke. However it was not long until his carefully constructed reputation created patronage off his own back. After a commission from the fifth Duke of Buccleuch to remodel Drumlanrig Castle, Dumfriesshire, in 1828, Burn entered into a network of Tory noblemen, who, along with the Duke of Buccleuch, would provide an important commission base for the rest of his career.³²³ The importance of maintaining this network of clients was increased by Burn's withdrawal from entering competitions early in his career and his practice of never publishing his designs.³²⁴ Burn's refusal to publish his works not only protected the privacy of clients and prevented copyism, but may also have been part of his self-presentation as an exclusive elite architect. Corfield has described the importance of keeping trade secrets within a profession and which, as a result, enhanced prestige due to the exclusive nature of knowledge and skills.³²⁵

³²² T. L. Donaldson, 'Memoir of the late William Burn, fellow', *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects* (1869–70), pp. 121–9.

³²³ P. Bradley, 'William Burn, The Country House', University of Nottingham PhD thesis (2004), p. 10; D. Walker, 'William Burn: The Country House in Transition', in J. Fawcett (ed.) *Seven Victorian Architects*, p. 8; H. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600–1840* (New Haven and London, 3rd ed., 1995), p. 182; D. M. Walker, 'Burn, William (1789–1870)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online Edition* (Oxford 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4044> [accessed 5 May 2015].

³²⁴ Walker, 'William Burn', pp. 8–10.

³²⁵ Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 205.

Once established within a virtual network and with so many commissions evidencing his work, Burn's employment at Lamport could well have been the result of his reputation alone. He would certainly have been known to members of the upper classes. Significantly, the commission at Lamport Hall, the new principal front, was one of the most important facades of the building after it had been reoriented. It is perhaps this reason which led Sir Charles and Emily to hire one of the most well-known architects of the time. On the converse, Burn's employment at Lamport Hall is not included on the commission list in a memoir of Burn written by Donaldson after Burn's death.³²⁶ This suggests that Burn was even more prolific than Donaldson's record of his work might indicate but also contextualises his employment at Lamport: this was a relatively small commission.

Although Burn worked for a certain type of clientele he was also noted for his skill and reliability. If his perceived reputation was correct, the Ishams were employing a reliable architect experienced in both new builds and a large number of alterations to existing houses. In particular, he was known to be skilled in the arrangement of the floor plans of both old and new houses to create comfortable and convenient homes. To this end, Kerr described Burn as the 'master' of the country house plan.³²⁷ Burn was well suited for a job which required the re-arrangement of the internal plan of a country house. Reputation may also have stimulated the Evans to hire the Reptons at Laxton Hall, discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.³²⁸

The themes considered through the examples in this chapter so far, have evidenced the importance to architects of networks of patrons in gaining commissions. However, as well as networks of patrons there were also networks of architects and workmen in operation which promoted colleagues, students or members of their own family. Alliances between architects were being created in the form of professional organisations. Thus traditional personal systems of recommendation were supplemented by new systems of official validation, for example competitions, mentioned in the

³²⁶ Donaldson, 'Memoir of the late William Burn', pp. 121–9.

³²⁷ Kerr, *The Gentleman's House* (London, 1865), p. 59.

³²⁸ As part of his commission from Evans Repton was also employed to draw 'plans and Elevations of a Mansion to be built in Ireland called Bulgaden Castle in the massive Gothic style'. See Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/2A, Account showing sums due for designs, architect's commission and travel from George Freke Evans to H and J. A. Repton, c. 1809.

chapter introduction, but also membership to exclusive groups such as the RIBA.³²⁹ Arnold has argued that the move towards a regulated profession by the RIBA instilled an element of trust in architects who were increasingly viewed as professionals, in much the same way as were lawyers.³³⁰ However, what this meant in practice was questioned by some contemporaries: ‘Perhaps the Institute may entertain an idea that the public will think that better architects will be found belonging to an architectural institute than are to be found unconnected with one...Anything which has a tendency to elevate a man in public opinion, otherwise than his own individual merits, is so far bad’.³³¹

On a smaller scale, partnerships were made between architects to broaden client bases and the skills on offer to potential patrons. As architecture became separated from practical building, the architect’s role increasingly involved choosing agents or contractors to employ.³³² Goddard was employed at both Lamport and Haselbech at a similar time. Many of the workmen, the builder Clifton for example, were also working at both sites.³³³ Viscountess Milton and Sir Charles also both used the land agent Edward K. Fisher (c. 1827–1901). If Fisher, Goddard and even Clifton had a working agreement or helped each other gain commissions or if proximity to the building works and good reputations earned them a place on both sites is not clear. However, Wilson and Mackley have shown that architects would often use the same contractors for different commissions and by doing so created informal alliances.³³⁴ The remainder of this chapter will describe one example where the professional connection between the architect William Milford Teulon and the landscape gardener and designer William Broderick Thomas may have resulted in both of their employment at Overstone Hall.

Professional Networks: William Milford Teulon and Overstone Hall

A detailed study of Teulon, a relatively unknown architect, and his employment at Overstone Hall illustrates the many different factors which influenced the patron’s choice of architect and in particular the importance of recommendations from within the

³²⁹ Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 184.

³³⁰ D. Arnold, *Reading Architectural History* (London, 2001), p. 62.

³³¹ J. C. Loudon, *Architectural Magazine*, 2 (1835), p. 471.

³³² Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, pp. 135–6

³³³ NRO, FS 24/6, William Clifton to Edward K. Fisher, 4 November 1857.

³³⁴ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 140.

profession.³³⁵ Currently, there has been no comprehensive survey of Teulon's practice and assessments of his work have been dominated by the negative perception of one commission, Overstone Hall. On seeing the Hall in 1864, Lord Overstone described the house as an 'utter failure' and as having 'neither taste, comfort nor convenience' and said of Teulon, that 'incapacity is his smallest fault'. He wrote, 'I am utterly ashamed of it...I grieve to think I shall hand such an abortion over to my successors.'³³⁶

Teulon's reputation as an incompetent architect and Lord Overstone's disapproval of his design have followed him ever since. Pevsner argued that Overstone Hall 'defeats description and appreciative analysis', Girouard has condemned the building as designed in a 'terrible bastard Renaissance' style and Heward and Taylor have claimed that Overstone Hall is 'by common agreement the ugliest' building in the county of Northamptonshire.³³⁷ Lord Overstone has not escaped censure. The choice of Teulon as architect has been criticised by Franklin: 'Often one can guess how a client came to choose a particular architect. Sometimes it remains a total mystery. Samuel Jones Loyd, Lord Overstone, banker, was one of the richest men in England. Yet for Overstone Hall he employed the obscure W. M. Teulon...he got what he deserved'.³³⁸

The low estimation of Overstone Hall's aesthetic, in part, owes to scholarship's traditionally negative response to High Victorian and eclectic architecture, which has only recently begun to be viewed in a serious light. Teulon's older brother Samuel Saunders Teulon has been described as a 'rogue architect'; an expression coined by Goodhart-Rendal.³³⁹ Saunders has argued that Teulon shared some of his brother's 'roguish tendencies'.³⁴⁰ 'Rogue' architects have been defined by their 'stylistic nonconformity', individuality and their difficulty to categorise on stylistic grounds.³⁴¹ However, studies of Lamb (1806–1869), Bassett Keeling (1837–1886) and Edward

³³⁵ Many of the starting points for this assessment of Teulon were suggested by Alan Teulon who kindly shared his research with me and who has published on Samuel Sanders Teulon. See A. E. Teulon, *The Life and Work of Samuel Sanders Teulon: Victorian Architect* (2009).

³³⁶ O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 3, p. 1070, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 8 April 1865.

³³⁷ Pevsner, *Northamptonshire* (1973), p. 368; Girouard, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 185; Heward and Taylor, *Country Houses of Northamptonshire*, p. 44.

³³⁸ Franklin, *The Gentleman's Country House and its Plan*, p. 122.

³³⁹ H. S. Goodhart-Rendel, 'Rogue Architects of the Victorian Era', *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 3rd ser., 56 (1949), pp. 251–9.

³⁴⁰ M. Saunders, 'The Churches of S. S. Teulon', *The Ecclesiological Society* (1982), p. 3.

³⁴¹ S. Abbott, 'Edward Schroeder Prior (1852–1932): Rogue Architect?' in Webster, *The Practice of Architecture*, pp. 145–167 (p. 146).

Schroeder Prior (1852–1932), among others, have begun to revise traditional interpretations by illustrating how the architectural decisions made by these architects responded to wider movements within the architectural profession.³⁴² In particular, nineteenth-century architects were concerned with finding a style for the nineteenth century and which stimulated, among this group of architects, innovation and often the mixing of architectural styles.³⁴³ Hence, as well as suggesting how Teulon came to be employed at Overstone Hall, the following analysis will take a more critical and balanced view of the architecture of the Hall.

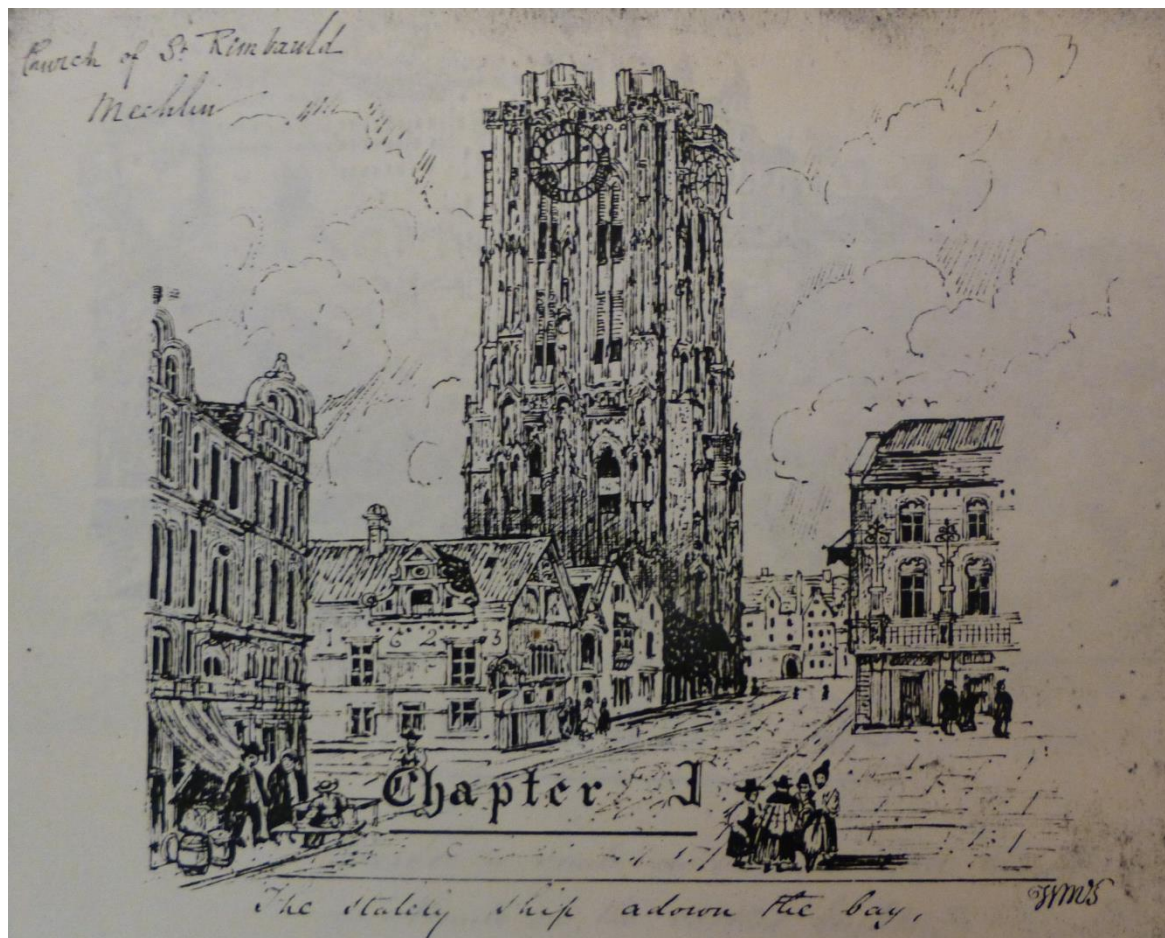


Figure 24: Drawing of the Church of St Rumbold in Mechelen, William Milford Teulon’s European tour journal, 1847–1848 (Private Collection).

³⁴² Kaufman, ‘E. B. Lamb: A Case study’, pp. 314–345; Abbott, ‘Edward Schroeder’, pp. 145–167 and J. S. Curl, ‘Acrobatic Gothic, freely treated: the Rise and Fall of Bassett Keeling (1837–86)’ in Webster, *The Practice of Architecture*, pp. 107–144.

³⁴³ For more on the different styles employed in the nineteenth century see J. Mordaunt Crook, *The Dilemma of Style: Architectural Ideas from the Picturesque to the Post-Modern* (London, 1987).

Born in 1823, William Milford Teulon was the younger brother of the better known architect Samuel Sanders Teulon.³⁴⁴ By the time he was fifteen his elder brother had already established an architectural practice working principally in London and the Midlands.³⁴⁵ However there is no evidence that the brothers ever worked together or that Teulon was articled to Samuel Sanders.³⁴⁶ The only insight into Teulon's early training is afforded by two manuscript volumes: his European tour journals from 1847 to 1848. Teulon visited Mechelen, the Rhine, Basel, Bavaria, Austria, Venice, Vicenza, Rome and Paestum. The title pages for each chapter of his journals are filled with sketches.³⁴⁷ The buildings Teulon chose to feature were common stops on the European tour including St Rumbold in Mechelen, Hendebery Castle in the Rhine, the Walhalla in Germany, St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, the Palazzo Foscari in Venice, the Piazza dei Signori in Vicenza, St John's Lateran in Rome and the Basilica and Temple of Neptune in Paestum. Teulon's illustrations are not simply of architecture or architectural details, but are scenes, often populated, and which show a concern for the overall silhouette of a building and in particular the skyline [Figure 24].

The size of Teulon's practice was not as great as that of his brother however between 1850 and his retirement from the RIBA in 1889, he received at least 68 commissions [See Appendix]. It is probable that this list could be considerably extended. A large number of these were in Yorkshire, Sussex, Kent and London. They varied in type from parsonages, schools, churches, mausoleums, alterations and additions to country houses and gardens to several new country house builds. Later in his career and after being commissioned by Lord Overstone, he was employed by a number of other bankers. William Yeoman, chairman of the Darlington district banking company, hired Teulon to build their Darlington head office, house and a bank at Leyburn in North Yorkshire. The similarities between the architecture of Leyburn bank, built in 1875, and Overstone Hall are notable and illustrate how Teulon, like Hakewill mentioned earlier, transferred his ideas from a domestic to public context. Teulon was also hired by the banker

³⁴⁴ From this point on William Milford Teulon will be referred to as Teulon and his older brother as Samuel Saunders Teulon.

³⁴⁵ C. E. Lee, 'The Younger Teulon, Profile of a Camden Architect', *Camden History Review*, 5 (1977), pp. 4–5, 24 (p. 4).

³⁴⁶ Teulon, *The Life Works*, p. 49.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁸ The location of these journals is no longer known however photocopies of the title pages are held in a private collection.

Oswald Augustus Smith in the 1860s and by H. Birkbeck to build a bank at Derehem, near Norwich.³⁴⁸

Teulon had several important professional partnerships and associations. Between c. 1872 and 1874 Teulon worked in partnership with the builder Egbert Evans Cronk.³⁴⁹ Teulon was a trustee of St Pancras Church, the originator and designer of the Strand Improvement Scheme, founder of the City Churches and Churchyards Protection Scheme and an Associate of the RIBA in 1854 and fellow in 1860. To add to this, he was also a committed member of the Ecclesiological Society which he joined in 1847.³⁵⁰ Thus, although not building on the scale of his brother, Teulon was still a relatively successful architect and was certainly well known within the profession.

Even though it has been established that Teulon was not necessarily as obscure as Franklin suggests, the employment of Teulon at Overstone Hall still deserves further investigation. Lord Overstone had almost unlimited finances as well as numerous connections to the art and architectural world. His role in the financial and organisational aspects of the Great Exhibition of 1851 meant he came into contact with a number of architects.³⁵¹ As one of Her Majesty's Commissioners for the Great Exhibition he worked alongside Sir William Cubbitt, James Meadows Rendel, Sir Charles Barry and Sir Charles Lock Eastlake. He was on the Catalogue committee with Sir William Cubitt and Dr Lyon Playfair; the Prices of Admission committee with Col. Sir William Reid and Sir William Cubitt; and the finance committee, again, with Sir William Cubitt. To this list of architects, surveyors and architectural historians can be added the Reptons and the engineer Thomas Telford, old family friends of the Lindsays. George Stanley Repton had been used by Lord Overstone to design Stabling Wood's Mews but died in 1858 before Overstone Hall was commissioned.³⁵² Many of these acquaintances occupied a strange middle ground in the architectural profession, being considered as engineers, garden designers or surveyors as much as architects. As a

³⁴⁸ Teulon was also hired to build a house for Oswald Augustus Smith. See LP, Tait 211 ff. 306, Testimonial letters, Oswald Augustus Smith, 27 December 1870.

³⁴⁹ *The London Gazette*, 17 July 1874, p. 3593.

³⁵⁰ Lee, 'The Younger Teulon', p. 4.

³⁵¹ Lord Overstone was committed to the public display of art and offered to loan £120,000 to fund the venture. The loan was not accepted as Lord Overstone and the Commissioners could not agree upon appropriate securities for the loan. See SHL, MS 804/1181–1203.

³⁵² 'The Architecture of the Estate: The Reign of the Cundys', in F. H. W. Shepherd (ed.), *Survey of London*, vol. 39, *The Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair* (London, 1977), pp. 127–140.

result, Barry aside perhaps, there were no candidates among Lord Overstone's circle to rebuild his house. This all assumes that it was Lord Overstone who chose the architect of Overstone Hall. As Chapter Five will show, it was Lady Overstone who desired to rebuild the Hall and it is not beyond the realm of possibility that it was her who chose Teulon.³⁵³ There is, however, another possible way that Teulon may have come to the Overstones' attention: through the landscape gardener William Broderick Thomas.

At both Overstone Hall and Althorp Hall the fortunes of Teulon and the garden designer Thomas were connected. The laying out of the gardens at Althorp has been attributed to Teulon who is credited with the design for the formal gardens around the house and the stone pillars and ironwork to the forecourt. Thomas has been noted as the gardener.³⁵⁴ However, there was a far more complex relationship between Teulon and this garden commission. A letter from John, fifth Earl Spencer and owner of Althorp suggests it was in fact the landscaper Thomas who laid out the gardens at Althorp and that it was Thomas who employed Teulon's assistance.³⁵⁵ Spencer wrote on 24 July 1864 'I am glad to state that I have known you for four years. You were introduced to me by Thomas, who employed you for the architectural part of some plans for re-arranging the grounds at this place, which he made for me...some drawings you have made for me enable me to state that I consider you have considerable skill as a designer, and that your designs are in excellent taste.'³⁵⁶ Thomas worked on several prestigious commissions previously, including Sandringham Palace for the Prince of Wales as well as for the Earl of Abercorn, the Earl of Cranbrook and Lord Iveagh among others.³⁵⁷

The acquaintance of four years mentioned by Spencer would date Teulon's involvement in the grounds at Althorp to the same time that he was employed at Overstone. Importantly, similarly to Althorp, both Thomas and Teulon were employed. Thomas was commissioned to lay out the grounds around Overstone Hall, choose a site for the stables and create new roads through the park to approach the entrance court.³⁵⁸ It is possible that Teulon was recommended to Lord Overstone by Thomas, or vice versa. Regardless, this example shows the benefit which architects and landscapers could gain

³⁵³ See Chapters Two and Five.

³⁵⁴ Bailey, *Northamptonshire*, p. 82.

³⁵⁵ LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, John Spencer, fifth Earl Spencer, 24 July 1864.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁷ B. Elliott, *Victorian Gardens* (London, 1986), p. 147.

³⁵⁸ 'Overstone Hall', *The Builder*, 20, no. 995 (1 March 1862), p. 151.

by forming professional relationships. Further evidence of a professional and personal relationship between Thomas and Teulon is provided by a letter to Teulon by Thomas himself. He wrote, 'I believe I have had the pleasure of being acquainted with you for upwards of fifteen years, in which time I have had many opportunities of observing your taste, &c., which I consider very good, and have often received great assistance in my own profession from your thorough knowledge of your profession.'³⁵⁹ The employment of an architect to complete the architectural parts of a landscape design was not necessarily unusual. In the earlier part of his career, Repton employed several architects for that exact purpose before collaborating with his son.³⁶⁰

The connection between the patronage of Teulon at Althorp and Overstone is further strengthened by the high probability that Lord Overstone visited Althorp on several occasions and was likely to have seen the works being executed.³⁶¹ Thomas had also worked for the brother of Lord Overstone's son-in-law, Robert Stayner Holford at Westonbirt, Gloucestershire from 1839.³⁶² Lord Overstone and Holford were correspondents and Lord Overstone visited Westonbirt prior to beginning building works at Overstone. Though it is not clear who was recommending Thomas to whom, it is apparent that within Lord Overstone's kinship network there was a confluence of thought on the most appropriate landscaper for their ambitions and that Thomas' connection with Teulon may explain his employment at Overstone Hall. Thus, when placed in the wider context of Teulon's patron and professional networks the choice of architect at Overstone Hall does not appear as illogical as Franklin has suggested. Recognition of Teulon's wider networks and the context in which the Hall was built also sheds light on the architecture of Overstone Hall, which is perhaps not so far beyond comprehension as Pevsner has put forward.

Teulon, like many contemporary architects, worked in many different styles, tailoring his architecture to the needs of clients or suggestions from professional architectural

³⁵⁹ LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, W. B. Thomas, c. 1864.

³⁶⁰ S. Daniels, *Humphry Repton Landscape Gardening and the Geographies of Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 1999), p. 4.

³⁶¹ The Pytchley hunt was attended by all the great and good of the county as well as those who travelled from further afield. Lord Spencer was one of the renowned hosts of this event. Lord Overstone also visited the library at Althorp and corresponded with Lord Spencer on matters concerning the county.

³⁶² Col. Robert Loyd Lindsay's sister, Mary Anne, married Robert Staynor Holford on 5 August 1854. Lord Overstone appears to have fostered very close bonds with the Lindsays, frequently visiting their homes.

associations.³⁶³ Among other styles, Teulon designed buildings in late pointed Gothic, perpendicular, neo-Elizabethan and neo-Jacobean. Teulon was noted within the architectural community for his innovative and experimental designs. In 1865 Teulon submitted a design for the Chapel-School, Spaldington, Yorkshire, to the *Ecclesiologist* which he frequently used as a sounding board for his ideas. The design for the Chapel-School was criticised as being ‘multum in parvo’ with particular reference to the combined chimney pot, single bell and clock face. Teulon was chided for his ‘misplaced ingenuity’. He submitted a redesign to the *Ecclesiologist* in 1857 which received a more positive response.³⁶⁴ Teulon also responded to the requests of patrons and the personal treatment they received, described at the beginning of this chapter, was extended to his designs. In 1857 Teulon was commissioned to build ‘Long Hull’ for Captain Thomas Chaloner in Guisborough, Yorkshire. The design is unique and copies elements of a ship’s design, for example, the inclusion of an oriel window on the south front, mimicking the porthole on the stern of a ship. The design is a reference to the Captain’s profession in the Royal Navy.³⁶⁵ Thus, Teulon was regarded as innovative, even if all of his innovations were not well received.

Teulon’s approach to design is evident at Overstone Hall, commended in *The Builder* for its successful combination of architectural components from different periods: ‘a dignified design for a large mansion, with what may be called a mixture of Renaissance and Elizabethan features pretty successfully fused into a consistent whole’.³⁶⁶ The towers at Overstone combine elements from many periods and countries seamlessly to produce a monumental feature. The round arches of the central tower, combined with the heavy cornice, are arguably Venetian in inspiration. However, the vertical thrust, grid like appearance and rusticated columns borrow more from Elizabethan models. A compelling comparison can be made with the neo-Elizabethan prodigy house Mentmore

³⁶³ Mordaunt Crook, *The Dilemma of Style*, p. 13.

³⁶⁴ *The Ecclesiologist*, 17, no. 115 (August 1856), p. 312; *The Ecclesiologist*, 18, no. 122 (October, 1857), p. 325.

³⁶⁵ Pevsner tentatively attributed this to William Milford Teulon rather than Samuel Saunders Teulon on the grounds that William Milford Teulon also built the parsonage. However, from a pamphlet of testimony produced by William Milford Teulon in 1876, the attribution can be made with certainty. See N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire: The North Riding* (London, 1959), p. 179; LP, Tait 211 ff. 310, Testimonial letters, Captain Thomas Chaloner, 25 July 1864; ‘Latest News’, *The York Herald*, 21 October 1884, p. 5.

³⁶⁶ ‘The Architectural Exhibition’, *The Builder*, 28, no. 1424 (21 May 1870), p. 900.

Towers designed by Paxton and modelled on Wollaton. These towers are accompanied by shaped gables and triangular pediments.



Figure 25: East facade of Overstone Hall.

The asymmetrical and sometimes awkward arrangement of architectural features and windows at Overstone were to a large extent determined by the interior layout of the house. Several clear examples can be used to illustrate this. The east facade of the house has, perhaps, the most uncomfortable arrangement of windows and architectural features. On the ground floor level long rectangular windows are surmounted by a Jacobean style gable consisting of scrolls, raised and fielded panels, pilaster strips and an urn or Jacobethan pendant, however, there are no windows on the floor above [Figure 25].

The awkward arrangement was determined by the internal layout of rooms. On the second and third floor level there were fireplaces. As a result, no window could be placed in the wall. Instead, the ornamental gable was used to decorate what would otherwise have been empty space. Equally, the window at second floor level in the adjoining bay sits uncomfortably close to the bay window. The window was placed in

this position to provide light into a small dressing room rather than as a result of external aesthetic considerations. A similar situation presented itself on the north entrance facade. In this instance an area of wall at the west end of the elevation was left unadorned except for the cornice and stringcourses carried around the majority of the building. The elevation published in *The Builder* of 1862 covers this wall space with a carefully placed hedge; possibly indicating the architect's awareness of the problem [Figure 19]. The reason for the lack of fenestration, as with the previous example, was due to the presence of a chimney flue running from the ground to third floor. It is interesting that the fireplaces should have taken precedence over external arrangement in light of the presence of a central heating system at Overstone Hall.³⁶⁷ It is possible that these were features of the eighteenth-century structure intended to be retained, or that they marked important rooms in the internal arrangement, or simply, were the result of Teulon's design philosophy. It was not unusual for a building to be designed from the inside out. This was a principle espoused by Pugin and one which was persistent throughout the nineteenth century.³⁶⁸ Arguably, the distribution and location of ornament was executed in such a way that an impression of ad hoc placement is given. However, these were deliberate design decisions.

³⁶⁷ In 1862 *The Builder* described that 'the whole of the house will be warmed by Messrs. Price's apparatus, under the direction of Mr Lea'. The 1921 sales catalogue for the Hall describes that there was hot-air heating in many of the principal rooms and corridors. See 'Overstone Hall', *The Builder*, 20, no. 995 (1 March 1862), p. 149; NRO, SC 138, *Sales Catalogue*, p. 28.

³⁶⁸ R. Hill, *God's Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain*, (Yale, 2008), p. 18.



Figure 26: Column Capitals, Overstone Hall.

Aspects of the architecture of Overstone Hall suggest Teulon's skill as a church architect as much as a domestic architect. The column and pilaster capitals of Overstone are distinctive and Teulon went to great lengths to avoid the repetition of capitals [Figure 26]. They are of several types, though there does not appear to be any correlation between their style and position on the building. This is not necessarily an unusual feature. In his *History of Architecture*, which was as much a treatise on what modern architecture should be as a history, the architectural historian James Ferguson argued that in Medieval France the capitals of 'the best buildings vary with every shaft'.³⁶⁹ Similar observations were made by Ruskin in *The Stones of Venice* and other publications.³⁷⁰

Rather than evoking classically Gothic or classical shapes and styles the columns at Overstone creatively employed plants and foliage. Some draw on geometrical design whereas others are stylised, heavy and robust carvings of flowers, ivy leaves and acanthus leaves; the latter are often deployed to the volutes and shapes of more recognisable capitals and others are variants of crockets or stiff leaf capitals. These vegetative forms spill from the capitals onto the wall surface. This mannerist approach to the placement of decoration is repeated through leaves exploding from gaps of

³⁶⁹ J. Fergusson, *A History of Architecture in all Countries from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London, 1862–7), vol. 3, p. 380.

³⁷⁰ J. Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice* (London, 2nd ed., 1867), pp. 175, 181.

scrolled ornament over the terrace facade doorway and elsewhere. This decoration and more especially the column capitals are reminiscent of the Gothic revival decoration in church interiors of the 1850s and 60s and would not look out of place in the repertoire of Gilbert Scott or in form, though not necessarily in material, in the Museum of Physical Sciences (now the Natural History Museum) at Oxford built under the superintendence of Messrs. Deane and Woodward from 1855.³⁷¹ Similar column capitals though less bold and on a building of a much smaller scale were executed at Teulon's Mortuary Chapel, Bryn-y-Pys, Overton, Flintshire, which was being erected by Teulon in 1861.³⁷² These elements demonstrate Teulon's noted ability for invention upon a recognisable theme.

Ruskin argued for the importance of the craftsman in producing varied and natural ornament.³⁷³ If the carving of column capitals was the invention of Teulon or the craftsmen themselves is not known. However, the craftsmen employed seemed suited to a project which required so much masonry work. The Overstone's employed a local builder and contractor to the East Midlands, Benjamin Broadbent of Leicester of Messrs. Broadbent & Son.³⁷⁴ Messrs. Broadbent & Sons was described by *The Builder* in 1861 as 'one of the acknowledged best and most liberal provincial firms'.³⁷⁵ Broadbent would not see the end of his contract. He died 'somewhat suddenly' on 16 May 1862 at the age of 49.³⁷⁶ None the less, for a commission which would require considerable numbers of masons to complete the intricate detail of capitals and gables, Broadbent seemed an obvious choice. In 1846 Broadbent was listed in directories as a partner in Broadbent and Hawley, stone and marble masons and gravestone cutters. By 1855 he was working alone as a builder and mason.³⁷⁷ His knowledge as a contractor as well as a mason would stand him in good stead for a commission as complex as Overstone Hall.

³⁷¹ For further examples see C. L. Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival* (London, 1872), pp. 283–291.

³⁷² *The Ecclesiologist*, 19, no. 144 (June 1861), p. 198.

³⁷³ Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, p. 172.

³⁷⁴ 'Overstone Hall', *The Builder*, 20, no. 995 (1 March 1862), p. 149.

³⁷⁵ Quoted in 'A Mason's Strike', *Northampton Mercury*, 5 October 1861, p. 7.

³⁷⁶ *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 May 1862, Births, Deaths and Marriages section.

³⁷⁷ An advertisement for workmen in the *Northampton Mercury* indicates that, in spite of Messrs. Broadbent & Son continuing after the death of its head, a new contractor was found, Mr Hawkes. See 'To Stone Masons', *Northampton Mercury*, 14 November 1863, p. 4.

³⁷⁷ Bennett, *Leicestershire Architects*, unpaginated.



Figure 27: North and west fronts of Overstone Hall, William Milford Teulon. It is highly probable that this is the painting exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1865 and at the Exhibition of the Architectural Society in 1870. Reproduced with permission of the Northampton Museums and Art Gallery.

Here, it is worth returning to the response of Lord Overstone quoted earlier in this analysis. Lord Overstone's damning remarks on Overstone Hall and Teulon might have damaged Teulon's reputation. However, it is important not to over-emphasise the impact of individual patrons and individual buildings upon the success of an architect's career. The multiple reasons for Lord Overstone's dislike of the architecture at Overstone Hall will be described in greater length in Chapter Five. The designs, however, were not so poorly received among the architectural profession. Teulon exhibited a painting of Overstone Hall at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1865 [Figure 27].³⁷⁸ He also exhibited at the Exhibition of the Architectural Society in 1870 where, along with a number of other designs, Overstone Hall was commended as having 'much that is admirable'.³⁷⁹ *The Builder* reported that 'Mr Teulon, however he may vary the style of his domestic buildings, always impresses on them a certain amount of originality of treatment, and is in quite a different position from those architects who merely reproduce correctly and exactly the original features of two or

³⁷⁸ In the 'South Room' under the category of architecture, item 778 was 'Overstone Hall, Northamptonshire' by William Milford Teulon. See *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts, 1865, The Ninety-Second* (London, 1865).

³⁷⁹ 'Exhibition of the Architectural Society', *Art Journal* (1 June 1870), p. 191.

three styles.’³⁸⁰ This quote echoes the cry of the nineteenth century for a new style; a style which transcended the chaos of copyism.³⁸¹

There is also evidence to suggest that Teulon had provided a good service at Overstone Hall and that the building was not universally unappreciated. Among the testimony provided for Teulon’s application to the London School Board was a letter from Lord Suffield. He attached a private note to his letter in which he commented on the praise he had heard for Teulon at Overstone Hall: ‘I have written you the sort of letter I suppose you require; what I have said is strictly true. I have observed Lord Overstone’s house in Northamptonshire, and though I had not the pleasure of meeting you there I heard everything in your praise, so much so that if I required your services, I should not fail to ask for them.’³⁸²

Pevsner’s comment that the architecture of Overstone Hall ‘defeats description and appreciative analysis’ and Girouard’s, that Overstone was a ‘terrible bastard Renaissance’ style quoted at the beginning of this chapter need to be balanced against the context in which Overstone Hall was built. The inability to define the architecture of Overstone Hall and Teulon’s adaption of Renaissance idioms when read in the context of the nineteenth century could be understood as Teulon’s attempt to find a new architectural style for the age. In fact, contemporaries equally struggled to define the architecture of Overstone Hall. In 1862 *The Builder*, wrote: ‘the style adopted is claimed to be that, in a simple form, of the age of Francis I’.³⁸³ By 1870 *The Builder* changes its assessment and describes the style of Overstone as ‘a mixture of Renaissance and Elizabethan features’.³⁸⁴ The confusion over how to describe Overstone’s architecture says as much about the design as any ability to categorise the architecture through a single overarching style. By the 1870s buildings similar to Overstone were appearing. These were fuller and vamped up expressions of what Teulon was striving for in the 1860s. For example, St Leonard’s Hill by C. H. Howell was comprised of many of the same features as Overstone Hall but multiplied and with

³⁸⁰ ‘The Architectural Exhibition’, *The Builder*, 28, no. 1424 (21 May 1870), p. 400.

³⁸¹ K. J. Mays, ‘How the Victorians Un-Invented Themselves: Architecture, the Battle of the Styles, and the History of the Term Victorian’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 19, no. 1 (2014), pp. 1–23 (p. 10).

³⁸² LP, Tait 21 ff. 309, Testimonial letters, Lord Suffield, n.d.

³⁸³ ‘Overstone Hall’, *The Builder*, 20, no. 995 (1 March 1862), p. 149.

³⁸⁴ ‘The Architectural Exhibition’, p. 400.

a fashionable French mansard roof.³⁸⁵ It is also evident that Teulon was fascinated with experimentation. This was not only in the style of the Hall described above but also materials and technology. The Hall had many modern conveniences including a central heating system, gas lighting, and one of the earliest examples of cavity wall construction.³⁸⁶ Chapter Five will consider if Teulon's passion for experimentation was matched by Lord and Lady Overstone.

Conclusions

Even though the architectural scene as a whole was changing in the nineteenth century, it is also evident from the architects considered in this chapter that traditional means of patronage endured when hiring architects for the country houses considered in this thesis.³⁸⁷ The reasons to hire an architect were multiple and the networks and relationships described among this small sample of houses were only one part of the rationale behind employment. However, in these examples it is evident that, for architects, networks of clients played an important role in gaining access to future patrons either through word of mouth recommendations or reputation within a virtual network. For the patrons, the act of recommendation was itself, a means to an end. It could consolidate family ties and help to ensure the success of a family member's project through the employment of a trusted reliable architect. In doing so, dynastic patronage networks were perpetuated.

The choice of architect could also express something of the patron's status or ambition, financial ability, as well as the status of the project. To this end, the importance of hiring the right architect and building in the right style is noted by Brown in his publication *Domestic Architecture*:

Let it be borne in mind that the want of chasteness and harmony in such buildings, either in the external part of the fronts, or taken as a whole mass,

³⁸⁵ Perspective view of St Leonard's Hill, Berkshire, owned by Charles Henry Howell, *The Building News* (15 October 1875).

³⁸⁶ The wall construction of the Hall was described as 'built double and quite independent of each other; the internal one being of brick, tied to the outer by means of galvanized iron clamps', See 'Overstone Hall', *The Builder*, 20, no. 995 (1 March 1862), p. 149. A 'gas-house' was also erected in the grounds by Messrs. Strode and Co. in a 'sequestered portion of the park' to light the house and stables and a 'shadowless sun-burner' was installed to light the staircase at night. See 'Overstone Hall, Northamptonshire', *The Building News*, 11 (13 May 1864), p. 300.

³⁸⁷ Mordaunt Crook, *The Dilemma of Style*, p. 71.

when observed by a man of taste, will ever detract from, or be a disgrace to, the judgement of the owner.³⁸⁸

There is little evidence to suggest how far contemporaries believed that Overstone Hall detracted from the judgement of its owner. Overstone Hall was, indeed, seen as a ‘disgrace’ by Lord Overstone. However, this chapter has shown that the design was not universally disapproved of, even if it lacked the ‘chasteness’ and ‘harmony’ Brown clearly valued.

Access to patrons and their initial interest did not guarantee employment. The factors which determined successful patronage were far more complex and are not always recoverable in historical sources or circumstantial evidence. Attempts have been made across the chapter to draw connections between commissions and the suitability of architects. Evident across the sample is the versatility of architects, many of whom could design in multiple styles to suit the requirements of a patron but who also built numerous building types, from schools to country houses, to sustain a wider architectural practice. For example, Burn was fluent in the Greek revival, Tudor Gothic, Scots Baronial, Cottage House, Classical and Italianate styles.³⁸⁹ Differences in the size of offices and in the types of buildings the architects were most associated with also determined their *modus operandi*. Burn’s almost exclusive attention to country houses after the 1840s required a different approach to gaining patronage, described above. Other architects in this thesis took full advantage of the new patronage opportunities emerging in the nineteenth century. Hakewill found a steady source of employment as architect to Rugby School. The architect at Haselbech Hall, Poynter, took on several salaried positions including Inspector of the provincial schools in the Government School of Design as well as frequently acting as an arbitrator in disputes.³⁹⁰

Once employed by a patron there was no guarantee, even with a recommendation, that the employment of a specific architect was going to be successful. This has been evidenced by the comments made by Lord Overstone. The following chapter will describe the relationship between architects and patrons during design and building to explore the factors which contributed to a positive or negative building experience.

³⁸⁸ R. Brown, *Domestic Architecture* (London, 1841), p. 72.

³⁸⁹ Bradley divides William Burn’s commissions into these stylistic categories as the principal styles he built in. See Bradley, ‘William Burn’.

³⁹⁰ S. Macdonald, *The History and Philosophy of Art Education* (1970), pp. 91–92.

Chapter Four

Architect-Patron Relationships

Do not expect that you will build and not discover at the end of the work that you have gained experience, and that you could do the work better were you to begin again. This fate awaits all who handle bricks and mortar.³⁹¹

Lord Overstone, 1858

Hanson has argued that architects' authority and control over a building programme depended on a process of 'subtle diplomacy, so as to control the building process without appearing to do so'.³⁹² In spite of moves towards professionalisation, the relationship between architect and patron was still flexible and ill-defined in the nineteenth century. Architects, not necessarily able to dictate the terms of their relationship with patrons, were in a continual process of negotiating and renegotiating their position in the architectural process and the dynamics of these relationships could determine the success or failure of a building programme.³⁹³ Thus, Herbert and Donchin have argued that the architect-patron relationship could be positive, negative or obstructive but was 'undeniably definitive'.³⁹⁴ The traditional view of the nineteenth century, in particular post 1834 and the foundation of the Institute of British Architects, as the period where architecture was formalised and the role of architect and patron defined masks the great variety of *modus operandi* in operation at the time and, Webster has argued, the 'fascinatingly wide set of activities, performed by designers'.³⁹⁵

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) aimed to create 'uniformity and respectability of practice in the profession' and to uphold the 'character and respectability of its professors'.³⁹⁶ This, Saint has argued, was a response to the two most pressing issues faced by architects in the nineteenth century, status and

³⁹¹ O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 862, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 15 July 1858.

³⁹² Hanson, *Architects and the "Building World"*, p. 13.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³⁹⁴ Herbert and Donchin, *The Collaborators*, p. 16.

³⁹⁵ Webster, *The Practice of Architecture*, p. 11.

³⁹⁶ 'Art. XI. Address and Regulations of the Institute of British Architects, explanatory of their Views and Objects with a List of the Members, and of the Contributors to the Collection, Library, &c. 12mo. London, 1835', *The Architectural Magazine* (July 1835), p. 305.

education.³⁹⁷ The RIBA sought to define a role for architects separate from builders and workmen who had recently taken full advantage of a boom of building construction in the nineteenth century. Formal aspects of the architect-patron relationship were discussed including payment of fees, ownership of designs and the level of involvement architects should have after supplying initial drawings. However, there was still considerable scope for variation. The architect might simply supply designs, supervise the building or contract to erect the structure itself.³⁹⁸

To this end, Mordaunt Crook has shown that very few architects were actually members of the RIBA; approximately 9% of the architectural community in 1841.³⁹⁹ Thus, regardless of proscriptive ideas and an attempt to create ‘uniformity’ across the architectural practice, during the period of this study the role of architect and patron was still fluid and, even by the end of the century, architects and patrons had a very different view of the responsibilities of the architect. In a lecture given to architectural students at the University College London in 1888 and printed in *The Building News*, Professor Smith suggested that ‘The desirability of an architect’s maintaining a purely professional intimacy with his client is well urged. This is best for all parties...what the client *wishes* and what he actually *wants* are two different things. Attention to the former and disregard to the latter are sure to lead to unsatisfactory results.’⁴⁰⁰ However, when commenting on a recent court case between a patron and architect two years later, Lord Grimthorpe, reminded architects of the professional responsibility of the architect to the client, even at the cost of their own personal taste or judgment: ‘The architects would soon learn then that “the responsibility of the architect”... means something else than the power of ordering whatever they like, and even ordering the builder to omit things that have been put into the specification and drawings by your express desire, merely because the architect does not like them’.⁴⁰¹ The hierarchy of patron and architect was unclear. Aristocracy’s undisputed leadership in matters of taste in the period was no longer beyond question and the distance between ‘gentleman architects’

³⁹⁷ Saint, *The Image of the Architect*, p. 52.

³⁹⁸ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 120.

³⁹⁹ J. Mordaunt Crook, ‘The Pre-Victorian Architect: Professionalism and Patronage’, *Architectural History*, 12 (1967), pp. 62–78.

⁴⁰⁰ ‘Architects’ Mistakes’, *British Architect* (5 October 1888), pp. 235–236.

⁴⁰¹ Lord Grimthorpe, ‘Architects’ Certificates’, *British Architect* (12 December 1890), p. 451.

of the eighteenth century and a new breed of architects educated through articulation increased.⁴⁰²

As some architects tried to define a professional status similar to that of medicine or law, the issues of authority, status and power within design relationships were increasingly problematic. Tensions were increased by the shifting position of aristocracy within architectural discourse as a whole. Scholars have traditionally argued that as the architect became professionalised and the building trade more organised the landowner was growingly detached from the architectural process.⁴⁰³ As architecture became professionalised there were fewer opportunities for patron engagement or amateur involvement in the practice. This particularly disadvantaged female engagement, which had traditionally been in an amateur capacity.⁴⁰⁴ In spite of this, in the 1890s there were still those who saw themselves as amateur architects, although Lord Grimthorpe described them as an ‘accursed race...whose only duty is to find money and praise for the great “artists”’.⁴⁰⁵

Previous scholarship has tended to focus on the formal elements of the architect-patron relationship to describe the rise of the professional architect from the lower ranks of builders and tradesmen. As the formal development of the architectural profession has been written elsewhere by Kaye, Wilson and Mackley, Jenkins and Wilton-Ely among others, it will not be repeated at length.⁴⁰⁶ Instead, this chapter will focus on the personal relationships formed between architect and patron and how professional ideology worked, or did not work, in practice. What becomes evident is that the most important factors in the building process were, perhaps, the personalities of the architect and patron and their own personal circumstances. In their edited volume on collaborations in architecture Herbert and Donchin have argued for an approach to architecture which brings ‘to life the challenges, the problems and above all the human

⁴⁰² Saint, *The Image of the Architect*, p. 57.

⁴⁰³ For example see J. V. Beckett, ‘Country House Life’, *Historical Journal*, 45, no.1 (2002), pp. 235–44 (p. 238).

⁴⁰⁴ L. Walker, ‘Golden Age or False Dawn? Women Architects in the Early 20th Century’, *Report for English Heritage*, <http://women-in-architecture.com/fileadmin/wia/pdfs/WIA02032012/women-architects-early-20th-century.pdf> [accessed 24 March 2016]. See also Chapter Five.

⁴⁰⁵ Grimthorpe, ‘Architects’ Certificates’, p. 451.

⁴⁰⁶ Kaye, *Development of the Architectural Profession*, pp. 39–54; Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, pp.109–144; Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*; J. Wilton-Ely, ‘The Rise of the Professional Architect in England’, in S. Kostof (ed.), *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession* (London, 2000), pp. 180–208.

dimension and dynamics extant in the creation of architecture.⁴⁰⁷ With this in view, generalisations about the architect-patron relationships are difficult to make.

This chapter will add to a body of literature which supplements progressive interpretations of the architectural profession and the subsequent detachment of the patron from the architectural process. It will illustrate how a series of negotiations and renegotiations defined roles in the design and building process on a case by case basis, as much as formal structures described by nineteenth century institutions, journals or theorists. This is not to say that custom and precedent were not used by architects and patrons in the establishment of a *modus operandi* and, as this chapter will illustrate, to justify their position when a commission went wrong. Secondly, this chapter will show that it was often the conversations between architect and patron, and other protagonists in the process such as builders, tradesmen and clerks of the works which decided the form of designs and buildings executed. It is important to highlight here, that this chapter will not consider how decisions were made between patrons as this will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Due to the existence of an extensive series of correspondence a large part of this chapter is dedicated to an in depth study of Laxton Hall.

Conceptualisation: Negotiation and Compromise

The initial commission, generation and development of designs by the architect and subsequent consultation with clients often resulted in a series of presentation drawings and sketches. These attempted to interpret the clients' ideas but also to show the clients what they would miss if they did not commission the architect. From the initial designs, working drawings were made and sent to the site for workmen to follow. With the rise of contractors and fixed formal estimates prior to building, these drawings became more and more complex and detailed and the alteration of designs after working drawings more costly; a circumstance of which architects and well informed patrons were well aware.⁴⁰⁸ It could take years of negotiation before building actually began.

The re-drawing of designs suggests that the original concept presented by the architect did not meet the patron's requirements. From these architectural designs certain

⁴⁰⁷ Herbert and Donchin, *The Collaborators*, p. xviii. See also Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*, p. xiii.

⁴⁰⁸ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, pp. 136–138.

assumptions can also be made about the levels of involvement of the architect and patron or the levels of agreement and disagreement. At Lamport a number of highly finished designs as well as sketches of the alterations executed by Henry Hakewill in the 1820s and William Burn in the 1860s survive. These drawings show the evolution of ideas during the design and building process and suggest a successful process of consultation.



Figure 28: Watercolour sketch and plan of the proposed new entrance to Lamport Hall, Henry Hakewill, January 1821. This design was not executed (NRO, IL 3079/D10). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

In 1821 Hakewill proposed an elegant neo-classical design for the new entrance to Lamport Hall on the Harborough Road. The very carefully drawn and coloured design he produced was intended to show Sir Justinian and Mary Isham exactly what they could expect if they commissioned Hakewill and went as far as including a couple on horseback arriving home [Figure 28]. Not only did architects have to present plans to their potential clients but they also had to sell them. The design of the entrance gates

was revisited three years later.⁴⁰⁹ However, it would appear that after consultation with the Ishams, Hakewill's designs changed radically. When executed a less extravagant design was chosen. The new entrance constructed passed through simple swan adorned piers. The two swans were specially commissioned from London sculptors and were the emblem of the Isham family.⁴¹⁰ From this personal touch, passers-by on the Harborough road knew exactly who lived in the house beyond the gates. Compared to Hakewill's first design, this proposal appears understated. It may have been a simple question of cost, but the change in style suggests the Ishams preferred a less ostentatious architecture. This is further suggested by a number of other neo-classical designs which were not executed.

The drawings which survive of Lamport Hall from 1821, of which the proposal for the entrance is one, are united by their neo-classical features. Not only did Hakewill include neo-classical ornament in his first design for the entrance gate, but also in designs for a drawing room fireplace and garden porch.⁴¹¹ To add to this a plan included in a letter from 1825 showing additional service areas includes a rectangular dairy with a portico suggested by Hakewill as opposed to the octagonal shape which was executed.⁴¹² Cumulatively these all added to a much clearer articulation of a neo-classical concept for the public areas of the Hall. However, of these designs only the fireplace was executed with all its neo-classical features.⁴¹³ Hakewill had a personal interest in

⁴⁰⁹ A number of designs survive showing the different proposals for the entrance gate. The first shows a plan and elevation of the gate depicted in a watercolour [Figure 28]. See NRO, IL 3079/D9, Plan and elevation of park entrance, January 1821. Three drawings showing the simpler design of piers with Greek key ornament and piers adorned by swans also survive. See NRO, IL 3079/D19, 20, 21, Designs for the entrance gate, 2 January 1824, 10 April 1824 and 30 April 1824.

⁴¹⁰ Entries for 22 and 31 of January in NRO, IL 2803, Account book, 1 March 1823 to 28 February 1825.

⁴¹¹ NRO, IL 3079/24, Section of drawing room, Henry Hakewill, March 1825; NRO, IL 3079/26, The chimney piece to be completed at Lamport in one month from day 27 June 1825, William Whiting; NRO, IL 3079/D27, Elevation and plans for new garden entrance, Henry Hakewill, May 1827.

⁴¹² NRO, IL 3079/D23, Letter from John Goldicutt to D. Hewlett including sketch plan by Henry Hakewill of the new laundry and washroom, 1 March 1825. John Goldicutt was Henry Hakewill's pupil at the time he was working at Lamport Hall. See B. Porter, 'Goldicutt, John (1793–1842)', rev. by M. A. Goodall, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online Edition* (Oxford, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10906> [accessed 20 June 2012].

⁴¹³ Entry for payment of £43 10s to Mr Whiting for white marble chimney piece in drawing room on 21 November 1825 in NRO, IL 2804, Account book 1 March 1825 to 26 February 1827.

ancient Roman architecture and it seems these neo-classical elements were an expression of Hakewill's taste, not that of his patrons.⁴¹⁴

The redirected drive which led from the new gate described above terminated at the south west front rather than the north west, as it had previously.⁴¹⁵ Thus, the first view of Lamport Hall visitors saw from their carriages was the block built by the architect John Webb from 1654 and extended by the Smiths of Warwick between 1732 and 1741. In 1829, under the direction of Sir Justinian and Mary, Hakewill modified the pediment over the entrance to the Webb block. In a letter dated August 1829, Hakewill commented: 'The present pediment is so out of line of proportion that it disfigures the front' and attached an elevation of proposed alterations to the pediment and section of the cornice.⁴¹⁶ The Ishams' agent Hewlett wrote, in return, that Hakewill's proposal had 'been carefully examined by several persons of much taste now in the House, and the prevailing opinion' was to remove the pediment and extend a horizontal cornice across the whole front without vases or ornament whatsoever [Figure 29]. Hakewill attempted to persuade his patrons that this was not the best solution.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁴ H. Hakewill, *An Account of the Roman Villa Discovered at Northleigh, Oxfordshire* (London, 1826). Although Henry Hakewill worked in a number of styles as a pupil of John Yenn he was most likely trained in the neo-classical style. See Chapter Three for more on Hakewill's style and practice.

⁴¹⁵ See Chapter One.

⁴¹⁶ NRO, IL 3079/D31, Henry Hakewill to Sir Justinian Isham, 15 August 1829.

⁴¹⁷ NRO, IL 3079/D32, Henry Hakewill to Sir Justinian Isham, 11 August 1829.

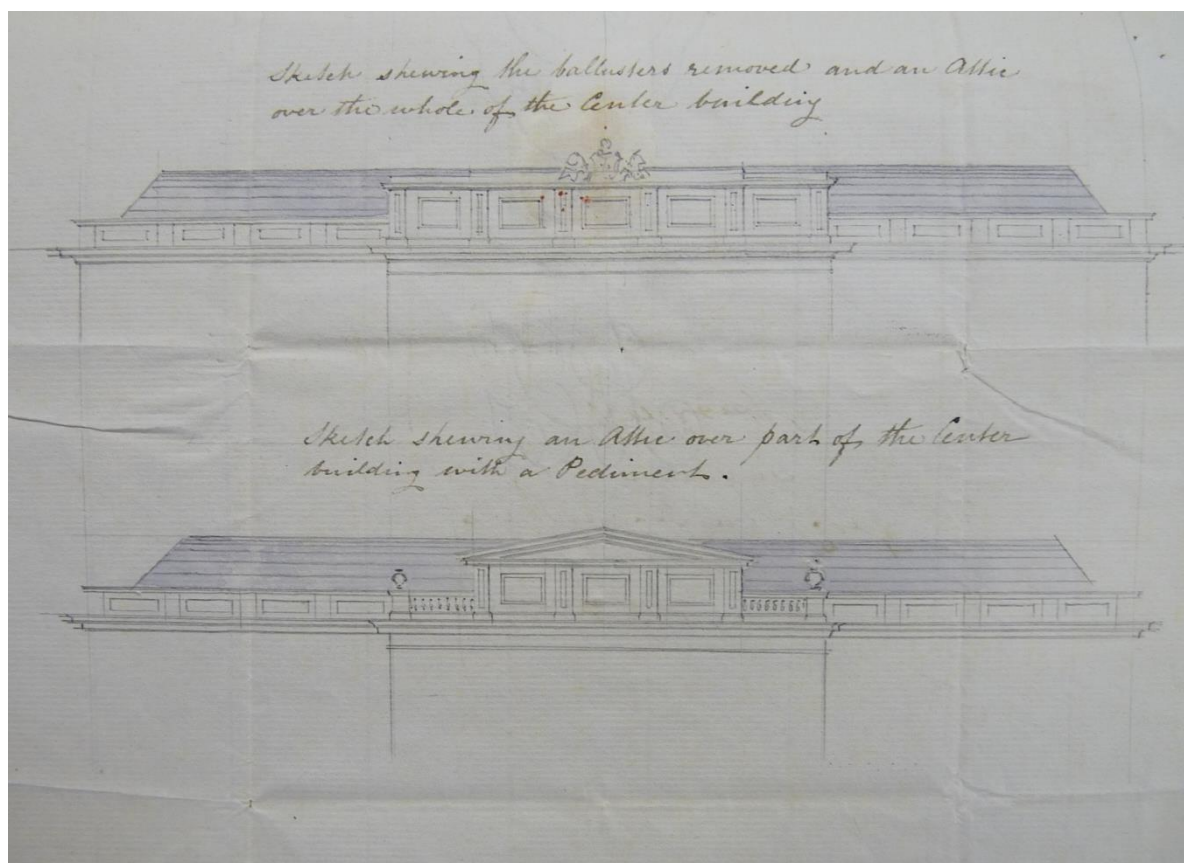


Figure 29: Elevations in a letter from Henry Hakewill to the Ishams showing the effect of the two different proposals for altering the pediment. The top elevation is the suggestion of the Ishams and the bottom, Hakewill's (NRO, IL 3079/D31). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

In his following letter he directly compared two designs by drawing elevations of the pediment one on top of the other. One elevation was based on the Ishams' suggestion and showed the pediment removed in favour of a low wall across the central block and surmounted by a coat of arms, which Hakewill believed would add a necessary central focus to their proposition. The other showed the pediment raised on a low wall, with part of the balustrade removed and flanked by neo-classical vases. If the direct comparison that Hakewill hoped would highlight the aesthetic merits of his design failed, he appealed to the Ishams on the grounds of economy. He argued the Ishams' proposition 'would hardly add to the effect of the front equal to the expense attending it'.⁴¹⁸ The alterations to the pediment, when executed, appear to have been a compromise. In this positive example of consultation the patrons relied on their 'taste' and the opinion of those around them whilst Hakewill referenced the ideas of 'effect', 'proportion' and economy to try to sway them to his design preference.

⁴¹⁸ NRO, IL 3079/D31, Henry Hakewill to Sir Justinian Isham, 15 August 1829.

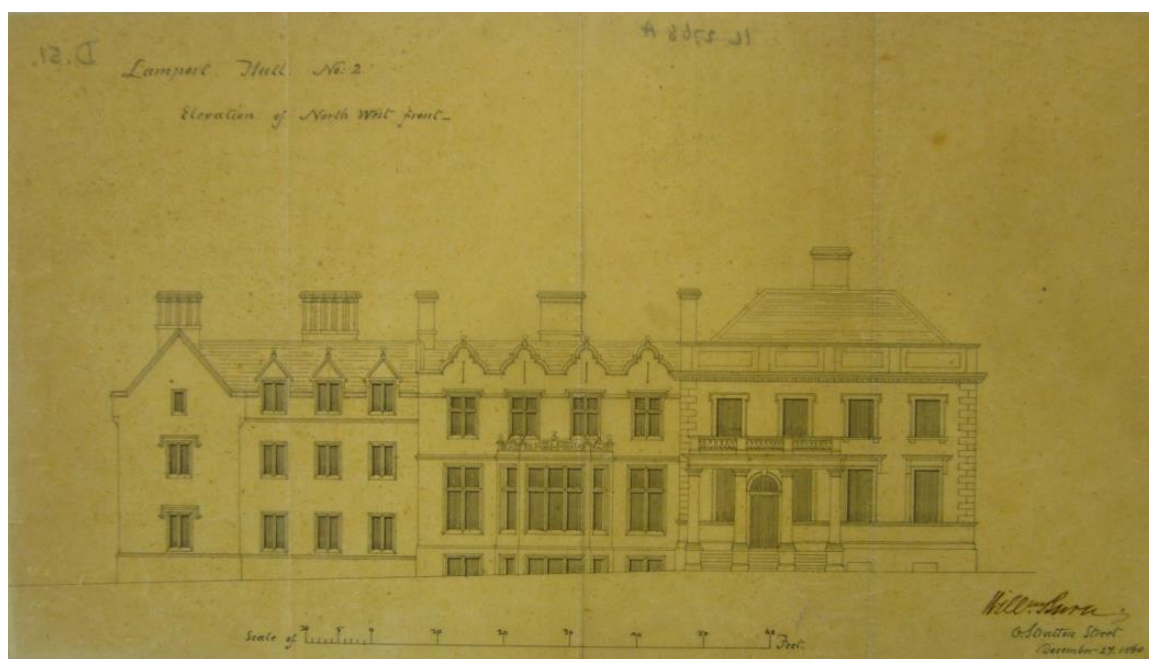


Figure 30: Unexecuted design for elevation of the north west front, William Burn, 27 December 1860 (NRO, IL 3079/D51). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

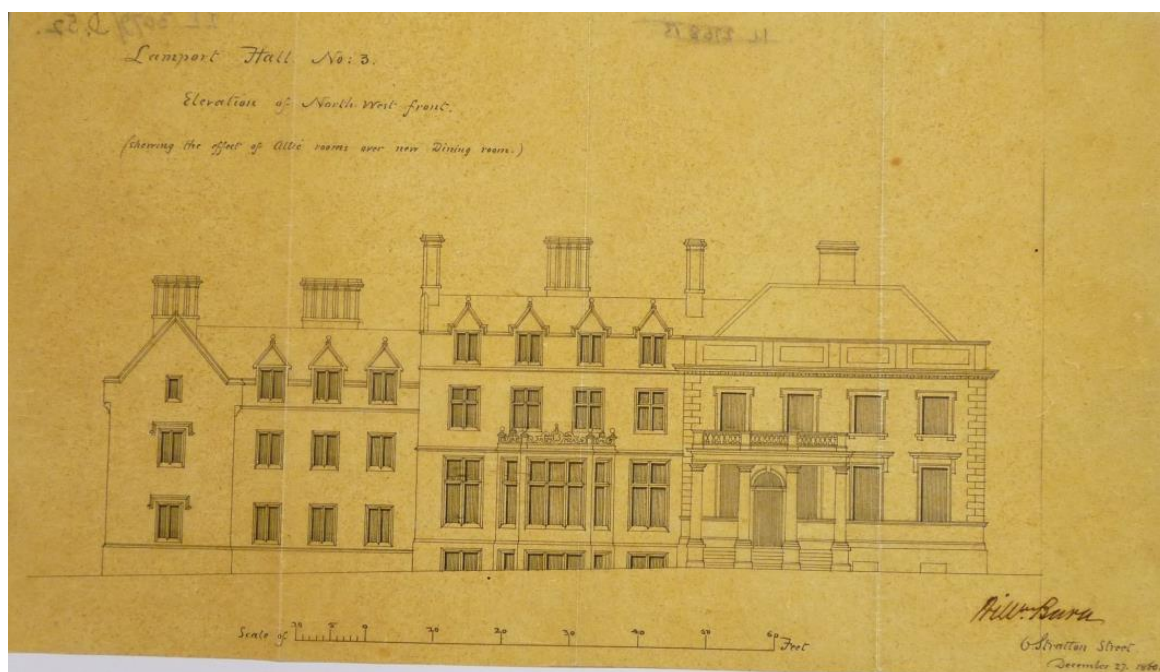


Figure 31: Unexecuted design for elevation of the north west front, William Burn, 27 December 1860 (NRO, IL 3079/D52). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

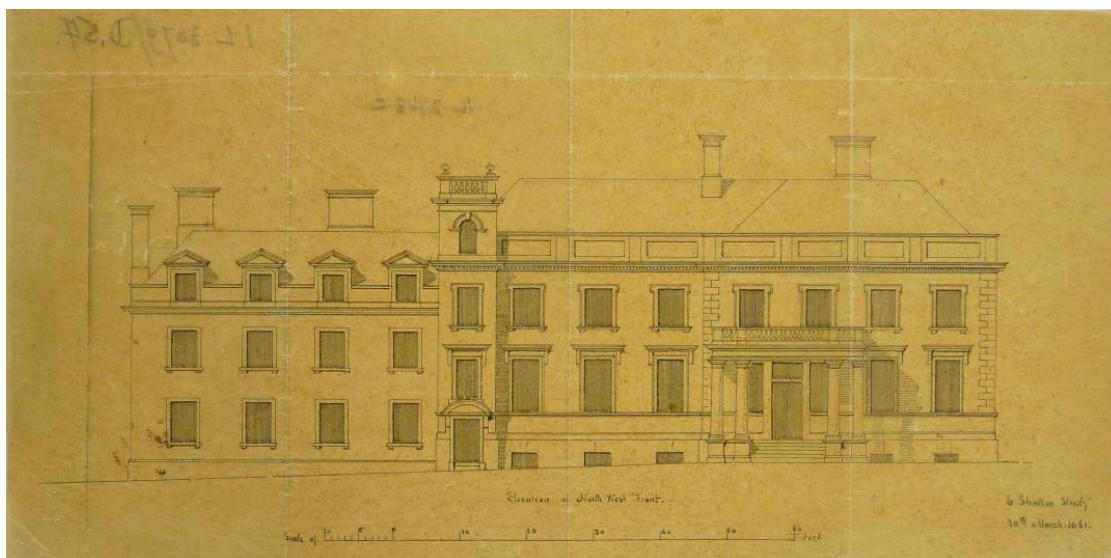


Figure 32: Unexecuted design for elevation of north west front, William Burn, 20 March 1861 (NRO, IL 3079/D52). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.⁴¹⁹

A similar process of consultation occurred between Sir Charles and Emily Isham and Burn when designing the new re-faced north west front. The first surviving design is dated January 1860 and compares two proposals for the configuration of rooms leading from the new north west entrance.⁴²⁰ The presentation of options, quite possibly at the request of the patron, suggests that this was not the first proposal given by Burn. These frequent option appraisals continued throughout the commission. By April 1860 a sheet of designs had been worked up showing the proposed facade, bedroom floor, new attic floor, and roof plans. The fashionable ‘Italianate’ style Burn proposed harmonised with the existing Smith of Warwick block and included a porte cochere to the public rooms and a lateral tower entrance for visitors’ luggage [Figure 11]. However, it is evident that the designs did not exactly meet the patrons’ expectations.

Over eight months later Burn drew up two further proposals. These were essentially re-workings of the original design but in a different style and showing the effect of adding an attic floor between the lateral tower and Smith of Warwick wing [Figures 30 & 31]. These designs were in a Jacobethan style; retaining some of the character of the structure it was designed to replace. They were also more typical of Burn’s architectural

⁴¹⁹ A rough plan from the same date and which would have accompanied this elevation also survives as well as a more detailed and finished ink and wash plan from the 10 April 1861. See NRO, IL 3079/D53 and NRO, IL 3079/D55.

⁴²⁰ See Chapter One.

output.⁴²¹ The mixture of Jacobethan and Tudor detailing in the designs at Lamport was deployed by Burn in one of his earliest Jacobethan houses, Riccarton House, Midlothian extended by Burn in 1827.⁴²² The elevation marked 'No. 2' and which does not include the extra attic floor [Figure 30] uses a combination of Jacobethan curvilinear gables alongside straight pointed gables and Tudor hood moulded openings in the terminal bay to the left of the design.⁴²³ On both designs, a bay window highlights where the Tudor great hall once stood and marks the transition from service rooms to public rooms. However these were not the last designs presented. The options appraisal continued three months later with a third elevation [Figure 32]. This design returns to the original Italianate style Burn had proposed and besides a few minor adjustments to details, is almost identical to the April 1860 design. In a turn of events, and after much evident indecision the house built was more or less executed to the first designs made in April 1860 [Figures 11 & 33].



Figure 33: North west front of Lamport Hall.

With a lack of accompanying correspondence it is not evident how Burn responded to his patron's indecision. However, it is possible to suggest that this sequence of drawings indicates a successful collaborative relationship between architect and patron who worked together to explore options and to find a design both architect and patron

⁴²¹ Bradley, 'William Burn', p. 234.

⁴²² *Ibid.*

⁴²³ Number one in this sequence is a plan showing the basement, principal and bedroom floor. See NRO, IL 3079/D50.

agreed upon, even if this was the first the patrons had seen. As a result of the close resemblance between the April 1860 designs [Figure 11] and the design executed it is tempting to suggest that this design was misdated and was in fact from April 1861, the month after the final Italianate option and when the Ishams were considering different stylistic options [Figures 32 & 33]. It could therefore be a finished version of this rough design. Even if this was the case, the point remains that Burn and the Ishams considered the different options before settling upon the Italianate style.

Surviving documents during and after building shows Burn's personal attendance to the commission at Lamport. He corresponded directly with Sir Charles on the erection of a terrace wall in front of the south east front of the house, the design of the dining room ceiling, the omission of a servants' hall in the basement, the clerk of the works and contractors.⁴²⁴ This is all the more significant because, as Chapter Three has indicated, Lamport Hall was a relatively small commission for Burn who was at the head of a large and busy office.⁴²⁵ It does seem that apart from a few problems with some inferior masonry work, the Ishams had a positive experience.⁴²⁶ This is of note as, after his death, Donaldson described that Burn's 'frank and plain spoken manner was not always tolerated.'⁴²⁷ The design of alterations at Lamport Hall by both Hakewill and Burn were formed through negotiations and discussions between the patrons and architects and evidenced by a series of architectural drawings. After designs were made they were converted to bricks and mortar. This transition will be the focus of the remainder of this chapter. As a result of the survival of an extensive series of letters between Humphry Repton and George Freke Evans, the following discussion will predominantly focus on Laxton Hall.

⁴²⁴ NRO, IL 2771/A–D, four letters from William Burn, May 1861 to May 1862. The contractors at Lamport Hall were Holland and Hammond and the clerk of the works, William Chaw.

⁴²⁵ Walker notes that William Burn handled everything personally when working with clients. Walker, 'William Burn', p. 10.

⁴²⁶ Sir Charles Isham wrote, 'twenty years ago, at the time of rebuilding part of the house during a period of strikes, when work had to be executed by unskilled hands, and when some inferior stone was used, columns, capitals, mouldings &c had to be executed a second time before they were passed by the architect.' See LH, C. Isham, *Rock Gardens and Gnomes* (1864); NRO, IL 2785D William Colling (Burn's principal clerk) to Sir Charles Isham, 19 March 1869; Bradley, 'William Burn', p. 22.

⁴²⁷ T. L. Donaldson, 'Memoir of the Late William Burn', p. 124. For an example of an unsuccessful working relationship see P. Bradley, 'William Burn and the Design (and Re-Design) of Sandon Hall, Staffordshire', *Studies in Victorian Architecture & Design*, 1, no. 1 (2008), pp.31–41.

Laxton Hall: From Concept to Building

The remainder of this chapter will consider what happens when a collaborative and cooperative relationship between architect and patron turns into a negative and obstructive one; what happens when the architect-patron relationship breaks down? This study will focus on one example: the troubled relationship of an eminent architect and his son, Humphry Repton and John Adey Repton, and their demanding patron, Evans, when building Laxton Hall and the surrounding village. The end result was the Reptons' dismissal and a mansion and village which neither patron nor architect was entirely satisfied with. Although not the central focus of this chapter, where relevant, design conversations relating to estate buildings will be included.⁴²⁸

Laxton Hall was altered just after the turn of the century and before the creation of formalised architectural societies such as the RIBA. By this date there were already moves towards a more organised and cohesive profession. A number of short-lived architectural societies had formed at the end of the eighteenth century in an attempt to improve the education of architects and standardise architectural practice.⁴²⁹ Yet, as suggested in the introduction to this chapter, there was no common agreement among architects as to the shape the architectural profession should take, the exact role of the architect during design or his status as a professional man. Repton had begun his career in the eighteenth century at the very beginning of this move towards professionalisation. However, as the following analysis will show, he had a very clear sense of his authoritative position in the design process and a specific, if not very high handed, *modus operandi*. This was at a disjuncture with the patron's expectations of his own high level of personal involvement during design, as well as the degree and nature of support he anticipated from his architect before and during building.

The architect-patron relationship was further complicated once building began. The number of protagonists in the process increased and with it, the possibilities for differences of opinion, mistakes and misunderstandings. The relationship between architects, patrons and building works was not direct. Craftsman, clerks of the works, draftsmen as well as architects and patrons were all engaged in the process of building and the roles of each often overlapped and varied from commission to commission.

⁴²⁸ See Chapter Six for more on estate buildings.

⁴²⁹ Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 26–41.

This was exasperated in the nineteenth century as the practice of architecture became fragmented into its component elements: the builder, the surveyor, the architect and the engineer. At Laxton Hall, the patron, architects and clerks of the works became embroiled in a cycle of disagreements.

Humphry Repton and his son John Adey Repton were employed at Laxton Hall from February 1806. Humphry Repton, referred to as Repton from this point onwards, produced designs for the landscaping of the grounds, and acted jointly with his son in the architectural department.⁴³⁰ Arguably one of the most famous and sought after landscape improvers of the mid- to late eighteenth century, Repton had a clear sense of his identity in the design process. He was the first to describe himself as a ‘Landscape Gardener’, a role which he believed required the combination of landscape painter and practical gardener.⁴³¹ In 1795 Repton wrote the landscape gardener ‘must possess a competent knowledge of surveying, mechanics, hydraulics, agriculture, botany, and the general principals of architecture.’⁴³² Although taking on architectural commissions, Repton was not a trained architect but had started his landscape gardening career at the age of 36 after working as a textile merchant, private secretary, art critic, essayist and transport entrepreneur.⁴³³ At the beginning of his career Repton overcame his lack of architectural training by recommending architects to complete the architectural parts of garden designs.⁴³⁴ This was not necessarily uncommon and, as described in Chapter Three, was how Teulon came to be employed at Althorp. In 1800 he began working with his eldest son, John Adey Repton, who took on the responsibility of architectural elements.⁴³⁵

The relationship between the two Reptons at Laxton adds a further protagonist to the design process. However, all communication with Evans was written by Repton and surviving designs are signed ‘H & JA Repton’. This makes it very hard to differentiate the roles they played. It is likely that a number of the architectural drawings were the

⁴³⁰ NRO, Freke, Bundle 5/1, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 28 June 1810.

⁴³¹ H. Repton, *Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening* (1795) in J. C. Loudon (ed.), *The Landscape Gardening and Landscape Architecture of the Late Humphry Repton, Esq. Being his Entire Works on These Subjects* (London, 1840), p. 30.

⁴³² *Ibid.*

⁴³³ Daniels, *Humphry Repton*, p. 1.

⁴³⁴ D. Stroud, *Humphry Repton* (London, 1962), p. 37.

⁴³⁵ In spite of being deaf from birth, John Adey Repton had a relatively successful career. He trained as an architectural draftsman under two architects his father had worked with, William Wilkins and John Nash, before working with his father. See *Ibid.*, pp. 112–120; Daniels, *Humphry Repton*, pp. 36–37.

responsibility of John Adey Repton. When questions on the architectural design arose it was John Adey Repton who often answered, even though it was through his father.⁴³⁶ Repton also protected his son from the severity of the relationship breakdown with Evans. He wrote to his patron: 'Please direct your answer to me in London. As I wish to keep from my son all knowledge of this matter, lest it shou'd damp that ardour & enthusiasm with which he is now interested in all that relates to Laxton Hall to which he has of late given all his attentions'.⁴³⁷ Due to a lack of evidence of John Adey Repton's exact role, the remainder of this study will focus on Repton's relationship with Evans.

The Reptons' lack of working drawings was a bone of contention during the building process at Laxton Hall. On the occasions where Evans received drawings they were not what he expected or unsatisfactory. For example, in May 1806 Repton sent designs for the offices and stables to Laxton. He requested that those parts of the drawings that Evans approved should be drawn over in pen and alterations communicated in pencil; this was consultation and collaboration from a distance.⁴³⁸ From these initial designs new working drawings would be drawn and then sent for the tradesmen on site to follow during construction. However, when the working drawings for the stables arrived they were entirely different from those which Evans had corrected. Unsatisfied with the new designs, Evans requested the Reptons return the original drawings; these were not forthcoming.⁴³⁹ At least Evans had received drawings for the stables; as for the offices, he had received none. Instead, Repton sent a letter in which he explained: 'with respect to the offices, perhaps it will be better to defer the working plans till we are on the spot'.⁴⁴⁰ This was not the only time the Reptons deferred sending drawings until they were on the spot. On a plan Repton sent of the cellar floor dated 1806 he wrote: 'The precise dimensions can only be figured on the spot as the new part must be made to fit the present building'.⁴⁴¹

This frustration over a lack of drawings came to a head in October 1807 when, after requesting working drawings for the offices, house, church and lodge to proceed with building, Evans threatened: 'I shall be happy to hear an early answer or from your

⁴³⁶ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/33, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 10 June 1808.

⁴³⁷ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/36–38, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 8 September 1806.

⁴³⁸ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/45–46, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 19 May 1806.

⁴³⁹ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/39, George Freke Evans to Humphry Repton, 5 September 1806.

⁴⁴⁰ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/43–44, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 20 May 1806.

⁴⁴¹ NRO, Maps 5052, Plan of cellar floor by Humphry and John Adey Repton, 1806.

silence I shall conclude you wish me to apply to some other architect'.⁴⁴² Exasperated by the Reptons' delays and withholding of plans, Evans requested their presence on site so that those drawings needed to be done on the spot could be completed.

However this created further problems when instructions given 'on the spot' were not recorded. Repton never made plans for the plantations or the location of new buildings at Laxton. Instead he marked them out when on site which he believed 'render'd any map of the demesne unnecessary'.⁴⁴³ A lack of drawings was once again a problem three years later when in November 1809 the construction of the new part of Laxton Hall was well under way. The clerk of the works sent a letter requesting Repton to resend the general plan showing the connection between the old and the new building. Repton could not understand why 'because he [the clerk of the works] has the drawing made on the spot for the mode of connecting which cou'd only be ascertained on the spot – & any drawing made at a distance would only confuse him because the new must be fitted to the old as we ultimately settled the plan where we had the old walls before us – & unless he sends me a sketch of what was finally determined it is impossible to recollect all the circumstances'.⁴⁴⁴ This chiding letter on the clerk of the works highlights a further grievance: the Reptons' lack of copies of drawings. As Evans commented 'I am surprised you had not copies of the plans as I will recollect on your shewing me those for Mr Neals house you informed me you had copies of them & that such was always your custom as seems absolutely necessary'.⁴⁴⁵ Evans found it impossible to comprehend that the Reptons would not remember or have records of the details of their commission.

The transition point from concept to working drawings became a sticking point; drawings were late, insufficient or never made. Part of this undoubtedly had to do with Repton's individual working method and in particular his favouring 'working on the spot'. Repton argued he was 'gifted with the peculiar faculty of seeing almost immediately the way in which [a place] might be improved'.⁴⁴⁶ On his first visit he would decide the overall concept and make sketches. The details were worked out later and the architectural drawings for Laxton were being made by John Adey Repton while

⁴⁴² NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/39, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 17 October 1807.

⁴⁴³ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/36–38, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 8 September 1806.

⁴⁴⁴ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/21–22, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 16 November 1809.

⁴⁴⁵ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/18–19, George Freke Evans to Humphry Repton, 21 October 1807.

⁴⁴⁶ Daniels, *Humphry Repton*, p. 12.

works were progressing. Repton also completed a lot of his designs by eye, favouring sight lines and physically seeing visual connections rather than producing them on paper. By the turn of the century deciding the details of construction after building had commenced was no longer considered a sign of grace. With the introduction of ‘contracts in gross’ architects were expected to provide more detailed plans and specifications for the patron but also for the craftsmen to follow.⁴⁴⁷ Patrons wanted to know how much they were going to spend and what they were paying for from the start. To exacerbate this situation further, the Reptons were constantly traveling across the width and breadth of the country in pursuit of commissions and especially as a result of the number of commissions they had at the time they were working for Evans.⁴⁴⁸ Consequently, they had very little time to personally attend to and supervise the works.

The stage was set for a turbulent relationship and the problem of a lack of drawings was a continuing grievance throughout the progress of works. Unhappy with Repton’s delays and lack of designs Evans also began to question if his confidence in the Reptons’ ability, judgement and trustworthiness had been well placed. This did not go unnoticed by Repton who descried Evans’ position throughout the process as one of ‘extreme caution & suspicion’. Evans wanted to approve all designs before execution and as Repton commented paid ‘very active unremitting attention’ during the alterations.⁴⁴⁹ Ultimately, Evans and the Reptons had a different idea of which parts of the designs needed the patron’s approval. The issue of control and Evans’ role during the design and execution of plans is most clearly spelt out when a disagreement erupted over the manufacture of the entrance gates. Repton sent enquiries to ascertain the best price and quality of gates from two smithies: Pilton and Moiser.⁴⁵⁰ It seems Evans had Pilton in mind for the commission and had even visited his manufactory to discuss plans. However, Repton was eager to receive at least one other quote for comparison.⁴⁵¹ Finding the estimates from Pilton and Moiser so alike, Repton confirmed the order with

⁴⁴⁷ Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*, pp. 205–206; M. Crinson and J. Lubbock, *Architecture or Profession? Three Hundred Years of Architectural Education in Britain* (Manchester, 1994), p. 43.

⁴⁴⁸ Daniels, *Humphry Repton*, p. 39; Daniels, ‘On the Road’.

⁴⁴⁹ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/7, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 9 March 1809.

⁴⁵⁰ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/9, Roger Moiser to Humphry Repton, 15 January 1807.

⁴⁵¹ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/15–16, Humphry Repton to George Feke Evans, 10 July 1807.

Pilton.⁴⁵² On the 12 August 1807, nearly four weeks after Pilton was given conformation to execute the plans, the manufacturing of the gates was brought to a halt.

Evans was unimpressed: he had not seen the design of the gate before it was ordered nor had he approved the estimate. He exclaimed, 'I have to express my very just surprise at your saying that I told you I had ordered Pilton to make the gate – it is a very extraordinary circumstance indeed if I did so as I never had the most distinct idea of ordering a Gate'.⁴⁵³ Repton had acted on Evans' behalf and had done the same in the past. When ordering a clock dial and vane he did not show Evans detailed designs but merely sketches in a letter. He replied:

[I] do not know how I have deserved to lose that confidence – without which it will be mutually unpleasant to transact any business at the distance of 100 miles – In the detail of execution of the minutest point of a design – this will arise trifling variations which it would be ridiculous to trouble you with – but as I see you expect it – the working drawings shall always in future be sent to you at the same time I hope you will do me the justice to suppose that in acting for you, I act as I would for myself.⁴⁵⁴

The right and wrong of this situation aside, Evans' complaints are illuminating. Evans, even though he clearly distrusted the Reptons, saw his own desire to see plans and designs not as a want of confidence, but rather as a question of control. He saw it as a reasonable request and argued 'I never shall delegate to any one the power of determining for me as long as I am in possession of my eyesight & understanding'.⁴⁵⁵ This desire to determine the building programme was possibly increased as, even though they were similar, Repton had chosen the more expensive of the quotes for the gates. In demanding such close supervision of the works, there was inevitably tension between the architect and patron over their respective positions and authority in the design process.

Evans wanted to be involved in all aspects of the alterations at Laxton to ensure he was receiving quality, value for money and that the alterations were executed quickly and

⁴⁵² NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/14, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 30 July 1807.

⁴⁵³ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/3–5, George Freke Evans to Humphry Repton, 19 August 1807.

⁴⁵⁴ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/8–10, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 16 August 1807.

⁴⁵⁵ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/3–5, George Freke Evans to Humphry Repton, 19 August 1807.

efficiently. He was neither sympathetic nor patient when it came to the Reptons' working methods. The points of conflict between Repton and Evans were made worse by a succession of clerks of the works employed to oversee building and mistakes which were made during the execution of designs.

The translation from drawing to building was not direct. One of the mediators in this process was the clerk of the works. Repton had a clear idea of their duties: at least once a month they should send an accurate statement of the progress made on the works with the number of men employed & how each 'gang' was employed.⁴⁵⁶ On various occasions the clerk of the works at Laxton was also required to make working drawings and even spent a few days in the Reptons' office for this purpose.⁴⁵⁷ This was not necessarily unusual as the clerk of the works' role could vary greatly depending on the personal involvement of the architect and the patron. However it was generally understood that, at the very least, he was responsible for keeping a record of the tradesmen's accounts, supervising building, organising materials and ensuring the drawings supplied were executed to a standard and cost satisfactory to the patron. The clerk of the works was often chosen by the architect who 'always claims...to treat him as the architect's servant'.⁴⁵⁸ To this end, in 1876 Hoskins argued 'the clerk of the works, although paid by the employer, is employed by the architect.'⁴⁵⁹ In Repton's eyes the control of the clerk of the works at Laxton had been appropriated by the patron.

During the whole of the building works at Laxton the line of communication between Repton and the clerk of the works was not well maintained. From the very start of building in 1806 a large majority of Repton's letters concluded with a request for information on progress. In January 1809 when dismissal seemed imminent and tensions were at their highest, Repton wrote to Evans 'It is so long since I have heard from Laxton that I begin to fear that it must be with your consent that the clerk of the works has ceased to send his monthly report of the progress – but it is impossible for me or my son not to feel anxious'.⁴⁶⁰ This was repeated two months later after the Reptons' dismissal and when both Repton and Evans attempted to wash their hands of

⁴⁵⁶ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/23–25, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 22 September 1809.

⁴⁵⁷ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/50–51, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 28 April 1806.

⁴⁵⁸ Grimthorpe, 'Architects' Certificates', p. 45.

⁴⁵⁹ 'Duties of the Clerk of the Works', *British Architect* (26 May 1876), p. 275.

⁴⁶⁰ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/19–20, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 16 January 1809.

any blame for the failures at Laxton: ‘lately you have actually forbid the Cl[er]k of the works to write us & at the same time prevented our visiting the spot for 12 months by saying that everything was going on right & that there was no occasion for our visiting Laxton.’⁴⁶¹ While Repton was in the dark on progress, mistakes and decisions by the patrons were being made without his knowledge.

Three different clerks of the works were employed while the Reptons were architects at Laxton and two further clerks after the Reptons had been dismissed. Employed from 30 April 1806 to 22 September 1806, John Collet was the first casualty at Laxton. Collet was employed by Repton on the recommendation of a Mr Rowles who had employed him for many years. However Evans found Collet’s services unsatisfactory and on 22 September 1806 wrote, ‘his abilities are constantly not at all equal to the situation in which you have placed him.’⁴⁶² Amongst his blunders was a crooked gable on the parsonage. The offcuts over the bow window to the east were also laid wrong resulting in its having to be taken down and redone. Finally the piers on the parsonage were not all the same dimension. These mistakes were continued through to the construction of the new offices at the Hall where the foundations were ‘dug & redug & redug again’ and, as with the parsonage, no two piers had corresponding dimensions. These mistakes Evans was willing to overlook, however, when it came to the principal front of the new offices Evans could not take the risk of the clerk of the works making further errors and dismissed Collet. He had ‘shewn extreme ignorance & has put me to considerable expense by repeated blunders.’⁴⁶³ It seems, however, that Collet was equally unhappy and placed the blame on the tradesmen. Repton commented that Collet ‘was disgusted with the ignorance of the tradesmen whom he had to instruct’.⁴⁶⁴

Evans decided to choose a new clerk of the works without a recommendation from Repton. He settled upon one of the carpenters at Laxton, Jones. Jones lasted one year and five months before he was dismissed by Evans; the exact reasons why are unknown. However, after Repton was dismissed he was quick to point the finger at Jones for little errors and delays in the execution of work and at Evans for hiring a clerk

⁴⁶¹ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/7, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 9 March 1809.

⁴⁶² NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/32–33, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 22 September 1806.

⁴⁶³ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/27, George Freke Evans to Humphry Repton, 7 October 1806.

⁴⁶⁴ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/23–24, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, n.d.

of the works whom Repton ‘knew nothing but his incompetency’.⁴⁶⁵ The final clerk of the works employed while the Reptons were architects was Woolcot. He lasted just shy of a year. Woolcot’s appointment was never intended to be permanent because of his ‘great age’ and it seems that Woolcott was dismissed at the same time as Repton.⁴⁶⁶ As a result a large part of the blame for the failure of the Reptons at Laxton fell on his shoulders. The succession of clerk of the works was not conducive to the smooth execution of the buildings. There was no consistency and one clerk of the works constantly had to make good the blunders of their predecessors.

Concluding Business: Payment and Reputation

Loss of confidence in the Reptons’ ability and working methods, as well as in the clerk of the works, were points of contention during the building process and added to the issues already mentioned. However, the relationship between the Evans and Repton ultimately came to an end over money. Disagreement over appropriate remuneration played a fundamental role in the escalation of tensions and the removal of the Reptons from the Evans’ service. In the period under discussion, Port has argued that there was considerable distrust of the architectural profession and a large part of this centred upon an inability to build on budget.⁴⁶⁷ From the first year of the Reptons’ employment Evans complained of charges for their travel to and from Laxton Hall. He queried the necessity of a visit Repton charged as landscape gardener and argued his presence was as an architect, joint with his son. This argument was, in part, borne out of the difficulties inherent in employing two architects on one job. The dissatisfaction with the charge was exacerbated by blunders and misunderstandings during the execution of the architectural and landscaping works described above. The continually evolving side issue of payment created ceaseless trouble and could have ended in considerable legal expense.

By 1809 the situation at Laxton had become untenable and the relationship unworkable in the eyes of Evans who wrote:

⁴⁶⁵ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/7, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 9 March 1809.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁷ M. H. Port, ‘The Office of Works and Building Contracts in Early Nineteenth-Century England’, *The Economic History Review*, 20, no. 1 (1967), pp. 94–110. See also Saint, *The Image of the Architect*, p. 61; Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*, p. 206.

Under these circumstances, I have determined to give the whole business into Mr Carter's hands, who will furnish all plans that may be wanted & take upon himself the responsibility of yours being well executed – I should therefore wish to settle accts with you.⁴⁶⁸

The settling of these accounts was anything but simple. In the period Laxton was built, architects traditionally charged 5% on building works executed. They also customarily charged travel expenses and time on the road. These were the terms Repton stated in the first letter which survives in this correspondence dated February 1806: the first visit to all places at 100 miles from London was 50 guineas, plans cost from 20 to 50 guineas according to magnitude or difficulty, subsequent journeys were charged at 20 guineas and in the architectural department in which Repton and John Adey Repton acted jointly the terms were 'the usual with all architects – 5 per cent on the expenditure'.⁴⁶⁹

The fairness and effectiveness of the 5% rule was disputed well into the nineteenth century.⁴⁷⁰ In 1886 the architect George Aitchison commented 'The payment of 5 per cent seems to me to work very badly, not as the judges think by enabling the architect to rob their clients, but by enabling the clients to rob the architects.'⁴⁷¹ The 5% payment could be a limiting factor on work for architects. As payment was not technically due until the end of a commission architects could find themselves out of pocket if commissions took a long time to realise. Repton also encountered a loss of profit when plans were executed a long time after they were made and were claimed to be the ideas of the patron.⁴⁷² However, it was generally accepted that the architect would receive advances during the progress of works; at Laxton this amounted to the payment of £310 for the works and £90 for travel.⁴⁷³ The architect also had to rely on the clerk of works on site to produce reliable accounts from which the 5% could be calculated. For Repton and Evans this was problematic:

⁴⁶⁸ NRO, Freke, Bundle 3/12–14, George Freke Evans to Humphry Repton, 19 December 1808.

⁴⁶⁹ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/52–53, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 16 February 1806.

⁴⁷⁰ Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*, pp. 211–215.

⁴⁷¹ G. Aitchison, 'On Five Per Cent', *The British Architect* (1 October 1886), p. 303.

⁴⁷² Stroud, *Humphry Repton*, p. 109.

⁴⁷³ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/2A, Account showing sums due for designs, architect's commission and travel from George Freke Evans to H and J. A. Repton, c. 1809; Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/2A, Account showing sums due for travel from George Freke Evans to Humphry Repton, 24 April 1809.

If I have given offence by asking for a remittance on amount of percentage you must have the goodness to recollect that I cou'd have no knowledge of the amount of your expenditure or even of the progress of the work because Woolcot was forbid to correspond with me & therefore I confided implicitly in your honor for what was due to me being certain that you never cou'd intend to take any pecuniary advantage but that in a paltry consideration of the injury sustained professionally by the cost of reputation in withdrawing your confidence after Lady Carbery & yourself had expressed so much satisfaction in our endeavours to be useful.⁴⁷⁴

Repton estimated that executing the plans already underway could cost no less than £10,000 making the charge £500.⁴⁷⁵ To this he added the cost of travel and drawing unexecuted designs. However, as Repton made clear, no financial recompense could mend the loss of professional reputation. He consulted his second son, William, a solicitor to check the charges were just. Only six years earlier Repton had sought advice from the architect Sir John Soane when he was faced with a similar situation at Panshanger.⁴⁷⁶

At this time there was no formal architectural profession with fixed rules, entry requirements or a regulating body; arguably, this would not start to form until 1834 and the creation of the Royal Institute of British Architects. This made the settling of accounts difficult, especially when the patron and architect did not see eye to eye. As Repton told Evans on his refusal to pay travel costs:

a letter from you gives me much concern – my terms are well known – & long established...I have no means of redress as my profession is a liberal one...but as an architect the terms have been allow'd repeatedly in the court of justice...I was very far from supposing...I was asking a favour which you cou'd refuse.⁴⁷⁷

This was a system based on precedence and custom. Payment was not a problem confined to Laxton but one which extended across the profession. The Architects Club formed in 1791, though essentially a dinning club, had among its aims the auditing of

⁴⁷⁴ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/12–15, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 9 February 1809.

⁴⁷⁵ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/2A, Account showing sums due from George Freke Evans to H and J. A. Repton, c. 1809.

⁴⁷⁶ Stroud, *Humphry Repton*, p. 109.

⁴⁷⁷ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/30, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 10 September 1806.

fellow architects' accounts.⁴⁷⁸ The early nineteenth-century architect Alfred Bartholomew complained that to all the other charges the cost of litigation had not infrequently to be added. He wrote: 'Almost entirely from sufficient plans not being taken in drawing specifications for buildings, and from a want of proper foresight, may be traced most of the disputes between the builder, architect and the employer, which so often occur, and which lead to lawsuits and arbitrations, which are oftentimes so excessively and even ruinously expensive, and though final are unsatisfactory to all parties.'⁴⁷⁹ Bartholomew's comments seem especially appropriate in light of the lack of plans provided by the Reptons.

Repton's costs were not readily accepted. The building completed was measured both by Repton and Evans; although there was disagreement as to whether measuring fell into the usual compass of the architect's 5%. The difference between their accounts was great and recriminations over payment marked the end of the relationship. Evans complained the parsonage was uninhabitable as every room smoked; the roof was bad as the timbers were no good; and that due to a lack of drains the basement was damp. The plans for the stable office were defective and blunders in the erection of the house severe. Evans argued they had caused great trouble and expense as the plans supplied were not up to standard and concluding: 'you wrote to us some time ago respecting a remittance w[hich] letter I did not answer as I was at that time most dissatisfied about many things & I conceive that you are in my debt not rather than I'm yours'.⁴⁸⁰ Repton retorted that the parsonage had been lived in by three different curates; a basement was sunk without him knowing so the drains were not his responsibility; the roof Evans complained of was made with fir which Evans had bought having failed to accept his recommendation for using timber from Lynn. He argued faults that had occurred during building were the consequence of the clerk of the works' blunders. Finally a lack of communication sanctioned by Evans meant that the Reptons were never aware of any

⁴⁷⁸ S. Nenadic, 'Architect-Builders in London and Edinburgh, c. 1750–1800 and the Market for Expertise', *The Historical Journal*, 55 (2012), pp. 597–617 (p. 613). On the Architect's Club see also M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson, *The Professionals* (Oxford, 1933), p. 179.

⁴⁷⁹ A. Bartholomew, *Specifications for Practical Architecture* (2nd ed., 1846), para. 12, quoted in Port, 'The Office of the Works', p. 107. Later in the century rather than hiring a clerk of the works and direct labour to complete works, building was increasingly contracted out to a firm. This happened at Lamport Hall where Holland and Hammer won the contract for the Hall by competitive tender. See Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, pp. 185–186.

⁴⁸⁰ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/9, George Freke Evans to Humphry Repton, 24 January 1809.

problems and assumed no news was good news. Repton felt as though he had been taken advantage of:

I might perhaps have felt altho I did not say it that you had taken full advantage of mine & my sons abilities before you discovered that you could do without them – you had plans for every thing you were likely to want & working drawings for most of those plans – so explicit as to enable you with the help of any carpenter to carry them into execution without the assistance of either architect or clerk of works – but I do not think this quite a fair reason for dismissing them – & much less for disgracing them by attributing blame without a cause.⁴⁸¹

It was decided the case would go to arbitration. After all the mistakes, misunderstandings and complaints Evans and Repton were unlikely to come to their own terms. In June 1810, a year after the Reptons had been dismissed Repton asked Evans to name a sum in an attempt to end the business.⁴⁸² Seven months passed and again Repton made another desperate plea for settlement and asked that Evans would stop referring him to other people. He was also concerned that the works had progressed so much further since their dismissal that it would be hard to differentiate the Reptons' work from that which had followed.⁴⁸³ Repton was never paid his final bill. The creation of societies and a profession to guard against these difficulties was equally as important for architects as their patrons.

It is obvious to state that not all architect-patron relationships were successful. When they failed, the possibility of an architect's dismissal and replacement by someone to execute their plans and who would acquiesce with the patron's wishes was a distinct possibility. This was the case at Laxton Hall. After the break down of their relationship, Evans replaced Repton with William Carter, whose father and brother had been employed at the Hall as carpenters from 1806.⁴⁸⁴ Carter is first mentioned in 1808

⁴⁸¹ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/7, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 9 March 1809.

⁴⁸² NRO, Freke, Bundle 5/1, William Repton to Humphry Repton, 28 June 1810.

⁴⁸³ NRO, Freke, Bundle 1/1–2, George Freke Evans to Humphry Repton, 9 January 1811.

⁴⁸⁴ In *The Country Houses of Northamptonshire* Heward and Taylor place William Carter at Laxton from 1806. However, from reports of the proceedings taken against William Carter by George Freke Evans it is apparent that there were several members of the Carter family working at the Hall and that William Carter only commenced work there in 1808. The letters between Humphry Repton and George Freke Evans do not differentiate very clearly between the members of the Carter family, calling them all Mr

when he was consulted by Repton about procuring a suitable clerk of the works.⁴⁸⁵ It is apparent that Evans did not approve of this communication as, after his dismissal, Repton bitterly wrote, 'I was blamed for corresponding with the very carpenter whom you have now engaged to complete our plans.'⁴⁸⁶ After Repton's dismissal, Carter superintended, altered and executed Repton's designs and, as will be evidenced later, certainly did not think of himself as a carpenter.

It was not unheard of for architects to be replaced after a commission had commenced, although it was severely deprecated. This is testified to by a rule in the Architects Club's Code of Regulations which stated 'That if any Member shall make application, directly or indirectly, to be employed in any business of the Profession, about to be executed during the known employment of any other Artist...shall in either case, be considered as acting contrary to the established practice of a Gentlemen, and derogatory to his own honor and that of the profession.'⁴⁸⁷ At Harlaxton, Lincolnshire, three different architects, Salvin, Blore and Burn, were consulted or hired by Gregory Gregory. Although there is no current explanation why, the possibility of disagreement and friction between architect and patron was possibly amplified by Gregory Gregory's role as 'chiefly his own architect' and his heavy involvement in the supervision of works.⁴⁸⁸ At Stafford House, commissioned by the Duke of York, Robert Smirke was dismissed in favour of Benjamin Wyatt four years after building had commenced and as a result of George IV's disapproval of the designs. Wyatt was soon forced to retire from the Architects Club whose members frowned upon his behaviour.⁴⁸⁹ Architects' relationships with patrons broke down not only due to personalities but also as a

Carter. William Carter's father and brother ran a carpenters or joiners house, Daniel Carter & Son, London, who worked as carpenters at Laxton from 1806. William Carter worked independently as a 'surveyor' and was employed from 1808 as the Evans' architect. See Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/3, William Carter vs. George Freke Evans, 20 January 1815.

⁴⁸⁵ There are references to 'Carter' making designs for floors, likely to have been William Carter's father and brother, but also to Humphry Repton consulting with William Carter on the employment of a suitable clerk of the works between 1807 and 1808. See NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/28, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 13 September 1808; NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/33 Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 10 June 1808; NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/41, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 9 March 1808.

⁴⁸⁶ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/7, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 9 March 1809.

⁴⁸⁷ Colvin, 'The Architects of Stafford House', p. 23; Kaye, *Development of the Architectural Profession*, p. 59.

⁴⁸⁸ T. Knox, 'A Palace for an 'English Country Squire': Early Designs for Harlaxton Manor, Lincolnshire', *Architectural History*, 36 (1993), pp. 94–102 (p. 100).

⁴⁸⁹ Colvin, 'The Architects of Stafford House', p. 23.

consequence of the opinion of members of the patron's networks and competition from other architects.

There is no evidence to suggest that Carter actively sought Repton's commission, however, six months after Repton's dismissal Carter did comment that Repton's charges were 'extravagant' even though, the correspondent noted, 'architects and Artists...are not in general fond of taxing each others Bills'.⁴⁹⁰ Even though there was an increasingly formalised set of procedures in the nineteenth century architects still had to work hard to form a good relationship with their patrons and to defend their work. After all, as Chapter Three has described, it was through these positive experiences that new commissions were gained.

Initially the relationship between Carter and Evans seems to have been a successful one. Evans even recommended Carter to friends in 1809 and 1811.⁴⁹¹ However, just as it had with Repton, the relationship broke down and payment was the main bone of contention. Evans and Carter disagreed on a number of issues, many of which had caused similar disputes with Repton: charges for travel, materials, tradesmen and plans. Carter's integrity was also questioned and it was inferred that he was not only making money from his percentage on the commission but also on his families business. It is evident that Evans was not an easy client to work for.

Carter persuaded Evans to go to arbitration. Carter's defence was built upon his status as a London architect, his experience and his belief that he had followed generally accepted architectural practice. When cross examined Carter stressed his 18 years of experience and the fact that he had never been a partner with his brothers or any person in the building trade. He stated that before working for Evans he had 'had the superintendence as a surveyor of many other buildings – of greater magnitude than Mr. Evans's'. Evans agreed to pay Carter the same commission and charges as other 'first rate architects' and gave Mr Wyatt, Mr Soane and Mr Dance as examples, suggesting Carter's perceived standing.⁴⁹² The drawings were examined by two surveyors, Thomas Hardwick and Mr Porden, who agreed they showed 'considerable skill' and were 'fit

⁴⁹⁰ NRO, Freke, Bundle 3/3, Unknown (possibly lawyer) to George Freke Evans, 10 June 1809.

⁴⁹¹ When being cross examined as a result of George Freke Evans' refusal to pay his bill, William Carter noted that Evans had recommended him to Stafford O'Brien who employed him in 1811 as well as to Mr Hartrop in 1809. See Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/3, William Carter vs. George Freke Evans, cross examination of Mr Carter, 4 January 1816.

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*

and proper' for a clerk of the works to follow. Carter also noted that he had been directed to act 'without any limitation'.⁴⁹³ The investigation into the disagreements came to an effectual halt after Carter declared bankruptcy and upon which it was believed the assignees would accept £1000 without any further investigations, as opposed to Carter's claim of nearer £3000.⁴⁹⁴

Carter's concern over the appointment of men with appropriate skills reoccurred in the proceedings taken against him by Evans. As with Repton, Evans questioned Carter's professional judgement in this matter. When Carter was asked why he did not employ a plumber from Birmingham at a lower rate than the plumber employed, Poynder from London, he argued that country workmen were not 'fit to do such work'.⁴⁹⁵ A similar sentiment towards country workmen was expressed by Ambrose Poynter, nearly half a century later after a fountain in the grounds of Haselbech was erected incorrectly.⁴⁹⁶ He complained 'These country workmen are enough to drive any one out of his senses'.⁴⁹⁷ There was a divide between the way that these two London-based architects viewed city and country workmen and a belief that skills in the country palled in comparison to London. These concerns were likely to have centred upon the status of the architects, workmen, and buildings being constructed as much as the skills of the tradesmen.

Carter believed country workmen were not fit for commissions such as a country house and preferred to employ the 'best tradesman' for the job.⁴⁹⁸ However, while the employment of the best workmen may have been a priority for the architect, it was not necessarily the main concern of the patron. At Haselbech, as already discussed, Viscountess Milton prioritised economy. Thus, the employment of cheaper country workmen meant that her requirements were met, even if they upset Poynter. Carter, knowingly or unknowingly, prioritised quality above the patron's desires to keep costs low. Evans complained 'unknown to me until brought him by Mr Carter from London, rejecting some...much better & at half the expense'.⁴⁹⁹ This, Evans argued, was the

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁴ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/3, Jonathan Dennett to George Freke Evans, 3 February 1815.

⁴⁹⁵ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/3, Note as to Mr Carter's travelling expenses, 1816.

⁴⁹⁶ The mason, Walpole, had not levelled the fountain and thus not set the central vase correctly. As a result the water only ran down one side. Despite his frustration, Poynter was unwilling to supply his own men for the majority of the works as there were not sufficient facilities to lodge and feed them.

⁴⁹⁷ NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 7 October 1857.

⁴⁹⁸ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/3, William Carter vs. George Freke Evans, 20 January 1815.

⁴⁹⁹ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/3, George Freke Evans to Jonathan Dennett, 12 May 1813.

result of Carter's desire to increase costs and thus increase the amount due to him as a percentage on the works. Evans' comments are reminiscent of his distrust of Repton. The interplay of status, skill, trust and priorities caused friction between the patron, architect, clerks of the works and tradesmen. Disagreements over tradesmen also demonstrate yet a further layer of protagonists which could influence the success of building.

The fact that Evans had many of the same problems with both Carter and Repton suggests that the personality of the patron played an important role in determining the success of the building program. The rules and customs which Wilson and Mackley describe so well in *Creating Paradise* were, in some instances, secondary to specific working relationships created in particular contexts and determined by individuals' temperaments. However, like Repton, when it came to defending his work and right to payment Carter called upon precedent and convention to defend his actions. He also highlighted his status and reputation within the architectural world. Both Repton and Carter saw themselves as professionals and gentlemen. This emphasis on status, standard practice and the elevated position of the architect were characteristic goals in the professionalisation of architecture, even if this was far from being achieved at the time. In spite of this, even though the procedures Carter followed were accepted as conventional by witnesses during the arbitration case, these rules and customs only worked if both parties recognised their relevance and standing and if evidence existed to suggest if they had been adhered to.

Many of the same problems experienced at Laxton Hall were still points of contention sixty years later and can be evidenced by letters between Viscountess Milton and Poynter during alterations to Haselbech Hall. In particular, the payment of bills was still problematic and suggests that any attempt to resolve these issues had not yet become universal. Viscountess Milton was just as particular as Evans when ensuring she only paid what was due.

Viscountess Milton was exacting about receiving detailed accounts and frequently checked the estate accounts recorded by her agent, Edward K. Fisher, during building. The precision with which Viscountess Milton monitored the accounts is shown in a letter from John Mason, the local builder responsible for the garden walls and fountain. His accounts were questioned as a result of a difference between his book and

Viscountess Milton's over the day the fountain brickwork commenced. Fisher had been asked to ascertain if this had been started on the Monday or the Wednesday. Mason recorded works on the Monday of each week regardless of the day in that week they began.⁵⁰⁰ Thus it is evident that two records of the accounts were being made, one by the builder and one by Viscountess Milton. These were scrutinised to the day by Viscountess Milton.

The builder William Clifton had been contracted to extend the services at Haselbech in 1857 as well as to complete sundry work. When he submitted his accounts for these extra jobs in April 1857 he hoped this would be satisfactory 'the more so as it is quite unusual for a carpenter builder to name every little job done by his men while employed at Sundry jobs'.⁵⁰¹ Though Poynter agreed with the bills for measured work he asked for the day accounts to be revised as they seemed too high for the work completed. Clifton promised to return the bill with explanations of all the costs 'so explanatory that I should be satisfied with its accurateness'.⁵⁰² Before he could verify these new bills Poynter travelled to Germany as a result of his failing health. What could have ended in confusion was prevented as Fisher stepped in to continue Poynter's job. Poynter left estimates of what was due and on his return arranged to meet Fisher to resolve any problems.⁵⁰³ However before his return it was suggested, possibly by Fisher, that the accounts should be looked over by a valuer. Poynter was eager for the accounts to be brought to a close as his eyesight was failing and as a result he wanted to rest from business.⁵⁰⁴ Not long after, evidently feeling under attack from Viscountess Milton's exacting standards, Poynter sent a letter defending his position in dealing with the accounts: 'as you know exactly what I wrote to Lady Milton & the pains I took that the tradesmen might be paid on account you will agree that it is very hard upon me to be made for the least chargeable with the delay'.⁵⁰⁵

As at Laxton Hall, Poynter frequently requested information on the progress of works so he could plan his visits.⁵⁰⁶ Unlike Laxton Hall, his polite requests were met by

⁵⁰⁰ NRO, FS 24/7, John Mason to Edward K. Fisher, 22 July 1857.

⁵⁰¹ NRO, FS 24/7, William Clifton to Edward K. Fisher, 22 April 1857.

⁵⁰² NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 12 October 1857.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*; NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 8 December 1857.

⁵⁰⁴ NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 11 December 1857.

⁵⁰⁵ NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 23 December 1857.

⁵⁰⁶ NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 5 August 1857.

Fisher. Communication between the architect and patron, and architect and workmen was through a reliable, professional and trusted mediator, Fisher.⁵⁰⁷ However, this did not mean that the building works were error free. There was miscommunication between Poynter and the bricklayers, who began foundations without consulting Poynter on levels.⁵⁰⁸ After Poynter had ordered the balustrade, Clifton put a halt to castings as the cases were not the same size.⁵⁰⁹ Clifton was Poynter's eyes on site. As at Laxton Hall, there were problems over the gate for the entrance. The gate was ordered from the ironmonger Barwell who enquired on 28 February 1857 if the gate was to swing both ways. If this was the case it would have to be made differently from the drawing. Three months later, after the gates were installed, Poynter was horrified to discover they only swung one way.⁵¹⁰ The comparison of Haselbech over a decade after the alterations at Laxton shows that the same points of contention were arising: payment of bills, an exacting patron and communication between participants in the building process. With the increasing specialisation of roles during the building process more and more people were involved in constructing a house, each with seemingly discrete responsibilities. However, in the nineteenth century these roles were often ill-defined or overlapped. To add to this, those on site were often directed from a distance. Poor lines of communication and the freedom with which some individuals exercised their own judgement on site caused problems both at Haselbech and Laxton Hall. The patrons were certainly not detached from the architectural process.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁸ NRO, FS 24/6, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 27 December 1856.

⁵⁰⁹ NRO, FS 24/7, William Clifton to Edward K. Fisher, 8 January 1857.

⁵¹⁰ As there was to be no gatehouse or gatekeeper to open the gates Poynter believed it was vital they opened both ways. If not, they would never be shut. See NRO, FS 24/7, Barwell & Co. to Edward K. Fisher, 28 February 1857; NRO, FS 24/7, Ambrose Poynter to Edward K. Fisher, 21 May 1857.

Conclusions



Figure 34: Design for Laxton Hall in Humphry Repton's *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (London, 1816), p. 113.

Evans did not have the final word on Laxton Hall. Two years before his death in 1818, Repton published *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*. In this treatise, he looked back upon his lifetime of commissions. One in particular struck a bitter cord: Laxton Hall. He describes how he had made extensive and detailed plans for the house, stables, a school-house, a parsonage, and numerous other buildings, which were approved of, and executed, but he was denied from ever being permitted to visit the progress of the works and never received the expected remuneration. The name of both the place and its proprietor were omitted in the text but a design was inserted for all to know that it was Laxton Hall and Evans he referred to [Figure 34]. He wrote of his exertions: 'some of these I can view with delight and record with exultation; but alas! in how many have my time, my labour, and my contrivance been employed, without producing fame or profit: the latter was only a secondary consideration, and yet, when that has been withheld, the other has generally suffered in proportion.'⁵¹¹ In reproducing the plate in *Fragments* and by staking his claim to the works at Laxton, Repton was in some way recovering a little of the fame he lost; even if he was unable to claim any profit. His disillusionment at the practical difficulties which could arise

⁵¹¹ H. Repton, *Fragments on the Theory and Practice*, p. 113.

during building was expressed in his book, *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*. Repton wrote ‘the frequent opposition I have experienced from gardeners, bailiffs and land stewards, who either wilfully mar my plans, or ignorantly mistake my instructions...It is rather through my opinions in writing, than on the partial and imperfect manner in which my plans have been executed, that I wish my fame to be established’.⁵¹²

Although it has not been the purpose of this chapter to attribute blame it is apparent there were a number of factors which led to the breakdown of the architect-patron relationship at Laxton Hall: a lack of communication, Evans’ micromanaging of the situation, Repton’s working method and wider changes to the architectural profession in the nineteenth century. In particular, it is evident there was tension between the status of Repton as the overall authority in relation to designs and the increasing expectation in the nineteenth century that architects would provide detailed and exact plans for patrons to comment on before and during building. This evidences that, at this time, the role of patron and architect during design was uncertain and ill-defined. This chapter has focussed chiefly upon Laxton Hall but in doing so has highlighted the areas of potential ambiguity and tension where things could go wrong, and which with houses like Haselbech Hall and Lamport Hall were negotiated much more successfully.

This chapter has also highlighted that in many instances, patrons were not simply *patrons* in the technical sense of providing the finances for a building endeavour, but *collaborators* whose influence could be fundamental in determining the conceptualisation of a building’s design.⁵¹³ The re-designs of plans for Lamport Hall were almost certainly the result of requests and suggestions by the patrons. It is in the conversations and discussions between architect and patron where the final form of the designs were determined. However disagreements could also have lasting legacy in the final form of buildings.

Beyond the mistakes at Laxton Hall the most obvious legacy in regards to the Hall’s architecture was the evolution of designs as a result of two architects. The plans proposed by Repton were not executed in their entirety but were instead modified by his

⁵¹² H. Repton, *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (London, 1803), p. 2.

⁵¹³ Herbert and Donchin, *The Collaborators*, pp. 15–23.

successor in the works, Carter.⁵¹⁴ As described in Chapter One, Carter altered Repton's plans to change the layout of rooms but also suggested re-casing the old Hall. This chapter has also shown that at the houses discussed patrons not only communicated directly with architects but also with men on site. As a result, at Laxton Hall many clerks of the works became caught in the middle of the patron and architect. It took approximately five years, two architects and five clerks of the works to finish altering Laxton Hall and the surrounding estate. Fortunately, the disagreements described in this chapter did not permanently halt building works.

⁵¹⁴ See Chapter One.

Chapter Five

‘Under Petticoat Government’? Husbands, Wives and Architecture

The excellent suggestions for improving Lamport Hall,
Came not from me in any way, they yours were doubtless all.⁵¹⁵

Sir Charles Isham, 1899

In this verse Sir Charles Isham attributes suggestions for the alterations to Lamport Hall to his wife, Emily. The view that architecture was the domain of men where, regardless of their ability or aptitude for design, women could not participate is slowly being revised. Neither men nor women were acting in isolation in a strictly predetermined gendered-sphere. Individual skills, knowledge, circumstances and interest meant that different protagonists in the design process engaged with architecture to different degrees. There was an element of individual choice and interest. Yet, gendered expectations could govern the ways that individuals participated in the building process and more especially in the architectural profession. Changes in the practice of architecture in the nineteenth century resulted in a profession struggling to establish an identity and professional status. One aspect of this transition to a professional culture was the strict gendering of the emerging profession as male.

Professional institutes were generally exclusively male. The RIBA did not count a woman among its ranks until 1898, even though there was no rule to prevent women from joining. The exclusion of women, Walker has argued, was simply assumed.⁵¹⁶ In 1835 the secretary of the RIBA commented that its members were to be ‘men of taste, men of science, and men of honour’.⁵¹⁷ Some of the new architectural organisations formed across the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century took the form of male dining clubs and focused on the education of aspiring male architects or young gentlemen.⁵¹⁸ Women already had little access to formal architectural education through

⁵¹⁵ Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

⁵¹⁶ L. Walker, ‘Golden Age or False Dawn? Women Architects in the Early 20th Century’, *Report for English Heritage*, <http://women-in-architecture.com/fileadmin/wia/pdfs/WIA02032012/women-architects-early-20th-century.pdf> [accessed 24 March 2016].

⁵¹⁷ Walker, *Drawing on Diversity*, pp. 8–9.

⁵¹⁸ Crinson and Lubbock, *Architecture or Profession?*, p. 39; Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary*, p. 34.

a standard upper class female upbringing and had even less access to new systems of articulated pupillage, considered entirely inappropriate for a woman.⁵¹⁹ In spite of this, Corfield has argued that women's engagement with the professions was not directly harmed by a professional ethos which favoured skills and knowledge.⁵²⁰ It was professional culture and gendered expectations which meant their direct participation in the architectural profession was more or less inconceivable.

Yet, in spite of the masculine nature of the profession some architectural practitioners and commentators recognised and even recommended appropriate ways in which women could engage with architecture. Loudon argued that an inclusive dialogue between 'females, surveyors, builders, carpenters, ironmongers, and in short all trades connected with building' would be most beneficial to architects, architecture and the public.⁵²¹ He thus recognised that women were 'connected with building' and could be influential protagonists in the design process. This potential was also noted in an article in *The Foreign Quarterly Review* in 1831 which advocated the study of architecture among women:

in order that they may be able to draw columns, for that is merely the means, not the end of the pursuit, that we would suggest the propriety of ladies applying themselves to what has hitherto never been included within the circle of female acquirements; but that they may thereby cultivate their taste, and ground it on something less baseless and shifting than mere feminine likings and dislikings we would suggest the propriety of ladies applying themselves to what has hitherto never been included within the circle of female acquirements.⁵²²

The article went on to acknowledge how 'influential the authority' of female taste had been on 'ornamental furniture and interior embellishments'. It did not, however, recommend that women became architects or designed country houses, but merely that they 'cultivate their taste' through education rather than feminine intuition.⁵²³ The idea

⁵¹⁹ Walker, *Drawing on Diversity*, p. 8.

⁵²⁰ Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 188. See also A. Summers, *Female Lives, Moral States: Women, Religion and Public Life in Britain 1800–1900* (Berkshire, 2000), pp. 7–13.

⁵²¹ Loudon, *Architectural Magazine*, 2 (October, 1835), p. 472.

⁵²² 'Modern Architecture and Architectural Study', *The Foreign Quarterly Review*, 7 (1831), pp. 432–461 (p. 441).

⁵²³ M. Leyland, 'Lady Harewood (1801–59): Patronage, Agency and Representation at Harewood House', University of York MA dissertation (2011).

that a woman's taste was founded in 'baseless and feminine likings and dislikings', draws on an Early Modern rhetoric which viewed women's innate nature as less rational, less constant and less restrained.⁵²⁴ Equally, by describing the study of architecture as a superficial 'female acquirement' and one 'incapable of receiving or transmitting the least moral taint', the author framed his argument in the language of femininity and morality, softening the impact of his suggestion and forestalling any possible objections. Although the usefulness of women learning about architecture was recognised this was understood within a patriarchal framework and within the limitations of women's nature.

However, just as some commentators recognised women's usefulness to architecture in supporting roles, others were completely opposed to women engaging with architecture in any capacity. Wightwick's *The Palace of Architecture* explained architecture to the public and advocated women pass some of their leisure time studying it. However, a review by 'Candidus' disparagingly wrote 'That which has hitherto been the task of a higher order of intellect is now to become the amusement of women – perhaps the plaything of children.'⁵²⁵ Wider educational movements often classified women with children and the lower orders and texts such as Wightwick's responded to a greater societal concern with raising the architectural and aesthetic standards of the populace in general. Candidus was further appalled that Wightwick had dedicated his publication to a Countess, exclaiming, 'A man might as well think of dedicating a cookery-book to Wellington.'⁵²⁶ Not only does Candidus illustrate negative attitudes towards women's suitability to engage with architecture but his comments also suggests wider tensions between the preservation of an exclusive profession and the quasi-paternalist ethos which many professions adopted to justify their elevated position.⁵²⁷ As the article in the *Foreign Quarterly Review* acknowledged, 'Non-professional people would be considered by them in the light of interlopers. We ourselves, too, run some risk, not only of being looked upon by the Vitruvian fraternity as poachers trespassing on their manors, but as seeking to derogate from the honour of their art, by recommending it as

⁵²⁴ J. Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven and London, 1999), p. 58.

⁵²⁵ Candidus was a pseudonym used by the journalist and critic W. H. Leeds (1786–1866). See Candidus, 'Wightwickism', in *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, 22 September 1840, p. 363. Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 202.

⁵²⁶ Candidus, 'Wightwickism', p. 360.

⁵²⁷ Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 202.

a pastime for boys and girls, and rendering its mysteries “intelligible to the meanest capacities””.⁵²⁸

Yet, exclusion from professional institutes and the mixed opinions of commentators did not necessarily exclude women from architectural patronage or engaging in architectural conversation, as they had done in previous centuries. There always had been and continued to be informal methods through which a woman could acquire a more than competent knowledge of architecture and design, through reading, through conversation, through country house visiting or simply through practical observation. Both Emily and Mary Isham, although not members of the Northamptonshire Architectural Society, attended meetings.⁵²⁹ In fact, the aim of some local societies such as The Northamptonshire Architectural Society was not only to protect buildings and advise architects but, as they described upon their establishment, to act as a ‘middle class educational tool’.⁵³⁰ In a similar way to Wightwicks’s publication, one category of individuals the Society sought to educate was women. The Society also admitted a very small number of female members, even if its activities were coordinated and led exclusively by men.⁵³¹ At Haselbech Viscountess Milton learnt about cottage design and estate management by consulting the knowledgeable men she surrounded herself with.⁵³² Lady Overstone went on two tours of the continent with Lord Overstone and her daughter in the ten years before Overstone was built, which included Paris, Rome, Venice, Munich, much of Switzerland and Italy. This might have meant she was more receptive to the suggestions of Teulon. Mary meticulously transcribed documents relating to Isham family history and paid particular attention to the architectural history of the house.⁵³³ This suggests her personal investment in her marital family but also an

⁵²⁸ ‘Modern Architecture’, p. 444.

⁵²⁹ ‘Northampton Architectural Society’, *Lincolnshire Chronicle*, 12 October 1849, p. 4; ‘Northampton Architectural Society’, *Northampton Mercury*, 13 October, 1849, p.3; ‘Architectural Society of the Archdeaconry of Northampton’, *Northampton Mercury*, 25 October 1851, pp.1–2.

⁵³⁰ T. James, ‘Report Read at the Autumn Meeting at Northampton, October 21, 1851, by Thomas James, M.A., Vicar of Theddingworth, and one of the Secretaries of the Society’ in *Reports and Papers Read at the Meetings of the Architectural Societies of the Archdeaconry of Northampton, the Counties of York and Lincoln, and of the Architectural & Archaeological Societies of Bedfordshire and St. Albans* (London, 1851), p. lxiii.

⁵³¹ Of 224 members listed in 1850, eight were women. Half of these were from prominent families and were members alongside their husbands. See ‘The Sixth Report of the Architectural Society of the Archdeaconry of Northampton’, in *Ibid.* (1850), pp. i–iv.

⁵³² See Chapter Six.

⁵³³ NRO, IL 3086, Mary Isham, ‘Memorandums taken from old papers’.

understanding and appreciation of its historic fabric. Although not active in the profession, women could certainly attain the skills required to become informed patrons and active contributors in the building process.

In this context Hall has observed that although few women acted independently as architectural patrons or as architects, there is plenty of evidence of women acting as advisors to their husbands when building or altering their country houses.⁵³⁴ Much scholarship has closely equated women's architectural agency with domestic locations and a wider dynastic mission.⁵³⁵ Among others, Walker and Friedman have argued that by acting within the family unit and on family property, elite women were given a degree of responsibility over the built environment not afforded elsewhere.⁵³⁶ Recent scholarship has also increasingly shown that women who altered their family homes, or indeed engaged in areas such as estate management, were not necessarily transgressing or challenging traditional gender divides.⁵³⁷ Instead they were fulfilling their duty as wives and mothers by creating an 'atmosphere of domesticity' with family life, intimacy and comfort at its centre.⁵³⁸ They were conforming to the idealised image of the woman as homemaker.

Larson argues that by performing these roles women not only provided for their own and immediate family's needs but also enhanced their family's public image.⁵³⁹ Reynolds, among others, has drawn upon the concept of the 'incorporated wife' to explain the joint approach of husbands and wives to the management of estates.⁵⁴⁰ 'Incorporated wives' played an essential supporting and public role in their husband's career and consequently his wider familial and dynastic ambitions.⁵⁴¹ Hence, women could be active participants in occupations, such as architecture, traditionally considered the domain of men. Yet, if the concept of the 'incorporated wife' is taken as the central

⁵³⁴ Hall, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 18.

⁵³⁵ P. Mandler, [review] 'Namier in Petticoats? K. D. Reynolds *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain*', no. 63, *Reviews in History* (February, 1999), <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/63> [accessed 24 March, 2015].

⁵³⁶ Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House* (New York, 1998), p. 15; Walker, *Drawing on Diversity*, p. 6; Mandler, [review] 'Namier in Petticoats?'.

⁵³⁷ Walker, *Drawing on Diversity*, p. 6.

⁵³⁸ L. Walker, 'Home Making: An Architectural Perspective', *Signs*, 27, no. 3 (Spring 2002), pp. 823–835 (p. 826); J. Lewis, 'When a House is not a Home', pp. 336–63; Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*; Larson, 'Dynastic Domesticity'; A. Blunt and R. Dowling, *Home* (London and New York, 2006), pp. 3–5.

⁵³⁹ Larson, 'Dynastic Domesticity', p. 85.

⁵⁴⁰ Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, pp. 43, 156.

⁵⁴¹ H. Callan and S. Ardener (eds.), *The Incorporated Wife* (London, 1975), p. 1.

framework for understanding women's agency, it implies that their individual ambitions or interests were indistinguishable from a wider public identity and performance; an identity determined by their husbands' position and status.

Certainly, the perpetuation of the husband's identity can be seen in the built fabric of the houses considered in this thesis. A geometrical scheme of barbed quatrefoils and interconnected fields was executed on the library ceiling at Overstone Hall. In the main field of the central barbed quatrefoil is the coat-of-arms of the Loyd family with the additional Barons coronet.⁵⁴² At Lamport, the Isham swan was present on the piers of the entrance gate as well as furniture purchased by the family. Stained glass from the Ishams' ancestral residence of Pytchley was also inserted into the window in the stairwell in 1844.⁵⁴³ Arguably, the desire to retain original parts of their homes during alterations could also be understood as an attempt to preserve and perpetuate the families' dynastic heritage.⁵⁴⁴ These easily readable signs privileged the paternal line and contributed to a wider self-presentation of the family in the public realm.

Yet, dynastic displays alone tell us very little about the agency and interests of husbands or wives during alterations. Although the husband's family was privileged in the built fabric, it cannot be assumed that wives were not the motivating factors behind the perpetuation of their new family's identity. As already suggested, Mary was deeply invested in Isham family history. It was also logical that alterations would respond to existing structures and their dynastic associations. Equally, nor can it be assumed that the husband's taste and architectural predilections would be privileged over his wife's. The difficulty of identifying individual agency and individual taste in schemes of building is one which has previously been recognised by Cunningham.⁵⁴⁵ This challenge is increased when trying to establish the influence of individuals in the creation of a family home and family identity and more especially when trying to establish the roles of women.

Women's role as advice givers or as proxies of their husbands as opposed to the person who signed contracts has lessened their mark in the archives.⁵⁴⁶ It is likely that many of

⁵⁴² Private Collection, Twentieth century photograph of the library ceiling.

⁵⁴³ NRO, IL 3068, Mary Isham 'Memorandums taken from old papers'.

⁵⁴⁴ Larson, 'Dynastic Domesticity', p. 28. See also Chapter One.

⁵⁴⁵ Cunningham, 'An Italian House is my Lady', p. 70.

⁵⁴⁶ See Chapter Two for women's legal position and contracts.

the suggestions and consultations between husband and wife were never committed to paper. Where evidence does survive to suggest female agency, for example in letters, it is not necessarily easy to ascertain who made decisions and when. Though it may have been the gentleman of the house to whom bills were addressed, this did not necessarily mean that he took responsibility for deciding what to buy. It may have been the gentleman of the house who wrote to the architect, but the decision to do so and the instructions the letter contained may have been made by a different person at a different time. Thus, this chapter seeks to reintroduce women into the design and building histories of the houses considered in this thesis. As Adams and Tancred have argued, if women as well as the designers and builders who were not necessarily termed as ‘architects’ are taken into consideration ‘a much wider range of architectural experience is encompassed’.⁵⁴⁷

This chapter is divided into two parts. Part One explores husband-wife relationships and their impact on agency in the design process through three themes: agency, identity and representation. It will highlight evidence which suggests the specific agency of men and women during alterations to their country houses and gardens. However, it will also consider how the creation of space could express individual and collective family identities. Finally, it will recognise that the vast majority of sources used to find evidence of male and female agency can only ever provide a self-consciously constructed representation of one person’s view of the design process. This is especially important as the evidence which has survived for the properties discussed in this thesis has predominantly been found in the writings of male spouses with very little surviving of women’s views. The second part of the chapter will explore the emotional responses to home and how this can alter understandings of responses to architecture and design. In doing so it highlights that meanings attached to buildings were constantly changing.⁵⁴⁸ Crucially, it highlights that responses to architecture could be informed by familial circumstances, memories and emotions as much as individuals’ taste.

⁵⁴⁷ A. Adams and P. Tancred, *Designing Women: Gender and the Architectural Profession* (Toronto, 2000), p. 9.

⁵⁴⁸ A similar study but which focuses on Yorkshire women’s concept of home in the eighteenth-century has been completed by Larson. See Larson, ‘Dynastic Domesticity’, pp. 64–86.

Part One: Agency, Identity and Representation

Structural Alterations

In a notebook written by Louisa Corbett (née Isham), Mary Isham's granddaughter, she describes how 'Granny altered the triangle over principal door in music hall (the pediment) about 1830 – it used to be circular with [a] window in centre'. Louisa explains that Mary also 'designed the curved window over garden door in order to get an entrance to the crimson room' as well as constructing outbuildings, panelling the Gothic room and planting trees.⁵⁴⁹ The 'triangle' refers to the central pediment over the Webb elevation of the house, altered by Henry Hakewill in 1829.⁵⁵⁰ The 'curved window' refers to a porch added to the garden front of the house in 1828 [Figure 35].⁵⁵¹ If her granddaughter's comments are taken at face value, they imply that Mary determined a large part, if not the entire programme, of works.⁵⁵² However, the alterations Louisa describes were completed before she was born and as a result, her attribution of elements of the building to Mary may have been a result of her hearing stories of the alterations from 'Granny'. It is notable that she describes Sir Justinian as 'Granny's husband', the two having never met. There is very little known surviving evidence from the time of the alterations to corroborate Mary or even Sir Justinian's roles. None the less, a bundle of letters written by Hakewill and the Lamport estate steward, Hewlett, cast doubt over Mary's singular role in determining the design of one feature, the pediment.⁵⁵³

⁵⁴⁹ NRO, I 1387, Louisa Corbett notebook with additions, most likely by Millicent Isham.

⁵⁵⁰ See Chapter Four.

⁵⁵¹ NRO, IL 3086, Mary Isham, 'Memorandums taken from old papers'.

⁵⁵² Garwood has argued that Mary Isham had a significant impact on alterations. See Garwood, 'Hidden Patronage', pp. 32–40.

⁵⁵³ See Chapter Four.

Mary's own experience. This notebook suggests Mary's pride in her adopted family's history and more particularly a knowledge of, and interest in changes to the Hall.⁵⁵⁵

Mary's careful management of the accounts at Lamport are potentially further evidence of her agency during alterations. Memoranda in her hand describe the cleaning of books in the library, a notebook records the payment of tithes, tax, insurance and donations to charities and her own personal ledger includes everyday household expenses as well as references to payments for 'the new building', carpenters, nurserymen and items such as bricks.⁵⁵⁶ In managing the household and accounts Mary was fulfilling gendered expectations learnt in her formative years. During her childhood she filled in a notebook with practice accounts and maths questions. Many of these were scenarios she might encounter during married life and was no doubt preparation for her future occupation.⁵⁵⁷

However, while accounts show what was being purchased and that Mary was engaged in household management, including making payments for building, they reveal very little about who was choosing items in the accounts or what level of engagement Mary had with building decisions.⁵⁵⁸ This example shows the difficulties of attributing agency and of claiming that any one person was a determining force in the architectural process. It also shows how difficult it is to establish the role of women through the use of traditional sources used to describe building, such as letters to and from architects, accounts and architectural designs. It is the coincidental noting of facts about the history of the house by Mary and family legend which has primarily drawn attention to her potential role in the architecture of the Hall.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁵ For more on women's interest in house histories see Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, p. 134.

⁵⁵⁶ NRO, IL 2757, Mary Isham notebook containing financial and property notes, c. 1850–70; NRO, IL 3086, Mary Isham, 'Memorandums taken from old papers'; NRO, IL 2821, Mary Isham's ledger 1818–1821; NRO, IL 2822, Mary Isham's ledger, 1821–1823.

⁵⁵⁷ LH, Book of practice accounts completed by Mary Close (later Isham) at Elm Park.

⁵⁵⁸ The initials 'E. E.' appear throughout the summary account books. These were added to show the accounts had been checked and were possibly the initials of a head servant, suggesting that Mary Isham might not have checked the accounts herself. The initials D. H. also appear and could refer to the agent D. Hewlett. See NRO, IL 2803, Account book, 1 March 1823 to 28 February 1825; NRO, IL 2328, Summary account book; NRO, IL 2804, Account book 1 March 1825 to 26 February 1827; NRO, IL 2805, Account book 6 April 1831 to 17 July 1832; NRO, IL 2838 Account book, 2 June 1829 to 31 March 1831.

⁵⁵⁹ An article by Sir Gyles Isham from 1948 describes that Lamport Hall was known as 'Close castle' during Mary Isham's residency and that Sir Justinian was known as 'the silent Baronet'. See G. Isham, 'The Historical and Literary Associations of Lamport Hall', *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, 1 (1948), pp. 12–28.

Greater evidence survives to suggest that Mary's daughter-in-law, Emily, had a considerable influence over the structural alterations to Lamport Hall. As described in Chapter Four, several designs by William Burn in different styles survive for the rebuilding of the north west front. Summerson and subsequently Garwood have argued that it was Emily who chose the style adopted.⁵⁶⁰ This is supported by comments made by Sir Charles in a book he wrote and published, *Emily*. The caption under a photograph of the Hall reads 'This is the House, oh: so greatly improved, Part forty years old my good wife had removed'.⁵⁶¹ Published in 1899, the year after his wife's death, the volume contained extracts from condolence letters as well as poetry, essays and letters by Sir Charles, and others, relating to the Ishams' home, their lives there, and their spiritualist beliefs. This was not, however, the only suggestion in verse of Emily's agency during the alterations to the Hall. Composed by Sir Charles when he fell ill in 1902, his self-published poem *My Wife* lovingly looks back on his life with his departed 'thrice Blesséd Wife'. He declares that it was she who had made all the suggestions for improving Lamport Hall:

With splendidly developed head, you deemed yourself not clever,
 Could anyone have thought the same? no, indeed, no, never.
 The excellent suggestions for improving Lamport Hall,
 Came not from me in any way, they yours were doubtless all.
 You came at the right moment, and the same you went,
 I, therefore, never had a doubt you from heaven were sent.⁵⁶²

The agency of Emily during the initial designs for alterations to Lamport Hall is described by Sir Charles' poetry; however the strongest evidence of her direct involvement survives in a 'Journal of the Works' kept by the clerk of the works during building.⁵⁶³ The journal chronicles the alterations to the north west front of the Hall from 24 June 1861 to 6 February 1862.⁵⁶⁴ It is likely that this journal was kept as a record of 'extra work' not included in the original contract for the Hall. Once completed, it was checked and signed off by both Sir Charles and Burn. In July 1861

⁵⁶⁰ Summerson, *Lamport Hall*, p. 13.

⁵⁶¹ Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

⁵⁶² NRO, IL 10A, Sir Charles Isham, *My Wife* (Horsham, 1902).

⁵⁶³ NRO, IL 2785, Journal of the works, 24 June 1861 to 6 February 1862.

⁵⁶⁴ The consistency of the hand writing and layout suggest that this document may have been written in one go.

the journal records alterations to the location of doors in the nursery and attic rooms ordered by 'Lady Isham'. She was also the first to approve a revised plan for the extension to the service area which set it back further from the facade of the rest of the house, almost certainly to mask its existence from any visitors arriving at the Hall along the main driveway.⁵⁶⁵ This plan for the service extension was drawn on 27 July 1861, approved of by Emily on 29 July and 'settled' by Sir Charles on 5 August [Figure 36]. Further practical considerations were requested by Emily including the ventilation of the nursery and attic rooms and the raising of the back windows.

Sir Charles ordered the partition in the attic passage to be set back, the division of window panes, bell hanging and new rain water pipes on the Webb front. Orders for designs from Mr Burn were requested by both Emily and Sir Charles through their steward, Mr Watson. From Burn, Sir Charles requested a plan for a balustrade and alterations to the bedroom water closet and Emily, for the coal store and luggage lift.⁵⁶⁶ There are also entries where decisions were made jointly, for example the use of wood on the office floor and York pavement in the luggage passage. It is difficult to quantify the exact extent of influence and impact Sir Charles and Emily had on the overall design of Lamport Hall. What is apparent, however, is that once building had commenced both Sir Charles and Emily were on site making decisions independently of each other and as partners, thus confusing Sir Charles' idealised representation of his wife's role. Equally interesting, then, is the light that this example sheds on the way that the design process and Emily's role within it was represented by Sir Charles in his poetry. Intimately bound up with Emily's ability to engage in design and Sir Charles' representation of her influence was his view of their marriage.

⁵⁶⁵ Plans by William Burn from April 1860 show a proposal to move the servants' hall from the ground floor to the basement. See NRO, IL 3079/D56. An alternative proposal from 27 December 1860 proposes building new specialised rooms in the basement and leaving the present servants hall unaltered. See NRO, IL 3079/D50. In the event, neither was executed. The servants Hall was left in its present location and an extension added at the east end of the north west front. A letter from William Burn to Sir Charles Isham in 1861 reveals that this was the cheapest option. See NRO, IL 2771A, William Burn to Sir Charles Isham, 20 May 1861. It is the designs for this addition that the journal refers to. See NRO, IL 3079/D57, 58.

⁵⁶⁶ The design for the coal store and luggage lift this refers is almost certainly NRO, IL 3079/D60, Designs for a coal lift showing principal, nursery, attic and roof floors, n.d.

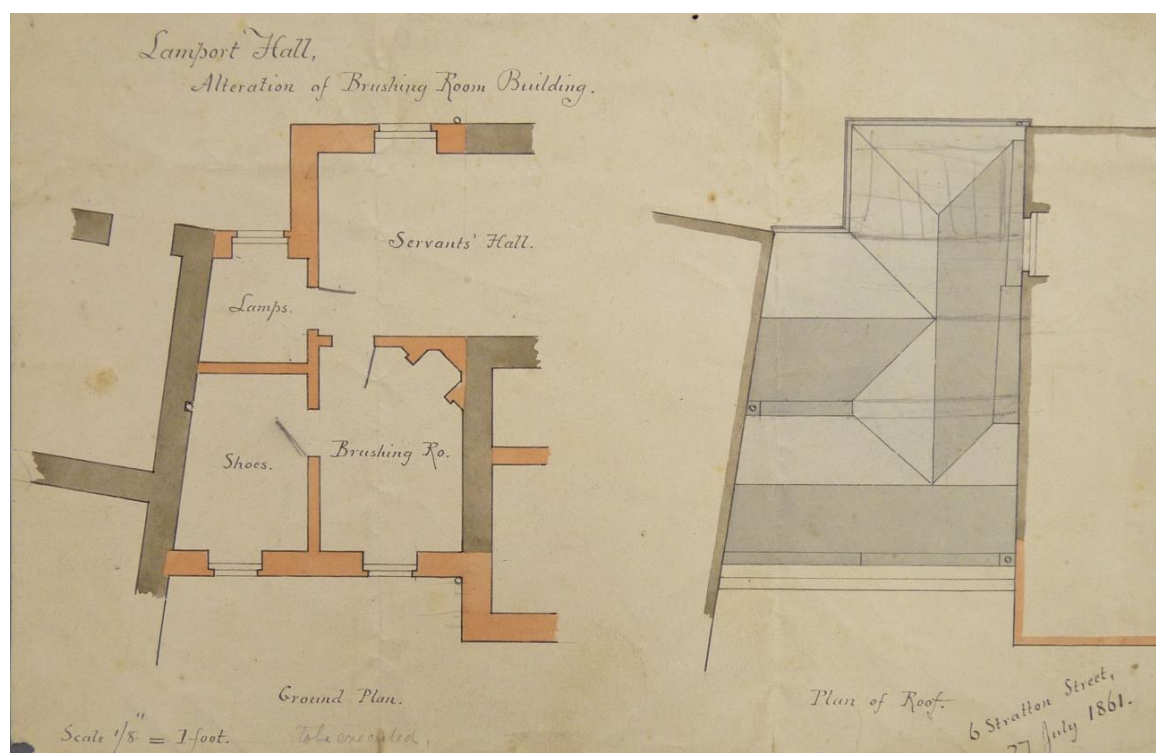


Figure 36: Plan for alterations to the proposed brushing room building, William Burn, 27 July 1861. This is the plan referred to in the clerk of the works' Journal which Emily approved and Sir Charles Isham settled. It shows the setting back of the service extension between the stables and house (NRO, IL 3079/D58). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

Sir Charles' publication, *Emily*, offers a carefully curated view of Sir Charles and Emily Ishams' relationship. Sir Charles selected abstracts from 183 letters sent by family, friends and acquaintances after Emily's death. Across the extracts are the common themes of Emily's virtuous character, her role as the 'centre of the family', her selflessness in helping the poor and her husband's devotion. One correspondent wrote, 'I know from many years observation, how uniformly you made *her* comfort and pleasures the ruling object of your life' and another, 'You gave her the whole devotion of your life to make her happy.'⁵⁶⁷ A great number of comments pay testament to Sir Charles' desire to make his wife happy, no doubt intended to comfort him. They also have to be representative of the dynamic of Sir Charles and Emily's relationship. Some of the extracts have been added to by Sir Charles. To the remark 'I am sure I am right in thinking she never had a wish ungratified if it was in your power to gratify it' he added 'True'.⁵⁶⁸ When one correspondent wrote 'Lamport was the perfection of an English

⁵⁶⁷ Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

country house' Sir Charles added 'This was entirely done by herself'.⁵⁶⁹ Sir Charles and Emily were described as 'inseparable'.⁵⁷⁰ Although the attributes assigned to Emily closely match many of those of the idealised nineteenth-century woman, the devotion of Sir Charles and intimacy of their relationship appear genuine.

There is also evidence to suggest that Sir Charles viewed his relationship with Emily as one of equality and collaboration. In a 'Confession Album', a form of specialised autograph album where confession-writers answered questions on their likes and dislikes, Sir Charles wrote next to the question 'favorite [sic] heroines in real life', 'those who maintain their equality with men'.⁵⁷¹ Sir Charles also connected Emily's contributions to the alterations with her intelligence, quoted in the verse above. In a scrapbook filled with articles on spiritualism, local events and unusual or odd occurrences created by Sir Charles he included articles describing women's achievements in traditionally male domains. One clipping describes the success of Miss Hervey and Miss Ramsay coming out top in Tripos on 20 June 1887 and another, the inability of phrenology to justifiably assert women's inferiority.⁵⁷² These may have been included as they were unusual or appealed to Sir Charles' wider interests. Yet, he certainly attributed Emily with considerable intelligence. This did not, however, have a bearing upon the subordinate position of Emily constitutionally or necessarily within domestic space. Sir Charles' respect for Emily's abilities is suggestive of their happy marriage, Sir Charles' view of husband-wife relationships within marriage, and Sir Charles' desire to create a home for Emily. The desire to please his wife and his high opinion of Emily's abilities removed many of the obstacles which might have existed to prevent her engaging with architectural design based on gendered grounds.

It is significant, however, that the verses Sir Charles wrote about Emily in *My Wife* and *Emily* were written just after her death and at a distance of forty years from when the alterations were executed. After her death Lamport Hall became a tangible reflection of his marital relationship. It was the largest product of his devotion and his desire to

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁰ Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

⁵⁷¹ NRO, IL 2844, Confession album. For more on the function and use of confession albums see S. Matthews, 'Psychological Crystal Palace? Late Victorian Confession Albums', *Book History*, 3 (2000), pp. 125–154.

⁵⁷² LH, Three large scrapbooks containing articles etc. selected, pasted and annotated by Sir Charles Isham, vol. 1, p. 88.

please Emily in every way. Through Sir Charles' publications Emily was publically acknowledged for the 'suggestions' for improving the Hall. By this time, women were participating, though in a very limited way, in architectural education as well as in many domains previously understood as masculine.⁵⁷³ From these sources a series of questions arise, not only about agency, but about how men's and women's agency was represented and how this in turn could construct identity and meaning.⁵⁷⁴ The interplay of representation, agency and identity is also evident at Overstone Hall.

Like Emily, Lady Overstone has been attributed with the programme of building at Overstone Hall in the 1860s. However, unlike the Ishams, evidence suggests that Lord Overstone showed a complete disinterest and even hatred of the project. Lady Overstone's daughter, Lady Wantage, acknowledged her mother's role in the erection of the Hall in the published memoirs of her husband: 'It had been the desire of her life to make her home at Overstone, and with this view a new house had been erected there under her supervision'.⁵⁷⁵ Little evidence survives to define the nature of Lady Overstone's 'supervision' and as a result, as with Emily, it is difficult to uncover her exact influence on the Hall's architecture. However an extensive series of letters between Lord Overstone and his friend George Warde Norman (1793–1882) describe the attitudes of both Lord and Lady Overstone towards the project and Lord and Lady Overstone's marital relationship. Unusually, there is clear evidence to suggest the differences in taste which existed between the marital partners.

Although Lady Overstone desired a new home, Lord Overstone was opposed to the idea. In 1859 he complained to Norman, 'I cannot enter into Lady O's extraordinary enthusiasm for building a new House – the time is gone for such folly and I covet quietude and repose in what I have, bad as it may be'.⁵⁷⁶ Lord Overstone was 63 and as noted in Chapter Two, his daughter, Harriet (later Lady Wantage), was soon to marry and leave the family home. He had retired from banking after accepting a peerage and was increasingly resigned to life on the side-lines of business and parliamentary life. With other mansions in his possession, he could 'see no necessity for building'

⁵⁷³ Walker, *Drawing on Diversity*, pp. 8–13.

⁵⁷⁴ Brown has highlighted the potential usefulness of these themes when posing the question 'What role does representation have in constructing identity and meaning?'. See L. A. Brown (ed.), *Feminist Practices: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Women in Architecture* (London, 2011), p. 7.

⁵⁷⁵ Wantage, *Lord Wantage*, p. 148.

⁵⁷⁶ O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 893, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 18 August 1859.

especially in a county where he had no ‘society’.⁵⁷⁷ He was also anxious about the responsibilities attached to creating a new country house such as the building of cottages, park walls and a parsonage. It would bring ‘no want of occupation...for time or money.’⁵⁷⁸ Not only would building a new home disrupt any hopes of quiet retirement but worse, his father’s home would be demolished and all of Lord Overstone’s ‘habits and associations violently broken up’. In 1861 Overstone wrote, ‘I have resisted to the last without success.’⁵⁷⁹

After building had begun he complained that for the next two years he would be ‘turned out of the house and home...thro’ the Summer, Autumn, and Wint[e]r – we become Tramps, unable to give any satisfactory account of ourselves, and willing to be passed from house to house.’ He wrote to Norman ‘Could you see the state of things here – I am confident you would pity the sorrows of an old man condemned to build a new house. It makes me heavy at heart’.⁵⁸⁰ Although privy to plans and on site once building had commenced he wrote, ‘I hate the very mention or sight of plans and builders’.⁵⁸¹ To him, being encircled by building works was to be ‘surrounded by all the plagues of Egypt’.⁵⁸² Lord Overstone’s only consolation was improving the pleasure grounds: ‘Mr Thomas, our landscape gardener, has been with us since you left. I find pleasure in developing the capacity of the grounds’.⁵⁸³ From Lord Overstone’s dislike of building and his wife’s ‘enthusiasm’ it can be inferred that he was less involved in the construction of Overstone Hall. If Lord Overstone was so against building, what made him a man ‘condemned to build’?⁵⁸⁴

On several occasions Lord Overstone describes his familial situation as under ‘petticoat government’. When Lord Overstone recommended that Norman should rebuild his house at Bromley Common, he suggested that before he began he should ‘go and see what an old fool under petticoat government is doing at Overstone’.⁵⁸⁵ When the family made tours of the continent, they were determined by Lady Overstone and his daughter

⁵⁷⁷ Lord Overstone also owned Monks Orchard, Sywell Hall and Lockinge. He gave the latter to his daughter as a wedding gift.

⁵⁷⁸ O’Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 857, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 8 June 1858.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 950, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 12 March 1861.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 952, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 20 April 1861.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 950, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 12 March 1861.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 952, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 20 April 1861.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 893, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 18 August 1861.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 952, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 20 April 1861.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 968, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 26 September 1861.

Harriet (later Lady Wantage): ‘the ladies after a hard struggle have got the Mastery, I am powerless, and they alone are responsible.’⁵⁸⁶ Similar control was maintained over engagements nearer to home. When in Edinburgh, Lord Overstone wrote to Norman, ‘The ladies have got the upper hand with me, my authority is gone...it has just been announced to me that in one day more I am to be again suddenly and violently transferred to Inverness – What then? Ask my travelling wife and daughter – they only can say – the Pole’.⁵⁸⁷ Lady Overstone and Harriet appear to have had considerable control over Lord Overstone’s domestic and social engagements. Even in his letters, the hovering presence of Lady Overstone is felt:

How many more dividends will be paid on my Stock – What will become of me when they are not paid – shall I join a rifle Club – as the best means of shooting myself. Lady O – insists upon my asking all these questions and requisitions your calm advice thereupon – Lady O – is very indignant at my making this disclosure to you – and says I do not speak the truth – You thus see the state of things in my family.⁵⁸⁸

Lord Overstone constructed an identity for himself in his letters which reveals how he related to the building process and his position in his marriage. This image of family life was painted with a hint of humour and self-deprecation. Whilst some assumptions and generalisations can be made about the roles of Lord and Lady Overstone during the design and building process, these letters are more useful as sources of Lord Overstone’s view of the project, his own sense of identity, and how he wanted to represent his familial relationship to Norman. Something of the intimacy of Lord Overstone and Norman’s relationship is suggested in Norman’s description of Overstone in his autobiography: ‘Of all my friends, he is the person to whose advice I have ever resorted with the greatest confidence in all cases of difficulty’.⁵⁸⁹ Unlike Sir

⁵⁸⁶ The only extant record kept by Lady Overstone of her tours is an engagement diary from November to March 1852 when the Overstones were in Rome. This documents the social rounds when on the continent. See SHL, MS 804/2180. Comments in letters and the addresses they were sent from do, however, indicate other stops on their tour.

⁵⁸⁷ In the years before building at the Hall commenced the family’s movements were, in part, determined by Harriet’s coming out and ensuring that she met an appropriate partner. O’Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 591, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 28 August 1847.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 891, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 11 May 1859.

⁵⁸⁹ George W. Norman (1793–1882) and Lord Overstone met in Paris in 1821 when Lord Overstone was on a tour of the continent. They remained friends until the end of their lives. For more on his life see *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 7.

Charles' published poetry, which was almost certainly intended to be seen by a wide audience of friends and family, Lord Overstone's letters were private. These were personal thoughts only to be read by the recipient and their immediate family and tailored to Norman's sense of humour. To add to this, by portraying himself as obliging his wife and meeting her wishes, Lord Overstone separated himself from responsibility for the architecture of the Hall, the style of which he seems to have disapproved of very early on.

These letters also provide evidence of Lord and Lady Overstone's different tastes and ideas of comfort, showing how a family identity could accommodate different opinions and that both could not necessarily be expressed in the architectural style chosen. It was not a foregone conclusion that a husband and wife's taste would be the same and that the husband's would take precedence. Sir Charles admired his wife for the alterations to Lamport Hall and from the evidence previously stated, generally seems to have agreed with her taste. At Overstone Hall, Lord Overstone did not celebrate the house which his wife had commissioned but instead expressed his hatred of the style. Lord and Lady Overstone also had a different view of what a house could offer in terms of 'domestic comfort'.

In 1863 Lord Overstone wrote, 'The park remains as it was, growing in beauty every year – but in the midst of it is being erected an edifice – ambitious, pretentious – and with little promise of domestic comfort.'⁵⁹⁰ Whatever the intention of Lady Overstone and Teulon may have been, Lord Overstone understood the building in different terms. When he saw Overstone being constructed, as quoted above, he described it as 'ambitious', 'pretentious' and devoid of 'taste' 'comfort' and 'convenience'. He continued, 'It has distressed me deeply...I grieve to think I shall hand such an abortion over to my successors.'⁵⁹¹

Lord Overstone valued modesty in design. In a memorandum on his personal wealth he tried to justify its accumulation commenting that throughout his life he had been 'prudent and moderate' and 'had no expensive tastes to indulge'.⁵⁹² His ideal qualities in a new house are suggested when he describes Kingston Hall near Kegworth in

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 1007, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 14 September 1863; *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 1071, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 8 April 1865.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 1273, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, February 1875.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 599, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 6 December, 1845.

Derbyshire, commenting 'He has built a house which is nearly perfect – handsome without ostentation – sufficiently capacious without being in excess – and the most comfortable of any recently built house which I have ever entered.'⁵⁹³ Overstone Hall, Lord Overstone believed, was too large to be comfortable. His greatest objection was with the principal rooms, as opposed to the more intimate 'private apartments'. These, he argued, were 'literally uninhabitable' and commented 'I shall never fit them up'.⁵⁹⁴ It was perhaps the houses size and extravagance which led Lord Overstone to argue that there was little chance of 'comfort'. Convenience might usually be associated with modern technology installed in a house, such as the central heating system, lift and gas lighting at Overstone Hall. However Lord Overstone argued the Hall was anything but convenient. His view of such technologies is suggested in a comment to Norman on the rebuilding of Norman's country home, Bromley Common, 'I really begin to think that the old and venerated Mansion at Bromley Common will be displaced by one of these new follies of the day – what they call a handsome, commodious, substantial, well-warmed House. Happy the man who likes to live in hot water! and has more pleasure in Destruction than in Construction.'⁵⁹⁵ Overstone Hall was the antithesis of modesty and prudence. However, Lord Overstone's views were not unchanging. When visiting Westonbirt, Gloucestershire, in 1873 he wrote:

I sit down to write to you a few lines from this really wonderful place. Mr Holford has built a Mansion, the full length of which is 400 feet – the external elevation, now complete, is a perfect Model of architectural taste and beauty – and the internal decorations, rapidly advancing, will be of a corresponding character. The courage of a man who will embark upon such an establishment is beyond my comprehension...but there constitute a really large and handsome House.⁵⁹⁶

Arguably, Westonbirt bore similarities to Overstone Hall and was certainly not modest. This was not a fleeting fancy as two years later Lord Overstone wrote of the Holfords and 'their splendid new Mansion in Gloucestershire'.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 1236, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 21 November 1862.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 1071, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 8 April 1865.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 1209, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 12 July 1871.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 1252, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 5 August 1873.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

Although Lord Overstone was knowledgeable on architecture and even participated in the design of public buildings, Overstone Hall was Lady Overstone's project. What, however, becomes even more interesting from this brief exploration of Lord Overstone's ideas and taste is how diametrically opposed his views on architecture were to the Hall commissioned at Overstone. The style of the Hall was bold and although it contained rooms designated for domestic quietude it was also fitted up with large rooms for entertaining. These spaces were possibly the consequence of Lady Overstone's desire to entertain on a scale and in a way which was befitting of a newly titled family.⁵⁹⁸ With a lack of evidence on Lady Overstone's point of view and taste it is hard to discern if the architecture of the Hall was led by her ideas or Teulon's. However, it would be hard to imagine that she would supervise the erection of an edifice she disliked even if Lord Overstone believed the Hall's failures were the result of an 'incompetent architect', described in Chapter Three. Lady Overstone's taste and Teulon's style aside, it is significant that Lord Overstone was willing and able to build a house for his wife that he personally did not like and to which he was opposed from the very beginning.

In his letters Lord Overstone presented a very specific image of himself as a pliant husband tolerating his wife's construction of a new house. When writing to Norman about altering Bromely Common, Norman's home, in a mocking tone, he argued the principal benefit would be pleasing his wife:

Mrs Norman herself would dance and be frantic with delight; to roam thro halls and varied galleries of her spacious Mansion – to look at last thro' the thick wall of her trees, and to see that there really is sky and light behind them... Oh thrice happy woman thus expectedly blessed in her advancing years – only thinking the good half lost, because no sooner found.⁵⁹⁹

The idea that husbands built for, or to attract wives was certainly not a new one. In 1654 Sir Justinian Isham, the second Baronet, wrote that he was 'busy in building my nest against my wife lies downe' when making alterations to Lamport Hall.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁸ See Chapter Two.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 968, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 26 September 1861.

⁶⁰⁰ Isham, *The Correspondence of Bishop Brian Duppa*, vol. 2, p. 83; His wife had described the old house as 'vile'. See also Isham 'The Architectural History of Lamport', p. 17.

So far the evidence discussed in this section has shown that in spite of the strong association of architecture with men, women often participated in various ways in the alteration of their country houses. However, the ability of historians to attribute women's agency is dependent on the sources which have survived, which can often only provide suggestions of female involvement. The preceding analysis has also suggested that an important factor in determining if women participated in alterations was the nature of the relationships between husbands and wives as well as patrons' own personal interest, inclination and motivation. Considering relationships of husbands and wives, in turn, contributes to our understanding of how women's participation has been represented in men's writing. It has highlighted how the ways architecture and the design process were written about were deliberate representations not only of the building process but also the marriage of the country house owner. The following analysis will now turn to an area women have more traditionally been associated with during the alterations to their country houses: interior decoration, furnishing and garden design.

Ornamenting the House and Garden

Structural alterations have often been considered the domain of men. However, interior design and furnishing have been associated with a strong feminine culture.⁶⁰¹

Nineteenth-century theorists argued that the dutiful wife should both manage and beautify the home. The creation of an appropriate interior was often construed as part of women's household management and part of their obligation to create a comfortable residence.⁶⁰² A division of labour existed during alterations to Laxton Hall and which broadly matches the gender divide suggested by scholarship and nineteenth-century domestic ideology between structural alterations and interior design.

The surviving letters to Humphry Repton during the alterations to Laxton Hall are exclusively addressed to George Freke Evans and have been described in Chapter Four. However, there is also evidence in letters and from accounts and bills that suggest Lady Carbery was, at the very least, responsible for the interior design of the Hall. In a letter addressed to Evans, Repton asks him to decide how he would like rooms on the principal floor decorated and furnished. However, he addressed the second part of his

⁶⁰¹ S. McKellar and P. Sparke (eds.) *Interior Design and Identity* (Manchester, 2004), p. 3.

⁶⁰² Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, p. 258.

letter directly to Lady Carbery: 'I should have the honor [sic] to propose to Lady Carbery to vary the style of fitting up the different rooms – as much as they are varied in shapes – in aspects – & in views'. Using the guiding principle of variety, Repton proposed painted marble for the Hall and stairs, en Marque for the oval room, woods of various colours in the library, painting and gilding in the music room, a 'more splendidly' decorated drawing room, and Etruscan, panelling or Hindostan for the dining room.⁶⁰³ Consideration was also given to the location of specific objects. In particular, serious concern was given to the display of 'Lady Carbery's china jars'; evidently prized possessions and quite possibly a remnant of her East Indian heritage. Lady Carbery's participation in decisions is further suggested when Repton asked for the patrons' preferred location of furniture in the music room: 'as you & Lady Carbery have such correct ideas of what may be proposed – by a slight sketch I have not finished any one design – but lightly put in pencil several different hints for your selection'. Read within the context of the Evans and Repton's ongoing conflict there is a thinly veiled hint of annoyance in Repton's words at the patrons' interference. With regards to the placement of an organ – directly in front of a window so as to require its being made blank or at the east end of the room between two doors – Repton hoped that 'Lady Carbery' would 'consent to the organ being in the east end of the room'.⁶⁰⁴ These examples suggest the joint importance of Lady Carbery and Evans in the decision making process.

With only one side of the correspondence it is hard to know if suggestions by the Repton's for Lady Carbery's consideration were directed as a result of her own instruction or if it was an assumption that, as the Lady of the house, she would have a say on interior design. By addressing letters to Evans an assumption was also made that, as patron, it was Evans who should receive all official correspondence and that even if Lady Carbery had a say in decisions, it was Evans who was the vehicle through which these would be communicated. It is difficult to know if, in the event, Lady Carbery made any decisions regarding these elements of the remodelling. Yet, having lived at Laxton for nearly a decade and a half it would seem unlikely that Lady Carbery would not have had a say in how new objects and those inherited from her first marriage were

⁶⁰³ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/44–46, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 1 March 1808.

⁶⁰⁴ NRO, Freke, Bundle 2/51, Humphry Repton to George Freke Evans, 30 January 1808.

arranged in the remodelled house. After all, her knowledge of the building and its contents would have been far greater than that of Evans or Repton.

Further evidence of Lady Carbery's role is provided in a series of bills for furniture and fixtures from 1809 to 1816 which suggest an almost wholesale alteration of the interior of the Hall. Bills survive from several cabinet-makers and upholsters.⁶⁰⁵ Orders were made with Hurley and Grant, then John Calloway and finally Oakley and Evans.⁶⁰⁶ Although the surviving correspondence and bills are almost exclusively addressed to Evans, a letter from Richard Hurley asking for early payment is addressed directly to Lady Carbery and enquires if tassels which had been ordered were for shutters or curtains as well as asking after drawings sent to Mr Calloway and Mr Atkinson.⁶⁰⁷ Although letters and bills which have survived are almost exclusively directed to Evans this adds further evidence that the decisions may have been directed to Lady Carbery.

A comparable process of redecoration, mentioned briefly earlier, was completed at Lamport Hall where between 1819 and 1831 the Ishams spent over £2,258 refurnishing as part of the wider programme of alterations.⁶⁰⁸ Account books record the purchase of three pianos, several dressing tables, no fewer than six beds, numerous chairs, sofas, mirrors, curtains and plates.⁶⁰⁹ New bookshelves were installed around the perimeter of the library by Mr Atkins.⁶¹⁰ Some of the furniture was tailor made or personalised, for example a long case clock purchased in March 1831 with an inlaid swan on the case, the Regency Isham crest. Some were purchased to fill newly built rooms such as a billiards table purchased and set up in a new billiard room designed by Hakewill. Others were to furnish old rooms in need of updating, such as the large amount of furniture brought for the old library. Eight new chairs were even bought for the servants.⁶¹¹ It is evident that the purchase of furniture was both out of practical need but also a desire to create a fashionable home suitable to the Ishams' status. However, as

⁶⁰⁵ NRO, Freke, Bundle 6/4, Bills for various items including interior furnishings.

⁶⁰⁶ NRO, Freke, Bundle 7/25, Richard Herely to Lady Carbery, 11 June 1814; NRO, Freke, Bundle 7/51–54, Bill to George Freke Evans from John Calloway, March 1813 to c. July 1814; NRO, Freke, Bundle 7/28–33, Bill to George Freke Evans from Grant and Hurley, September 1812 to October 1813; NRO, Freke, Bundle 7/44, Bill to George Freke Evans from Oakly and Evans, 28 December 1815.

⁶⁰⁷ NRO, Freke, Bundle 7/25, Richard Hurley to Lady Carbery, 11 June 1814.

⁶⁰⁸ See Chapter One.

⁶⁰⁹ NRO, IL 2328, Summary account book, 1818–1836.

⁶¹⁰ NRO, IL 3079/D3–4, Designs by Atkins for library shelving, c. 1818.

⁶¹¹ NRO, IL 2328, Summary account book, 1818–1836.

mentioned previously, account books can, in reality, reveal very little about who was making decisions.

The evidence given so far can, to a limited extent, suggest women were involved in the decoration of their country house interiors, as expected. In the case of Lady Carbery, it highlights that she was certainly perceived to be in charge of, if not actively involved in the decision making process even if the final decisions went through Evans. In a similar way, the 'Journal of the Works' at Lamport Hall recorded that Emily Isham 'approved' designs for the new service area and Sir Charles 'settled' them, suggesting that he made or at least confirmed the final decision. From accounts showing items purchased at Laxton and Lamport it is evident they were decorated in the latest regency fashion. However, how far this was determined by the taste of individuals in the design process is not necessarily evident.

Of the houses considered in this thesis evidence does survive, however, to suggest the crucial role and individual influence of Sir Charles in furnishing Lamport Hall a generation later. The unique and unusual additions he made to the interiors and garden can be understood as expressions and reflections of his interests and personality. In turn, Sir Charles presented these in carefully orchestrated displays intended to entertain and amaze visitors to Lamport Hall. As well as an example of the pivotal importance of individual agency and personal idiosyncrasies in determining design, Sir Charles' role adds to a literature concerned with discovering the influence of men in creating house interiors. Not only were men involved in buying large expensive objects and fixtures for their homes, as has traditionally been understood, but also in determining the minutiae of design and furnishing. This has been explored by scholars such as Finn, Styles and Vickery. After all, men could be equally if not more invested than their wives in adorning the places where they lived.⁶¹²

⁶¹² M. Finn, 'Men's Things: Masculine Possession in the Consumer Revolution', *Social History*, 25, no. 2 (May, 2000), pp. 133–155; J. Styles and A. Vickery (eds.), *Gender, Taste and Material Culture in Britain and North America* (New Haven and London, 2006), pp. 2–14.

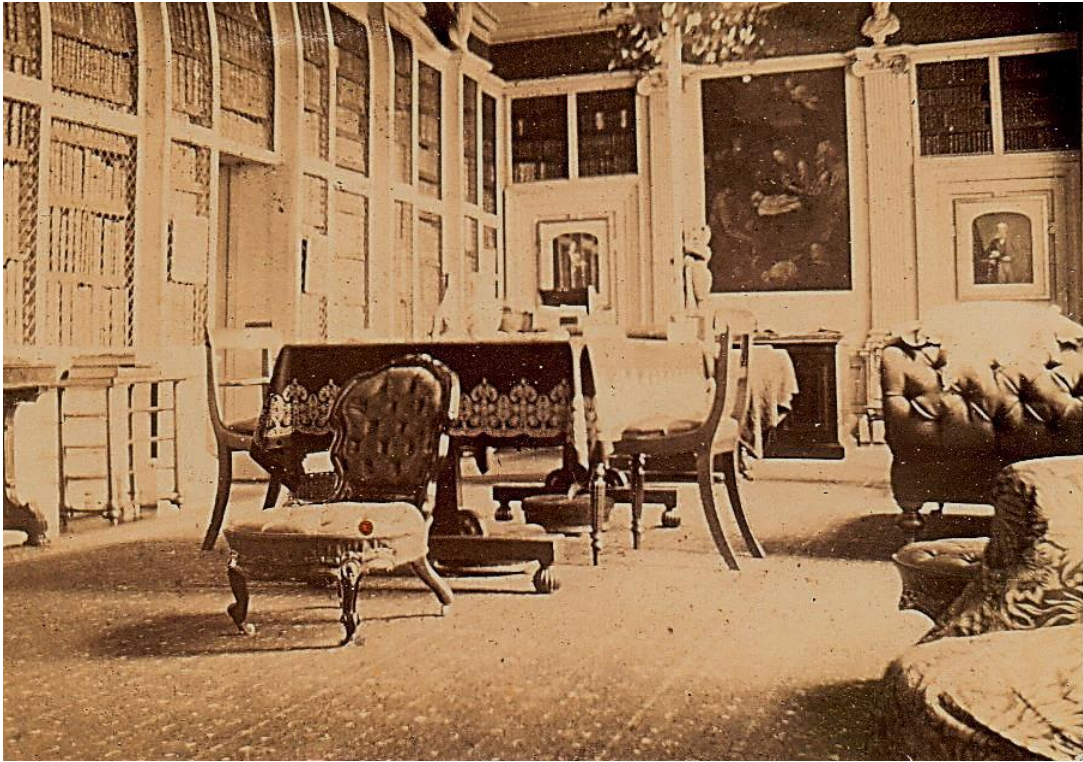


Figure 37: Late nineteenth-century photograph of the library at Lamport Hall showing furniture, some of which was purchased by Sir Justinian and Mary Isham, and the library bookshelves designed by Atkins. In front of the painting on the far wall is one of Sir Charles' creations: a bear holding a glass with dried plants and butterflies (LH). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

Sir Charles used his home as a large cabinet of curiosities. Lamport was filled with prized objects collected on his travels and items he had carefully made. He saw these as attractions and wonders displayed to dazzle and surprise visitors, as much as decorative devices. Sir Charles prided himself in owning 'one of a kind' oddities.⁶¹³ He was interested in crafts and design and drew, sculpted clay figurines, designed monograms and even had his own lithographic printing press.

On the dining room table at Lamport Hall was, Sir Charles claimed, the world's first ever portable water fountain and across the Hall plates were displayed with monograms to his designs.⁶¹⁴ In the library Sir Charles displayed a clay bear holding an eight foot glass 'like a coach-horn' with dried plants and butterflies in the top [Figure 37]. The bear was one of Sir Charles' own creations:

There's a great rough bear to protect it from breaking,

⁶¹³ NRO, I 10/12, Sir Charles Isham, 'The Wonders of the Orphanage Fete' (Northampton, 1879).

⁶¹⁴ Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

He holds the glass tight should it chance got a shaking;
 I made him some years back, he long has done duty,
 Some exclaim, 'Why I never before saw such beauty!'⁶¹⁵

Two further clay figurines were displayed on top of an organ between the staircase vestibule and drawing room and held objects that related to Sir Charles' interests in spiritualism and the unknown: a divining rod, an alpine plant which had lived with no earth or water for a year, two kettles struck by lightning at the nearby village of Old, bird's nests from South America and the skin of a snake [Figure 38]. The organ these were placed upon, at nearly four metres high, was a spectacle in itself. To fit the instrument into the Hall Sir Charles removed the wall dividing the drawing room and stair vestibule in 1847.⁶¹⁶ He described its booming sound: 'The organ was played, another grand wonder, some people outside the house thought it was thunder'.⁶¹⁷

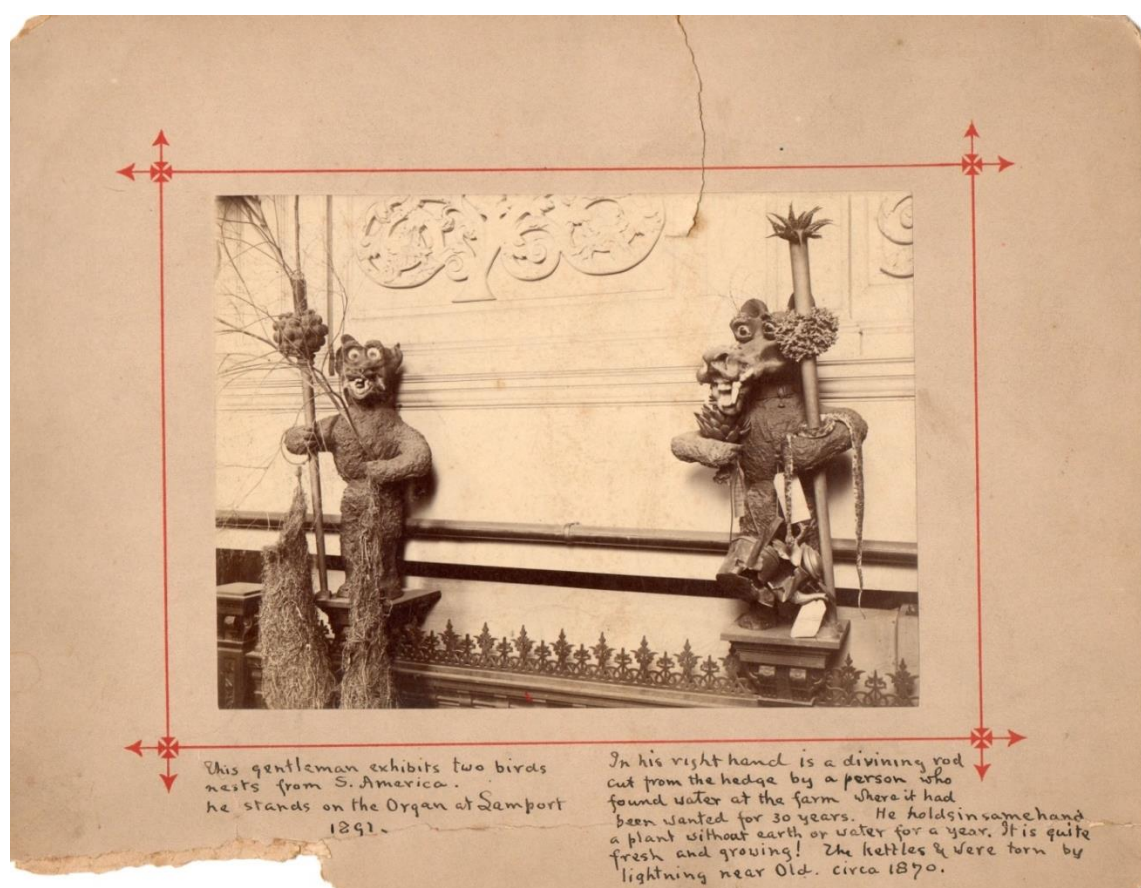


Figure 38: Photograph and description of Sir Charles Isham's sculptures in the stair vestibule at Lamport Hall, 1891 (LH). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

⁶¹⁵ NRO, I 10/12, Isham, 'The Wonders of the Orphanage Fete'.

⁶¹⁶ NRO, IL 3086, Mary Isham 'Memorandums taken from old papers'.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Cohen has argued that interiors were a forum for self-expression and, that by the very end of the nineteenth century, this expression had transitioned from a concern with character and morals to one concerned with ‘distinctiveness, performance, and display’.⁶¹⁸ These three descriptors certainly apply to Sir Charles’ approach to the interiors at Lamport Hall. How far Sir Charles’ alterations were also products of his distinct interests is evidenced by three large scrapbooks filled with articles and annotated with Sir Charles’ thoughts as well as a number of books and pamphlets he authored. These contain articles on religion and spiritualism, vegetarianism, music, inexplicable occurrences and local events.⁶¹⁹

However, Sir Charles’ creative expressions did not stop at the house but extended into the gardens, where he designed a landscape of concealed surprises. Visitors passed from unique and perfectly formed box bowers, to ancient trees, down a long Irish yew lined avenue to a cage where a pet great eagle owl named ‘Jamarack’ lived, and along a narrow passage to emerge in a miniature alpine world colonised by gnomes [Figures 39 & 40].⁶²⁰ It was the creation of the rockery where these gnomes lived which was the most personal of Sir Charles’ projects. Although rockwork was not novel, the rockery at Lamport Hall, Sir Charles argued, had several unique characteristics and in particular, the use of ‘pigmy trees’.⁶²¹ The one off character of the rockery was recognised by those who visited. In an article published in the *Strand Magazine* in 1900 Herbert Pratt wrote ‘The word “unique” has been used, but this is incorrect, in so far as it is not the only rock garden in existence...But the word may be allowed to stand, for probably nothing to be compared with the rockery at Lamport can be found the world over.’⁶²²

⁶¹⁸ D. Cohen, *Household Gods, The British and Their Possessions* (London, 2006), p. xii.

⁶¹⁹ LH, Three large scrapbooks containing articles etc. selected, pasted and annotated by Sir Charles Isham.

⁶²⁰ The area surrounding the rockery at Lamport Hall has changed since it was created by Sir Charles Isham. A visitor to the gardens in 1872 describes that the first view of the rockery was from the conservatory (now demolished) which would have enclosed the north east end. In this context, the rockery was hidden from view except from the conservatory and a few bedroom windows. The original rockery would also have come closer to the wall of the house. See ‘Lamport Hall’, *Journal of Horticulture, Cottage Gardener, Country Gentleman*, n.s. 586 (20 June 1872), pp. 501–503 and NRO, I 831, Note by Sir Gyles Isham, 28 March 1972. A photograph of the rockery in its original form can be found in LH, *Lamport Rockery and Gardens Reprinted from the “Gardeners’ Chronicle”, Sept. 25, 1879, with Additions* (London and Tonbridge, c. 1897), Figure 1.

⁶²¹ LH, Sir Charles Isham, *Notes on Gnomes and Remarks on Rock Gardens* (1884).

⁶²² H. Pratt, ‘A Wonderful Rock Garden’, *Strand Magazine*, 19, no. 110 (February, 1900), pp. 225–230 (p. 225).

Sir Charles extolled the benefits of this form of gardening in pamphlets he wrote and decorated with colourful marginal designs and illustrations.⁶²³ It could be constructed in a small space, was not seasonal and plants of varied requirements could thrive there. The jagged rocks, quartz, miniature alpine plants, and dark crevices of the rockery provided the perfect backdrop for scenes of industrial life staged by Sir Charles' colony of gnomes and narrated with poetry on plaques. The rockery's population had been purchased in Nuremberg and were originally intended as place name or match box holders.⁶²⁴ However, instead, Sir Charles displayed them as miners and some, as miners on strike under a plaque concerning working conditions, suggesting his interest and possible support of the 'Trade Union spirit' [Figure 39].⁶²⁵

Sir Charles also conducted research on gnomes, or as they were otherwise known knockers or mine fairies, who were often described as guides to miners in spiritualist thought and folklore. In *Notes on Gnomes and Remarks on Rock Gardens* Sir Charles argued that these were real beings and that if they had been imaginary, they would not have been admitted in the rockery. Seeing these spiritualist creatures was not a sign of 'mental delusion', he wrote, but an 'extension of faculty'.⁶²⁶ From Sir Charles' research it is not hard to find the sources of his inspiration. An account of mine fairies in Llanferris [sic], Wales transcribed by Sir Charles describes how W. Smith saw 'a little mine fairy ascend the ladder step by step, it was dressed like a miner, it carried a small pick axe over its shoulder' [Figure 40].⁶²⁷ The rockery and its population was an outlet for Sir Charles to indulge and display his interest in verse, the occult and the unusual.

⁶²³ For example see LH, Sir Charles Isham, *Notes on Gnomes*. For a slightly altered version of the first part of this see NRO, YZ 7776; LH, Sir Charles Isham, *Lamport Rockery* (also containing *The Wonders of Lamport* and *The Delights of Lamport*). A number of Sir Charles Isham's pamphlets are also reproduced under different titles, with minor revisions or incorporated into other books and pamphlets.

⁶²⁴ Sir Charles Isham wrote that the gnomes were intended for the drawing room table 'bearing a match box ill adapted for matches, now removed' before continuing to describe that they would be more at home in the rockery as opposed to 'supporting a dinner card for which they were designed'. See LH, Sir Charles Isham, *Notes on Gnomes*.

⁶²⁵ Pratt, 'A Wonderful Rock Garden', p. 228; See also Figure 39.

⁶²⁶ In *Notes on Gnomes and Remarks on Rock Gardens* Sir Charles Isham describes reports of encounters with mine fairies and knockers in Wales, gnomes in Dovedale, Derbyshire, 'Earth Spirits', 'Kobikds' and 'Berg-gesiter' in Germany and knockings at the Hungarian School of Mines. See LH, Sir Charles Isham, *Notes on Gnomes*. Sir Charles published further evidence of the existence of gnomes in 'Visions of Fairy Blacksmiths at Work'. See LH, Sir Charles Isham, 'Visions of Fairy Blacksmiths at Work also a "Fairy Fiddler"', Reprinted from the *Medium and Daybreak* (22 November, 1889).

⁶²⁷ LH, Sir Charles Isham, *Notes on Gnomes*.



Figure 39: Photograph of gnomes on strike, Sir Charles Isham, *Emily* (Horsham, 1899). The verse on the plaque was probably adapted from the slogan: ‘Eight hours labour, Eight hours recreation, Eight hours rest’, used in the ‘eight hour day movement’ which advocated better working conditions.⁶²⁸ Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

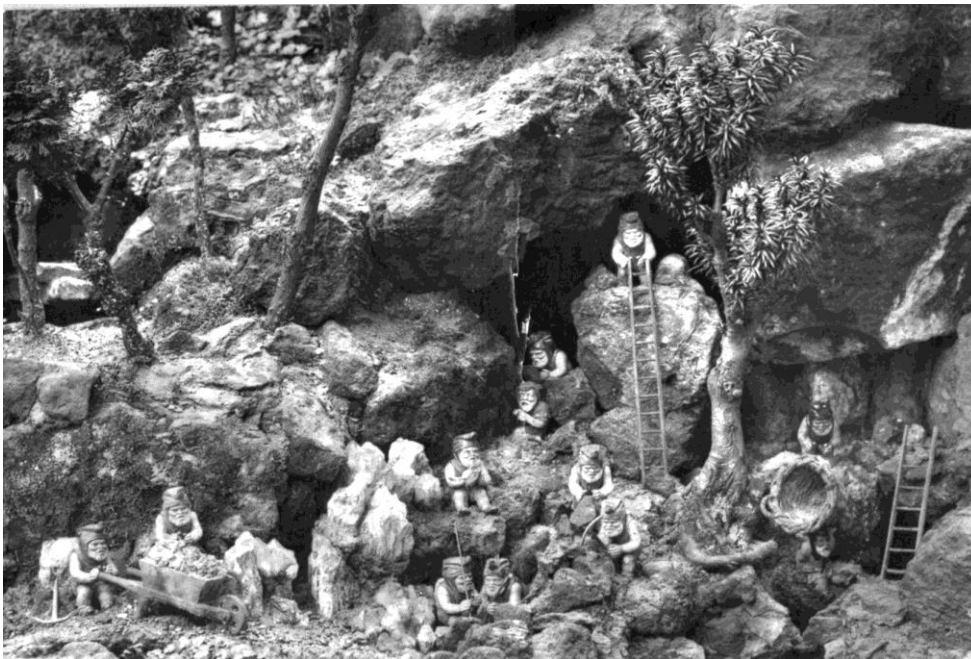


Figure 40: Photograph of rockery with gnomes mining, Sir Charles Isham, *Notes on Gnomes and Remarks on Rock Gardens* (1884). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

⁶²⁸ Robert Owen (1771–1858) spearheaded campaigns for an eight hour day and is said to have coined this slogan in 1817. See G. Langenfelt, *The Historic Origin of the Eight Hours Day* (Stockholm, 1954).

As well as being influenced by his spiritualist beliefs Sir Charles was also inspired by contemporary theories on garden design discovered in the pages of horticultural journals. Sir Charles commented that he had been inspired to include gnomes in his rockery by J. C. Loudon, who had observed the effect of figures in ‘pigmy gardens’.⁶²⁹ Over the years Sir Charles continued to adapt and alter his rockery. This included the addition of a terracotta statue of a girl purchased in 1888 from an auction house in London. Sir Charles described visitors’ reaction to seeing her: ‘At sight of her some people start, Think they’re intruding and depart’.⁶³⁰

In creating this landscape and describing its unique design in his publications Sir Charles was not only creating a display which suggested his beliefs and interests but one which demonstrated his horticultural expertise. In 1848 a greenhouse was constructed in the kitchen garden and in 1853 a large 53-foot long and 40-foot wide conservatory near the rockery.⁶³¹ With the introduction of numerous new species, the rise of the nurseryman and the publication of periodicals concerned with all aspects of gardening, the cultivation of plants became increasingly popular among the aristocracy and garden designers.⁶³² Unlike many of his contemporaries, however, Sir Charles had little interest in the cultivation of flowers. He argued that by flowering, they wasted energy. Instead he was fascinated by Alpine plants and ‘pigmy trees’ and showed his skill by cultivating plants rejected by the Northamptonshire nursery.⁶³³

There is little evidence to suggest the extent of Emily’s involvement in these endeavours. Sir Charles did note once that she had read the *Spiritualist* and it seems likely that she shared in some, if not all, of his interests. There are also surviving receipts from nurserymen and upholsters addressed to Emily.⁶³⁴ However, even if she shared his interests and contributed towards the gardens and interiors of Lamport, the rockery was Sir Charles’ project. In 1890 he wrote of Emily, ‘That spirit...took but

⁶²⁹ See LH, Sir Charles Isham, *Notes on Gnomes*; T. Ways, *Garden Gnomes: A History* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 221–22.

⁶³⁰ LH, *Lamport Rockery and Gardens Reprinted from the “Gardeners’ Chronicle”*, p. 9; LH, photocopy of receipt of purchase from The Auction Company, Oxford Street, London, 17 October 1888 and photograph of the statue and a poem by Sir Charles Isham called ‘A Paradoxical Lady’ c. 1888.

⁶³¹ NRO, IL 136, Bill from Gray & Ormson horticultural builders &c. Dancers Street, Chelsea to Sir Charles Isham, 1853.

⁶³² V. Remington, *Planting Paradise, The Art of Gardens* (London, 2015), p. 202.

⁶³³ LH, Sir Charles Isham, *Notes on Gnomes*.

⁶³⁴ NRO, IL 2393, Bundle of receipts from 1897.

little interest in the rockery, it having to attend to so many other important matters.’⁶³⁵ Almost every stone was said to have been put in place by Sir Charles himself.⁶³⁶

The reasons to decorate a home or design a garden were undoubtedly many; however the information which survives about Sir Charles’ interests and the way Lamport was used and presented to visitors, offers unusual insight into the thought processes which accompanied their design. Sir Charles’ collecting and display was closely linked to his construction of identity and its subsequent presentation to the public.

It is apparent that both Sir Charles and Emily contributed to alterations to Lamport, even if certain projects became the reserve of individuals. It is also evident that Lamport was altered to match the lifestyle and interests of the Ishams. For example, they frequently opened the grounds of Lamport to the Northampton Archery Association, friends, and family as well as for an annual orphanage fete.⁶³⁷ In a speech at the meeting of the Northampton Archery Association a member exclaimed: ‘Through parks and through palaces though we may roam, There’s no host like Sir Charles, and no place like his home’.⁶³⁸ On several occasions Sir Charles published a poetic account of the annual orphanage fete which he sold to raise further funds.⁶³⁹ This described the carefully curated route which visitors could take through the gardens to see all of Lamport’s wonders.⁶⁴⁰ The Ishams built a home for family, display but also as an outward expression of their personal preoccupations.

Part one of this chapter has focused on the attribution of agency to protagonists in the design process. In doing so it has highlighted the interplay of agency, identity creation and representation revealed through the use of various different sources. The last part of this chapter will move away from the physical creation of a house or representation of the design process to consider how these buildings were understood in the context of

⁶³⁵ Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

⁶³⁶ ‘Lamport Hall’, *Journal of Horticulture*, p. 503

⁶³⁷ NRO I 10/12, Isham, ‘The Wonders of the Orphanage Fete’; LH, Isham, ‘Delights of Lamport’, in *Lamport Rockery*.

⁶³⁸ *Northampton Mercury*, 29 June 1861, p.8.

⁶³⁹ The orphanage fete raised money for the Northamptonshire Orphanage for Girls and became an important annual fixture in Northamptonshire society. The popularity of the event is demonstrated by advertisements in the papers for special train fares. For example the London and North-Western Railway offered greatly reduced fares between Northampton and Market Harborough in 1869. See ‘Great Fete at Lamport Hall Gardens’, *Northampton Mercury*, 11 September 1869, p. 6.

⁶⁴⁰ See also Chapter two which considers how architectural alterations to the Hall met the needs of the immediate family.

dominant domestic ideologies relating to home as well as considering how meanings attached to buildings could change with changing family circumstances. This will modify how Overstone Hall has been understood by further explaining Lord Overstone's response to its architecture.

Part Two: Understanding Architecture; Experiencing Home

The specific context of building and the precise nature of the relationships between husband and wife not only determined their agency in the design process but also emotional attachments individuals formed to particular locations. This section will illustrate how memories of the architectural process and lived experience contributed to the meanings attached to architecture by country house owners. This draws on Roper's suggestions for the development of the field of masculinity studies. He argues that these studies should foreground emotions, subjectivities and 'human experience formed through emotional relationships with others'.⁶⁴¹ In doing so, this section will explore the obvious assumption that legal ownership or control over a building project was not a prerequisite for a sense of ownership or emotional attachment to a building. Thus, it will also consider if and how gendered assumptions about ownership were embodied in individuals' notions and experiences of home.⁶⁴²

The ideological association of women with home became well established in the nineteenth century and has, to an extent, been discussed in scholarship through studies of domesticity. In comparison, the body of work on men, especially aristocratic men, and their concept and experience of home is limited.⁶⁴³ Vickery and Hamlett have argued that this is, in part, a consequence of a lack of sources. Men, they argue, were less likely to write about home as they prioritised other concerns, for example their careers, when writing journals or letters.⁶⁴⁴ In spite of this, among the houses considered in this thesis evidence survives to illustrate Sir Charles' and Lord Overstone's experience of, and emotional responses to home in moments in their lives where home, or the lack of a home, meant this was uppermost in their thoughts. The following analysis does not intend to consider the ideological construction of home, but

⁶⁴¹ Roper, 'Slipping Out of View', p. 62.

⁶⁴² For a similar approach see L. Walker, 'Home Making: An Architectural Perspective', pp. 823–835.

⁶⁴³ Tosh, *A Man's Place*; K. Harvey, 'Men making Home: Masculinity and Domesticity in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Gender and History*, 21, no. 3 (2009), pp. 30–40.

⁶⁴⁴ Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, p. 64.

rather ideas of home and masculinity as products of personality and circumstance.⁶⁴⁵

First, however, it is worth briefly discussing what is meant by 'home' in this study.

In her study of elite women's impact upon the construction of their country homes, Lewis has defined home as an:

environment in which one privileges comfort and convenience over grandeur and display, in which primary attention is paid to rooms and objects for the kinship family – the members of the family alive at the time of the subject, as opposed to her ancestors and descendants or the vertical relationships with dependants. In a home emotional attachments to objects and spaces exist primarily because of personal histories rather than dynastic ones.⁶⁴⁶

It is apparent, therefore, that not only is a home a physical space or building but also an imagined space, ideology or idea centred on emotional connections and personal histories. The latter were not necessarily attached to specific buildings. In this context, Smith has argued for a far more sophisticated use of the idea of home in country house studies claiming that 'more emphasis needs to be placed on the 'home' as a multivalent site through which individuals discussed and negotiated ideas of family, identity and belonging.'⁶⁴⁷ The home was a place where gendered roles and boundaries could be established and tested.

Smith has emphasised the importance of 'imagining home' in colonial families detached from their physical homes.⁶⁴⁸ This process of imagining home was not only important when people and homes were separated by distance but was a fundamental part of embarking upon building. Ideas of 'home' and in particular of a future 'ideal' home factored in design decisions as well as motivation to build.⁶⁴⁹ Smith also discusses the feelings of longing for home.⁶⁵⁰ These feelings of displacement and homesickness were equally not confined to those who travelled across the continent. Larson has noted that from the 1750s there was an increase in declarations of affection

⁶⁴⁵ Roper, 'Slipping Out of View', p. 57.

⁶⁴⁶ Lewis, 'When a House is Not a Home', p. 341.

⁶⁴⁷ Smith, 'Imperial Families', p. 4.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁶⁴⁹ T. Chapman and J. Hocke (eds.), 'The ideal Home as it is Imagined and as it is Lived', in T. Chapman, and J. Hocke (eds.), *Ideal Homes?* (London and New York, 1999), pp. 1–3.

⁶⁵⁰ Smith, 'Imperial Families', p. 4.

toward country houses in women's letters, especially when they were separated from their homes and family.⁶⁵¹ These feelings of longing and loss were a reoccurring theme in Lord Overstone's letters.

Lord Overstone's elevation to the peerage and consequent removal from business in 1850 increased the time he spent on his country estate. He commented that his usefulness in business was over and spent his time in the countryside often investing in and managing land. It was with this transition to a more domesticated rural existence that Lord Overstone became acutely aware of the importance of home. Fundamental to Lord Overstone's concept of home was retirement. As described previously, Lord Overstone opposed alterations to Overstone Hall as this would disrupt any hope of quietude. Throughout his life Lord Overstone was troubled by the possibility of not having a home and was anxious about any change in the location of his residence. A comment made by his daughter suggests that the challenges presented by change were not helped by a nervous disposition: 'every character has its limitations, and in Lord Overstone's case with a singularly sound and powerful brain was coupled a nervous organisation.'⁶⁵²

Lord Overstone was most animated about ideas of home in moments in his life when he was without one. As part of an appropriate masculine education, in his formative years, Lord Overstone went on a tour of the continent in 1821. However, any appreciation of his travels was dampened by home sickness.⁶⁵³ These anxieties surfaced again when moving house. Lord Overstone's letters to his friend Norman reveal his anxieties about being away from home and fear of becoming homeless. As mentioned in Chapter Two, before living at Overstone Hall, Lord Overstone resided at Wickham Park. From 1850 Lord Overstone had increasing demands on his time. His father's health was failing and he had purchased a new London house in Carlton Gardens. Between trips to his father at Overstone and his new London home, Lord Overstone was spending little time at Wickham. In 1850 he wrote, 'But I must have a home, and that I cannot have without living at it'. He wrote of Northamptonshire, 'there is much to be done there, our presence is certainly required and is useful'.⁶⁵⁴ As a result, in 1853 he transferred his

⁶⁵¹ Larson, 'Dynastic Domesticity', p. 68.

⁶⁵² Wantage, *Lord Wantage*, pp. 299–8.

⁶⁵³ O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 173, Lord Overstone to Mrs L. Loyd (Snr.), 3 September 1821.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 500, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 7 October 1850.

Wickham property to his cousin and permanently relocated to Overstone to take care of his sickly father.⁶⁵⁵ The decision to move from Wickham to Overstone was made reluctantly:

This is done with some regret on my part, with still more regret on the part of Lady O. I hope we have not acted foolishly. I cannot see my way to residence there. My father expresses the strongest wish for our presence here...this arrangement, with my approaching removal from my old house in Norfolk St. makes me feel desolate – and on the whole I am heavy-hearted.⁶⁵⁶

A month later he wrote, ‘I have broken off many tender and pleasing associations and I cannot look forward to a renewal elsewhere of the happiness which I have there enjoyed.’⁶⁵⁷ Wickham Park was near the home of many of Lord Overstone’s closest friends, including Norman. It had also been the house where his daughter had spent the first three years of her life.

Lord Overstone’s emotional attachment to buildings was not fixed over time but altered with his circumstances. After the death of Lady Overstone on 6 November 1864 the Hall took on an emotional significance as a tangible connection to his lost wife. In the following year, when visiting Overstone, he wrote ‘The absence of Lady Overstone is felt most painfully – in the garden, in the grounds, in the House – in short everywhere’.⁶⁵⁸ When staying with his daughter and son-in-law at Lockinge, which had been a wedding gift from Lord Overstone, he wrote ‘Every thing about the place is full of associations which must necessarily fix my thought upon the dreadful absence of her, whose presence was sunshine wherever she went.’⁶⁵⁹ These feelings of loss and the sense of something missing have been termed by Rubenstein as the ‘presence of absence’.⁶⁶⁰ Lord Overstone ‘felt’ the absence of Lady Overstone in the places most associated with her, Overstone Hall and Lockinge. In his letters he remembered and imagined her presence and this in turn had an impact upon the way he used and

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 566, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 13 February 1853.

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 568, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 13 March 1853.

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 1071, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 8 April 1865.

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 1081, Lord Overstone to Mrs G. W. Norman, 8 May 1865.

⁶⁶⁰ R. Rubenstein, *Home Matters: Longing and Belonging, Nostalgia and Mourning in Women’s Fiction* (New York, 2001), p. 5.

furnished the spaces in which he lived. Overstone Hall was a home which never came into being and as a result Overstone determined to never fully furnish it.

The house was used as a glorified hunting lodge and occasional residence for the family. Over time Lord Overstone slowly warmed to the quietude and peace that the Hall and its surroundings offered. He took part in the Pytchley hunt and became engrossed in improving farming.⁶⁶¹ However, a considerable amount of his later years was spent living with his daughter and son-in-law at Lockinge. This house provided a tangible connection to Lady Overstone. In the month after his wife's death Lord Overstone wrote of Lockinge:

I am surrounded by every comfort my case admits of. The remembrance of the pure and holy life of her who is gone...I have no wish to fly from the scenes around me. I find a holy joy and consolation in associating with them. The chairs in which she sat – the windows from which she used to look out, smiling and calling to me – the walks in which we rambled together – the very grave in which her remains now repose. It is a joy to me to be with these.⁶⁶²

Responses to objects and buildings could be informed by the relationships which were conducted within them. The association of Overstone Hall with the incomplete project of his wife was likely to have effected Lord Overstone's responses to the architecture. From the evidence already presented, it is clear that Lord Overstone was never enthused by the prospect of building. However, his description of Overstone Hall as an 'utter disgrace' which could offer no hope of domestic comfort was perhaps not only stimulated by a dislike of building, but also the death of his wife six months earlier. In the months before Lady Overstone died, he had written that she was in Northamptonshire 'preparing the great House for our domestic torture'.⁶⁶³ This had been her project. An emotional response to building could also be the reason why Lord Overstone objected to the rebuilding of Overstone Hall in the first place. As mentioned

⁶⁶¹ For example, in December 1866 Lord Overstone discussed going to Overstone for the hunt and accommodating friends in 'the few rooms which are made habitable'. However, he still noted how he was 'ashamed to show that wretched House to any of my friends – I can never look upon it or enter it but with pain and humiliation.' See O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 3, p. 1119, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 10 December 1866; O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 3, p. 1220, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 9 February 1872.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 1059, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 15 November 1864.

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 1041, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 16 July 1846.

previously in this chapter, Overstone had been the home of Lord Overstone's father. When it was decided that the house was to be demolished Lord Overstone wrote that he would have his 'habits and associations violently broken up'.⁶⁶⁴ Thus, understanding not only Lord Overstone's attitudes towards building, his creation of an identity during the building process and its representation in letters but the emotional significance of Overstone Hall, can contribute to a better understanding of his responses to architecture.

Whilst the concept of home may have influenced Lord Overstone's response to buildings it is evident that it was not necessarily the buildings or specific locations themselves which Lord Overstone believed created a home. Instead it was the memories, associations, people and feelings of comfort and ease attached to them. This is exemplified by a comment made after his wife's death. He wrote of his daughter, 'I have no home however but where she is – I must follow in her steps.'⁶⁶⁵ Central to Lord Overstone's idea of home were people and in particular family members.

Similar associations were drawn by Sir Charles at Lamport Hall. Emily had been the centre of the family and it was her presence which was seen by many to have made Lamport Hall a home. By the 1880s, Lamport Hall, which had once been a centre for the Pytchley hunt, was suffering from the effects of Agricultural Depression. Nethercoate, High Sheriff of Northamptonshire and co-author of *The Pytchley Hunt: Past and Present*, saw the creation of a 'home' as a remedy to economic, physical and emotional 'aches and pains':

That evil spirit 'Agricultural Depression' has cleared out from many a stable the too costly luxury of a hunter, and in her flight across the broad acres of Northamptonshire it would seem as though she had laid her hand on the once well-filled boxes of the Lamport Hall stables. To share the blame with this 'evil spirit' are the cold and damp of a Midland county winter – evils which have necessitated for Lady Isham the formation of a home where a more kindly atmosphere gives hopes of immunity from aches and pains.⁶⁶⁶

Nethercoate credited Emily with the creation of a home with a 'more kindly atmosphere'. Although Emily undoubtedly contributed to a sense of home at Lamport

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 950, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 12 March 1861.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.* vol. 3, p. 1073, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 2 May 1865.

⁶⁶⁶ H. O. Nethercote, *The Pytchley Hunt: Past and Present* (London, 1888), p. 321.

Hall the comments by Nethercoate are framed in the language of domesticity which highlighted family, comfort, and the atmosphere of homeliness. He was not, however, the only person to note the centrality of Emily to the creation of home. After her death, friends and family wrote that it was Emily ‘who made us feel Lamport as a home’ and how an ‘atmosphere of affection and kindness...always seemed to pervade the place she lived in’. Emily was identified with the creation of an ‘atmosphere’ and feelings of comfort and homeliness.⁶⁶⁷

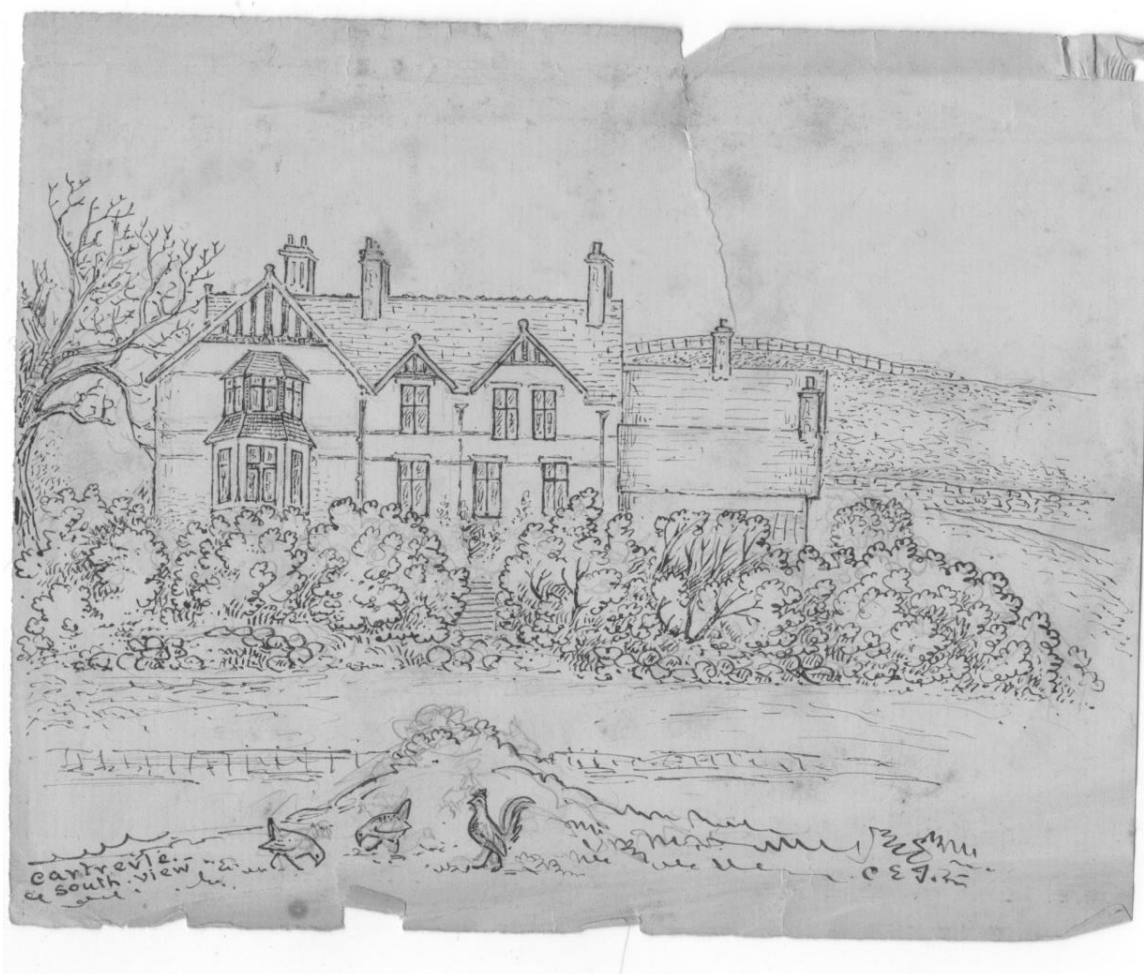


Figure 41: South view of Cartrevle, Sir Charles Isham, c. 1882–1899 (LH). Reproduced with permission of the Lamport Hall Trustees.

However in the 1880s the Ishams had multiple places they called home. In 1882 the Ishams brought a house called Cartrevle in Anglesey, near the Menai Bridge on a 99

⁶⁶⁷ Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

years' lease from the Marquis of Anglesey [Figure 41].⁶⁶⁸ This was a money saving measure. By 1880 falling crop prices and consistently high rainfall resulted in reduced profits from agriculture, which was the Ishams' only source of income. For part of each year from 1884 to 1898 the Ishams let Lampport for hunting and almost certainly retreated to Cartrevle.⁶⁶⁹ This was a smaller establishment and would have been cheaper to run. Although Emily and Sir Charles felt the exile from Lampport greatly, the couple came to view their Welsh house as home.⁶⁷⁰ Sir Charles was soon drawing sketches of the area labelled with historical facts and the Ishams became well known and well liked within the community.⁶⁷¹

Even though Lampport Hall was no longer their full time residence, after Emily's death in 1898 it ceased to be a 'home' to Sir Charles altogether. Lampport's importance to Sir Charles, however, was not decreased. One correspondent commented that now Emily was gone 'Lampport will seem more sacred to you than ever.'⁶⁷² In the year that followed, Sir Charles signed over the house to a distant cousin, and retreated to the home of his second daughter in Horsham, Sussex.⁶⁷³ In the year after Emily's death he wrote of his most personal project:

⁶⁶⁸ Sir Gyles Isham, thirteenth Baronet, wrote that Sir Charles and Emily Isham built a house in North Wales. There is no further known evidence to support this. There is, however, a reference to 'Cartrerlé' in the diary of Mary Isham. Mary had died by 1882 when the house was bought. It is likely that Louisa Corbett (granddaughter of Mary) added the entry. The reference reads: 'A house & 6 acres land (Cartrerlé) in Anglesey near the Menai Bridge was bought on a 99 years' lease of the Marquis of Anglesey, which with Furniture cost £2100, to which several necessary alterations were made. 1882.' See Isham 'Architectural History of Lampport Hall', p. 27; NRO, IL 3084, Diary of Mary Isham.

⁶⁶⁹ In January 1884 Lampport was let to Count Larisch (an Austrian) and in 1886–7 to Mr Noorhouse for hunting. Mr Noorhouse took it each winter up to, and including, 1898. The Ishams were reported to have 'rarely left their beautiful and quiet home in Northamptonshire, save for an annual visit to their seat in North Wales.' It is entirely plausible that the Ishams migrated to Anglesey when the house was being let. See NRO, I 1384, Diary of Mary Isham; 'An Eccentric Baronet', *Supplement to The Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 16 May 1903, p. 2.

⁶⁷⁰ The Ishams' connection to Anglesey begins earlier than Sir Charles Isham's purchase of a house there. The Isham family had close links to Anglesey through Mary Isham's Aunt and Uncle, Lord and Lady Uxbridge who owned Plas Newydd. Several comments in the diary of Mary record visiting Plas Newydd in her early life and a sketch of Plas Newydd by Sir Charles are testament to his familiarity. See NRO, IL 3079/B/C/9.

⁶⁷¹ LH, Three engravings of views from the drawing room of Cartrevle, n.d.

⁶⁷² Quoted in Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

⁶⁷³ Isham, 'The Architectural History of Lampport Hall', p. 27.

The rockery was commenced the year of marriage and its gradual downfall may probably be dated from the year of the departure of the moving spirit [Emily] of Lamport Hall.⁶⁷⁴

Once spaces have been produced they can have multiple and specific meanings to the people who owned and used them. In the instance of Sir Charles and Lord Overstone they became objects to remember their wives by. Lamport Hall was a testament to Sir Charles' wife's intelligence, evidenced in the poetry and letters of testimonial described earlier in this chapter. Overstone Hall, however, was a reminder of Lord Overstone's wife's unfinished work. An understanding of the emotional attachments to home can help explain the ways buildings were interpreted and understood by patrons. Fundamental to both Sir Charles' and Lord Overstone's understanding of home was their wives. Thus, not only was the marital relationship important in determining agency, identity and representations of the home but it was also fundamental in determining emotional responses.

Conclusions

The examples discussed in this chapter suggest the very complex and multiple relationships members of the household could have with properties. As a result of surviving evidence, this has principally been viewed from the male perspective and contributes to a deficient literature regarding elite men's ideas of, and relationship to, home. In his discussion of contemporary literature on home, Briggs notes that husbands as well as wives became growingly interested in home in the Victorian era. To this end, he quotes John Stuart Mill: 'The improved tone of modern feeling as to the reciprocity of duty which binds the husband and wife – has thrown the man very much more upon home and its inmates, for his personal and social pleasures'.⁶⁷⁵ Tosh has argued that 'Domesticated husbands and supportive wives' were 'central to the self-image of the Victorians'.⁶⁷⁶ This, he argues, was a logical expression of the dominant domestic ideology.⁶⁷⁷ An interest in home is evidenced in the letters of Lord Overstone and writings of Sir Charles. Lord Overstone's playful self-portrayal as a man under petticoat

⁶⁷⁴ Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

⁶⁷⁵ A. Briggs, *Victorian Things* (London, 1988), p. 220.

⁶⁷⁶ Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p. 69.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

government plays on domestic ideology which placed women at the centre of the domestic realm. Lady Overstone controlled Lord Overstone's movements at home and even on family trips abroad. The house she built, even if it did not match Lord Overstone's image of domesticity, was designed to accommodate the private life of the family as well as to express their status and wealth.

The case studies in this chapter have also suggested that there was no one gendered version of the design process. Fundamental to the participation of married women in country house design was the relationship between husband and wife and its effect on the roles they adopted during design and building. The positive and doting relationships adopted by the men of the Isham and Overstone families resulted in their spouses playing an important role in building. However, this was not always the case. When rebuilding Charter's House the wife of Lord Coleridge remarked, 'my husband tells me he worships the ground I tread on...but I am never allowed to choose the carpets.'⁶⁷⁸

What starts out as a recovery of the gendered roles husband and wife played turns into an exercise of understanding representations; how husbands and or wives viewed their role and the roles of others in the design process. The representations of agency provided in Sir Charles' poetry or Lord Overstone's letters only show one side of the story. These can, to an extent, be tested against evidence to show what happened in reality. However, it is perhaps the representations themselves that reveal more about gendered roles and more specifically individual identities and personalities during building.

⁶⁷⁸ Hall, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 19.

Chapter Six

Beyond the Country House Gates

As I have already told you it is absolutely necessary now that I should stand up for myself I must do something & I must be as much mistress of my own cottages as I am of the Hall – so that when I come to reside there & even only going occasionally I may be looked up to by the villagers & that I am to come before Mr B & Mr Pell. As you know I have been driven out of the church but no one shall take my place in the village.⁶⁷⁹

Viscountess Milton, 1878

In 1878 Viscountess Milton sent a letter to her agent stressing the importance of asserting her position over the tenants of her country house estate, Haselbech. Decades of arguments with the parish clergyman Mr Bury (Mr B) and Mr Pell, a tenant of one of the farms and MP for South Leicestershire, had left her feeling undermined, unwelcome and out of control. In spite of this, she was determined to reinstate herself in what she believed was her rightful position, head of the estate. It was she and not the local clergyman or MP who should act as a focus for the community and for villagers' loyalty. Central to this was control over the estate buildings she owned and which she had spent years building and repairing.

Architectural patronage was not restricted to country house owners' homes. More often than not they possessed land and buildings surrounding their houses and many saw themselves as playing a part in a wider rural community. As a result, owners' architectural vision often included the villages surrounding their residences; considerably enlarging the scope of any architectural undertaking. This was a circumstance Lord Overstone was well aware of when embarking upon the building of Overstone Hall. He bemoaned: 'Many cares hang over me – The prospect of having to build a park wall – two whole villages – a church – a parsonage – and a Mansion – no want of occupation therefore for time or money'.⁶⁸⁰

⁶⁷⁹ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 12 November 1878.

⁶⁸⁰ O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 849, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 9 April 1858.

Yet, by the end of the nineteenth century the identification of the country house with the productive landscape was changing. For many, income from the land was supplemented or replaced by other sources of wealth and it was possible for country lifestyles to be maintained without an extensive working estate. This has resulted in historians drawing a divide between ‘the house in the country’, defined as a country house curtailed of land, and a country house, defined by its association with a productive estate.⁶⁸¹

However in the period covered by this study and in the case studies considered, landownership was still an important indicator of status, influence and, until the agricultural depression in the 1870s to 1890s, could present a good investment. Even though his wealth was originally derived from banking, Lord Overstone is testament to this. He invested extensively in land, describing himself in 1860 as ‘up to my chin in purchases’.⁶⁸²

As the nineteenth century progressed increasing measures to improve the rural built environment, a rush of publications on good and bad design and changing social relations within the rural community added an extra layer of complexity. The construction and maintenance of good estate buildings was considered an outward sign of good ownership. Analysis of building on the country house estates considered in this thesis paints a complex image of both men and women striving to create homes for their tenants which were comfortable and convenient but also economical. In doing so they were grappling with the dual requirements of function and economy addressed in much of the architectural literature of the day.

Building on the estate was not therefore conducted in a vacuum but attracted the attention of villagers and other landowners. When building a country house, design conversations were restricted to a privileged group which, as Chapters Four and Five have described, could include the architect and patrons, but also friends, family and craftsmen. Ultimately, however, it was the patron as holder of the purse strings who was in charge of the commission. The design of subjects of architectural patronage on the estate attracted attention beyond an immediate circle of invited commentators.

⁶⁸¹ Hall, *The Victorian Country House*, p. 9; Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall*, pp. 90–138; Clemenson, *English Country House*, pp. 96–106; Stone, *An Open Elite?*, p. 32.

⁶⁸² O’Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 923, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 26 September, 1860; R. C. Michie, ‘Income, Expenditure and Investment of a Victorian Millionaire: Lord Overstone, 1823–83’, *Historical Research*, 58 (1985), pp. 59–77; Rubinstein, ‘New Men of Wealth’, p. 127; Rubinstein, *Men of Property*, pp. 240, 264.

When building schools recourse might be made to the Committee of Council on Education and when building parsonages or altering churches the clergyman was frequently consulted.⁶⁸³ As a result, patrons were often confronted with the need to gain both public and private support for their building projects. The building of rural structures to a high or low standard also contributed to a wider nineteenth-century discourse on the moral obligations of country house owners. This was an issue which was not only a subject for landowners but also the church and state.

This chapter will discuss the management and construction of buildings on the country house estate by country house owners. The first section will consider dwellings attached to the productive landscape; farm houses and cottages and the second half, the formal architectural elements of schools and the church. The erection, repair, and maintenance of these buildings could form part of a programme of estate management. Using buildings as a locus, the interaction of various interested parties in estate affairs will offer insight into the way patronage worked as well as shifting power relations on the estate more generally. Prominent among surviving letters considered here are the concepts of authority, power and the identity of the estate. Vital to understanding these dynamics of power is the recognition that women often made considerable contributions to estate building and management. This shows that, when removed from the context of the country house, patrons could have a very different relationship with architecture and the design process.

Women and Estate Management

Although scholars such as McDonagh and Reynolds have shown that women were able to participate in areas such as estate management and landscape improvement, there are still comparatively few studies detailing their roles and impact on the built environment of the country house estate.⁶⁸⁴ Women's involvement in the construction of estate buildings can be understood in a similar familial context to women's contribution to the design of their homes. Like country houses, it can be understood as an extension of their domestic role. As discussed in Chapter Five, Emily Isham's domestic prowess was

⁶⁸³ The Committee of Council of Education was established in 1839 but was known as the Board of Education from 1856.

⁶⁸⁴ For example, see B. McDonagh, 'Women, Enclosure and Estate Improvement in Eighteenth-Century Northamptonshire', *Rural History*, 20 (2009), pp. 143–162; Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, pp. 26–60.

described as a remedy to agricultural depression and she was known for always 'being engaged in some good work, first for the people of Lamport and then for the county at large.'⁶⁸⁵ The moral well-being of tenants, labourers and their families was considered to be a particular concern of women, in a similar way to the moral health of their own households.⁶⁸⁶ For some, this found expression in the improvement of housing. Reynolds has argued that this was a particular concern of aristocratic women.⁶⁸⁷

The role of women in improving the dwellings of labourers and tenants was recognised in architectural treatises. In his *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture*, J. C. Loudon was very clear about the publication's intended audience. It was written for men who had not had sufficient architectural education to engage with the subject, the young, and women. The intention was to impart knowledge of good and bad architecture and in doing so, to improve the dwellings of the 'great mass of society'.⁶⁸⁸ Lady Caroline Kerrison even went as far as producing her own book of cottage designs in 1864.⁶⁸⁹

However, women's moral role on the estate could have wider implications. Prochaska has argued that women's philanthropic activities were tools to political ends, a form of 'self-expression' and an opportunity to engage in governance through the management of institutionalised philanthropy.⁶⁹⁰ This chapter will demonstrate that the philanthropic contributions of women can also be read as a sophisticated response to economics and changing attitudes towards landownership. Some wives of country house owners were far from the 'Lady Bountiful' portrayed by Gerard who, due to her lack of property ownership, was unable to offer material benefits to tenants beyond organising charitable clubs or tending to the sick.⁶⁹¹ The case studies considered also evidence that benevolence and duty were crucial to aristocratic women's creation of identity on the estate, as well as their motivations behind building. In an age when the exclusivity of the upper classes was shifting and dominance in the country side was waning,

⁶⁸⁵ 'Death of Lady Isham', *Leicestershire Chronicle*, 10 September 1898, p. 8.

⁶⁸⁶ J. Gerard, 'Lady Bountiful: Women of the Landed Classes and Rural Philanthropy', *Victorian Studies*, 30, no. 2 (1987), pp. 183–210 (p. 189).

⁶⁸⁷ Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, p. 45.

⁶⁸⁸ Loudon, *Encyclopaedia* (1835), pp.1–2.

⁶⁸⁹ C. Kerrison, *Plans and Estimates for Labourers Cottages* (London, 1864).

⁶⁹⁰ F. K. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 1–5.

⁶⁹¹ Gerard, 'Lady Bountiful', p. 191. For a further critique of the concept of 'Lady Bountiful' see Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, p. 48.

benevolent estate policies and architectural patronage continued to justify and support the aristocracy's economic and social position.⁶⁹²

Viscountess Milton provides an instructive example of an aristocratic woman engaged in estate management and in particular, the management of building stock. As discussed in Chapter Two, Viscountess Milton purchased Haselbech with money loaned by the trustees of her father's estate and under the terms of purchase owned the property separately from her husband.⁶⁹³ The fear of defaulting on loans made it all the more important that the estate was successful and profitable. As a result, throughout her lifetime, Viscountess Milton took considerable pains to improve the village and land.⁶⁹⁴ She did this through a sophisticated management network which she used to monitor the village during long periods of absence, garner advice on estate policies and administer the day-to-day running of her property. This was particularly important because, as established in Chapter Two, Viscountess Milton chiefly resided at her husband's principal seat, Osberton, Nottinghamshire. As well as this, any difference in education or training as a consequence of Viscountess Milton's gender could to a large degree be mitigated.

Viscountess Milton's first port of call for advice or information was her land agent, Edward K. Fisher. Fisher was a new type of non-resident agent who, rather than managing a single estate, managed over fifty different properties for various owners in Northamptonshire and Leicestershire from his base in Little Bowden, Market Harborough.⁶⁹⁵ Fisher contributed towards the management of alterations to Haselbech Hall, collected rents, helped with the allocation of tenants, managed accounts and improved estate buildings and farming. While doing so, Fisher also acted as an important intermediary between Viscountess Milton and members of the village.

In October 1858 Viscountess Milton dismissed Fisher arguing that 'As the farms are now all tenanted (for wh[ich] I am much indebted to you) & the farm building are

⁶⁹² Gerard, 'Lady Bountiful', p. 185.

⁶⁹³ NRO, ZB 291/153, Deed of indemnity, 19 September 1856.

⁶⁹⁴ The potential for such improvements had been noted in a valuation prior to purchase, 'much improvement would ensue by different management than shown at present'. See NRO, FS 24/2, Smith to Viscountess Milton, valuation of the Haselbech estate, c. September 1855.

⁶⁹⁵ On the professionalisation of land agents see E. Richards, 'The Land Agent' in G. E. Mingay (ed.), *The Victorian Countryside* (London, 1981), pp. 439; S. Webster, 'Estate Improvement and the Professionalisation of Land Agents on the Egremont Estates in Sussex and Yorkshire, 1770–1835', *Rural History*, 18, no. 1 (2007), pp. 47–69.

completed & as the estate is so small a one & will now require so little attention I think it will be quite unnecessary for me to take up your time'.⁶⁹⁶ Viscountess Milton intended to run the estate on her own. However, it was perhaps with the termination of Fisher's employment that Viscountess Milton realised his value. Within less than four months she wrote to ask if she could once again employ his services. This, however, came with several provisos. Fisher must not be insulted if, when Viscountess Milton's son was old enough he decided to take over the management of the estate for the sake of economy. She requested that Fisher consult her on 'every' estate matter and pay rents directly into her account from which other expenses, including Fisher's salary of £50, would be paid by cheque.⁶⁹⁷ The terms of Viscountess Milton's reemployment of Fisher and surviving letters illustrate her level of direct engagement with estate management and in particular, her desire to maintain control over her finances.

Viscountess Milton did not, however, solely rely on Fisher and often sought second or third judgements on a situation. On several occasions she discussed decisions with her husband and drew upon her knowledge and experience of living at Osberton. She consulted her husband on the length of notice which should be given to tenants when asked to leave their cottages and wrote of her hope to discuss plans for a farm with him before a visit to Haselbech in February 1857.⁶⁹⁸ On issues with a long lasting effect Viscountess Milton consulted her sons, especially in later life. From the terms given to Fisher noted above, it is evident Viscountess Milton saw her management of the property as a temporary position until her son came of age. In matters concerning law, she occasionally drew upon the knowledge of her London lawyer, Mr Bennett. More frequently, however, Viscountess Milton consulted Dr Faulkner, a local Northampton lawyer. Faulkner almost certainly cost less and had the added advantage of local knowledge and networks.

Finally, Viscountess Milton relied on information reported by trusted tenants who often acted on her behalf during her absences.⁶⁹⁹ Viscountess Milton was acquainted with the farmers and labourers in name and reputation, if not in person. The tenant farmer and

⁶⁹⁶ NRO, FS 24/10, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 14 October 1858.

⁶⁹⁷ NRO, FS 24/11, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 4 February 1859.

⁶⁹⁸ NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 27 February 1857.

⁶⁹⁹ See M. Ayres, 'The Provision of Housing and Power Relations in Rural England, 1834 -1914' University of Leicester PhD thesis (2004), pp. 146–147 for a useful introduction to surveillance on the estate and wider issues surrounding the nature of tenancies.

trustee of the school Mr Scales informed Viscountess Milton of any untoward or important events on the estate and was also an important ally in upholding her interests and reputation. To this end, when looking for a new tenant for one of her farms a priority was finding someone who would be friendly with Scales so he could ‘work hand in hand with him in all Parish concerns so as to uphold & strengthen me’.⁷⁰⁰ When the Reverend at Haselbech, Bury, questioned her right to any involvement in the running of the school on the grounds of her frequent absence, she retorted ‘there is not a person or a thing that I don’t attend to – Every sick person is looked after for me by Mr Scales every building is attended to by me &c &c’.⁷⁰¹

A recurring topic in correspondence between Viscountess Milton and Fisher was the allocation of tenancies and management of building stock. Viscountess Milton took it upon herself to personally attend to the allocation of cottages to an ‘improved class of labourer’.⁷⁰² She informed Fisher, ‘I shall always wish to arrange myself who should live in my cottages’.⁷⁰³ To enable her to do this, rather than having tied tenancies, where farmers allocated cottages attached to their properties directly to a labourer, Viscountess Milton chose tenants based on a selection of candidates presented by the farmer. These candidates were ruthlessly vetted and any slight hint of previous misdemeanours meant they were not even considered. Viscountess Milton was also ruthless in ensuring that the standards she expected from tenants were maintained. Any evidence of bad character or poor behaviour once living on the estate could result in notice being given for tenants to leave. Finally, Viscountess Milton prioritised and favoured tenants she liked or who would be useful in running the estate. In managing her tenancies she was not only ensuring she had reliable hard working tenants but was also undertaking a form of moral policing on her property.

Viscountess Milton’s correspondence with her agent Fisher also indicates her approach and attitude towards the buildings themselves. It is apparent she was uncompromising when it came to control over the built environment. This point was directly made when members of the cooperative society at Haselbech led by Bury and the local MP Mr Pell sublet a room from one of her tenants to use as the cooperative store. The cooperative

⁷⁰⁰ NRO, FS 24/79, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 16 February c. 1878.

⁷⁰¹ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 5 June 1878.

⁷⁰² NRO, FS 24/15, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 19 July 1862.

⁷⁰³ NRO, FS 25/14, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 21 February 1862.

erected a partition in the sublet room without consulting Viscountess Milton and against the will of the tenant. Viscountess Milton exclaimed: ‘Now this is quite out of the question, it is my house, & I am not going to allow him or any one else to interfere with my cottages & houses, he might just as well talk of putting up a partition in the Hall.’⁷⁰⁴ Thus, the buildings on the estate were, in the eyes of Viscountess Milton if not others on the estate, firmly under her jurisdiction. However, she also perceived that the provision and maintenance of good dwellings was a duty which came with landownership. When erecting cottages in 1859 she wrote ‘I was anxious to do something for my poorer neighbours’ and in 1878 remarked ‘I consider & always shall consider it my duty to see that all the cottages that I build are kept as they should be & in proper repair’.⁷⁰⁵

Viscountess Milton was not necessarily unusual in her interest and position in the management of her country house estate. Only five days after her marriage to Rainald Knightly in 1869, Louisa Lady Knightly (née Bowater) recorded astonishment at her husband’s ignorance of the cottages and farms on his Northamptonshire estate, Fawsley, in her journal.⁷⁰⁶ On a visit with her husband to Down Farm she alighted upon a project where she felt in her element. The Ames family at Down Farm lived in a tied tenanted cottage with only two rooms. In line with the general belief that a comfortable uncrowded cottage should have three, Lady Knightly decided building was necessary. She wrote in her diary with excitement and in the hope that she could do a ‘tidy job’ of the improvement. Aware of the expense attached to the alteration she also noted:

But I fear it will be some time before much can be done here in the way of cottage-building, the farms absorb so much money, and even now all the cottage rents are spent in repairs.⁷⁰⁷

An interest in housing was evidently not confined to Lady Knightly. Her mother offered to bring a book of Lord Cawdor’s on *Housing* to which Louisa enthusiastically said she was ‘always on the look-out for hints.’ Lord Knightly, however, did not wish to indulge his new wife’s passion, writing ‘She and her cottage improvements are the plague of

⁷⁰⁴ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 6 November 1878.

⁷⁰⁵ NRO, FS 24/11, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 7 February 1859; NRO FS, 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 4 June 1878.

⁷⁰⁶ J. Cartwright (ed.), *The Journals of Lady Knightly of Fawsley* (London, 1915), p. 173.

⁷⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

my life!'. He wrote to his mother-in-law asking her not to bring the book on account that the Ames' cottage had already cost him £30 to which he did not want to add.⁷⁰⁸

Lady Knightly's interest was not simply confined to buildings and ensuring moral standards were met, but also farming and its methods. Rainald Knightly, as with cottage building, was unenthused by more general estate matters.⁷⁰⁹ This became all the more important in the 1880s when five or six of the principal farms on the estate stood empty in the midst of the agriculture depression. With tenants hard to come by and the estate heavily mortgaged, Lord and Lady Knightly decided to farm the land directly. With their agent, Waters, the couple set upon a plan of improvement. This was taken up more readily by Lady Knightly than her husband. She found it all 'most interesting' but feared that the outlay required to put the farms in order would 'disgust' Lord Knightly. She walked the farms and settled matters about the turkey and fowl, as well as improvements to the dairy without her husband's presence. In spite of her efforts, Waters reported on the 2 August 1880 that losses amounted to £2200 for the half year. This did not seem to effect Lady Knightly's enthusiasm and optimism however she wrote of her husband, 'No wonder my poor darling is low and out of heart!' ⁷¹⁰ Viscountess Milton does not appear to have engaged as actively in the day to day aspects of farming as Lady Knightly but certainly showed awareness of both what happened on her farms and of farming methods. She wrote, 'for tho' I don't consider myself a great farmer I could see plainly when I was at Haselbech that Mr Teasdales object has been to get all he could from the land & not to consider the real improvement of the land.'⁷¹¹

Lady Knightly's efforts on the estate were seen as a burden as much as any form of assistance by her husband. However, Lord Overstone valued the support of female members of his family and especially his daughter. After making two new purchases of land in 1869 he wrote:

We have now rather more than sixteen thousand acres around this place; and we are steadily and rapidly bringing it into good order – draining, building cottages, improving the cultivation. I feel most deeply the responsibility which attends the

⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁷⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁷¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 337–341.

⁷¹¹ NRO, FS 24/9, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 7 June 1878.

possession of large property – and I hope I am proceeding in the right course – fortunately I have the full sympathy and cooperation of Harriet [Lady Wantage] and her husband.⁷¹²

Lord Overstone estimated that between 1842 and 1883 he had spent £106, 361 on his estates, not including purchases of land.⁷¹³ Like Viscountess Milton, he felt a great moral responsibility and ‘spared no expenditure’ in bringing his holdings into ‘the best possible condition – to improve the condition of both Tenants and Labourers.’⁷¹⁴ He was helped in this by his daughter and her husband. In the memoir of her late husband Lady Wantage wrote: ‘She [Lady Wantage] shared eagerly in all her husband’s pursuits and work...from hunting and volunteering to estate management and politics...she herself used to say that she had filled the post, not altogether unsatisfactorily she flattered herself, of confidential private secretary both to her father [Lord Overstone] and her husband.’⁷¹⁵ It is evident that women took on a number of roles in relation to their estates, from deciding day to day farming policies, to identifying unacceptable housing, to general estate management or administration. Evidence also survives to suggest that women’s role was not only acknowledged by their relatives, but also in the public realm.

Lady Carbery’s ownership and engagement with estate policies was recognised on a number of occasions in print. A report by William Pitt for the Board of Agriculture described new cottages at Laxton as both ‘comfortable and ornamental’ and J. P. Neale commented that ‘every attention’ had been paid ‘to the comfort of the inhabitants, as well as the picturesque appearance of the cottages’ during the village’s rebuilding.⁷¹⁶ Pitt noted that by ‘the benefice of Lady Carbery’ nine of the cottagers in Laxton were given land and cows.⁷¹⁷ He explained that the provision of comfortable housing and the tools needed for food production meant the owner could benefit by a reduction of poor rates and increase the value of the whole estate, even if the return on the outlay for building was not realised through rents. Lady Carbery and the Marchioness of Exeter

⁷¹² O’Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 3, p. 1179, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 27 March 1869.

⁷¹³ Michie, ‘Income, Expenditure and Investment’, pp. 59–77.

⁷¹⁴ O’Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 3, p. 1276, Memorandum by Lord Overstone on his wealth, 1875.

⁷¹⁵ Wantage, *Lord Wantage*, p. 145.

⁷¹⁶ W. Pitt, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Northampton, drawn up for the Board of Agriculture and Internal Improvement* (London, 1809), pp. 30–32; Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen*, vol. 1.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 31.

were praised in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for their 'building and repairing cottages, and allotting small patches of land to them, according to the ability of the tenants'. They were said to have 'done honour to their sex'.⁷¹⁸ It is noteworthy that, although *The Gentleman's Magazine* and Pitt recorded Lady Carbery's role, there is divergence over the ownership and patronage of cottages at Laxton in printed texts. Britton described Laxton Hall as 'the seat of *George Freke Evans, Esq.* who, among the many alterations...has erected several new and comfortable cottages'.⁷¹⁹ In the context of nineteenth century gender norms, Britton assumed they were built by the husband rather than the wife. The recognition of Lady Carbery's role by individuals beyond the country house estate may have been a consequence of her life interest in Laxton.

However, the way that both men and women managed their estates was not necessarily fundamentally different because of gender. Men as well as women relied on networks of professional men. For example, both Sir Charles and Lord Overstone employed the advice of the agriculturalist Beasley at their estates and Viscountess Milton and Lady Knightly relied heavily on their agents. In a similar way to Architectural Societies discussed in Chapter Five, men were also more likely to take leading roles in official institutions and bodies of opinion. Sir Charles was President of the Lamport Ploughing Society and a member of the Northamptonshire Agricultural Society. In this context it is perhaps unsurprising that Lady Carbery's impact may have gone unnoticed or unrecognised by those only briefly viewing the property. However, this did not mean that women were less interested in, or less able to manage these aspects of the country house with equal competency. It is evident that husbands and wives helped each other to manage the estate. Foljambe advised Viscountess Milton on farm buildings and tenancies and Lady Wantage assisted her father in administration.

Irrespective of the impact gender on direct agency, this section has begun to suggest the multiple reasons to improve or rebuild estate buildings. Many landowners and their families saw the provision of good housing as a paternalistic obligation and justification of their landownership.⁷²⁰ In 1897 the Duke of Bedford argued 'There is...nothing more important to a landlord than the question of cottage management. Good and comfortable cottages, in which the decencies and dignity of human life may be

⁷¹⁸ 'Benefits of Cottage Agriculture', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, (September 1819), p. 222.

⁷¹⁹ J. Britton, *Beauties of England and Wales: Northants* (London, 1810), p. 205.

⁷²⁰ Ayres, 'The Provision of Housing', p. 114.

maintained, generally imply that they are inhabited by good and efficient labourers.⁷²¹ The equation of good housing and efficient tenants was a keystone of nineteenth-century thought on cottage construction.

The remainder of this chapter will examine the processes and motivations behind the construction of buildings on the country house estate. It will explore how design relationships differed from the relationships formed when building the country house.⁷²² As part of this it will highlight that although the country house owner may legally own land or provide money to build, estate building was conducted in a very public forum. At Haselbech and Laxton, this resulted in the intervention of the local clergyman and tenants in the design and construction process. The power struggles which ensued shed light on how these owners used and viewed their ownership. In particular, it highlights how the built environment was used to shape the country house owners' identity on the estate and, in some instances, control the estate tenants. A lack of directly comparable information for these estates makes it hard to ascertain if the examples considered here are unusual or if the identities women and men adopted on the estate were gender determined. However, certainly in Viscountess Milton's case, it is evident that she saw herself as occupying the same position as any nobleman.

Cottage Building

From the mid-nineteenth century the number of pattern books of rural buildings aimed at landowners increased.⁷²³ These were particularly targeted at wealthy and benevolent estate owners and were concerned with the 'comfort and convenience' of the cottager as much as the external appearance or economic benefits derived from building. In fact, it was generally believed that cottage building was a poor financial investment.⁷²⁴ The vital components of a 'comfortable' home were relatively simple: according to Loudon it had to be warm, dry, well ventilated, and convenient.⁷²⁵ The architecture of convenience was primarily concerned with creating a working, practical house. The

⁷²¹ The Duke of Bedford, *A Great Agricultural Estate* (London, 1897), p. 95, quoted in A. Mitson and B. Cox, 'Victorian Estate Housing on the Yarborough Estate, Lincolnshire', *Rural History*, 6, no. 1 (1995), pp. 29–45 (p. 29).

⁷²² See Chapters Four and Five.

⁷²³ D. Maudlin, 'Habitations of the Labourer: Improvement, Reform and the Neoclassical Cottage in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Journal of Design History*, 23, no. 1 (2010), pp. 7–20.

⁷²⁴ Havinden, 'The Model Village', pp. 414–427.

⁷²⁵ Loudon, *Encyclopaedia*, p. 8.

house functioned through a network of objects, by the logical layout of rooms and ensured the morals of the household were preserved through the separation of the sexes and of parents from children.⁷²⁶ In constructing buildings suitable to their function, Loudon argued, the appearance of these structures would improve as a consequence.⁷²⁷

Equally, there was a general belief that improved dwellings would both create and attract a better sort of tenant. The introduction to C. B. Allen's *Cottage Building; And Hints for Improved Dwellings for the Labouring Classes* is an impassioned essay arguing for the benefit of 'comfortable habitations' in improving the minds of tenants and stemming the increase of pauperism.⁷²⁸ In his book on cottage construction and design Strickland argued 'The health and happiness, and even the morality of men, are very considerably influenced by the character of the houses in which they live'.⁷²⁹ He advocated that landowners should not consider if a building would pay of itself but 'whether they be not wanted in order that the land should be made the most of' by raising the standard of morality, lessening crime, and having reliable and trustworthy workmen. All of these, he argued, increased the value of the properties.⁷³⁰ These ideas were assimilated by some, though certainly not all, of the landowning classes.

The idea that architecture could improve the minds of men was something Sir Charles was familiar with. Beside an article on housing pasted in a scrapbook, he quoted Ruskin:

Architecture is the art which so disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man for whatever uses that the sight of them contribute to his mental health power and pleasure.⁷³¹

The belief that appropriate housing could improve social and moral behaviour was an important impetus for many landowners improving estate housing.⁷³² This is evidenced

⁷²⁶ E. Lupton and J. Murphy, 'Case Study House: Comfort and Convenience', *Assemblage*, 24 (1994), pp. 86–93.

⁷²⁷ Loudon, *Encyclopaedia*, pp. 4–5.

⁷²⁸ C. B. Allen, *Cottage Building; And Hints for Improved Dwellings for the Labouring Classes: With Notes and Additions by John Weale* (London, 1866), pp. 1–19.

⁷²⁹ C. W. Strickland, *On Cottage Construction and Design* (London, 1864), p. 2.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 6–7.

⁷³¹ LH, Three large scrapbooks containing articles etc. selected, pasted and annotated by Sir Charles Isham, vol. 2, p. 86.

in the policies of Lady Carbery, Lord Overstone and Viscountess Milton described above.

An increase in patronage and interest in rural buildings in the mid-nineteenth century from prestigious landowners was followed by a growth of interest among architects.⁷³³ Previously, cottage and farm buildings had predominantly been the domain of agents and local builders. This undoubtedly continued for a large proportion of rural buildings. However, as will be demonstrated, some structures were designed by the same architects that altered country houses discussed in this thesis. This was noted by Brudett:

The wealthier classes are able to take care of themselves by the employment of such able architects as they may like to select, and the poorer classes – artizans and the like have thousands of well-arranged and carefully-constructed dwellings erected for them from the designs and under the superintendence of the same class of architects.⁷³⁴

In an 1850 lecture to the Royal Institute of British Architects Henry Roberts, Honorary Architect to the Society to Improve the Condition of the Labouring Classes, enumerated the interest which cottage design could provide for the architect and appealed to the Institute to pay closer attention to the subject. This enthusiasm filtered through to local societies, such as the Northamptonshire Architectural Society of which Sir Charles was vice president.

Like many other landowners in the nineteenth century, Viscountess Milton continually grappled with finding the perfect balance of economics, a good comfortable and convenient plan, and a pleasing aesthetic when building cottages. At Haselbech, low cost and an appropriate plan to promote specific modes of living were prioritised, with aesthetic appearance as a secondary concern. She was always careful not to overspend and only to undertake what she knew she could afford.⁷³⁵ From 1856 Viscountess

⁷³² S. Daniels and S. Seymour, 'Landscape Design and the Idea of Improvement 1730–1900', in R. A. Dodgshon and R. A. Butlin (eds.), *A Historical Geography of England and Wales* (London, 1990), pp. 487–520.

⁷³³ Arnold, *The Georgian Country House*, p. 165.

⁷³⁴ H. C. Burdett, 'The Dwellings of the Middle Classes', *Transactions of the Sanitary Institute of Great Britain* (1883–4), pp. 237–41, quoted in D. Rubinstein, *Victorian Homes* (Newton Abbot, 1994), p. 29.

⁷³⁵ NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 18 September 1857.

Milton started pulling down old cottages and began a programme of cottage building which would last approximately seven years. In a letter to her agent Fisher regarding the construction of two new cottages in 1859, Viscountess Milton described her expectations. Each cottage was to be built using bricks made on the estate and the overall cost was not to exceed the sum of £105–£110.⁷³⁶ To achieve this, Viscountess Milton specified plain window panes instead of lattice, the cheapest roofing material, and decided not to employ an architect. All of these were measures intended to reduce outlay. Instead of an architect Viscountess Milton sent plans she had ‘selected’ and employed the builder Badcock to erect the buildings. There is no evidence, however, to suggest where she was selecting designs from. Any queries relating to the construction were to be directed to Viscountess Milton herself who was confident she could answer any problems and frequently visited Haselbech to see progress and make decisions on the spot.⁷³⁷

Some of the cottages erected were specifically tailored or allocated to fit the needs of families already in the village and to promote specific modes of living. A new cottage facing south west was to be built with three bedrooms so the Iron family – two adults, a son and daughter – could live there. It was important that the parents and children should sleep in separate rooms and that the genders were divided. However, Viscountess Milton made a point of saying ‘I don’t fancy having them nearer to the Hall’.⁷³⁸ The new cottage near the Hall was to be occupied by Bury and his wife and another facing south east by Watkins and her son. So as to discourage the taking in of lodgers the house built for Watkins and her son was designed with only two rooms. However, in recognition that in the future more rooms might be required, there was space for a partition and window to be constructed to create a third. By the 11 June 1863 Viscountess Milton was satisfied that she had provided everyone on the estate with cottages. She also hoped that by her next visit all of the old cottages would be demolished.⁷³⁹ There was only one tenant for whom Viscountess Milton would not build a new home, Old Admitt. Having heard that Admitt had struck his daughter and with no explanation forthcoming, Viscountess Milton was clearly in the hope that the

⁷³⁶ This was probably at the lower end of what was usually spent on estate cottages in this period. For comparison see Mitson and Cox, ‘Victorian Estate Housing’, p. 34.

⁷³⁷ NRO, FS 24/11, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 4 February 1859.

⁷³⁸ NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 16 March 1863.

⁷³⁹ NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 11 June 1863.

lack of a new cottage and the poor condition of his current home would induce him to leave.⁷⁴⁰ In this way, Viscountess Milton used buildings to enforce the expected behaviours of those living at Haselbech.

Although not a priority, Viscountess Milton was not unconscious of the aesthetic appearance of the buildings she was constructing. The three rooms of the Iron family's and Bury's cottages could have been two if it were not for a last minute request from Viscountess Milton. However, this arrangement was to be sacrificed if it ruined the uniformity of the village:

now I think this increase of length wd not shew much outside to make it observable & look very different from the other cottages would it? There would be 2 extra windows necessary for one bedroom & the staircase at each end of the house whd be different from the other cottages but that whd not signify...now if the house are begun upon & you think this alteration wd not make them sufficiently uniform with the others never mind, we must then build a pair like the others.⁷⁴¹

Certain details of the design were flexible, such as the roofing material and window leads, if it meant costs were reduced. In 1872 she wrote to Fisher 'I think it is a great pity that appearance is not a little more studied in building, even farm buildings, because with a very slight alteration they might be made so ornamental & quite as good & useful as the present ugly ones'.⁷⁴² Viscountess Milton wrote to Fisher when travelling through Europe and after having seen 'such very picturesque houses' in Switzerland.⁷⁴³ She asked if the eaves of Mr Teasdale's new farm, being built at the time, could be made to extend two or three feet beyond the wall. This, she believed, would make a considerable difference to the appearance at little increased expense. The desire to make cottages and farm buildings aesthetically pleasing, comfortable and morally sound resulted in numerous suggestions in pattern books for low cost ornament, for example simple moulded tiles and bricks which could be manufactured by most brick makers.⁷⁴⁴

⁷⁴⁰ NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 16 March 1863.

⁷⁴¹ NRO, FS 24/7, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 5 March 1863.

⁷⁴² NRO, FS 24/61/43, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 4 September 1872.

⁷⁴³ NRO, FS 24/61/41, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 19 August 1872.

⁷⁴⁴ This was suggested by Strickland. See Strickland, *On Cottage Construction*, p. 85.

Creating moral homes out of a sense of duty was not necessarily the only motivation to build new cottages on the country house estate. Clemenson and Mowl have argued that buildings in the grounds and on the estate of country houses, such as entrance lodges, could reference the architecture of the country house, acting as a prelude.⁷⁴⁵ These buildings, often emblazoned with date stones, initials or even plaques commemorating patronage, were outward signs of good ownership. The building itself could also be read as an indicator of status within the village. When discussing the designs for a new school at Haselbech, Viscountess Milton specified that the windows should match those of the stables: ‘The only thing I can imagine may increase the expense is, the storm heads to windows & stone sills I wish them to be brick just like the stables’.⁷⁴⁶ In doing so, Viscountess Milton created a visual link between the school and Hall and thus a link between the provision of education and her benevolence. Similarly, the Renaissance style of a plaque to commemorate Lady Overstone’s rebuilding of Sywell village referenced the style of Overstone Hall and showed a Baronet’s coronet, foregrounding the Overstones’ status [Figure 42].

⁷⁴⁵ Clemenson, *English Country Houses*, p. 84; T. Mowl, ‘The Evolution of the Park Gate Lodge as a Building Type’, *Architectural History*, 27 (1984), pp. 467–480 (p. 1); T. Mowl and E. Earnshaw, *Trumpet at a Distant Gate: The Lodge as Prelude to the Country House* (London, 1985).

⁷⁴⁶ NRO, FS 24/44–45, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 1 June 1871.

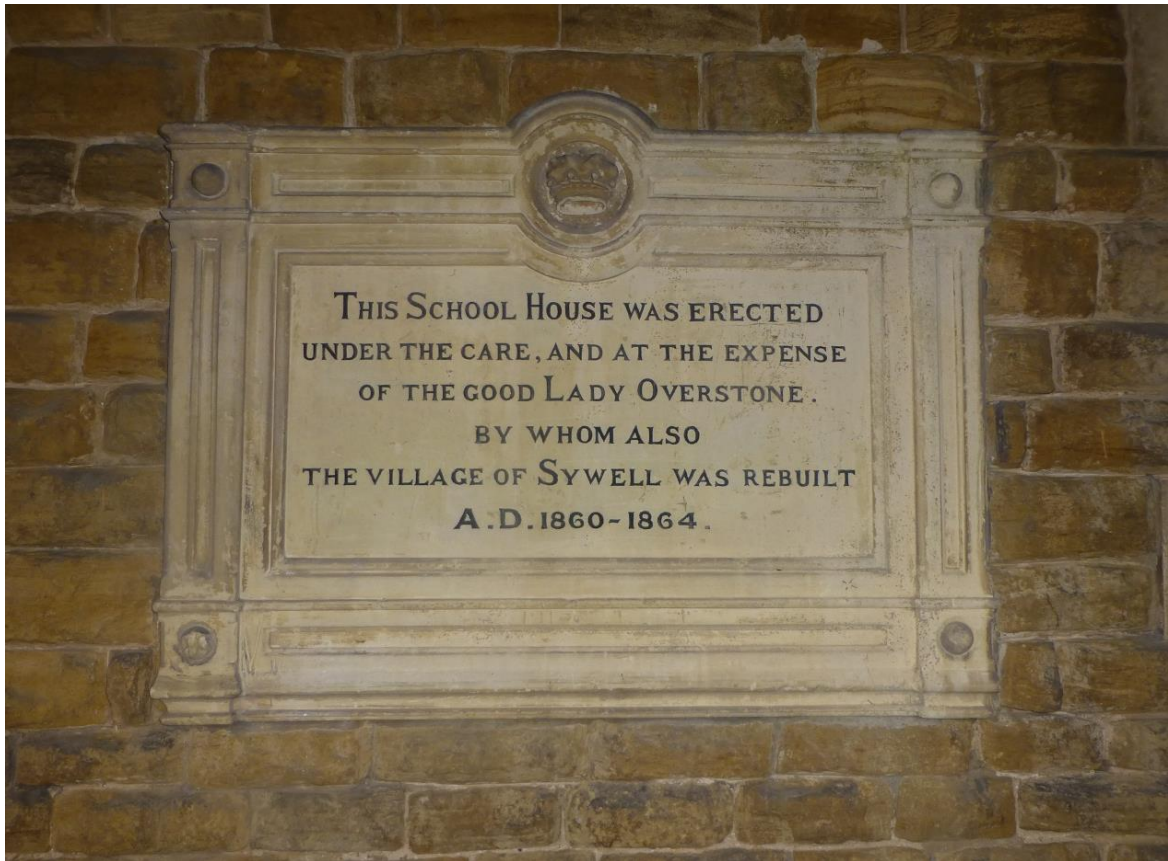


Figure 42: Commemorative Plague on the front of Sywell School.

Even when cottages were built that were not parts of a model village, there were often common features across the estate.⁷⁴⁷ These were not necessarily confined to the one estate village owned by the patron but could extend across several villages. Housing built by the Ishams at Lamport is comparable to that built at Shangton, their Leicestershire estate, and which was almost entirely rebuilt by Sir Justinian and Sir Charles.⁷⁴⁸ A report of the Northamptonshire Architectural Society from 1849 mentions designs for model cottages at Shangton: ‘No. 5 is a tracing of a plan for three cottages, which have been erected at Shang[t]on, for Sir Chars. Isham, under the superintendence of Mr Fisher...I have not yet seen these in brick and mortar, the great test of all plans, but they seem to contain all the requirements I have spoken of, and are very simple and inexpensive.’⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁷ Mitson and Cox, ‘Victorian Estate Housing’, pp. 29–32; H. Fuller, ‘Land Ownership of the Lindsay Landscape’, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 66 (1976), pp. 14–28.

⁷⁴⁸ Lee and McKinley, *A History of the County of Leicestershire*, vol. 5, pp. 293–297.

⁷⁴⁹ T. James, ‘On Labourers’ Cottages’, *Reports and Papers Read at the Meetings of the Architectural Societies of the Archdeaconry of Northampton, the Counties of York and Lincoln, and of the*



Figure 43: Model cottage at Shangton and initials and date on a shield almost certainly designed by Sir Charles Isham.

Properties on both estates that were erected by Sir Charles are emblazoned with his monogram, CEI (Charles Edmund Isham) and some are further decorated with polychrome brickwork [Figure 43].⁷⁵⁰ It is easy to suggest that the dynamic polychromy of the diamond cottages at Lamport is Sir Charles' handiwork [Figure 44]. The buildings on the estate were also a vehicle for Sir Charles' poetry. In 1859 the 'old pigeon house' or dovecot on the estate was converted into a bakehouse.⁷⁵¹ A plaque was inserted above the door reading 'where pigeons once did sport and fly, you now may bake a pigeon pie.' Although the use of heraldry and of dating stones grew in popularity from the middle of the eighteenth century, the designs at Lamport and Shangton are unique and each different.⁷⁵² In the archives scraps of paper survive with sketches by Sir Charles of family members' monograms.⁷⁵³ His own carefully designed initials appear in many of the books he wrote and illustrated as well as plates displayed in the Hall. It is highly likely Sir Charles also designed those on his estate housing and probable that he influenced the design and decoration of estate buildings more generally. Estate housing provided Sir Charles with the opportunity to indulge his interest in design, much as he had done at Lamport Hall itself.

Architectural & Archaeological Societies of Bedfordshire and St. Albans (London, 1852), pp. 24–36 (p. 31).

⁷⁵⁰ The cottages opposite Lamport Hall do not have the monogram of Sir Charles Isham but 'M.S.I', almost certainly referring to his mother, Mary Isham.

⁷⁵¹ NRO, IL 3086, Mary Isham, Memorandums taken from old papers.

⁷⁵² J. M. Robinson, *The English Country House Estate* (London, 1988), p. 133.

⁷⁵³ NRO, I 10/10, Monograms of 'MI' and 'VI' for Millicent Isham and Vere Isham; NRO, I 10/16, Monogram of Sir Charles Isham's initials, C.E.I. See also Chapter Five.



Figure 44: Diamond cottages erected in 1854.

Mowl has argued lodge houses were used as sites for architectural experimentation.⁷⁵⁴ This kind of architectural invention can equally apply to the wider estate. After visiting England in the 1860s The French writer Hippolyte Taine commented:

Their dwellings [are] huge machines, partly Italian or partly Gothic, without distinctive character. One sees that they are spacious, comfortable, well kept – nothing more. These are the houses of the rich, who understand comforts, and who sometimes rather unfortunately, have architectural fancies; many elegant cottages, covered and encumbered with turrets, seem playthings in glazed pasteboard. All their imagination, all their national and personal invention, have been expended upon their parks.⁷⁵⁵

Monograms on the buildings at Shangton and Lamport were not only subjects of Sir Charles' architectural invention, but also signalled his personal and dynastic benevolence. They associated the Ishams with a well-built 'improved' sort of dwelling.

⁷⁵⁴ T. Mowl, 'The Evolution of the Park Gate Lodge', p. 1; Mowl, *Trumpet at a Distant Gate*.

⁷⁵⁵ Rubinstein, *Victorian Homes*, p. 46.

Sir Charles was described as a man of a ‘transparently kind and simple nature, an admirable host, a sympathetic landlord, generous to a fault’.⁷⁵⁶ His concern with the welfare of his tenants is evidenced by his attendance at meetings of the Agricultural Society, by giving of rent relief during the agricultural depression and by the raising of funds for local charity.⁷⁵⁷ The presence of Sir Charles’ initials announced his benevolence to the local community and visitors to Lamport, but also reflected the interests of a man deeply invested in his estate and who was said to have had ‘an extraordinary attachment for rural life’.⁷⁵⁸

There were undoubtedly multiple motivations to improve or rebuild estate housing. The evidence discussed so far dispels any myth that estate management was a purely masculine sphere and operated along gendered lines. Although agents and farmers were predominantly male, both men and women supervised and oversaw the management of the built environment. Similarly to the conclusions reached in Chapter Five, this was determined by marriage dynamic, circumstances and inclination. Viscountess Milton’s interest in alterations to the estate was almost certainly the consequence of her ownership of the land and her personal interest in securing an estate for her son to inherit. Lady Carbery’s role may have been a consequence of her life interest in Laxton. However, investment in cottages and farm buildings was also the consequence of a desire to improve the living conditions of villagers. With this came the ability to attract and secure a better kind of tenant and to ensure that the estate was morally sound. In the context of Haselbech, it is evident that an element of social control and a belief in the authority of the country house owner determined decisions when managing the built environment. This control is even more evident in discussions over the erection of the school and alterations to the church at Haselbech. Here, the importance of the position of Viscountess Milton on the estate comes into sharp focus.

⁷⁵⁶ ‘An Eccentric Baronet’, *Supplement to The Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 16 May 1903, p. 2.

⁷⁵⁷ In a letter from Sir Charles Isham to his tenants he wrote, ‘In consideration of the late exceptionally trying season, Sir Charles Isham wishes to express his sympathy with you by returning 10 per cent. on the half-year’s rent’. See *Northampton Mercury*, 16 August 1879, p. 6.

⁷⁵⁸ ‘Death of Sir Chas. Isham Bart. Special Memoir’, *Northamptonshire Mercury*, 10 April 1903, p.5.

Church and Parsonage Building: Conflicting Religion

This section will describe how the built environment could act as a locus for issues of authority and control between the local clergyman and landowner.⁷⁵⁹ This is exemplified by the turbulent relationship between the parson, Bury, and Viscountess Milton in the second half of the nineteenth century. Uncertainties about their roles as clergyman and estate owner, but also as a ‘gentleman’ and ‘Lady’, created tension and distrust. This was aggravated by overlapping areas of jurisdiction; both felt in some way responsible for the physical and spiritual well-being of the parish. These tensions presented themselves during the construction or alteration of buildings on the estate including a school, parsonage and church, which might traditionally be considered within the clergyman’s scope, but also cottages and shops, traditionally the landowner’s domain. A similar set of disagreements was also evident at Laxton Hall over the construction of a parsonage for the new incumbent. In the correspondence of Viscountess Milton and Lady Carbery the issues of authority, control, and social status are played out. As a result, this section will trace the role of both men and women in the construction of buildings related to the church and how specific dynamics determined the success or failure of building projects. These arguments, however, have to be read within the changing relationships between the church and parish as a whole and an explosion of interest in church architecture in the nineteenth century.

There was a growth of interest in church architecture on both a local and national scale in the nineteenth century. The church building acts of 1818 and 1824 resulted in a boom in building through the creation of grants. The Oxford society and Cambridge Camden society spearheaded research into churches from an archaeological and architectural perspective but also advised on church restorations and new builds.⁷⁶⁰ Not only did these societies prescribe how churches should look but also how the clergy should conduct services. Their influence stimulated a growth of regional groups, such as the Northamptonshire Architectural Society, which absorbed many of their ideas but also created a forum for discussion within the local community. Meetings of these societies were an opportunity for architects, clergymen and landowners to discuss architecture

⁷⁵⁹ For a similar approach see Ayres, ‘The Provision of Housing’, pp. 1–26.

⁷⁶⁰ P. Howell and I. Sutton (eds.), *The Faber Guide to the Victorian Church* (London, 1989), p. ix. For more on these two societies see J. F. White, *The Cambridge Movement: The Ecclesiologist and the Gothic Revival* (Cambridge, 1962).

and seek advice.⁷⁶¹ The increase in commentary on church architecture can be understood as part of a wider movement of reform within the church and which Smith argues advocated a more accessible and engaged clergy embedded in the community.⁷⁶²

Smith has described how the identity of the clergyman within the parish was changing in the nineteenth century. Not only did clergymen play an important role in ministering their flock but also in the running of charities and provision of education.⁷⁶³ Large numbers of nineteenth-century clergyman had been to university and, as a result, were frequently the most educated in a village.⁷⁶⁴ It is not surprising therefore, that they were increasingly looked to as potential leaders in rural communities, especially if the landlord was absent. The tensions created by an ambitious and active clergyman heavily invested in parish affairs created conflict at Haselbech. Viscountess Milton feared that her authority and status would be eclipsed and that any idealised vision of the landowner as a figure looked up to by the community would be disrupted.⁷⁶⁵

Chadwick has argued that the clergyman's 'usefulness in the parish, his capacity for almsgiving, his free access, the decoration of his church or effectiveness of his school, often depended on alliance with the squire or the farmers.'⁷⁶⁶ This was especially true when altering or erecting structures associated with the church. The church and attached buildings were traditionally objects of architectural patronage for the landowner. Where the advowson of a living was held by an individual patron, frequently the lord of the manor, they often contributed to the maintenance of, or alterations to, the church and might construct or maintain a parsonage for the incumbent. However, tensions arose over the control of the landowner and control of the clergyman during the erection of a new parsonage at Laxton Hall.

The building of the parsonage at Laxton was part of a rebuilding of the village begun in 1804, before the fourth Baron Carbery's death. Built in 1806, the parsonage is marked out as different from the buildings in the rest of the village by its size and style. The

⁷⁶¹ C. Miele, "'Their Interest and Habit': Professionalism and the Restoration of Medieval Churches, 1837–77" in C. Brooks and A. Saint (eds.), *The Victorian Church: Architecture and Society* (Manchester, 1995), pp. 151–172 (p. 168).

⁷⁶² J. T. Smith, *A Victorian Class Conflict* (Brighton, 2009), p. 7.

⁷⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶⁴ S. Morgan, *A Victorian Woman's Place: Public Culture in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 2007), p. 27.

⁷⁶⁵ N. Everett, *The Tory View of Landscape* (Hew Haven and London, 1994), p. 131.

⁷⁶⁶ O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* (Cambridge, 1970–2), vol. 2, p. 156.

entrance front consists of two gables with tall finials, between which is a two storey ashlar porch with a Tudor arched doorway. The whole of the porch is framed by two narrow buttresses terminating in moulded pinnacles and giving an otherwise plain facade a perpendicular character. This marks a break from the picturesque cottages of the rest of the estate. The Gothic appearance of the house is likely to have been a reference to its ecclesiastical purpose and was a design decision recommended in pattern books later in the century.⁷⁶⁷ On the south elevation of the building is a cartouche displaying the Initial E to remind the minister that while the parsonage was the home of the incumbent, the house was under the patronage of the Evans.

Before starting to build the parsonage at Laxton the donative was vested by Lady Carbery in a new minister, Rev C. Chew.⁷⁶⁸ The Carberys owned a donative, as opposed to an advowson, which entitled them directly to vest a person with the living without presenting them to the Bishop for approval. By accepting the living at Laxton the parson was entitled to the benefice which came with it. The parsonage, however, did not belong to the benefice but to the patrons who gifted its use to the incumbent during his residency. Chew's letters are filled with deferential assertions and self-deprecating statements and his tone, whilst recognising his subservient position, tried to conceal his unyielding stance when it came to alterations to the parsonage that he believed necessary for a comfortable life. For example, he wrote 'I am...desirous cordially to pay all deference shown to my exalted patrons, not more elevated in rank than by their unbounded beneficence'.⁷⁶⁹ However, the correspondence which followed was a tangle of misunderstandings and accusations which, in a progression of events parallel to those with Repton described in Chapter Five, resulted in Chew resigning his position.

In designing a building for someone else certain assumptions have to be made about the household, their lifestyle and values. Or to put it another way, when building the parsonage at Laxton, a decision had to be made about what characterised a home equivalent in rank and value to the living. Divergent views of the identity, social, and visual standing of the person living in the new parsonage was an inevitable point of conflict between the patron and the future incumbent. Not only did the architect have to understand the patrons' vision of a future undesigned minister but they had to

⁷⁶⁷ A. Savidge, *The Parsonage in England: Its History and Architecture* (London, 1864), pp. 129–131.

⁷⁶⁸ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Lady Carbery to Rev. C. Chew, c. 1807.

⁷⁶⁹ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Lady Carbery to George Freke Evans, c. 1807.

anticipate the minister's needs and lifestyle which could vary considerably between individual incumbents. The extreme difference in the wealth of clergymen and their livings was recognised in architectural pattern books. In 1841 the architect Thomas F. Hunt described designs he had published on a hierarchical scale. At the top were houses suited to both parson and squire: 'A house erected from this Design would be a suitable residence for a Clergyman on an opulent living; or it would be applicable as a Manor House.'⁷⁷⁰ Kerr's *The Gentleman's Country House* includes suggestions for parsonages as well as for the grandest mansions. These better sorts of parsonages are likely to have been built by men of rank who had entered the clergy, a practice at its peak between 1810 and 1830, or by a wealthy patron to a living.⁷⁷¹ The architecture of the parsonage is thus indicative of the tension which could exist between the competing visual status of the clergy and of the country house owner on the estate. Both could command a residence fit for a gentleman. At Laxton, a new parsonage was built to the designs of the Reptons and to a standard that Lady Carbery and Evans believed was appropriate for the value of the living.

The Evans and Chew clashed on three main points concerning the parsonage and its design: the influence of Chew during the design of the floor plan, the addition of offices, and the length of tenure. These were, in part, practical problems but also impinged upon Chew's perception of his status within the parish, ecclesiological differences between Evans and Chew and conflicting information given to Chew by Lady Carbery and Evans.

From the outset Chew expressed concerns to Lady Carbery about his position at Laxton: 'circumstances have made me apprehensive that I am no longer regarded at Laxton as a gentleman, nor hardly considered as a Clergyman in my own parish.'⁷⁷² In a letter to Lady Carbery he described an 'unaccountable coolness' towards him on the part of Lady Carbery and Evans.⁷⁷³ This was compounded by anxieties that his position was being appropriated by the schoolmaster, Mr Charter, who Lady Carbery insisted should provide instruction in singing to the children in the parish and who ran the Sunday school – the latter described disparagingly by Chew as 'a conventicle'. In reply

⁷⁷⁰ T. F. Hunt, *Designs for Parsonage Houses, Aalms Houses etc. etc.* (London, 1841), p. 6.

⁷⁷¹ A. D. Gilbert, 'The Land and the Church', in Mingay *The Victorian Countryside*, pp. 43–57 (p. 50).

⁷⁷² Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Rev. C. Chew to Lady Carbery, c. February 1807.

⁷⁷³ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Rev. C. Chew to Lady Carbery, n.d.

Lady Carbery informed Chew that singing had always been instructed by Charter and that ‘he will as usual superintend my Sunday School...in doing which he is answerable to no one but to me’.⁷⁷⁴ Lady Carbery exclaimed that she could not understand Chew’s need to be consulted on every subject relating to the church. On the other side, Chew felt areas within his jurisdiction as a clergyman were threatened and, although it may have been acceptable to the previous incumbent, Chew clearly questioned the extent of lay influence in the day to day running of the church.

Evans, on the other hand, confronted Chew on matters of liturgy. After a service at Laxton he wrote to Chew to request that he only read from the ‘approved lessons’ as they were ‘universally read’.⁷⁷⁵ He also took the opportunity to explain to Chew that he could not see the ‘propriety of your speaking with such approbation from the pulpit...of places of worship out of the established church’.⁷⁷⁶ Evans’ High Church standards clashed with Chew’s evangelical approach. When corresponding with Evans on the terms of his appointment at Laxton, the exasperated Chew exclaimed: ‘Was not your Ladyship looking out for an evangelical Clergyman? & was not I accepted as one of that description?’⁷⁷⁷

It was possible Evans and Lady Carbery’s close supervision of the church was a consequence of holding a donative advowson.⁷⁷⁸ Certainly Evans argued that ‘from the peculiar circumstances of Laxton being out of the Bishops jurisdiction’ he felt it his duty to guard against any irregularity’.⁷⁷⁹ However, personal religion was undoubtedly a factor. The family friend and author De Quincey wrote of Lady Carbery’s religious devotion ‘supporting locally the Church of England, patronizing schools, diffusing the most extensive relief to every mode of indigence or distress’.⁷⁸⁰ He went so far as to suggest that ‘had any mode of monastic life existed for Protestants, I believe that she would before this have entered it’. He explained, ‘having sunk into gloomy discontent with life, and its miserable performances as contrasted with its promises, she sought relief and support to her wounded feelings from religion’.⁷⁸¹ Lady Carbery also

⁷⁷⁴ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Lady Carbery to Rev. C. Chew, 12 February 1807.

⁷⁷⁵ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, George Freke Evans to Rev. C. Chew, 17 August 1807.

⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁷ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Rev. C. Chew to Lady Carbery, c. November 1807.

⁷⁷⁸ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, George Freke Evans to Rev. C. Chew, 18 August 1807.

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁰ De Quincey, *Works*, p. 349.

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

cultivated an intellectual interest in religion. She engaged in theological debates with De Quincey and learnt Greek in order to read the New Testament.⁷⁸²

At one point, Lady Carbery went so far as to question Chew's faith and his anxieties over secular affairs. In the same letter in which Chew questioned Charter and Lady Carbery's role in the church, he complained about the conditions he had arrived to at Laxton. He was disappointed and surprised that the donative was not a lifelong position and argued that he had sacrificed much to relocate to the parish. In response Lady Carbery wrote:

you mention them as trials of faith & patience you will pardon my saying I really think it is a mocking of the times & I trouble to think (if such grievances as you have mentioned form trials of faith & patience) of what will become of us when a day of real affliction shall arrive.⁷⁸³

The Evans', and in particular Lady Carbery's, engagement with the church can thus be read as an expression of their strong religious sentiment. The disagreements and questions of control this created were reflected in discussions over the building of the parsonage. Chew was in an unusual position. When accepting the living at Laxton sometime in 1806 or 1807 he had been informed that a new parsonage was to be built. It is evident that Chew had been privy to designs and, according to Lady Carbery, had negotiated alterations to them. In corresponding on the initial design Chew believed he had a voice in the building's conceptualisation and, as became evident in later correspondence, in its future development.⁷⁸⁴

This view was not shared by Evans or Lady Carbery. Evans argued: 'no terms whatever were made or implied except as to the stipend – that a new parsonage was not promised to you at any stated period & consequently if the first stone had not been laid even at this day, you could not have said you had been deceived'.⁷⁸⁵ Chew retorted that Lady Carbery had promised a parsonage would be built in the course of the following year and that it would be 'built for me, that is, as the Minister of this place; & that it should be to my mind, as I was to live in it'.⁷⁸⁶ In support of this, Lady Carbery does appear to

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 375.

⁷⁸³ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Lady Carbery to Rev. C. Chew, 12 February 1807.

⁷⁸⁴ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, George Freke Evans to Rev. C. Chew, 26 November 1807.

⁷⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁶ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Rev. C. Chew to Lady Carbery, c. 1807.

have given Chew an active say in the design. Chew had required three sitting rooms 'to be comfortable' and requested that the height of the bedrooms should be sufficient to accommodate his four poster beds. Lady Carbery commented that these requests had caused considerable difficulties when the Reptons made their plans. She wrote:

Sir I am compelled to say, that it was your consciousness that the three sitting rooms being built originated neither in any mistaking you upon the subject, nor in their having been (as you now say) part of my original plan, but that they were built at your own express desire.⁷⁸⁷

When built, Evans chided Chew for changing his mind after he had told Evans three rooms were unnecessary. Chew denied ever requesting they should be built. A similar argument arose over the lack of offices attached to the parsonage. Chew could not conceive that Lady Carbery would contemplate building a 'naked house' especially after he had expressed the expectation that offices would be constructed. He had not been corrected by Lady Carbery in this hope and had therefore understood they would be built. Chew wrote, 'I beg you to reflect upon the situation you reduce me to'.⁷⁸⁸ In practical terms, a lack of space to keep horses, he believed, would prevent his receiving guests.

Mr Evans declares it is not his intention to build either barn or stable at the Parsonage, or suffer any person whatever to do it. What can this mean? Lady Carbery allows me to continue upon the terms on which I came, which I am willing to do; & Mr Evans comes in with a condition, that deprives me of the power & the hope ever to visit or to receive a friend, in circumstances as I am in this village, besides the want of accommodation in other aspects!⁷⁸⁹

Chew saw Evans as an interfering influence and, in this situation at least, as undermining his original agreement with Lady Carbery. Though the grievances Chew held about the construction of his home were directed against Lady Carbery and, he argued, rested upon her honour, he initially corresponded with both Lady Carbery and Evans.⁷⁹⁰ In the same unrestrained manner in which he corresponded with Repton,

⁷⁸⁷ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Lady Carbery copy of Rev. C. Chew's letter of 27 November 1807 with her answer of the 30 November 1807.

⁷⁸⁸ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, George Freke Evans to Rev. C. Chew, 24 November 1807.

⁷⁸⁹ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Rev. C. Chew to Lady Carbery, c. November 1807.

⁷⁹⁰ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Rev. C. Chew to George Freke Evans, 25 November 1807.

Evans explicitly stated that Lady Carbery never intended to build offices at the parsonage and further questioned Chew's right to ever suppose he had any say in the building's design: 'you must give me leave to ask what right you had to suppose that your hints were to regulate Lady Carbery's conduct that it was incumbent upon her to explain to you every particular of her intentions.'⁷⁹¹

The issues surrounding the construction of the parsonage are illustrative of several wider issues. First, in spite of choosing an enthused evangelical minister Lady Carbery and Evans kept tight controls on all aspects of the clergyman's responsibilities. They evidently believed that their views came first, even in matters of religion, and that Chew should be grateful for such a high quality parsonage and good position. There also seems to be a wider miscommunication between Chew, Lady Carbery and Evans. It was Lady Carbery who had appointed Chew to the living and it was Lady Carbery who appears to have entered into negotiations with Chew and Repton over the design of the parsonage.⁷⁹² Who was telling the truth in the arguments related above is not clear, however it is apparent that Evans took control of the situation and defended his wife. Both evidently read each other's letters and presented a coordinated response to Chew's complaints. On the other side of the argument, Chew felt like he had been cheated. He was not given the living he was promised and called upon the Evans to treat him decently, as a gentleman, but also to allow him to perform his role as a clergyman.

While female involvement in the religious life of the community was not unusual, Lady Carbery's experience at Laxton foregrounds the extent to which this could move beyond a spiritual concern to control over the built environment. While the homes of the parish clergy were contested sites of authority, it might be assumed the fabric of the church was more firmly under the control of the clergy. However, legally, the responsibility for the material fabric of the nave lay with the parish and the chancel, with the patron.

The finance needed to restore or expand churches was raised in various ways. Women have commonly been associated with raising funds. At Sywell, the newspapers noted that Lady Wantage, the daughter of Lord Overstone, had taken a special interest in the

⁷⁹¹ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, George Freke Evans to Rev. C. Chew, 26 November 1807.

⁷⁹² Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/4, Rev. C. Chew to Lady Carbery, c. February 1807.

alteration of the church which had cost Lord Overstone £1750.⁷⁹³ Local Northamptonshire papers were also filled with notices of church bazaars and lists of female patronesses. Both Viscountess Milton and Emily Isham were patronesses of a bazaar in aid of the subscription for erecting a new church in the parish of St Sepulchre in Northampton, even if in reality the event was actually managed by the middle-class ladies of the town.⁷⁹⁴

Where there was a resident country house owner it was common that they would cover the expense, or at least a large portion. However, the patronage of an individual or dominant subscriber created scope for disagreement over the subsequent control of those alterations.⁷⁹⁵ Viscountess Milton was prepared to pay for repairs to Haselbech church after a report by the architect Edmund F. Law, a prominent member of the Northamptonshire Architectural Society, declared that the building was dangerous.⁷⁹⁶ In March 1858, she hired the architect John L. Pearson to draw up plans and halted all other estate building in anticipation of the future expense.⁷⁹⁷ When the designs were complete she showed them to the incumbent at the time, Rev. Henry Robinson, and altered them to incorporate his desires. However, the pair came to an impasse when Robinson asked for an alteration Viscountess Milton was unwilling to make: the position of her family pews in the church.⁷⁹⁸

In a letter dated December 1858 Fisher advised Viscountess Milton that alternative plans were being prepared and that a faculty was going to be applied for.⁷⁹⁹ These plans were under the guidance of Robinson and the tenant farmer and local MP Mr Pell. The architect they chose was William Slater who had been born in Haselbech and was well thought of by the Northamptonshire Architectural Society. He had been commissioned for similar projects across the county and notably had been hired by Sir Charles Isham

⁷⁹³ O'Brien, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 849, Lord Overstone to George W. Norman, 9 April 1858.

⁷⁹⁴ 'Bazaar in aid of the subscription for erecting a new church in the parish of St Sepulchre, Northampton', *Northampton Mercury*, 5 January 1839, p. 3.

⁷⁹⁵ W. Jacob, *Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 197.

⁷⁹⁶ NRO, FS 24/7, Albert Pell to Edward K. Fisher, 11 October 1857. For more on Edmund F. Law see Chapter Three.

⁷⁹⁷ NRO, FS 24/10, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 29 March 1858; NRO, FS 24/10 Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 13 August 1858.

⁷⁹⁸ NRO, FS 24/11, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 4 February 1859.

⁷⁹⁹ NRO, FS 24/10, Edward K. Fisher to Viscountess Milton, 14 December 1858.

in the past.⁸⁰⁰ Not only was control over the design being taken away from Viscountess Milton but her position as a patron was also threatened. Robinson had found someone else to provide the finances: the Ishams.

I only wish Sir Ch & Lady Isham could know all for I am sadly afraid Mr R[obinson] (who does not stick to the truth) makes them believe many things wh are very false & I think if he persuades them to undertake the whole expense of the church wh he probably will do it will be a most un neighbourly and unkind thing to do mainly to oppose & annoy us.⁸⁰¹

Viscountess Milton recognised that the only way to force Robinson to acquiesce to her desires was to make it impossible for him to repair the church without her help. When that right was appropriated by the Ishams, Viscountess Milton's bargaining power was removed. She felt unable to offer her patronage when Robinson and Pell 'completely put an end to the chance of my faculty being granted & entirely ignored my right to have an opinion or wish about the arrangements of the church'.⁸⁰²

When the papers reported the re-opening of St. Michael, Haselbech, on 27 August 1859 Robinson, his family, Sir Charles and Emily, and Pell were among those present. Conspicuous by their absence was Viscountess Milton or any representative of her family. The papers noted Sir Charles was 'a liberal contributor to the repairs and restoration' designed by Slater.⁸⁰³ The subscription list shows that Sir Charles donated £300 of the £1,146 10s 4d spent on the restoration. However other members of the immediate family also donated smaller sums. These included his mother the Dowager Lady Isham, brother, Rev. Robert Isham, daughter Mrs Macleod and his mother-in-law

⁸⁰⁰ William Slater was a life member of the Northamptonshire Architectural Society and was mentioned in a number of reports. Although he was from Haselbech, his practice was based in London. In 1854 he supplied plans for the reseating and restoration of the church at Islip, designs for new pews at Weldon, plans for reseating and restoration of the church at Stanwick and, in 1868, he advised on alterations to the chancel of the church at Earls Baton. See 'The Tenth Report of the Architectural Society of the Archdeaconry of Northampton', in *Reports and Papers Read at the Meetings of the Architectural Societies of the Archdeaconry of Northampton, the County of York, the Dioceses of Lincoln and Worcester; and of the Architectural & Archaeological Society of the County of Bedford* (London, 1854), pp. i–xiii; 'The Twenty Third Report of the Architectural Society of the Archdeaconry of Northampton', *Reports and Papers of the Architectural and Archaeological Societies of the County of York, Diocese of Lincoln, Archdeaconry of Northampton, County of Bedford and County of Leicester* (London, 1868), pp. xciv–civ.

⁸⁰¹ NRO, FS 24/10, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 11 December 1858.

⁸⁰² NRO, FS 24/11, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 4 February 1859.

⁸⁰³ 'Restoration of Haselbeech [sic] Church', *Northampton Mercury*, 27 August 1859, p. 4.

the Right Hon. Dowager Lady St. John. The Robinsons and Pells contributed £150 each. In all, the Ishams, Pells and Robinsons contributed close to two thirds of the total cost.⁸⁰⁴ In the chancel to Haselbech church is a carved stone plaque reading ‘1860. Revd Henry Robinson, Rector, the North Aisle and roof of this church were rebuilt, and the church reseated and otherwise restored. W. Slater, London Archt.’ Viscountess Milton was effectively removed from any association with the church repairs.

Patronage of the church was seen as a right by Viscountess Milton as much as a duty or paternal obligation. As a result she felt that there was something far more malicious occurring than a disagreement over church design. In a situation comparable to her disagreements with the next incumbent over Haselbech school, described later in this chapter, Viscountess Milton believed she was being denied her right as ‘mistress’ to control and manage the built environment of the estate. In her eyes, the root cause of this was Pell, his inability to follow the law or convention, and his determination to annoy her in any way possible. The source of the antipathy between Pell and Viscountess Milton is not obviously apparent, but may have centred on Pell’s position within the community. Unlike Viscountess Milton, he was resident at Haselbech where he leased a house and considerable land holdings from his wife’s cousin, Sir Charles.⁸⁰⁵ He was very active at Haselbech and at various points acted as churchwarden, guardian of the poor, justice of the peace and a prominent member of the Brixworth Union.⁸⁰⁶ Pell also formed strong alliances. Hurren has described the close friendship Pell formed with Bury, Robinson’s successor, which, she argued, transformed Bury from a cooperative local clergyman to a crusading influence at odds with Viscountess Milton.⁸⁰⁷ It is evident that Pell also had a close relationship with Robinson. With Pell’s direct engagement with the community and the drawing in of the Ishams into Haselbech matters, it must have felt as if he was closing ranks on Viscountess Milton, threatening her authority.

⁸⁰⁴ NRO, FS 24/13, ‘Restoration of Haselbech Church Subscriptions’, 1859.

⁸⁰⁵ E. Clarke, ‘Pell, Albert (1820–1907)’, rev. by Baker, A. P., *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online Edition* (Oxford, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35461> [accessed 20 June 2012].

⁸⁰⁶ A. Pell, *The Reminiscences of Albert Pell, Sometime M.P. for South Leicestershire* (London, 1908), p. 164. For more on his role in the Brixworth Union see E. T. Hurren, ‘Labourers are Revolting: Penalising the Poor and a Political Reaction in the Brixworth Union, Northamptonshire, 1875–1885’ *Rural History*, 11 (2000), pp. 37–55 (p. 51).

⁸⁰⁷ E. Hurren, *Protesting about Pauperism: Poverty, Politics and Poor Relief in Late-Victorian England 1870–1900* (Wiltshire, 2007), pp. 161–162, 258.

How far the Ishams' participation in the church restorations at Haselbech was a calculated act by Pell or how far the Ishams knew about the antipathy between Pell and Viscountess Milton is not clear. However, it is evident that Sir Charles had a personal interest in church design irrespective of any underhanded motives and, as a principal landowner in Haselbech, a personal interest in the village.⁸⁰⁸ Sir Charles was a member of the Northamptonshire Architectural Society and owned several publications by the Cambridge Camden Society, including the widely circulated *A Few Notes on Church Building*.⁸⁰⁹ In September 1867 he was made a vice-president of the London Free and Open Church Association which aimed to abolish pew rents.⁸¹⁰ As a consequence, he was unlikely to have been sympathetic when it came to Viscountess Milton's concern over the location of her family seats. Sir Charles' interest was undoubtedly a consequence of a more general preoccupation with design and religion. His style of church restorations is described in a letter from Fisher to Viscountess Milton:

His taste in matters of the this kind is to restore & improve without doing away with the old features & character of the edifice to a greater extent this is unavoidable but with regard to Haselbech church I do not think he wishes to interfere or improve any condition beyond this.⁸¹¹

This is further suggested by an annotation in a scrapbook of articles compiled by Sir Charles: 'an old church rebuilt becomes destitute of tradition'.⁸¹² Sir Charles also contributed to the internal fittings of a number of other churches. On 30 March 1863 the Rev. John H. Holdich began a 'thorough restoration of the chancel' at the church of St Nicholas, Bulwick, Northamptonshire. Sir Charles designed a monogram, not unlike those at Lamport, to commemorate Holdich's mother-in-law, Anna Maria Wartnaby (d. 1863), who died before fulfilling a promise to pay for new seats at the church [Figure 45].⁸¹³ There are eleven carved blocks on the back of the pews in the chancel. The central block, designed by Sir Charles, is carved with the monogram 'AWM'.

⁸⁰⁸ Whellan, *History, Topography and Directory of Northamptonshire*, p. 832.

⁸⁰⁹ A copy of this publication survives in the archival collections at Lamport Hall.

⁸¹⁰ *Northampton Mercury*, 14 September 1867, p. 6.

⁸¹¹ NRO, FS 24/10, Edward K. Fisher to Viscountess Milton, 14 December 1858.

⁸¹² LH, Three large scrapbooks containing articles etc. selected, pasted and annotated by Sir Charles Isham, vol. 1., back of front cover.

⁸¹³ NRO, ZB 561/1/1–37, Journal of the Rev. John Henry Holdich Rector of Bulwick Northamptonshire 1862–1892.

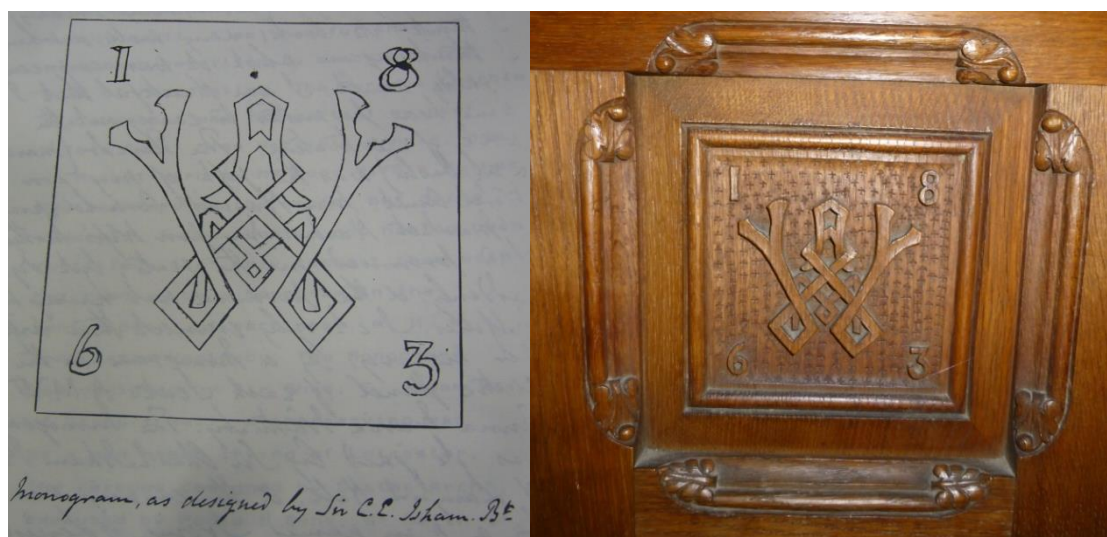


Figure 45: Photocopy of design for pew at Bulwick by Sir Charles Isham taken from the Journal of the Rev. John H. Holdich Rector of Bulwick and the design as executed at Bulwick Church (NRO, ZB 561/1/1–37). Reproduced with permission of the Northamptonshire Record Office.

As well as their more public facing exterior architecture, churches were also places for private remembrance. This was given physical expression in family memorials. These were very personal design projects, presented in the enlarged domestic domain of the estate. They connected the family of the country house with the community through their location and shared religion and could be understood as both status symbols and objects of piety.⁸¹⁴ Due to their often very personal nature it is perhaps unsurprising that it is here where there is some of the most evidence of the direct involvement of patrons in design on the estate. At both Lamport and Haselbech there are surviving examples of memorials to members of the family and evidence of the direct involvement of Viscountess Milton and Sir Charles in their design and production.

⁸¹⁴ H. Mytum, 'Monuments and Memory in the Estate Landscape: Castle Howard and Sledmere', in J. Finch and K. Giles (eds.), *Estate Landscapes: Design, Improvement and Power in the Post-Medieval Landscape* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 149–76.



Figure 46: Stained Glass window painted by Viscountess Milton, St Michael, Haselbech, 1872.

In 1872 a chapel was built at the church of St Michael, Haselbech, in memory of Louisa Blanche Foljambe, the daughter-in-law of Viscountess Milton, and her new born son. To build the chapel Cecil George Foljambe commissioned the architect Anthony Salvin. However the practical arrangements of organising stone and finding a builder to work under Salvin were left to Viscountess Milton and Fisher.⁸¹⁵ The chapel contained an altar-tomb with a recumbent figure of Louisa embracing Frederick, her new born child.⁸¹⁶ The windows of the chapel are filled with stained glass painted by Louisa's sisters and mother-in-law. The north window was painted by Viscountess Milton and

⁸¹⁵ NRO, FS 24/58/73, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 15 December 1871.

⁸¹⁶ In 1908 this monument was moved to Tickhill, where it remains today.

reads ‘Painted to the memory of a much loved daughter and sister by Selina Viscountess Milton, Elizth Ann Foljambe, Frances Mary Foljambe, Caroline Frederica Foljambe, 1873’ [Figure 46]. The three lights of the window depict scenes of the Crucifixion, the Entombment and the Holy Women at the Tomb. The subjects of the two east lancet windows of the chapel are of Jesus setting a child amidst the disciples and Christ blessing the children. These were painted by Catherine J.V. Harcourt and Margaret Fanny Howard.⁸¹⁷ This act of family patronage and also of family design and craft reclaimed a space in the church, which Viscountess Milton had lost control of in 1860.

Penny argues that ‘great families with whom no one in the parish could quarrel – least of all the parson, whose living was in their patronage’ – erected the greatest number of monuments in churches.⁸¹⁸ However, in spite of the personal nature of their monuments and their influence in the parish, owners of the country house were not as free of the influence of the local clergy as Penny would suggest. At Haselbech, once again, the sour relationship between Viscountess Milton and the incumbent reared its head. As a monument to her husband, Viscountess Milton installed an organ in the chancel. Inscribed across the top are the words ‘This Organ was erected by Selina Viscountess Milton A^o D^m MDCCCLXX In remembrance of George Savile Foljambe. Esq^{re}. Who Died A^o D^m Dec^r XVIII. MDCCCLXIX’. In 1878 Bury proposed changing the position of the organ.⁸¹⁹ This was met with the disapproval of Viscountess Milton and Scales.

Scales argued that it should not be Bury’s decision alone and that he thought it was a matter which should be brought to the attention of the churchwardens and ratepayers.⁸²⁰ As previously mentioned the chancel of the church was the responsibility of the tithe owner not the tithe payer and thus marked the stamp of ownership upon the church.⁸²¹ The different viewpoints of Bury and Viscountess Milton are set out in a letter from Bury: ‘it appears that Lady Milton regards the organ rather as a monumental erection to the memory of her late Mr Foljambe of Osberton, than as a gift to the church’. To avoid further arguments Bury suggested that Viscountess Milton apply for a faculty to remove the organ. Bury was confident another could be found and ‘the church of which I [Bury]

⁸¹⁷ C. G. S. Foljambe, ‘Monumenta Foljambeana’, *The Reliquary*, 15 (1874), p. 30.

⁸¹⁸ N. Penny, *Church Monuments in Romantic England* (New Haven, 1977), p. 41.

⁸¹⁹ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 2 December 1878.

⁸²⁰ NRO, FS 24/69, Mr Scales to Edward K. Fisher, 10 September 1878.

⁸²¹ Penny, *Church Monuments*, p. 41.

am Rector would therefore suffer no loss.’⁸²² This assertion of Bury’s authority over the church and of his independence from Viscountess Milton is reminiscent of Robinson’s exclusion of Viscountess Milton from the church restoration in 1859. Bury believed it was unfair that so little consideration was given by Viscountess Milton to ‘restorers of the church’.⁸²³

A far more positive relationship existed between the Ishams and the incumbents of All Hallows. The family built a chapel in 1673 under which is a vault where members of the Isham family up to Sir Charles are buried.⁸²⁴ Unlike Viscountess Milton, the Ishams had been at Lamport since the thirteenth century and were well established in the parish as well as the church. Many of its incumbents had been drawn from the family or from those with close dynastic or personal connections.⁸²⁵ Across the church are monuments to family members who died in the nineteenth century. In a similar way to Viscountess Milton, Sir Charles showed a very personal and active engagement with the design of a number of these. The first he erected was in the memory of his daughter Isabel Vere Isham who died aged seven in 1868.⁸²⁶

⁸²² NRO, FS 24/69, Rev. William Bury to Viscountess Milton, 15 September 1878.

⁸²³ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁴ G. Isham, *All Hallow’s Church, Lamport Northamptonshire* (Northampton, 1998), p. 4.

⁸²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 8–11.

⁸²⁶ Isabel Vere Isham’s death was reported in the *Northampton Mercury*. This included an article describing her funeral. See *Northampton Mercury*, 29 February 1868, p. 6.

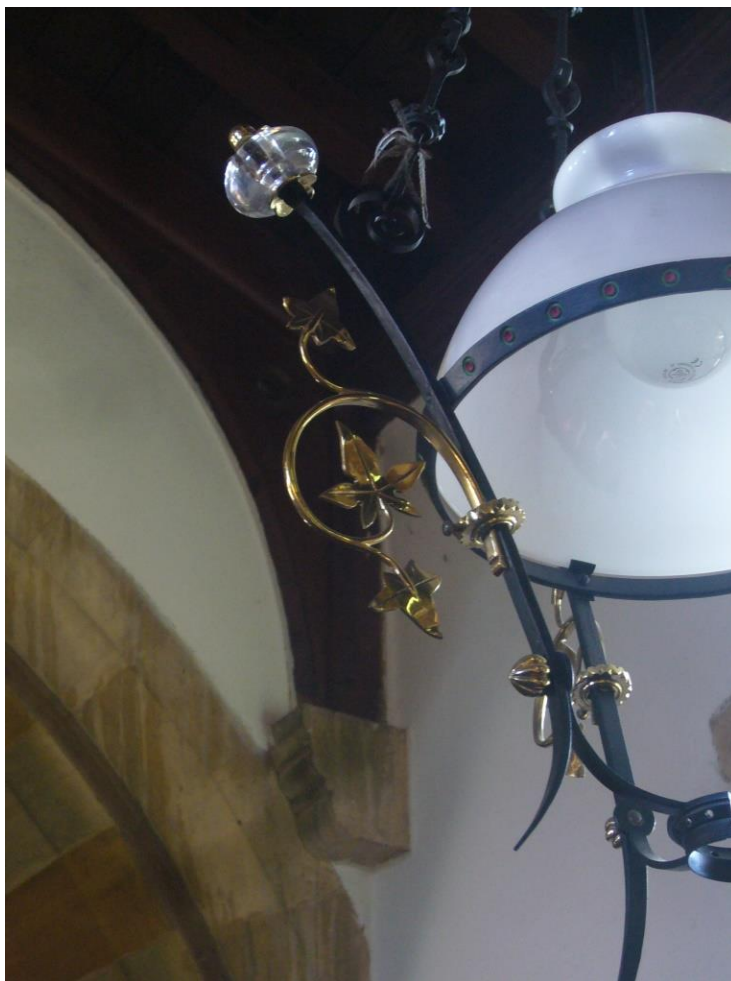


Figure 47: Ivy leaf pendant, Scaldwell Church.

A brass plaque in the nave of the church records that the decoration of the tower and font was completed in remembrance of Isabel Vere. The ceiling is painted with twisted ivy around a central red rose, referencing Isabel's initials I.V.I and the name used for her by her parents. This was not the only memorial to his daughter. The pendants of oil lamps given to Scaldwell Church as a gift from the Ishams in 1868 were also offered in remembrance of Isabel and are decorated with ivy leaves [Figure 47]. The brass plaque which commemorates this gift is also decorated with ivy in a similar fashion to those on the plaque at All Hallow's but also with a cross filled in with red, green and yellow mastic and with the letter 'V' twisted around its base. To remember his mother, Mary, Sir Charles commissioned a new organ chamber at All Hallow's built by the architect George F. Bodley. For his wife Emily who died in 1898 he commissioned another brass plaque for All Hallow's.⁸²⁷ Sir Charles suggested that this plaque would not be

⁸²⁷ A plaque referring to Mary Isham was also placed in Scaldwell church by the inhabitants. It read 'this brass plaque has been placed here by inhabitants of Scaldwell in affectionate remembrance of one who

considered conventional. He disapproved of the nineteenth-century fashion of using short epitaphs copied from printed collections of brass plaques and complained that the ‘amusing’ and ‘even comic vein’ of the previous century had been lost. Emily’s plaque inscription was anything but brief. Sir Charles recorded her last words and a short story of Lamport Hall, suggesting the joint importance of Emily and their home. Sir Charles believed his lengthy and unfashionable inscription would be subject to censure but that ‘Whatever may now be thought of the record in questions, one thing is certain, which is, that the time will arrive when, should it subsist, it will be looked upon as a bold and sweeping innovation on the trite and vapid cemetery effusions of the nineteenth century.’⁸²⁸

The relationships between clergymen, country house owners and other landowners in a parish were determining factors in the success of alterations to the country house estate and especially buildings associated with the church. The relationships of Viscountess Milton and Lady Carbery with their church incumbents have demonstrated that this could be strained due to ideological differences and conflicting concepts of their respective areas of jurisdiction. The nature of alterations and type of ownership were also potential sources of tension and could determine levels of engagement with design. As the patrons of the parsonage building at Laxton Hall, the Evans family ultimately had the final say in design decisions, even if these were at odds with the ideas of the incumbent. Sir Charles’ brass plaques and church alterations were highly personal examples of design and individual expressions of his interest in architecture and religion. Those at Lamport and Scaldwell were successfully executed in villages where comfortable relationships existed between residents. However, in spite of the personal nature of these monumental erections, contested jurisdiction over areas such as the internal arrangement of churches could threaten their survival. This section has shown that buildings associated with the church were often contested areas of authority. The success or failure of negotiations between individuals could determine the degree of authority clergyman and country house owners wielded in the building and design process, but also in ongoing management of the built environment. This is equally true of the design, construction and management of schools.

did much for the restoring & beautifying of this church & for the welfare both temporal & spiritual of those who worship here’.

⁸²⁸ Isham, ‘Addenda.’, in Isham, *Emily*, unpaginated.

School Building: The Landowner's or Minister's School?

In a paper presented to the Northampton Architectural Society in 1851 Thomas James, Vicar of Theddingworth, argued that appropriate school architecture aided the education of children and helped foster positive associations in connection with the parish:

the principal repeatedly advocated by this Society, that school-rooms should be something more than four brick walls. A handsome elevation and appropriate decoration is not thrown away either upon pupils or teachers, and those of ourselves who have had the advantage, and who still feel the influence, of happy architectural associations connected with the scenes of our education, should be the last to withhold from our poorer brethren, so much more impressible by externals than ourselves, a boon which not only influences the days of childhood, but carries its abiding associations to the end of life.⁸²⁹

Similarly to the design of cottages discussed above, there was a belief that the architecture of a school could influence the behaviour and improve the wellbeing of pupils. However, throughout the nineteenth century control over the building and design of schools was increasingly contested. Schools were undergoing a slow process of secularisation or as Edward R. Robson described in the wake of the Foster Act in 1870, education emerged from the 'denominational stage and become a national question.'⁸³⁰ He argued 'School-houses are henceforth to take rank as public buildings, and should be planned and built in a manner befitting their new dignity.'⁸³¹ The involvement of the state in education and school building had begun earlier in the century. The Committee of Council for Education was established in 1839 and a system of inspectors put into place. New Parliamentary Grants became available to build schools from 1833 and placed controls on the design of buildings and, in theory, loosened dependence upon wealthy patrons or the church to provide spaces for education.⁸³² However, it has been argued that many schools in rural locations remained heavily under the control of the local clergy and local gentry or aristocracy.⁸³³ Many

⁸²⁹ James, 'Report Read at the Autumn Meeting at Northampton', p. lxvi.

⁸³⁰ Robson, *School Architecture*, p. 4.

⁸³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁸³² M. Seabourne, *The English School: Its Architecture and Organization* (London, 1977), vol. 1, p.135.

⁸³³ Clemenson, *English Country Houses*, p. 89.

ministers saw education as a vital function of their position in the village. The connection with the church was also financial. Many schools in the early nineteenth century were funded by religious institutions such as The National Society or the British and Foreign Society.⁸³⁴ However, it is evident that this control over education was also considered by some as a vital part of the landowners' benevolent self-image.

The strong connection between the country house owner, church and school is expressed in the architecture of Laxton School erected by Evans and Lady Carbery in 1807. The school was built outside the village and within the grounds of Laxton Hall.⁸³⁵ The design shares common features with the parsonage showing the building's elevated status in the village but also creating a visual connection with the church and parsonage [Figure 48]. The pride which the Carberys took in their patronage of the local school is demonstrated by its depiction in book plates for the library's collection, which were most likely made when the library was redecorated and the books rebound in 1814 [Figure 49].⁸³⁶ De Quincey noted Lady Carbery's patronage of the school and Neale commented that 'The School House, a little detached from the Village, was designed by Repton; it is a handsome building in the pointed style; here all the children of the parish, between the ages of six and thirteen, are taught reading, writing, and plain work, and are all clothed at Lady Carbery's expense.'⁸³⁷ From these comments and the struggle mentioned between the Evans and Chew in the previous section, it is evident that Lady Carbery believed the school was under her control and that it formed an important part of her identity, as well as that of her family.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁵ NRO, SC 544, Plan of Laxton Hall estate, 1921.

⁸³⁶ Bisbrooke, T/2966/D/3, Letter to Lady Carbery about book binding and the layout of the library at Laxton, 1814.

⁸³⁷ De Quincey, *Works*, p. 349; Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen*, vol. 1, p. 3.



Figure 48: Late nineteenth-century photograph of the school building at Laxton Hall erected in 1807 ('A Short History of Laxton, Northamptonshire', <http://www.laxtonvillagehall.com/history> [accessed 24 October 2014]). Creator Unknown.



Figure 49: Book plate showing Laxton School in the background to the left ('Susan Lady Carbery & The Laxton Hall Bookplate', *The Somerset Dragon*, 25 (August 2013), p. 8).

The tensions which could form between church and patron demonstrated by disagreements between Lady Carbery and Chew described earlier in this chapter, are also evident just over fifty years later at Haselbech Hall. By this time a greater range of patrons could apply for state funding to build schools and Smith has also argued that the role of the clergyman in the education of the parish was more confidently expressed.⁸³⁸

In 1859 Viscountess Milton commented that she was ‘anxious to do something for my poorer neighbours especially as I have been so completely stopped from building the church, & that cold water was alas thrown upon my proposition to build a school &c for wh is so much wanted, but the only way will be to keep quite clear of Mr Robinson as long as he is at Haselbech’.⁸³⁹ Viscountess Milton’s construction of cottages and the way in which she was prevented from building the church have already been discussed; it is to the building of a school this chapter will now turn.

In 1871 designs were drawn up by the local builder Lucas, twelve years after a new school had originally been proposed. By this time Robinson had left Haselbech passing on the living to Bury, who took up the school building cause. Bury complained, ‘four plans of the proposed school site will not satisfy forever’.⁸⁴⁰ Although designs had been drawn up, building had not commenced. Designs of the school drawn by Lucas were the result of discussion between Viscountess Milton, Fisher and Bury. When considering them in her letters, Viscountess Milton demonstrated an awareness of the conventions of school design and in particular practical considerations which ensured the efficient use of the building. She required that a door should be built specifically for the girls to leave the school room and for the playground to be divided for girls and boys, thus ensuring the separation of the sexes. She commented that the windows must be high up to avoid any chance of distraction, and also noted other simpler practical considerations, such as the kitchen sink being located under the window so as to receive the most light.⁸⁴¹

Viscountess Milton’s concern was primarily with the plan of the school. She wanted to ensure that it would meet the requirements of the Privy Council in order to gain a grant, discussed further below. However, when it came to the exterior Viscountess Milton’s

⁸³⁸ Smith, *A Victorian Class Conflict*, pp. 1–12.

⁸³⁹ NRO, FS 24/11, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 7 February 1859.

⁸⁴⁰ NRO, FS 24/58/17, Rev. William Bury to Edward K. Fisher, c. 1871.

⁸⁴¹ NRO, FS 24/58, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 10 March 1871.

concern, as with her cottages, was to maintain an appropriate and fitting appearance for the village at minimal expense. Depending on the estimate Lucas provided for construction, she would build the front of the school of stone with brick window surrounds, and the back simply of brick.

After corresponding on the design of the school Viscountess Milton decided not to apply to the Privy Council for a grant:

We have quite decided upon having nothing to do with [the] Privy Council therefore I hope by the middle or towards the end of this month the Barn will be pulled down & the school begun – so pray don't let it be delayed any longer – & as we shall not be tied down by any Privy Council rules I shall not make the 3d bed room wh is quite unnecessary nor shall we require so much play ground, therefore I hope Church will not lose much of his field for it is really too good land, to give up for a playground.⁸⁴²

The financial benefit derived from a building grant was outweighed by the reduction in time, cost and land needed if Viscountess Milton acted as the sole financier and patron. The preparation to submit an application for the grant was lengthy. Applicants had to send information on the site, plans, estimates, specifications, title, and trust deed which had to be approved by the Department of Education.⁸⁴³ The conditions went so far as to specify materials. For woodwork oak was to be used. This would have considerably increased construction costs. By deciding not to apply for a Privy Council grant Viscountess Milton also avoided compulsory school inspections and the necessity of following the new regulations introduced by the Forster Act. As a result, she was able to maintain a level of control over the school, its teachers and classes which would otherwise have been denied to her.

To build the school Viscountess Milton employed the architect Lucas to make the designs and the builders Watts and Winckles to execute them. However the estimate Watts and Winckles returned for the build far exceeded Viscountess Milton's expected costs and those which had been predicted by Lucas. With the knowledge that it would cost £500 to build the school and the mistress' house, Viscountess Milton suggested some cost reducing modifications at the potential sacrifice of the school's appearance.

⁸⁴² NRO, FS 24/58/34, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 1 May 1871.

⁸⁴³ *Report of the Committee of Council on Education; With Appendix 1871–72* (London, 1872), p. xcvi.

She suggested that the school could be built in concrete, ‘that will be very much cheaper drier & sooner ready to be used’.⁸⁴⁴ Viscountess Milton knew exactly what she was willing to sacrifice and how to get the most out of her money:

I have seen Lady Milton and she is quite agreeable to anything except giving up her stone front & brick course (is that the way to spell couis) and before she quite gives in to any idea of flat tiles instead of slate she would like to know the difference in price.⁸⁴⁵

Viscountess Milton questioned every recommendation and every decision relating to the construction of the school. Letters describing her recommendations for the plan and then latterly the finer matters of construction demonstrate her knowledge not only of building construction and materials but also of practical design. Her meticulous attention to detail and desire to reduce costs was noted by Bury. After communicating what Viscountess Milton believed to be excessive charges for Lucas’ designs, Bury wrote that if she was to act as ‘her own agent, architect, builder & who knows what beside’ she was right to ‘pay “through the nose.”’⁸⁴⁶ It is apparent that Bury did not approve of her direct management. However, as well as Viscountess Milton, Bury was also given a voice in the school’s design and corresponded with Fisher on the matter. Like Viscountess Milton, he offered extensive notes on both the appearance and plan which seem to have been mediated and collated by Fisher.⁸⁴⁷

Bury and Viscountess Milton continued to clash after the school was erected and in particular, disagreed on the employment of a school mistress. As a subscriber to Haselbech School, Viscountess Milton believed she had a special claim to its management and in particular the appointment of teachers. She sought advice from her lawyer who stated that the appointment or dismissal of a school mistress was to be vested in a committee including the incumbent, his curate and one other subscriber and manager of the school.⁸⁴⁸ Viscountess Milton had financed and planned the building and paid the mistress’ salary and an annual subscription. However, her right to have a voice in the school’s management was continually disputed by Bury. He argued that her

⁸⁴⁴ NRO, FS 24/58/44–45, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 1 June 1871.

⁸⁴⁵ NRO, FS 24/58/65, Rev. William Bury to Edward K. Fisher, c. August 1871.

⁸⁴⁶ NRO, FS 24/61/39, Rev. William Bury to Edward K. Fisher, 2 July 1872.

⁸⁴⁷ NRO, FS 24/58/65, Rev. William Bury to Edward K. Fisher, c. August 1871.

⁸⁴⁸ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 8 January 1878.

absence from Haselbech coupled ‘with other circumstances’ made it difficult to recognise her claim to be consulted on school matters. In fact, in spite of her patronage, he argued that she was not even a manager.⁸⁴⁹ Questions of authority over the right to contribute to the school’s management came to a head over the appointment of a new school mistress in 1878. During the disagreement that followed two points of contention surfaced: the first was under whose authority a mistress was appointed, the second was the appointment of a woman of suitable age to live alone ‘respectably’ in the school house.⁸⁵⁰

Viscountess Milton recommended candidates for the role who were reference checked by Bury. Problems arose when Viscountess Milton’s preferred candidate, Mrs Dockett, was unable to start due to ill health.⁸⁵¹ Bury temporarily employed Miss Ward, who left shortly after due to Viscountess Milton’s opposition to her appointment.⁸⁵² Of the subsequent recommends from Viscountess Milton, one candidate failed to provide references, and the references of another proved unsatisfactory.⁸⁵³ Letters suggest that in the interim Viscountess Milton refused to commit to subscribing to the school.⁸⁵⁴ Her lawyer Bennett advised that she was within her right to ‘stand out against’ any appointment and that if Bury hired entirely against her wishes, she should withdraw her subscription altogether.⁸⁵⁵ Bury was increasingly incensed by the situation and wrote that although he was willing to consider her wishes ‘she shall not appoint a mistress – she may continue to hinder me from appointing but in that case she must thank herself for the consequences which will follow’.⁸⁵⁶

This situation suggests the multiple motives behind the patronage of estate buildings and bares similarities to Viscountess Milton’s attempted patronage of alterations to the church. Patronage of estate buildings could be, and undoubtedly was, motivated by philanthropic concerns. However, patronage could also provide a means to secure control over the built environment. Even if this consideration had contributed to

⁸⁴⁹ NRO, FS 24/69, Rev. William Bury to Edward K. Fisher, 11 January 1878.

⁸⁵⁰ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, July 1878.

⁸⁵¹ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 14 January 1878.

⁸⁵² NRO, FS 24/69, Rev. William Bury to Edward K. Fisher, 1 January 1878.

⁸⁵³ NRO, FS 24/69, Arthur Smith to Edward K. Fisher, c. February 1878; NRO, FS 24/69, Rev. William Bury to Edward K. Fisher, June 1878.

⁸⁵⁴ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, July 1878.

⁸⁵⁵ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 12 July 1878.

⁸⁵⁶ NRO, FS 24/69, Rev. William Bury to Edward K. Fisher, 1 January 1878.

Viscountess Milton's desire to build the school or alter the church, it did not result in any direct increase in authority. Viscountess Milton was denied her right to contribute towards the building of the church and, even though she was the chief subscriber and the builder of the school, Bury did not consider this as reason enough for her participation in its management.

The relationship Viscountess Milton had with the school and church buildings at Haselbech was different to the position she held in relation to her cottages. These were, in theory, more securely in her control. However, the same arguments focused on authority repeat themselves throughout her correspondence irrespective of the different character and purpose of the buildings discussed. In all instances Viscountess Milton called upon her rights as lady of the manor and her desire to 'improve' the moral lives of her tenants. Bury's claim to the management of the built environment came from a similar moral and religious stand point as well as the desire to protect his parishioners. In spite of their similar intentions, Viscountess Milton believed Bury, along with Pell, was too high handed in matters concerning the parish. During the disagreement regarding the employment of a school mistress she wrote:

Really the kind of way, that he considers that he & the Pells are 'the Parish' & can act & do exactly as they please without consulting any one else (neither the Parish Churchwarden, or any of the rate payers &c) – is quite too bad & I hope you have told him, or will tell him that this is not the way things ought to be done – or are done elsewhere – but it is just what I have always said, that if I ever proposed anything I was told 'the Parish wish it otherwise' that Parish being merely the Pells & himself, not another creature ⁸⁵⁷

The friction between Bury and Viscountess Milton did not go unnoticed by the residents of Haselbech. Bury described how he felt aggrieved by the sentiment against him amongst the parish who, he argued, knew nothing of what had gone before and believed that he was treating Viscountess Milton badly. ⁸⁵⁸

Patronage and control over the built environment was a useful tool which both Viscountess Milton and Bury deployed in their battle to have a voice in matters concerning the parish. This reached a crescendo when, in an attempt to force loyalty,

⁸⁵⁷ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 23 July 1878.

⁸⁵⁸ NRO, FS 24/69, Rev. William Bury to Edward K. Fisher, 19 June 1878.

Viscountess Milton pledged that if the builder Winkle took direction from Bury and made any alterations to houses or cottages without her sanction she would never employ him again.⁸⁵⁹ She was even suspicious that Fisher would fall under Bury's spell and commanded that he was not to help Bury in any way: 'don't let him consider you his Agent'.⁸⁶⁰ Beyond her employees, villagers were also under pressure to pledge their loyalty or face the possibility of eviction.

In 1878 she wrote to Fisher of people in and outside of the village who supported Bury and noted others who had taken an interest in the cooperative stores which he helped to run. Viscountess Milton opposed the stores on moral grounds, arguing the beer they sold was a corrupting influence. Determined to stand up for herself, she resolved to force members of the village to decide on their loyalty: 'if they give him up & his stores &c I shall be most ready to let them remain in the village, but if they will run after him they must expect to have notice to quit'.⁸⁶¹ This action was strongly advised against by Fisher. He believed that if an agreement over the responsibility and control of different aspects of the estate was reached 'in the light of the good of the people instead of a weapon of offence' a platform could be built 'upon which the respective duties of owner & clergyman might be clearly appointed in the interest & for the good & happiness of the people'.⁸⁶²

Over the years, the disagreement between Bury and Viscountess Milton had become personal and control of the built environment had become a form of leverage to ensure the loyalty of villagers and to determine how the village was run. Fisher, an experienced agent and, it must be remembered, Viscountess Milton's employee, boldly highlighted the solution and as a result the problem. Bury and Milton had failed to find a compromise or middle ground when negotiating their respective roles on the estate. As a result, he cautiously suggested, they had lost sight of the 'happiness of the people'.

Conclusions

This chapter has argued that both men and women could be active participants in the management and construction of buildings on the estate. In the case of Viscountess

⁸⁵⁹ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 2 December 1878.

⁸⁶⁰ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 14 November 1878.

⁸⁶¹ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 12 November, 1878.

⁸⁶² NRO, FS 24/69, E. Morgan to Viscountess Milton, 14 November 1878.

Milton, she acted uninhibited by her gender and in the belief that she was no different to her husband or sons when it came to the respect and control she expected:

Mr Cecil Foljambe & myself we consider the letter (Mr B's) impertinent do you think that the clergyman at Osberton (wh is no longer a private chapel) wd dare write & tell Mr Francis Foljambe (who has lived there very little & will not live there again for 2 or 3 years).⁸⁶³

However, building on the estate was a potential source of tension. The examples given in this chapter have shown how power, authority and loyalty were central to arguments between Viscountess Milton and the local clergy. These were played out in the built environment which, in the case of Viscountess Milton, was evidently used as a form of social coercion, even if it was with the intent of bettering the village. Similar tensions between the country house owner and the clergyman were evident at Laxton where religious difference caused inevitable friction.

The built environment of the estate shaped the identity of country house owners within the parish and could act as an outward sign of virtuous ownership. The style and appearance of estate buildings was often linked to that of the country house. This created a visual connection between the structures, suggesting the country house owner's generous patronage. For some, though not all, the building of structures such as schools or improved cottages was not just a 'performance' of benevolence but was founded on the genuine belief that good architecture could improve the minds and wellbeing of the parish inhabitants. This chapter has shown that the engagement of country houses residents with estate building rested on a complex set of design relationships and ideologies. These, in turn, could influence if and how dwellings, church buildings and schools were altered or built.

⁸⁶³ NRO, FS 24/69, Viscountess Milton to Edward K. Fisher, 14 January 1878. Mr Cecil Foljambe was Viscountess Milton's son and Mr Francis Foljambe was her stepson.

Conclusion:

Patronage, Architecture and Gender

This thesis has revealed potential areas where considerations of design and building conversations can enhance our understanding of country house patronage, design and construction. Central to this has been the notion that the design, construction and interpretation of country houses were part of a process negotiated by multiple protagonists, both male and female, and situated within wider professional, legal and gender frameworks. Individual personalities, relationships, and the very specific context in which building took place determined the impact of gender during design and construction. In considering these many factors together this thesis has tried to take a more integrated approach to the study of architecture.

Gender: Agency, Identity and Representation

In depth archival research has shown that gender undoubtedly affected the relationship which both men and women fostered with their country homes. However, gender did not necessarily restrict men or women's ability to engage in the design and construction of buildings, interiors and gardens. Chapter Two has shown that married women's legal identity was markedly different to that of their husbands. Yet, the legal relationship with properties could be negotiated through marriage settlements and wills, which enabled some women to own separate property in their own right. Equally, legal ownership was only one way that men and women related to property. Thus, Chapter Five has demonstrated that a lack of legal entitlement to a property did not necessarily prevent emotional investment or day-to-day possession of property.⁸⁶⁴ This is evidenced by the identification of the agency of men and women altering their homes. For example, George Freke Evans was instrumental in alterations to Laxton Hall in which his wife had a life interest and Emily Isham determined the structural alterations to Lamport Hall, legally the property of Sir Charles. These findings contribute to studies on the agency of patrons during the design process, and in particular women.

⁸⁶⁴ Erickson, 'Possession – and the Other One Tenth of the Law', p. 370.

The thesis has also considered why, in some instances, men or women took leading roles in design. In particular, the examples studied have illustrated the importance of husband-wife relationships in determining engagement with architecture but also in informing representations of agency during and after building. The types of sources which have survived to reveal female agency in the case studies considered in this thesis have principally been written by men. In particular, Sir Charles very consciously represented his agency, as well as his wife's, in poems shared among friends. Chapter Five has shown that whilst gender did not strictly restrict the roles of men or women when altering their country homes, it did frame the language used to describe their agency.

From the case studies considered it is apparent that actions and the motivations behind those actions could be the result of interior emotions, memories and feelings. Even though the more emotional traits were considered the domain of women in the nineteenth century, it is obvious to say that men also felt attachments to the homes where they lived. In fact, evidence of the most personal and emotional engagement with buildings in this thesis is in the writings of men. The light which this has shed on Overstone Hall has shown how an understanding of the reasons behind responses to architecture can offer a complete reinterpretation of an architectural style. The impact of individuals' personal interests and passions on the nature of engagement with design has also been highlighted. Through Sir Charles' design interventions to the Hall, gardens and estate at Lamport, his enthusiasm for intellectual investigation, spiritualism, horticulture and design is evident. A relative silence in scholarship on the emotional and physical investment of men, and particularly elite men, in the creation of home is only now being challenged by scholars such as Tosh. This thesis has therefore attempted to add to that currently sparse literature.

In the last few decades scholars of gender and architecture have been trying to find a new approach. This is one which moves away from simple attribution or the creation of gendered space merely through habitation. The various ways which gender has been considered in this thesis have shown the potential for the ideas of identity, representations, interiority and in particular social and familial relationships to further the study of gender and architecture. It has also shown the importance of re-inserting rather than abstracting women from the building process.

Patronage: Networks, Control and Authority

The employment of an architect to complete building works depended on a complex set of issues. However, Chapter Three has shown the importance of networks in gaining access to patronage. Architectural patronage was not necessarily the simple employment of an architect or provision of money for an architectural project but could result in the direct engagement of the patron with the development and implementation of designs. Chapter Four has taken an in depth look at how one relationship worked in the early nineteenth century, the Reptons at Laxton Hall.

Through this study it is evident that the impact of ideas centred on a new formal profession and advocated by architectural societies in the nineteenth century seems to have had little impact on the way that relationships between architects and patrons were conducted. Although convention and standards of practice were called upon when Repton and Carter's own *modus operandi* was being questioned, the evidence which survives shows that the success of relationships between architect and patron was heavily dependent on personalities and circumstances as much as it was any formal architectural recommendations. Further than this, the translation from the architect's or patron's ideas to architectural drawings and then to buildings was never direct. This was often moderated by a whole series of workmen and other employees. As a result, the successful navigation of architect-patron relationships, and relationships with others in the building process, depended on the diplomacy of all parties involved. The issues of power, authority and control were also apparent in the erection of buildings on the country house estate. These could be markedly different to those in operation in the country house. However, the importance of managing relationships with a variety of people comes into even sharper focus. At Haselbech, the built environment becomes both a subject of disagreement and a tool used in wider arguments centred on power and authority over the parish.

Architecture: Alteration, Process and Interpretation

The introduction to this thesis described the difficulties of identifying significant alterations to existing country houses. However, detailed case studies have highlighted the importance of this type of building programme. Adaption of rooms to new functions, changing floor plans and the alteration of a house's exterior could

significantly change the perceptions and use of a building. Yet, the specific nature of alteration touched on in Chapter One has not been researched in great detail. To add to this, nineteenth-century country house architecture more generally has not been well received. A perfect example of this is Overstone Hall. This thesis has countered arguments by previous scholars that the architecture of Overstone Hall was beyond description. A more balanced view of Teulon's style and an understanding of the context in which Overstone was built and viewed has offered a new, more impartial, approach to understanding its design.

This research has emphasised the benefit of looking at programmes of alterations to country houses and their estates as a whole rather than as individual components. When taken together, the different interests of Sir Charles and Emily Isham during the alterations to Lamport Hall become evident: Emily was predominantly responsible for the structural alterations to the Hall and Sir Charles for the interiors and gardens. It also enables a comparison between the roles of individuals during building at the country house as opposed to building on the immediate estate. Notably, Lady Carbery took a leading role in building works attached to the estate whereas her husband determined alterations to Laxton Hall.

An attempt has also been made in this thesis to look at architecture as a process, as opposed to an architectural end product. Through conversations, discussions and the production of designs, the concept of buildings changed and evolved. Although architectural history has tended to focus on the moment when buildings were erected, it is evident that buildings had a life before and after construction. Chapter Five has shown how different protagonists responded to buildings as they were being built and after they were completed. Chapter Three has also shown that, in the case of Overstone Hall, interpretations of buildings could vary dramatically from different points of view and in different contexts. This, in turn, can inform new understandings of a building's architecture.

New Perspectives

When patronage, architecture and gender are taken together they can offer considerable insight into the architecture of the buildings studied, but also into the relationships of protagonists in the design process. The use of new archival material in this thesis has

offered new perspectives on the architecture and role of men and women in the alteration of Lamport Hall. The reinterpretation of Overstone Hall has moved away from previous analysis, based on story telling. Haselbech Hall, which has never before been analysed in depth, has revealed an extraordinary story of a powerful and opinionated owner. Finally Laxton Hall, when viewed in the context of architect-patron relationships, offers a unique insight into the *modus operandi* of an architect.

However, this thesis only represents a small range of lived experience during country house building as a consequence of the small sample of buildings included. It remains for further studies to be carried out into the roles adopted during the building process before a real sense of the normative roles of architects, patrons and other participants in the design and construction process can be established.

Appendix

William Milford Teulon Commission List

An unpublished commission list completed by Alan Teulon in 1992 has provided the starting point for this list. This has been expanded by searches of *The Ecclesiologist*, *The Builder*, Pevsner, the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and various other local histories. A large number of the commissions listed have also been drawn from letters of testimony collected by Teulon when applying for the position of Surveyor to the County of Flint in 1864 and architect to the London School Board in 1870. In the testimonial letters information is not always given about the nature of Teulon's engagement, the exact date or location of his work. Attempts have been made to fill in the gaps as far as possible.

This list was created to give an impression of the extent, nature and geographical location of Teulon's commissions. Although every effort has been made to obtain the correct date for commissions, many only suggest when Teulon was engaged on a project as opposed to building dates. Where details of the patron, such as addresses or position, have been provided in testimonial letters these have been included.

Date	Patron	Description	References
1850–51	Thomas Horlock Bastard	House at Charlton, Blandford, Dorset	LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, Thomas Horlock Bastard, n.d.
1853	Unknown	St Mary's church and schools, Horsmonden, Kent	A. Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> (1992).
c. 1853	John Charles Shore, first Baron Teignmouth	Alterations to Langton Hall and construction of church, Northallerton, Yorkshire	LP, Tait 211 ff. 309, Testimonial letters, Lord Teignmouth, 25 July 1864.
c. 1853	Unknown	School and Master's house, Spaldington, Lincolnshire	<i>The Ecclesiologist</i> , 18, no. 121 (August, 1857), p.259.

c. 1853	Rev. J. Clements Vicar of Gainsborough and Prebendary of Lincoln	Unknown	LP, Tait 211 ff. 309, Testimonial letters, Rev. J. Clements, 27 July 1864.
1854	C. J. Parke J.P. for County of Dorset	Additions to Henbury House, Wimborne, Dorset	LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, C. J. Parke, 27 July 1864; A. Graves, <i>The Royal Academy of Arts: A Complete Dictionary of Contributors and their Work from its Foundation in 1769 to 1904</i> (London, 1906), p. 350; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1855	James Brown	Rossington Hall Stables, Doncaster	Stables at Rossington Hall, <i>NHLE</i> , https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1151518 [accessed 24 March 2016].
1856	Sir H. Vavasour	Spaldington Chapel School, Yorkshire	<i>The Ecclesiologist</i> , 17, no. 115 (August 1856), p. 312; <i>The Ecclesiologist</i> , 18, no. 122 (October, 1857), p. 325; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .

1856	Thomas Papillon J.P. and D.L. for Kent and Sussex	St George's Church and alterations and additions to house, Crowhurst Park, Crowhurst, Sussex	LP, Tait 322 ff. 311, Testimonial letters, Thomas Papillon, 27 July 1864; Parish Church of St George, <i>NHLE</i> , https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1233292 [accessed 24 March 2016]; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1856	Unknown	House, West Wickham, Kent	Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
c. 1856 and 1857– 59	Henry S. Meysey- Thompson M.P. for Whitby, Chairman of North- Eastern Railway	New wing and ornamental stone balustrades to Kirby Hall, North Yorkshire	LP, Tait 322 ff. 310, Testimonial letters, H. S. Thompson, n.d.
1857	Captain Thomas Chaloner R.N. and J.P. for North Riding of Yorkshire	Long Hull, Guisborough, Yorkshire	LP, Tait 211 ff. 310 Testimonial letters, Captain Thomas Chaloner, 25 July 1864; <i>Royal Academy Exhibitors</i> , p. 350. Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> . See also Chapter Three.
c. 1858	Richard Lumley, ninth Earl of Scarborough	‘services’	LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, The Earl of Scarborough, 26 July 1864.
c. 1858	John J. Johnson	West Broyle House, Chichester, Sussex	LP, Tait 211 ff. 310 Testimonial letters, J. Johnson, 23 July 1864; <i>Royal Academy Exhibitors</i> , p. 350; <i>The Building News and</i>

			<i>Engineering Journal</i> , 6 (18 May 1860), p. 398; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1859	Captain Thomas Chaloner	Rectory, Guisborough, Yorkshire	Pevsner, <i>Yorkshire</i> , p. 179; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1859	James Brown [jnr] M.P. for Malton	Butcher's Shop, Rossington, Doncaster	<i>The Ecclesiologist</i> , 130, no. 94 (February, 1859) p. 74; Garage Shop at Premises of Rossington Motor Co, <i>NHLE</i> , https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1151522 [accessed 24 March 2016].
1859–60	Rev. Henry Bennett Vicar of St. Nicholas-at-Wade, Isle of Thanet	Parsonage, Isle of Thanet, Kent	<i>The Ecclesiologist</i> , 18, no. 137 (April 1860), p.115; <i>The Gentleman's Magazine</i> , 208 (May 1860), p. 484; LP, Tait 211 ff. 310, Testimonial letters, Henry Bennett, 25 July 1864; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1860	Lord Dynevor	National School, Dynevor Park, Llandeilo, Carmarthen [also ornamental cottages but it is not clear where these were built]	T. Lloyd, J. Orbach and R. Scourfield, <i>The Buildings of Wales: Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion</i> (New Haven and London, 2006), p. 253; <i>Royal Academy Exhibitors</i> , p. 350; LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, Lord Dynevor, 26 July 1864; <i>The Building News and Journal</i> , 6 (25 May 1860), p. 414;

			Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1860	Unknown	Alterations to St Peters Church, Hambledon, Hampshire	<i>The Gentleman's Magazine</i> , 208 (May 1860), p. 484; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
c. 1860–1870	Henry Birkbeck Banker, Gurney's bank	Alteration of house and church, Stoke Holy Cross, Norwich [Gurney's] bank, Derehem, near Norwich	LP, Tait 211 ff. 306, Testimonial letters, Henry Birkbeck, 27 December 1870; LP, Tait 211 ff. 311, Testimonial letters, Henry Birkbeck, 27 July 1864.
c. 1861 and 1864	Henry T. Lambert	Stables and entrance lodge, Sandhills, Bletchingly, Redhill, Surrey Designs for a house which was not executed	LP, Tait 211 ff. 306, Testimonial letters, Henry Lambert, 26 December 1870.
1861	John, fifth Earl Spencer	Alterations to formal gardens at Althorp, Northamptonshire	Christopher Hussey, <i>English Country Houses</i> , p. 213; LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, Earl Spencer, 24 July 1864; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> . See also Chapter Three.
1861	Edmund Peel [?]	Mortuary Chapel, Bryn y Pys near Wrexham, Flintshire	<i>The Ecclesiologist</i> , 19, no. 144 (June 1861), p. 198; <i>The Gentleman's Magazine</i> (May 1861), p. 541; LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, Edmund Peel, 18 July 1864.

1861	James Brown [jnr]	Well House, Rossington, Yorkshire	<i>The Gentleman's Magazine</i> (May 1861), p. 541.
c. 1861	Rev. Thomas D. Hudson	Unknown, Frogmore, Hertfordshire	LP Tait 211 ff. 309 Testimonial letters, Thomas D. Hudson, 24 July 1864; <i>Royal Academy Exhibitors</i> , p. 350; Teulon, <i>William Milford</i> <i>Teulon</i> .
1862	Henry Taylor	School and house, Oakleigh, East Grinstead, Sussex	LP, Tait 211 ff. 306, Testimonial letters, Henry Taylor, 26 December 1870; Teulon, <i>William Milford</i> <i>Teulon</i> .
c. 1860– 1864	Samuel Jones- Loyd, Lord Overstone	Overstone Hall, Northamptonshire	See Chapter Three.
1864	William Essex	Unknown, St Leonards Dale, Clewer, Berkshire	Teulon, <i>William Milford</i> <i>Teulon</i> .
By 1864	Thomas Alcock M.P. for East Surrey, Kingswood, Epsom	Employed as Architect for 12 years	LP, Tait 211 ff. 311, Testimonial letters, Thomas Alcock, 5 August 1864.
By 1864	Captain Cust, Ellesmere, Shropshire and Lord Brownlow	Rectory house, farm house, cottages, extensive buildings, blocks of cottages as well as extensive repairs and additions in various places over last six years as architect on both estates	LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, Captain Cust, 28 July 1864.
By	J. W. Perry	Moor Hill stables and	LP, Tait 211 ff. 308,

1864	Watlington M.P. for South Essex	gardener's house, Wallington	Testimonial letters, J. W. Perry Watlington, 26 July 1864.
By 1864	John Stuart Bligh, sixth Earl of Darnley Cobham Park, Gravesend	Works ‘the amount has not been great’	LP Tait 211 ff. 309, Testimonial letters, Right Hon. The Earl of Darnley, 26 th July 1864.
By 1864	Sir Joseph Copley Sprotborough Hall, Doncaster	Small amount of work	LP Tait 211 ff. 309, Testimonial letters, Sir Joseph Copley, Bart, c. 1864.
By 1864	James Brown [jnr]	Stabling, farm premises, and cottages, Rossington Hall, Doncaster	LP, Tait 211 ff. 309, Testimonial letters, James Brown, 21 July 1864.
By 1864	Robert Hamond Fakenham, Norfolk	Worked on estate connected to from eight to twelve years	LP, Tait 211 ff. 311, Testimonial letters, Robert Hamond, 26 July 1864.
By 1864	Philip Hamond Ashurst Lodge, East Greenstead, Sussex	Undertaken ‘works’ in East Grinstead and previous residence over the past eleven years	LP, Tait 211 ff. 311, Testimonial Letters, Captain Hamond, 26 July 1864.
By 1864	Abel Smith M.P. for Hertfordshire	Terrace wall, balustrade and fountain, Woodhall Park, Hertfordshire	LP, Tait 211 ff. 311, Testimonial letters, Abel Smith, 30 July 1864.
By 1864	R. Heywood Jones Badsworth Hall, Pontefract,	‘works’	LP, Tait 211 ff. 311, Testimonial letters, R. Heywood Jones, 3 August 1864.

	Yorkshire		
1865–68	Oswald Smith Lombard Street and Hammerwood, East Grinstead, Sussex	‘Building operations’ including the construction of a coffee house, East Grinstead	LP, Tait 211 ff. 306, Testimonial letters, Oswald Smith, 27 December 1870; <i>The Building News and Engineering Journal</i> , 38 (1880), p. 308.
1866	Rev. John F. Kitto Vicar of St. Matthias Church	St Matthias Church, vicarage and church hall, Poplar, London	H. Hobhouse (ed.), <i>Survey of London: Poplar, Blackwall and Isle of Dogs</i> , vols. 43–44 (London, 1994), pp. 98–107; LP, Tait 211 ff. 307, Testimonial letters, Rev. John F. Kitto, 29 December 1870; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1868	G. C. Carew Gibson	Sandgate Park, Sullington Sussex	Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1869	Mr Partridge	House, Peckham, London	Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1870	Charles Harbord, Baron Suffield	Landscape garden, Gunton Park	LH, Tait 211 ff. 309, Testimonial letter, Lord Suffield, 24 July 1864; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
c. 1870	Edmund Peel [?]	Restored St Mary’s Church and cemetery chapel, Overton, Flintshire	D. R. Thomas, <i>A History of the Diocese of St Asaph</i> (London, 1870) p. 833; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
c. 1870	W. L. Christies	Addition to house,	LP, Tait 211 ff. 305,

		Glynbourne Hall, Glyde, Lewes, Sussex	Testimonial letters, W. L. Christies, 26 December 1870.
By 1870	Arthur Hutton Croft Aldborough Hall, Boroughbridge, Yorkshire	Unknown	LP, Tait 211 ff. 307, Testimonial letters, Arthur Hutton Croft, 28 December 1870.
By 1870	Brian B. Barttelot	Bramblehurst, East Grinstead, Sussex	LP, Tait 211 ff. 306, Testimonial letters, Brian B. Barttelot, 26 December 1870.
By 1870	Col. Walter Barttelot M.P. for West Sussex	Stopham House [?], Stopham, Sussex	LP, Tait 211 ff. 306 Testimonial letters, Col. Walter Barttelot, 26 December 1870; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon.</i>
By 1870	Rev. Sir George C. Shiffner, Bart. Coombe Place, Lewes, Sussex	Unknown	LP, Tait 211 ff. 306, Testimonial letters, Sir George C. Shiffner.
By 1870	Rev. Thomas O. Blackall Rector of Seal, Sevenoaks, Kent	Unknown	LP, Tait 211 ff. 307, Testimonial letters, Rev. Thomas O. Blackall, 30 December 1870.
By 1870	Rev. John Young	Alterations to house, Rumbolds Wyke, Chichester, Sussex	LP Tait, 211 ff. 307, Testimonial letters, Rev. John Young, 31 December 1870.
By 1870	Rev. Frederick Perry Vicar of St Saviour's, Fitzroy	Architect for proposed schools, St Saviour's Fitzroy Square	LP, Tait, 211 ff. 305, Testimonial letters, Rev. Fredrick Perry, 23 December 1870.

	Square		
By 1870	G. F. Kenyon Gredington, Whitchurch, Shropshire	'work'	LP, Tait, 211 ff. 305, Testimonial letters, Rev. Fredrick Perry, 26 December 1870.
c. 1871	Rev. H. F. Sidebottom Rector of Sevenoaks, Kent	School buildings, Sevenoaks, Kent	LP, Tait 211 ff. 307, Testimonial letters, Rev. H. F. Sidebottom, 6 January 1871.
By 1871	William Henry Campion	Alteration of house, Danny, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex	LP, Tait 211 ff. 307, Testimonial letters, William Henry Campion, 1 January 1871.
By 1871	Rev. W. Penry Lendon	Alterations and improvements to vicarage, Seal, Sevenoaks, Kent	LP, Tait 211 ff. 307, Testimonial letters, Rev. W. Penry Lendon, 5 January 1871.
By 1871	Earl De La Warr Buckhurst, Withyham, Tonbridge Wells	Pair of cottages	LP, Tait 211 ff. 308, Testimonial letters, Earl De La Warr, 7 January 1871.
1872	Unknown	Unknown, Cockayne, Haltey, Bedfordshire	Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1872	Rev. Canon Thorold Vicar of St. Pancras	New Schools, Thanet Street, St Pancras	LP, Tait 211 ff. 303, Testimonial letters, Rev. Canon Thorold, 15 December 1875; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .

By 1872	Rev. H. Mackenzie Rector of Overton, Flintshire	St Mary's Church, rectory, and cemetery chapel, Overton, Flintshire	LP, Tait 211 ff. 305, Testimonial letters, Rev. H. Mackenzie, 26 December 1870, D. R. Thomas, <i>A History of the Diocese of St Asaph</i> (London, 1870) p. 833.
1873	Rev. Canon Thorold	Mission House and chapel, Sandwich Street, St Pancras, London	<i>The Builder</i> , 31 (1873), p. viii; LP, Tait 211 ff. 303, Testimonial letters, Rev. Canon Thorold, 15 December 1875; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1874	Rev. Canon Thorold	Alterations, additions and renovation to Old National Schools, Lancing Street, London	LP, Tait 211 ff. 303, Testimonial letters, Rev. Canon Thorold, 15 December 1875.
1875	William Willding Jones	Hampton Hall, Maplas, Cheshire	LP, Tait 211 ff. 303, Testimonial letters, Willding Jones, 15 December 1875; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1875	William Yeoman Chairman of the Darlington District Banking Company	Leyburn branch, Leyburn, Yorkshire Head office, Darlington [completed earlier]	LP, Tait 211 ff. 303, Testimonial letters, William Yeoman, 15 December 1875.
1875	Thomas Walker	St Lawrence Church, Aldwick-le-Street, Yorkshire	Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1880	Unknown	Nave and south aisle St Margaret's Church, Halstead, Kent	Church of St Mary Margaret, <i>NHLE</i> , http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1258279 [accessed 24 March 2016]; N. Pevsner,

			<i>The Buildings of England: West Kent and the Weald</i> (London, 1980), p. 314; Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .
1882	James Brown [Jnr] and nephew R. J. Streatfield	Rossington Hall and quadrant wall, Doncaster (as well as earlier unexecuted designs)	Rossington Hall and Attached Quadrant Wall on South East Side, <i>NHLE</i> , https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1151517 [accessed 24 March 2016].
1883	Unknown	Church House, Lancing Street, St Pancras, London	Teulon, <i>William Milford Teulon</i> .

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