

The Landmark Trust

WORTHAM MANOR History Album



**Researched and written by Charlotte Haslam
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Re-presented in 2016

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BASIC DETAILS

Built: 15th century

Remodelled: 1500-25

Adapted as a farmhouse: from c.1750

Roofs altered 19th century

Restored by: Philip Tilden 1945-8

Restored and converted into flats by: The Landmark Trust 1969-75

Architects: Pearn & Procter

Builders: EL Greening & Son

Joiner: Victor Greenslade

Reunited as one house: 1990

Architects: Caroe & Partners

Builders: Penbekon Ltd

Owners: by descent or marriage:

de Wortham, until c.1400

Dinham, c.1400 - 1641

Harris 1641 - 1790

Mrs Middleditch 1790 - ?

by sale:

Cook c.1790 - c.1820

Rayer c.1820 - 1919 (tenant: Stenlake)

Bradshaw 1919 - 1940

Perry 1940 - 45

Tilden 1945 - 49

Vining 1949 - 51

Burgess 1951 - 69

Acquired by Landmark Trust 1969

Contents

Summary	5
Introduction	7
Owners of Wortham	
In the Middle Ages	9
My Cosyn John Dynham	10
The Harrises of Wortham	19
Tenants and later owners	23
Edwardian Wortham	25
Philip Tilden	30
Architectural interpretations	33
A Tour of the building	
Outside the house	45
Inside the house	51
Restoration by the Landmark Trust	
Acquisition and first steps	55
Full restoration plans	59
Structural repair and other work	63
Final stages	65
Further alterations	67
Wortham Manor, Devon I & II, the home of Captain PW Burgess, May 1956, <i>Country Life</i>	73
Extract from <i>Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales</i> , 2006	81



Wortham Manor

Summary

Wortham Manor was only recognised as a building of more than ordinary interest after the Second World War. Architectural enthusiasts remained unaware of its existence partly because of its remote location; its reduced status as a farmhouse from the middle of the 18th century until 1945; and because from the outside it does not look medieval.

Wortham was finally 'discovered' by the architect Philip Tilden in 1943, who became its owner a few years later. He described in his autobiography how Wortham was one of the most beautiful houses of the late 15th century that he had ever seen. He spent many months, with the help of two "most conscientious German prisoners", removing plaster ceilings to expose the exceptional carved oak ones that can be seen today.

The origins and developments of Wortham remain to this day somewhat unclear. Originally there would have been a typical medieval manor house, with an open hall at its centre and a short wing at its east end containing a solar chamber on the first floor, also with an open roof. The hall range continued to the west with the usual service rooms 'below' the screens passage, which probably had a gallery above providing access to the upper storeys of the porch. The hall itself was entered through the fine north porch with its decorative carving dated to about 1450.

A second phase of remodelling and modernisation then took place probably in the first quarter of the 16th century. The major alteration was the insertion of a floor into the open hall to create an upper and lower hall. The upper hall was reached by a new newel stair in a turret added onto the back or south wall of the hall. West of the hall, the former service rooms were turned into a parlour with a new ceiling similar in detail to that in the hall. Thereafter there were only minor alterations such as the addition of the panelling and fireplace in the parlour around 1600, and the creation of a farmhouse kitchen in the room to the east of the hall, probably after 1750, together with new ceilings which were to hide the early carpentry for the next two centuries.

This simple account is open to debate and others have argued that the central part of Wortham was in fact rebuilt in one complete phase soon after 1500 in its existing form. In a very traditional area, this would have been an advanced form of planning perhaps brought about by the family responsible, the Dinhams, who had business and family contacts in London and the south east where such ideas were more commonplace by this date.

Originally the house had crenellations on top of the hall wall to distinguish this important centre of the house from the rest. The porch, with its panel or tympanum carved in the intractable local granite by local craftsmen, was clearly intended to be decorative and to herald something grand beyond. The College at Week St Mary, also owned by the Landmark Trust, had a nearly identical outer door, reliably dated to 1506.

The south front presents a less unified appearance. The walls are of different stone and of less high quality, revealing evidence of the manor house that must have existed here for at least a century before the early 16th century. The windows are a mixture dating from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

Restoration

Philip Tilden's work in the 1940s was so carefully done that it isn't clear exactly what he did. Certainly, the very unusual screen now in the hall was built into a wall somewhere else in the house when he moved in. The Tildens moved on in 1949 and eventually Wortham was sold to the Landmark Trust by Miss Mildred Burgess in 1969.

As originally repaired, the house was converted into three flats – one for Miss Burgess and two for others to rent. A condition of receiving grant aid was that the main rooms – the old kitchen, hall and great chamber above – would have to be occasionally open to the public and so it was resolved to leave them as public spaces held in common by all three flats, rather as in the Tudor period they provided communal space for a household whose members would withdraw to separate apartments or lodgings at other times.

South of the old kitchen had been a dairy, already converted by the Burgesses into a sitting room. Beyond that was the cider house, still with its press, and this was converted to provide a kitchen, bedroom and bathroom. To create a new kitchen for the flat on the first floor of the east wing, the loft over the cider house was built up to full height, and given a new roof over it with a hipped gable and three new windows looking south.

The third flat was formed to the west of the hall. A kitchen was fitted into the closet next to the parlour instead of into a derelict addition still further west, which was constructed of cob and collapsed after heavy rains. The great chamber closet was included in this flat as its third bedroom, together with the bathroom that already existed in the porch.

Other major work included returning the roofs to their original form and appearance as most of the timber needed renewal anyway. A new stone chimney stack was built for the fireplace in Miss Burgess's sitting room. Others were given stone rather than brick tops, and the chimneys of the main range were given new granite caps based on those shown in a drawing dated 1716. The stone all came from field walls being demolished by the Highways Department, and the new slates came from the Delabole quarry in North Cornwall.

Structural repairs were carried out including underpinning of the walls. Woodworm, dry rot and death watch beetle all had to be tackled. Damp proof membranes were installed along with underfloor heating to provide a gentle background heat without the danger of drying out the timbers. Trusses, windbraces, lintels, joist and beams all had to be checked and their ends repaired or strengthened as necessary.

All this work took several years, and it was only in 1974 that Wortham emerged from its cocoon of scaffolding. The cost had also increased dramatically.

For 15 years Wortham remained divided into its three flats. But the main rooms, seldom visited by the public, were becoming rather sad and empty places, and there were also practical problems such as noise from adjoining flats. So in 1990 it was resolved to reunite the house formally. This was easy to do, with the old farmhouse kitchen taking on once again its former role. Wortham can now be used very much as it always has been, and the self-contained life of a small but rich, manor house re-created and understood.

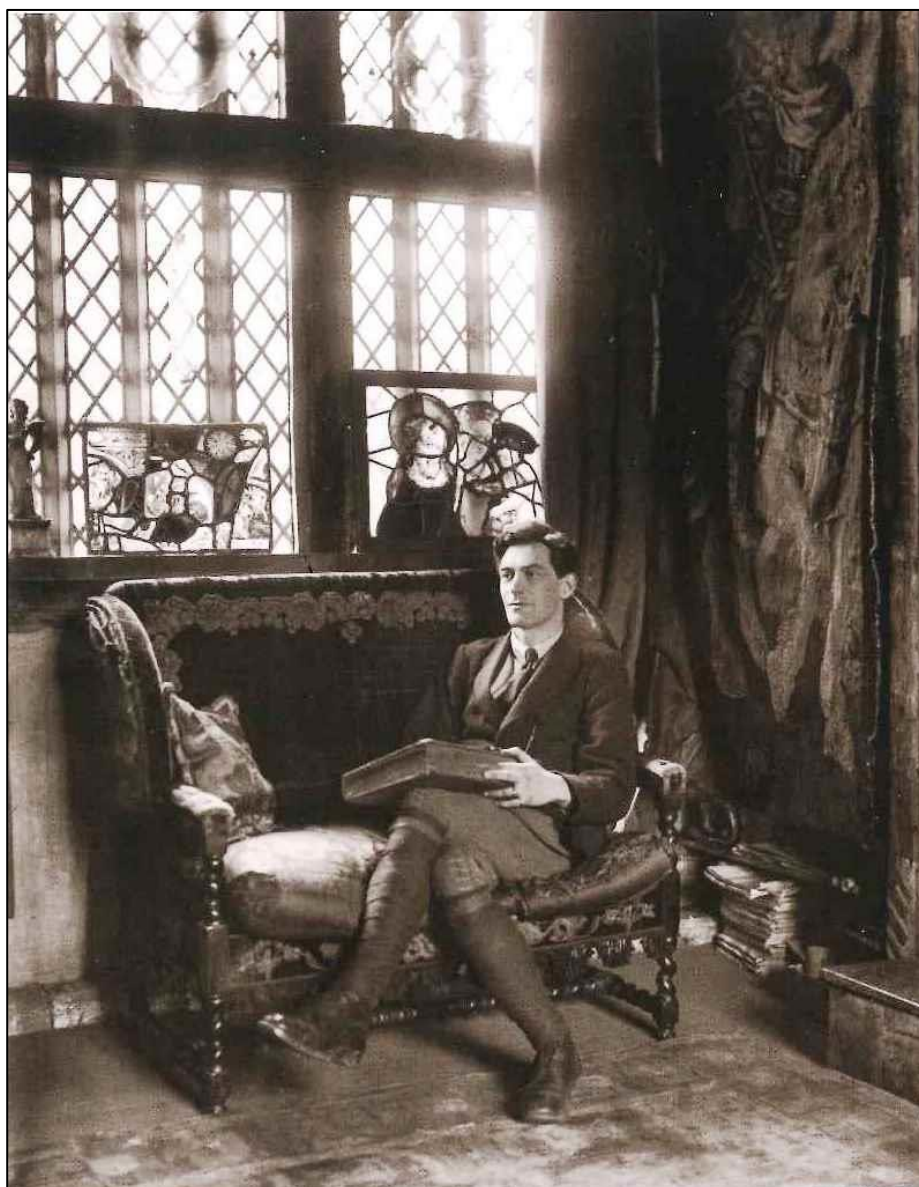
Introduction

Wortham Manor was only recognised as a building of more than ordinary interest after the Second World War. Earlier architectural enthusiasts seem to have been unaware of its existence, and it remained unvisited by the Devonshire Association until 1966. The explanation must lie in its remote situation, and in its reduced status as a farmhouse from the middle of the 18th century until 1945. Another reason must be that it does not, from the outside, look medieval, so was not considered suitably ancient to merit further examination by anyone who did venture down the farm track.

The architect Philip Tilden proved more persevering. He lived not very far away, on the northern edge of Dartmoor, and he discovered Wortham in 1943. He and his wife persuaded the farmer to sell the house to them in 1945, by which time they seem already to have moved in. In his autobiography *True Remembrances* (in which a photograph of Wortham is confused with his later home, Dunsland) he wrote that it was:

‘one of the most beautiful houses of the late fifteenth century that I have ever seen. The mullioned windows, stone doorways and a gabled porch were matchless, but it had been badly treated. My wife and I spent many enthralling months removing plaster ceilings (with the help of two most conscientious German prisoners) to expose a beautifully carved oak ceiling in almost perfect condition.’

He says no more about it, except that in 1949, when they took on the derelict and endangered Dunsland, in North Devon, ‘it nearly broke our hearts to leave Wortham Manor, now fully restored to its ancient dignity.’



Philip Tilden in 1920.

Owners of Wortham

In the Middle Ages

The manor of Wortham long pre-dated the current house. In the reign of Richard II (1377-99), the manor was held by William de Wortham. We do not know how long the family had been settled there, but it was long enough to take as their own the name of the manor that had come into existence some time after the Domesday Survey of 1085, as a sub-manor to Lifton.

William de Wortham is both the first and last member of his family to be recorded, although Wortham continued in the hands of his descendants until the late 18th century. According to one of them, John Dinham, writing in 1620, this William left six daughters as his co-heiresses: Johanna, Jane, Emma, Agnes, Alice and Elizabeth; Agnes married Otes, or Otho, Dinham and took Wortham as her share of William's estate. Another pedigree, of 1564, gives a William or Walter Dinham as Agnes's husband and Otho as her son. This seems more plausible since Nicholas, Otho's son, was still alive in 1506, and an entire century is a long time to span with just one generation.

The Dinham who married Agnes de Wortham was almost certainly a junior member of one of the most important families in medieval Devon, the Dynhams of Hartland, whose ancestors had founded Hartland Abbey in the late 12th century. (Most prominent of all was Sir John Dynham, who lived from 1443 to 1501. He was a Knight of the Garter, Lord Dynham from 1467, and held high office under Edward IV, Edward V, Richard III and Henry VII, whose Treasurer he was. He amassed considerable property, but died without legitimate male heirs of his name).

It has crept into recent accounts that Wortham became the chief seat of the Dynhams after Agnes's marriage, but this is a little misleading. While the Wortham family undoubtedly continued to represent the name in Devon, they inherited none of the Dynham estates, which went to Sir John's four sisters and their children. The precise connection between the Wortham Dinhams and the Hartland Dynhams has never in fact been established. Later heralds gave the two families similar, but different, coats of arms. It is quite likely, however, that promotion to the position of senior surviving line of an ancient and distinguished family gave the Wortham Dinhams a sense of importance which encouraged them to rebuild their house in a lavish way after 1501.

My Cosyn John Dynham

Thanks to the pedigrees compiled as a result of the Herald's Visitations to the various counties of England in the reigns of Elizabeth and her immediate successors, we know more about the Dinhams than their Wortham predecessors, and their family networks cast interesting insights on another Landmark, The College at Week St Mary, some twelve miles west over the Tamar. Otho Dinham, possibly with Agnes de Wortham, had a son, Nicholas Dinham, who married Elizabeth Westlake, daughter and co-heiress of John Westlake.

The extent or whereabouts of the Westlake property is not given, but it is possible that they came from Kent. Elizabeth's sister Joan was buried at Chelsfield, in West Kent, with her husband, John Bonaventure of Week St Mary, in Cornwall (whose brother, Richard, was rector of Chelsfield from 1463 until 1500) and the connection may have been due to her owning land there.

Nicholas Dinham, who as we shall see was still alive in 1506, had several children of whom the eldest was John, who married a Surrey heiress, Margaret Westmanton, before 1494. The rebuilding of Wortham was almost certainly carried out by John, but the work could possibly have been begun by Nicholas his father. We know more about John Dinham, who died in 1553, than about other

members of the family, out of a curious connection. The College has clear architectural similarities to Wortham, for which there was good reason. The College was founded in 1506, as a grammar school and chantry, by a native of Week St. Mary, Dame Thomasine Percival, née Bonaventure, widow of Sir John Percival, a merchant tailor and former sheriff and mayor of London.

The Dinham family were closely involved in this act of philanthropy. Nicholas Dinham was a Trustee of the endowment and John, with his 'first begotten son', William, were named among the nineteen feoffees, (trustees, holding a fief or "fee" in an estate of land for the use of a beneficial owner in the Middle Ages). Feoffees were charged with the actual administration of the school. John especially was closely involved, being party to several of the transactions transferring land to the endowment. Moreover, in her will (of which he was also executor) Dame Thomasine laid on him a special charge:

And as for all thinges concernyng my Chauntry and gramer scole at saint Mary Wyke in the Countie of Cornewall I committe only to the discretion of my said Cosyn John Dynham requiryng him to see eury thinge concernyng the same to be perfite and sure as nygh as he can accordyng as he knoweth my mynde and as I have putt my confidence and trust oonly in him therein.

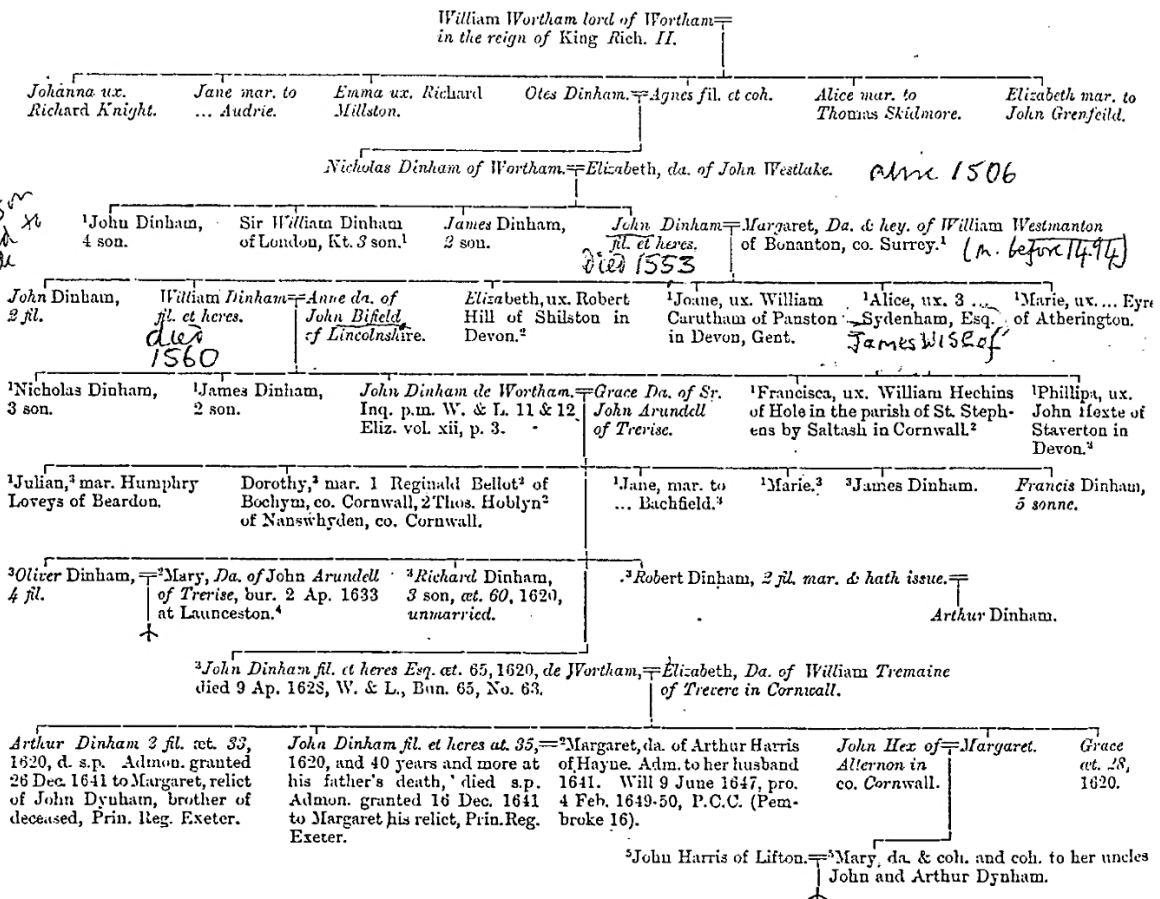
There must have been a considerable difference of age between them, but the likelihood is that he and Thomasine were first cousins, both their mothers having been named Westlake. In addition, his wife Margery Westmanton was Thomasine's niece - she refers to him on one occasion as 'my cosyn ... which hathe married my susters daughter.'

Legend, most notably elaborated by Reverend Stephen Hawker of Morwenstow near Coombe, presents Thomasine as a shepherdess, who after three shrewd marriages ended as wife to the Lord Mayor of London; and John Dinham as her abandoned peasant lover, who promptly forsook the world by becoming a friar.

DYNHAM OF WORTHAM.

ARMS:—Gu., four fusils in fess, a border Erm.

CREST:—An arm copped Or., hand Az., holding a lock of hair Sa.



*. The portion of this pedigree printed in *italic* is a copy of the Original Visitation of Devon 1620, Harl. MS. 1163. fo. 46, b, signed John Dynham.

¹ Harl. MS. 1080, fo. 216, b.

² Vivian's *Visitations of Cornwall*, Arundell ped., p. 12; Hill ped. p. 229; Hechins ped., p. 214; Hext ped., p. 221; Bellot ped. p. 26; Hoblyn ped., p. 234; Harris ped., p. 207.

³ Named in the will of their cousin John Arundell of Trevice, living 1580.

⁴ Launceston Parish Register.

⁵ Lysons.

The reality was somewhat different, since it has now been established, in an article by P.L. Hull for the Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall in 1973, that the founder of the Week St Mary Grammar School was of good family, with connections among the gentry of several counties. Certainly in setting up her school, in emulation of her last husband who had founded a school in his own native town of Macclesfield, she drew on the leading country gentlemen of the border between Devon and Cornwall for her feoffees, men with names such as Trevelyan, Trecarrel, Grenville and Denys, in addition to her Dinham cousins. In the endowment deed, Dame Thomasine mentions 'a house there and therefore by me nowe of newe made and ordained a free Grammar School', which implies that the work was already in progress in 1506. Rich, childless, experienced in the management of property, and living in London herself, she recognised the wisdom of having building work closely supervised by someone living nearby. Judging by the words in her will, and the similarities between the College and Wortham Manor, there seems little doubt that it was John Dinham to whom she entrusted this task. Advice could also have come from another feoffee, Sir Henry Trecarrel, who was rebuilding his own manor house at the same date, before embarking on the nave of St. Mary Magdelene, Launceston.

It is impossible to say for certain whether the College came first, and John Dinham then employed the same men on his own house, or the other way round. If Wortham is thought to be a more likely product of the second rather than the first decade of the 16th century, then it must have been the College which gave John Dinham the knowledge and experience to embark on its great rebuilding.

The Dinhams continued to keep an eye on the school. In 1536, there was clearly a dispute about the tithes, which provoked John Dinham to write to Thomas Cromwell, the King's Secretary, on 12 October, complaining:

I and my son are daily called upon for the annual 'decimes' of Wike School by the bishop and his officers, and as he has now twice paid the same they threatred process. Others wrongfully occupy the lands of the schoolmaster, which this man [a new schoolmaster], not yet brought in corporal

possession, cannot redress. I hope for an end of our troubles from your answer by Nich. Wyse [of the Sydenham family].

John's son, William, who like his father was a feoffee of the endowment, was clearly doing what he could to help. He wrote himself to Cromwell on the same subject on 20 October 1536, saying, 'I fear the bishop will make further trouble without your letters.'

When the school was closed under the legislation suppressing chantries in 1548, and its endowment given to Launceston School, John Dinham was noted to have been paying the wages of the school's servants, the manciple or usher and the laundress, out of the revenue of a farm set aside for that purpose. We can imagine that he was also closely involved in the other duties laid on the feoffees by Dame Thomasine, such as keeping an eye on the priest-schoolmaster, and appointing a replacement should he die, leave or prove unsuitable; as well as managing the lands of the endowment and every so often appointing new feoffees to replace those that had died. It is interesting that the Abbey of Hartland, with which the Dinham family had a close connection, was chosen as the place of safe-keeping for copies of the deeds, rather than one of the closer religious houses, such as Launceston Priory.

William Dinham was already known to Cromwell when he wrote on the school's business in 1536. Three years earlier, he had been a suppliant to him on another, important, matter:

Notwithstanding my daily attendance since Monday last, owing to the importance of your affairs, I have not been able to speak with you, and therefore I have put my suit in writing. I request favor for my poor father as one who ought not to be returned upon the precept to take up his knighthood. He is willing to bear any reasonable burden for his Prince, such as others bear of £40 land. He has hitherto borne many impositions beyond his ability, and has children to support.

The knighthood must have been one of those offered at Anne Boleyn's coronation, which many declined, presumably from a mixture of principle, and

reluctance to assume the duties and expense which the honour bore with it. The king, through Cromwell, was now demanding a fine from all those who had declined: and the Dinhams were sufficiently substantial gentry to be thought worthy of knighthood.

William seems to have been on familiar terms with Cromwell, and obviously wished to remain so. In 1536, besides the business of the tithes he is reporting on the progress of the religious reforms in the West, where clearly there was much resistance to the King's 'most Christian Elements and Articles.' He ends a little ingratiatingly by saying that 'I doubt not but that God in time will give success.' He was also in communication with one of Cromwell's servants, a Mr Morison, 'whose kind remembrances of me sithen my last being above, I cannot requite.' This could have been the Calvinist Sir Richard Morison, author in 1539 of *An Invective avente the grear detestable vice Treason*. It is possible that William also had Calvinist leanings

With their connections with Surrey, through the Westmantons, and possibly with Kent, and especially with the influential Dame Thomasine Percival in London, it is clear that the Dinhams were not simply provincial gentry interested only in their land. Very probably, they were involved in the wool trade, which had brought wealth to the area in the 15th century, as merchants as well as producers. It could have been this which took them to London and, indeed, provided them with the means to rebuild their house.

Some evidence for this comes from Dame Thomasine's brother, Richard Bonaventure, Rector of Chelsfield, who died in 1500, when John Dinham became his executor. It is clearly the same John Dinham, because the will also refers to his wife Margery, the Bonaventures' niece, but on this occasion he is referred to as 'of the city of London, gent.' At this date his father, Nicholas Dinham, was still alive and it is entirely plausible that the eldest son was meanwhile pursuing a

career in London to further family interests while his cousin's husband was Master of the Merchant Tailors, and mayor in 1498-9.

When John Dinham returned to Devon to take up his estates, the family's London interests were perhaps taken on by his younger brother, William. The Herald's pedigree describes him as of London, and as a knight, so that whatever his business, he clearly prospered in it.

The younger William Dinham, of Wortham, also extended the family property, by marrying Anne Bifield, an heiress from Lincolnshire, but died not long after his father, in 1560. The family continued to make good marriages thereafter, but more local ones. William and Anne's son, another John, married Grace, daughter of Sir John Arundell of Trerice, otherwise known as 'Jack of Tilbury', who had served as Vice Admiral of the West under Henry VIII.

Their son John Dinham III (c.1555-1628) married Elizabeth Tremain of Trevere. It was he who signed the pedigree of the family drawn up by the Heralds in 1620, and he, too, who panelled the parlour. His son was also John, the fourth to be so named. He married a neighbour's daughter, Margaret Harris of Hayne, whose prolific family were settled at a number of houses in the area. Her father, Sir Arthur Harris, was also lord of the manor of Lifton. They had no children and John Dinham died, the last male heir of his line, in 1641, on the eve of the Civil War. There is a monument to him, and to members of the Harris family, in Lifton church.

How a House such as Wortham was furnished. The following inventory of contents was taken in a house of similar size and status to Wortham, on the death of its owner. John Dinham IV died in the same year, 1641.

LEONARD YEO of Huish, esquire
By Robert Cliffe and Christopher Kellond, gentleman
24 May 1641

12 Oxen £62; 11 Kine & a Bull £42 10s; 5 Steeres £13 10s; 9 young cattle of 2 yeeres age £20 5s; 7 yearlings, & 7 Calves £14 15s; 5 Naggs £23; 80 sheepe £39; 27 Melch Ewes £9 9s; 38 Lambs £7; 24 Pigg Hogs £14 15s; Geese & other Poultry £1 10s; Corne in the Mowe Barne & Granary £29; 25 Acres of wheat in the feild, 10 of Barley 20 of Oates 4 of Beanes & Peaze £135 10s; Double & parcell guilt plate £56 13s 4d; Silver plate £43 6s 8d;

IN THE HALL: 2 Great Table boards, 1 Livery Table 3 Formes one payre of Andirons etc £2 10s;

LITTLE PARLOUR: 1 Tableboard, 1 Liucry Cupborde with their Carpets 6 stools 10 Cushions, Andirons, Bellows, Tonges firepan, snuffers etc. £3 10s;

GREAT PARLOUR: 1 Large Tableboard 1 square Tableboard 1 Liucry Tableboard with their Carpets 3 great Chayres 12 backstoole 6 Joynd stools 2 formes 4 low stools 12 Needleworke Cushions, 1 payre of Brasse Andirons & a lesser payre, 1 halbert 1 skreene, 1 payre of Tables, Snuffers etc. £17;

BY THE SELLER DORE: 1 Joynd stoole 2 Low stools, & a Childes chayre 7s;

GREAT PARLOUR CHAMBER: 1 Hiegh Bedsteede with valence & silke curtaynes 1 fayre Bed of Downe 1 Bolster & 2 Pillowes of the same 2 Ruggs a silke quilt 1 Arras Couerlett 1 payre of Blanketts £26 13 4d; 1 Canopie 1 Trendle Bedsteed a Bedd of Downe in it 1 Bolster & 2 Pillowes of the same, 1 Rugg & 1 payre of Blankets £5; 3 fayre Hie chayres wrought with Needlework 3 other back chayres & 6 Low stools all Needlework £5 10s; Liucry Cupboard & its Carpet 3 window Cushions 1 Joynd stoole 2 Low stools, Andirons, firepan tongs, bellows, snuffers etc £3 4s;

LITTLE PARLOUR CHAMBER: Blew hangings for the roome, 1 Bedsteed with Tester & curtaynes of the same, 1 Downe Bed & bolster, 2 Downe Pillowes of the same 1 Rug 1 Arras Couerlett 1 payre of Blanketts 1 Liucry Table & its Carpet 2 back stools 2 Low stools 1 Cusheon firepan tongs bellows snuffers etc £8;

HALL CHAMBER: Red Hangings for the room 1 fayre heigh Bedsteed with valence & Curtens of the same with the hangings 1 Bed of Downe, 1 Bolster, & 2 Pillowes of the same 1 white Rug An other fayre Covering answerable to the Curtens & valence 1 Arras Couerlett 1 payre of Blanketts £18 6s 8d; 1 Trendle Bedsteed with a Bed of Downe in it 1 Bolster & 2 pillowes of the same 1 rug 1 payre of blankets £4; 1 Liucry Table & Carpet 2 window Cusheons 2 great Chayres with backs of red cloth 2 back stools 2 other Low stools suteable, 1 ioynd stoole 2 other little stools Andirons, warming pan, firepan, tongs, bellows etc £3;

ENTERY CHAMBER: 1 fayre Bedsteed valence & Curtaynes, & Couerling answerable 1 Feather Bed 1 Bolster 2 Pillowes of Downe 1 Rug 1 payre of Blanketts £6 13s; 1 side bedsteed with a feather bed therein 1 Bolster 1 pillow 2 Coverletts 1 payre of Blanketts £3 10s; 1 Liucry Table & Carpet 2 window Cushions 2 heigh Chayres 2 back stools 6 Low stools 1 Looking glasse, fire pan, tongs, bellows, Andirons, snuffers etc £2 9s 4d;

BUTTERY CHAMBER: 1 Feather Bedsteed with valence & Curtens, 1 Feather Bed 1 Bolster 2 Downe Pillowes Hangings to the roome 2 Ruggs one payre of Blanketts £8; 1 Trendle bedsteede 1 Feather Bed 1 Bolster 1 Pillow 1 Couerlett & 1 payre of Blanketts £3; 2 Great chests & 1 little 1 Trunke & 1 spruce chest 2 Heigh Chayres 2 Backstoole 4 lesser stools 1 window Cusheon 3 other little Cusheons 1 Carpet a Brush steele, firepan, tongs, Andirons, bellows snuffers, & 1 ioynd stoole £5 6s. 8d;

THE STUDY: The Bookes valued at £12 10s; 1 Table Borde with a Carpet 2 little Chests 1 other Chest 1 Trunk 1 little Deske 2 little scriptories 1 great scriptory a standish, Pictures & brass weights £2 5s;

THE CLOSETT: 1 Table boorde 1 scriptory 1 Backstoole, Bottles & glasses £1 10s;

THE INNER BUTTERY CHAMBER: 1 Bedsteede & greene Sey Courtens
1 Fether Bed, 1 Bolster of the same 2 Couerletts, 1 payre of Blanketts
£3 10s; 1 Trendle Bedsteed 1 Feather Bed 1 bolster 2 Couerletts & 1
payre of Blanketts 1 great Presse 1 Chayre, & 1 Low stoole £2 10s;
WETT LARDER CHAMBER: 1 Hie Bedsteed 1 Feather Bed 1 Bolster of the
same 1 Couerlett 1 Trendle bedsteed & bed 1 Table borde £1 15s; IN
THE LARDER CHAMBER: 1 Hie Bedsteed with valence & Curtayens of
greene sey 2 Couerletts 1 Feather Bed 1 Bolster 1 Downe Pillow 1 payre of
Blanketts £5 10s; 1 Trendle Bedsteed 2 Feather Beds 2 Bolsters 2 Downe
Pillowes 3 Couerletts 2 payre of Blanketts 2 old Arras Couerletts £5;
1 Downe Bedd £2; 2 Chests 1 back chayre 2 Frames of Chayres 1 ioyned
stoole £1; 6 Remnants of New cloth 1 new Bed-Tike £1 13s 4d;

IN THE GALLERY: 1 Fayre Table Boord 3 Chests & 2 Trunkes 1 Low
stoole, 1 Forme, 2 Flasketts 2 spinning Turnes etc £2 8s 10d;

THE HIE CHAMBER: 1 Hie Bedsteed, valence & Curtens 1 Feather
Bed 1 Bolster 2 Downe Pillowes 2 Couerletts 1 payre of Blanketts £4 10s;
1 Trendle Bedsteed 1 Feather Bed 1 Bolster 1 Coverlett 1 payre of Blanketts
£2; 2 Liucry Tables 1 Carpett 2 Hie chayres 1 framestoole 1 little chayre
& a little Cradle £1;

THE STUDY CHAMBER: 1 Bedsteede 1 Feather Bed 1 Feather Bolster
1 old Arras Couerlett 3 Blanketts & a little Table borde £2 6s 8d; THE
SERVINGMENS CHAMBER: 2 Bedsteeds 2 Feather Beds 2 Feather bolsters
2 payre of Blanketts 4 Couerletts & 2 ioyned stooles £3 6s 8d; THE
PRESSE CHAMBER: 1 wrought old Carpett 1 wrought Cupbord cloth 9
Cusheons £2; 22 Fayre Chushion Couerings for stooles £7 10s; 1 Long
Broadcloth greene Carpett £1 13s 4d; 1 Presse 1 ioyned stoole 12s;
GATEHOUSE CHAMBER: 1 Bedsteed 1 Feather Bed 1 Bolster 2 Couerletts &
1 payre of Blanketts £2 10s; INNER DAYRY CHAMBER: 2 Bedsteeds 2
Feather Beds 2 Feather Bolsters 3 Couerletts 2 payre of Blanketts 1 Frame
of a Tableborde 1 Chayre & 1 stoole £3; THE OUTER DAYRY & PUMPE
CHAMBERS: 5 Bedsteeds 1 Feather Bed 1 Feather Bolster 4 other Bedds
& Bolsters 5 Couerletts 5 payre of Blanketts £4; THE STOREHOUSE
CHAMBER: Woll, Hops & Feathers £7; 2 little Tanned Hides 5s; 2 skilletts
2 Possnetts 2 Brasse potts one dropping pan 13s 4d; The Candle chest &
Candles etc £1 10s; One Chest of Armour £5 10s; 2 stillatories 2 Morters,
& other Implements 16s;

THE BUTTERY: 6 Beere Flaggons 2 Pewter Basins & Ewers 3 voyders
11 Pewter Candlesticks Chamber Potts £1 6s 8d; 7 Brasse Candlesticks
13s 4d; Cups glasses & Trenchers 11s; 3 Table Bordes 1 Chest 2 Joyned
stooles 1 Presse for Linnen 1 Cupbord £1 10s; 4 Hoggesheds & 14 Barrells
£1 16s; Linnen in the Buttery £3 11s 8d; Linnen in the Buttery Chamber
chest: Damasker £1 10s; Diaper £4 13s 4d; Holland £5 17s; Canvasse
£14 5s; Pewter in the Gallery Chest £6 7s 6d; 5 Brasse Candlestickes
there also 10s;

THE KITCHING: Old Pewter vessell £1 16s; 6 Kettles 2 Posnetts 1
Chafer £2 3s; 8 Brasse Potts 2 skilletts 2 skummers £3; 5 Dropping pans
8 spitts etc £2 3s 4d; 6 sides of Bacon £1 10s;

WETT LARDER: 12 Barrells & Trendells £1 6s 8d; Butter, Hony,
Morde, Seame, Tallow, & Suite £2 10s; Grotts, flower & Beese £1 13s 4d;
An Amery & 4 little Tubbs 13s 4d; PASTORY: 1 Amry 6 Tubbs & Barrells
etc 13s 4d; IN THE CORNE CHAMBER: 1 Brasse pan 1 Kettle 2 Barrells vessell
Timber, Boards etc £3 3s 4d; BREWHOWSE: 3 Brasse pans £2; 6 Keeues
3 Trendles 6 Tubs £3; 18 Barrells 4 Bucketts 2 Brandirons £1 13s 4d;
DAYRIE: 16 Brasse pans £3 4s; 1 Trendle 2 Tubs 6 Bucketts 2 Cheesewrings
15s; CELLAR: 5 Great barrells & 4 lesser 2 great stoning potts 2 great
glasse bottles & glasses one glasse cage 1 Amrey 1 Table boorde £1 5s;

STABLE: 1 Muster saddle & 4 hackney saddles 4 Packsaddles Girths,
Panniers, Crookes etc £2; 4 Payre of Ironbound wheelles, waynes, Butts
Harrowes, yokes, Chaynes, Tooles of Husbandry, Timber for Plough
stuffe, Ladders etc £23; Goods valued at Collaton £22; Goods valued at
Fishleigh £4; Wood in the Rick £1 10s; Winnowing sheetes & Baggs
£1 13s 4d; Goods not prized 10s; His wearing apparrell £40; Mony in
his purse £60; More in depts owing him £180.

Total £1140 13s 8d

Exhibited 15 June 1641
[Parchment]

From Margaret Cash. *Devon Inventories of the 16th and
17th Centuries* (Devon & Cornwall Record Society, 1966).

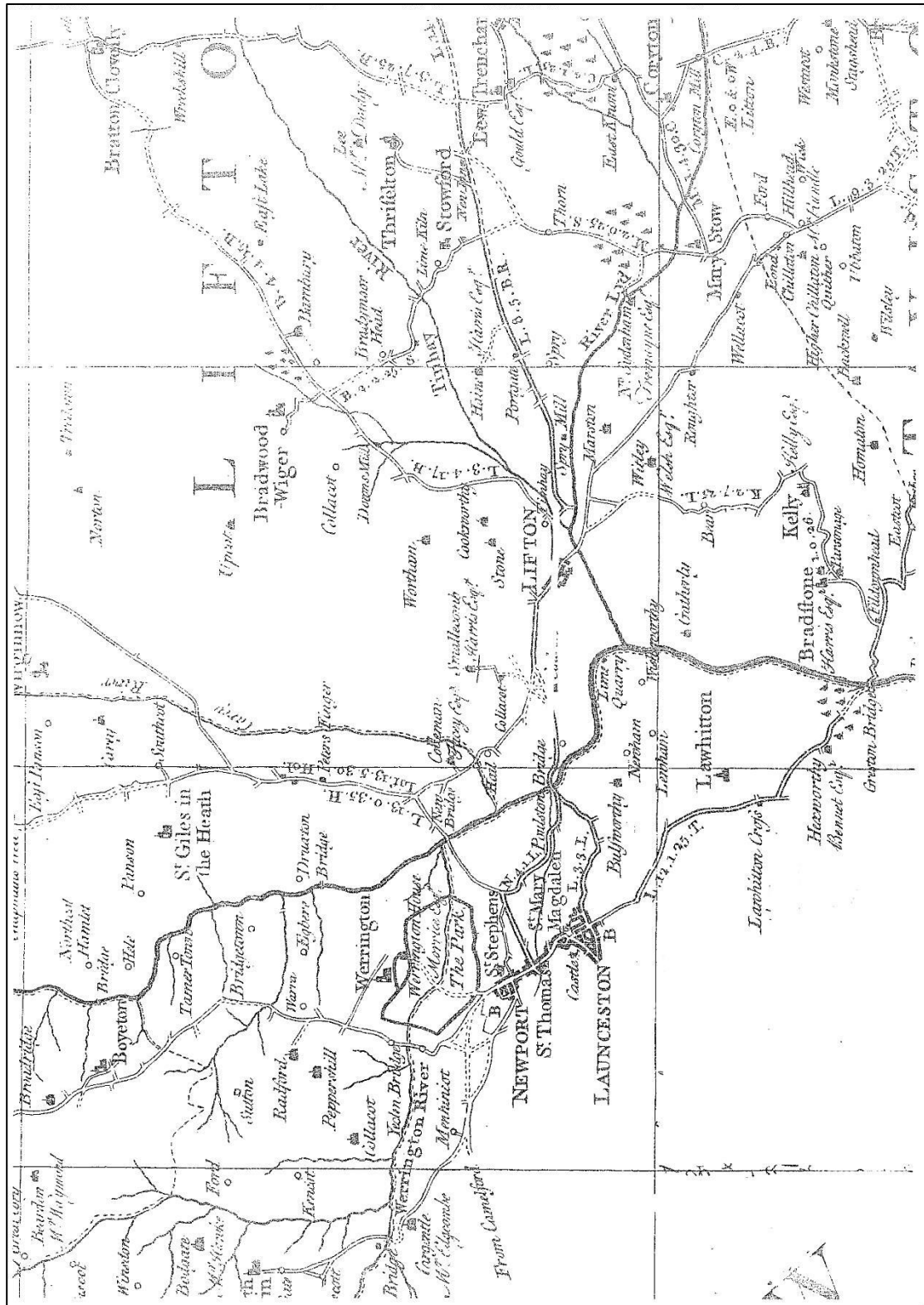
The Harrises of Wortham

John Dinham's lands were inherited by his niece Mary Hex (or Hicks or Hext) the daughter of his sister Margaret. Mary, who lived until 1674, married John Harris, a nephew of John Dinham's wife. Wortham thus passed to the Harrises, who established a new branch of the family there.

In 1666, John Harris also inherited the estate of his cousin William Newcourt of Pickwell, at Georgeham in North Devon. He and Mary had only one son who survived infancy, described in pedigrees as John Harris of Wortham. He presumably lived at Wortham Manor, therefore, until his death in 1727. In about 1700 his son, William Harris, married Honor, daughter of Arscott Bickford of Dunsland, another ancient Devon manor, which was to be bought by Philip Tilden in 1949, causing him to abandon Wortham.

One of Honor's cousins was Edmund Prideaux, whose family lived at Prideaux Place in Cornwall. In 1716, he made a tour of the West Country, visiting his many relations, and made sketches of their houses, one of them of Wortham. The couple standing in the foreground of the drawing on page 44 could therefore be Honor, with her husband. Although William is known to have died before his father, the date is not given in the Harris pedigree, and he could still have been alive in 1716.

The Prideaux drawing records Wortham at the end of its existence as a country gentleman's home. William's eldest son, Samuel, who succeeded his grandfather in 1727 at the age of 22, was probably the first member of the family to desert the now old-fashioned house. He is described as being 'of Smallacombe' and that very charming house next to Wortham, now a farmhouse, with its early 18th-century brick front and outbuildings, probably owes its present appearance to him.



A map of the *County of Devon* 1765 by Benjamin Donn, (facsimile Exeter, 1965). The names of gentleman occupants are given after the houses, and it can be seen that Wortham by this date has become a farmhouse. Samuel Harris is living at Smallecomb. Other Harris houses are Bradstone and Haine which was sold in the late 19th century.

Samuel Harris and his wife, Florence, had only two daughters, Dorothy and Mary. Because he had no sons, most of his estates, being entailed on the male line, were inherited by his brother, another John Harris, who had already inherited the house at Pickwell, near Barnstaple, for which town he was MP. John married Dorothy Herbert, sister of Henry, 1st Earl of Powis, and left an only surviving daughter, Miss Honor Harris of Pickwell, on whose behalf the entail appears to have been broken, perhaps for lack of male heirs, since she seems to have inherited all her father's estates, including Wortham. According to two early 19th-century histories of Devon, Lysons' and the Supplement to Risdon's Survey, on her death in 1790, the old Harris, or perhaps even Dinham, estates in Cornwall went to a Harris cousin, while she left Pickwell and the other Devon properties to a Mrs Middleditch.

LIFTON is a parish and a considerable village, pleasantly situated in the valley of the river Lyd, about a mile from its confluence with the Tamar, 4 miles E. of Launceston, and 15 miles W.S.W. of Okehampton. It has a station on the Launceston and Tavistock branch of the South Devon Railway. It is in Tavistock union, Launceston county court district, Lifton hundred and petty sessional division, Totnes archdeaconry, Southern division of the county, and Tavistock rural deanery. The parish had 1519 inhabitants (755 males, 764 females) in 1871, and comprises 5982 acres of land, including about 600 acres of plantation, the hamlets of *Tinney, High Cookworthy, Beara and Lifton Down*; also *West Week*, a detached part of Lifton, adjacent to the parish of Virginstow. The manor of Lifton was given by King John to Agatha, who had been his mother's nurse. It afterwards passed to various families, and was sold in September, 1845. F. Bradshaw, Esq. (the lord of the manor), W. C. Rayer, Esq., S. T. Kekewich, Esq., J. Tremayne, Esq., and Mrs. Kelly are the principal owners of the soil. LIFTON HIGHWAY BOARD meets on the second Thursday in every month, except July and August. Reginald B. Gill, Esq., is treasurer; and Mr. John L. Cowlard, clerk.

Limestone, lead ore, manganese, &c., is obtained in the parish. A large cattle fair is held in the village on February 13. PETTY SESSIONS for Lifton division are held in the justices' meeting room on the last Thursday in the month by the following magistrates:—Reginald Kelly, Esq., F. Bradshaw, Esq., J. H. Deakin, Esq., John Tremayne, Esq., M.P., T. E. Manning, Esq., E. Coode, Esq., T. H. Newman, Esq., S. C. Hamlyn, Esq., and the Rev. H. J. Morshead. Messrs. Cowlard and Cowlard are their clerks. The CHURCH (St. Mary) is an ancient structure consisting of chancel, nave, south aisle, and a lofty square tower, surmounted by crocketed pinnacles, and containing eight bells and a clock. There are monuments to the Harris and Dynham families. The Register dates from 1653. The living is a rectory valued in K.B. at £31 2s. 11d., in the patronage of Frank Bradshaw, Esq., and incumbency of the Rev. William W. Martyn, B.A., who has a good residence and 21 acres of glebe. The rectory house was formerly the manor house and the property of the Earls of Westmorland, and has walls of an extraordinary thickness. The tithes were commuted in 1841 for £540 3s. 4d. a year. The BAPTISTS, WESLEYANS, and BIBLE CHRISTIANS have chapels here. The NATIONAL SCHOOL was built in 1871 by Henry Bradshaw, Esq. In the village is a Literary Institute.

POST, MONEY ORDER and TELEGRAPH OFFICE and SAVINGS BANK at Mr. William Teague's. Letters are received from Exeter and London at 6.15 a.m., and despatched at 6 p.m.

Allen Miss Esther, 3 Park cottages	Downing Joseph, carpenter & shopkeeper, Lifton Down	Martyn Mrs Charlotte, shopkeeper, Lifton Down
Arundell Mr William Reinfrd A. H., Lifton cottage	Drown Joseph, shopkeeper, Tinhay	Martyn John, station master
Baker Mr G. H. 4 West End cottages	Eastcott Thomas, seedsman	Martyn Rev William Waddou, B.A., rector, The Rectory
Ball William, victualler, Bell Inn	Facey Peter, farmer, Five Acres	Mason Mrs Joanna & William, farmers, Higher Carley
Bartlett John, farmer	Fletcher John, jun. butcher	May Joseph, victualler, Fox & Grapes; and seedsman, Tinhay
Bartlett Richard, farmer, Yeat	Fletcher John, farmer, assistant overseer and assessor of taxes, Lower Cookworthy	Medland William, farmer, Gatherley
Berribell Stephen, farmer, Higher Cookworthy	Fox John, blacksmith & farmer	Miller Richard, sculptor, & watch & clock maker
Beran Mrs Jane	Hamley Richard, farmer, Riscoombe	Mitchell Richard, blacksmith, Tinhay
Beran John, carpenter & builder, Leat	Hanns George Linnington, farmer, Markstone	Northay Mrs Mary, Little Beare
Bickle John, blacksmith, Lifton Down	Harry Thomas, tailor	Northey & Co. lime & coal merchants, Tinhay
Bickle John Jackman, farmer, Stone Barton	Hawkins Miss M. J. schoolmistress	Northey John, farmer, Lake
Blagden Rev Richard Thomas, M.A. rector of Broadwood Widger, Underwood cottage	Hearle Joseph, agent to F. Bradshaw, Esq., Home Park lodge	Northey William Stenlake (N. & Co.); h Tinhay
Blatchford James, farmer, Ashleigh	Hearn Mrs Mary, 2 Park cottages	Northway Thomas, farmer & baker
Bloye David, farmer, Coombe	Hill Mrs Ann, Grove hill	Palmer Miss Grace, Little Beare
Bloye Thomas, farmer, Polson	Hill Tristram, victualler, Masons' Arms, Lifton Down	Palmer James Jessop, cornfactor, Leat
Bradshaw Mr Frank, Lifton Park	Hilley —, excise officer	Palmer Miss Joanna Eliz., Park row
Bradshaw George, boot & shoe maker	Hocking John, frmr. & carrier, Tinhay	Palmer Thomas, farmer, Lugworthy
Buckingham Henry, National school master, 1 West End cottages	Hutchings Mrs Venila, lodging house keeper, 1 Park cottages	Penwarden & Son, plumbers, painters, and gasfitters
Bullen Henry, builder, Leat	Jackman Roger, farmer, Harts	Pethick Mrs Mary, farmer, Higher Cookworthy
Bullen Mr James	Kellaway Jno. grcr & drpr. Tinhay	Reed John, farmer, Beara
Bullen John, contractor & tmbr. merr.	King Miss Annie, schoolmistress	Seccombe John, farmer, West Week
Bullen Mr William Langford	Kittow & Co. lime merchants, Cawdron Lime quarry	Smale George, frmr. West Week moor
Butters Mr Ebenezer, 2 West End cots	Kittow John (J. & Son); h St. Marys	Smale George, jun. farmer, Lower West Week moor
Colwill John, farmer, Lower Wollaton	Kittow Jonathan (J. & Son), & farmer, Cawdron cottage	Smith John, farmer, West Week moor
Colwill Richard, farmer, Welltown	Kittow Jonathan & Son, auctioneers, land agents, and surveyors	Soby Thomas, saddler & harness mkr
Cooksley Jas. sergeant, Police Station	Kneebone Mrs Susannah, 4 Park cots	Stacey William, blacksmith, Tinhay
Crout John Bullen, grocer & farmer	Lock John, frmr. Higher Cookworthy	Stanbury Mrs Mary, shopkeeper
Doidge Mr Henry, Tinhay	Madderer Miss Mary Coombe, grocer and draper	Stenlake Robert, farmer, Wortham
Doidge John, road surveyor, Tinhay		Stenlake Robert, farmer, Smallacombe
Doidge John Griffiths, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. surgeon		
Doidge William, farmer, Tinhay cot		

Stenlake John, miller & frmr. Leatmill
Stenlake Mr William, Woodbine cot
Stenlake William Hy. frmr. Whiteley
Symons James, victualler, Arundel Arms; and inland revenue officer
Teague William, shopkpr. & postmstr
Uglov Wymond, farmer, Lower Carley
Vawden James, tailor, Tinhay

Vawden John, farmer, Colman's
Vawden Richard, farmer, Woodpark
Vawden Stephen, farmer
Ward John, farmer, West Week Barton
Watkins David, farmer, Ashleigh
Weeks Philip, farmer and carrier
Westlake Richard Gilbert, draper and outfitter

Wilson Rev Benjamin (Dissenting), Tinhay
Wise James, boot & shoe maker

RAILWAY—John Martyn, station mstr
CARRIERS—John Hocking & Philip Weeks to Tavistock Fri. and Launceston Sat.

Lifton in 1878. *History, Gazetteer and Directory of the Contry of Devon*, ed. William White (Sheffield 1878-9) 524-5.

Tenants and later owners

There is no mention that Mrs Middleditch, who inherited Honor Harris's Devon estates in 1790, was a Harris cousin, nor indeed that she was any relation at all. For the first time since the 15th century, in fact, Wortham Manor no longer belonged to a descendant of William de Wortham. The connection was broken still further when shortly afterwards it was put up for sale. It was bought by a Mr Cook, who sold it in about 1820 to William Rayer Esq, of Holcombe Court at the other end of Devon.

By this date Wortham had been a farmhouse for over 50 years. At the time of the tithe apportionment of 1840 the tenant was called Edward Bodley. Sometime in the next thirty years the Rayers let it to a Cornishman named Robert Stenlake. His son, daughter-in-law and grandson followed him as tenants. Many of his descendants still live locally.

In 1919 Wortham Farm, then consisting of 391 acres and let to Mrs Louisa Stenlake, was bought from the Rayers by Thomas Bradshaw of Lifton Park, the principal landowner in the neighbourhood.



Mrs Prout and her son and grand-daughter at Wortham in 1990.



Mrs Prout in the dairy where she made cheese.

Edwardian Wortham

Mrs Prout, née Stenlake, who was born in the house in 1899, remembered very clearly the life of a prosperous tenant farmer in the early years of this century. In those days there was a little round summer house with cob walls and a thatched roof and built-in-seats in which she and her sister used to have children's tea-parties.

Her grandfather, father and then her elder brother farmed Wortham with the help of 6 or 7 men who lived with their wives and families in three cottages further down the lane. They kept sheep, cows, bullocks and pigs, and grew corn and dredge corn for the animals, wheat, barley, apples in the orchard and vegetables in the garden.

In a separator house on the right of the kitchen porch, butter was made in the old West-country way, by stirring the scalded clotted cream until it became butter. The buttermilk went to the pigsty opposite the kitchen entrance. Mrs Prout was taught to make Caerphilly cheese in the dairy, now Miss Burgess's sitting room, on a blue stone table, putting rennet into a great vat of warm milk, draining the junket in muslin then pressing it in a cheese press. Also in the dairy were the wooden trendles for pickling pork.

Cider was made in the lean-to cider house leading out of the dairy; neighbours who had no press of their own would bring their apples to Wortham. All this food was needed because there were many mouths to feed: the Stenlakes and their six children and the maid Ethel all sitting at a long table in the hall to eat. There the ringers would come with hand bells at Christmas-time.

On Saturday each of the farm-labourers would be given a pot of cream and a jug of milk to take home. At harvest time more food than ever would be needed: the travelling threshing-machine would come round and everyone helped to bring in



The Stenlakes at Wortham.

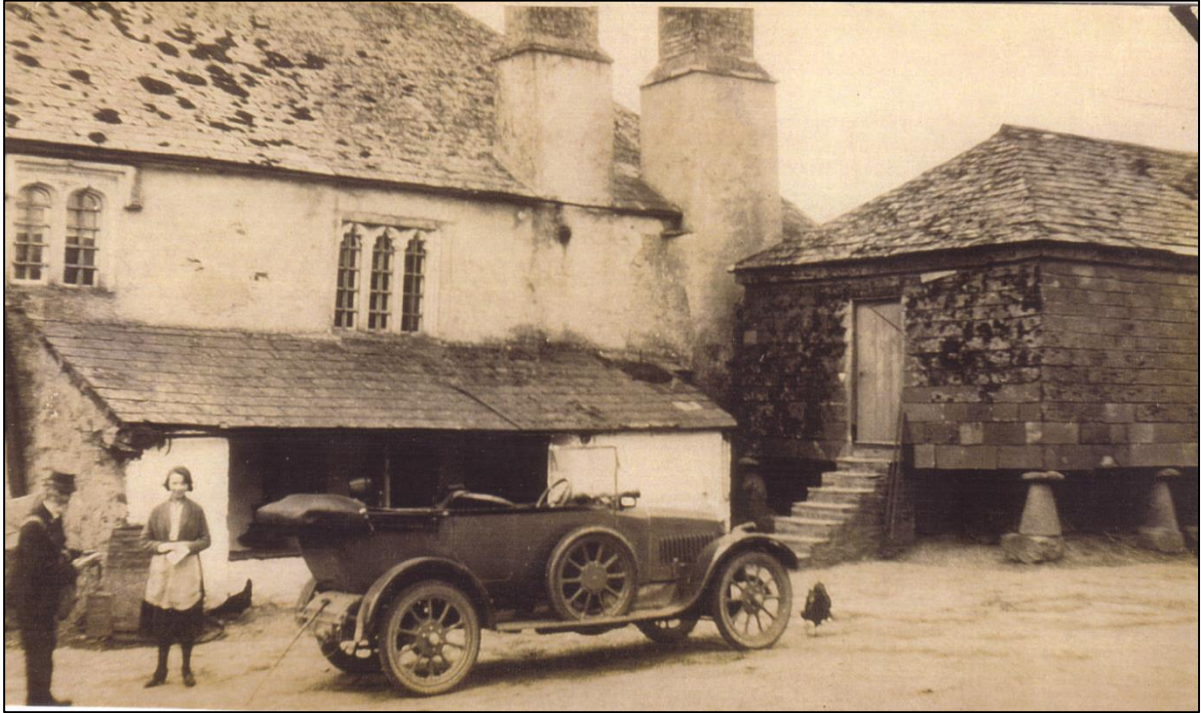


Mrs Prout at Wortham with her son and grand-daughter and photographs of her parents.

the crop. Mrs Prout remembers the square hamper full of a round of beef with vegetables being carried out hot to the fields smelling deliciously, with plenty of cider to drink. At tea-time they went out again with scones and pasties full of fruit and big copper kettles of tea, each with a potato on the spout to stop it spilling.

Not only did most of the food have to be grown on the farm, but there were few labour-saving devices. The washing was done by the cattleman's wife Rose with a peggy-tub and a copper, in the porch by the pump outside the kitchen. Looking at the windows Mrs Prout remembered what a chore it was cleaning them through the bars on the outside.

The following three photos were sent to us in 2001 by Mrs Jill King, a granddaughter of the Stenlake family who used to farm at Wortham Manor. They are undated but seem likely to have been taken in the 1920s or 1930s, pre-dating the manor's acquisition by Philip Tilden in 1945.



Above: East elevation – postal delivery. The house is shown rendered at that time. The car is parked where the Landmark visitors' parking is now. The granary, mounted on staddle stones to protect its contents from predators and damp, had disappeared before Landmark's involvement.



North elevation. The lean-to to the left of the entrance and the outbuildings to the right of the house no longer remain.



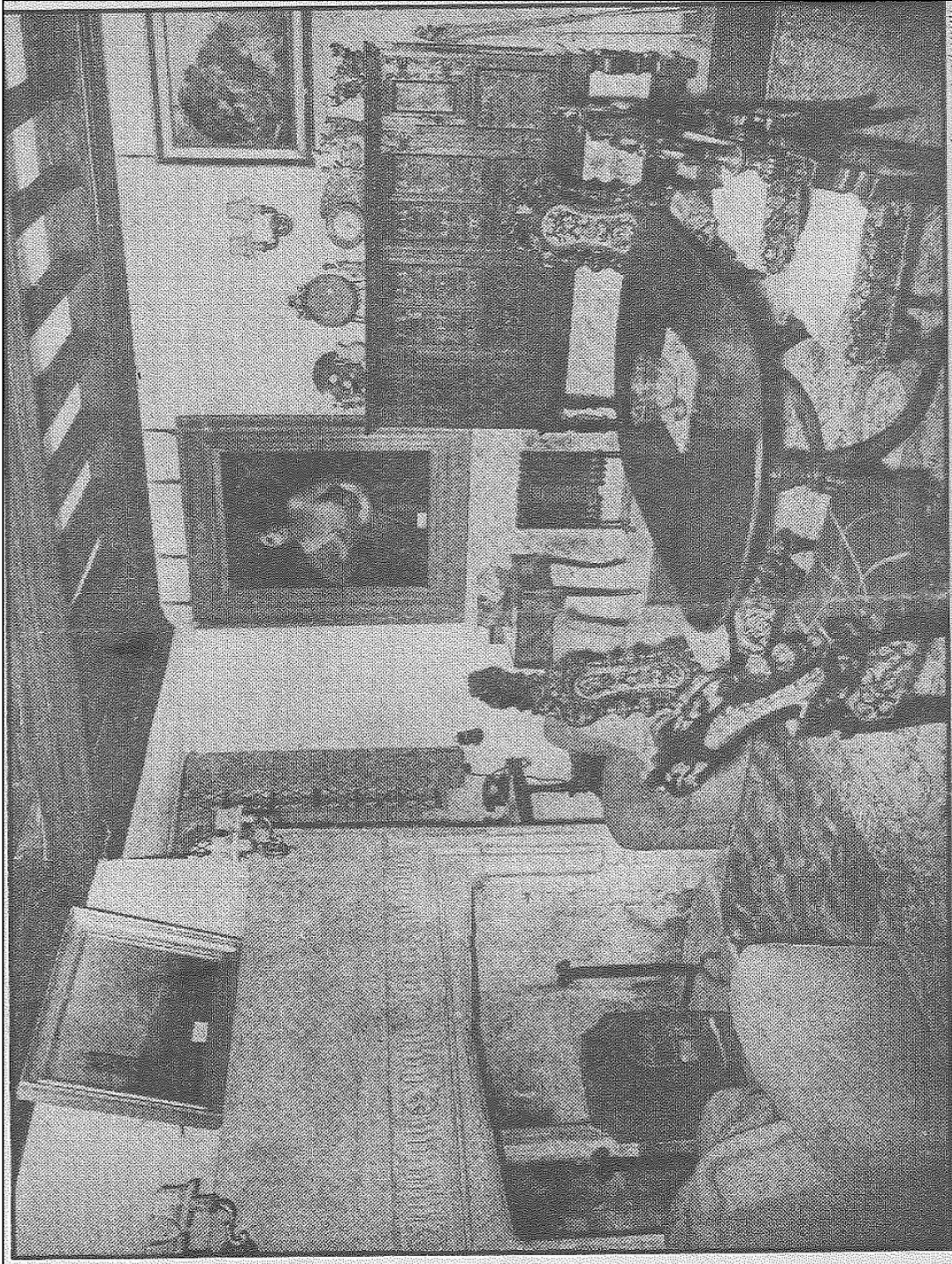
The south elevation, which is again shown rendered. The window to the right of the doorway no longer exists; nor does the lantern on top of the stair turret.

Philip Tilden

On the sale of Lifton Park to Major Allnatt in 1940 an arrangement was made whereby Wortham was sold separately to Sidney Perry, a farmer from Lawhitton.

It is not clear whether the Perrys actually lived at Wortham, but the Stenlakes had certainly left by then. It is possible that when the architect Philip Tilden first saw the house in 1943, it was empty and abandoned. Two years later, the Tildens bought the house, with 'its garden and granary adjoining' and also the mill pond, part of the farmyard and part of the orchard. The Perrys retained the farm buildings and land. Since the deeds describe the Tildens as being 'of Wortham Manor', they may already have been living there as tenants before they actually bought the house.

Building licences for the years 1945-8 show the Tildens restoring and repairing the house, so far as the government's financial restrictions allowed, not to mention their own. Then, in 1949, they moved to Dunsland, selling Wortham to Lt-Colonel Richard Vining. Two years later he sold it to a brother and sister from Essex named Captain Philip and Miss Mildred Burgess. In 1969, after her brother's death, Miss Burgess sold Wortham to the Landmark Trust, though she continued to occupy part of the house until her death in the autumn of 1974.



**'The impressive interior of the Great Hall.' From *Western Morning News*,
22 July 1954. The Great Hall when the Burgesses lived there.**

On instructions received from Miss M. M. Burgess.

WORTHAM MANOR, Near LIFTON, DEVON

Sale by **PUBLIC AUCTION** on the **PREMISES** (by kind permission of the Landmark Trust) on

WEDNESDAY, 26th NOVEMBER, 1969, comencing at 1.30 p.m., a small quantity of

OLD MASTER PAINTINGS, a few Lots of **GEORGIAN** and **CONTINENTAL FURNITURE**, and General Household Furniture and Effects including:— Sir Godfrey Kneller—Portrait of George, Earl of Halifax (ex-Kimbolton Castle Collection); Sir Godfrey Kneller—Portrait of "Dean Swift"; Jose de Ribera—"St. Jerome" (ex-Kimbolton Castle Collection); Thomas Hudson — Portrait of Oliver Goldsmith; English School — Portrait of "Prince Charles Edward"; Gideo Renne (attributed) "Europa and the Bull"; other Italian School works include "Queen Ester and the High Priest"; "Cleopatra"; and "Diana the Huntress"; 18th Century Antwerp ebony Cabinet, faced with coloured marbles and small crystal pillars; 17th Century red tortoiseshell-faced Spanish Vargueno on stand; Georgian mahogany Pembroke Dining Table; Jacobean oak Coffin; Georgian cross-banded mahogany Linen Press; Georgian cross-banded oak Hanging Cupboard; pair of carved bog oak Open Bookcases; carved mahogany Bookcase Cupboard; Continental floral marquetry ormolu mounted Cadenza; mahogany drop-leaf Dining Table with cabriole supports; modern mahogany Sideboard; various Windsor Chairs; 2 Chippendale-style Dining Chairs; Books; 4ft. 6in Divan Bed with interior sprung mattress with shaped headboard; mahogany wardrobe; cross-banded mahogany Bedside Cupboards; Chesterfield Settee; 3-piece Lounge Suite; various upholstered Armchairs; 3 Carpets; and some Kitchen Effects including a full size Calor gas Cooker; etc.

Catalogues being prepared 2/- each

Viewing — only on day prior to Sale and morning of Sale

On instructions from the Executors of the late Alfred Langrish Stephens.

" BANDIRA," TREWARMETT, TINTAGEL

Sale of **HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE AND EFFECTS** (after the Sale of the Freehold Property) on **THURSDAY 27th NOVEMBER**, at approximately 2 p.m.

Items include Georgian oak Bureau; Jacobean oak double Drop-Leaf Dining Table; Georgian Pembroke mahogany Tea Table; Sheraton mahogany Work Table, etc., etc.

View: morning of Sale

From Western Morning News, 22 November 1969.

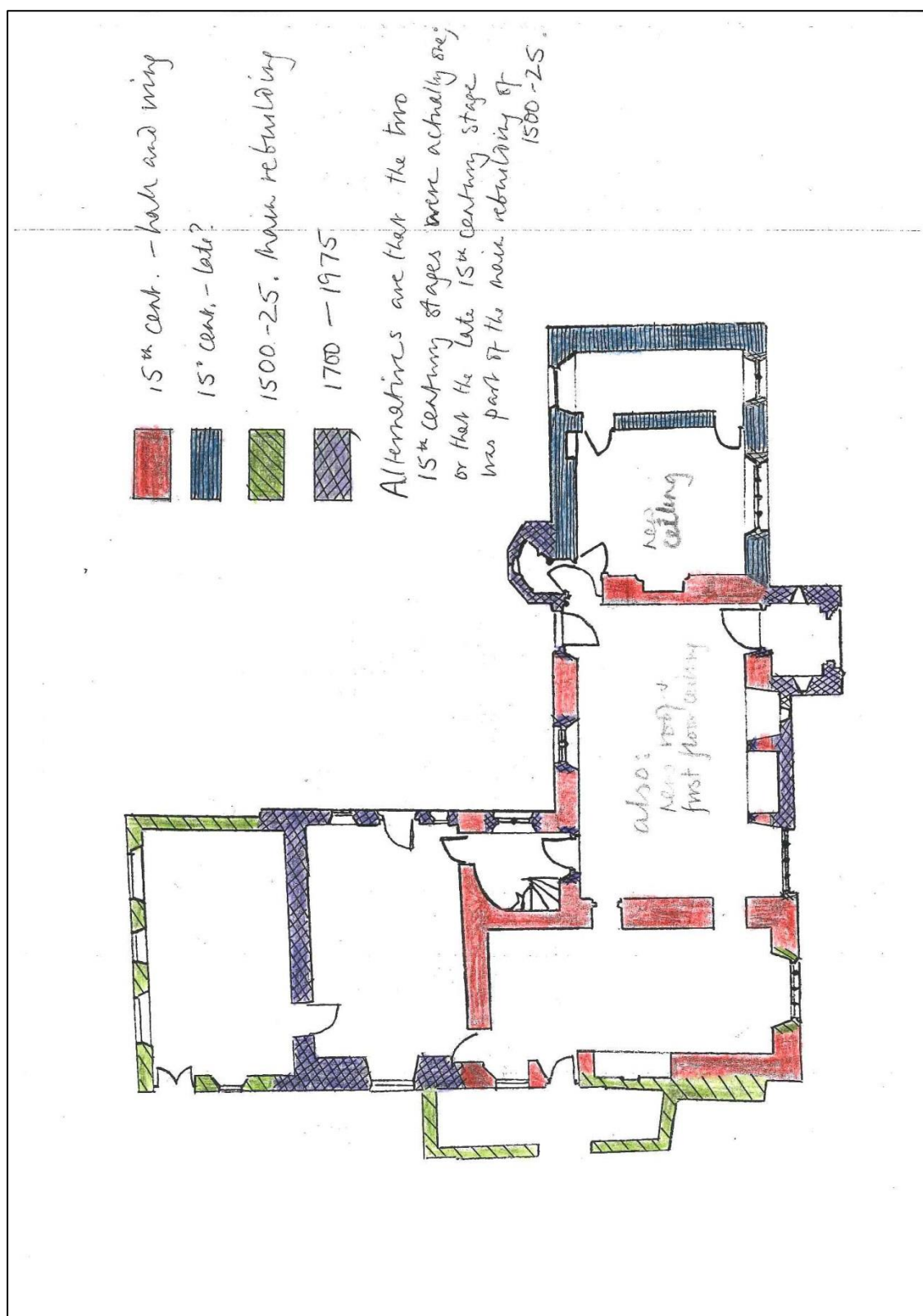
Architectural Interpretations

The first serious architectural account of Wortham Manor was written for *Country Life* in 1956, by Arthur Oswald, and in its main conclusions, it is his interpretation that has been followed since. However, there was enormous progress in the study of Medieval and Tudor buildings in the second half of the 20th century, increasing and refining the detailed knowledge which makes accurate dating possible. Many more buildings of comparable age and status have been examined, some with documentary evidence of their building date to give fixed points around which others can be grouped.

In the light of this, histories are continually being revised, some of them so long accepted as almost to have become orthodoxies. The process will no doubt continue for as long as there are scholars and architects to put forward new ideas. The next few pages describe how this affects the current thinking on Wortham. Those who are happy just to be told what they are looking at, can ignore this section and go straight to the Tour of the Building.

Two new studies were made of Wortham in the twenty years since Landmark acquired the building in 1969. The first of these was by Architecton, revising the lists of buildings of architectural and historical importance for the Department of the Environment at the time. The second by Dr Bridget Cherry (with assistance from Paul Pearn, architect for the Landmark Trust's restoration), for the revised *Devon* volume of Nikolaus Pevsner's *Buildings of England*, finally published in 1989.

Both of these accounts differ from Arthur Oswald's in the dating of individual parts of the house, while agreeing with his proposal for the sequence of its building. A closer look at the differences, however, reveals that in revising the details, their authors have also demolished the supports for the main argument. It is possible that this too needs looking at again.



Possible sequence of building

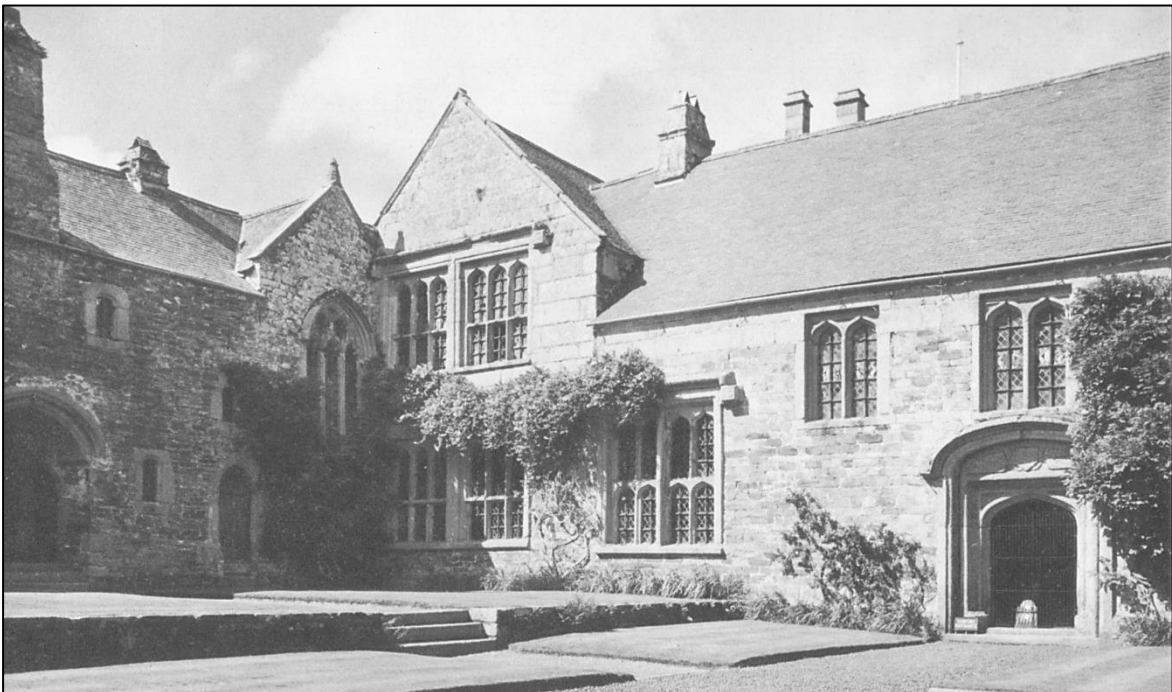
Arthur Oswald's careful study led him to the conclusion that Wortham was built in two phases. The first, which he put at about 1450, had resulted in a typical medieval manor house, with an open hall at its centre and a short wing at its east end containing a solar on the first floor, also with an open roof. The fine arch-braced roof of the hall, with its moulded beams and intersecting wind-braces, he noted as being nearly identical to that of the hall at Cotehele, at Calstock on the Tamar, but some fifty years earlier in date.

The hall range continued to the west with the usual service rooms, 'below' the screens passage. The hall itself was entered through the fine north porch, which from the three-light cusped window on its first floor, must date from about 1450, as did two further cusped windows in the east wing. Similarly, the door surrounds of carved granite at the southern end of the screens passage, and leading out of the south-east corner of the hall, both bearing a close resemblance to those of the porch, were 15th-century. He suspected that there had been a gallery over the screens passage, supported by joists for which pockets survive in the west cross-beam of the hall ceiling, which he therefore took to be a survival of the first, medieval phase. Such a gallery would presumably have been the only means of access from the hall to the upper storeys of the porch.

The second phase occurred in the first quarter of the 16th century, and took the form of a general remodelling and modernisation. The major alteration was the insertion of a floor into the open hall, to create two halls, an upper and a lower. The upper hall was reached by a newel stair in a turret added onto the back, or south, wall of the hall. This opened into a closet screened off from the larger chamber by a new partition, of the kind called post-and-panel, which reached right to the apex of the 15th-century roof. The turret also gave access to another chamber to the west of the hall



The hall at Cotehele, inside and out. In its present form, it is thought to date from between 1489 and 1520. Roof, windows and door are all similar to Wortham.



West of the hall, the former service rooms were turned into a parlour, with a new ceiling similar in detail to that in the hall. The service rooms were possibly moved to a guessed-at wing on the west end of the house. Meanwhile, into the existing walls of the medieval manor house, new windows were inserted, of a pattern seen also at Cotehele, and in other buildings of the early 1500s in Cornwall, with slightly ogee, or pointed heads.

With the extension of the east wing to the south, this completed the second main phase of Wortham's architectural development. Thereafter there were only to be minor alterations, such as the addition of the panelling and fireplace in the parlour around 1600 and the creation of a farmhouse kitchen in the room to the east of the hall, probably after 1750, together with ceilings which hid the early carpentry from view for the next two centuries.

Arthur Oswald's story was thus a complete and satisfying one. Only gradually do questions emerge. Where were the windows of the hall, of which one at least would have been tall, and of which there is no trace in the masonry around the early 16th-century windows? Is the roof structure not rather light in character for a room thirty feet high? And although the plainer door surrounds could be 1450-ish, the carved tympanum or panel over the main door into the porch must surely, like other examples of such work, date from the very end of that century, or the beginning of the next?

After these revisions, only the east wing, the hall roof and the back wall of the hall range are left belonging to the first phase, together with the cusped windows, which it is suggested by both may not be in their original positions. The argument which led Arthur Oswald to propose the existence of a 15th-century hall, the early date of the porch, has disappeared. Another implied argument concerns the form of the roof. An arch-braced roof of the type seen in the upper hall at Wortham would be old-fashioned for a great hall after 1485,

even in Devon, where fine hammer-beam roofs were built at this time, notably at Orleigh Court and Weare Giffard in North Devon

However, they did go on building them after this date on the other side of the Tamar, to which region Wortham belongs in terms of its building culture. Here there are two notable examples of around 1500: at Trecarrel in Lezant, where work stopped in 1511, and where the mouldings on trusses and purlins are similar to those at Wortham; and most notably at Cotehele, where the hall was remodelled between 1489-1520. Both halls share the characteristic ogee-headed mullioned windows, although it has now been suggested that those at Cotehele were inserted after the addition of the new roof, if only by a few years. If the nearly identical roof at Cotehele is allowed to date from around 1500, and to be close in date to the mullioned windows, then the final question must be: why should not that at Wortham?

Moreover, even in Devon, arch-braced roofs continue to be found in first floor chambers, up to and after 1500. It will be suggested here, therefore, that the central part of Wortham was rebuilt in one single phase soon after 1500, in its existing form: a ground-floor hall with a great chamber above. A very similar arrangement can be found, of roughly the same date, in the inner range of a courtyard house, now Nos. 10-11, The Close, Exeter. Explanation for such advanced planning at Wortham, in an otherwise very traditional area, will be looked for in the family responsible, the Dinhams.

For those who are unhappy with the idea of a total rebuilding, there could be a more gradual alternative. Just possibly the rebuilding of Wortham was begun before 1500, on the lines of an open hall, with a new porch, and even a new parlour block to its west: there are reasons for suspecting that this was added, or rebuilt, at about this date, but before the addition of the stair turret, even if only very slightly. The upper floors of the parlour block and the porch were to be reached from the gallery suggested by Arthur Oswald, with a door in the niche

which is now a cupboard in the porch bathroom. The cusped windows may also date from this stage.

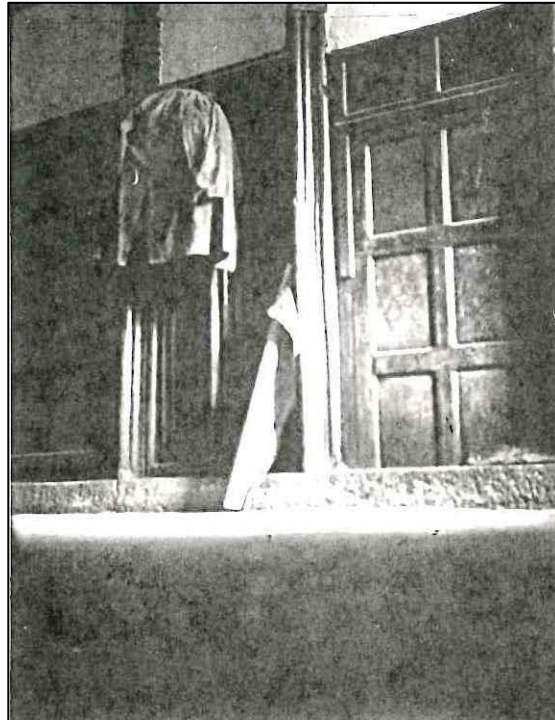
Almost immediately afterwards, and so quickly that it was really part of the same building operation, the decision was changed to floor in the hall completely, to complete the north front with windows on both floors, and to add the stair turret at the back.

None of this is to deny the survival of some parts of an earlier house, probably one that had been remodelled and enlarged more than once already, with the best materials of the last reused in each new stage. By the second half of the 15th century, we can be sure that there was a house here of the standard medieval type, an open hall with chambers and service rooms on two storeys at one or both ends. Only the shadow of this house survives, in the back wall of the hall and in the east wing, projecting a few feet to the south of it.

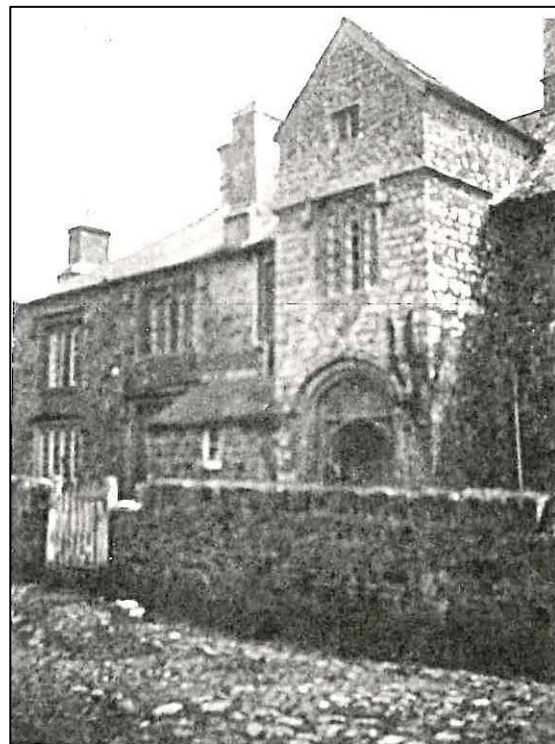
It is possible that a further shadow of the original hall survives in the inner face of its present north wall, the inner wall of the porch, and even north wall of the west wing. By following this line along, you find the outline of a narrower hall, meeting the east wing some two feet back from the present face, allowing the typical projection of a cross wing, lost when the wall was increased in thickness to disguise the great chimney.

Whether there was already a projecting chimney in this north wall before it was rebuilt cannot now be guessed, nor can the positions in it of the hall windows. Even in the south wall, there is no trace of the disturbance that would indicate the blocking of such a window, though rubble masonry shows such alterations less clearly.

Photographs taken in 1943 by Philip Tilden, from the National Monuments Record.



One section of the screen, apparently built into a wall, but in which room?



The lean-to beside the porch was removed by Philip Tilden.

Another question is whether the parlour block to the west of the porch was part of this medieval house, containing service rooms as suggested by Arthur Oswald, or whether it is a later addition. Its masonry is similar in character to the rest of the walls, front and back, but in the end wall of the hall there is no apparent sign of the blocked openings of the doorways which must have led to these rooms. It would be surprising if such a door was one and the same with that now leading to the stair turret and the parlour.

It may be that the medieval hall had only the cross-wing at its eastern end. The surviving simple arch-braced roof trusses visible on its first floor, typical of the 15th century, indicate a room with an open roof, a solar or main family chamber. Possibly the kitchen was always on the floor below, although the great chimneys of the present kitchen are of later date. Alternatively the kitchen may have been in a separate building near the south end of the screens passage, and the rooms in the east wing, shown with only a small window in the drawing of 1716, were perhaps for storage.

Before getting onto a detailed description of the building, there is one area of uncertainty still untouched: the extent of Philip Tilden's restoration. Tilden himself refers to the uncovering of ceilings, and Arthur Oswald, presumably from verbal report, describes the insertion of the small window to the left of the porch, and of the fireplace from Anthony in the hall (removed in 1970); and the discovery of post-and-panel partitions in the east wing. The general impression, however, is that Tilden simply revealed the ancient structure of the house, and did nothing to 'improve' on it. Such restraint on his part is, perhaps, unlikely.

Much of Tilden's architectural work was involved, as he himself said, in 'dealing with the past.' Alongside new work, he was from his earliest days in practice involved with major restorations such as those of Allington Castle and Saltwood Castle in Kent, and Sydenham House in Devon. After 1945, he was almost entirely employed in reducing to a manageable size - and inevitably thereby

recreating - several earlier houses, by removing large Victorian additions. Anthony in Cornwall was one of these.

In the catalogue for an exhibition of Tilden's work in 1987, James Bettley wrote that 'his skilful restorations might confuse an archaeologist in centuries to come.' He clearly built up a wide knowledge of medieval and Tudor building methods and details. More than that, he worked on and trusted his own instinct. Of the restoration of their first house in Devon he wrote:

I say instinct, because in matters architectural I have always relied upon a sort of uncanny picture that presents itself to me upon the first view of any new scene. My knowledge, proofs of truths, reading of histories, and minute examinations have generally confirmed my instinct, but have seldom proved necessary.

There is no reason to think that Tilden played about with the main structure at Wortham. It is possible, however, that certain fixtures, such as the post-and-panel partitions, might have been moved around within it.

The biggest question mark lies over the hall screen, which has puzzled many people including Architecton and Dr Bridget Cherry. To start with it does not fit happily in its present position. It is also unlike anything seen anywhere else in Devon or Cornwall, and indeed has an almost foreign character. There has been a suspicion that Tilden introduced it to Wortham. However, a small and dim photograph in the National Monuments Record, taken by Tilden in 1943, when he first saw the house, proves that it was actually there already. It was built into a wall with panelling on either side, but it is impossible to tell in which room this was.

The only thing that is certain is that when Tilden bought Wortham, the screen was not where it is now, since there was no wall in that position. This we learned from Mrs Prout, whose family, the Stenlakes, were tenants at Wortham from the mid-19th century until the 1930s. In 1990, she visited the house, in

which she had been born, for the first time since 1939. She and her son, who had known the house in his childhood, agreed that the hall had changed totally. In the Stenlakes' time, a wall divided the room roughly in two; the further room, next to the parlour, contained a billiard table. The main hall had a large table in it, and in addition to the plaster ceiling hiding the moulded beams, had a panelled dado running round its walls, against which was a fixed wooden bench. She could not, in fact, remember seeing anything like the screen before, although it must have been there somewhere. Its origins therefore remain mysterious. Meanwhile the role that Tilden's instinct told him it should play is as good as any, even if it has only a shaky claim to it.



Drawing of the North front of Wortham Manor, done by Edmund Prideaux while on a tour of West Country houses in 1716. It is inscribed 'Wortham in Cornwall, Devon.'

A Tour of the Building

Outside the House

The best place to start at Wortham is outside the north front. This was once the main approach, through a private walled courtyard with other farm or stable courtyards beyond. It was with this front, therefore, that the Tudor owners of the manor, the Dinhams, took most trouble. To see how little it has changed in recent centuries, you have only to look at a drawing done in 1716 by Edmund Prideaux, a keen sketcher of country houses, who later inherited Prideaux Place in Cornwall, and was a cousin of the Wortham family.

The unchanged quality is slightly deceptive, because the discovery of this drawing, in the 1960s, allowed the Landmark Trust in its restoration to reverse some changes that had taken place, which can be seen by looking at the photographs in the *Country Life* articles of 1956. The evidence of the drawing was confirmed by study of the roof structure itself. The earlier form has been restored, but leaving the new front parapet uncrenellated to distinguish it from the original.

Apart from this, the only changes are the loss of one window to the left of the porch; and the insertion of a new window, probably by Philip Tilden, on the ground floor of the east wing, where there was formerly only a small plain opening. In the surroundings of the house, buildings seen over a wall to the west of the house have disappeared; and the tall building to its east, which could be either domestic or agricultural, and of which the remains, perhaps, survived in a building shown in that position in conveyances of the 1940s.

As you look at the north front again, one thing immediately stands out. The windows, and the porch, all say early Tudor, but the central part of the house, where you would normally at this date still expect to see the tall window of a

great hall, has instead the appearance of a more modern type of house altogether, with rooms on two storeys.

With the widespread introduction of the chimney to grander houses during the 15th century, the open hall, in fact, became something of an anachronism in practical terms, surviving thereafter mainly for reasons of tradition and ceremony. It was no longer necessary to have a high roof in which the smoke of a central fire could collect, away from the people below.

The Dinhams of Wortham were among the first to realise that the comfort enjoyed in the rooms with lower ceiling heights, found for the previous two centuries at the high and low ends of the hall house, could be extended to the hall itself, a pattern which became widespread during the 16th century. In this, they were ahead of their neighbours, the Edgecumbes, at Cotehele, near Calstock, where a new and magnificent open hall was built around 1500; and of a nearer neighbour, Sir Henry Trecarrel of Trecarrel in Lezant, both over the Tamar in Cornwall. However, as already mentioned, Nos 10-11 The Close, in Exeter, is of the same type and of similarly early date, soon after 1500; and closer to London, in the southern counties of England, are other early examples. The Dinhams had family connections with Surrey, and London, and it could have been from there that they learned of a fashion unknown elsewhere in rural Devon.

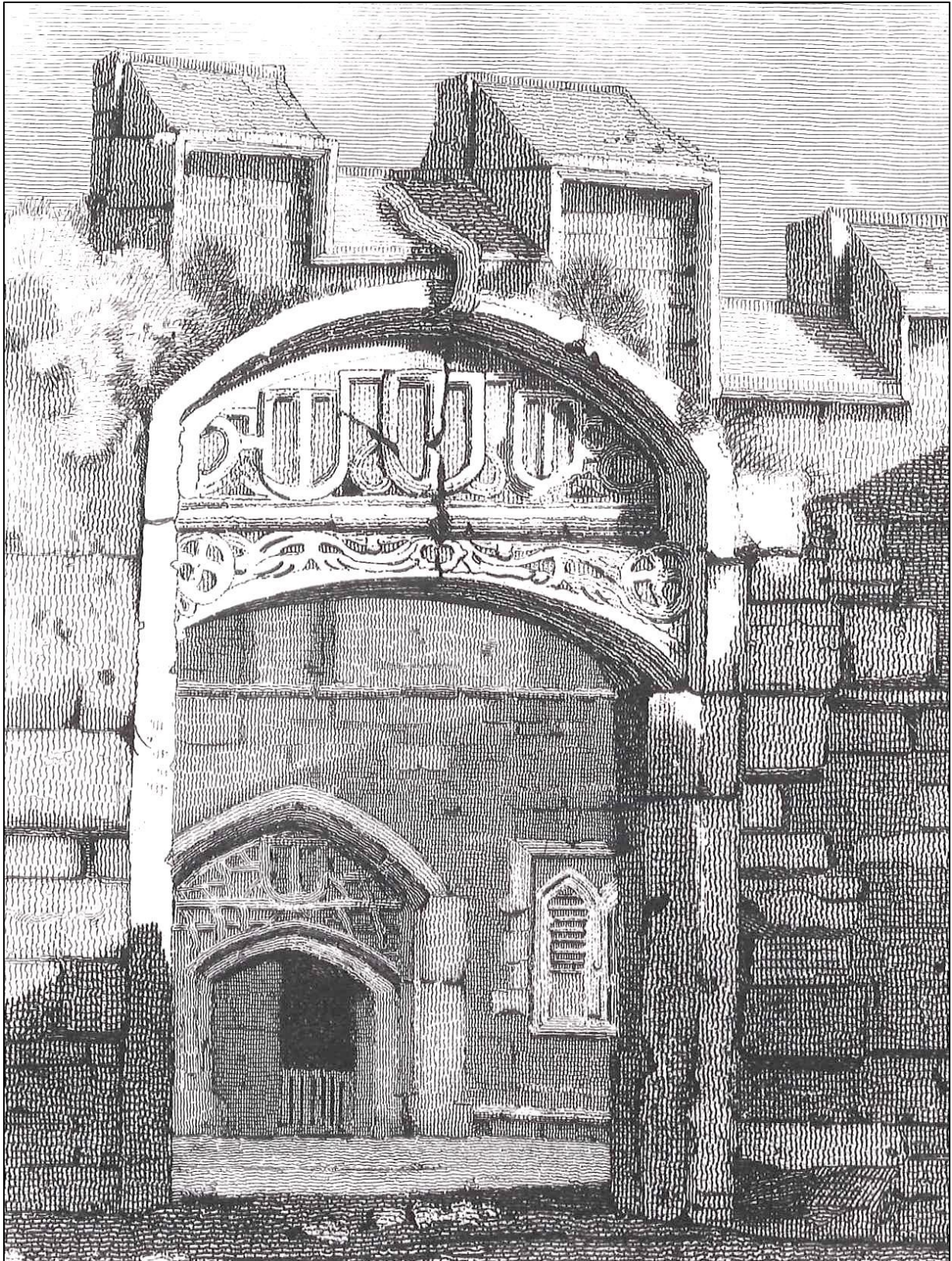
The north front of Wortham achieves a balance between the two opposite architectural impulses of symmetry and hierarchy. The medieval convention of a tall window to mark the great hall, or the projection from the wall of a great chimney, are now concealed behind a smooth and regular two-storeyed front, forming a unity with the traditionally storeyed ends. To achieve this, the new front wall is some two foot thicker than it need be, and extends up in to a parapet to disguise this fact.

The original crenellations also served to distinguish the centre of the house from the rest. The Dinhams still wanted it to be clear which were the most important rooms. The front is further divided by the porch, which has the height seen in the ornamental gatehouses of the period. Such an entrance heralds something grand beyond.

In its ornamental detail, the front shares a family resemblance with other buildings in the area, perhaps the work of one particular team or school of masons. The slightly pointed, or ogee, shape of the individual window lights is seen at Cotehele and Trecarrel, and at another building in Cornwall which has close ties with Wortham, both then, as will be seen, and now, since it too is owned by the Landmark Trust: the College at Week St Mary, which can be dated with near certainty to 1506; as well as in other buildings further west, such as Prior Vivian of Bodmin's favourite manor of Rialton; and in the curious courtyard house of about 1500 in Plymouth, called Yogge's House.

The carved panel, or tympanum, over the door of the porch also appears at Cotehele, both in the gatehouse added by Sir Richard Edgecumbe between 1485-89, and in the door to the hall, the rebuilding of which is usually attributed to his son, Sir Piers, between 1489-1520; and, again, at Trecarrel. The College also had doors of this type. The inner, surviving, door there is similar in design to Sir Richard Edgecumbe's at Cotehele, but an engraving exists of a now vanished door in the outer courtyard wall, which seems to have been almost exactly the same as that in the porch at Wortham.

These panels are examples of a flowering of the technique of carving in the intractable local granite by local craftsmen, determined to impose upon it the elaborate ornament beloved of late medieval and Tudor builders, of which evidence can be found in both churches and houses in Cornwall in the early years of the 16th century. Other examples are the south aisle of St Mary's, Truro; St Grace and St Probus, Probus; reassembled fragments in a bow window in Place



Two doorways at the College, Week St. Mary in an engraving published in 1810.

House, Fowey; and nearest and most memorably, the encrusted exterior of the nave of St Mary Magdalene at Launceston, built between 1511-24 by Sir Henry Trecarrel of Trecarrel.



St Mary Magdalene, Launceston

The north front has the appearance of a house of the early 16th century, but the south presents a less united front and reveals evidence of the manor house which must have existed here for at least a century before that. The walls are of a different stone, of less high quality; the stair turret is not tied into these, indicating that it is an addition. The windows are of a variety of dates and sizes. Those which belong to the early 16th century can be recognised by their ogee heads. Those with straight heads are of the 17th century or later. And on the right, on the first floor of the east wing, is a window with a cusped head, similar to that in the porch, and to another on the east side of the house, all probably of the 15th century and all possibly moved from their original positions.

Just to the south of this window is the straight joint in the masonry pointed out by Arthur Oswald, which distinguishes the southern end of the medieval cross-wing from the rooms added to it after 1500. The addition, which has its own door and perhaps formed a separate lodging, had one room at least on each floor. Whether it originally extended further south on both floors is uncertain. The gable over it was formed in 1970-75, recreating what is thought to have been its original appearance. Until 1970, the present end room on the ground floor was a cider house, with a loft above it, and a catslide roof over both, which was the continuation of the hipped gable of the wing. The upper storey was added by the Landmark Trust.

The east side of the house reflects most strongly the recent stages of Wortham's history, the farmhouse and the Landmark Trust's original conversion into flats. The central gable, like that on the west, is 1970-75. The chimneys at the north end are probably mid-18th- and 19th-century; and the long porch outside the kitchen 19th-century, together with the steps at the south end, originally leading to the loft over the cider house, retained by Landmark to give access to the flat on the first floor. The Country Life photographs show the walls limewashed, as was traditional with masonry of poor quality. These and other photographs suggest that the south side of the building was also once rendered and limewashed, but all traces of this have disappeared.

Inside the house

Inside Wortham, the high quality of workmanship seen on the north front continues. Through the inner door of the porch you pass into the traditional medieval screens passage. It must be pointed out at once, however, that the remarkable screen is perhaps an impostor. The mystery surrounding this fine piece of carving, which does not fit its present position either in literal or stylistic terms, has already been described. Philip Tilden found it at Wortham, apparently built into a wall. He was probably right in assuming it to have been a moveable screen of the type found in Lancashire, for instance. Whether it ever served that role at Wortham, and how it got there, we just don't know.

The framed ceiling, with its rich mouldings and carved bosses, is another particularly fine piece of work, this time undoubtedly in its right place. It is typical of the early Tudor period in Devon, and shows the same enjoyment of ornament as was seen in the granite carving of the porch.

The stone-flagged floor was laid in 1970-75. The jambs, or sides, of the fireplace are what was found when the one inserted by Philip Tilden was removed, and was presumably found by him too when he took away whatever was in front of it in 1945. It is possible that the original lintel was similar to that at Trecarrel, with an ogee head.

Standing in the embrasures on either side of the fireplace, it is possible to see that the new 16th-century front had to be built some two foot beyond its suggested predecessor, in order to disguise the projection of the chimney. According to the Prideaux sketch, there was a window in both of these embrasures, but that next to the porch later disappeared when a lean-to was added, which was removed in turn by Philip Tilden.

Equally fine, and close in date, is the ceiling of the adjoining parlour. The panelling and fireplace were added a century later, in the early 17th century. From the lobby between the two rooms, entered through angled doorways each with original doors, stairs lead up to the first floor.

The stairs at present lead directly into two bedrooms, one above the parlour with a closet beyond which is thought to have been an oratory. The fireplace in this is 15th-century, but is probably not in its original position. Turning right at the top of the stairs, you pass into a bedroom which has been screened off from the Tudor great chamber or upper hall. The dividing partitions are of 16th-century date, and appear to be made for their present position, but are puzzling all the same, especially with the little squint looking into the passage outside the porch room, for which no very convincing explanation has been put forward.

The theory that the whole of this floor was simply the upper part of a previously open hall, into which a floor was inserted, allowed these partitions to be simply be a further subdivision. If, as is now suggested, this part of the house was actually built as a lower hall and upper great chamber, it must also be unlikely that part of it was screened off from the beginning, especially since the stair turret provides the main approach, which would hardly have been into a closet. The suspicion arises that this subdivision, then, dates either from the farmhouse years, or is the work of Philip Tilden, using panelling found elsewhere in the house, or even on the end wall of the great chamber itself. Apart from anything else, the relationship between great chamber and porch chamber would be much happier without such a closet.

The best is still to come, with the great chamber itself. The graceful roof is a replica, on a reduced scale for reduced surroundings, of the roughly contemporary roof of the great hall at Cotehele, and must be the work of the same carpenters, as the stonework must be the work of the same school of masons. Curiously, and in spite of the many similarities between the two houses, there is no record

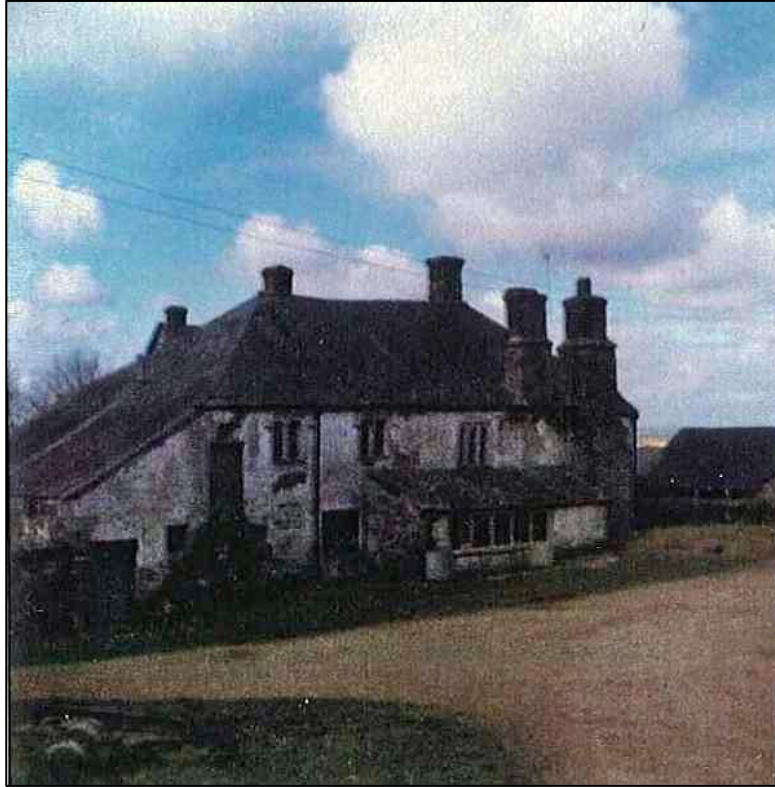
of any family connection between the Dinhams of Wortham and the Edgecumbes of Cotehele.

In the south-east corner of the chamber, a door leads to a staircase and landing giving access to the east wing. The window overlooking the south front of the hall is one of the three surviving from the late 15th century. The turret stands in the angle between hall and east wing and is probably medieval, although the stair itself is modern, apart from the 18th-century balustrade.

To the left is the medieval solar, the roof trusses of which are visible in the room overlooking the north front. The wing has been subdivided for a long time, and its arrangement has recently been altered again, when Wortham was reunited as one dwelling in 1990 after fifteen years as three flats. At the same time, the old farmhouse kitchen below was brought back into use.

The next rooms to the south are within the lodging added in the early 16th century. The original subdivisions are not known. The partition now dividing the two bedrooms is said to have been uncovered by Philip Tilden, but whether in this position or another is not known. It is close in design to that in the great chamber. On the floor immediately below, the present sitting room was, from the 19th century at least, a dairy, until it was brought back into domestic use in the 1950s.

The rooms at the end of the wing date from 1970-5, when the cider house and the loft over it were converted to give extra space for the two flats which occupied this part of the house until 1990



Wortham in 1968. The east front.



The north front.

Restoration by the Landmark Trust

Acquisition and first steps

Captain Burgess died in 1966, leaving Wortham to his sister for her life and then to their cousin Colonel Parkinson, in the hope that it would go on to his son as a family home. The following year Mildred Burgess, then in her sixties, had a car accident which put her in hospital for over a year. Meanwhile Michael Trinick of the National Trust had seen the house, and realised that it was a treasure which efforts must quickly be made to preserve. Neither the Burgesses nor the Parkinsons had the necessary funds to carry out the repairs which were becoming increasingly urgent - someone who visited the house at this time spoke of the fascination of its 'beauty and squalor.'

Although the Burgesses had hoped to see Wortham continue as a family home, with the contents that they had collected for it, the Parkinsons could see little chance of this being realised. Instead they made a generous offer, to step down as legatees, to allow the transfer of the house to the National Trust if an endowment could be found for it. Michael Trinick doubted that this would be possible, but wondered if the recently founded Landmark Trust would be interested, and to this end approached John Smith early in 1968.

John Smith had already heard of Wortham from Caroline Tilden, whom he had met at Dunsland House, and who had spoken warmly of their former home. He was immediately interested in Michael Trinick's suggestion, even though Wortham was somewhat larger than the buildings Landmark had so far rescued. It took just one visit to convince him that Landmark should buy the house, with the intention of repairing it and then creating two or three flats within it, with the minimum alteration to the existing layout of the rooms. One of the flats was to be for Miss Burgess herself, to return to from hospital when fully recovered from her accident, enabling her to live on in the house of which she was so fond.



Details of north elevation.



The east elevation before restoration.



The south front in 1968.

Miss Burgess's flat was to be on the ground floor of the east wing, and would be created in a first and separate phase of work. This allowed time to fully examine the fabric of the rest of the building and prepare a scheme for its restoration. It was clear from the start that this was going to be a major undertaking, not to be embarked on in a hurry.

It was also clear early on that, as a condition of receiving grant aid from the local authority or the Historic Buildings Council, the main rooms - the old kitchen, the hall and the great chamber above - would sometimes have to be open to the public. To make this possible without disturbing the occupants, and at the same time give each flat an equal opportunity to enjoy the rooms, it was resolved that they would be left as public spaces, held in common by all three flats, rather as in the Tudor period they provided communal space for a household whose members would withdraw to separate apartments or lodgings at other times.

To provide enough space for Miss Burgess within the wing, some alteration to its southern end was needed. In 1968, to the south of the old kitchen, there was just one large room on the ground floor, once a dairy but converted by the Burgesses into a sitting room, when they fitted the ornate marble chimneypiece around a small stove with a tin chimney. Beyond was the cider house, still with the granite cider-press in one corner. This was to be converted to provide a kitchen, bedroom and bathroom.

None of this work could begin, however, until all the legal formalities had been dealt with and the sale completed, which was not until early 1969. Before this the architect, Paul Pearn, of Plymouth, had carried out a thorough survey of the whole building and drawn up a report on its condition, consulted specialists on such matters as damp and death-watch beetle (both rampant), and approached the Historic Buildings Council with a view to obtaining grants for the repairs. The contractors for the work, EL Greening & Son of Tavistock, were fully briefed and able to start as soon as they were given the signal.

This they were given in the spring, and Miss Burgess's rooms were ready for her in the New Year, although due to illness she was not able to move in until the summer of 1970. She lived on there for just over four years, during all of which time building work was going on in the rest of the house, watched by her with great interest. She died in October 1974, and her rooms, which were let with the other flats the following year, were named after her.

Full restoration plans

Meanwhile, in 1969, the drawings for Phase II had been sent to the Local Authority for Listed Building Consent. There were two main areas of alteration. The first of these was at the south end of the east wing. To provide a new kitchen and bathroom for the flat on the first floor of the east wing, to be called the Old Solar, the loft over the cider house was to be built up to full height. This would have a new roof over it, with a hipped gable, and three new windows looking south, matching those inserted for Miss Burgess on the ground floor. Access to the flat would be by the same stone outside steps that had led to the loft.

Another flat was to be formed to the west of the hall, incorporating at that stage a semi-derelict addition on its west gable, whose walls were partly constructed of cob, or rammed earth. This later collapsed in heavy rains in 1970, and was demolished. Little alteration to the existing plan was needed, however. The kitchen could be fitted into the closet next to the parlour, instead of in the addition, and the loss of one bedroom was made up for by including the great chamber closet in this flat, along with the bathroom that already existed in the porch (which apart from a bath in a corner of the old kitchen was the only one in the house).

Much more major was the proposed remodelling of the roofs. These were in very poor condition. Not only did the slates need renewing, but the structure itself, particularly in the east wing, was severely decayed. Since most of the timber would have to be dismantled and renewed, this was a perfect opportunity to return the roofs to their original form and appearance. This had been lost during the 19th-century, when the roof had last been renewed, and at the same time greatly altered, if in some ways simplified.

Over the hall itself the change had only been slight, with the front slope given a more gradual pitch, to extend it forward to the outer face of the front wall. To do



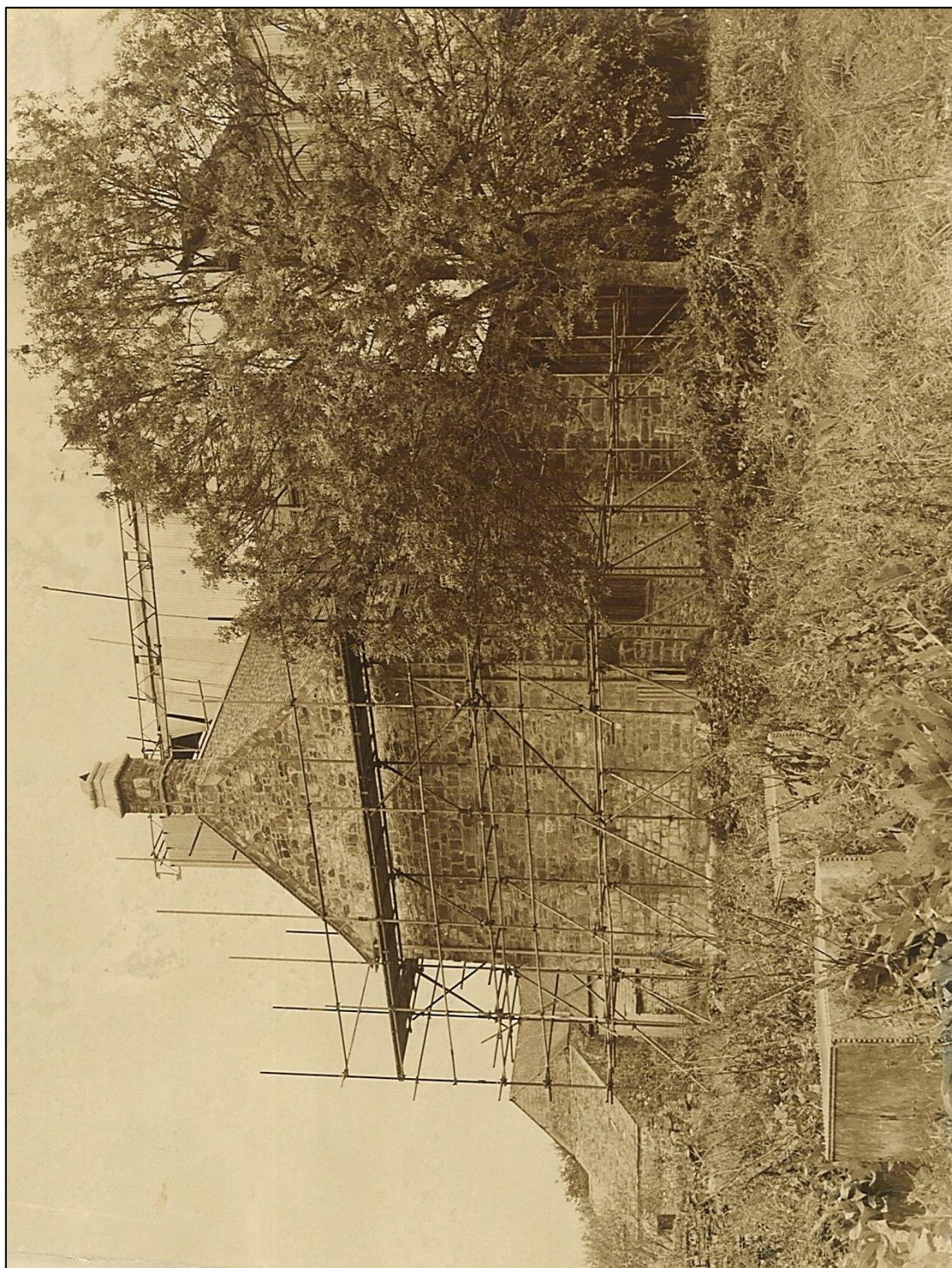
Wortham under repair, February 1974. From '*The Western Morning News*.'

this, the battlemented parapet had been removed, but traces of it were left on the great chimney, and its existence was then confirmed by the Prideaux drawing.

The Victorian alteration to the east wing had been more radical. To start with, the new ridge was much higher, level with that of the hall range. It also had hipped gables at both ends, that at the north end becoming part of the front slope of the hall roof. However, the surviving arch-braced trusses inside the solar, and the base of the original stone gable in the north wall itself provided evidence for its original form which, again, was confirmed by the Prideaux drawing. The proposal to restore these roofs, and to reinstate the parapet over the hall, was thus soundly based both on pictorial evidence, and archaeological evidence within the building itself.

For the remodelling of the roof at the southern end of the east wing, the evidence was more conjectural. From what he could see, however, Paul Pearn, was sure that the rooms added to the south end of the wing in the early 16th century had formed a cross-wing to it, running parallel to the hall range, with gables facing east and west. He therefore proposed that this arrangement be reinstated, greatly improving this aspect of the building. A new stone chimney would be built for the fireplace in Miss Burgess's sitting room. At the same time, the chimneys on the east elevation would be rebuilt, and given new stone tops instead of brick ones; while the chimneys of the main range were given new granite caps, of a design based on those in the Prideaux drawing and on the chimneys of other buildings in the region.

The stone for all the new work came from field walls in the parish of Lifton which were being demolished by the Highways Department in 1970. They offered to give this to Landmark for the cost of its transport - an offer which Paul Pearn quickly took up. The new slates came from the Delabole quarry in North Cornwall.



Work in February 1974

Structural repair and other work

Approval for these major works did not come until half way through 1970, and work did not begin on the roofs until the following year. There was plenty of other work to be getting on with in the mean time, and for several years more, under the heading of structural repair. The foundations were in need of underpinning in several places, and new drains were needed to take water away from the building. Rentokil had been called in to deal with woodworm and death watch beetle, and they inserted an electro-magnetic damp proof course at the same time. All the floors were lifted, to lay a hardcore concrete slab, with a damp proof membrane and then the panels for the underfloor heating system. Where they existed already, such as in the old kitchen, slate floors were put back, with new to make up the gaps, but in the hall the floor had been paved with concrete slabs, so here new slate was laid.

Underfloor heating had been decided upon as the best way of introducing a gentle, basic warming of the atmosphere without the danger of drying out, and thereby damaging, the precious joinery in which the house abounded. This would be combined with night storage heaters on the upper floors. Even so it was advised that humidifiers be installed in the main rooms.

Meanwhile, a joiner and carpenter from North Devon, Victor Greenslade, had started on the intricate job of repairing the trusses and windbraces of the great chamber roof. He went on to carry out repairs to all the Tudor joinery, both ceilings and partitions. Decayed timber was cut out and new carefully pieced in, to strengthen joints and prevent further damage. Paul Pearn's intention from the beginning was to encourage the highest standard of craftsmanship in all the work at Wortham, and this aim was fully realised.

Throughout the building, lintels, joists and beams were checked, and their ends repaired or strengthened with metal plates where necessary. New and second-

hand oak and elm floor boards were laid where the original ones were decayed, or had been replaced with boards of inferior quality.

There were extensive stonework repairs to be carried out as well. In addition to rebuilding walls and chimneys which had become unstable, there was the slow and painstaking job of hacking out decayed mortar and repointing the whole building. Requiring greater skill, was the overhaul of all the windows surrounds. This involved the repair or, if unavoidable, the replacement of worn or damaged granite jambs, sills, mullions and window heads, such as that on the top floor of the porch.

The ironwork of the windows, and the casements, also needed an overhaul. Non-rusting bronze tips were fitted to the iron bars, to prevent future damage to the stonework. As many as possible of the existing fixed window casements were reinstated, with the old glass re-leaded, but a number needed new glass, and new opening casements were provided as well. The new glass was mainly white, with a little green for variety.

Apart from the insertion of bathrooms and kitchens, and doors giving access to the new rooms in the east wing, alterations to the interior of the building were very few, and can be seen by comparing the before and after plans. A partition was taken out of the old kitchen, and another out of the closet bedroom in the great chamber. A door leading from the great chamber into one of the bedrooms in the old solar was blocked. An existing second doorway from the parlour into the new kitchen in the west, or Hall, flat was opened up, on the other hand, as was the second doorway from the old kitchen into the hall itself, after the removal of the bath. A loo was removed from the east porch, to reinstate it as a simple storm shelter, with new windows.

The fireplace surround inserted in the hall by Philip Tilden, which had come from Anthony, was meanwhile taken out, and the broken, but original, granite surround behind it repaired by the stonemason, Mr Welsh, and a new lintel provided.

The house is plentifully provided with ancient doors, so few new ones were needed. The east wing flats were given new outside doors. The staircase to the south-east of the hall was badly decayed, and had to be rebuilt entirely, in Douglas fir, but reusing the old balustrade at its top.

Final stages

All of this work, it can be imagined, took several years. Only in 1974 did the building begin to emerge from the cocoon of scaffolding and sheeting that had enfolded it since the main phase began. During those years both the scale of the work, and the prices to be paid for it, and for materials, had increased dramatically, so that the cost in the end was two or three times what had originally been expected. Fortunately the HBC gave a generous grant for the repairs. However, it is interesting to note that this entire building was repaired and restored for a little over £150,000. Work of that extent and quality in 1992 would cost about five times that figure, if not more, a measure of inflation in the building industry in the last twenty years.

During the last year, an equal amount of activity was to be seen around the building, as attention was turned to its setting. Walls were built, or rebuilt, and a beech hedge planted. Grass was sown and paving stones laid. The surroundings were to be as plain and simple as possible, in keeping with John Smith's avowed philosophy that you seldom improve a place by adding things to it.



Cypresses *Leylandii* flourishing outside the south screens door.

The companion wisdom, that by taking them away you nearly always do, was not in this case strictly followed. The Burgesses had planted two Leyland Cypresses immediately outside the south door to the hall, which were still at this stage quite small. However, in the way of their kind, they grew and grew, until they almost blocked the way in. They were finally removed in the 1980s. By then, new apple trees had been planted in the orchard, and the boys of Launceston College had undertaken a project to repair the water-wheel and sluice in the mill pond in 1976.

It was not until the summer of 1975 that Wortham was finally ready for furnishing. The Burgesses had collected paintings and furniture for Wortham. Some of this went to their cousins, and much else was sold at auction in 1970 (by Messrs Button, Menhenitt and Mutton of Wadebridge). However a few key pieces were bought by Landmark, such as the chest in the hall, and the large paintings now hanging in the great chamber and in Miss Burgess's sitting room. These formed a basis around which the furnishings of the three flats could be fitted, ready for occupation in the autumn of that year.

The work at Wortham had hardly been finished when the opportunity arose to acquire the farm buildings around the north courtyard, in 1976. Repairs were carried out to those on either side, and the barn fitted up for use as a store, while that to the north was rented back to the farmer. The immediate surroundings of Wortham are thus safeguarded.

Further alterations

For fifteen years, from 1975 until 1990, Wortham was divided into three flats, with the main rooms remaining common to them all. However, this division proved increasingly unsatisfactory. The main rooms were seldom visited by the public, and became rather sad and empty spaces. There were practical problems, too, such as the annoyance of noise from the Old Solar Flat for those occupying Miss Burgess's rooms. Moreover, in those years, the pattern of letting had changed, with many people happy to form larger parties. More and more, the flats were being taken together, and the house used as one, with chaotic results for the housekeeper as equipment and books ended up in the wrong place. Finally, in 1990, it was resolved to reunite the house formally.

This proved surprisingly easy to do. Downstairs, the kitchen of the Hall flat reverted to being a closet off the parlour, while the old farmhouse kitchen took on, once again, its former role. Upstairs, the alterations were more, but consisted largely in providing additional bathrooms for the increased numbers of beds. The

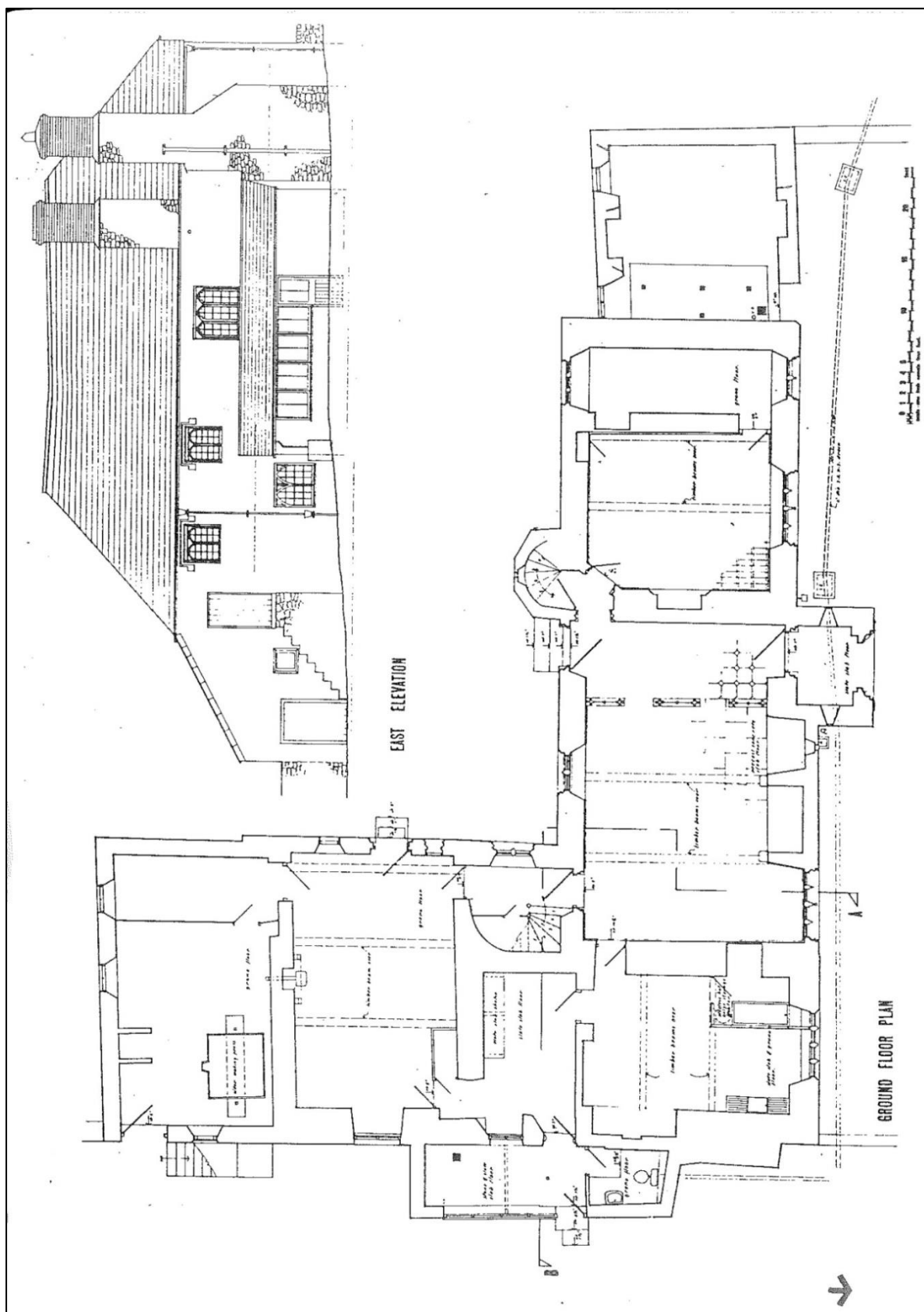
staircase in the east wing was adapted slightly, and a doorway opened up, to give separate access to the solar bedroom.

The opportunity was taken to carry out some minor improvements at the same time. The 1970s window surrounds at the south end of the east wing had been made in reconstituted stone, which contained iron reinforcing. This had rusted, causing the material to break up. These were now replaced in granite, and the lead glazing put back. The glazing throughout the house was checked over and renewed where necessary. The hall and porch were newly limewashed.

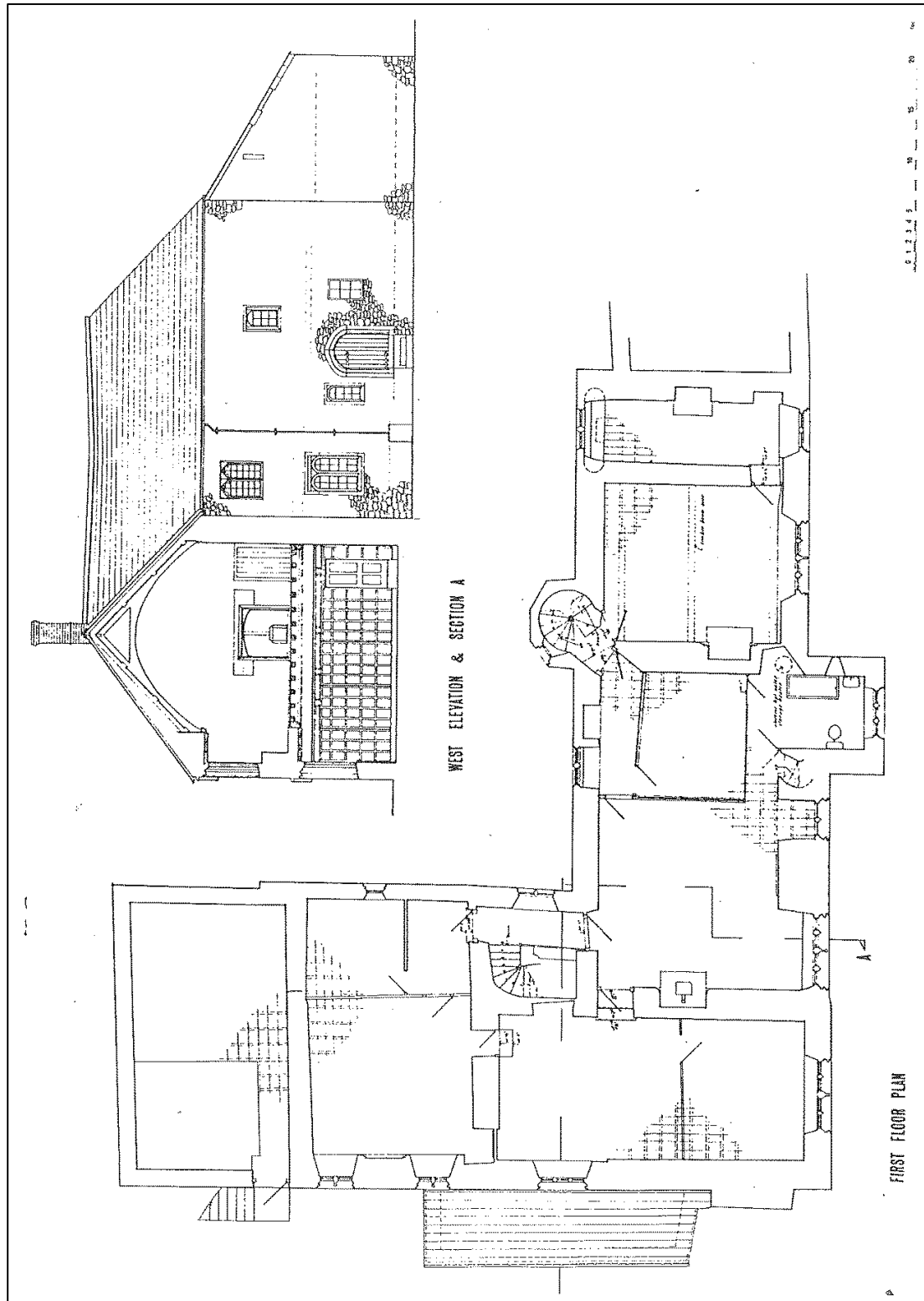
This work was carried out by Penbekon, a building firm which was also doing work for Landmark at Higher Lettaford on Dartmoor. Paul Pearn having retired, the architect was Peter Bird, of Caroe and Partners in Wells.

Wortham Manor remained divided into three flats for 15 years. However, its main rooms, kept communal, became rather sad and empty places, rarely visited by the public and seldom ventured into by Landmarkers. Experience had also taught that Landmarkers also enjoy buildings as larger groups. So in 1990, it was decided to reunite the whole house. This was easy to do, with the old kitchen simply taking on its old role once again.

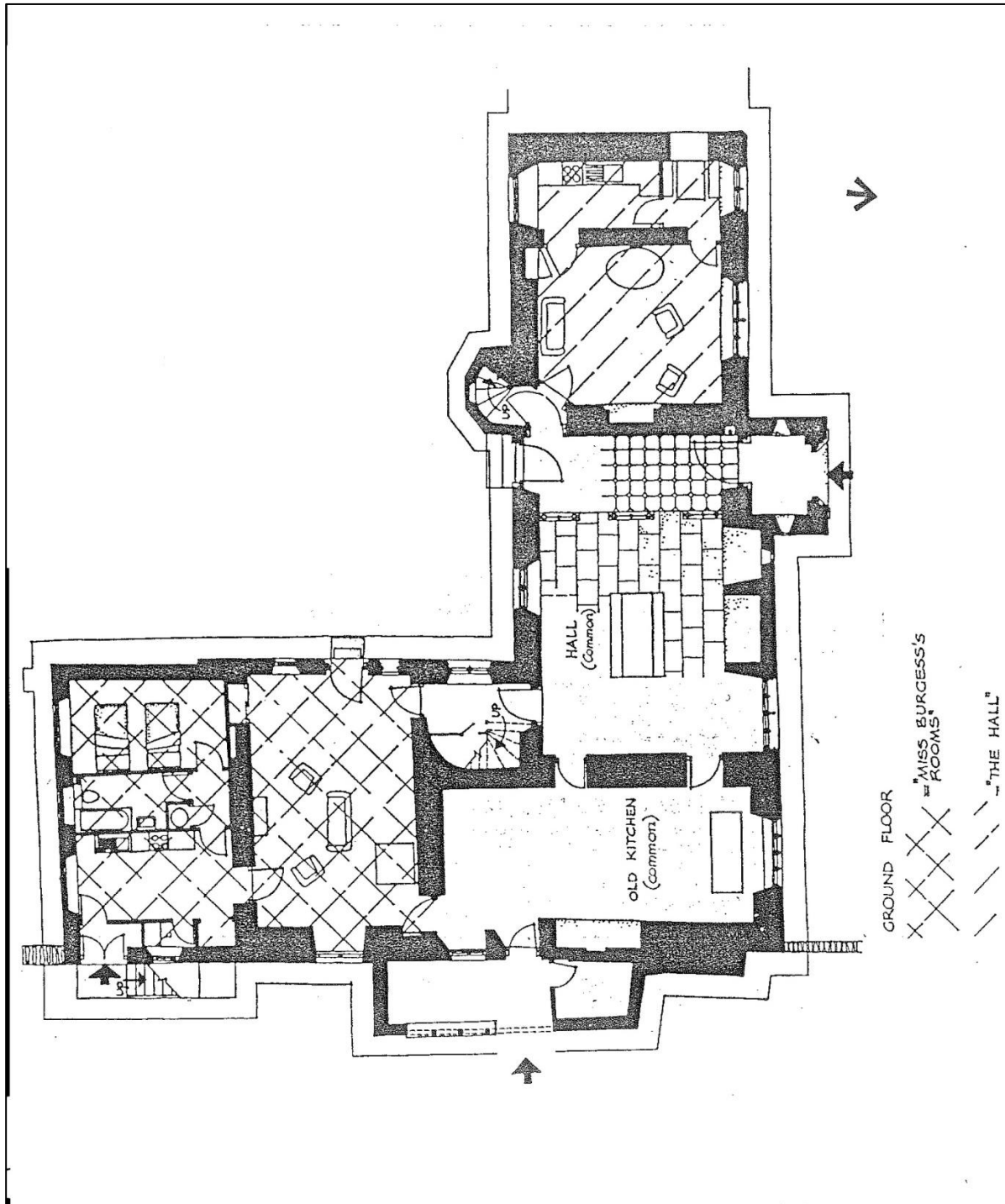
Except that its Tudor inhabitants would not have maintained so strict a division between rooms for sleeping and rooms for sitting, let alone rooms for washing, Wortham can now be used very much as it always has been, and the self-contained life of a small, but rich, manor house recreated and understood. The number of people making up a full house party here, indeed, is likely to be pretty close to that of the permanent household living here in the past.



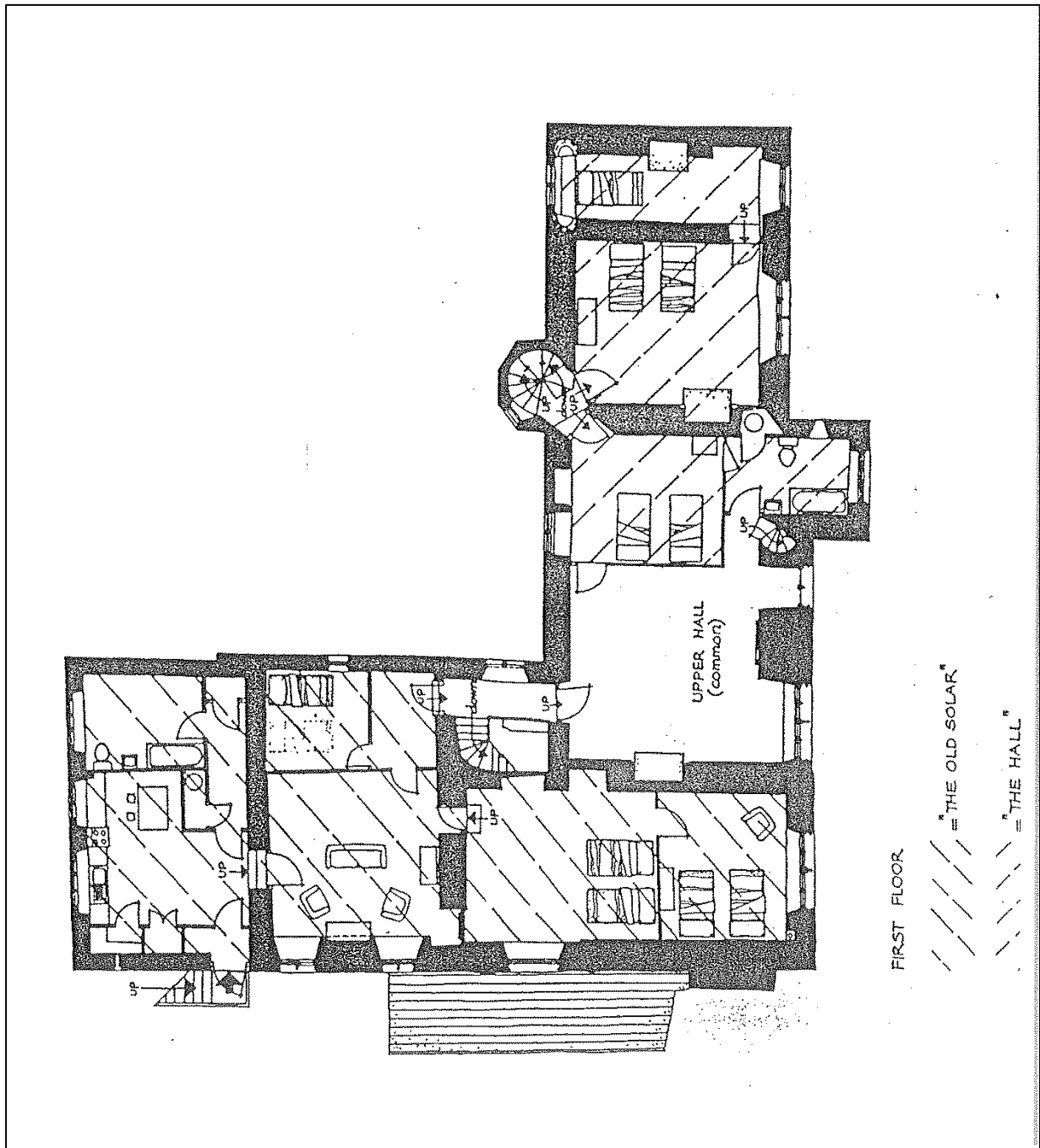
Ground floor, before restoration 1969-75



First floor, before restoration 1969-75



Ground Floor, after restoration 1969-75



First Floor, after restoration 1969-75

Wortham Manor, *Country Life*, May 31, 1956

WORTHAM MANOR, DEVON—I

1st May 1956

THE HOME OF CAPTAIN P. W. BURGESS AND MISS BURGESS By ARTHUR OSWALD

This 15th-century house, altered and enlarged in early Tudor times, was discovered and restored by the late Philip Tilden. A branch of the Dinham family was seated at Wortham from the first half of the 15th century until the eve of the Civil War.

WORTHAM, until Philip Tilden discovered and restored it at the end of the last war, had been a farm-house time out of mind. Standing remote on a windy ridge, not far from the Cornish border, it seems previously to have escaped the notice of sleuthing architects and archaeologists, though, no doubt, it was of local repute as a very old house. In his recently published autobiography, *True Remembrances*, Mr. Tilden wrote glowingly of Wortham as "one of the most beautiful houses of the late 15th century that I have ever seen." With its granite doorways and windows and its slate roofs, the outside is stern, though it is relieved by the warm brown colour of the sandstone in the walls: it is only after the interior has been explored that one comes fully to share the discoverer's enthusiasm. It is astonishing to find how completely the house has been preserved in its Tudor state, but much lay hidden, under plaster and wallpaper, waiting for a perceptive eye to reveal it. "My wife and I spent many enthralling months removing



1.—THE NORTH FRONT, 15th AND EARLY 16th CENTURY



—THE ENTRANCE DOORWAY, CARVED IN GRANITE, WITH A VIEW THROUGH THE SCREENS PASSAGE

plaster ceilings (with the help of two most conscientious German prisoners) to expose a beautifully carved oak ceiling in almost perfect condition." This was only one of the things they found.

To reach Wortham, if you are coming from Exeter, you leave the Okehampton-Launceston road (A.30) at Lifton, about two miles before it crosses the Tamar, and strike northward. If you have studied the map carefully enough, a winding lane sunk between high hedges will bring you up on to a ridge, on the farther side of which the house can be seen; it is approached by two farm-tracks, one from the south, the other from the east. The front faces north (Fig. 1), looking out on the farm buildings; the two tracks, having met just short of the house, come up to the farmstead on the east side (Fig. 10). It is the back of the house with its prominent stair turret (Fig. 3) that first comes into view.

This ancient barton, a sub-manor of Lifton, is almost as lonely now as when the farm was first carved out of the waste. Not much can be said about its earlier history, and most of what we know depends on the pedigree to which John Dinham of Wortham put his signature in 1620 when the Heralds made their Visitation of Devon. A family taking its name from the place failed in the male line when William Wortham, who is said to have lived in the reign of Richard II, died leaving six daughters as his co-heirs. Agnes, probably by arrangement with her sisters and brothers-in-law, brought Wortham to her husband, Otes or Otho Dinham, a cadet of one of the great mediæval families of Devon. (According to an earlier pedigree, however, it was Otho's father who married the Wortham heiress.) The Dinhams came from Brittany, and their name is an anglicised version of Dinant, of which their ancestor, Geoffrey, was *sire* in Henry I's reign. In Devon their chief manors were Hartland, Nutwell and Ilsington; Cardinham in Cornwall and Buckland Denham in Somerset were also theirs. The last and most distinguished of the senior line, John, Lord Dinham was a Yorkist, whom Edward IV appointed keeper of the Forests of Dartmoor and Exmoor, steward of all the Duchy of Cornwall manors in Devon and Warden of the Stanneries; although he had supported Richard III, he was made Treasurer of the Exchequer by Henry VII and a Knight of the Garter. No son survived him when he died in 1501, but the Dinham name was maintained in Devon for nearly a century and a half longer by the junior

branch seated at Wortham. John Dinham, who signed the pedigree in 1620, when he was aged 65, was fifth in descent from Otes or Otho. The succession from father to son is given as Nicholas, John, William, John and John. The second John, father of the owner in 1620, died in 1569, leaving a large family of young children. William died in 1560, the first John in 1553. The dates of their predecessors are not known, so that it is not possible to say which of them was responsible for building the house. As it now is, it has an L-shape, but it is not unlikely that there was once another wing running back from the west end of the principal range. Before Mr. Tilden repaired it, this end was finished off in makeshift fashion and there is a later and lower adjunct attached to it.

The north front gains its distinction from the projecting three-storey porch with its massive granite doorway, composed of an outer and inner arch, each four-centred and having the intervening space filled by a carved tympanum (Figs. 4 and 2). The three-light window above is cusped, but all the other windows on the front are of an early Tudor type, uncusped, of two or four lights. Those of four lights have a thick central mullion and returned hoodmoulds ending in carved stops much worn.



3.—FROM THE SOUTH-WEST. THE EAST WING (*right*) WAS EXTENDED FROM THE BREAK IN THE WALL EARLY IN THE 16th CENTURY

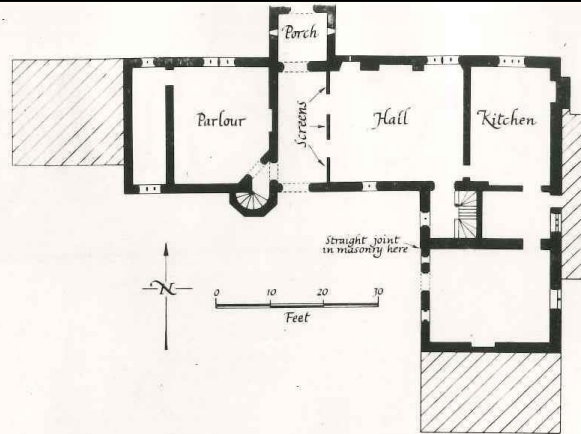


4.—THE 15th-CENTURY PORCH. (*Right*) 5.—THE EARLY TUDOR STAIR TURRET PROJECTING FROM THE SOUTH FRONT

Although the entrance doorway and porch window also have hood-moulds and carved stops, it is clear that the porch is earlier than the windows in the front, and it may be noted that its masonry is superior, being squared and laid in regular courses.

Going round to the east side, one finds another window with three cusped lights (Fig. 10) and, to the left of it, in the southern half of the wing, two more small Tudor windows, each under a hoodmould. The west wall of this wing (right of Fig. 3) shows a straight joint about 10 feet from the corner. There is a third cusped window, of two lights, on the first floor to the left of the break; as all the original features to the right of it are of early Tudor character, the wing may be assumed to have been extended southward in the 16th century. A screens passage runs from the porch to the square-headed doorway in the south wall (Fig. 5). This is set under a heavy hoodmould, and has a four-centred head with carved spandrels. On the right-hand side the carved stop to the hoodmould remains, but its opposite number disappeared when the turret stair was built immediately to the left of the doorway. There is an early Tudor window to the right of the doorway, but the other windows in the south wall are of later insertion.

Before trying to date the building, we must go inside. The hall, which is remarkable for its carved and moulded screens and ceiling, to be illustrated in more detail next week,



6.—SKETCH PLAN (LATER ADDITIONS SHOWN HATCHED)

has above it a high chamber with an open timber roof of three bays (Fig. 7). It might be thought that here we have an example of a house planned with an upper and lower hall, respectively for winter and summer use, but all the evidence taken together suggests that there were two phases of building and that in the second phase a floor was inserted and a room formed in the upper part of the hall. This alteration, it would seem, was only part of a thorough remodelling, which entailed some replanning, the refenestration of the north front, the addition of the turret stair and the extension southward of the east wing. The earlier phase is represented by the porch, the cusped windows, the doorways of the

screens passage and, presumably, most of the walling of the principal range and of the east wing as far as the break in the stonework already noted.

In a region where the difficulty of working intractable materials made for simplicity and standardisation of mouldings and ornament, precise dating is peculiarly difficult. The porch suggests a date about the middle of the 15th century, but this cannot be much more than a guess. Defence was still a consideration, for there are loop-holes in the north and south walls, and there was a massive outer door to judge by the iron hangers which remain in position. There is evidence, particularly on the west side, that the house was originally moated. In the room over the porch there is a little quatrefoil opening, giving a view westward. Another, found by Mr. Tilden, was inserted by him to the left of the porch when he repaired the wall after having removed a lean-to that had been built up against this side of the house.

The entrance doorway, the finest feature of the exterior, has the outer arch filled with three great blocks of granite, two forming the inner arch with carved quatrefoils in the spandrels and the third a tympanum between (Fig. 2). A circular motive with a left-ward "movement" is balanced by a six-pointed star composed of two interlaced triangles in the outer panels of the tympanum. The gate-tower of the outer court at Cotehele has the head of its arch similarly filled with a



(Left) 7.—THE CHAMBER ABOVE THE HALL, LOOKING WEST. (Above) 8.—THE GREAT HALL AT COTEHELE, WHICH HAS A ROOF OF THE SAME DESIGN



9.—POST-AND-PANEL PARTITIONING IN THE CLOSET WEST OF THE HALL CHAMBER, WITH A LITTLE WINDOW CUT IN ONE OF THE PANELS

tympanum, but the ornament consists of crude foliage, incised with obvious difficulty in the granite. Cotehele, on the other side of the Tamar valley, supplies several analogies with the work at Wortham, but in that extensive courtyard house, built over a period of half a century or more, there are similar problems of dating.

There is a peculiarity about the plan of Wortham. In mediæval houses it was normal for the offices to be placed at the screens end of the hall and the parlour and solar at the opposite end, but here the dispositions are reversed. There is a parlour at the screens end, entered at its south-east corner through a doorway set diagonally at the foot of the turret stair. The room has a fine boarded and panelled ceiling decorated with carved ornaments at the intersections of the ribs. The details of this ceiling, as of the one in the hall, are all of late Gothic character but are quite compatible with an early-16th-century date. In the 15th century the offices were probably at the screens end. What one would have expected to be the parlour, at the east end of the hall, is now the kitchen, and has been, at any rate, since Wortham became a farm-house. In the early Tudor reconstruction the kitchen and offices may have been removed to a west wing, the existence of which we have surmised.

As all the windows in the north front apart from the porch are of early Tudor character, it must have received a thorough-going remodelling. At the east end, where the roof is now hipped, there is likely to have been a gable originally. (The bottom left-hand window at this end is a replacement.) The arched lights of the windows are almost all finished with a very slight ogee curve, little more than a nick in the head. This peculiarity is also found at Cotehele and in other Cornish houses of the same period. At the back the turret staircase (Fig. 5) was added to provide easier access to the room formed in the upper half of the hall and to the first-floor rooms west of it. The stair goes up two storeys, giving admission to the roof. The gable corbelled out at the lower angles has a parallel in the manor

house at Winterborne Clenston in Dorset, which has a similar, though larger, turret staircase, half octagon on plan, projecting from the wall face.

The third and most striking analogy with Cotehele is in the form of the roof over the upper hall (Figs. 7 and 8). The hall roof at Cotehele is of the same distinctive design, having trusses with arched braces, the curves of which are echoed in moulded and intersecting ribs set between the purlins and principals; but whereas at Cotehele the rafters are exposed, here they are covered by plaster. A late-15th- or early-16th-century date is usually given to the roof at Cotehele, but this one at Wortham will be earlier if we are right in supposing that it was the roof of the high hall of the 15th-century house.

When this upper room was formed, a fireplace was inserted at the east end.

At the opposite end (Fig. 7) there is a bedroom or closet isolated by post-and-panel partitioning of a kind that has seldom survived. It is entered through the door on the left, one of several that retain their carved heads. On the right the panel and door have been removed. Here a passage leads to the porch room passing on the right a door that opens on to a steep stair going up to a room in the gable above. The post-and-panel partition is returned along the south side of the passage, and here, in the first panel, there are two small openings with cusped heads (Fig. 9). Spy-holes giving a view of the hall are not uncommon, but this one merely looks out of the room into the passage at right angles to the hall chamber. A door at the other end of this partition has been formed recently to give access to a bathroom, but formerly there was no entrance to the bedroom from the passage. The purpose of the little openings may have been to allow the occupant to give orders to a servant outside



10.—THE EAST SIDE OF THE HOUSE



11.—ENTRANCE TO THE STAIR TURRET FROM THE SCREENS

or to keep under observation comings and goings to and from the porch chambers.

Further exploration of the interior must be left until next week. From what we have seen it would appear that the alterations to the house were made within the first quarter of the 16th century, probably by the first John Dinham. He married an heiress, Margaret Westmanton, and he was an old man when he died in 1553, for his son, William, is stated to have been 50 years of age and more at the time. In 1536 father and son approached Thomas Cromwell over the payment of tithes for the school at Week St. Mary in Cornwall, demanded by the Bishop of Exeter. Their letters are dated "at Lyfton." Three years previously William had petitioned Cromwell that his father should be excused from taking up his knighthood, stating that he was willing to bear any reasonable burden for his Prince "such as others bear of £40 land," that he had hitherto borne many impositions beyond his ability and that he had children to support. Perhaps the remodelling of the house had taken place in the earlier years of the reign before the King's impositions became so crushing. The extension may have been made to provide accommodation for William Dinham when he married, since the east wing as enlarged could have been used as a separate lodging.

(To be concluded)

WORTHAM MANOR, DEVON—II

THE HOME OF CAPTAIN P. W. BURGESS AND MISS BURGESS

By ARTHUR OSWALD

The interior, which remains for the most part in its early Tudor state, preserves many exceptionally interesting features, including a rare form of the screens in the hall.

IN the halls of mediæval houses where the screens have survived they usually consist of a continuous partition set below the gallery and pierced by twin doorways. The arrangement is familiar to us from its having been preserved in the halls of many of the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge. An alternative treatment is to be seen in the hall at Wortham, where the place of the screen is taken by three independent, shoulder-high barriers, each framing pairs of large linenfold panels and flanked by moulded posts that blossom into crocketed finials (Figs. 2 and 3). This arrangement, besides being remarkably decorative, had the advantage of admitting light to the screens passage, always a dark thoroughfare when the doors at either end of it were both shut.

Although the type of screens so perfectly preserved at Wortham is now very seldom found, it is probable that it was as common



1.—FROM THE SOUTH: THE BACK OF THE HOUSE AND THE EAST WING



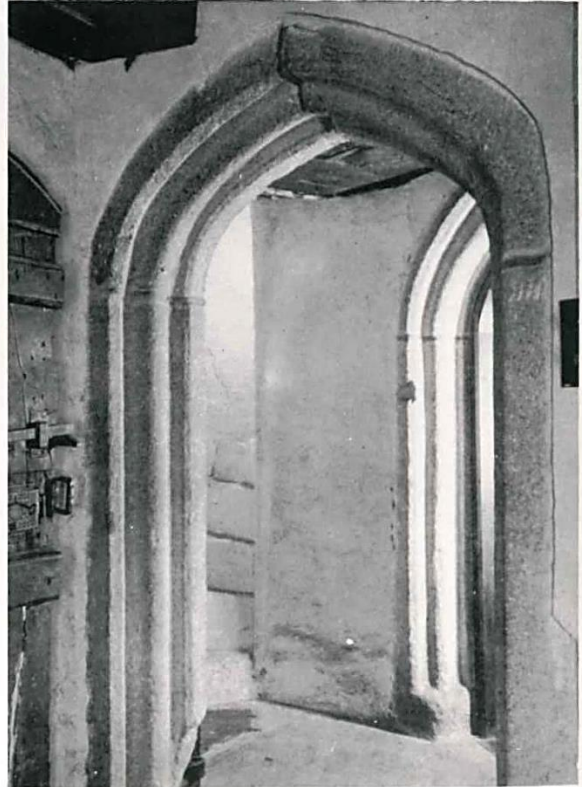
2.—LOOKING INTO THE HALL FROM THE SCREENS PASSAGE

as the more familiar kind, especially in smaller halls where there was no gallery; indeed, it is likely to have been the original form of the screens (hence the plural), and its rare occurrence is to be explained by the ease with which such barriers could be removed when they decayed or were no longer wanted. In mediæval accounts and contracts draught-excluding screens of this kind are called "speres." The word seems to have been pronounced "speer," but it is uncertain whether it was a derivative of "spar" or of "spur," with the meaning of a projecting screen. The Wortham arrangement has parallels in the early-15th-century hall of Chetham's Hospital at Manchester and in Abbot Middleton's great hall at Milton, Dorset (dated 1498). In the timber halls of Cheshire and Lancashire there was a regional development of the speres. The side partitions were carried up to the tie-beam of the roof, and a wide and lofty arch springing from massive uprights was formed between them. Rufford Old Hall in Lancashire is the most perfect example, preserving as it does the low, movable screen, very elaborately carved, under the arch in the middle.

All the examples mentioned are in halls with high roofs. At Wortham the hall has a flat ceiling and a room above it with an arch-braced roof, illustrated last week. The evidence then considered led us to conclude that the 15th-century house had a high hall and that the floor supporting the upper room was inserted in the first quarter of the 16th century, to which time most of the windows and the stair turret at the back of the house (Fig. 1) belong. With the insertion of the floor the opportunity was taken to treat with unusual richness all the underlying timbers. Not only the cross-beams and wall-plates but all the joists as well are elaborately moulded and finished with carved stops at the points of junction (Fig. 6). As this detail shows, the carving is late Gothic in treatment and motive: a variety of leaf forms, interlacing cords and clusters of grapes are most in evidence without any admixture of Renaissance elements. Although the screens might have been already there, they are more likely to have been inserted at the same time as the ceiling. It is worth mentioning that the crossbeam against the end wall (Fig. 3) has the mortice holes of earlier joists cut in it, suggesting that this timber was not replaced and that in the 15th-century high hall there was a gallery above the screens passage.



3.—THE WEST END OF THE HALL. THE THREE "SPERES" FORMING THE SCREENS ARE A VERY RARE SURVIVAL



4.—A 15th-CENTURY GRANITE DOORWAY IN THE SOUTH WALL AT THE EAST END OF THE HALL. (Right) 5.—EARLY-16th-CENTURY DOORWAY IN THE WEST WALL OF THE HALL OPENING TO THE NEWEL STAIR AND THE PARLOUR



6.—DETAIL OF LATE GOTHIC CARVINGS ON THE HALL CEILING

Until Mr. Philip Tilden bought and restored the house towards the end of the last war, these wonderfully rich timbers were hidden under a lath and plaster ceiling, which was removed with the enthusiastic help of two German prisoners. The fireplace (Fig. 2) is an insertion. There was nothing but a plain unadorned beam across the chimney opening before Mr. Tilden obtained the present late Tudor chimney-piece from Sir John Carew Pole when he was taking down the Victorian additions to Antony. The spandrels are carved with delicate scroll-work, above which there is a frieze of gadrooning interrupted at intervals by medallions in which the fleur-de-lis and the Tudor rose occur.

West of the screens passage there is a parlour, occupying the usual position of buttery, pantry and passage to the kitchen. The traditional arrangement may have been altered when the upper room was inserted in the hall and the turret staircase added. A granite doorway with four-centred arch at the south end of the west wall and close to the south door of the screens passage opens on to the foot of the newel stair (Fig. 5) and also to the doorway of the parlour, which is set diagonally across the south-east corner of the room (Fig. 9) and likewise has a four-centred arch of granite. Both doorways have kept their

heavy iron-studded doors, as have those at either end of the screens passage.

The parlour is chiefly remarkable for its boarded and panelled ceiling of a geometrical pattern, divided into two sections by a moulded cross-beam (Fig. 7). At all the points where the ribs meet or intersect there are carved ornaments of the kind called knobs in contemporary building accounts; larger ornaments in the form of bosses mark each important junction of eight ribs and these are surrounded by eight leaves in the angles. As in the hall ceiling, the motives are all of late Gothic character, chiefly foliage, fruit and flowers, but interlaced cords again occur and on one boss there is a six-pointed star—not heraldic, it would seem, for the crest of the Dinham of Wortham was an arm holding a lock of hair. This early Tudor ceiling has been preserved in an extraordinarily perfect state. There are traces of gilding on the carved ornaments. It is easy to see how the patterns of Elizabethan plaster ceilings with their intersecting ribs and leaf ornaments evolved from boarded ceilings of this type, although those with pendants must also have owed something to late Gothic vaults.

The panelling in this parlour dates from the early 17th century, and so does the overmantel over the fireplace in the east wall (Fig. 8). The three



7.—THE PARLOUR CEILING DECORATED WITH RIBS AND CARVED ORNAMENTS

arched panels frame a double-headed eagle (in the middle) and scrolling sprays of flowers emerging from a vase (left and right). Outside and between them are four figures, all with arms crossed over the breast, the work of a delightfully unsophisticated carver. The two ladies show their ankles below their full skirts; the men, both bearded, are in trunk hose. Mr. Tilden painted the frieze between panelling and ceiling, since damaged by an overflow of water from the bathroom above.

At the east end of the south wall of the hall there is another granite doorway (Fig. 4), which opens to a later staircase with a light balustrade probably of 18th-century date. As the doorway is like those at each end of the screens passage, having a four-centred arch set within a square head, it is doubtless contemporary with them and with the porch, for which a mid-15th-century date was suggested last week. The doorway opens into the east wing, seen on the right of Fig. 1. This wing terminated southward about 10 feet from the angle before it was extended in the early part of the 16th century. A two-light window of early Tudor type lights the foot of the staircase, but on the first floor above it there is a 15th-century window with cusps to the lights like the one in the porch above the



8.—CARVED OVERMANTEL IN THE PARLOUR, EARLY 17th CENTURY

entrance. The cusps are partly concealed by later wooden frames internally (Fig. 10). Originally the window was unglazed and fitted with shutters, the rebates for which can be seen, and the bulge in the mullion was for a rod passing through it to hold them in position. In this, as in most of the windows, the original iron standards and lockets remain undisturbed.

What was probably the 15th-century solar, above the present kitchen, at the east end of the hall, has been divided into two rooms. The end of an arched brace issuing below the plaster ceiling suggests that the original roof may still be in place, or at least part of it. The first floor of the early Tudor part of the wing is at a higher level, and here the bedroom is entered from a lobby or closet on the west side. The dividing partition of post-and-panel construction (Fig. 11) was uncovered by Mr. Tilden. It is similar to the partitioning at the west end of the hall chamber illustrated last week, having a moulding worked on the sides of each upright and returned along the rail at the top. The door-head, with a pair of carved spandrels in one piece, is like others over the first-floor doorways opening off the turret stair.

At the west end of the house the room above the parlour has an early Tudor fireplace in its east wall. Beyond it there is a narrow room, which, it has been thought, may have been an oratory. At the south end on either side of the window there is a niche and the portion of ceiling above is treated as a four-part vault. A coating of

plaster makes any estimate of date a matter of guesswork.

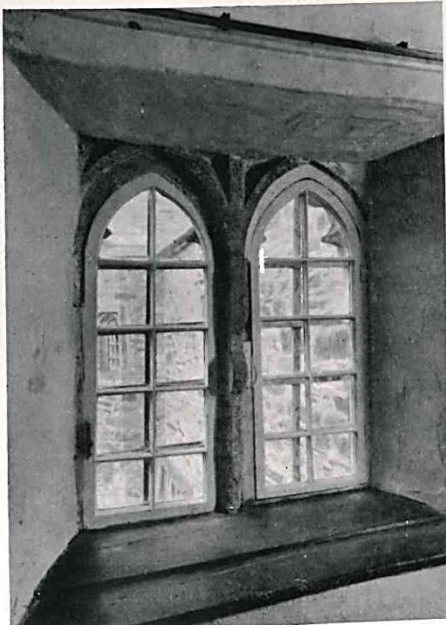
The Dinham family, who had obtained Wortham by marriage in the first half of the 15th century, continued to be its possessors until the eve of the Civil War. The third John Dinham, having succeeded as a minor, died in 1628, fifty-nine years after his father. His son, the fourth and last John, and his wife, Margaret, are commemorated by a monument on the south wall of the chapel at the end of the aisle in Lifton church. He married

the daughter of a neighbour, Arthur Harris, of Hayne, and the arms of Dinham impaling Harris are displayed in the middle of the monument within a large cartouche. Arthur Harris, who was Captain of St. Michael's Mount, also has a monument in the church. John Dinham died in 1641, his widow in 1649, and there were no children. The estate went to his niece, Mary, daughter of his sister, Margaret, wife of John Hext of Altarnum. Mary Hext married John Harris, a grandson of Arthur Harris of Hayne, and they established a junior branch of the Harris family at Wortham, to which their son, a second John, succeeded. This John Harris, who died in 1727, described himself as "of Wortham" when he made his will, but his grandson and successor, the third John, went to live at Pickwell beyond Barnstaple, and no doubt, it was in his time that Wortham was let as a farm.

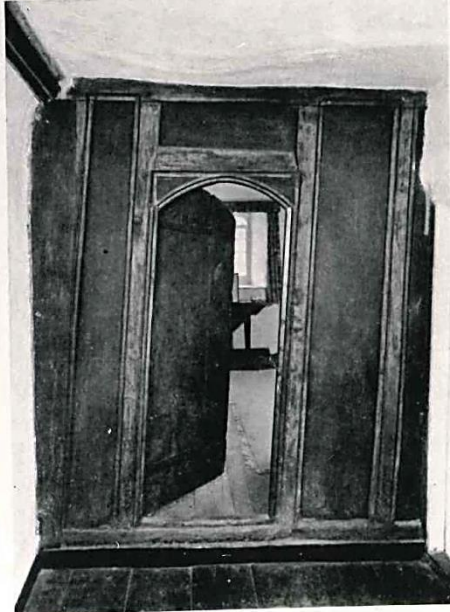
The third John Harris represented Barnstaple in Parliament and married a sister of the Earl of Powis. Soon after the death of his only surviving daughter, Honor, in 1790, Wortham was sold, and when Lysons' *Devonshire* was published in 1822, the owner was William Rayer. It remained the property of the Rayers until 1919, and was for long occupied by farmers called Stenlake. Mr. and Mrs. Tilden bought the house without the farm in 1945, and it was acquired from their successor, Colonel Vining, by the present owners three years ago.



9.—LOOKING SOUTH-EAST IN THE PARLOUR. THE PAINTED FRIEZE WAS DONE BY PHILIP TILDEN



10.—A 15th-CENTURY WINDOW REBATED FOR WOODEN SHUTTERS. (Right) 11.—POST-AND-PANEL PARTITION IN THE EAST WING



Extract from *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales Vol 3*,
A. Emery, 2006

SOUTH-WEST ENGLAND

Abbey where his striking canopied tomb lies opposite the more magnificent double tomb of his wife (d.1359) and her previous husband Lord Despenser (d.1349). Brian's tomb seems to have been suggested by the slightly earlier double monument opposite and stylistically was prepared well before his death in 1390.

A. Oswald, *Country Houses of Dorset* (1959 edn) 50-3
RCHM, *Dorset*, II, pt 2 (1970) 397-400

WORTHAM MANOR, Devon

Like the nearby houses at Cotehele and Trecarrell across the Cornish border with which it shares common architectural detailing, Wortham Manor was developed in three phases spanning the years close to 1500. As with the residences of Sir Piers Edgcumbe and Sir Henry Trecarrell, precise dating is absent, but Wortham differs fundamentally from them by developing into a far more forward-looking house. It is not a courtyard residence but one with a ground-floor hall with great chamber above – a prime example of its period in relatively complete condition, with quality fittings including doors, hall screen, and fine ceilings.

The property was held at the close of the fourteenth century by William Wortham, who had six daughters. Agnes, the fourth one, married Otto Dynham, a younger member of the Dynhams of Hartwell whose most distinguished member was the last of the senior line John, Lord Dynham.¹ The family name was maintained at Wortham until the mid-seventeenth century through six generations, including Otto's son Nicholas (d.1506) and his grandson John (d.1553) who had declined a knighthood twenty years earlier.

Wortham looks across the valley of the river Carey near its junction with the river Tamar three miles north-east of Launceston. L-shaped, the house is two-storeyed except for the accents of a second-floor chamber over the porch and the corbelled head of the rear stair turret. It was built of local sandstone with granite dressings and slate roofs, with multiple straight joints identifying separate building activity. Yet the house has an apparent unity of form and detailing that conceals a more complex story.

Edmund Prideaux's drawing of 1716 of the north front shows the forecourt wall enclosed, with the hall surmounted by an embattled parapet.² There was also evidence of a moated enclosure on the west side until the mid-twentieth century.³ None of this has survived, though the porch retains two gunports, decorative rather than defensive. This very grand porch has a well-moulded granite entry with four-centred head set in a square frame surmounted by a decorative tympanum, a feature shared with the hall entries at Cotehele and Trecarrell, and the school at Week St Mary (1506).⁴ The earlier inner entry is more modest and off-centre.

The ground-floor hall, 32 feet by 18 feet, has a splendid example of a three-section screen of linenfold panels, each section surmounted at the ends by crocketed pinnacles touching the cross beam. A contemporary cousin to that in the hall at Milton Abbey (1498), the screen was discovered elsewhere in the house by the architect Philip Tilden in 1943 when he recorded it, before becoming the house's owner two years later. Whether it was original to the property or not is an open question, but it is an outstanding example of its type and certainly enhances the character of the hall. The extremely thick north-facing wall with deep-set light, lateral fireplace (Tilden replacement), and upper-end window in line betrays two building phases, the original inner wall having been thickened



PLATE 299 Wortham Manor: from the south

WORTHAM MANOR

with the outer section when the four-light window was added. The framed ceiling is spanned by three elaborately moulded cross beams and lines of moulded joists with all junctions enhanced by carved leaves and clusters of grapes. The two doorways in the upper-end wall are eighteenth-century forced entries, for the principal one is the granite doorway in the angle, similar to the cross-passage entries.

The stair to the upper chamber is a 1975 replacement to a landing with two-light cinquefoil window, formerly unglazed and shuttered. Originally 33 feet by 19 feet, the great chamber is slightly larger than the hall. It has an upper-end fireplace with four-centred lintel head, a recessed four-light window nearby, and a room over the porch at the lower end, now missing its partition wall.⁵ The glory of this chamber is the five-bay roof of arch-braced collars rising from the lower of the two wall plates with three lines of moulded wind braces, intersecting to create a simple but effective pattern as with the hall and withdrawing chamber roofs at Cotehele. The lower-end division of this chamber with a post and panel partition occurred at a relatively early stage, together with the insertion of a second fireplace to heat the new room.

The lower parlour wing was a secondary development to the hall though it shares with it the same form of windows of two or four uncusped lights with ogee nips under rectangular hoods with square end stops. The single four-centred arch from the cross passage opens into a lobby with canted access to the ground-floor parlour with its cross-wall fireplace, four-light window, boarded and panelled ceiling with decorative cross ribs and knops at the intersections, and early seventeenth-century panelling and overmantel. The small end chamber has been divided and is featureless. The polygonal stair turret to the upper floor is clearly an addition cutting across the head of the earlier cross-passage doorway to the hall. The upper lobby with its wooden doorways with four-centred heads and roughly carved spandrels provided supplementary access to the great chamber as well as to the bedchamber above the parlour with original fireplace, a smaller version of that in the great chamber, and an inserted ceiling.⁶

That the upper end of the house was a cross wing is much more obvious in the Prideaux drawing of 1716 than in the present hipped roof. It now holds the kitchen, in a position that would not have been tenable originally. Its relocation here is identified by the eighteenth-century hearth, the adaptation of an earlier fireplace to farmhouse use, and the considerable enlargement of the end window subsequent to the Prideaux drawing. The chamber above formerly embraced the adjacent bathroom with its three cinquefoil-light window. It retains part of a much repaired arch-braced collar roof and a pair of reinstated wind braces.

The further parlour block is a later extension with its own entry, crude cross beams, and an early nineteenth-century Greek-style fireplace, but the windows of the chamber above repeat the nipped ogee head and fireplace form seen elsewhere.

Wortham's plan of medium-sized rooms on both floors comfortably opening out of each other fits well with present-day living practice, but it was only the conclusion of a four-stage development which must take account of fifteenth-century cinquefoil lights and early sixteenth-century ogee window heads, finer-quality walling to the front than the rear, an outstandingly early example of a ground-floor hall with chamber above, and the absence of contemporary services and kitchen in the body of the house.

Resolution starts with the hall, which seems to have begun as a

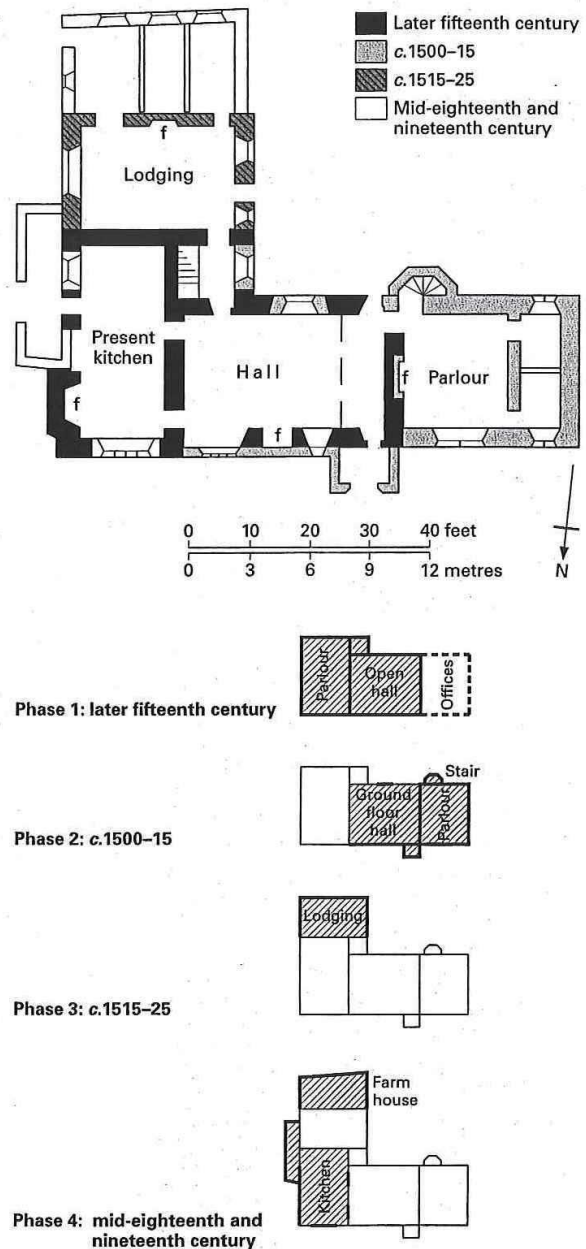


FIGURE 179 Wortham Manor: ground plan and development phases

mid to late fifteenth-century structure open to the roof. The upper cross wing is contemporary, with ground-floor parlour and solar over with cinquefoil-light windows and a roof of slightly earlier character than elsewhere. The offices were probably in their usual position below the hall, perhaps in a matching cross wing.

SOUTH-WEST ENGLAND

The development of Wortham reflects the major changes of the first decade of the sixteenth century at Cotehele, particularly the reconstruction of the storeyed family apartments as two great chambers and the use of common architectural details.⁷ The remodelling at Wortham was particularly elaborate, displays high-quality craftsmanship, and is remarkably well preserved. The north wall of the early hall was thickened to carry the weight of the inserted floor and new roof over the newly created great chamber. The added frontage was built in superior masonry, regularly coursed, now with mullioned windows at both levels with hood moulds and carved stops, and an imposing porch with a tympanum-type entry and a cinquefoil-light window reused from the earlier hall.⁸ The lower cross wing was replaced by the present extension to the hall range, creating a unified two-storey frontage. Coarser stone was used for the rear walls and the added stair turret, allowing the offices and kitchen to be resited southwards away from the body of the much-enhanced house.⁹

Very shortly afterwards, the cross wing was extended with a second unit with its own entry and chamber over. This was an independent lodging, possibly added for William Dynham, who was married, more than fifty years old, and still living at Wortham when his father died in 1553.¹⁰

The last development phase from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-twentieth century was initiated by adopting the high-quality parlour as a farmhouse kitchen with an outhouse nearby, and then by a further extension to the south wing. It was in this state that the house was rescued by Philip Tilden in 1945, who brought it back to its exceptionally well-preserved early Tudor condition,¹¹ still secluded, and sensitively maintained by the Landmark Trust.

NOTES

1 The Dynhams were a gentry family of local importance from the twelfth to the early sixteenth century, initially at Hartland in north Devon, where they founded the abbey, and from the later thirteenth century at Nutwell on the opposite side of the Exe estuary from Powderham Castle. John Dynham (1433–1501) was the outstanding member of the family, whose career developed from youthful esquire to elder statesman. An enthusiastic twenty-six-year-old Yorkist supporter, he helped Edmund, earl of March and the earls of Warwick and Salisbury to escape after their failure at Ludford Bridge via Devonshire and Guernsey to Calais (1459), and he followed this up with leading an expedition from Calais to Sandwich where he captured Lord Rivers and his son in their beds. After Edward's accession to the throne, Sir John was richly rewarded, becoming sheriff of Devon (1460–1), keeper of all the duchy of Cornwall manors in Devon (1467), and 1st Lord Dynham (1467). He benefited territorially from the execution of Lord Hungerford in 1464, but only became regionally significant as the king's chief supporter in the south-west after the death of the earl of Devon (1469). When Edward IV planned his French invasion, Dynham was appointed commander of all

armed forces at sea (1475) and a royal counsellor in the same year. Governor of Calais and steward of the duchy of Cornwall during Richard III's rule, he was sufficiently trusted by Henry VII to be appointed treasurer of the exchequer (1486). Dynham died holding that office in 1501, and his property was divided between four co-heiresses. Nothing remains of the medieval Nutwell Court, now a mansion of 1802 with an earlier stone first-floor chapel that may be on the site of that licensed in 1370. Hooker in his *Synopsis Chorographical of Devonshire* (1599) says that it was 'sometimes a castle of defence', in other words a fortified house. Dynham's will itemises his considerable amount of silver and gold plate and refers to his textiles, of which one still survives. Discovered in Appleby Castle in the mid-nineteenth century, his spectacular armorial tapestry, 12 feet square, is preserved in the Cloisters Museum, New York. Of wool and silk, this Tournai hanging centres on Dynham's large coat of arms with supporters, on a millefleurs background scattered with Dynham's badge of the top castle of a ship flying a St George's pennon, a reference to his seafaring exploits (pl. 204). As the arms are garter enclosed, this imposing tapestry is attributable to between about 1487 and 1501, with the likelihood that it was commissioned shortly after Dynham's garter appointment by 1488. B. Young, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 20 (June 1960). Also R. P. Chope, *Trans. Devon. Assoc.* 50 (1918) 431–92; *Com. Peer.*, IV (1916) 369–82.

2 *Arch. Hist.* 7 (1963) 108.

3 Oswald (1956) 1176.

4 John Dynham was responsible for overseeing the building of this grammar school 12 miles away, founded by his cousin Thomasine Bonaventure who was born at Week St Mary and became wealthy through marrying three London merchants in turn. As the school was also founded as a chantry, it was dissolved in 1548 and is now an occupied house with a forecourt enclosure.

5 The porch room has a cinquefoil three-light window and a steep stair to the attic above.

6 The fireplace in the small end room is twentieth century.

7 The distinctive window heads and arch-braced roof trusses were also used by Sir Henry Trecarrell at Trecarrell c.1500–11. The rear range of 10–11 The Close, Exeter, is also two-storeyed with arch-braced roof to the upper chamber, attributable to the first years of the sixteenth century.

8 Oswald (1956) 1176 suggests that the porch with its loopholes was an original component of the house, possibly of mid-fifteenth-century date. However, the poor alignment between the outer and inner entries and the character of the outer entry, rather than the straight joints, suggest that it was an addition.

9 Oswald noted in 1956 that there was evidence of a south wing running back from this west end which was finished off in makeshift fashion before Tilden repaired it: *ibid.* 1175.

10 William Dynham and his father had written letters to Thomas Cromwell from this house in 1536 over the payment of tithes for the school at Week St Mary.

11 P. Tilden, *True Remembrances* (1954) 169.

A. Oswald, *Country Life* (May 1956)