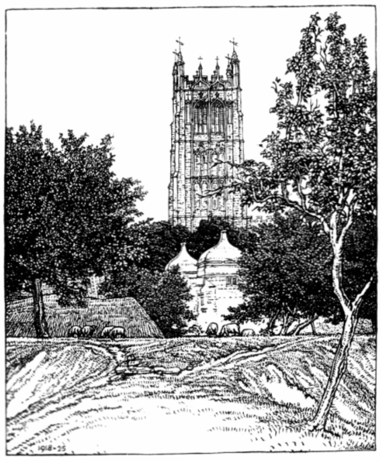
The Landmark Trust

OLD CAMPDEN HOUSE SITE
HISTORY ALBUM

East Banqueting House
&
West Banqueting House



Volume II – HISTORY OF THE HICKS FAMILY & OLD CAMPDEN HOUSE

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1999/2003

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THE EAST BANQUETING HOUSE & NORTH LODGE

BASIC DETAILS

Listed: Grade II*

Built for: Sir Baptist Hicks

Date: c1615

Campden House destroyed: 1645

Acquired by the Landmark Trust: 1987

From: Mr Peregrine and Lady Maureen Fellowes

Architects: Andrew Brookes of Rodney Melville & Partners

Main Contractors: Linford-Bridgeman Ltd.

Opened as a Landmark: Autumn 1990

THE WEST BANQUETING HOUSE & THE ALMONRY

BASIC DETAILS

Listed: Grade II*

Built for: Sir Baptist Hicks

Date: c1615

Campden House destroyed: 1645

Acquired by the Landmark Trust: 1998

From: Mr Peregrine and Lady Maureen Fellowes

Architects: Stephen Oliver & Andrew Brookes
of Rodney Melville & Partners

Archaeologists: Richard K Morriss & Associates

Main Contractors: William Sapcote & Son Ltd
Site foreman: Phil Semmens

Opened as a Landmark: Summer 2003

Acknowledgements

Few Landmarks have been more thoroughly researched than the Old Campden House Site. We are particularly indebted to Dr. Pat Hughes for documentary research, Richard Morriss for archaeological input and Land Use Consultants for landscape research. The students of the School of Ocean & Earth Science at Southampton University conducted a geophysical survey of the site.

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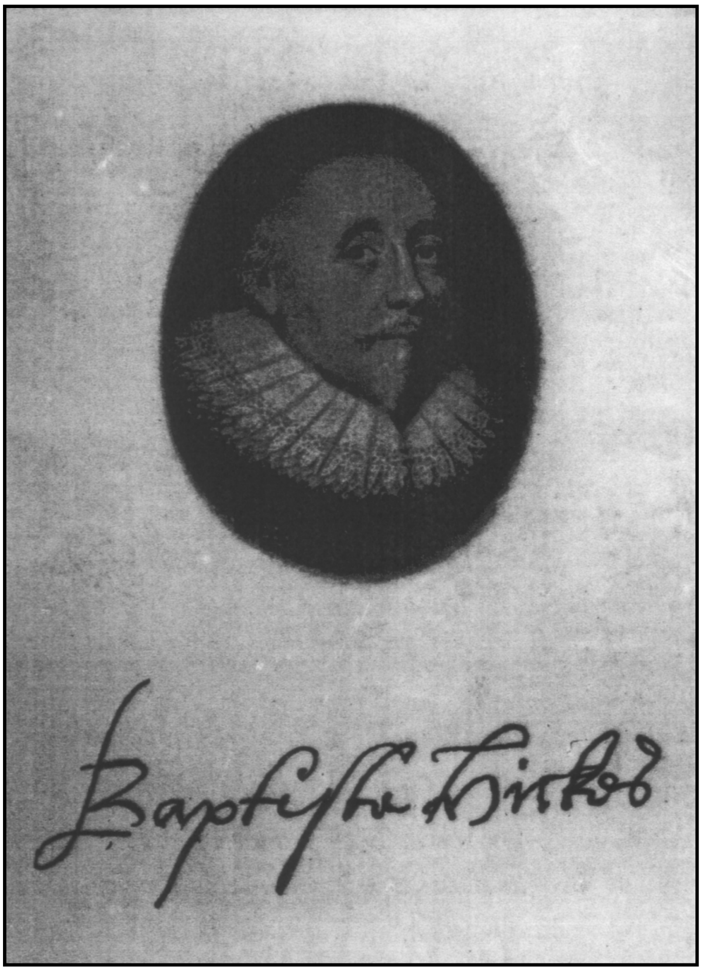

Figure 1: **Portrait taken from a miniature by John Hoskins and signature from a deed dated 1610.**

1551 – 1629

Created Viscount Campden by Charles I

1. Introduction

In the early seventeenth century, Chipping Campden would have been a relatively sleepy Cotswold town. During the Middle Ages the Cotswolds had thrived on the wealth to be made from sheep. The so-called ‘wool churches’ (of which St James in Campden is one) were built or extended with the bequests of the wealthy 14th and 15th century merchants.[1]

By 1600 however, the English wool and cloth trade was in something of a trough. The English wool merchants had made their fortunes supplying the raw commodity, to be woven into heavy broadcloth, much of it for export. By the mid-sixteenth century, a Dutch woollen industry had developed in direct competition. Fashions were also changing, demanding lighter, more highly coloured cloths. These required a short fibre, fine wool rather than the longer fibre, coarse wool of the traditional British flocks. Most of the profit on cloth was now on the finishing and dyeing processes, skills at which the Dutch excelled and which the English, in this period, struggled to acquire. Large premiums could be charged on the finished product, especially novel designs. Just as Grevel House is testimony to commodity wealth, Old Campden House was to be built through wealth acquired by a merchant of these ‘new draperies’.

This merchant, Baptist Hicks (see Fig. 1 opposite), made a timely arrival into the town, which was locked in a dispute with the then lord of the manor, Anthony Smith. Smith’s family had lived in Campden for centuries. His father, Thomas, had been a page of the bedchamber to Henry VIII. After the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s, Thomas and then Anthony gradually augmented the property of Campden manor, culminating in 1602 with the purchase of the manor of Broad Campden. Perhaps now over-confident of his position, Smith proceeded to launch an attack on the privileges of the town's burgesses. Campden had been granted borough status by royal charter as long ago as 1185, a significant privilege which gave the community the right to act collectively and independently from the feudal sway of local landowners. From the grant of a charter could follow the development of town officials (burgesses), town council, courts and gilds to regulate the political and economic life of the community. This usually led to a strong sense of fellowship and community spirit – and, in rural areas especially, could of course run counter to the pretensions of an ambitious lord of the manor. There seems to have been something of a vogue for such attacks on borough privileges in the area during this litigious period: both Burford and Stow-on-the-Wold's burgesses suffered similar actions.

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[1] Merchants like William Grevel bought up the fleeces from the local farmers and stored them in warehouses until they were sold on or sent out to be turned into broadcloth. In 1380 Grevel built Grevel House on Campden High Street, opposite the lower junction with Church Street. This fine mediaeval building is considered one of the best examples of its type in the country. Grevel was in many ways the forerunner of his day to the eventual builder of Campden House 130 years later: he too was a London citizen, influential businessman and financier to his monarch (Richard II). A fine brass marks his tomb before the altar in St James’.

The Campden burgesses responded promptly to Smith's challenge, applying to the king who, in 1605 granted a further royal charter for a council of 14 capital burgesses and 12 inferior burgesses, all elected for life (this may have represented a step away from feudal relationships, but remained more than a little oligarchic!) Smith retaliated by accusing the town of acting by stealth and tried to get the charter revoked. In fact, it was a very astute move by the town worthies against Smith's equally clandestine local efforts and it is an interesting illustration of the accessibility of the Crown courts to communities across the country. Perhaps it was these lawsuits which first brought Chipping Campden to Sir Baptist Hicks' attention, by now a wealthy mercer with a finger in all sorts of London and Court pies, including an older brother, Sir Michael, who had been private secretary to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, under Elizabeth. Michael retained close links with the household of Burghley's son, Robert, now James' Lord Treasurer. 'Influence', eased along by financial incentive, was often essential to the speedy and satisfactory conclusion of lawsuits and it is quite possible that Sir Michael Hicks was somehow involved in the borough's action against Smith.

In any event, during the course of these legal proceedings, Smith abruptly sold the entire manor holding to two men acting as agents for Sir Baptist. In a deed dated March 14th 1610, Hicks bought from these agents the manors of 'Campden, Chipping Campden, Broade Campden and [E]Berington', adding the ecclesiastical living of Campden in 1613 and from then on, field by field, increasing the size of his property. A new man had burst onto this small town with a quite different agenda from the previous lord of the manor. A product himself of the London gild system, Hicks was more sympathetic to the preoccupations of the burgesses and was to work on their behalf in various suits and issues.

Did the burgesses have mixed feelings when they discovered Sir Baptist's plans to erect a large and opulent mansion right next to their lovely church, quite possibly replacing an earlier manor house whose site is now lost? We do not know, but both the willingness to get involved with local issues and the desire to build on a grand scale are consistent with Hicks' motives in establishing himself in Campden. For him, it was primarily an exercise in gentrification, a desire to validate his new wealth through the ownership of land and the local responsibilities that went with it. Hicks was by no means alone in these aims in this age of social mobility; in this and many other ways he reflected trends of his day remarked upon by contemporaries and historians alike.

2. The Hicks family

Baptist was born in 1550/1. His father Robert had a mercer's business at the sign of the White Bear in Soper's Lane (now Queen Street), off Cheapside in the parish of St Pancras. Robert had in fact started life as an ironmonger's apprentice, was a member of the Ironmongers' Company and indeed describes himself as such in his will dated 1557. We do not know how he became a mercer, but Baptist's admission to the Mercer's Company in 1580 was recorded as

> 'Baptist Hyckes, the son of Robert Hyckes, late of London, Ironmonger, but while he lived he occupied a retail mercery: made free with us and of the City of London by redemption gratis.'

Robert was thus apparently not a full member of the Mercers' Company - unusual for the owner of a thriving business in an age when the right to trade was restricted to gild members and jealously guarded.

The family's roots seem to have lain in the West Country. According to his will, Robert owned land 'within the Cittie of Bristowe and the county thereof and within.... the countie of Glos.' (perhaps this was another factor which eventually led Baptist to Chipping Campden). Robert's father was either a fuller in Tortworth, Gloucestershire[2] or a Bristol ironmonger. It seems likely that Robert was apprenticed to a London ironmonger in his turn - a move that would in itself have required a relatively comfortable family background. The seventeenth century antiquarian Strype describes Robert's wife, Juliana, as a Somerset heiress.[3]

Baptist had two surviving older brothers (and three who died in infancy). Clement, the middle son, became a customs official in Chester and, from the few letters which survive, seems to have lacked his brothers' drive and to have led a somewhat struggling existence far from the elevated circles in which they moved. Baptist's other brother Michael and their mother, however, were both very important influences on his life.

---

[2] According to the account of Sir Baptist in the Middlesex Sessions Rolls. A fuller was involved in the process of cleaning and thickening cloth with clay (or "fuller's earth").

[3] Her maiden name was probably de Clapham, although the family biographer has it as Arthur .

Juliana Hicks

Baptist's mother Juliana was in every sense a matriarch. She outlived two husbands, and lived until 1592, by when she must have been in her seventies at least. When Robert died she took over his business, which two years later was thriving enough for her to acquire land and a house on Peter's Hill between St Paul's and the river. This allowed her to move out of the rooms above the mercer's shop on Soper's Lane.

Robert's will calls her 'well beloved wife' and made her sole executrix. In this he clearly recognises her competence to inherit his business and bequeaths sums to his two apprentices 'to be paid unto them at the coming out of their years of apprenticeship so as all the mean time they truly, diligently, willingly and faithfully serve my said wife'. To be left a widow of means was one of the few ways for an Elizabethan woman to achieve a degree of legal and commercial independence, and Juliana seems to have made the most of it. In an age of growing domestic luxury and personal splendour, her own inventories show that Juliana too had her tapestry and plate, her linen and jewels.

Robert's will had also contained this item:

> 'To my friend Master Anthony Penn one black gown, one coat cloth to it and a thick gold ring.'

It was this friend that Juliana married in 1559, two years after Robert's death and so became Mistress Penn. Anthony seems however to have played little part in her business affairs and we know little about him other than that he died in 1572. Juliana then remained single for the rest of her life.

She emerges as someone to ask for help, and often for a loan, by people from all walks of life. Requests vary, from one by John Gilpin 'to be pitiful to this bearer, my wife's nurse, that her mother, a woman of four score years, may have a simple gown as a mourner for the right worshipful Mistress Alderman Roo', to the likes of the Earls of Oxford and Kildare. Clearly she set the precedent for her sons' success in moneylending to the Court and she too was held in affection by the Cecils.

In 1588 after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, when it appears to have been fashionable to own a piece of the spoils, Lord Burghley's son, Robert Cecil, wrote to Dame Juliana about booty from the Spanish Armada. The letter illustrates the warmth and informality of their friendship:

> 'Good Mrs Penn, I do receive from you many kindnesses for which I heartily thank you and yet at this time I make bold with you for a thing which you may get and to which I would be beholden to no other but yourself. So it is that my Lady Gorge hath a pretty silver bell that was Don Pedro's the Spaniard. It was taken at sea. The weight of it in silver is all that to her it can be valued. If you of yourself would desire to buy it I would willingly pay whatsoever she would ask so that it might not be known unto her that I am to have it, for I would not be beholden to her. You see how bold I am with you. If I may pleasure you or yours I will be most ready. And thus wishing you health and long life for my friend's good eldest son I commit you to God. From my lodging this 3 of Obre 1588, Yor. loving friend Robt. Cecill.'

Juliana was clearly a cool headed and able woman even in old age. Once at least, she found herself closer to the seats of power than she might have wished. In 1592 she was in trouble with Robert Cecil (by now relieving his father Lord Treasurer Burghley of some of his workload) for having harboured a Bristolian, Charles Chester, now imprisoned in the gatehouse at Westminster for 'his lewd disposition to the State.' Chester must presumably have been renting rooms in Juliana's house, or perhaps was a contact from her West Country roots. Cecil wrote Mrs Penn three letters. First, 'because you are my very good friend', he says he will spare her the ignominy of a poursuivant (or official search warrant) if she will deliver up

> 'all such papers, books, caskets or other things belonging to Charles Chester…You shall do well to deal clearly in the discovery of such things as be in your house, for his confession will otherwise discredit your denial.'

A clear threat to comply (though one cannot help wondering whether Chester had in fact confessed to anything). From his next letter, Juliana seems to have visited Cecil, pleaded ignorance and then fallen ill. Cecil now wrote in conciliatory and concerned tone. His third letter, however, shows him losing patience with the old woman's evasions:

> 'I have forborne for your children's sake to do by you as I would have done by your betters…I do fear it will prove that your house has fostered him to no purpose. And it will go near to be proved that in your hearing his tongue hath walked further than to speak of subjects [*sic*] . Your silence in answering me, as though you scorned me for dealing friendly with you, and your privy intelligence with him since his apprehension, I can assure you must be answered. I love (I confess) your sons well, but do not imagine that any of their credits with me shall make me blind when I am ill-used. And thus I bid you Farewell.
>
> Ro: CECYLL'

We do not know on whose side Baptist and Michael were in this wrangle. Perhaps Mrs Penn was after all merely an unwary landlady, for somehow she wriggled her way out; Cecil's final letter in this affair is to Michael and shows that further preferential treatment has been shown her, although the specifics are unclear:

> 'Mr Hycke. I pray you thank your mother for her apricots. And for any matter of suspicion that I conceive against her for being an accomplice or an allower of his villainy against the state, I think you know that I cleared her. This, nevertheless, which of good will I made you show her, I pray you require her not to speak of. For I am not able to answer it that I should show it to anybody. Your loving friend
>
> Ro: Cecyll.'

Juliana's business letters show the vivacity and drive that Baptist inherited. She pursues her bad creditors with vigour. One letter is worth quoting at length, both for its reference to Baptist and its insight into the precarious nature of Elizabethan finance and the chains of debts which constituted it. The letter is written to a Mr Hardwick who is a JP and 'of an ancient house', who is languishing in prison for debt. Juliana had been losing money from him for years; now, in 1580, she had a specific need for funds herself:

> '…Only my request is because I neither have present money to defray my necessary expenses, and am daily driven to pawn my plate to supply ordinary charges. And further…(because my son being now ready to trade and to set up for himself) the want thereof will be a let and stay to his determination, and so consequently both turn to his discredit and hindrance, and to my no small reproof, who am bound both by nature and the laws of this City, to see him instantly and truly satisfied…. Concerning the causes between you and your creditors, I am very glad to hear that they grow well towards an end…'

Juliana obviously did manage to set her son up in business. Her will is now lost (though its date of 1592 is included in earlier lists). A paper of the same year, signed by Michael and Baptist, makes a deed of gift by Michael of all his interest in the shop at the White Bear (under his father's will) to Baptist. From then on, Baptist was to go from strength to strength, building on the twin foundations provided for him by his mother and father, money-lending and mercery.

Michael Hicks

Baptist' eldest brother Michael (see Fig. 2) was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge in the 1560s, then at Lincoln's Inn. In 1573, Michael became a secretary to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Elizabeth I's trusted Lord Chancellor. This placed Michael at the very centre of the realm, since Burghley was a statesman of remarkable resilience, quietly outlasting all Elizabeth's other favourites and justifying the trust she placed in him at her accession.

The partnership was to last until almost the end of Elizabeth's reign, ended only by Burghley's death in 1598. It is not at clear how Michael entered this important household, although he must have been a very competent administrator to remain there himself for 25 years. Two other members of Burghley's secretariat, George Blythe and Vincent Skinner, had been in the same circle as Hicks at Cambridge. However, there is also evidence that Juliana Hicks lent money to William Cecil when he was in the political wilderness before Elizabeth's accession, which might have given her a later claim on him. Over 800 letters from and to Michael survive

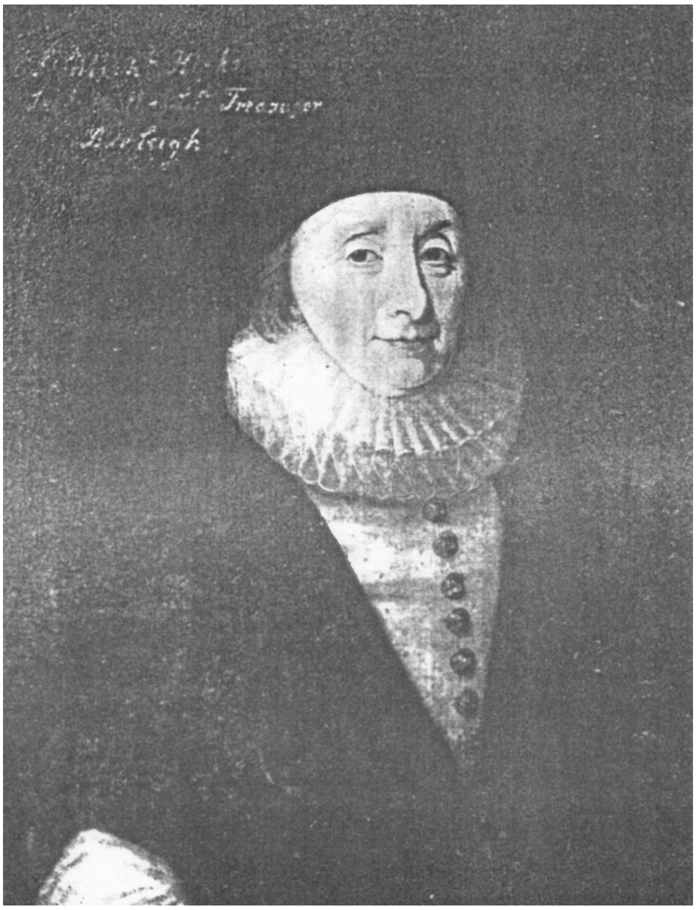

Figure 2: **Michael Hicks (from a portrait at Witcombe Park, Glos, house of his descendants, the Hicks Beach family).**

in the Cecil papers (now under the Lansdowne Manuscripts) and despite occasional crises of self-confidence, Michael seems to have been a very competent secretary. He became one of only two or three principal secretaries to Burghley through the 1580s and 90s. These men dealt with the deluge of government business and private suits which came to their master. An anonymous household biographer (who may have been Hicks himself) described the workload:

> 'besides all business in Council or other weighty causes, and such as were answered by word of mouth, there was not a day in the term wherein he received not threescore, fourscore and an hundred petitions which he commonly read that night and gave every man answer himself the next morning as he went to the hall.'

Hicks seems to have specialised in the ordinary (but for him very profitable) business of domestic patronage. Under the very personal Elizabethan political system, ministers' political standing depended primarily on Elizabeth's confidence in them. Her confidence in a particular individual was demonstrated by the extent of his patronage, which attracted suitors in direct proportion. Suitors of all levels, be they individuals, towns or corporations, might have a difficult, protracted and humiliating time in their search for favour. It was here that Michael Hicks' influence lay, in bringing a given suit to his master's attention, even perhaps presenting the arguments in its favour. This made him the recipient of a stream of gifts in return for his favour, many of them monetary. He was often offered sums of £100, or 100 angels (an Elizabethan coin worth 5s). At other times he was promised venison, geldings and even a "Welsh nag" worth £5. Perhaps strangely to our modern eyes, this system of gratuities was generally accepted by everyone and was essential to secure an adequate standard of living for government servants, one which equally did not have to come from the coffers of the parsimonious Elizabeth.

No doubt with his mother's encouragement, Michael very soon began to take on the role of moneylender with surplus funds. He was ideally placed to act as loan broker, directing those seeking money to those lenders with funds available - and, very often, to his brother Baptist.

Michael seems largely responsible for the lasting warmth between the Hicks family and the Cecils. Burghley's reprobate son-in law the Earl of Oxford[4] lodged for a while with Juliana, although she was left chasing her debts (Oxford's factotum, one Thomas Churchyard, wrote to her that he had taken refuge in Sanctuary for fear that she would have him arrested for his master's debts, for peers of the realm could not, of course, be arrested). Michael's relationship was especially close with Burghley's son, Robert Cecil, whom he had known since the

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[4] This Edward de Vere is the same Earl of Oxford believed by some to have written Shakespeare's plays. However, it seems implausible that someone as constitutionally unpleasant as de Vere could have written with such sensitivity and understanding of the human condition.

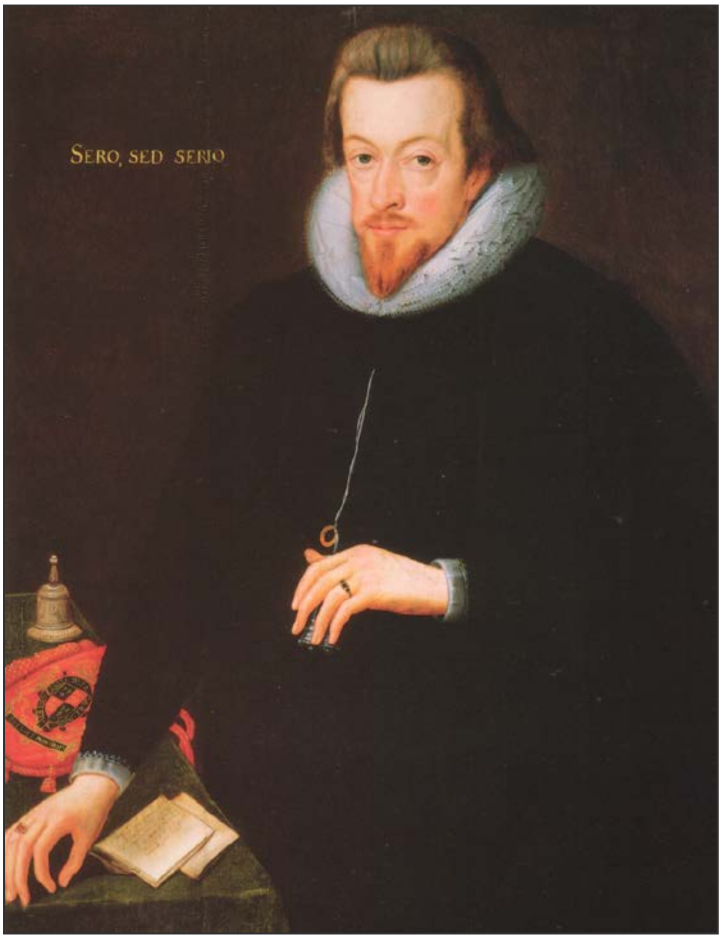

Figure 3: **Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury c. 1602**
National Portrait Gallery, London

age of ten and who was himself to become Lord Treasurer during the last years of Elizabeth and then under James (Fig 3).

By 1588, Michael was crony, factotum and confidant of Robert, who took pleasure in the company and wit of 'lusty Mr Michael' and teased the older man about his 'bald, idle pate.' They exchanged frequent letters and often dined together. Occasional vignettes surface in these letters of the life of the canny mercer Baptist; for example, in 1588 Cecil wrote to Michael

> 'Sir W Rawley[5] and I dining in London, we went together to your brother's shop, where your brother desired me to write to my wife [to ask her] not to let anybody know that she paid under £3:10s a yard for her cloth of silver. I marvel that she is so simple as to tell anybody what she pays for everything.'

And when Michael's first son was born in 1596 (Michael had remained a bachelor until he was 50) Cecil writes that his wife Elizabeth

> 'willed me to let you understand from her that now you have an heir of your own a friend of yours in Cheapside who expected that fortune from you will sell his velvet 2s a yard dearer.'

From both these, one suspects that Baptist's business acumen may sometimes have been the butt of gibes from his peers.

When Burghley died in 1598, Cecil wrote to Michael 'For my private things at Theobalds[6], good Mr Hyckes, end them for I am weary of the noise of such beggarly things as they are and will be when they are best. I commit all to you.' Despite this trust and continuing friendship, Michael never achieved the status within Robert Cecil's household that he had enjoyed when Burghley was in charge. By now, however, he was in his sixties and Cecil may simply have preferred younger men working for him. Michael turned to his estates and local government in Essex instead. While he may have been less close to Cecil, Michael still had many close and elevated friends. One was Sir Francis Bacon, whose early ambitions had been thwarted by Elizabeth's dislike of him, but who rose to Lord Chancellor under James and became a quintessential figure of the period's intelligentsia. After his mother died in 1600 and at a low ebb in his fortunes, Bacon wrote:

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[5] Michael's historian, A G R Smith, has this plausibly as Sir Walter Raleigh.

[6] Theobalds, now lost, was Lord Burghley's prodigy house in Hertfordshire, so beloved by Elizabeth that he extended it to palatial proportions. Robert never liked it ("I have nothing to say to Theobalds but that I wish it less") but unfortunately for him he inherited it at his father's death. King James also cast covetous eyes on Theobalds and offered another estate in Hertfordshire in exchange. It was there that Cecil (by then Lord Salisbury) built Hatfield House (1607-12), one of the last great houses. Designed by Robert Lymminge, Hatfield House is of specific interest for nearing completion when Baptist would have been drawing up plans for Campden House. We know that Baptist was knighted at Theobalds in 1603; it is highly likely that Baptist would have known about and perhaps even visited and admired Hatfield House and its gardens.

> 'Sir Michael Hicks. It is but a wish, and not anyways to desire it to trouble you, but I heartily wish I had your company here at my mother's funeral, which I purpose on Thursday next in the forenoon. Feast I make none. But if I might have your company for two or three days at my house I should pass over this mournful occasion with more comfort.'

From another letter, it appears that Bacon too had had occasion to borrow from the brothers Hicks. This time, however, he is repaying a different kind of loan and writes in a more cheerful frame of mind:

> 'Sir Michael. I do use, as you know, to pay my debts with time [to spare]. But indeed if you will have a good and perfect colour in a pair of carnation stockings, it must be long in the dying. I have some scruple of conscience whether it was my Lady's stockings or her daughter's and I would have the restitution to be to the right person else I shall not have absolution. Therefore I have sent them both, desiring them to wear them for my sake as I did wear theirs for mine own sake. So wishing you all a good New Year, I rest yours assured,
> Francis Bacon'

Michael seems always to have been witty and pleasant company, but there was also a wry shyness to his character, which is apparent in his portrait as well as in his letters and actions. He declined to be knighted by the new king at Theobalds in 1603, preferring to wait until James visited his house at Ruckholt in Essex before accepting such an honour.

Michael died at the age of 67 in 1612, a rich and kindly man who seems to have been content with himself. At times over self-deprecating, he summed up his professional career well when he wrote in 1594 to a petitioner "you shall find in me a poor friend, ready to hold the candle to give light to the game while others play it". Yet he emerges as a wise counsellor and reflective man, able to express himself with elegance. At the end of his life he wrote to console his good friend Sir Hugh Beeston on the death of his only son. He concludes with a beautiful passage of measured dignity that epitomises the best in Jacobean prose:

> 'And now Sir Hugh Beeston to join in counsel myself with you. For as much as the glass of our life is almost run out and the light of our candle burnt to the socket, let us with David learn to number our days and to apply our hearts to wisdom. Let us redeem the time past with an earnest apprehension and

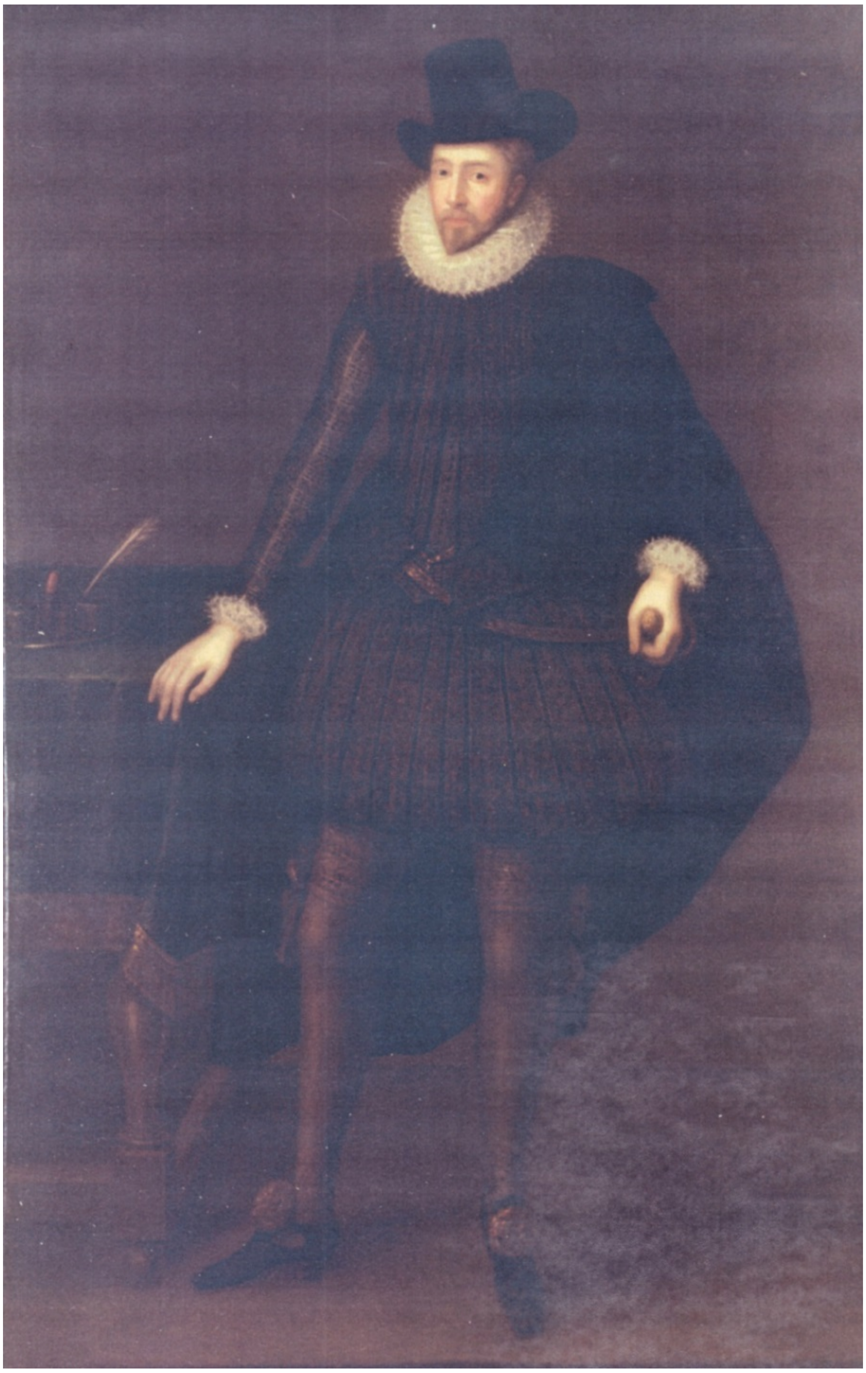

Figure 4: **Sir Baptist Hicks, c. 1618. Sir Baptist was a JP for Middlesex some time before 1612, and was appointed Deputy Lieutenant for the county in 1624. In 1612 he had built the county a new Sessions House in Clerkenwell, long since demolished. This portrait now hangs in its modern day equivalent, the Crown Court at the Middlesex Guildhall.**

> meditation of our approaching end *Et ideo serio quia sero.*[7] To which end let us cast off all worldly cogitations and cares, which are but grigs in our heads and thorns in our hearts, and being balanced and valued, are nothing else but trash and transitory.'

Which were not, one suspects, the sentiments of his brother Baptist, embarking in the year his brother died on his magnificent house in Chipping Campden.

Sir Baptist Hicks, Viscount Campden

Baptist Hicks is not a name known by most today, yet his career exemplified (and enabled to a significant degree) several of the key social trends of his day. The period from about 1550 to the beginning of the Civil War in 1641was an era of high social mobility, accompanied by wild and competitive personal extravagance. "Between 1570 and 1630, the social structure groaned under the stresses of accommodating more and more new families. In an effort to prop it up, the ideal of generosity became twisted into a frenzied competition in ostentation which it was beyond the capacity of many a family to support".[8] Hicks the mercer was able to pander to the taste for ever increasing personal splendour; Hicks the moneylender to enable his clients to pay for their magnificence.

London grew rapidly in this period largely because of its unique role as a centre for luxury goods and professional services. Imports of silks, satins and raw silk had one of the highest growth rates between 1560 and 1640, rising sevenfold from 4% to 15% of all London imports. In 1550 there were 30 mercers in London; by 1600 this had risen to 300. Like hospitality, clothes were to the aristocracy a status symbol. Fashions in this period changed with bewildering speed, glorying in a profusion of embroidery and gold and silver lace. King James, coming south to an altogether more splendid existence than he had enjoyed in Scotland, set the pace. Between 1608 and 1613, he had on average a new cloak every month, a new waistcoat every three weeks, a new suit every ten days, new stockings, boots and garters every 4-5 days and a new pair of gloves every day. As early as 1610, royal wardrobe expenses for the year amounted to more than £25,000, with silks alone costing James and his queen over £10,000 (see Figs 5 & 6).

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[7] 'What will be, will be.' Robert Cecil's motto was 'Sero sed serio.'

[8] L Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (OUP, 1985), p583

A mercer to the king could not help but prosper, especially allowing for trickle down emulation through the Court and beyond. (Of course, the Stuart kings were increasingly to find that they had tastes beyond the means allocated by parliament, quite apart from the costs of actually ruling the country. Once again, the financial activities of men like Hicks allowed them to disguise and postpone the crisis, which was already beginning to come to a head when Hicks died in 1629. That, however, belongs to the origins of the Civil War, an event that would have been unthinkable to a man of Hicks' generation, and so to a different story.)

A mercer to the Court could also expect to profit from the ceremonial role of clothes. Coronations and State occasions all required their trappings: in 1610 the Earl of Rutland's parliamentary robes required 25 yards of crimson velvet and ermine at a cost of £53 15s. By 1625, for his investiture as a Knight of the Garter, the Earl of Salisbury spent a colossal £976 on cloth, silk, satins, gold and silver lace, buttons and embroidery for his outfit.

No wonder there was such a demand for moneylending as lords and gentry alike grappled with the age-old problem of balancing income and expenditure. This was complicated for all landlords by the technical features of estate management. Most of a landowner's income came from the rents and entry fines on his properties. These rents often failed to keep up with inflation and a landlord could only benefit from the increasing farming profits of his tenants by increasing the fine, or down payment, when a tenant's old lease expired and he entered a new one. However, such leases usually ran over a number of years, so that a landlord's income could fluctuate wildly from year to year. Many were thus tempted to live on credit, confident that loans could be paid off within a predictable period. There was a need both for long term credit and short term credit, both to bridge the gap between Lady Day and Michaelmas when rents were paid, and also to cover one-off expenditure like a dowry for a daughter or imprudent speculation in industry or commerce. Juliana Penn was not the only one driven to pawn her "plate" (i.e. gold and/or silver domestic ware), a process not without social ignominy if this letter from Sir Fulke Greville to Michael Hicks in July 1603 is anything to go by:[9]

> 'Sir. The heavy burthen that is fallen upon me for the securing of my whole estate, makes me to intreat your favour in this matter. I am to pay to Sir David Fowles £500 at a very short day, and have no other means to raise so great a sum, but by laying all my plate to gage. I do therefore very heartily pray you to be a means to procure me such a sum, upon a sufficient pawn, of some good friend, whereby I may escape the rumour of the world, and leave my plate safe; either for three months or half a year. I will willingly give the usual consideration, and take it a very kind favour at your hands.'

Michael obliged, with the help of his brother, and Sir Fulke writes again in the same month:

> 'Sir. I thank you very heartily for the pains you have taken about this money: wherein I was more willing to trouble you, because I am very loth to have my name in question amongst them that practice in this kind upon the Exchange. And, if there be no remedy, but that we must use their help, let me pray you be thus more beholden unto you and your brother. Allow that my plate may remain in your hands and custody, and that, betwixt you, the lenders may have such security as may content them, without notice of me, or passage of my plate through unknown hands in this infectious time.'

Coming into an inheritance, as was the case for Sir Fulke, often necessitated borrowing, since furnishings and household goods were considered part of personal estate and therefore usually allocated to pay the debts of the deceased. The heir would then find himself running up further debts to furnish the great house he had inherited. The striking feature of the English economy at this time compared to European countries was the total lack of deposit banking. Surplus cash (if any) had to be stockpiled at home - and hard coinage was of course very

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[9] Sir Fulke was a descendant of William Grevel, Baptist's forerunner in Campden. He was a favourite with Queen Elizabeth, a soldier, courtier and man of letters. Thwarted at first under James by Robert Cecil's lack of regard, after Cecil's death he became Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1621 James made him Baron Brooks and gave him the then ruinous Warwick Castle, where he was to be murdered by his discontented manservant (and lover?) in what is now known as the Ghost Tower.

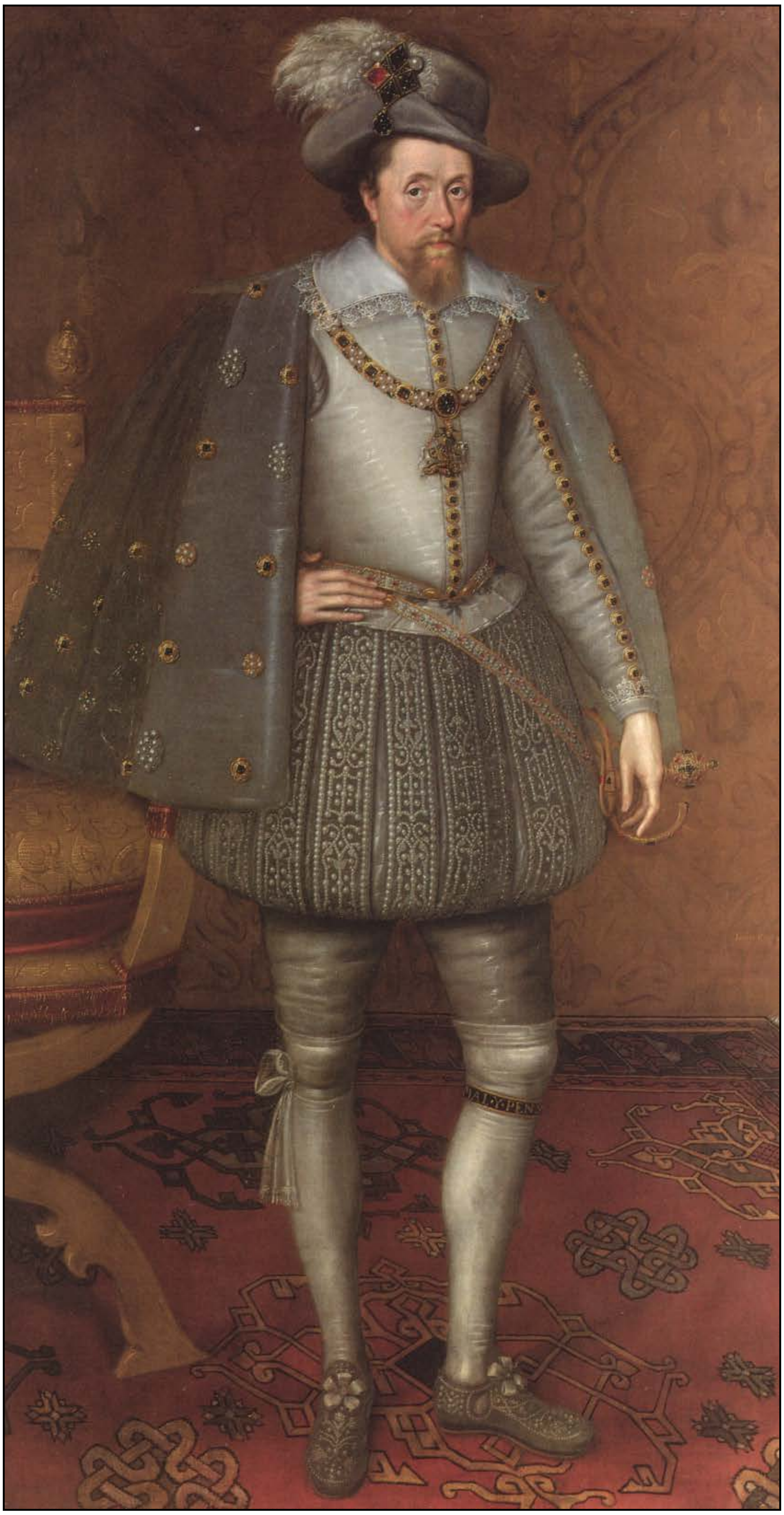

Figure 5: **King James I & IV. The splendour of full court dress far outshines the garb in the portraits of the Hicks brothers. It is entirely plausible that Sir Baptist could have provided some of the fine fabrics used in this outfit.**
Attr. John de Critz the Elder, Private Collection.

cumbersome to transport. The great temptation was to use any spare cash to buy more land, and to borrow to tide over any temporary difficulties. 'The system was a gigantic merry-go-round, with the great moneyed men of London in effect paying each other off every six months or so.'[10] It was in this game of lending at a higher rate than he had borrowed that Baptist Hicks excelled.

There is one final aspect of early Stuart finance that is relevant to our understanding of Baptist Hicks the man, and that is social attitudes to money lending. Usury was an essential lubricant to a society almost entirely lacking in recognisable banking mechanisms, but this did not make the money lender a popular figure. Interest rates were not extortionate by today's standards - a 1571 Act had limited them to 10%, and successive Bills under James attempted to reduce them to as little as 5%. In practice, 7-8% was the norm. Yet contemporaries bitterly resented their dependency on money lenders, despite being happy to court them when in need. Francis Bacon, oppressed with debt all his life and a client and friend of both Hicks brothers, called money lending 'the canker and ruin of many men's estates, which in process of time breeds public poverty.' By the last decade of Elizabeth's reign, as personal extravagance escalated while Court favours declined, as much as two thirds of the peerage are estimated to have been in financial difficulties.

The financiers were, almost without exception, 'new men', willing to use any means to increase their wealth and thereby enter the ranks of the elite themselves. 'Generally all merchants, when they have gotten any great wealth, leave trading and fall to usury, the gain thereof being so easy, certain and great', wrote Sir Thomas Culpepper in his *Tract Against Usury* of 1621. He would almost certainly have had Baptist Hicks in mind among the archetypes of this trend.

This then was the context into which the young mercer Baptist Hicks entered in 1580, his apprenticeship over and newly set up in business.

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[10] L Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*

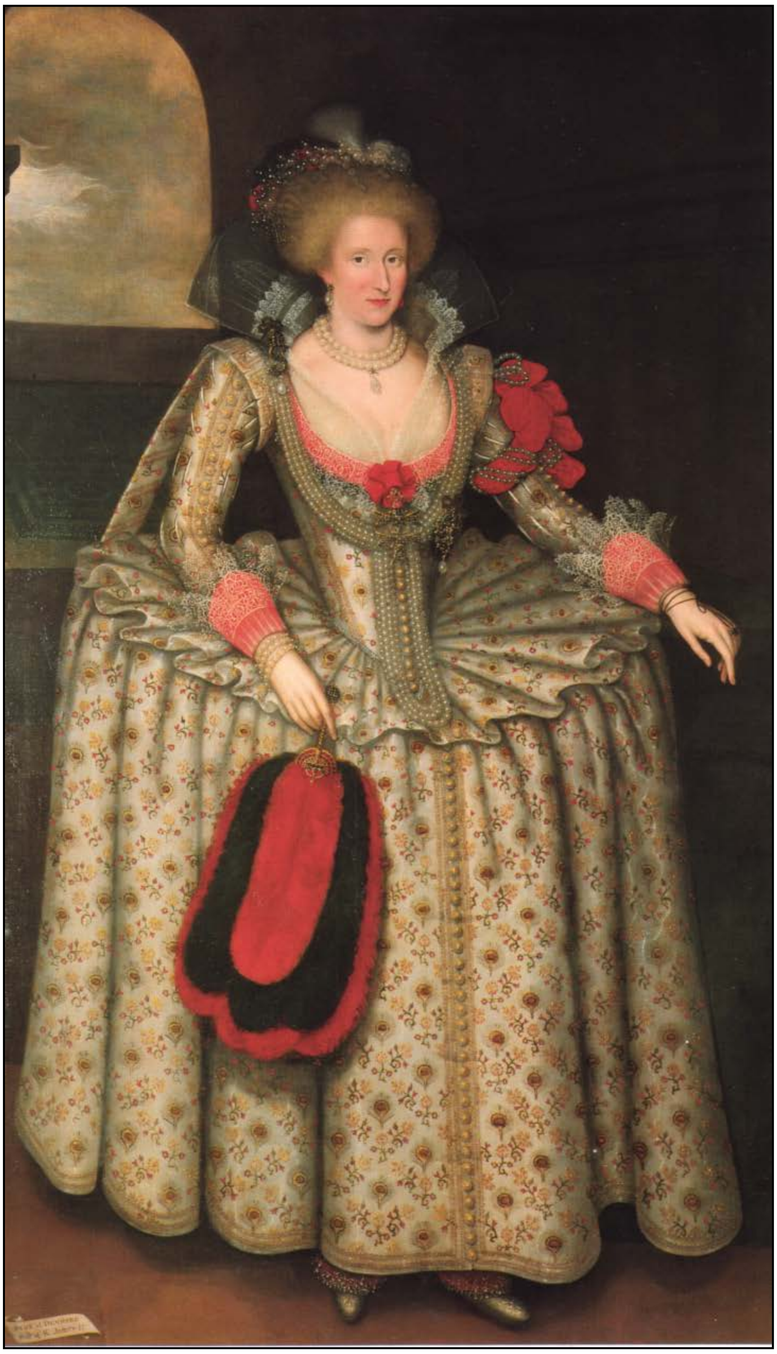

Figure 6: **Anne of Denmark c. 1611-14, a patron of poets and musicians and, especially, of the elaborate court masques of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, in which she performed. Again, Sir Baptist may well have supplied the fabrics.**
Marcus Geeraerts the Younger, Bedford Estate Collection

'It is perfectly plain that, of Juliana's three sons, the youngest most resembled her in capacity, in vivacity and in an inherent liking for the splendours of life. He had neither the education nor the social opportunities of Michael, but he out-distanced him in worldly success. If, of the three brothers, Clement had obviously the least vitality, Baptist as certainly had the most'. So writes the family biographer. Others have been less complimentary; the usurer's shadow is a long one, and it is for these of his activities that Baptist Hicks features in the history textbooks. As we have seen, Robert and Elizabeth Cecil were not above the odd snide remark about him. We perhaps have more reason than any to dig deeper for a more balanced view of him. After all, it helps to like one's host, even if he has been dead more than 350 years! Driven, acquisitive, fussy, self important and pretentious - all these adjectives spring to mind, yet so too do congenial and convivial, a generous parent and (eventually at least) public-spirited.

We know little about his early life. What is known comes mainly from his correspondence with his brother and the Cecils. While few of these letters deal with his activities as mercer, it is interesting to note what a valuable and even symbolic commodity he dealt in. At one level, his sister-in-law may return him some 'purple stuff striped with gold,' or Baptist may send a 'little present' to Sir Robert Cotton for his help in a cause where Sir Baptist was 'maliciously prosecuted by a lurking proud enemy.' The gift is a piece of silk he has had specially made for his friends and he writes that 'I persuade myself out of the judgement and skill that I have gathered in process of time in the commodity, you shall find it extraordinary for the goodness.'

At another level, in 1598 an embassy was sent to France to negotiate peace with Spain, a mission that included Robert Cecil. Baptist supplied silks, satins, velvets and taffetas worth £68 3s 2d for the emissaries to take with them as gifts. It is similarly likely that Baptist would have supplied the draperies for Queen Elizabeth's funeral. Up to 1200 yards of black stuff were typically required for an aristocratic funeral, let alone a royal one. We know that he provided 'velvets, damasks and satins of the colour crimson, to serve the coronation' of James I, because a warrant to him for £3,000 is dated August 7th 1603. However, three years later, Sir Baptist was petitioning the Privy Council for the payment of the King's debts in 'Considerations to move His Majesty and their Lordships to have a more special regard to Baptist Hicks for his debt due to him than any other creditor.' This petition mentions that the proportion of stuff ordered was changed so that Sir Baptist had been left with over 1,400 yards on his hands 'to his very great hurt and damage.'

By the early years of James' reign, Baptist had already amassed a large turnover, although there is evidence that his capital was not necessarily liquid. In 1605, James alone owed him £16,000. Baptist appears, astutely, to have made loans available to James and his 'bare Scotch nobility' even before they came south, for which service he was knighted just before the coronation, on 25th July 1603 at Theobalds along with 300 others. £16,000 was however only a fraction of James' total debts, which by 1607-8 amounted to £350,000. The Close Rolls show the extent of Sir Baptist's many monetary transactions with the King at this time, including bonds for £24,000, £30,000 and even, with other creditors, £150,000. This first decade of James's reign was, overall, a period of détente between London businessmen and the Crown without the acrimony which was to enter their relationship later in the Stuart period with the advent of Forced Loans from the City.

In fact, Sir Baptist may have been encouraged to lend further because of his lucrative contracts with the Court, and because royal payments for the stuffs he supplied were usually long overdue. 'I fynde Scottyshe men are fayre speakers and slow performers,' he wrote to Michael. 'Being rid of them I will cross them out of my books.' Baptist seems to have relied on his brother for all sorts of support, sometimes in an apparently self-centred manner. It is here that the voice of the harassed and self absorbed business man is heard. He declines an invitation to a masque at Ruckholt:

> 'yet not withstanding can I not [*sic]* possibly be with you and be here again to dispatch business...entertainment of friends is [*sic]* very pleasing and comfortable, when more serious affairs are not impeded thereby...In my absence I would have you give your friends the best entertainment you can and stick not to venture your money where so much is to be gained...I wish myself with you at your masque, some furniture thereunto I send you.'

With status and success came responsibilities, not all of them willingly assumed. In his busiest years, Sir Baptist shirked civic duties if he possibly could by pulling the most illustrious of strings. In 1603, he felt himself too busy to be an alderman (it is interesting that he did not feel himself in need of the prestige it carried[11]), and wrote in haste to his brother:

> 'If I were not ill at ease by reason of a cold I have taken, I would come to you myself and therefore I have written these few lines to you to let you understand that very suddenly and very much unexpected there is a bill delivered up unto my Lord Mayor with the names of four Commoners for the choice of an Alderman, among which four I am nominated and do very greatly fear that if speedily I make not better friends it will be my hap to be chosen, and they will turn me to a far greater trouble and suit than now it will do. Therefore I pray you do me that brotherly kindness as to come to London this present Monday (for it requires expedition) and that I may find that friendship at your hands by your friends as may stay the course pretended against me which I know by some is done of malice as more particularly you shall understand when I confer with you.'

This is not the only instance where Sir Baptist emerges as a rather self-centred individual, who was not entirely popular with his peers. Nevertheless, his intrigues here were successful and a draft paper survives in State papers requiring the lord mayor and aldermen not to elect Sir Baptist Hicks because he was employed in the King's service. He used the same tactics the following year to avoid being elected as sheriff and again in 1611, when he was actually elected alderman of Bread Street Ward. Here he was summoned to make his first appearance in Court and take his oaths of allegiance and of an alderman. He then again produced a letter from the King to which the Court at first demurred but then 'after consideration and the intimation that his Majesty means not to write for any other hereafter, and also in regard of the discreet and respectful behaviour of the said Sir Baptist Hicks in making his appearance and taking the oath' (and, of course, paying his £500 fine) 'the Court do freely and lovingly leave the said Sir Baptist Hicks to his own free choice and election.' All very cleverly stage-managed no doubt, and an illuminating example of the strength of James's regard for Sir Baptist.

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[11] The 26 aldermen, elected by the freemen of the City, represented the elite of the City. They were elected for life and from their ranks the Lord Mayor was chosen. However, the role did carry a heavy administrative burden.

It seems in these years that all Baptist's energies were focused on his business affairs, from which he was distracted only by direct service to the Court. In 1606, he was foreman of the jury at the Guildhall, which convicted the Jesuit Father Garnet of complicity in the Gunpowder Plot. Garnet had defended the seal of confessional, while claiming that he had done his best to dissuade Robert Catesby from participation in the Catholic plot by Guy Fawkes and others to blow up the Houses of Parliament. It was a show trial, orchestrated by the famous lawyer Sir Edward Coke and Robert Cecil, now Earl of Salisbury, and watched from behind a screen by the king himself. The outcome can never have been in doubt; still, a reliable foreman would have been needed. The jury took just fifteen minutes to find Garnet guilty; the sentence, that he be hung, drawn and quartered.

In 1609 Sir Baptist was of further service to the king as a Contractor for Crown lands, as James undertook a programme of more efficient management to maximise his non-parliamentary income from his property. This allowed James to postpone the troublesome business of calling a Parliament to vote him taxes, a procedure that increasingly required some kind of *quid pro quo* from the king in return. A ruthless businessman could play his part in such a process.

Earlier, Baptist had not been averse to office if it directly forwarded his business interests. He had received freedom (or right to trade) of the Mercers Company in 1580 and served as Master of the Company in 1604, 1611 and 1622. This was a position of some power: to this day, the Mercers have precedence among all the other Livery Companies.

By 1612, when Sir Baptist became a Justice of the Peace for Middlesex at the age of 62, he was an extremely wealthy, well established man. The extent of his rise is apparent by looking back to his letters of courtship in the early 1580s. He wooed three times unsuccessfully, seemingly mostly by letters. These reveal his ambitions, his defensiveness over his status as tradesman, and also a gentler side to his nature, less apparent in business:

> 'And now whereas the object that to marry a man of my trade were a great embasing of your credit and calling - Truly, methinks (as they may worst do it that have risen themselves from meaner beginnings) so they do great wrong to the trade itself, which in reputation all men know to be of chiefest account in this City. And as it cannot be denied that there are some which bear office now in this City which have been of that trade, so it is as evident that there are more which have been called to that place, and might worthily have accepted of it, if they had not preferred a quiet life before glorious titles. [12]
>
> 'But howsoever the trade itself, is in itself, yet it is not necessary that your marriage with a mercer should make you keep a shop or sell a yard of silk (as some have in a disdainful and scornful manner objected). For there is a[n] example not far off from me, of a woman of good wealth and credit who married with a man of my trade, she neither makes nor meddles with the shop nor silk, but having all things allowed her as are fit for a gentlewoman, she passeth her own time at her own pleasure, either here or at her house in the country, as she herself thinks fit.
>
> '...But alas! What need I labour thus to persuade you in these points considering... That it is not money that you shoot at, but the man. That is not worldly dignity and worshipful tithes that you desire, but a husband with whom you may lead a quiet and contented life in the fear of God; who will love you for yourself and not for that which you have; who will allow you to the uttermost of his ability and will use you in gentleness and kindness as becomes an honest man and a good husband. Than the which, if you might have your own heart's desire, what could you wish for more or better?'

But alas! This particular lady declined his advances. Here though, in a letter when Hicks cannot have been much more than 30 and newly established in his own business, we already see the hankering after a country house, which was to lead him to Chipping Campden. Eventually, on 6th September 1585, Sir Baptist married

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[12] Does Sir Baptist mean himself here? If so, he puts a kinder gloss on his avoidance of office than is apparent from the later documents referred to above!

Elizabeth May at All Hallows, Bread Street in London. She came of good citizen stock, her father being a member (and at times Master) of the Merchant Taylors Company. Unusually for the time, this was to be a long and seemingly stable marriage, lasting 44 years until Sir Baptist's death in 1629. It is unfortunate that the only image we have today of Elizabeth is her rather severe statue on the Hicks tomb (and she outlived her husband by fourteen years so was presumably older than him at death when the likeness was made - see Fig 7). The death mask rather supports the view that they were well matched as mates. She is described as 'burstling' and 'imperious' in contemporary letters after 1607 about a lengthy dispute over the newly knighted couple's right to precedence in City circles. This touchiness seems entirely consistent with the 'new man' defending his ground, but one can imagine how unpopular he must have been with his peers when he nevertheless shirked civic office at this time.

Baptist and Elizabeth had five children in their first nine years of marriage. Two daughters survived to adulthood. The eldest was born in 1586, and named Juliana after her grandmother (who still had several years to live). She was to have lasting links with Campden, and the gateway to the south of the Campden House site is still known as Lady Juliana's Gate. Her sister Mary was born in 1587. A brother Arthur died in 1596 aged six, and further siblings, Elizabeth and Baptist died within a month of each other in 1599, aged seven and five respectively. Such were the infant mortality rates of the day.

It was through his surviving offspring that Sir Baptist was able to ensure the durability of his stock's arrival into aristocratic circles (his descendants include Lord Byron, the Dukes of Devonshire, Beaufort, Portland and Rutland and many others of the nobility). Mary married Sir Charles Morrison, while Juliana in 1605 married Edward, Lord Noel, who was created Earl of Ridlington in 1617. The Noels were an old noble family who were finding it increasingly difficult to keep up with the expenses of the day. The match was the classic alliance of old title with new money - Sir Baptist is reported to have given each of his daughters a colossal dowry of £100,000 (even though his petition to the king claimed he had had to borrow to finance these dowries).

Sir Baptist's eventual Viscountcy passed to his son-in-law Edward, whose grandson was to become the first Earl of Gainsborough in 1682. This line survives to this day, as does Noel as the family name, although the main family seat is now at Exton in Leicestershire (the original Noel estate). The site of Old Campden House and its buildings were owned by a branch of the Noels until they passed into the hands of the Landmark Trust in 1998 (1987 for the East Banqueting House). Indeed, members of the family still live in the Court House on Calf Lane (formerly the stable block to the mansion) and you can still enjoy a drink in the Noel Arms Hotel on Campden High Street.

The building of his mansion in Campden must have occupied Sir Baptist, 62 years old at its commencement, for several years. It has been suggested that the work was carried on apace because he feared that he would not live to see its completion. In the event, he lived to 79 and seems as active as ever through his seventies. In 1620 he became MP for Tavistock and was created baronet. From 1624-28 he served as MP for Tewkesbury and was made Deputy Lieutenant for Middlesex in 1625. In 1628, aged 78, he was raised to the peerage by Charles I as 'Baron Hicks of Ilmington in the County of Warwick and Viscount Campden of Campden in the county of Gloucester.' Since 1605, Sir Baptist's business activities had centred on a house in Milk Street in the parish of St Laurence, Jewry, where records show that he regularly attended vestry meetings from until 1627, and where he also became a churchwarden.

It may be that Sir Baptist in fact spent relatively little time in Campden, since he kept his business and political activities going right to the end of his life. In 1616 'the Treasurer and Company of Adventurers and Plantations of the City of London for the first Colony of Virginia' agreed to sell to Sir Baptist and others 'The islands called Bermudas and now Somer Islands, being in the Ocean bordering on the coast of the said first colony, with all harbours, fishings, mines etc. in the said islands' - another canny investment.

He was lending considerable sums directly to Charles I throughout the 1620's. In 1627 the Crown raised a Forced Loan of £120,000 from the Livery Companies of London - one of the improvisations adopted by Charles to raise money without the need for parliamentary consent. The Companies almost always preferred to borrow to meet such 'loans' rather than impose compulsory assessment on their members, and Hicks is found lending the Mercers £2,700 at the preferential rate of 6%. The elevation to Viscount the following year seems a just reward for a lifetime's provision of financial services to the Crown. There seems no doubt that men like Sir Baptist Hicks made a significant contribution to the Stuarts' belief in their right and ability to survive in financial independence from Parliament - a belief that was critical in the crisis of royal relations with Parliament which culminated in the Civil War.

Sir Baptist died at the house in Milk Street on 28th October 1629, yet he chose to be buried in Campden where a funeral sermon was preached on 11th November. His tomb in St James at Campden is worth a visit and shows he died as he lived: with a certain ostentation. (The inscription records the tomb as having been 'piously and carefully' erected by Lady Hicks but it seems unlikely that Sir Baptist was not consulted). The tomb was at once in the vanguard and an anachronism. It was made by England's best sculptor, Nicholas Stone, who was a close associate of Inigo Jones, then Surveyor to the King's Works. There is nothing explicitly Christian in its symbolism but its Classical style shows how English taste was evolving under Jones' influence. Sir Baptist's tomb, with its twelve marble columns, pedimented canopy and (compared to his mansion at least) uncharacteristic simplicity, partakes of this new fangled return to ancient patterns.

Sir Baptist's will made a number of charitable bequests: Stowe's *Survey of London* (1633 ed) includes 'a brief Remembrance of such noble & charitable deeds as have been done by the Right Honourable Baptist, Lord Hicks, Viscount Campden, as well in his own life as at his death; Recorded to the Glory of God, his owne honour & good example of others.' One of his legacies persists to this day as the Campden Charities in Notting Hill Gate, to which he left £200 and Lady Hicks a further £200. Oliver Cromwell (ironically, since the Noels were to be fervent Royalists) was also to contribute £150 and today these modest sums represent an annual turnover of some £2 million with assets considerably higher. They are still administered according to Sir Baptist's instructions that they be held 'in trust to be employed for the good and benefit of the poor in the Parish [of Kensington] forever as the Trustees shall think fit to establish.'

In Campden, Sir Baptist had while alive funded various works to the church, built the market hall and the almshouses (both still standing today) and provided weekly maintenance for "6 poore men and 6 poore women". At his death he settled £140 a year in perpetuity on the almshouses, to allow "each of the saide poore pensioners 3s 4d weekely, and yearely a Gowne, a Hat and a Tunne of Coales per annum". Rushen, the Victorian local historian is scathing about his failure to index-link this annuity and it must be said that he has a point. Similarly, Sir Baptist's charitable bequests do rather pale in comparison with the £100,000 dowries he gave to each of his daughters. However, some deduction may be made about where Sir Baptist's relative loyalties lay, since he bequeathed £500 to Campden "for the setting of the poore to worke". His London mansion, Camden House in Kensington (see below) was leased to one of the King's favourites, the Earl of Somerset, in the 1620s.

The tomb in Campden church is surrounded by other splendid Noel memorials, which tell the story of the next generations of the Noel family through the vicissitudes of the Civil War and beyond. Sir Baptist and his lady lie in state, feet to the east, positioned in confident expectation of the resurrection. The likenesses, only really visible from above, are remarkably lifelike. It is easy to imagine this worthy couple strolling from their mansion the short distance through the Italianate garden through the (still apparent) arched gateway in the church wall (built, not surprisingly, by Sir Baptist) to hear the Reverend John Gaule preach his sermon from the pulpit (donated by Sir Baptist) and read the lesson from the falcon lectern (given by Sir Baptist).

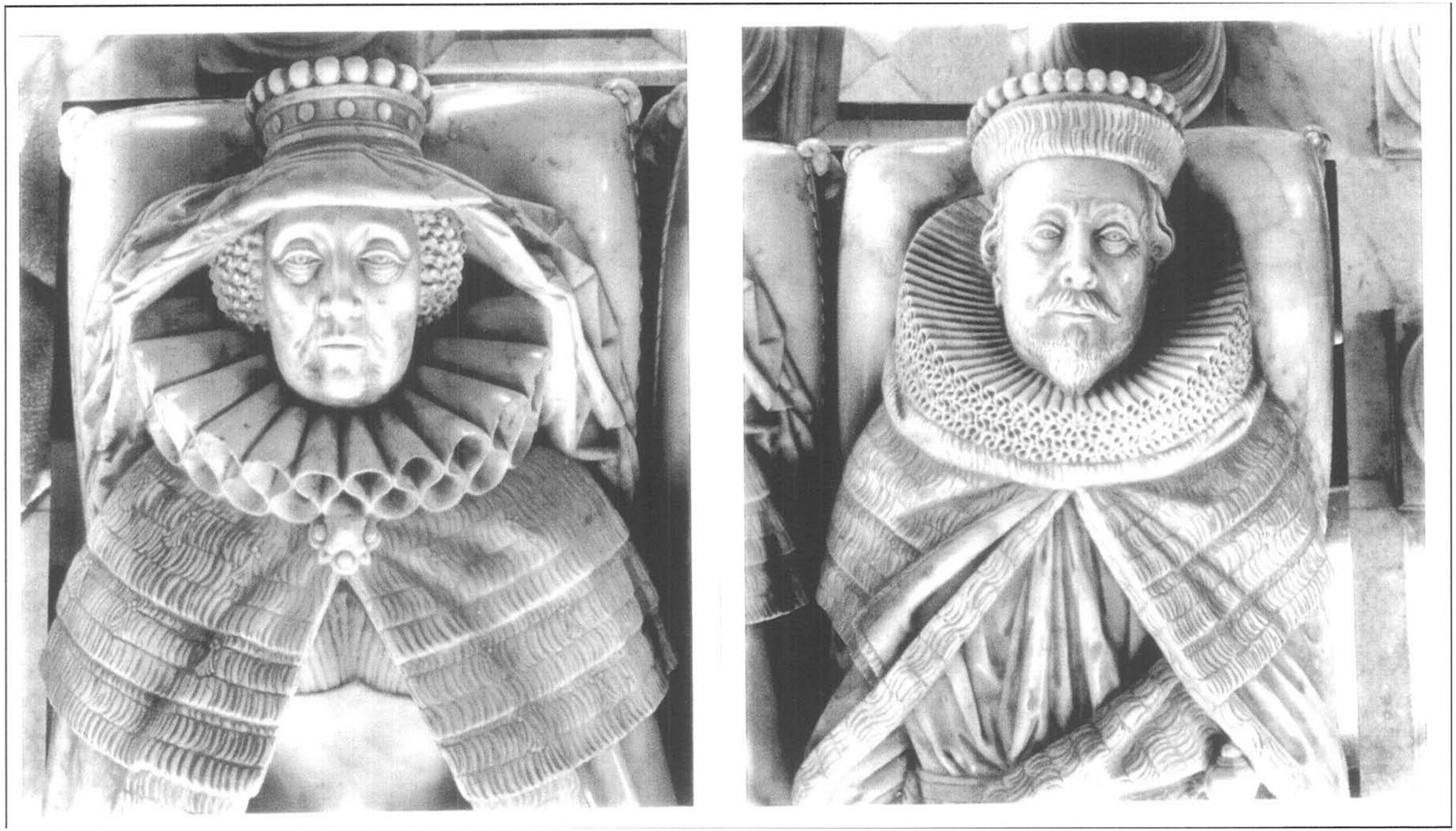

Figure 7: **Elizabeth and Baptist Hicks, Viscount and Lady Campden, as they looked at the end of their lives from their tomb in St James Church, Chipping Campden. This view, taken from above, is inaccessible to the casual visitor and is disconcertingly lifelike!**

No one knew then, of course, but the Hicks’ years in Chipping Campden must have represented a time of golden and prosperous stability. The social orders held their places and enjoyed the Arcadian pleasures of Robert Dover’s Games; the benign businessman from London protected the town’s interests and was generous in his benefactions. It is just as well Sir Baptist could not know that, 17 years after his death, the country would be in the throes of Civil War and his prized country seat be torched by a nemesis in the shape of one Colonel Henry Bard, supporter of the very king whom Sir Baptist had served so loyally.

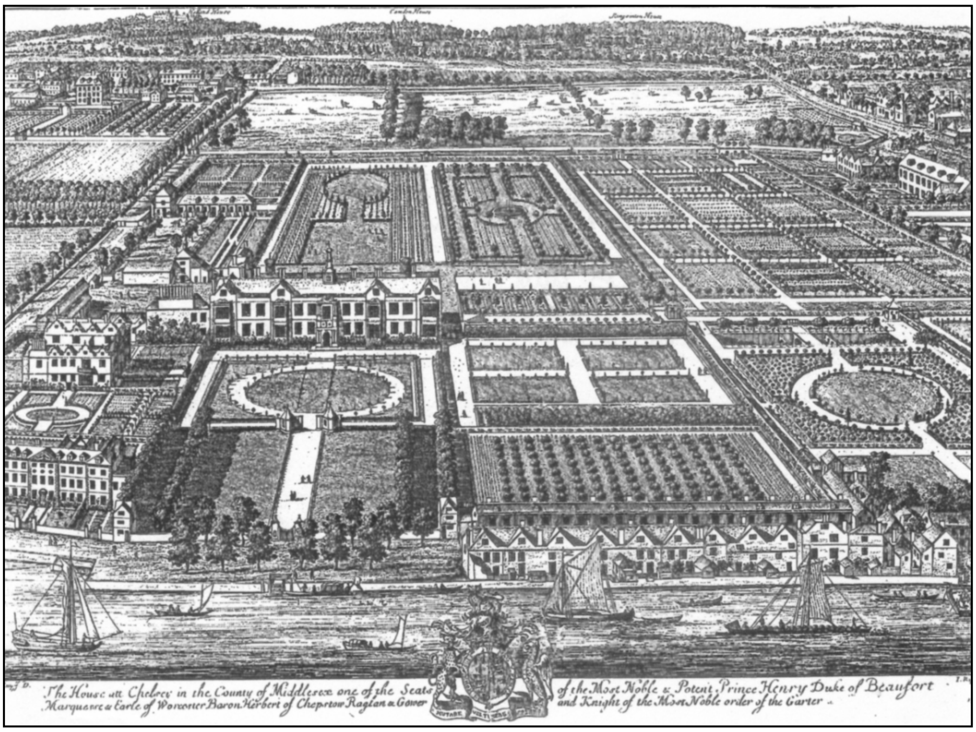
The House att Chelsey in the County of Middlesex one of the Seats of the Most Noble & Potent Prince Henry Duke of Beaufort Marquesse & Earle of Worcester Baron Herbert of Chepstow Raglan & Gower and Knight of the Most Noble order of the Garter

Figure 8: **Aerial view of c 1680 looking north from Chelsea towards Kensington. On the three hills in the distance are Holland House to the west, Camden House in the centre, and what was to become Kensington Palace to the east. The rural aspect is in obvious contrast to today.**

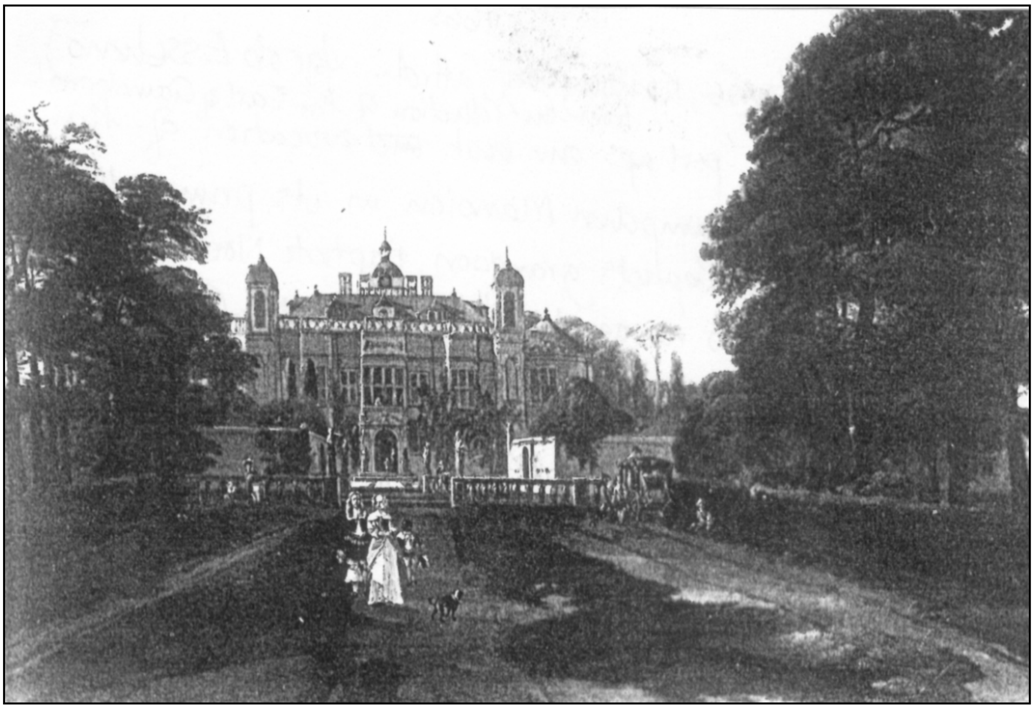

Figure 9**: Cam(p)den House, Kensington, c. 1665. Although painted half a century later, this provides a good evocation of the mood of Campden House in its prime. It was painted for Baptist's grandson, Baptiste Noel, 3rd Viscount, shown in the foreground with his wife, page and dog.**

3. Sir Baptist's Buildings

John Thorpe's designs for Mr Hix

Sir Baptist must have been outstandingly wealthy by 1612 for, notwithstanding £200,000 in dowries, he was building two great mansions simultaneously. The first was in the parish of Kensington, west of London, where the story has it that he won a few acres at cards from Sir Walter Cope, who built neighbouring Holland House. An entry in the court roll of Abbotts Kensington in 1609 admits Sir Baptist Hicks to a capital messuage and its surrounding land, an estate bordered roughly by modern day Sheffield Terrace, Hornton Street, Gloucester Walk and Kensington Church Street. The name Campden Hill Square is now the only evidence left of this magnificent house, of which a portrait from the 1660s and later engravings survive, but which was burnt down in 1862.[13] In its day, Camden House was a significant landmark (see Figs 8 & 9).

Sir Baptist seems to have been planning this London mansion for some years, and it may be that his daughters' marriages delayed these plans. Camden House, Kensington was complete by 1612, as recorded in a window holding the coats of arms of Sir Baptist and his sons-in-law.[14] The desire for a country mansion had however been an ambition from Sir Baptist's early years, as is apparent from his courting letter above. His letters to his brother are sprinkled with envious comments about his estate in Ruckholt; for example, in 1600 he wrote

> 'I pray you commend me heartily to my sister [in-law] and I wish that my wife were as well placed in the country as she is, but it availeth not to wish it.'[15]

The house in Chipping Campden seems to have been started just as the London mansion was completed. Sir Baptist was sixty-two by now, and the house was

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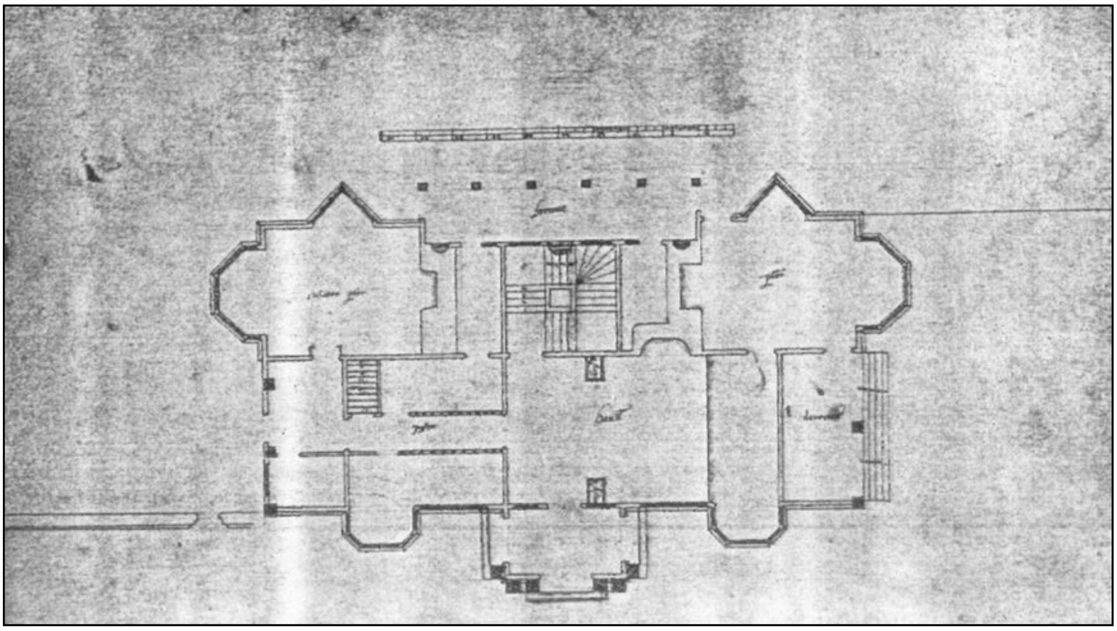
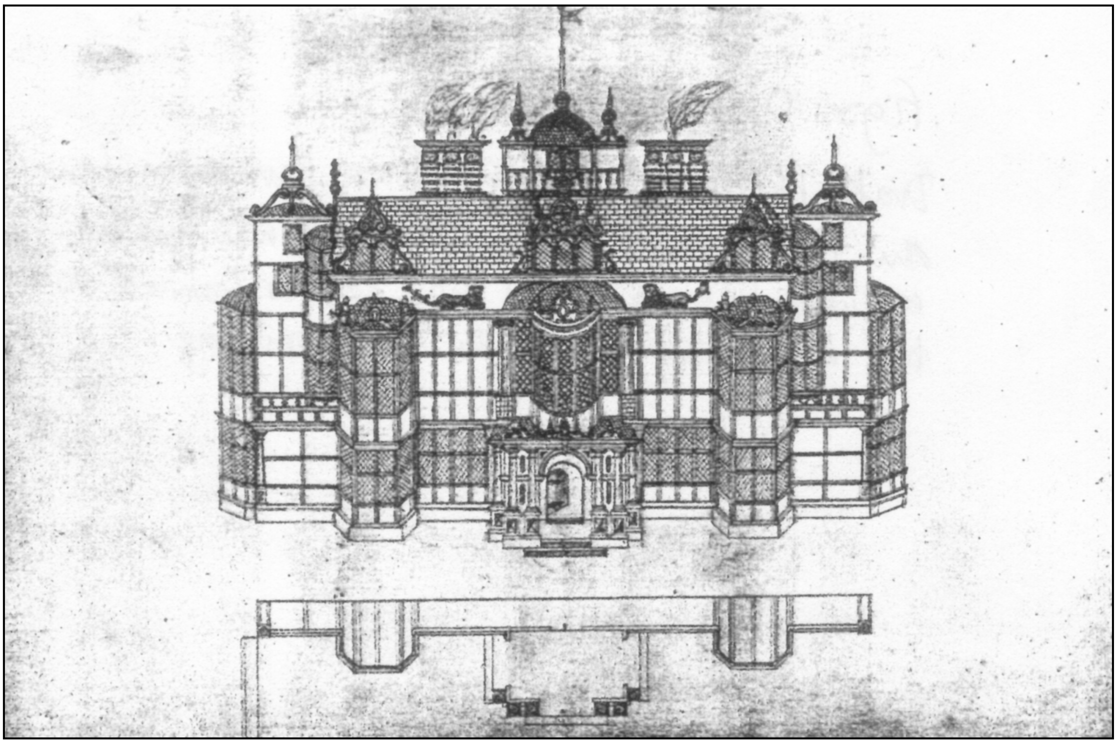
[13] Camden Town, in north London, also gets its name from properties owned by Viscount Campden, although the 'p' was usually lost in the London spellings. In the interests of distinguishing between the two, the convention used in this album is 'Camden' to refer to London, 'Campden' to refer to Chipping Campden.

[14] The house was almost totally destroyed by fire in 1862; a reasonable facsimile was rebuilt, but this was demolished c. 1900.

[15] The historian of Chipping Campden, Percy Rushen, transcribed this as "…I wish my wife were as well *pleased* in the country as my sister" and this has led to an apparently unfounded view locally that Lady Hicks never liked Campden House



T96



T95

***Figures 10 & 11*: Draft plan and elevation attributed to Camden House, Kensington, from *The Book of John Thorpe.* The house was finally executed in stone (see Fig 14) rather than timber framed as here, but is still recognisably the same building.**

built at speed and no small expense - it was finished in 1620, at a reported cost of £29,000. While building costs had risen dramatically in recent decades (Longleat, albeit with free supplies of stone, timber and fuel for brick kilns, had cost a mere £8,000 in the 1570s) the house must have been built to a very high standard for its size.

For both his great houses, there is evidence that he called in one of the leading designers of the day, John Thorpe. It was Sir John Summerson who pointed out that one of the plans in Thorpe's *Book of Architecture* was for Camden House, Kensington, and it now seems that Sir Baptist may have adopted another of Thorpe's designs for his house in Chipping Campden. Thorpe's work combined classical, Palladian architecture with late Elizabethan and Jacobean detail and he has been described as 'one of the creators of Jacobean taste.'[16]

Thorpe too was attempting to establish himself at this time. Until 1601, he had been a mason in the Elizabethan Office of Works (which was charged with the construction and maintenance of royal buildings). He then sought patronage in and around the Court as a surveyor of land and buildings. At this time, the profession of 'architect' did not exist as a discrete discipline and those chiefly responsible for the great houses were experienced master craftsmen like Robert Smythson (Longleat, Hardwick Hall) and Robert Lymminge (Blickling), and now John Thorpe, who was to go on to design the forecourt at Audley End.

Thorpe's surviving drawings in his *Book of Architecture* include designs for no fewer than eleven of those knighted by James in 1603 - one can imagine the scramble to acquire or construct houses (or even merely for plans to pass around) that they considered appropriate to their new status. Sir Walter Cope was the second of these patrons, and the plan for his Holland House is one of the few actually signed by Thorpe. The "Book" then includes an elevation and three plans (T 95 - 8: see Figs 10-13). These bear a clear resemblance to Camden House (Kensington) as it appears in the 1663 painting and a 19th century

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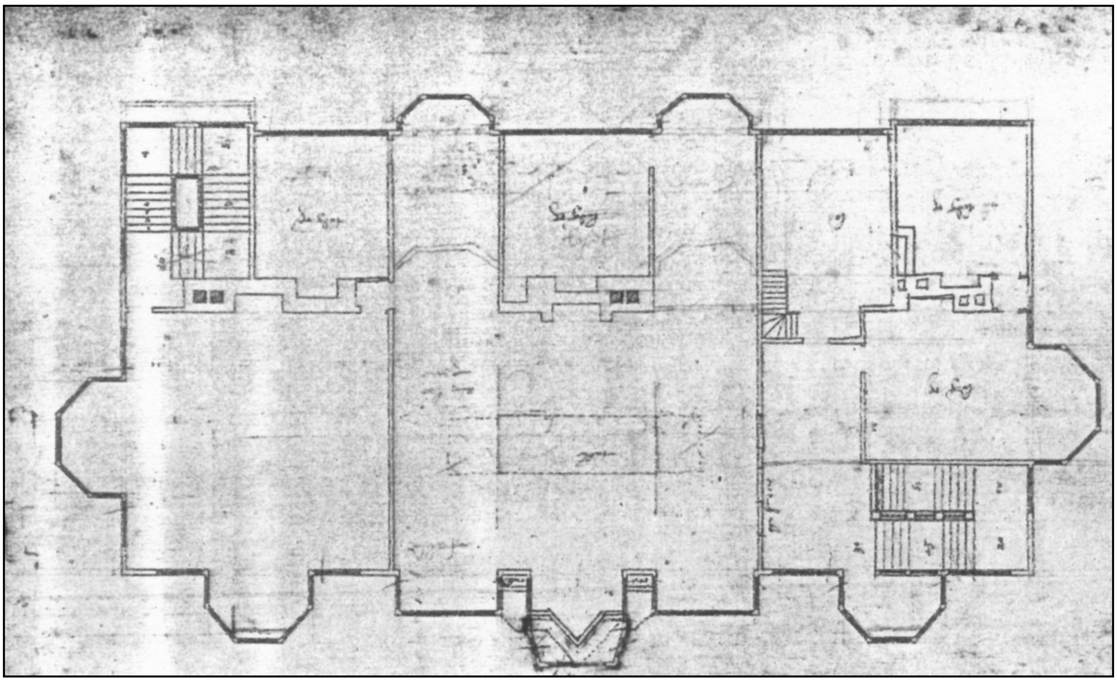
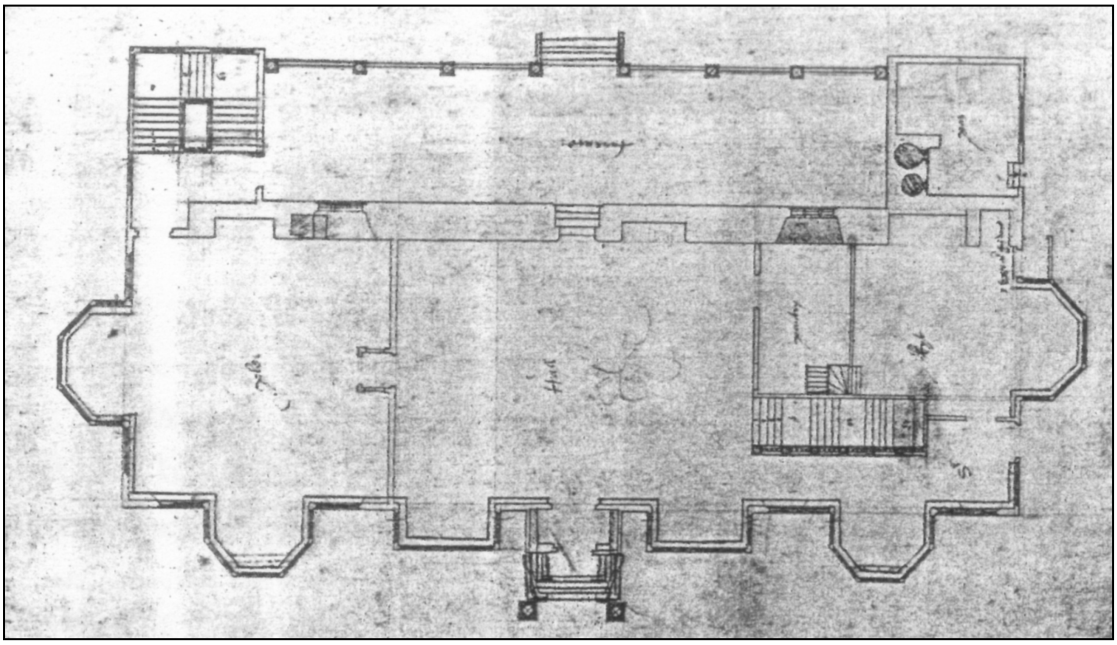
[16] M Girouard, *Robert Smythson & the Elizabethan Country House* (1983)



T98



T97

***Figure 12 & 13*: Two more working plans for Camden House, Kensington. Both bear an inscription in Thorpe's hand "Hix" or "Mr Hix", indicating that they were commissioned before Hicks' knighthood in 1603 - and before he won the eventual site of the house from Sir Walter Cope in a card game in 1609.**

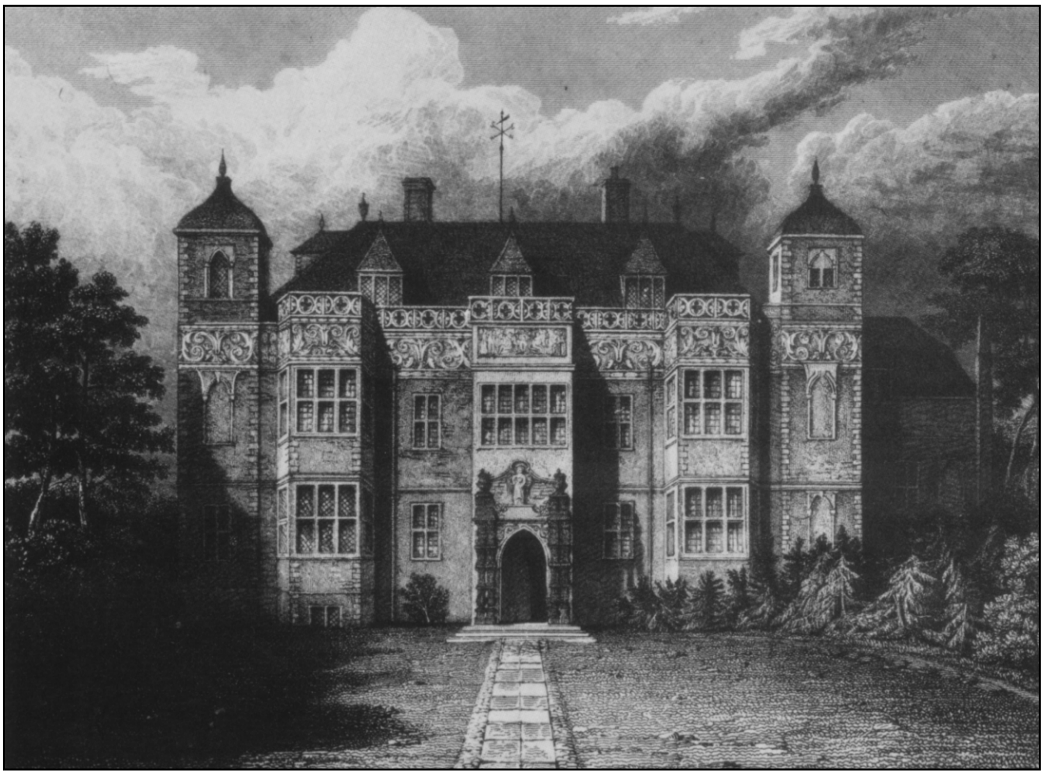


***Figure 14*: Camden House in an early 19th century engraving, before it burnt down in 1838.**

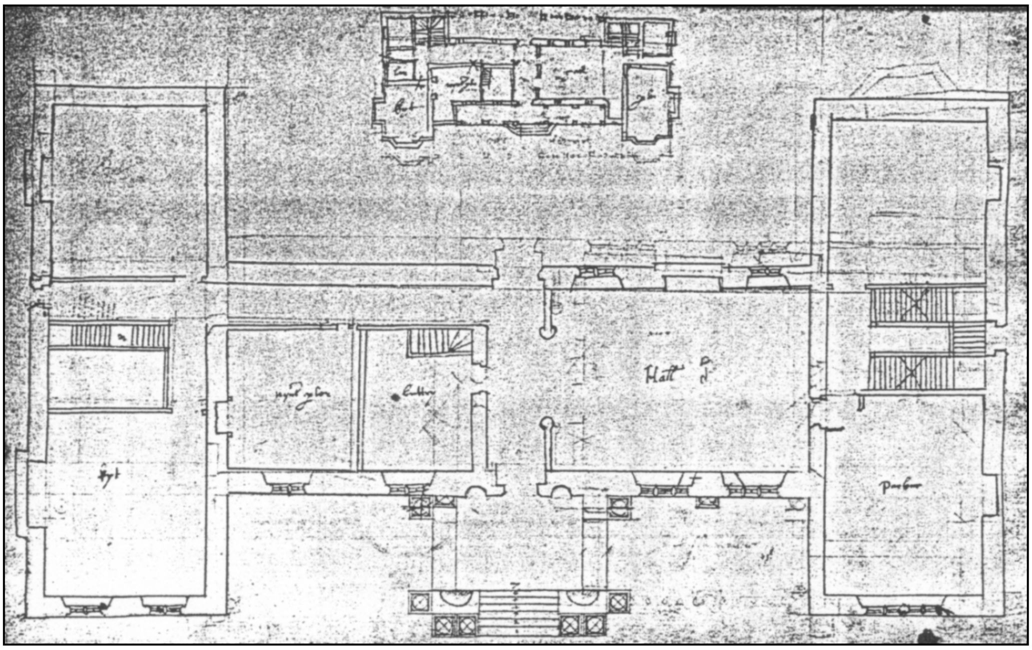
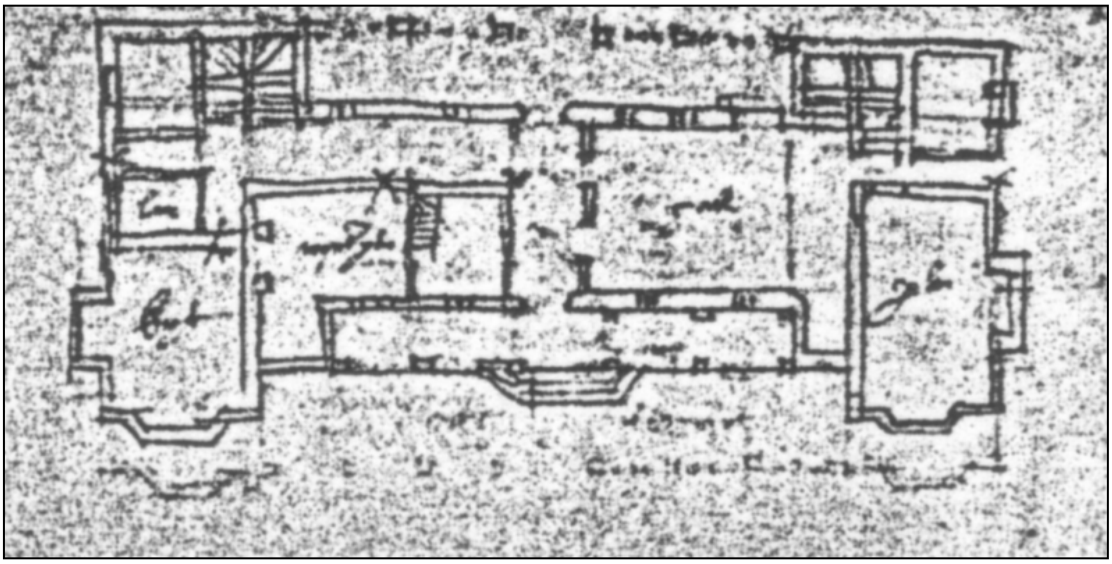


***Figure 15:* Two more plans from The Book of John Thorpe. Though stylistically later than those shown in Figs 10 -13, John Summerson attributed them to Camden House in Kensington. However, from the fragment that remains, it seems more likely that they were for the Chipping Campden mansion, especially on the evidence of the small sketch at the top.**

engraving (Fig 14), even though it was eventually built in stone and not timber framed as in Thorpe's surviving drawings. These drawings may reasonably be considered as 'work in progress' for the eventual building.

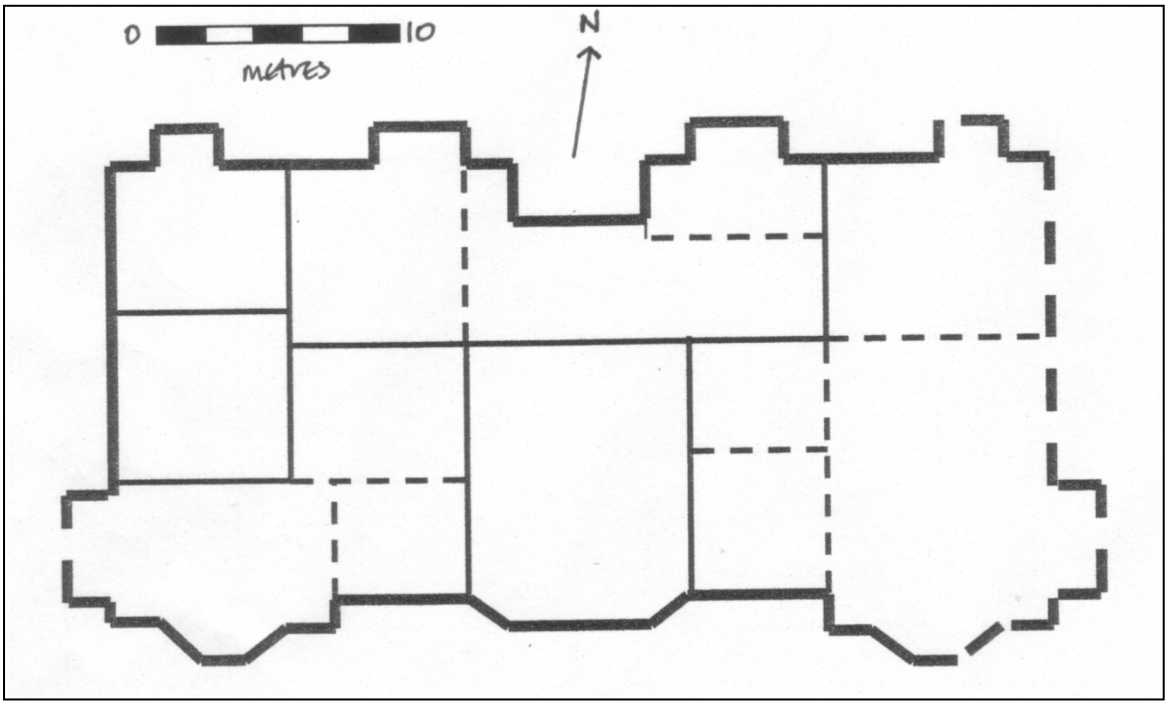
The next plan in the *Book* (T99 - Fig 15) is undated but belongs stylistically to a later period of Thorpe's career. Sir John Summerson also attributes this to Sir Baptist's London house. However, it bears little resemblance to the other two plans for this house. Instead, the 'H' or horseshoe plans suggested are more similar to the surviving frontage of Sir Baptist's other great mansion, Campden House in Chipping Campden, and especially in the case of the smaller sketch at the top of the page. Examination of the remains of the front wall of the house on the Campden site shows a very similar profile to this small plan at the top of T99, including the slanting bay windows, positioned to catch the south westerly sun. If you look carefully at the remaining fragment of the house, traces of the strapwork are still apparent, as are fixing holes for a downpipe.



Enlargement of Thorpe's thumbnail sketch in T99.

The H-plan gave ample space and allowed symmetrical treatment of both main facades. Sir Walter Cope's Holland House in London was one of the earliest houses constructed in this way; it would not be surprising if his neighbour Sir Baptist recognised its virtues when planning his own country house.

A geophysical survey of the Old Campden House site by students from Southampton University in 2000 also yielded evidence of foundations that appear very similar to T99.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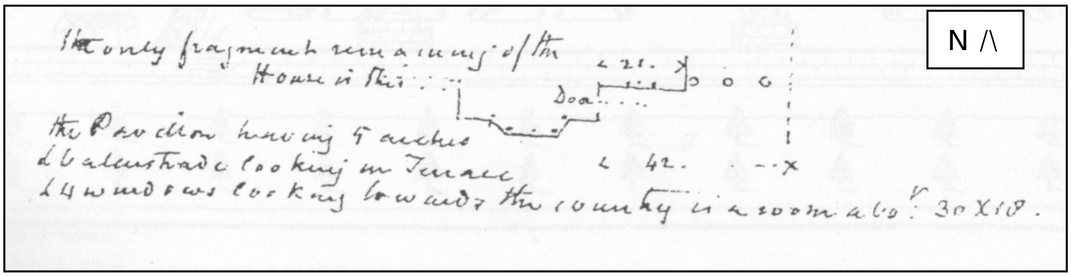
10
METRES
N

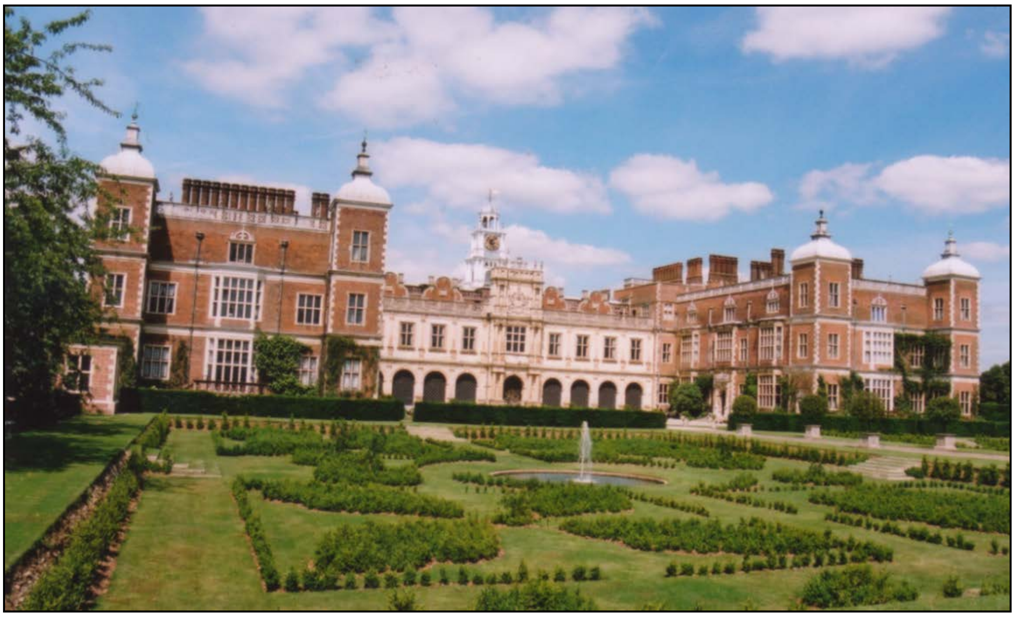
The layout of Old Campden House suggested by the Southampton University geophysical survey. They found foundations for a structure of some 1,000 square metres, the front wall measuring 42m and the side walls 24m.

Also close to T99 is a small thumbnail sketch done by C R Cockerell when he visited the site in 1825, of 'the only remaining fragments of the house'. This apparently records the bases of three pillars, presumably still extant in 1825, which are also apparent on the Thorpe thumbnail.


the only fragment remaining of the House is this
21.
Door
the Pavilion having 5 arches & balustrade looking on Terrace & 4 windows looking towards the country is a room abt 30 X 18.
42.
N /\

C R Cockerell's sketch of 'the only fragments remaining of the House' in 1825.

These pillars appear to relate to an open loggia similar to the one found on the south elevation at Hatfield House, on the estate given to Robert Cecil by James I in exchange for Theobalds, upon which the monarch had cast covetous eyes. Robert, Earl of Salisbury, built the present Hatfield House in1608 and Sir Baptist would certainly have known it. Hatfield is of course much larger than Campden House would have been, but with its lantern, Flemish gables, portico and open loggia the central portion of its south elevation arguably represents the best reference as we try to imagine Sir Baptist's mansion. From 'an accurate plan and elevation still extant' in the 1780s, Ralph Bigland was reminded by the portico of that at 'the Oxford schools' (for which presumably read the quadrangle of the Bodleian Library where James I is presented in majesty).



The south elevation of Hatfield House showing the open loggia, portico (with an attempt at Classical orders), Flemish gables and lantern, all of which may have been references for Campden House.

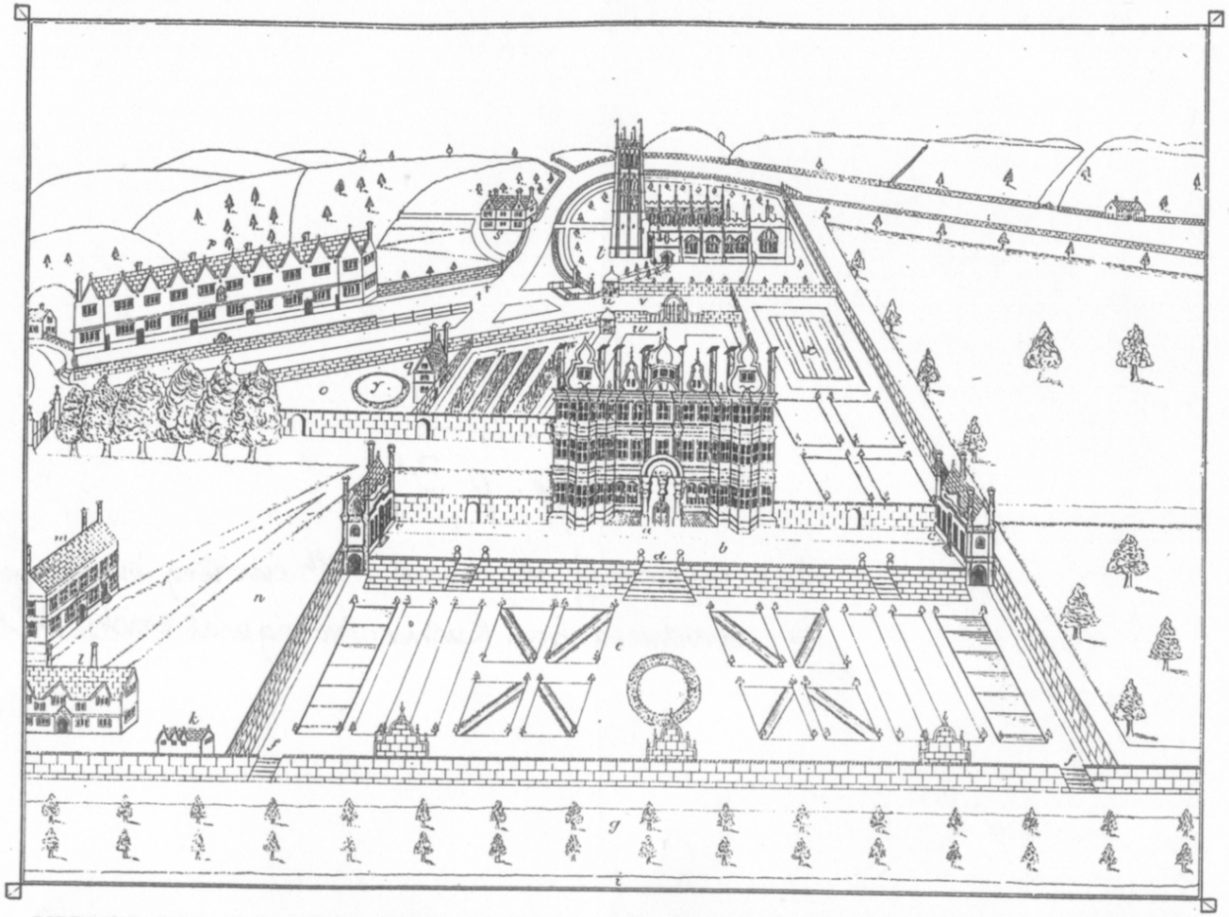
And so if Sir John Summerson's attribution of Plan T99's patron is correct, a good case can be made that the little thumbnail sketch-plan represents the only surviving contemporary documentary evidence of the mansion at Chipping Campden and an exciting link to one of the foremost Jacobean surveyor-designers.

Campden House

Although no contemporary depictions or building accounts remain for Campden House, there are four versions of a bird's eye view. As these all show the Court House in recognisable detail (which evolved from the stable block after the 1645 fire), all four must date from a later depiction perhaps all based on a lost original of the house (see Fig 16 opposite). They are also largely consistent with the remnants and topography still to be found today, despite a few inconsistencies such as the large, south facing doorways shown in both banqueting houses and which exist in neither. These bird's eye views do give a good idea of the grandeur of the house and gardens, and of the impact the house must have had on the setting of the church. They also provide evidence for the sense of enclosure of the various areas of the gardens, courts and service areas, hinted at by the walls which remain today and which the Landmark restoration has tried to re-establish around the Almonry. There was an extensive area of service buildings to the west – brewhouse, coach house and so on – some sense of which remains today in the grouping of buildings around the Court House on Calf Lane.

Ralph Bigland visited the Campden site in the 1780s and described in his history of Gloucestershire this "most sumptuous house with accompaniments of corresponding magnificence" from a plan he saw:

> From an Accurate Plan and Elevation still extant, it appears to have been an Edifice in the boldest Style of that Day. It consisted of four fronts, the principal towards the Garden, upon the grand Terras: at each Angle was a lateral Projection of some Feet , with spacious Bow Windows; in the Centre a portico with a series of Columns of the 5 Orders (as in the Schools at Oxford) and an open Corridore. The Parapet was finished with pediments of a capricious taste; and the Chimneys were twisted Pillars with Corinthian Capitals. A very capricious Dome issued from the Roof, which was regularly illuminated for the Direction of Travellers during the Night. This immense Building was enriched with Frizes and Entablatures most profusely sculptured; it is reported to have been erected at the Expense of £29,000 and to have occupied, with its Offices, a Site of 8 acres. Part of a Wall, discoloured by Fire, and the two Banquetting Houses which terminate the Terras, are the Remains most worthy of



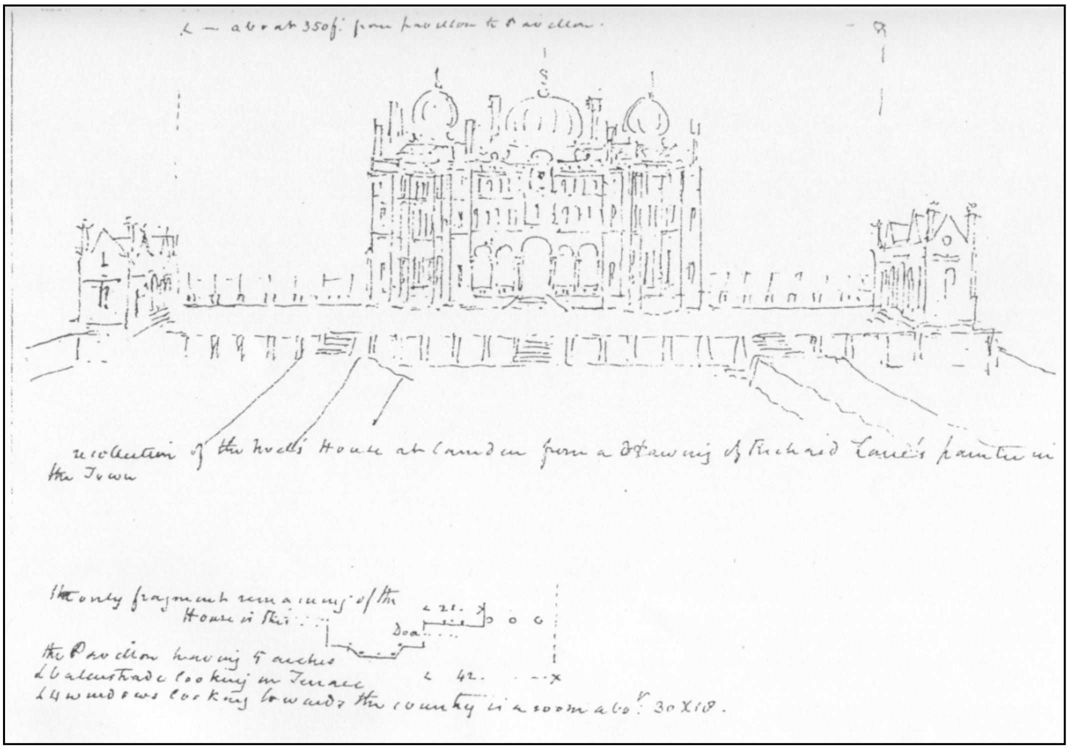
BIRDSEYE VIEW OF CAMPDEN HOUSE, BURNT DOWN IN THE YEAR OF NASEBY, 1645 (from an old drawing).

References—*a* The house. *b* The terrass walk. *c* The banquiting house. *d* The garden staires. *e* The great garden. *f* The orchart staires. *g* The great orchart. *i* The long canal. *k* The coach-house. *l* The brew-house. *m* The stables. *n* The stable court. *o* The henn yard. *p* The hospital. *q* The laundry. *r* The bleach garden. *s* The parsonage house. *t* The church. *u* The porter's lodge. *v* The outward court. *w* The great court. *x* The garden court. *y* The pond.

Figure 16: **This version of the mid-eighteenth century view of Campden House is reproduced from Rushen. An original exists in the British Museum.**

> Notice of this magnificent pile. Beside there is the grand Entrance adjoining the Church-yard composed of two low Pavilions connected by a Skreen with Pediments of a form which defies Description. Without doubt the munificent Founder employed the most eminent Architect that Age afforded, but whom is not known.[17]

When C R Cockerell visited on Tuesday 4th January, 1825 ('Went with Pepys to Campden, visited Church & monuments of Noel family – remains of the house which are remarkable also the almshouses – town itself very picturesque', he recorded in his diary), he made two drawings of the mansion based on 'recollection of the Noell's House at Campden from a drawing of Richard Lane's painter in the Town.'[18] One drawing is more worked up, more accurate in its


L — about 350f: from pavilion to Pavilion.
recollection of the Noell's House at Campden from a drawing of Richard Lane's painter in the Town
the only fragment remaining of the House is this
L 21. X
Door
the Pavilion having 5 arches & balustrade looking on Terrace & 4 windows looking towards the country is a room abt 30 X 18.
L 42. X

The page in C R Cockerell's diary showing his sketch of the mansion and its setting, based on a lost painting in 1825 and of interest in showing pilasters along the terrace and raised walkways leading through the parterre.

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[17] Ralph Bigland, *Gloucestershire Recollections* (1784) cited in *Country Life* article on Campden House site, 1916.

[18] RIBA C R Cockerell Diaries CC9/6

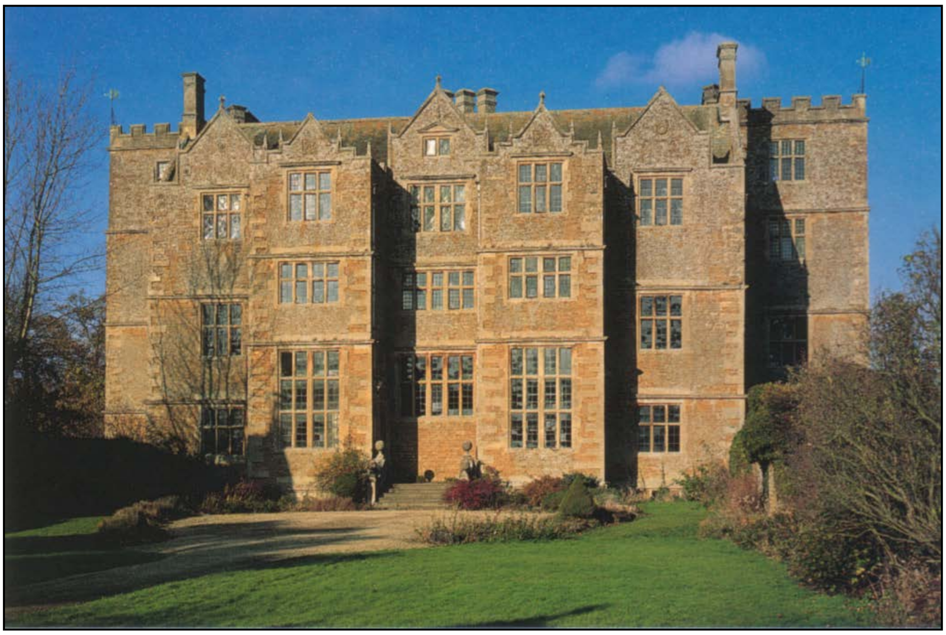
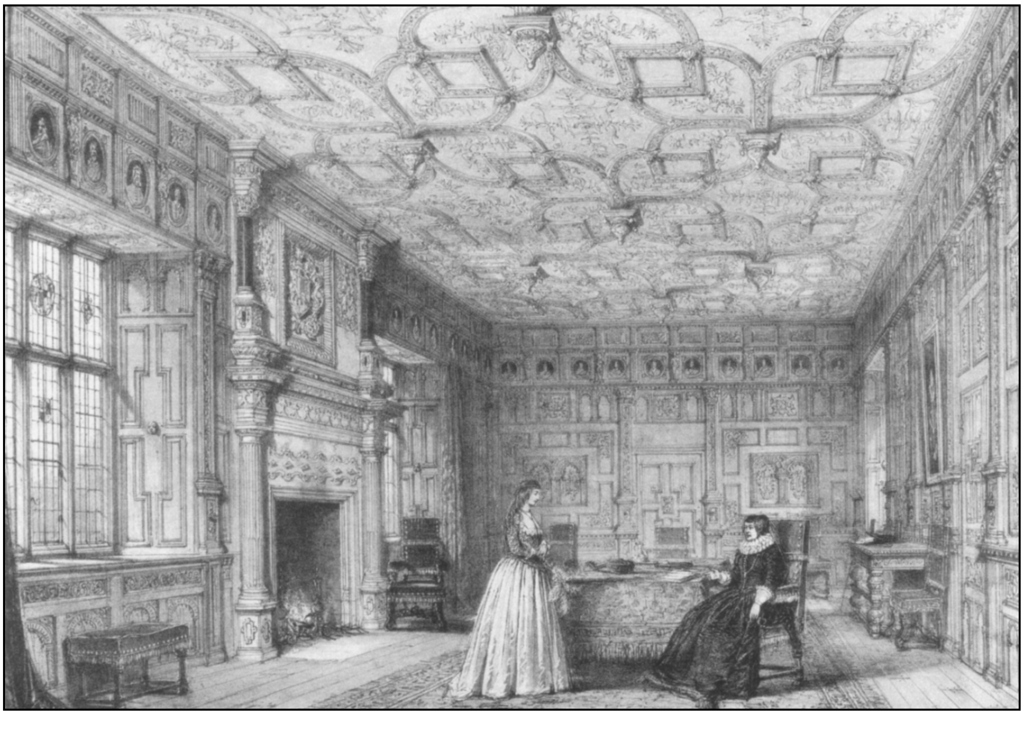


Figure 17**: Chastleton House, south front. Built at almost exactly the same time as Campden House, but with more loyalty to local vernacular style.**

Figure 18: **The Great Chamber at Chastleton as illustrated by Joseph Nash in 1841. Chastleton House has had a very different history from that of Campden House. In the ownership of the same family until its acquisition by the National Trust in 1991, the decorative finishes and many of its contents survive unaltered, due to preference as well as periodic lack of funds. The Great Chamber appears today much as Nash found and as it would have been in the early 17th century.**



depiction of the banqueting houses but also more derivative from the earlier bird's eye views. The other, on the same page as the thumbnail of the 'fragments remaining', is a rougher sketch. It is accurate at least in the plan of the garden elevation and of interest in showing pilasters along the retaining wall to the terrace and elevated walkways leading off to the south. If Cockerell made this sketch on site, it may well be that evidence for both pilasters and walkways was still apparent in his day.

That the mansion's setting was spectacular can still be appreciated today, not least from the Stow-Broadway road, from where Campden church can still be seen standing like a beacon. So too must Sir Baptist's house have caught the eye, the sunlight glittering from the many windows during the day, the candlelight by night to guide late travellers along the ridgeway and down to the town.

The mansion must also have been unique for the area. The surviving buildings on the site all represent a radical departure from the simplicity and solid blocking of the vernacular Cotswold style apparent elsewhere in Campden and the villages around, or, on a larger scale, at nearby Chastleton House (begun in 1602). One can imagine how intrigued the local stone masons must have been by these new fangled decorative schemes of strapwork, cresting and shaped gables and elaborately carved chimneystacks, imported from the fashionable metropolis.

For an idea of Campden House's internal grandeur, nearby Chastleton House is worth a visit. It is unusual in the extent to which its 17th century decorations, and even contents, have survived *in situ.* While remaining closer to the traditional Cotswold vernacular style (Fig 17) and probably not furnished to the same standards of metropolitan high fashion, Chastleton provides a good example of how elaborate wealthy Jacobean interiors were, with their moulded ceilings, rich hangings and ornate carvings (Fig 18).[19] Sir Baptist's mansion would undoubtedly have had all this and more.

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[19] Chastleton House lies just east of Moreton-in-Marsh. Owned by the National Trust, pre-booking of tickets is required at time of writing.

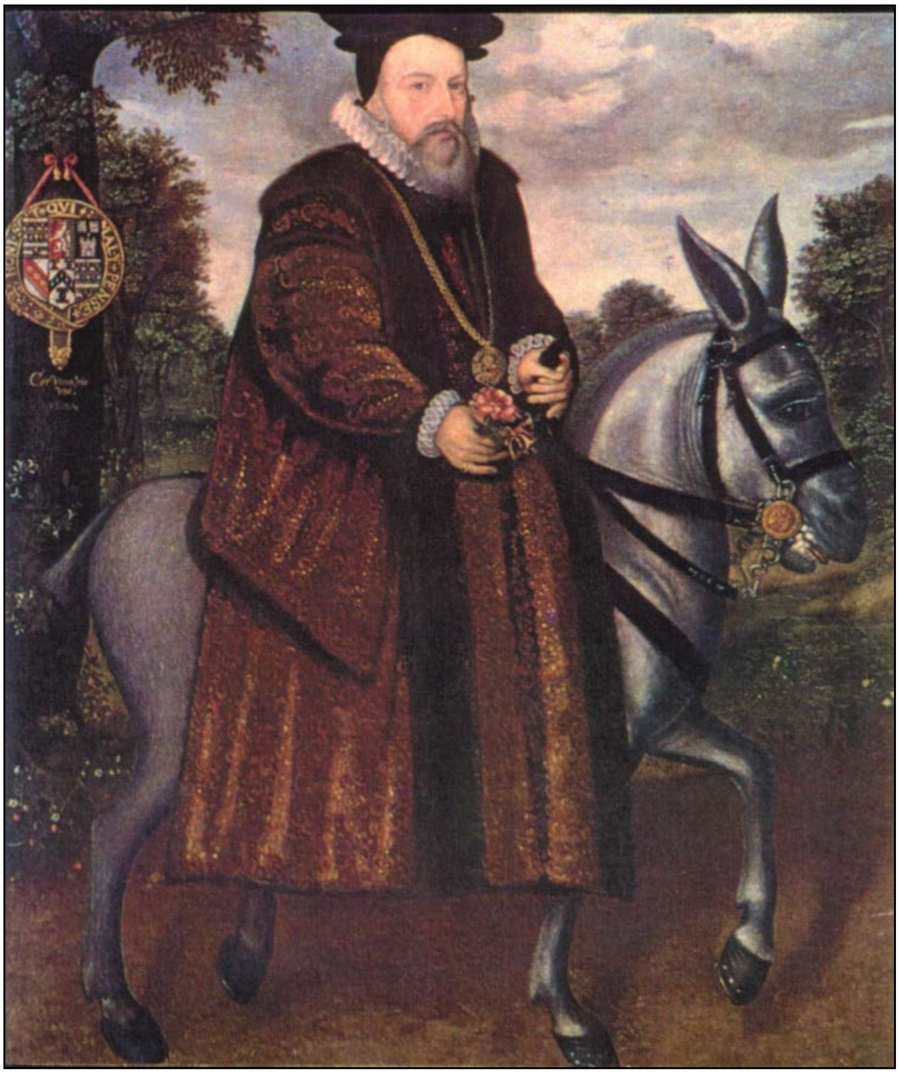

Figure 19: **William Cecil, Lord Burghley, holding a rose and a sprig of honeysuckle and perhaps on a tour of his gardens at Theobalds.**
Bodleian Library, Oxford.

The Gardens

There is no doubt that an archaeological site of the greatest importance lies just beneath the turf on the site. The bones of the landscaped terraces and parterre are still apparent within the boundary walls and the special circumstances of the firing of the mansion so soon after its construction means that an early seventeenth century garden lies intact and fossilized. "[A]s such they constitute an exceptional physical survival of the layout of a high-quality English Renaissance garden such as is generally known only from documentary and art-historical sources."[20] In 1984 the Royal Commission for Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) undertook a measured survey of the site, with the result that it now enjoys statutory protection as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Considerable landscaping would have been required to introduce the formal gardens, with drops of some 3 metres between terraces, and yet the plan also makes the most of the natural setting, with Scuttlebrook providing the southern boundary. For those interested in a more detailed account of the gardens, a copy of Paul Everson's detailed account of the 1989 survey may be found in Volume I of this album.

The bird's eye view gives us a good idea of what the gardens might have looked like in Sir Baptist's day, when it would have represented the height of gardening fashion. Gardening was another passion of the day, with garden plans and plants pored over and discussed just as much as plans for the houses. Without a garden, wrote Francis Bacon, "buildings and palaces are but gross handiworks". Exploration of the New World meant that new species were constantly arriving as well as from the Far East, many of which became status symbols in the great gardens of the day. The crown imperial lily, tulips, martagon or Turk's Cap lilies, fritillaries, candytuft, yellow crocuses, laburnum, sunflowers, evening primrose, nasturtium, lilacs, ranunculas, and Michaelmas daisies were all introduced during the period and might have been found in Campden alongside native species.

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[20] P. Everson *The Gardens of Campden House..Glos,* Garden History , 1989.

Sir Baptist would have had access to many of the finest gardens. William Cecil was a very keen gardener and plant collector and made the gardens at both Burghley and Theobalds renowned. Tradition has it that he enjoyed unwinding by riding a donkey through his gardens (Fig 19). While his son Robert was less passionate in this field, the gardens at his new house at Hatfield were being created in the 1610's and those at Campden may well have drawn inspiration from them. A couple of letters from Michael Hicks to Lord Salisbury illustrate that plants too played their part in the endless round of gifts and perquisites, as well as the detailed knowledge of their cultivation which a gentleman might display. The first letter is written in August 1603, at the end of the apricot season:

> 'Because it pleased you to thank me for the apricots which I sent you, which were the first, now I send you the last, and but a few, having lost many of my small number with pecking of birds and animals. I have a heart to send you things of value, but you have often said it is not the measure of you honourable favour towards me, nor of my love and affection towards you.'

The second, written in 1609, is about cuttings that may well have been destined for Hatfield:

> 'Having been lately at Sir Edward Sulyard's and finding that his grapes being ripe (especially the white) were in my opinion as good as I ever tasted of for the relish and sweetness, I prayed him to send some to your Lordship to taste of, to the end that if you liked them you might have some grafts of the same vine. But he told me that if your Lordship do like of them, he will give you half a dozen roots to set, which he saith are far better to take, and will bear in 2 years where the other will not bear in 3 or 4. Besides, he will give your Lordship two Nectarin plum trees of several kinds when the time of the year is to plant; and anything else he hath in his garden or orchard.'

Perhaps vines, apricots and nectarines also grew at Campden; certainly the gardens would have added another important element to Sir Baptist's re-casting of himself as country gentleman, who could now present *his* friends with choice produce.

The Banqueting Houses

The banqueting houses at Campden inspire affection and delight in all who look on them, both for their lively architecture and their apparently diminutive scale within the landscape. Architecturally, they "represent an ambitious move towards gracious living, Classical and symmetrical in spirit, but achieved with an improvisatory freedom that is still Gothic".[21] As for their scale, the lie of the land makes this scale deceptive, since each banqueting house has rooms below the "banqueting hall" which opens in each case onto the terrace. The falling away of ground levels away from the garden terraces provides enhanced views from the windows which do not face inwards over the terrace. The East Banqueting House looks out over Coneygree[22], common land now owned by the National Trust, whose name suggests that it was (and no doubt still is) frequented by rabbits - perhaps they featured in the after dinner entertainment as well as the dishes themselves.

So that the main chamber could be entered directly from the gardens, both banqueting halls are, in a sense, upside down. The two floors below the main chamber of the East Banqueting Hall are extensive enough to have served as lodgings for a member of the household - perhaps a relative or senior member of the household staff, a Sir Toby Belch or a Malvolio.

The word 'banquet' would have held a different meaning for Sir Baptist than for us today. Rather than a sumptuous, many-coursed meal, a banquet at this period came at the end of a main meal, when the family and their guests would withdraw from the rest of the household for conversation, elegant diversion and, especially, the luxury of privacy in a house without corridors. Typically, appreciation of one's own or one's host's property figured largely. At Campden, a stroll through formal gardens of the latest fashion led to the elegant separate banqueting halls, where views of the gardens' symmetry, the main house, church, almshouses, town and surrounding countryside could all be appreciated, either from within or from the viewing balconies.

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[21] T Mowl, *Elizabethan & Jacobean Style* (1993)

[22] "Conygrees" or "conieberries" were first constructed in the 13th century. They were earthen burrows provided to protect 'delicate' rabbits after their first introduction to England - a practice which has a certain irony today!

While they enjoyed the views, guests would drink fine and rare wines and nibble the small cakes, nuts, dried fruits and the crystallised sweetmeats and flowers that any lady of the house prided herself on providing from her store cupboard. The Receipt Book of Lady Elinor Fettiplace (1604) records many such recipes, usually stiff pastes of sugar, fruit puree and spices which would then be cut into squares. Not all would have been as luxurious as Lady Fettiplace's recipe for "Spanish Marmlad"[23], but who knows but that this was enjoyed at Campden too - her manor was at Appleton, a few miles south of Oxford, and a Fettiplace was to marry into the Jones family at nearby Chaslteton:

TO MAKE SPANISH MARMELAD Take five sponfulls or rose water and seaven sponfuls of sugar finely beaten, make yt boyle you must have redy by you two handfulls of almondes blanched and finely ground, with 15 or 16 of ye dates ye stones and wight staken out, and yor dates cut smale and beaten in a morter, then mixe yor dates and almondes well together, then put yt in your Sirrope stirringe ytwell togeher, then take on sponfull of pouder of sinamond, halfe a sponfull of ye powder of pearles, three sheetes of Golde, stirr all theise well, but you must take it first from ye fire or else yt will bee to stiffe that you can-not mingell yt, before yt bee through cold put yt upp into a marmalad box.[24]

Below the hall in the West Banqueting House is a single large, stone vaulted chamber with a very large fireplace. Its function has been the source of some speculation. At first it was thought it might be a kitchen. However, such a large kitchen in a banqueting house is puzzling, given the sort of food typically consumed at the banquet course (see below). Earlier houses often had separate kitchens away from the main house because of the fire risk, but the Thorpe plans (see Fig 15) show "kyt"(chens) within the main house, as was increasingly so. An alternative view is that it may have been a second banqueting chamber. Certainly the fine vaulted ceiling of ashlar is of higher quality than would be expected of a kitchen, and there is some evidence that this room was panelled to eaves height like the one above. Perhaps this represented a cosier "winter" banqueting chamber as a contrast to the open loggia above. The West Banqueting House was converted to domestic use soon after the fire in 1645, when the second fireplace and chimney were inserted on the first floor, and the tower became a stair tower rather than, perhaps, a close- stool. Later, a lean-to was added to its south wall (which still bears the scar) plus an extra hearth. It seems the East Banqueting House was raided for an extra chimney during these alterations, since it was missing one when we acquired it in 1987.

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[23] "marmelade" at this period refers to a cuttable paste rather than the "orange jam" we know it as today.

[24] Hilary Spurling, *Elinor Fettiplace's Receipt Book* (1987) p 51

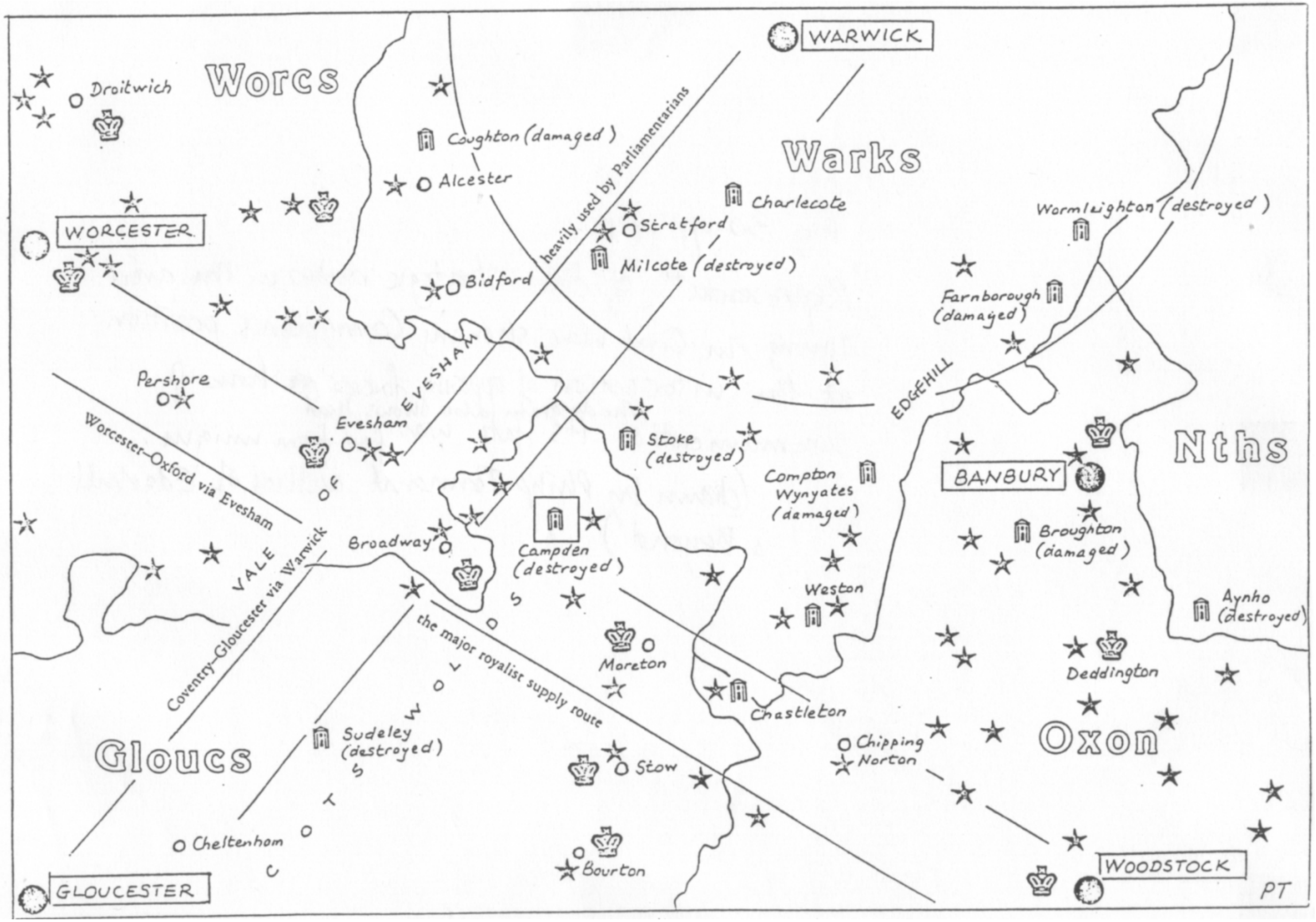
Droitwich
Worcs
Coughton (damaged)
Alcester
WORCESTER
Bidford
heavily used by Parliamentarians
Stratford
Milcote (destroyed)
Charlecote
Warks
WARWICK
Wormleighton (destroyed)
Farnborough (damaged)
EDGEHILL
Nths
BANBURY
Broughton (damaged)
Aynho (destroyed)
Pershore
Evesham
VALE OF EVESHAM
Worcester–Oxford via Evesham
Coventry–Gloucester via Warwick
Broadway
Stoke (destroyed)
Campden (destroyed)
Compton Wynyates (damaged)
Weston
Moreton
Chastleton
Chipping Norton
Deddington
Oxon
the major royalist supply route
COTSWOLDS
Sudeley (destroyed)
Stow
Bourton
Gloucs
Cheltenham
GLOUCESTER
WOODSTOCK
PT

Figure 20: **Representation of the strategic routes in the area during the Civil War, showing Campden' sposition at the intersection of opposing forces' lines of communication. The fate of Old Campden House was clearly far from unique.**

(drawn by Philip Tennant, author of Edgehill and Beyond)

4. The Civil War and the Destruction of Campden House

The jagged remnants of Sir Baptist's house today, scorched pink by fire, bear witness to its violent end, only 16 years after his death. Newsletters proliferated on both sides during the Civil War as an important means of keeping the various parts of the country in touch. Correspondence printed in them for 1664/5 illustrates vividly both the tensions in the later stages of the first Civil War, and the context and circumstances of the demise of Campden House.

Chipping Campden occupied an important strategic position, lying at the intersection of two main communication routes, between the Parliamentarian centres of Coventry and Gloucester, via Warwick castle, and between Worcester and Oxford via Evesham for the Royalists (see Fig 30). Even though Campden was a small, unfortified town, garrisons like Campden House could provide a satisfactory return on the manpower invested in them, both in cowing the local populace and also preventatively, in neutralising the potential danger of the garrison being occupied by a hostile force.

Not surprisingly the Noels were Royalists. 1643 had been an 'annus horribilis' for the family. Dowager Duchess Elizabeth died in July. Her heir and son-in-law, Edward Noel, husband to Juliana, died with the Royalist force at Oxford. His second son Henry also died in July, while a prisoner in Oxford and he is buried in Campden Church with his infant (and only) son, who died that same month too. No doubt embittered by the deaths of his father and brother, Baptist, 3rd Viscount Campden then became a very active Royalist partisan based on the family estates at Rutland, meting out much the same ravages there as Campden was also to suffer at Royalist hands

Campden House had been briefly occupied for the King in October 1643, by Lord Molyneux and a regiment of horse. Warwick Castle was held for Parliament at that time by Major Bridges, who, to protect his lines of communication with Gloucester, attacked Molyneux by night:

> 'The like exploit we also heare Major Bridges, Governour of Warwick, hath lately done upon an encounter with a Regement of Horse under Command of Lord Mollinex at Camden in Gloucestershire and routed them all at the second charge, killed divers, tooke 100 horses, many prisoners (amongst the rest Captaine Seager), two Cornets, and three Collours, three Quarter Masters, and all with the loss of one man, and is lately returned to Warwick.' [25]

Another account records

> 'About 300 of the King's horse came from Oxford into the town of Campden, whereof the Parliament's forces in Warwick Castle having special intelligence, there came a considerable party of them, in the midst of the night, into the said town, suppriz'd most of them in their beds and carried away prisoners to Warwick Castle, together with all of their horses. There were between 30 and 40 of them that for some space stood stoutly to oppose our forces, but they were soon quelled and some of them slain in the fight.'[26]

To their later regret, the Parliamentarians do not seem to have left any sizeable force in the house. The Royalists were under increasing pressure, and without firm leadership. In these circumstances, a more overtly anti-Royalist movement emerged in the North Cotswolds. In November 1643, 3,000 local men from the Evesham area had met on Bredon Hill to declare for parliament (Evesham was a parliamentary headquarters). This enraged a certain Colonel Henry Bard, who promptly sent a proclamation to the constables and parishioners of Twyning, just north of Tewkesbury:

> 'unless you bring unto me… the monthly contribution for six months, you are to expect an unsanctified troop of horse among you from whom, if you hide yourselves, they shall fire your house without mercy, hang up your bodies wherever the find them and scare your ghosts.'

Colonel Bard was, in the words of Percy Rushen, 'first and foremost an unscrupulous soldier and perhaps a freebooter and plunderer, who delighted in wasting and burning the property not only of his enemies, but even of those he should have protected.' Later in the war, an outraged moderate rails at the King and advises him to

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[25] Perfect Diurnal, 16th Oct 1643

[26] Vicar's *God's Ark Overtopping the Waves* Oct 1643. Some of the men who fell are buried in Campden churchyard.

> call to mind , if he have time, the cruelties done to his poor subjects the weeks past, there [at Leicester] and in the counties about. Consider how ill gotten goods prosper. Let someone tell him that his commanders, when they entered Leicester and in particular the late governour of Campden House, gave command to ravish all, and that he brag'd he had done it the same day severall times.[27]

It may have been the gathering of hostile forces on Bredon Hill that prompted this same Colonel Bard to take up residence in Campden House and by December 1644, a Royalist garrison was once more in place. Letters to Prince Rupert, commanding the King's troops in the area, record their arrival and dismay at the lack of provisions. Lamenting over an empty larder on Christmas Day 1644, one writer claims he "rather fears famine than an enemy". In January, as the garrison's leader, Bard wrote a letter to his major general, Prince Maurice, which was intercepted and published in the parliamentarian newsbook, *Perfect Occurences* :

> 'May it please your Highness Excellency, I thought it good to signify to you that I am here at Campden House with my forces, which I conceive will be very advantageous towards the strengthening of this Association for your Highnesse. We are taking great pains with spades, shovels and mattocks, "planting the Gospel", and I am no longer happy than I may wait upon your Highness.'

The Committee of both Kingdoms which steered the Parliamentarians, were quick to realise the threat posed by Bard. On 14th January they wrote to Colonel Massey at Gloucester:

> 'We are informed by some letters intercepted that the King's forces are about to fortify Campden (in co. Gloucester). If they should perfect that work it will be of very ill consequence in many respects and especially (as it is designed) to cut off all intercourse between you and Warwick. We therefore think it necessary that the enemy be removed from thence by all means and so recommend it to you to be done with all possible speed.'[28]

The letter then details the men Massey may command, totalling 1000 foot and 1300 horse - a sizeable force. However, Massey was unable to amass such a number and writes to excuse his inaction on 22nd January on the grounds that he could not defend Campden House even if he won it:

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[27] *Moderate Intelligencer*, 14th June 1645

[28] State Papers Interr. 19E, p88 as cited by Rushen, p52

> ‘Notwithstanding our best diligence with our whole strength we cannot sufficiently guard this county, no one quarter being free of their power….If upon less preparation and noise the enemy should be beaten out of Campden House, what is to be done with it as I have no men to garrison it. I shall therefore suspend that order (to take Campden House) until I receive further instructions from you.’[29]

The Parliamentarians must have believed Campden to be heavily garrisoned to warrant such a large force to attack it. In the event, Colonel Bard enjoyed several months undisputed possession during which he terrorised the neighbourhood:

> ‘I fear the way is something dangerous from Warwick to Gloucester. Some of Campden’s garrison went lately to Winchcombe where they plundered them so there that they had not a Sunday shift of clothes left them. All the cattle drove away.’[30]

However, by early May the garrison received orders to join the King in his victorious march out of Oxford to relieve the siege at Chester. In Rushen’s words ‘True to his character, Bard before leaving indulged in an act of wantonness such as was but rarely seen even in war by burning the noble mansion that he had late inhabited.’ The mansion’s destruction is poignantly recorded in an entry in *The Weekly Account* for 12th May 1645:

> ‘On Saturday last his Majesty in the evening went down by Broadway to Evesham and Prince Rupert marched in rear guard over Broadway Hill by the light of Campden House, which they say was then on fire.’

Local tradition has it that the fire started by accident as a result of one final carouse. However, Sir Henry Slingsby, one of the garrison, records a different version in his memoirs for Saturday 10th May:

> ‘…before we started the Prince [Rupert] had given command to Colonel Bard, Governor of Campden, to march along with his regiment and when he had left it, being so near Evesham, ye Prince likewise commanded it to

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[29] State Papers Interr. 17E, pp 193-5, in Rushen , p 52

[30] *Perfect Passages* (a Parliamentarian newsletter), 5th April 1645

> be burnt, which I set on a light fire before we marched off, a house, as my lord Campden says, that hath cost £30,000 in building and furniture.'

It conjures an eerie picture: the line of tense Royalist soldiers marching with their Prince along the Broadway-Stow road on the escarpment, no doubt speculating and wondering at the huge blaze visible in the Vale below, destroying one of the most renowned houses of its generation. Even the usually ardent Royalist Lord Clarendon was moved to caustic comment when he wrote his *History of the Rebellion* a half century later:

> 'His Majesty reached Evesham and on his way drew out the garrison from Campden House, which had brought no other benefit to the public than the enriching of the licentious Governor thereof, who exercised an unbounded tyranny over the whole country, and took his leave of it by wantonly burning the noble pile which he had too long inhabited.'[31]

Such an action, even if indeed ordered by the Royalist commander Prince Rupert himself, must have tested the Noels' loyalties to the limit. Baptist Noel, 3rd Viscount Campden and Sir Baptist's great grandson) had inherited estates in Leicestershire, Rutland, Gloucestershire and Kent on his father's death in 1643 but found his wealth in money and rents greatly diminished. He had led a swashbuckling existence during the First Civil War in East Anglia that was not far from Henry Bard's excesses; in December 1645, he received a safe conduct from Belvoir Castle to Brooke in Rutland and on to London. There he pleaded his case before the Parliamentary Committee for Compounding which sought to determine the fines and forfeitures that might be due from him as a supporter of the King's cause. Lord Campden protested his virtual bankruptcy to the Committee, claiming that much of his estate was held in trust for dependent members of his family (a canny move) and that Parliament had already sequestered the revenues from his estates for nearly three years. Cromwell's forces had taken £1300 worth of goods and £180 in farm crops from his house at Exton and his legacy of £2,000 from his grandmother Lady Elizabeth had also been confiscated. His property at North Luffenham had been plundered and burnt to the value of £800 and to add insult to injury, soldiers had stolen £850 'in his absence out of his chamber in

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[31] *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, 1839 ed, Vol V

Belvoir.' The worst loss however was the damage done to his 'Mannor Howse of Campden, Stables, other outhouses and some furniture therein burned to his damage of 5300li' – a somewhat disingenuous plea since this was of course carried out by his own comrades under the Royalist banner. Lord Campden finished by pleading his sympathy for parliamentary ideals, calling witness to how well he had treated his Parliamentary foes. Not surprisingly, the Committee was unimpressed. Recognised Royalists were made to pay for their allegiance to the defeated King and Baptist Noel was required to pay a swingeing £9,000, an indication perhaps of both the extent of the family wealth and the vehemence of their support for the Royal family who had been so instrumental in the amassing of that fortune.

After the Restoration, Sir Baptist's daughter Lady Juliana would petition Parliament for compensation for the privations suffered by the family in the Royalist cause. When the wars ended, the mansion house site and its grounds were given over to grazing and orchards. The banqueting houses were used for humbler accommodation and even to store apples and keep animals. Today's Court House, originally the stable block to the mansion, became known as Juliana's Dower House. Lady Juliana may have retired to Campden to lead a peaceful existence in this pleasant house with its enclosed garden leading down to the Scuttlebrook, where the remains of a separate entrance, Lady Juliana's Gate, still stand. Opinions differ as to the strength of Juliana's links with Campden after 1660. The hearth tax records suggest that the Court House was empty in 1662, but there is a strong local tradition linking Juliana with Campden, certainly in old age (she was married before Old Campden House was constructed). A pamphlet written by Sir Thomas Overby in 1676 refers to 'the honorable Lady the Lady Nowel whose place of dwelling was at Cambden' and although Juliana died at Brooke, on the Noel estates in Rutland, she is buried in a fine tomb next to her parents in St James's at Campden. In 1660, the disappearance of her steward led to a murder trial which became a local *cause celebre* known as The Campden Wonder. A brief summary of this follows, but by far the best account is in Sir George Clark's book of the same name, a copy of which should be found on the bookshelves in each Landmark on the site.

Juliana lived to the ripe old age of 94, dying finally in 1680. She witnessed the full history of the mansion at Campden, from its inception and days of full blown Jacobean elegance, through its destruction, and on to the more modest level of existence on the site that has continued little changed until the present day.

5. The Later History of the Site

The account of the Campden Wonder printed by Sir Thomas Overbury in 1676 suggests that Lady Juliana's steward, William Harrison, was living in the West Banqueting House in 1660 and again after his return in 1662 until his death in **?1680**. According to **Overbury,[Clark, Power of Witchcraft**?] Harrison had been in the family's service for fifty years in 1660, so he may well have moved into the banqueting house soon after the destruction of the main house. We know he was living in the West Banqueting House in 1659 because John Perry, his hapless servant whose testimony precipitated the murder case, tells of an attempted burglary to Harrison's first floor chamber in that year. Harrison's wife lived there with him and also their son Edward, who became steward after his father's death.

Pat Hughes' research into the hearth tax records also provides glimpses of life on the site of the ruined house after the Civil War. In 1662, just before William Harrison's return to Campden, his son Edward is presiding over a household with four hearths, which is consistent with what is know about the West Banqueting House at this time.[32] There were – and now are again – three flues in the building, two serving the basement chamber and one inserted on the ground floor, probably when the building was converted to domestic use. The fourth hearth was probably in the first floor of the Almonry, used to house servant.

The next hearth tax assessment was in 1672, when the West Banqueting house had six hearths.[33] This provides a probable date for the insertion of the ground floor hearth in the Almonry (clearly a crude insertion) and also for an extension to the south side of the West Banqueting House, the shadow of which can still be seen on its wall. This extension also appears on a survey map done in 1799 which hangs in Campden Town Hall.

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[32] PRO 179/116/554

[33] PRO E 179/247/14

The Harrison family may well still have been living in the West Banqueting House in 1694, when miller Rowland Wallington, who lived at the Town Mill down Calf Lane, made his will in a hurry.[34] The nearest available witnesses included a James Harrison and also a Nicholas Fletcher, who belongs rather to the story of the Court House.

The hearth tax records also tell us that between 1662 and 1672 a Mr. Rutter moved into a house near the Harrisons with six hearths, which later evidence suggests was the Court House, therefore converted from the ruined stable block during this decade. Mr Rutter had died by 1681, when his widow Mary contributed to the repair of the church. In 1691, Mr Rutter's lease of the site was renewed by the Noels to Mary.[35] By this time, Thomas Newnsham was the Noels' steward, but he was followed soon after by Nicholas Fletcher who appears in the Campden parish registers in 1690, when he married Elizabeth Batson. Nicholas died in 1720, when his will describes the property he was renting from the Gainsborough estate:

> 'I give and bequeath unto my loveing Wife all that my messuage of tenement with the Appurtenances wherein I now live scituate and being in [E]Berrington aforesaid together with all houses outhouses buildings Dovehouses Orchards gardens Stables Barns Fish ponds Closes and enclosed grounds and all other premises which I hold by lease fore three lives under the right honble the Countess of Gainsborough.'[36]

This reference to 'barns' may well have included the recently built Court Barn, which appears on the Survey of the Manor done in 1722 (see overleaf). This survey shows the extent of the orchard planting by this date on the site and also the re-use of Sir Baptist's water gardens as sally (or osier) beds and, intriguingly, as 'Fletcher's Boat Pool.'

Mrs Fletcher then moved to Covent Garden in London and according to Rushen renewed the lease on behalf of Nicholas's daughters in 1738. By this time a

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[34] PRO E 179/24714

[35] LRO DE 3214/135/15

[36] PRO PROB 11 f.211 Will of Nicholas Fletcher 1720

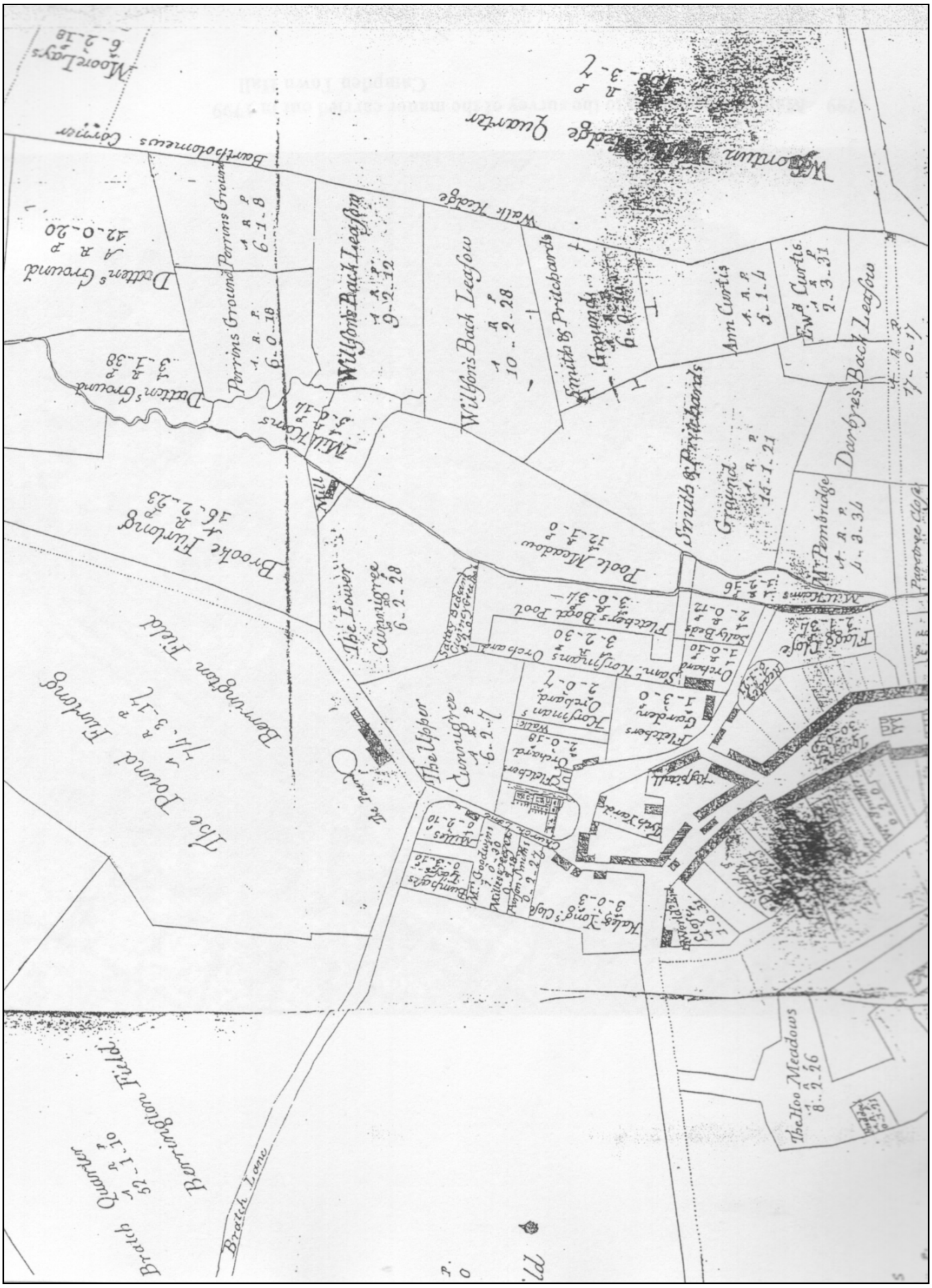
Moore Lays 6.2.18
Bartholomeus Corner
Datten's Ground 12.0.20
Perrins Ground 6.1.8
Perrins Ground 6.0.18
Wilsons Back Leasow 9.2.12
Wilsons Back Leasow 10.2.28
Walk Ridge
Smith & Pritchards Ground
Ann Curtis 5.1.4
Ewd Curtis 2.3.31
Darbyes Back Leasow
Datten's Ground 3.1.38
Mill Hams
Mill
Brooke Furlong 16.2.23
Pool Meadow 12.1.6
Smith & Pritchards Ground 14.1.21
Mr Pembridge 1.3.34
The Lower Cunnigree 6.2.28
Borrington Field
The Pound Furlong 14.3.17
The Upper Cunnigree 6.2.7
Fletchers Bogg Pool
Sam. Horsmans Orchard 3.2.30
Fletchers Garden
Hospitall
Hales Longs Close 3.0.3
Braich Quarter 52.1.30
Borrington Field
Braich Lane
The Hoo Meadows 8.2.26

***Figure 21*: 1722 Survey of the Manor of Campden LRO DE 3214/468/6**

banqueting house is included in the property description, so that it was no longer being used for a steward.

As for the East Banqueting House, Robert Weir was tenant in 1672, with two hearths. By 1698, this building and 'all that Orchard or Planted ground lying between one other Banqueting House a walk called the Terras Walk and a Great Pool called the Boat Pool' was leased to John Horsman. When he died in 1719, the lease was renewed by his sons, Samuel and Richard.37 The 1722 survey clearly shows the division of the site between the Fletchers and Horsmans and the lease of the orchards and East Banqueting House remained in the Horsmans' hands until Richard's death in 1774. After this, the property returned to the manor and was leased to a John Allen, suggesting that the East Banqueting House remained as living accommodation after that date. A further survey of the manor was made in 1799, which hangs today in the Town Hall in Chipping Campden. By then, the property had been amalgamated into one unit, in the hands of first John Stanley and then John Haines. Receipts for repairs during Mr Haines' tenancy record work to Court Barn in 1826 and 1828, but it appears to have been rather unstable and further repairs were necessary in 1837 to re-structure the entire roof, altering the pitch and rebuilding the gable ends. One of he banqueting houses, most likely the West, was also repaired in these years. Annotations to the 1799 survey suggest that William Rimell took over the site's lease in 1841. From the census of the same year, it emerges that Mr Rimell owned several farms in the area and acted as coal merchant. An engraving from 1846 shows the site as well cared-for, with formal gardens and a thatched lean-to to the Almonry, which also appears on the 1799 survey map.

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[37] LRO DE 3214/135/9

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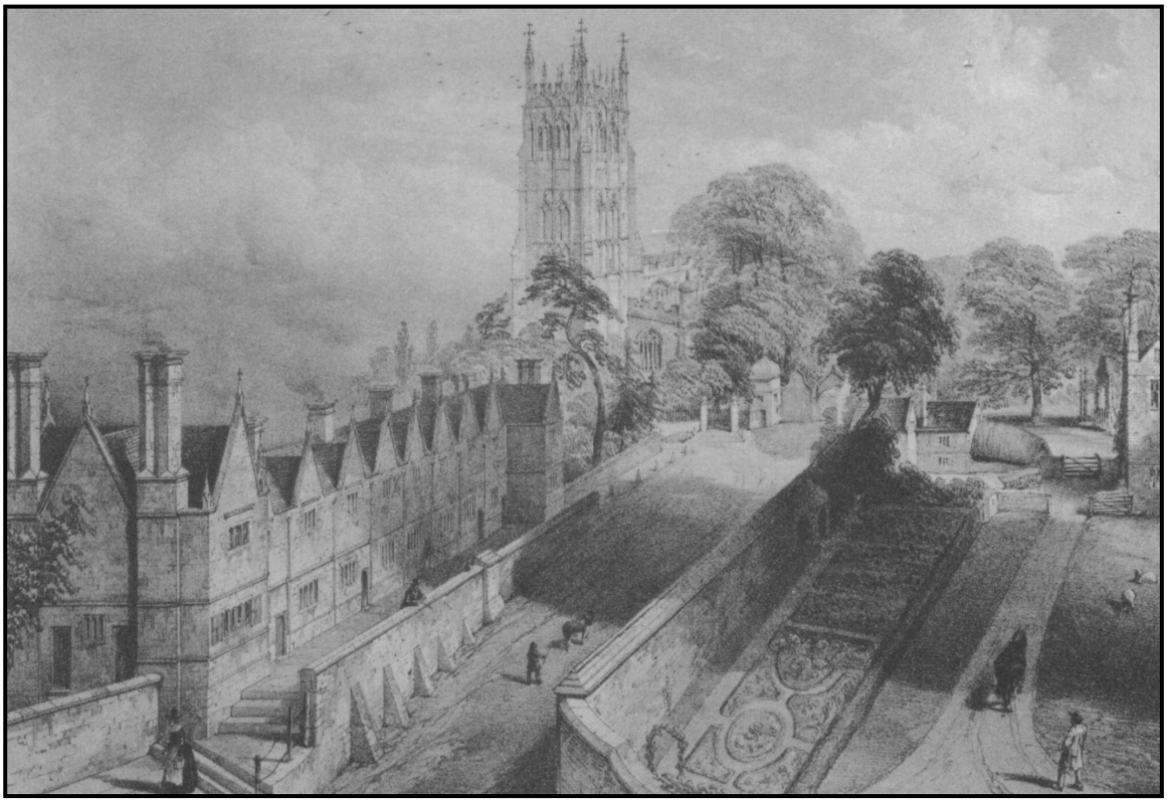


Church Street in 1846

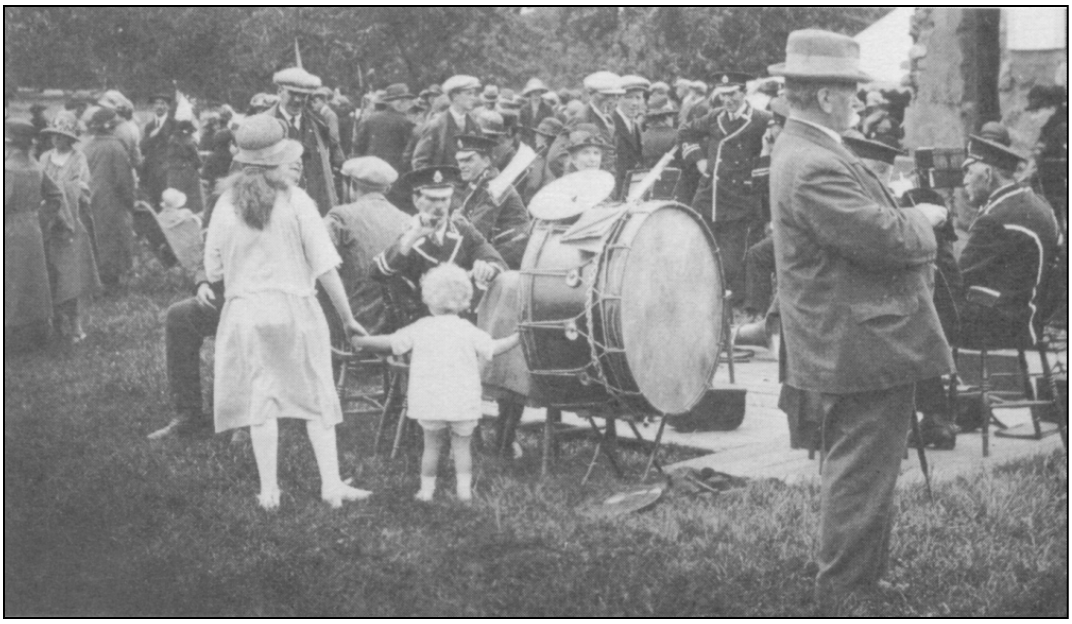
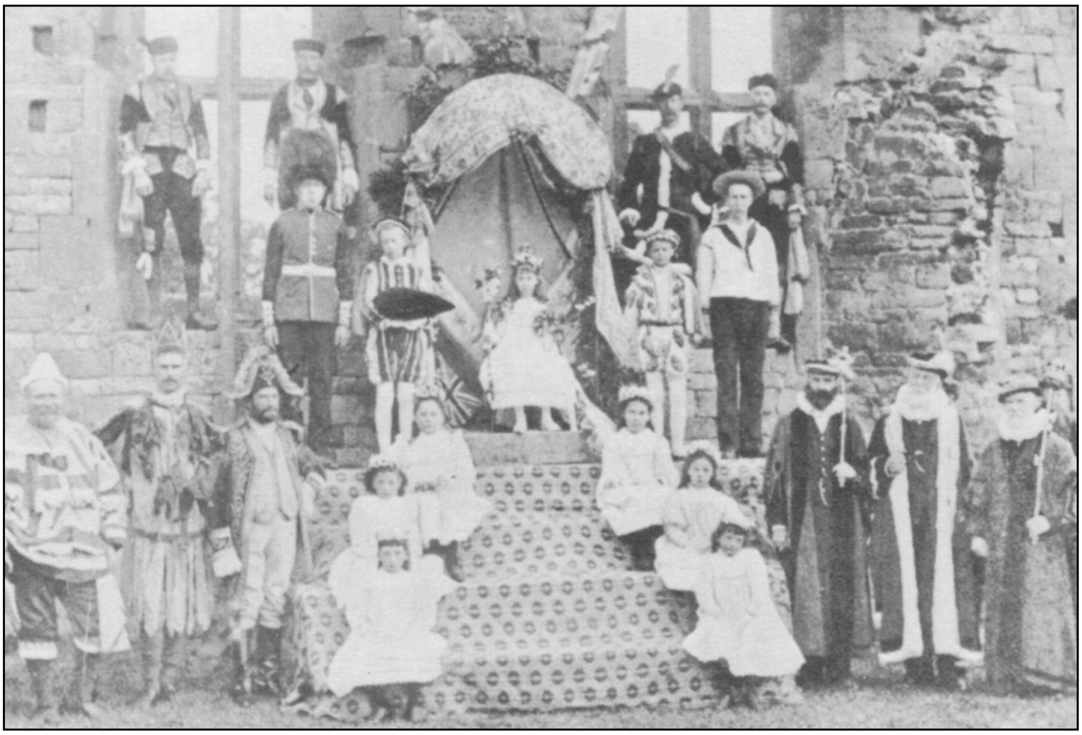


Figure 22: **In the early 20th century the ruins of Old Campden House were used as a backdrop for town events. The Town Band plays on the terrace walkway (above) and the crowning of the Scuttlebrook Queen (below). On the right, the mayor and his macebearers enter into the spirit of the occasion in their Tudor ruffs.**



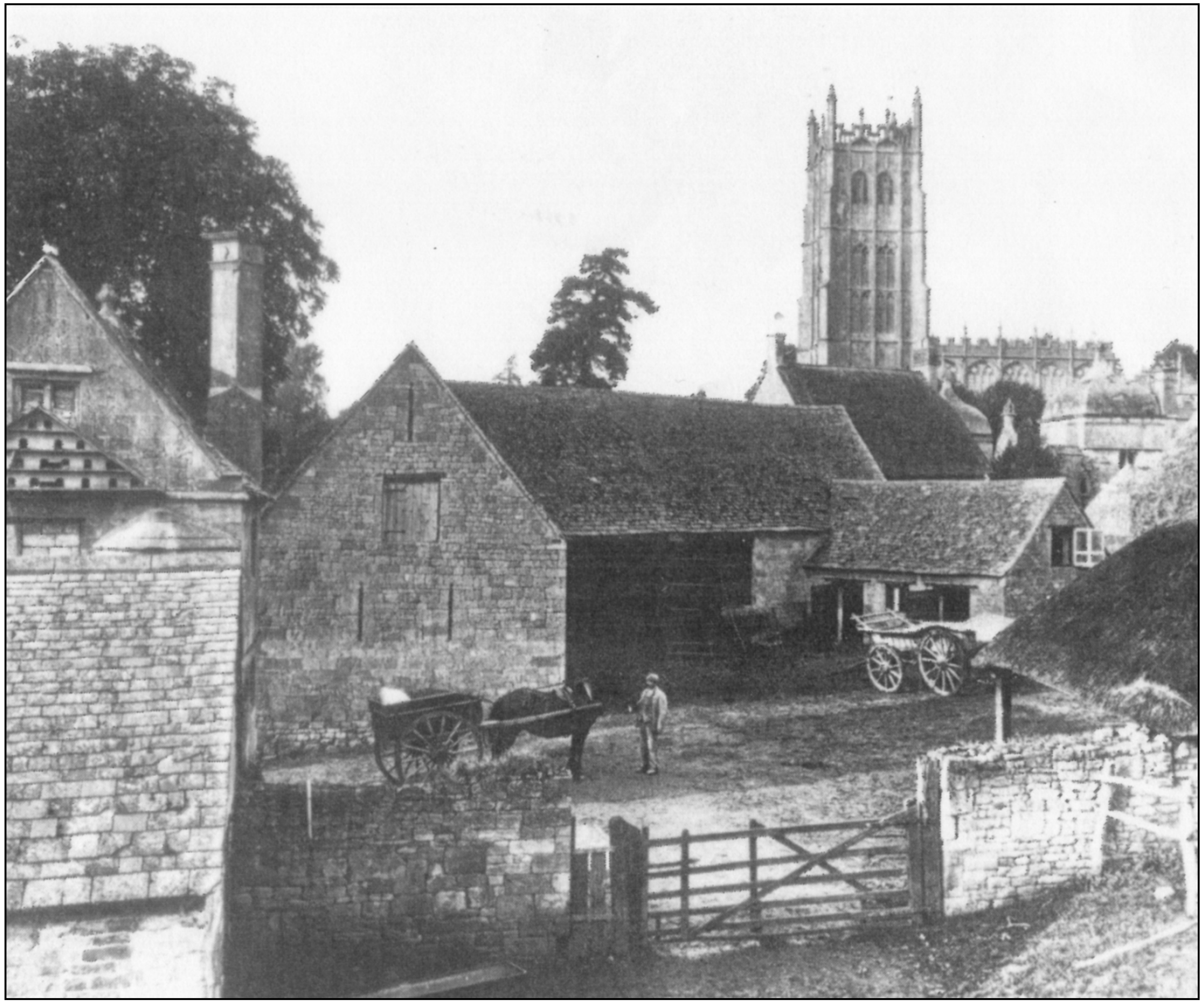
Mr Rimell was affluent enough to carry out minor repairs himself so receipts are less informative during his tenure. We do know that Court Barn had to be repaired again in 1850 (the roof repaired and new barn doors fitted to a twelve foot opening). Again, work was done at the same time to the ‘High House’ roof – probably the West Banqueting House. A cryptic note records Mr Rimell’s loss of the use of the East Banqueting House at this time, ‘Loss of Banquet House for use of cattle etc. £1.0.0’.

In 1862 the Earl of Gainsborough decided that the East Banqueting House would make an ideal grandstand from which to view the manoeuvres on the Coneygree of his newly formed volunteer Militia. The building was in a derelict state by then (an early photo shows three of the loggia arches blocked) and the Earl undertook a comprehensive restoration. The walls were repaired and strengthening rods inserted. Steps inside were replaced, new joists and new deal floors laid. The doors were renewed and the fanlight replaced. Three arches were unblocked and glazed with plate glass; the southerly arch was blocked. The ‘gighouse’, the little extension to the south-east end of the barn probably dates from the same campaign, built to house a chaff-cutter for cutting up animal feed.

By 1891, Mr Rimell had died and the Court House was being let separately from the land. This seems to have resulted in a marked deterioration of the buildings on the site, noted by various interested visitors. The site seems to have been used quite often for town events in the early twentieth century, the East Banqueting House being used for displays. Writing in 1911, Percy Rushen tells us that

> ‘Occasionally gatherings such as flower shows, school teas, etc., have been held in the grounds, the restored east pavilion being then used for exhibits of work, etc.’

However, Rushen also notes that ‘hens roost in the Jacobean fireplace’ in the West Banqueting House, now being used as a ‘barn and a pigstye.’ Lutyens, who visited in 1906, also comments upon its use as a hen-house.



View of the Almonry and farmyard from the first floor of the West Banqueting House c 1916, as Percy Rushen would have known it. The lean-to and dovecote removed prior to the 1929 repairs are still apparent; so too is the thatched cottage behind the barn (compare with Fig 23). Otherwise, the view has changed very little. *Country Life 18th Nov 1916*

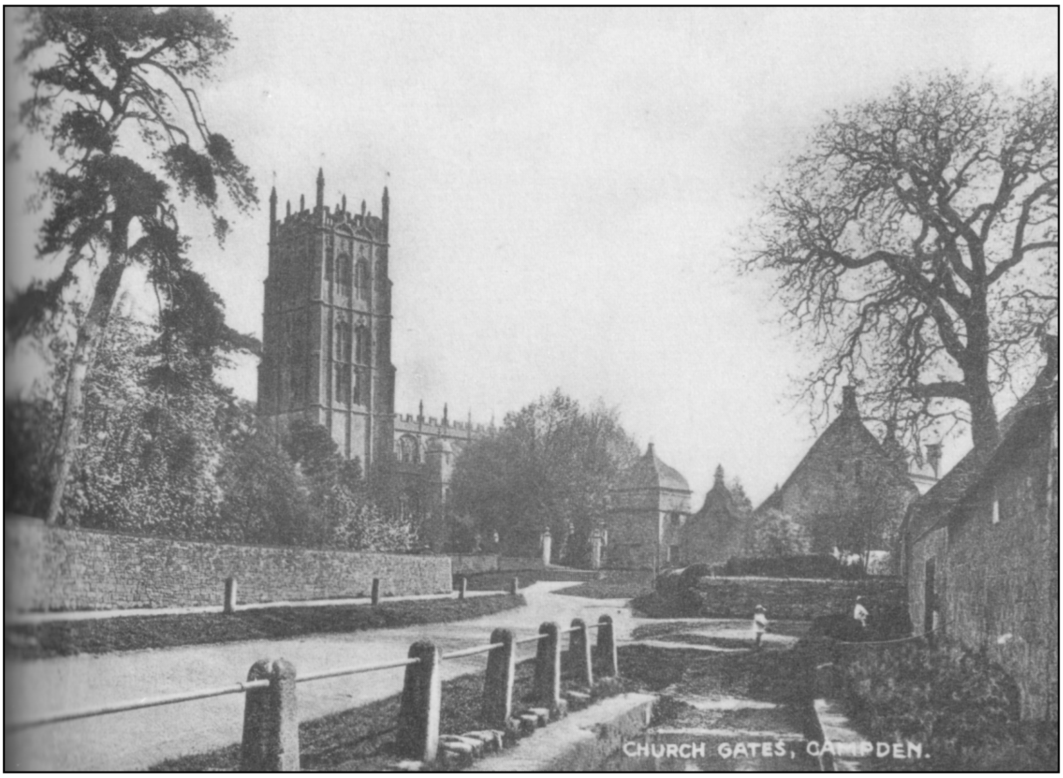


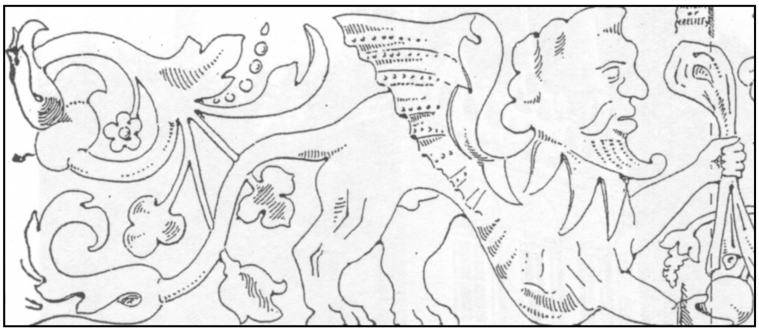
Figure 24: **Church Street in the 1900s. The arch between the lodges in the gateway has been walled up and remained so after FL Griggs oversaw repairs in 1930. The cart trough has water in; note too the thatched cottage beside the gate lodges, seen at its gable-end. This cottage was demolished in the 1950s.**

Fred Coldicott, who was born in Chipping Campden in 1910 and William Rimell's great-nephew, remembers from his childhood a cherry orchard planted behind the house ruins and apples, plums and damsons in the lower orchards. He also remembers the West Banqueting House being used to store fruit and the pickers have left their own traces in the graffiti still to be seen on the inner walls - tally marks and the weights and numbers of the 'pot-hampers' into which the apples were picked. Fred remembers the scales used for weighing the fruit, with a large platform and beam from which the weights were hung.

By 1930, Lady Gainsborough was living in the Court House and we move into more recent history. F L Griggs oversaw the repair of the Almonry and gateway in 1930 but thereafter the buildings on the site entered a gentle decline in increasing isolation from the town.

In 1987, Lady Maureen Fellowes and her husband Peregrine granted a lease of the East Banqueting House and the gate lodges to the Landmark Trust. This proved a great success and in 1998, they agreed to transfer the West Banqueting House, the Almonry and the rest of the house and garden site to Landmark's care.

We hope the site has now found a happy medium of restrained elegance in keeping with the exquisitely crafted banqueting houses while, as they have done for the past three hundred years, the sheep still safely graze around the ruined gardens of which Sir Baptist must once have been so proud.



5. A Tale of Mystery: The Campden Wonder

The Campden Wonder is a murder mystery tale that has puzzled lawyers and psychologists for centuries. Sir Thomas Overbury, who lived at Bourton-on-the-Hill, published a pamphlet about the affair in 1676, which has inspired plays, books and speculation ever since. The best account is to be found in Sir George Clark's book, *The Campden Wonder,* a copy of which should be found on the Landmark bookshelves.

The events unfold in the early 1660s, just after the restoration of the monarchy with Charles II's return to the throne. William Harrison was Lady Juliana, Viscountess Campden's steward for the Chipping Campden estates, sadly depleted by the firing of the main house which stood in ruins (Lady Juliana was Sir Baptist's elder daughter, who had married Edward Noel). Harrison was a man in his seventies and had been a trusted servant of the family for more than fifty years.

On 16th August 1660, Harrison set out to walk to nearby Ebrington and Charingworth to collect the rents due to his mistress. He did not return by nightfall, and so his wife sent their servant, John Perry to look for him. Neither had returned by daybreak, so she despatched her son, Edward, on the same errand. Edward met Perry on his way and they both went to Ebrington and then Paxford without success. On their way home, they found Harrison's hat, band and comb, all bloodied. The townsfolk then searched for a body, fearing the worst, but none was found.

Perry was brought before the magistrate. He told a tale of aborted departures: he had set out, then returned because it was too dark. 'He went to his Masters Gate, after which he went into the Hen-Roost where he lay till Twelve of the Clock that night.' When the moon rose and seeing from the light in his master's chamber that Mrs Harrison was still up awaiting her husband, he set out again. Others corroborated his movements for the earlier part of the night, but no-one then saw him until he met Edward at five the next morning. The following day, Perry demanded to see the JP again and confessed to complicity in the murder of William Harrison, who he claimed his brother had attacked, strangled and robbed on the Coneygree, their mother standing by. The money had been given to the mother and the two brothers had then carried the body to the former gardens and hidden it in the 'Great Sink' by Wallington's Mill. All three Perrys were then arrested for the murder of William Harrison. The mother and brother vehemently protested their innocence; the grounds of the ruined house were thoroughly searched but no body was found.

At the September Assizes, the magistrate refused to try the Perrys for murder in the absence of a body. But when the case came forward again in spring 1661, a different judge found all three guilty and they were hanged a few days later at the gallows on Westington Hill. This time, all protested their innocence, John now maintaining that he knew nothing of his master's death, nor what was become of him 'but they might possible afterwards hear.' Edward, in a fit of understandable revenge, insisted on John Perry's body being hung in chains. The other two were buried at the foot of the gallows.

Two years later, William Harrison walked back into Campden. He claimed he had been set upon, robbed, kidnapped and sold into slavery in Turkey. Eventually his new master there had died and he had made his way back to England. Harrison resumed his role as pillar of the community, continuing to sign as a school governor until his death (of natural causes and at a ripe old age) in 1686. A mystery indeed. Why did a respectable, elderly man disappear for two years, apparently leaving no word of his whereabouts with his family? His tale of kidnapping and slavery is more than a little incredible. His son was to inherit his position as steward after his death, suggesting he retained the trust of his employers. And why did John Perry confess to a murder he knew he had not committed, to condemn himself as well as his brother and mother to the gallows? It seems we will never know the answer.

What is particularly interesting for the history of the site, however, is that, however fabricated Perry's account of his deeds that dark night, it is told with considerable topographical detail on and around the site of the old house so that it is possible with some certainty to identify the West Banqueting House as William Harrison's home. We are told 'they [John Perry and his brother] went together to the Church-yard, about a stone's throw from Mr Harrison's Gate'… Later 'they came to a Gate about a Bow's Shot from Campden Church, that goes into a Ground of the Lady Campden's called the Coneygree (which to those who have a key to go through the Garden is the next Way from that Place to Mr Harrison's House).' Both of these are consistent with the distances and layout of the site. We have an atmospheric description of the moonlit site: 'some were of the Opinion, the Body might be laid in the Ruins of Campden-House, burnt in the late wars, and not unfit for such a Concealment.'

The hen roost in which Perry lay, watching the light in his master's upstairs chamber, is plausibly the Almonry or a structure adjacent to it. We find out that Harrison lived in a two storey house: 'The year, before Mr Harrison had his House broken open, between Eleven and Twelve of the Clock at Noon, upon Campden Market-day while himself and his whole Family were at the Lecture [sermon]; a Ladder being set up to a window of the second Story and an iron Bar wrenched thence with a Ploughshare which was left in the Room and Seven-score Pounds in Money carried away.'

Sir Thomas Overbury's account has helped us much in our understanding of the West Banqueting House's history after the Civil War, bringing its conversion to a domestic dwelling dramatically to life. We are, however, no closer to solving The Campden Wonder.

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Place of publication is London unless otherwise stated.

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