The Landmark Trust

# SACKVILLE HOUSE

# History Album


**Compiled, written and researched by**
**Julia Abel Smith, 1997**

**Updated in 2022**

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## BASIC DETAILS

| | |
|---|---|
| **Built:** | **c1525** |
| **Listed:** | **Grade II** |

**Bequeathed to the Landmark Trust by Mrs Edward Honess (Ursula Webb), March, 1995**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Repaired:** | **Autumn, 1995 - Summer, 1997** |
| **First let as a Landmark:** | **August, 1997** |
| **Architects:** | **Peregrine Bryant and David Hopps** |
| **Quantity Surveyor:** | **Bare Leaning & Bare** |
| **Contractors:** | **Colnet of Riverhead** |
| **Decorator:** | **Nigel Bill** |
| **Plumbers:** | **Tony Page and David Burnett** |
| **Carpenter:** | **Stan Brown** |
| **Electricians:** | **Geoff and Kent Harrison** |
| **Foreman:** | **Alan Colnet** |
| **Floor tiler:** | **George Smith** |
| **Blacksmith:** | **Trevor Hinckley** |

**Wall painting conservation: Tom Organ**

## 2021-2 RE-ROOFING

| | |
|---|---|
| **Architect:** | **Nicola Westbury** |
| **Contractors:** | **Clarke Roofing Southern Ltd, notably roofers Karl Strudwick and Daniel Sweet; also joiners Robin and Luke Watts, a father & son team.** |

**Structural Engineer: Justin McAteer**

## Contents



I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the help I have received with the preparation of these notes from: Mr Michael Leppard on the history of East Grinstead and inhabitants of Sackville House; Mr Christopher Whittick at the East Sussex Record Office; Mr Peter Gray for lending his article on Sackville House and to Mr Paul Dobson for all his help with photographs and information about the Webb and Hanbury families.

Julia Abel Smith, July, 1997.

**Mrs Ursula Honess. She left Sackville House to the Landmark Trust in 1995.**

## Summary

East Grinstead was laid out as a borough in the early part of the 13th century with its wide High Street used as a market place. It was flanked by 48 plots and each plot, known as a burgage, had a house on it with a piece of town land or 'portland' running behind it, the main purpose of which was to provide food for the occupants - agriculture in an urban setting. At just over 40 feet Sackville House's plot is wider than the norm (33 feet) for the town and unusually long at 630 feet. Its position nearly opposite the church was clearly an important one.

The ownership of a burgage conferred certain rights and privileges. For example, an owner could trade at the markets and fairs held in the market place outside their houses before non-burgage holders - thereby 'forestalling' them. The right to vote for a member of Parliament also depended on showing title to a burgage and so acquiring them became a way of exerting power and influence. It was in the 17th century that the Sackville family from nearby Knole started to actively acquire burgages and it is from this connection that the house got its name, although it doesn't appear to have been known as Sackville House until the late 19th century. It is the same Sackville family that has given its name to the almshouses, Sackville College, lying nearly opposite Sackville House.

The house was built around 1525 as a four bay continuous jetty house with the original wagon way giving access to the rear. Behind the house, and detached from it for reasons of fire safety, was probably a two bay kitchen, of which part of the last bay overlooking the garden still survives. As a continuous jetty house, the ground floor would never have been open to the roof, and it probably consisted of a two bay hall with the buttery and pantry service rooms off one end. There is no evidence of how the hall was heated, as the brick chimney stack is a later addition of 1574, the date proudly carved into fireplace lintel in the middle bedroom.

During repair works to Sackville House, the removal of tongue and groove boarding in a small washroom of the eastern bedroom, revealed extensive remains of a brocade pattern wall painting, painted in a red ochre onto the plaster panels of the stud work wall. Its position in such a small confined space is highly unusual, and it is clear that it must once have formed part of a much larger scheme for the bedroom. There are some slight remains of painted decorative patterns on a beam at the east end of the sitting room, and these, together with those visible in the bedroom, are also likely to be part of the improvements to the house towards the end of the 16th century.

Around this time, the detached kitchen range was connected to the main house and corridors where formed behind the chimney providing privacy to the bedrooms. Such changes necessitated the provision of a new staircase at the back of the front range. In a further raising of living standards, the open kitchen fire was replaced with a large inglenook hearth. The roof was raised, as it was again in about 1700 when the dormers were probably added. The roof is covered or 'healed' in the wonderfully thick Horsham stone tiles that are such a joy of this region. The front door would have been in the centre of the present sitting room wall. The final alterations, basically a rearrangement of rooms, and the insertion of hearths on the upper floors, and the reconstruction of the front wall of the ground floor hall house, date from the late 19th century.

**The Repair and Restoration of Sackville House**

In 1919, Sackville House was acquired by Geoffrey and Joan Webb from her father, Frederick Hanbury, who was Vice-Chairman of the pharmaceutical company, Allen and Hanbury. They found the house in a serious state of decay, with parts of the walls covered in dilapidated weatherboarding, and with trees allowed to grow right up against the house. They carried out a full restoration and laid out the garden.

Geoffrey Webb was a well-known stained-glass artist and he worked from a studio at the top of the house. The two roundels in the chapel were made by him. He came from an artistic family; his uncle, Aston Webb had a series of commissions of national importance - Admiralty Arch, and works to the Victoria & Albert Museum and Buckingham Palace. It was Geoffrey's daughter, Ursula, who with very great generosity, bequeathed Sackville House to the Landmark Trust at her death in 1995. She had worked tirelessly to defend the remaining portlands of East Grinstead from development, no doubt strengthened by her childhood memories of being able to ride from the garden right into Ashdown Forest without having to cross any roads.

We appointed Peregrine Bryant as our architect in 1995, and apart from building a new staircase running up from the back hall, it was felt relatively little intervention was needed. We changed the position of the existing bathroom and added two more. We also felt that the view from the back of the house was so wonderful that the end room, until then a service room, should be the kitchen. This end room and the one above it were extended by some three feet towards the garden when the Webbs moved in, and the windows that they put in were originally much higher to prevent the servants from being distracted from their work. We lowered them by the same amount again.

The bottom of the new staircase is in what was the former kitchen. To improve its appearance and headroom, we removed a steel beam from the ceiling, which is now held up through the new bathroom partition. The old flooring was replaced with hand-made tiles. In the front of the house, we made the cloakroom into one room, and in the corner of the sitting room where the family chapel is, we blocked up a doorway into the hall. The design of most of the curtains in the house is based on the wall painting discovered in the bedroom lobby. Outside we painted the walls with limewash and rationalised the rainwater goods. The yard has been repaved in brick and York stone, and the original stone wheel tracks, said to stem from the use of the house by a coffin maker, were revealed when the modern paving was taken up.

It was Ursula Webb's brother, Father Benedict, who first wrote to the Landmark Trust saying that 'nothing would give our family more happiness than to know that the future of Sackville House is assured as a residence and with its beautiful garden intact.' We were delighted that he was the first person to stay here after our restoration, to see that his family and sister's wishes will be respected.

2022 update: by 2020, the Horsham stone roof required comprehensive repair. A major campaign of repairs followed, as it became clear that the timber frame also needed extensive repair. Now the house is back to looking much as it always has, but once more in full good heart.

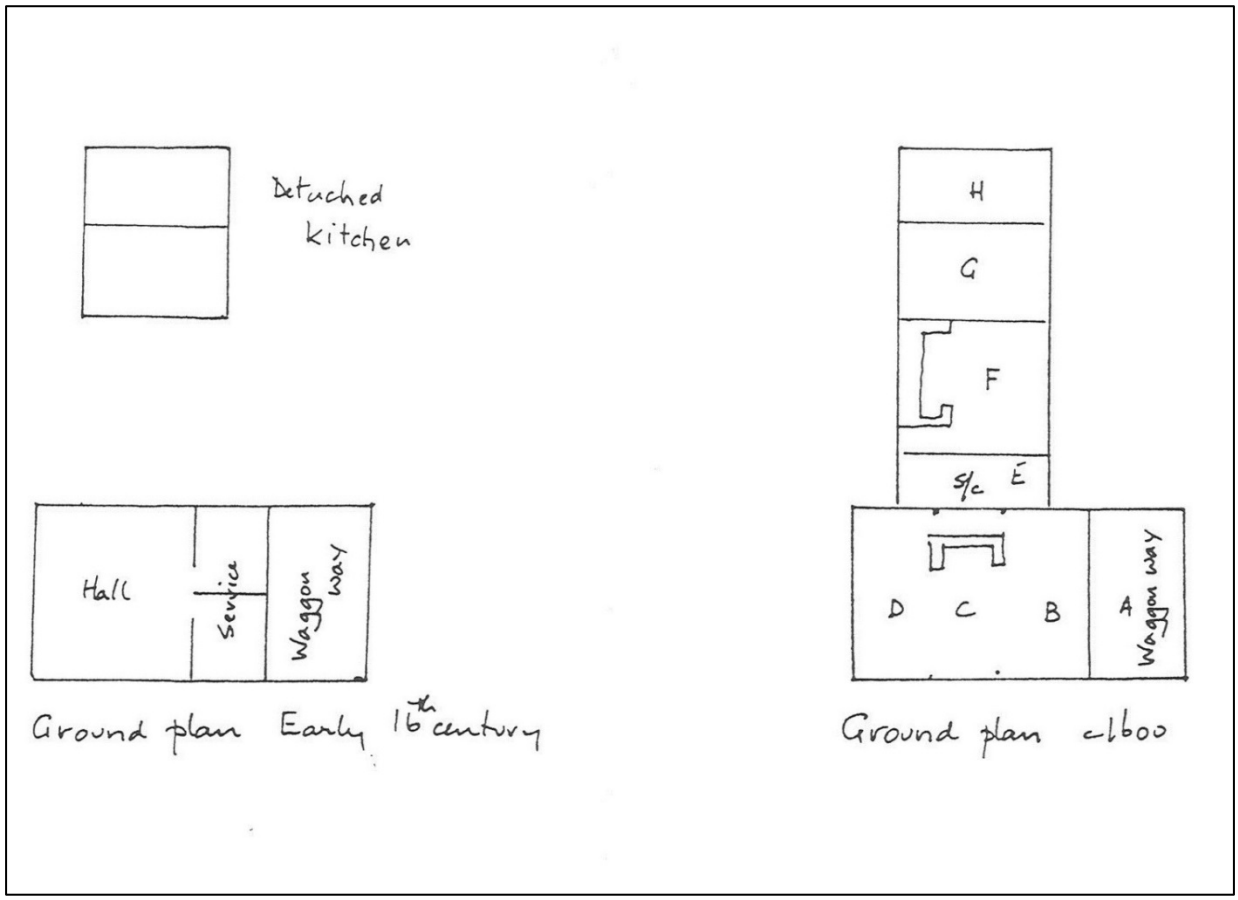
## Introduction

Sackville House was first brought to our attention in a letter from Father Benedict Webb in January, 1991. His parents, Mr and Mrs Geoffrey Webb, had acquired and saved this 16th-century timber-framed house in 1919 and at the time of his letter, it was lived in by his sister, Ursula Honess. She married late in life, in 1982, and her husband, Edward, died in 1992. Having no heirs, Mrs Honess was unsure how to protect her home; she had worked tirelessly with the East Grinstead Society to defend the remaining portlands - the long strips of land behind each house in the original borough - and wanted to be sure that her home would not, like so many of its neighbours, be turned over to commercial use, or have its garden sold for development. Mrs Honess died on 12th March, 1995 and with very great generosity bequeathed Sackville House to the Landmark Trust.

East Grinstead was laid out as a borough in the early part of the 13th century. Each burgage plot had a house on it and a piece of town land or portland, running behind it. The present house is not the first on the site for it was built in the first half of the 16th century but has been little changed since. The history of its past owners, tenants and occupiers is complicated by the fact that the house is part of a terrace and there was no numbering system until the last century. At the beginning of the 19th century it was owned by John Frederick, 4th Duke of Dorset and at that stage seems to have been lived in by a series of surgeons, one of whom, Dr P. Wallis, 'began his career as a doctor in East Grinstead in 1877, lodging in a damp room in company with swarms of lice over the gateway of the now lovely Sackville House.' The name Sackville House was probably given to the building between 1877 and 1885.

When the Webbs came to live here, the house was in a state of serious decay. They were responsible for the restoration of the house and the layout of the garden. Geoffrey Webb himself was a well-known stained-glass artist, working from a studio at the top of the house. His commissions included work at Ampleforth Abbey, the St. Faith Chapel at Tewkesbury Abbey, and the Lady

Chapel in Llandaff Cathedral. After his daughter, Ursula, so generously left us Sackville House, we appointed Peregrine Bryant as our architect. We have built a staircase running up from the back hall and provided sufficient bathrooms for eight people but other than little work was needed. The house was furnished in July  and the first visitors arrived in August, 1997.




**Ground plans in c1525 and c1600**

## Sackville House – an Account of the Building

**Site:** Sackville House occupies a burgage plot on the south side of the High Street, the former market place. Nearly opposite the church, its position was clearly an important one, reflected in the style of the building. The plot at 40' 10' is rather wider than the standard burgage plot, usually 2 rods (33' 0') in East Grinstead.

**General description:** It is a four bay continuous jetty house with the original waggon way giving access to the rear. It was built in the first quarter of the 16th century, perhaps about 1525 and probably had a detached kitchen behind, of which one, end jettied, bay remains. Part of the rear range may be contemporary with the c1525 date as the end bay furthest from the road (H) has features which would be quite compatible with this or an earlier date. An extension of the wall plate well into the adjoining bay (G) shows that it was once a larger building; the most likely explanation is that it formed part of a detached kitchen. This adjacent bay (now gone) would have been an open hall for cooking.

The original building on the street front remains basically intact, apart from the fact that the roof has been raised and reconstructed. The internal layout has however, been changed quite considerably. The ground floor was never open to the roof. The rooms there probably consisted of a two bay hall (C & D) with service rooms consisting of the buttery and pantry for wet and dry goods respectively at B. Evidence of the service doors remains near the chimney. Access to the first floor was likely to have been from what is now a store room in the SW corner. The first floor with sleeping accommodation open to the roof was probably similarly divided, although the evidence is thin. There is no evidence as to how the hall was heated but possibly there was an external timber framed chimney on the rear wall.

Later in the century, the house was altered when the kitchen range was connected to the main house, the brick chimney inserted into the present sitting room and a corridor formed on both floors behind the stack, and the roof raised. On the first floor, the room layout was revised to provide a corridor and thus privacy in each bedroom. The cellar must date from this period since the foundations of the chimney form part of its walls. Such changes necessitated the provision of a new staircase which was achieved by extending the rear block (presumably the kitchen) to the back of the front range. The changes to the rear range, with a large inglenook hearth replacing the open kitchen fire marked a big change in the standard of living for the owners. It is tempting to date all this to 1574, the date carved on a fireplace lintol in the middle bedroom on the front range. Such a date would be consistent with the style of the stair balusters and the capping to the attic stair newel. The stairs and other features which give the house its internal character largely date from this period.

The building must have been reroofed at this time but 1574 is too early a date for the present butt purlin roof and particularly the scantling, neither of which would be expected until well into the 17th century if not later. Therefore it appears that the house has been reroofed twice, once in say 1574 and again in about 1700. The fact that the roof tie beams project above the attic floor may support this idea. The final alterations, basically a rearrangement of rooms and the insertion of hearths on the upper floors, and the reconstruction of the front wall of the ground floor hall, date from the late 19th century.

**Layout:** The building consists of two ranges at right angles to one another. The front range lying right on the street is the most important and of a single build. The rear range is of several builds probably originating as a detached kitchen but connected to the main range at an early date. The front range is of four bays, two storeyed with an attic. At the west end is a waggon way with a two rooms above and and a further two rooms in the attic; both floors above the waggon way are set about 1' 6' above the adjoining floors. The ground floor now mainly

consists of a single room occupying most of the three bays but with a small cloak room in one corner. Access to the first floor is by a staircase in the rear range. The central and eastern bedrooms seem at one time to have been one with signs that the partition near the chimney was added possibly in the 19th century when the shallow fireplaces were inserted. The attic is approached by a stair which incorporates a moulded newel cap. It comprises one large room with two smaller ones above the waggon way, lit by dormers on the street side apparently contemporary with the roof of c1700.

The rear range of three bays is two storied with a short connecting bay containing the staircase. There is no attic. The range is built on land sloping fairly steeply away from the road so that the floor level at the furthest point is some 3' below the front range. The end bay was extended by some 3' at the beginning of this century, replicating an original end jetty which can however, be recognised from the side framing. Each bay is occupied by a separate room, none of which are particularly distinguished. They probably served in earlier times as kitchens and service rooms.

**Windows and doors:** There are no windows contemporary with the original building, although the framing in some places suggests their former location. They were likely to have been wind-eyes: the early form of window, which was unglazed. The windows to the front upper elevation, though much restored, relate to late 16th or 17th- century alterations.

No original external doors exist although the position of the original one to the rear was doubtless situated at the foot of the stairs. Lack of framing mortices in this position tends to confirm this. The front door on the street would have been opposite, lying nearly in the centre of the present sitting room wall. In R.T. Mason's East Grinstead, Notes on its Architecture, published in *Sussex Archaeological Collections,* Vol. LXXX, 1939, he writes,

> In restorations of the year 1919 a partition was pulled down near the west end (of the present sitting room) which contained two shaped pieces of oak lying loosely within the wall. These have been refixed near the fire-place in what was originally the hall, and are perhaps doorheads from the hall (west) screens.

These potential doorheads may be seen either side of the fireplace and the one to the right of the fireplace near the door, may have been reset in its original position opening into what was then a service room. In the beam, there is evidence of another door opening next to it which would have opened into the other service room.

**Wall framing:** That to the front elevation has been virtually rebuilt. However, that to the rear of the front range remains and is of large panels with big arch braces. The extreme bay to the rear range retains is original framing of large panels with big foot braces. Most of the rest of the framing to this range appears to have been rebuilt.

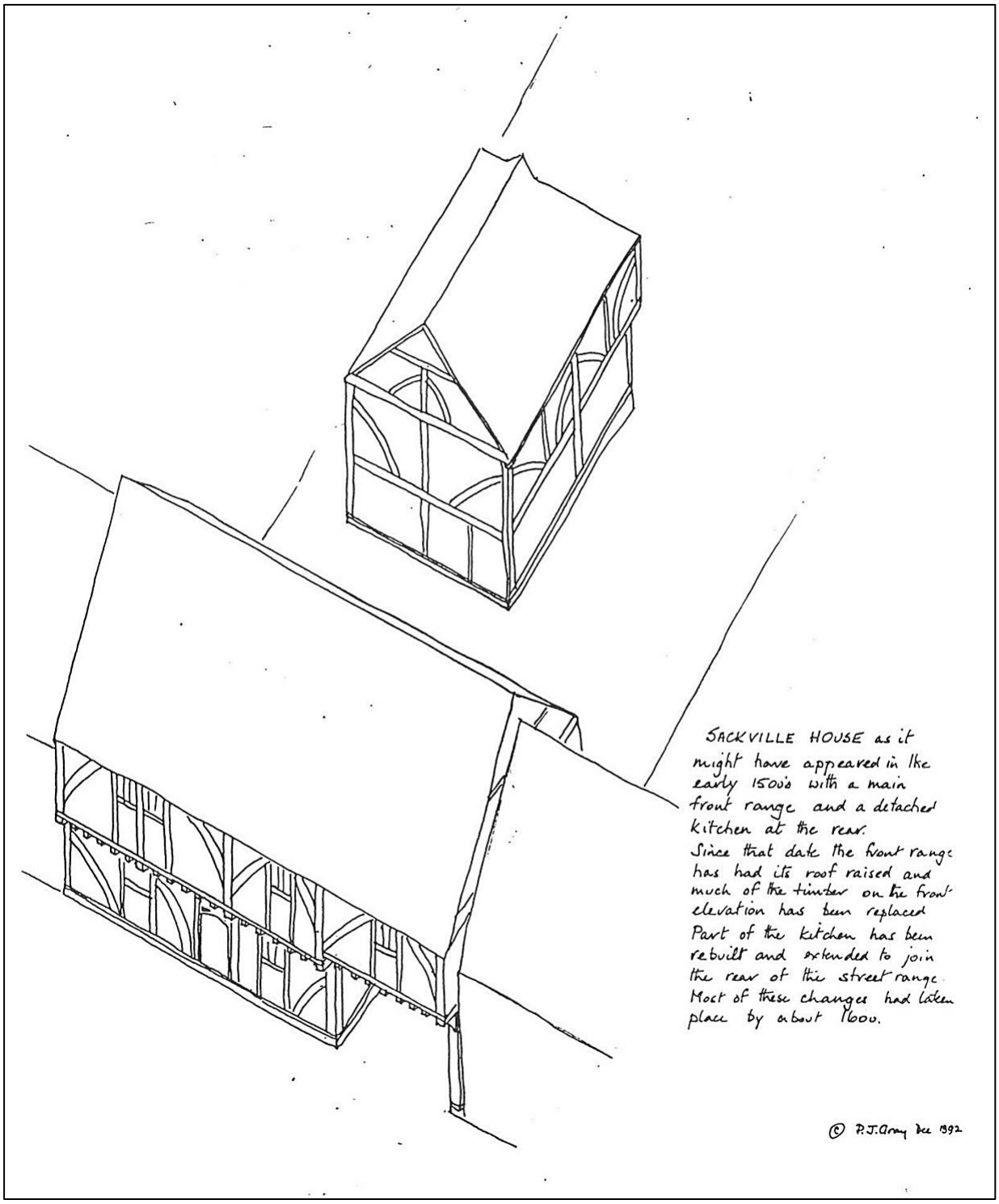
**Roof:** The roof to the front range is a staggered butt purlin and butt rafter roof, and is clearly not the original one. Peg holes in the tie beams above the waggon way indicate that the original roof was of crownpost construction.There is similar evidence of crown post construction on the tie beams to the extreme bay of the rear range. The roof to this range has also been rebuilt with side purlin and queen strut construction. It appears that the roof to the rear range has been partially rebuilt several times. The roofs are covered or 'healed' in thick Horsham stone tiles.

**Mouldings and decoration:** There are no mouldings, apart from minor chamfers, which appear to relate to the original structure. However, the inserted longitudinal girders over the main room upstairs have 4' wide chamfers with interesting stops (illustrated by Mason in *Sussex Collections*, Vol. 80). The sitting room fire place has some moulded 'Jacobean' panelling above and its stone lintol has a four centre arch with recessed spandrels. On the first floor, the hearth in the centre

bedroom has a timber lintel with an ogee carved soffit and is inscribed with the date 1574.

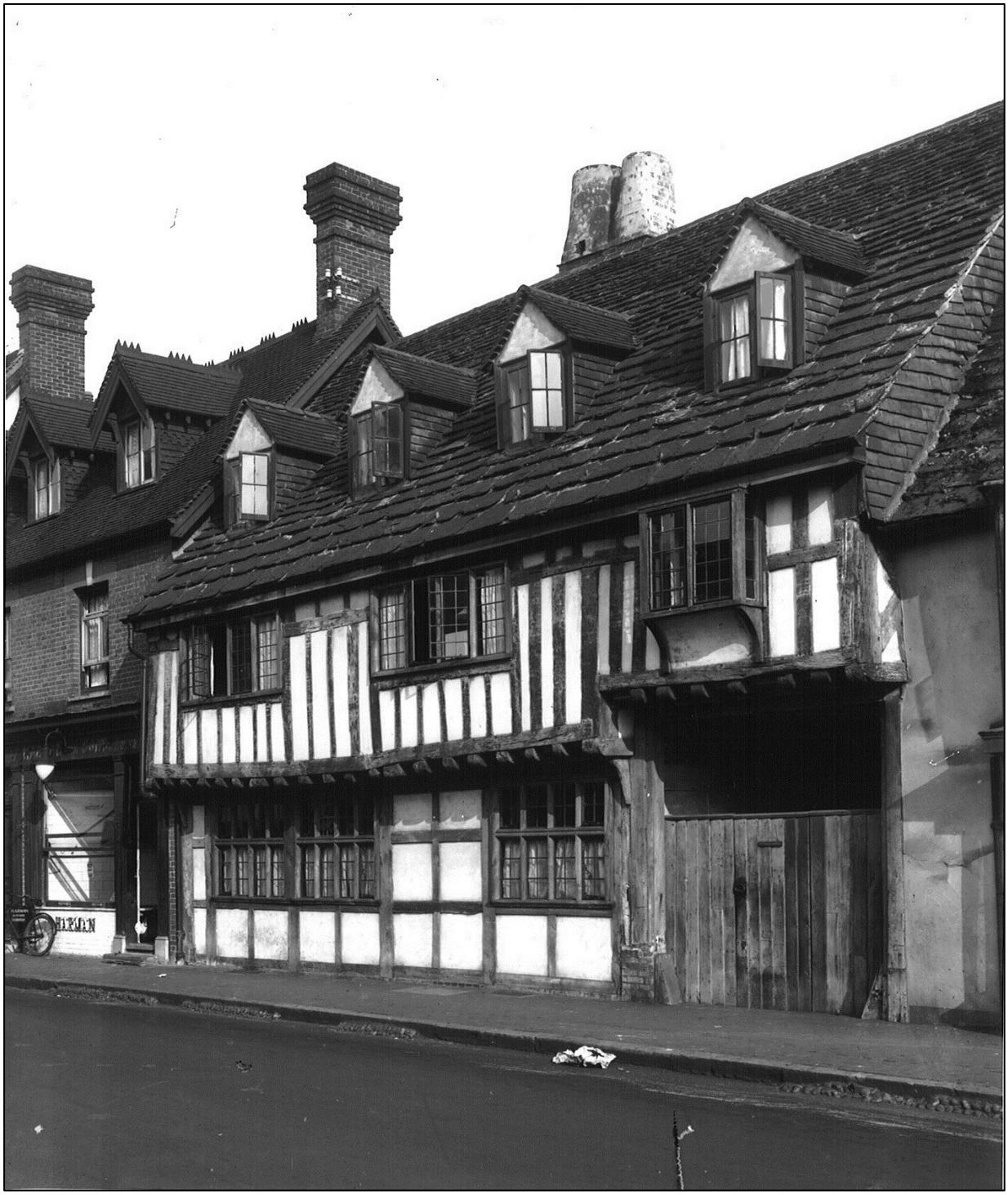
**Wall paintings:** There are some slight remains of painted decorative patterns on a beam at the east end of the sitting room. These and those visible in the eastern bedroom on the first floor date from about 1574 or a little later.

This account of the building has been adapted from: *Sackville House, High Street, East Grinstead - Its building history*, 3rd December 1992, by P. J. Gray.




**Sackville House as it might have appeared c1525.**


**Two old postcards of the High Street.**
**Note how in 1904 the timber studwork had been plastered over.**



**Sackville House in 1930 (RCHME)**

## Repair and Restoration of Sackville House

Since 1919, Sackville House had been the much loved and cared for home of the Webb family. When we were left the house in 1995, our job was to retain the exceptional character and spiritual atmosphere of the house whilst making it suitable for eight people to stay in, comfortably and conveniently, on holiday. So often when beginning work at a new Landmark, it is the bathrooms and kitchen which need rethinking and here it was the case. It was clear that we needed more than one bathroom and we decided to change the position of the existing one and provide two new ones. We also felt that the view from the back of the house was so wonderful that the end room, until then a service room, should be the kitchen. From the new back hall in the former kitchen, we built a staircase giving access to the back wing. We kept the dining room in its original place.

Even though he had stood down from running Landmark in 1990, the views of Landmark's founder, Sir John Smith, still held sway and informed the approach at Sackvilel House. He visited in August 1995, after which he wrote,

> 'The house needs simplifying. People have come to accept as typical, indeed to like, nooks and crannies in medieval houses; but in fact such houses, when first built, were orderly and straightforward. At Sackville House, I think that three things would greatly help:
> - Studying all the odd steps, and easing or eliminating them where possible.
> - Whitening some of the internal timbers.
> - Hiding all pipes and wires.'

The timbers inside were the cause of much discussion and debate. All were examined and divided into three categories:

- those which should show, and be left unpainted.
- those which should show, and which should be painted.
- those which should be concealed.

After long deliberation, it was decided to leave exposed the main structural elements and paint out secondary timbers.

**The rear in 1930 (RCHME)**

Work began in the Autumn of 1995. At the time, the roof needed no major work and only one slope on the back wing was renewed. The second floor had housed Geoffrey Webb's stained glass studio which had remained largely untouched since his death. Fortunately, the nephew of one of the beneficiaries had recently become interested in stained glass and was glad to receive all the contents, including the cartoons, of the studio. We renewed the plaster under the windows and removed the passage way at the top of the stairs, showing to better effect the fine 16th-century newel. Above the waggon way we divided the space into two rooms, providing a new bathroom, behind which is the house-keeper's store room.

On the first floor, above the waggon way was Mrs Honess's bedroom. Her bed was between the fireplace with the Dutch tiles and the window from where she enjoyed fine views of the countryside which she fought so hard to preserve. We divided this room into a bathroom on the street side with a single bedroom behind, keeping the bed in the same position. From the new bathroom, we reopened the door to the central bedroom. On the soffit of the attic stairs, we discovered some paint work which perhaps was part of the scheme found in the closet of the bedroom next door. It seems likely that these two rooms were at one time a single space, with the partition and the hearths added later. In the far bedroom, the joists already had been painted out and we removed a basin from the painted closet.

In the cloakroom by the main staircase, we raised the floor to eliminate a step. Upstairs, in the back wing, the single room had been used as a bathroom but we placed the boiler in the cupboard there and made a new bathroom in the room beyond, which was divided in two. Originally, we planned to put the bathroom at right angles to the rooms either side, opposite the staircase but the local authority preferred the present solution, which has the advantage that the end truss may be seen properly. In the end bedroom we made a window seat, set into a deep recess.

On the ground floor, at the bottom of the small staircase is the back hall in the former kitchen. To improve its appearance and headroom, we removed a steel beam from the ceiling, which is now held up through the new bathroom partition.

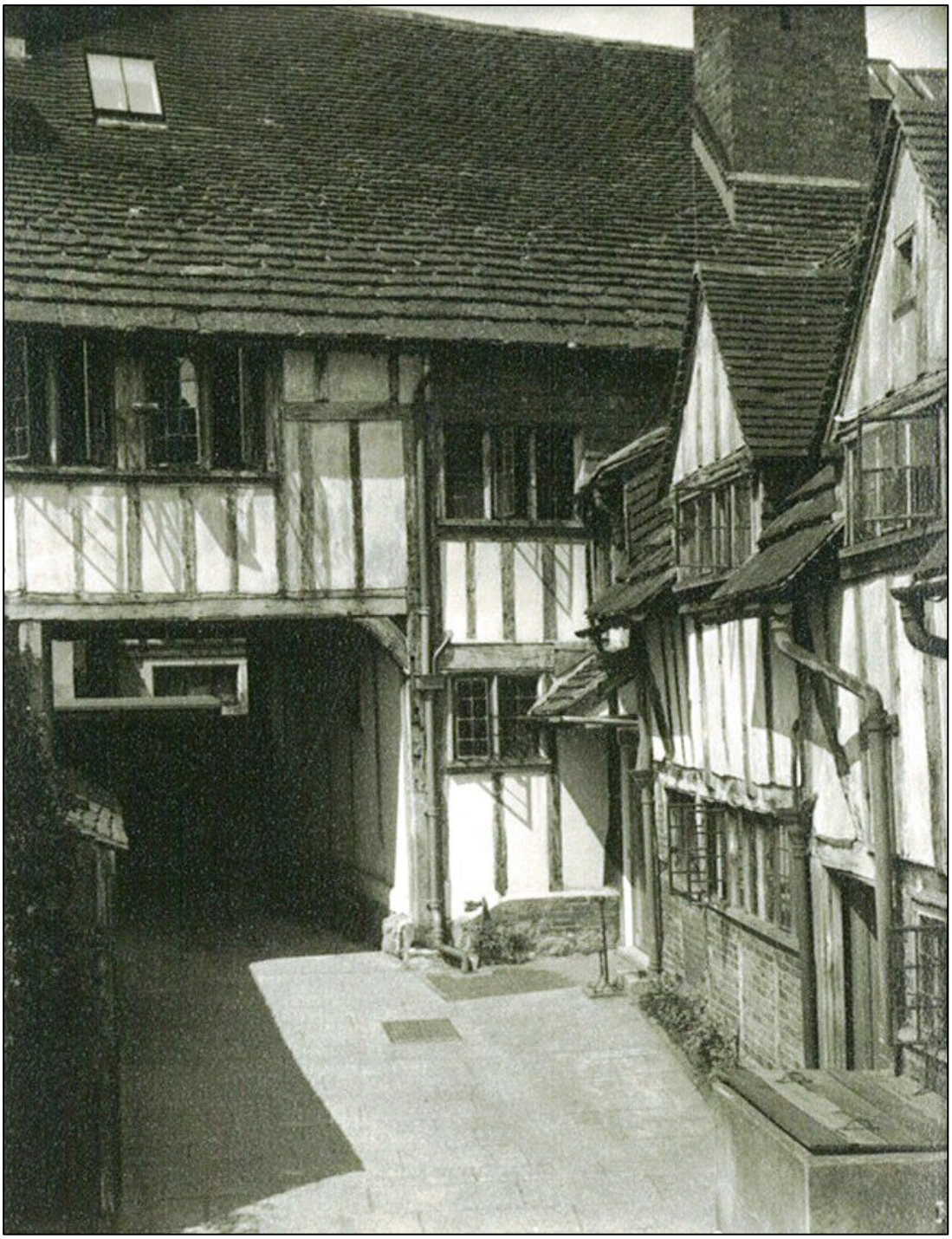
We replaced the old flooring with hand-made tiles. The present kitchen, with its original floor, used to be a scullery cum garden storage room with windows half their present height. This room and the one above were extended some three feet towards the garden when the Webbs moved in. Such high windows were put in to prevent the servants from being distracted from their work.

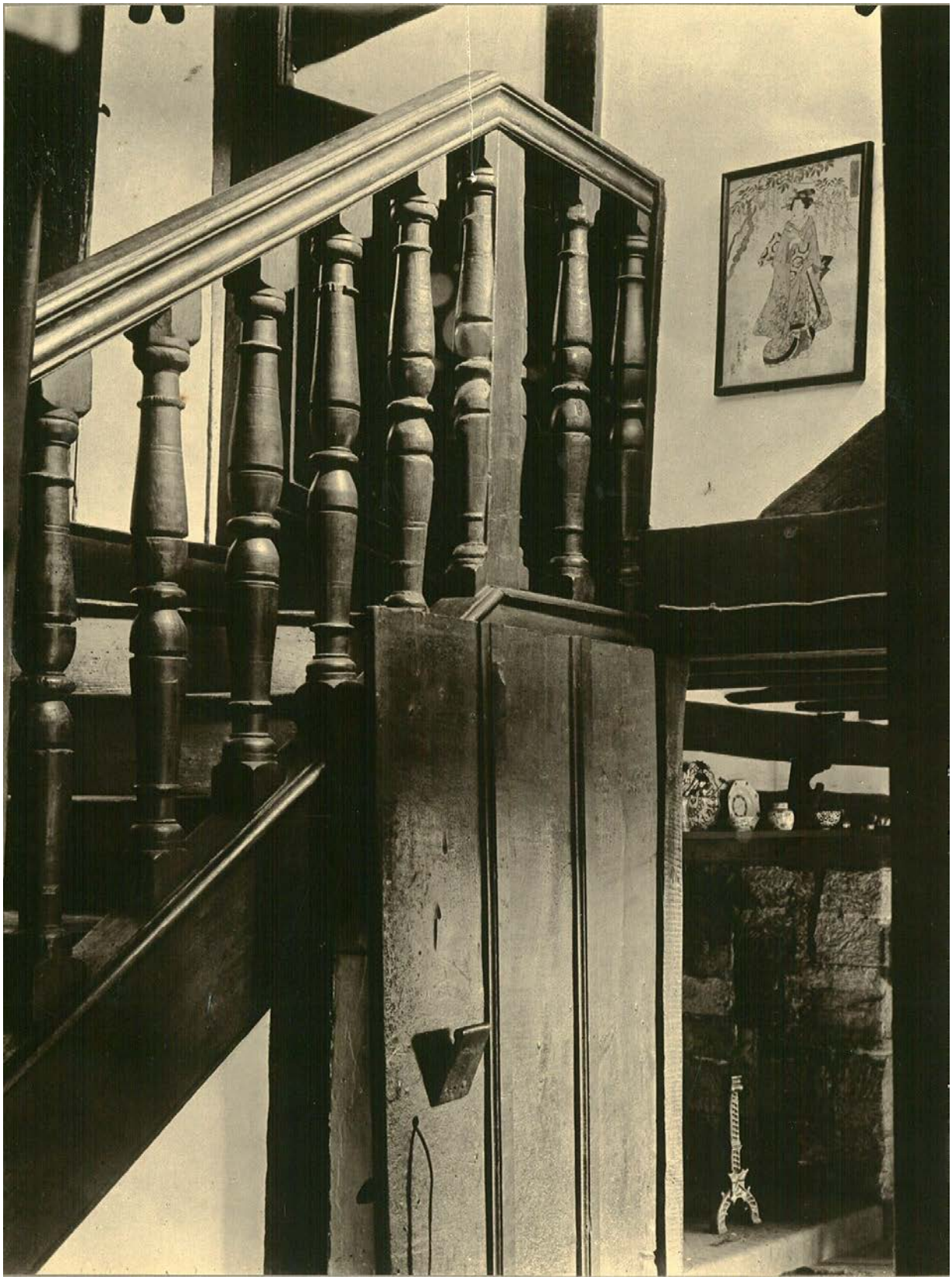
In the dining room the fireback was left in the house when we acquired it and the spit holders were repaired and refixed. Through into the front part of the house, the downstairs cloakroom was made into one room. In the corner of the sitting room was the chapel and we blocked up the doorway from here into the hall. After a great deal of thought, we have decided to leave the panelling as we found it, and not to paint it. Although the room is somewhat dark, the atmosphere created by the polished oak panelling seemed appropriate.

Outside we have painted the walls not on the street with lime wash. We have removed a forest of gutters and rain water pipes and carried out mortar and tile repairs above dining room windows. The yard was covered with imitation flags which we removed, relaying the area in brick and York stone. The original stone wheel tracks were revealed when the modern paving was taken up and they have been repaired. The design of most of the curtains in the house is based on the wall painting discovered in the bedroom lobby.

**The rear wing. The ground floor is now the kitchen with taller windows fitted (RCHME)**

**Three views of Sackville House**





**The old staircase looking through to the dining room**

**The sitting room as it was when the house came to Landmark.**

**The chapel area off the sitting room.**

**Geoffrey Webb's studio and looking through into the old kitchen which is now the back hall.**

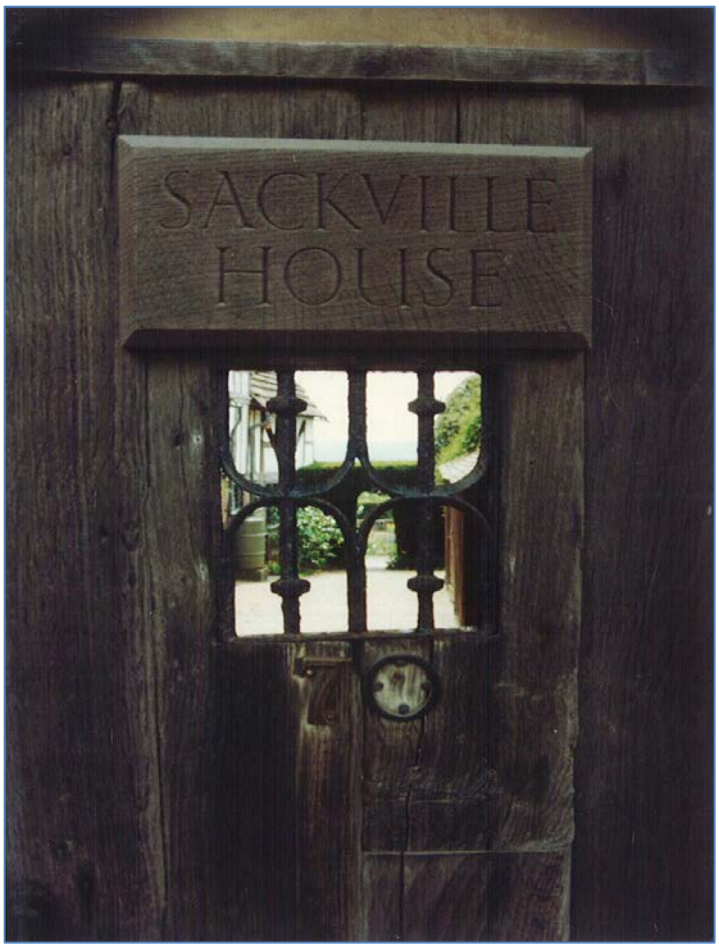
**The 'second parlour' now the double bedroom overlooking the garden.**

**Ursula Honess's bedroom over the archway.**

**This bathroom 'pod' was removed from the what is now a single bedroom.**

**Geoffrey Webb's studio.**

**Note the change in the chimney and dormers since 1930. Below: the peep hole added by Geoffrey Webb.**



## The Wall Paintings

During the works carried out at Sackville House, the removal of tongue and groove boarding in the small washroom of Bedroom 2, revealed extensive remains of late 16th-century or early 17th-century brocade pattern, painted in red onto the plaster panels of the stud-work wall. The painted decoration, although very dirty and powdery in places, has generally survived in good condition. The painting was executed using bold brushstrokes in a strong red colour, probably a red ochre, on a white limewash ground.

Traces of an interlacing vine scroll or brocade pattern exist on the beam at the east end of the principal ground floor room, formerly the hall, now the sitting room. Painted in black on an off-white ground, the decoration is the only known survival of late 16th/early 17th-century decoration in this part of the house. The remaining beams and panelled walls in this room are either later replacements or have been scraped down.

The wall painting in the first floor bedroom decorates a small area of stud wall in an area previously used as a private washroom. Consisting of a red brocade pattern, its position in such a small confined space is highly unusual and it is clear that it must once have formed part of a much larger scheme for the bedroom.

There is evidence to indicate that the washroom area once formed the entrance into the bedroom from the corridor. The outer (corridor) face of the wall consists of two flush plastered panels either side of a blocked doorway, with a smaller plaster panel over the door head. The corridor walls are thought to have been inserted at the end of the 16th century as part of a general remodelling of the house.

**The red brocade pattern of the wall painting in the first floor bedroom.**

The doorway measures approximately 5' 6′ x 2' 6′ with the vertical elements of the frame chamfered and ending with simple step stops 8′ from the floor. The inner edge of the lower wall plate is likewise chamfered and step-stopped to form a simply decorated doorstep. The main studs measure an average 4½′ wide x 3½′ deep. The plaster on the corridor side (the present plaster is modern) was executed flush to the surface of the studs. The laths were attached to intermediate studs and their ends fixed to crude securing batons nailed to the inner edges of main studs. The batons are clearly visible on the reverse (painted) side of the wall.

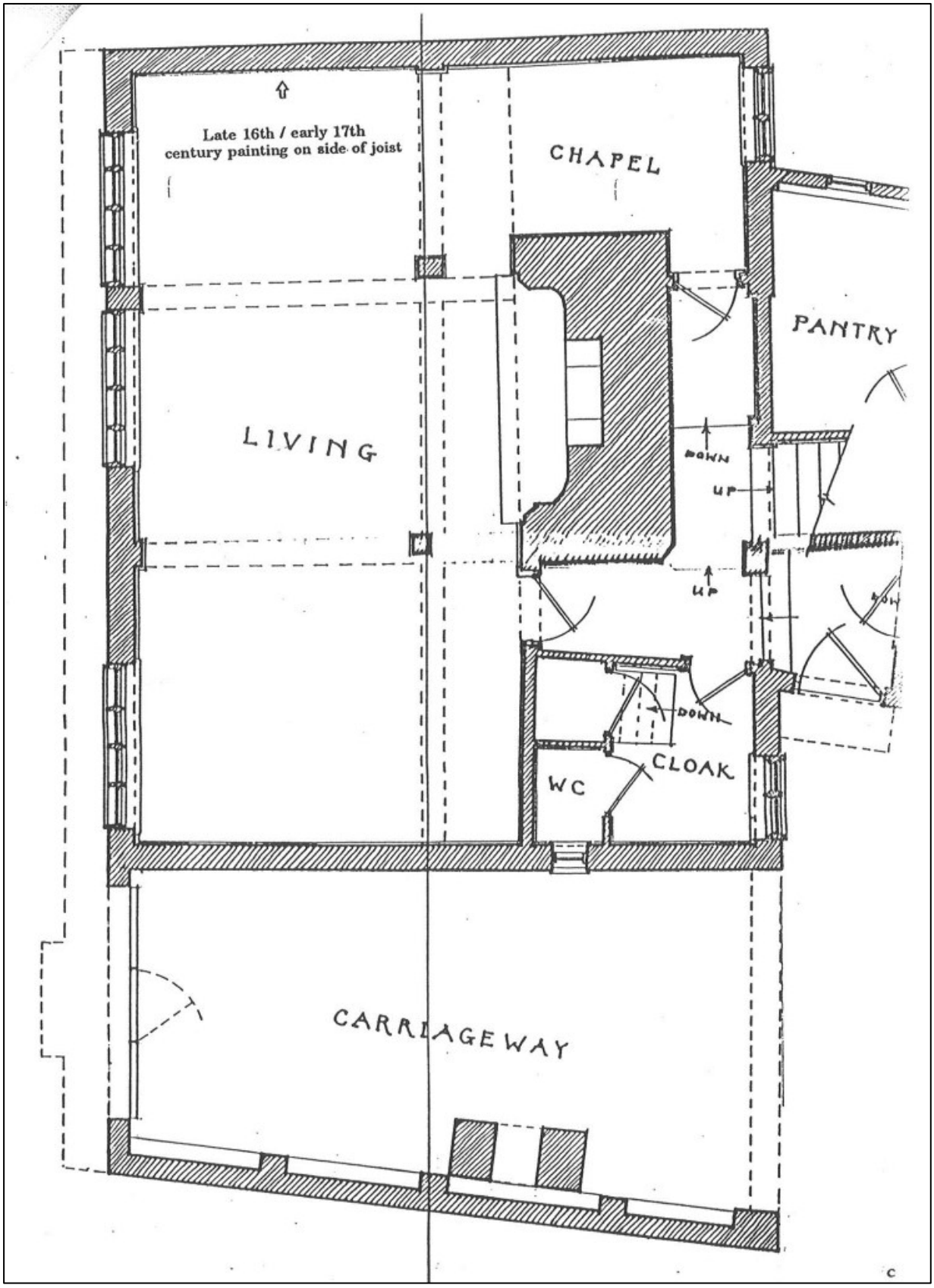
The laths were plastered on the reverse (i.e. within the room) using a very hair rich lime plaster. The plaster continues up and across the ceiling onto the upper part of the east wall opposite (forming the plaster infill over the beam). The remaining walls of the bedroom appear to have been replastered in recent times.

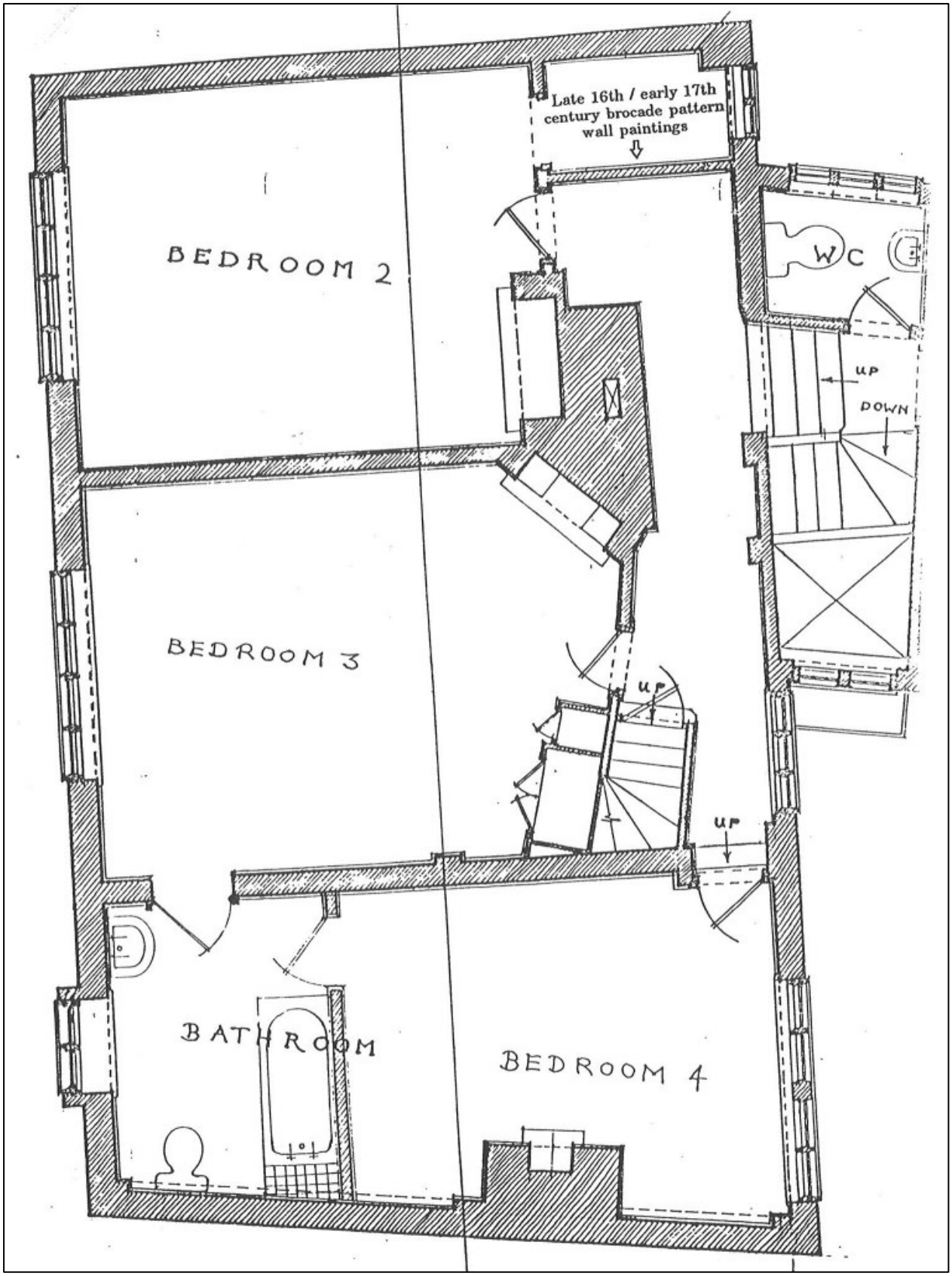
At some date the door was blocked in and a new entrance made into the bedroom through the adjacent wall to the left. The blocking was executed with split laths fixed to a central stud and covered with a mud/straw (cob) plaster. At a later date the corridor face of this infill was replastered using a sandy pink-coloured mortar (probably containing gypsum). This appears to have forced the mud/straw plaster off in areas (traces of mud can be found on the lath under the later plaster).

Discovered behind tongue and groove boarding, possibly applied c1919 or earlier, the painted decoration consists of late 16th/early 17th-century brocade patterns in red filling the plastered panels between the walls studs. The painting appears to have been executed in a secco technique (i.e. with the addition of a binding medium) on a white limewash ground with the brocade and scroll designs painted to fill the variously sized plaster panels exactly. The painting does not extend onto the adjacent timberwork and the overall effect of leaving the studs and batons visible is rather crude.

There are numerous remnants of early wallpapers on the face of the studs. A piece of wooden board in the upper left corner indicates that the plastered and painted panels were boarded over between the studs prior to redecoration with wallpaper.

(The above has been taken from a report for the Landmark Trust by Tom Organ of The Wallpaintings Workshop, who carried out the conservation of the paintings.)


Late 16th / early 17th century painting on side of joist
CHAPEL
PANTRY
LIVING
DOWN
UP
UP
DOWN
CLOAK
WC
CARRIAGEWAY


Late 16th / early 17th century brocade pattern wall paintings
BEDROOM 2
W C
UP
DOWN
BEDROOM 3
UP
UP
BATHROOM
BEDROOM 4

## Past Occupants of Sackville House

The layout of the borough of Grinstead was probably planned in the early 13th century as a wide street to be used as a marketplace. It was flanked by 48 burgage plots, on one of which is situated Sackville House. A **borough** is normally a town with a corporation and privileges - mostly commercial - conferred by a charter, and one that sends members to Parliament. In fact, East Grinstead never had a corporation and as no charter has been found, it is a borough by prescription. A borough was a place of local importance but chiefly it represented trade. The lowest common denominator of early boroughs was the possession of burgage tenure. This type of landownership was the basis of the economic fortunes of the vast majority of English medieval towns.

A **burgage** is the entire plot of land held by burgage tenure, which might contain a house, a couple of cottages, a barn and other buildings. In East Grinstead this plot of land upon which the burgage house stood is known as a portland or town land and its purpose was to provide food for the occupants - agriculture in an urban setting. Medieval burgage plots commonly took on a characteristic shape which was long and narrow with one end abutting on the marketplace or another principal street in the borough. By grouping the burgages together, a compact borough plan was formed, especially useful when there were no town walls or other defences.

A burgage holder was a burgess, citizen or townsman who held his land or tenement direct from the king or other lord for a certain yearly rent. The early burgage holders held commercial privileges at the markets and fairs which took place outside their houses by which they could trade before the non-burgage holders, thereby forestalling them. The burgesses also held full municipal rights and were responsible for the borough's administration. The Borough of East Grinstead was probably laid out by Gilbert de Aquila, (Gilbert de Laigle) Lord of the Honour of Pevensey some time before 1224. From about 1269 until 1607 it

One Stable in Middle Row. Rent .. .. .. .. .. 4*d.*

(H) **Laurence Langridge** 1 cottage in occ. of Henry Thomas. To the W. the Parish Cottage; to the E. cottage of John Langridge. Rent .. 2*d.*

(JK) **John Langridge** 2 cottages in occ. of Clemencia Harman, widow. To the W. cottage of Laurence Langridge; to the E. the High Street. Rent 4*d.*

(OP) **John Drewe** 2 cottages in occ. of Edmund Harman and William Gamon. To the W. cottage of Sir Richard Sackevile; to the E. the Queen's Highway. Rent .. .. .. .. .. .. 4*d.*

One shop and the currying house in the occ. of Edmund Harman. To the W. the Parish Cottage; to the E. shop of Thomas Duffelde. Rent .. 6*d.*

**Thomas Duffelde** 1 shop in Middle Row. Rent .. .. .. 1*d.*

**Edward Enfelde** 1 cottage in Middle Row. Rent .. .. .. 1*d.*

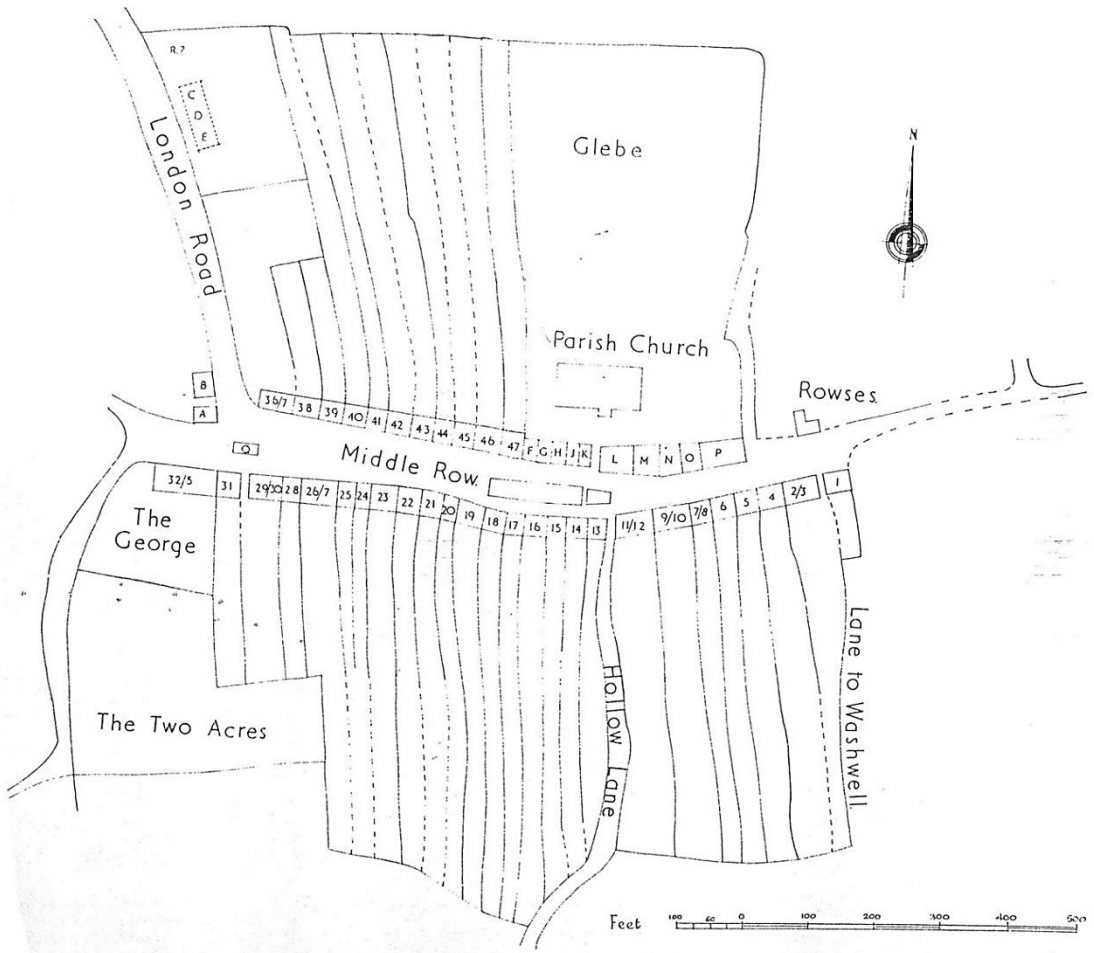
**Inhabitants of the parish of Estgrensted** 2 cottages, one in occ. of John Hasleden in Middle Row; the other (G) in occ. of Margarete Byran, widow; to the W. the cottage of Edward Goodwyn; to the E. the cottage of Laurence Langridge. Rent, for the two .. .. .. .. .. .. 4*d.*

Total Rents of the freeholders or burgesses of Estegrenestede (left blank—the total is 33*s.* 6½*d.*).

There is much useful information here, but it is not in a very convenient form. It is helpful to recast it into the following table, which should be read together with Map 1 (Fig. 1).

**1. Burgage Tenements**

| *No. on Plan* | *Burgess or Head Tenant* | *Occupier* | *Portlands, etc.* | *Modern Street Nos.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1–4 | John Payne | John Payne | 3 portlands | 80-88 High Street |
| 5 | T. Homewood | T. Homewood | 2 ,, | 74-76 ,, ,, |
| 6 | Andrew Ledger | Andrew Ledger | — | 70 ,, ,, |
| 7 | Sir R. Sackevile | Ed. Duffelde | 1 ,, | 68 E. ,, ,, |
| 8 | John Sherewoode | Richard Listney | 1 ,, | 68 W. ,, ,, |
| 9-10 | Andrew Cole | Thos. Wrighte | 2 ,, | Dorset House |
| 11-12 | John Duffelde | John Duffelde | 2 ,, | *Dorset Arms* |
| (Hollow Lane, now Hermitage Lane) | | | | |
| 13-14 | Rob. Hartefelde | Rob. Hartefelde | 2 ,, | 54-56 and Portland Road |
| 15 | Geo. Payne | Geo. Payne | 1 ,, | 48 E. High Street |
| 16 | T. Lullingden, sen. | T. Lullingden | 1 ,, | 48 W. ,, ,, |
| 17 | John Vowsden | Thos. Seale | 1 ,, | 46 ,, ,, |
| 18 | Thos. Fawkenor | Thos. Fawkenor | 1 ,, | 42-44 ,, ,, |
| 19-20 | John Ledes | John Wynsor | 11 ,, 2 posts | 34-40 ,, ,, |
| 21 | Thos. Hasell | John At tree | — | 30-32 ,, ,, |
| 22 | Jas. Baldewyn | Henry Goble | — | 26-28 ,, ,, |
| 23-25 | Ed. Goodwyn | Ed. Goodwyn | 4 ,, | 16-24 ,, ,, |
| 26-27 | Geo. Partriche | Geo. Partriche | — | 10-14 ,, ,, |
| 28 | John Norton | Jas. Baldwyn | — | 6 ,, ,, |
| 29-30 | John Payne | Thos. Underhill | 2 ,, | 2-4 ,, ,, |
| 31 | Wm. Stanforde | Wm. Stanforde | — | 1 Judges Terrace |
| 32-35 | Sir R. Sackevile | Edward Hills | — | Clarendon House and Old Stone Ho. |
| 36-37 | Sir R. Sackevile | Ed. Kippinge | 4 ,, | 1-5 High Street |
| 38 | Edward Payne | John Farley | — | 7-11 ,, ,, |
| 39 | John Bysshe | William Bet | — | 13 ,, ,, |
| 40-41 | Wm. Owterede | Wm. Owterede | 2 ,, | 15-23 ,, ,, |
| 42-43 | T. Lullingden, jun. | T. Lullingden, jun. | 2 ,, | 25-31 ,, ,, |




MAP 1. A reconstruction of the borough in 1564.



**A reconstruction of the borough in 1564**

was owned either by the Crown directly or by the Duchy of Lancaster, for whom its chief purpose was as a source of revenue. About 1280 and thereafter, the annual rent for a burgage was 3d  paid to the owner of the borough.

By 1295 East Grinstead was taxed as a borough and it was taxation that formed the bridge between the early boroughs and Parliament. The origin of the House of Commons lay in the belief that there should be no taxation without representation: the Crown had to consult the people before taxing them. The Commons arrived in Parliament during the 13th century and the people's first representatives were two knights from each shire but by 1265 they were joined by two citizens from each city and two burgesses from each borough. East Grinstead sent its first members to Parliament in 1299. Although the arrangements in each borough were different, generally each burgess had two votes for the return of their two representatives and the right to vote depended on showing burgage title. Burgages were easily bought and sold which made them attractive propositions to the unscrupulous vote hunters in later centuries.

In his Topography of East Grinstead Borough, in the *Sussex Archaelogical Collections* 106, (1968), P.D.Wood examines the borough in 1564 when a Survey of Crown properties was carried out by the Queen's surveyor on 9th August. According to Mr Wood's map derived from the Survey, Andrew Ledger lived on the site of Sackville House (see A reconstruction of the borough in 1564 with map and list of burgage tenements). However, its subsequent descent traced in court books at the East Sussex Record Office, implies that Sir Richard Sackville was a more likely owner. This would accord with the name given to the house in the 19th century.

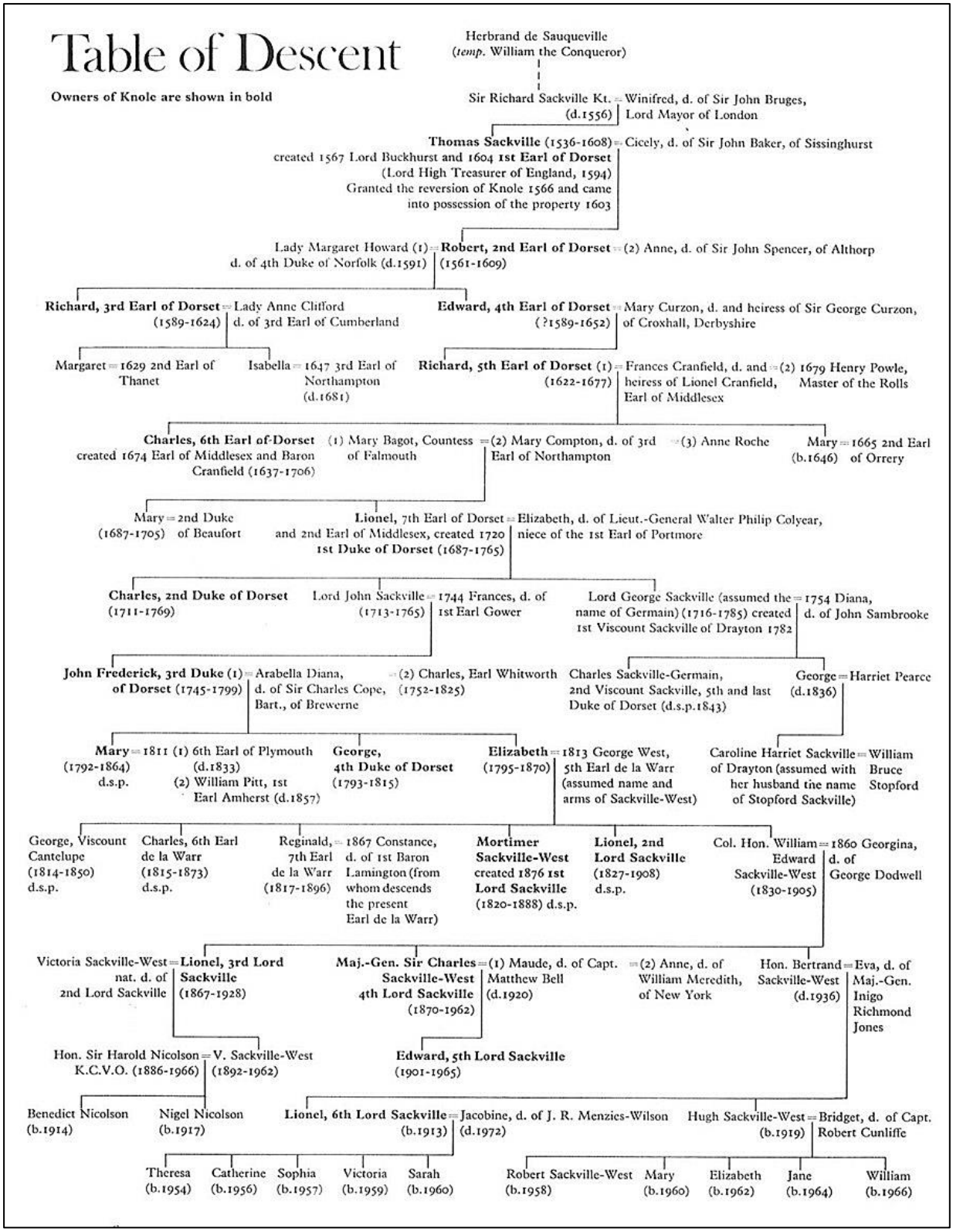


Table of Descent
Owners of Knole are shown in bold
Herbrand de Sauqueville (temp. William the Conqueror)
Sir Richard Sackville Kt. (d.1556) = Winifred, d. of Sir John Bruges, Lord Mayor of London
Thomas Sackville (1536-1608) created 1567 Lord Buckhurst and 1604 1st Earl of Dorset (Lord High Treasurer of England, 1594) Granted the reversion of Knole 1566 and came into possession of the property 1603 = Cicely, d. of Sir John Baker, of Sissinghurst
Lady Margaret Howard (1) d. of 4th Duke of Norfolk (d.1591) = Robert, 2nd Earl of Dorset (1561-1609) = (2) Anne, d. of Sir John Spencer, of Althorp
Richard, 3rd Earl of Dorset (1589-1624) = Lady Anne Clifford d. of 3rd Earl of Cumberland
Edward, 4th Earl of Dorset (?1589-1652) = Mary Curzon, d. and heiress of Sir George Curzon, of Croxhall, Derbyshire
Margaret = 1629 2nd Earl of Thanet
Isabella = 1647 3rd Earl of Northampton (d.1681)
Richard, 5th Earl of Dorset (1) (1622-1677) = Frances Cranfield, d. and heiress of Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex = (2) 1679 Henry Powle, Master of the Rolls
Charles, 6th Earl of Dorset created 1674 Earl of Middlesex and Baron Cranfield (1637-1706)
(1) Mary Bagot, Countess of Falmouth
(2) Mary Compton, d. of 3rd Earl of Northampton
(3) Anne Roche
Mary (b.1646) = 1665 2nd Earl of Orrery
Mary (1687-1705) = 2nd Duke of Beaufort
Lionel, 7th Earl of Dorset and 2nd Earl of Middlesex, created 1720 1st Duke of Dorset (1687-1765) = Elizabeth, d. of Lieut.-General Walter Philip Colyear, niece of the 1st Earl of Portmore
Charles, 2nd Duke of Dorset (1711-1769)
Lord John Sackville (1713-1765) = 1744 Frances, d. of 1st Earl Gower
Lord George Sackville (assumed the name of Germain) (1716-1785) created 1st Viscount Sackville of Drayton 1782 = 1754 Diana, d. of John Sambrooke
John Frederick, 3rd Duke of Dorset (1745-1799) = Arabella Diana, d. of Sir Charles Cope, Bart., of Brewerne
(2) Charles, Earl Whitworth (1752-1825)
Charles Sackville-Germain, 2nd Viscount Sackville, 5th and last Duke of Dorset (d.s.p.1843)
George (d.1836) = Harriet Pearce
Mary (1792-1864) d.s.p. = 1811 (1) 6th Earl of Plymouth (d.1833) (2) William Pitt, 1st Earl Amherst (d.1857)
George, 4th Duke of Dorset (1793-1815)
Elizabeth (1795-1870) = 1813 George West, 5th Earl de la Warr (assumed name and arms of Sackville-West)
Caroline Harriet Sackville of Drayton (assumed with her husband the name of Stopford Sackville) = William Bruce Stopford
George, Viscount Cantelupe (1814-1850) d.s.p.
Charles, 6th Earl de la Warr (1815-1873) d.s.p.
Reginald, 7th Earl de la Warr (1817-1896) = 1867 Constance, d. of 1st Baron Lamington (from whom descends the present Earl de la Warr)
Mortimer Sackville-West created 1876 1st Lord Sackville (1820-1888) d.s.p.
Lionel, 2nd Lord Sackville (1827-1908) d.s.p.
Col. Hon. William Edward Sackville-West (1830-1905) = 1860 Georgina, d. of George Dodwell
Victoria Sackville-West nat. d. of 2nd Lord Sackville = Lionel, 3rd Lord Sackville (1867-1928)
Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Sackville-West 4th Lord Sackville (1870-1962) = (1) Maude, d. of Capt. Matthew Bell (d.1920)
(2) Anne, d. of William Meredith, of New York
Hon. Bertrand Sackville-West (d.1936) = Eva, d. of Maj.-Gen. Inigo Richmond Jones
Hon. Sir Harold Nicolson K.C.V.O. (1886-1966) = V. Sackville-West (1892-1962)
Edward, 5th Lord Sackville (1901-1965)
Benedict Nicolson (b.1914)
Nigel Nicolson (b.1917)
Lionel, 6th Lord Sackville (b.1913) = Jacobine, d. of J. R. Menzies-Wilson (d.1972)
Hugh Sackville-West (b.1919) = Bridget, d. of Capt. Robert Cunliffe
Theresa (b.1954)
Catherine (b.1956)
Sophia (b.1957)
Victoria (b.1959)
Sarah (b.1960)
Robert Sackville-West (b.1958)
Mary (b.1960)
Elizabeth (b.1962)
Jane (b.1964)
William (b.1966)

Only about 14 of the burgages in the 1560s were not occupied by the owners. Sir Richard Sackville, whose son Thomas came into the possession of Knole in 1603, owned three burgages, evidence of the Sackville family beginning to acquire property and influence in East Grinstead, which itself was a prosperous market town. It was probably still the case that the burgage holders were entitled to two votes at elections at this time but from about 1640, the number of burgages was increased to 50. By 1832 and the parliamentary Reform Act, the number of burgages had decreased to 36 following their acquisition by the Sackvilles.

If the date 1574 on the fireplace upstairs is the correct one for the rebuilding of Sackville House, then the building Andrew Ledger lived in was clearly an earlier one. By the time of the Survey, many burgage houses had lost their portlands, which makes the survival of ours in the 1990s all the more remarkable. No houses from the earliest years of the borough exist although part of Amherst House, next door, may be dated to the first quarter of the 14th century. This implies that the street frontages had probably been built by then. Much rebuilding in the borough took place when Sackville House was altered and improved in the late 16th century. About 1645 a mercer, John Allen, lived in this house but he had died by 1666.

By 1785 the Rev. Stileman Bostock is paying Land Tax at Sackville House. Aged 25, he married Catherine Bethune in 1780, the same year that he became curate at East Grinstead. He ended his curacy in 1789 and became vicar two years later. An undated map of East Grinstead by William Figg shows Thomas Fulcher as the occupier of Sackville House, but we know from the Church rate book of 1790 that John Collins was living at the house by then. If Mr Bostock moved out when his curacy ended in 1789 and no earlier, then the map could possibly be dated to 1789/1790.

In tracing the history of Sackville House, The Dorset Settlement Act of 1827 is helpful. (Thomas Sackville became Earl Dorset in 1604 and the 7th Earl was created 1st Duke of Dorset in 1720.) This was

> An Act for vesting certain real estates late of the most noble John Frederick Duke of Dorset deceased situate in the borough town of East Grinstead in the county of Sussex in trustees upon trust to sell the same and lay out the money thence arising in the purchase of other estates to be settled to the same uses as the estates so sold.

John Frederick, the 3rd Duke, had died in 1799 and it was decided to sell certain of his properties which were not creating much income. Many of these were in East Grinstead and one of them was Sackville House, described in 1827 as a:

> Messuage, burgage and portland with outbuildings, yards, gardens, orchards, lands and hereditaments formerly Rev. S. Bostock, late Thomas Fulcher, now John Collins annual rent £20.

The fact that the Figg map describes Fulcher as an occupier, that Bostock was paying land tax in 1785, and that John Collins was living in the house in 1790 implies that the names appearing in the Settlement description were lease-holder occupiers rather than trustees acting for the Dorset estate.

The Church rate book of 1790 reveals that John Collins, the attorney and the Bailiff of the Borough in 1794, was living in the house in 1790. The census of 1811 shows another John Collins, a surgeon and probably his son, living here with four males and three females. He died in 1834 aged 57 and he was the father of Miles Bailey Collins who appears in the census of 1841 and in the Tithe Aportionment of the same year. In the next census of 1851, Miles Collins, aged 39, also a surgeon but with no practice, lived in the house with his widowed mother, Ann, as well as a housemaid, Amelia Penticost. By the late 1850s Miles Collins was active as a surgeon and he died in 1863 aged 57.

From at least 1790 until about 1861 Sackville House seems to have been lived in by three generations of the Collins family: an attorney and two surgeons. The 1861 census shows William Payne, a master bootmaker, with his wife, four

children and one grandchild living at Sackville House. Edward Lynn, a builder, seems to have moved in soon afterwards as his nameboard appears in a photograph attributed to 1864. It appears that he took in a lodger, as Mrs Dempster's contribution to Reminiscences of East Grinstead, published in 1973, tell us that

> My father, Dr. P. E. Wallis, began his career as a doctor in East Grinstead in 1877, lodging in a damp room in company with swarms of lice over the gateway of the lovely now Sackville House.

But it cannot have been too uncomfortable because Mr Wallis was still there in 1886 whilst Mr Lynn's widow lived on in the house until the 1890s. Edward Lynn was also a carpenter and undertaker and Mr Paul Dobson, one of the Mrs Honess's Trustees, said that he had always understood that the ruts in the paving of the waggonway were made by the hearses. In 1899 another surgeon, Charles Edwards was living there according to Kelly's Directory and from 1903 until 1905 it listed William Young under gentry but by 1907 only Mrs Young appears. From 1910 until 1913, A.W. Sturgeon, a committee member of the East Grinstead branch of the National Farmers' Union, lived at Sackville House. From 1915 no one lived there and it was in a deplorable state when Mr and Mrs Geoffrey Webb acquired it in 1919.

It seems that Sackville House acquired its present name sometime in the last century. After the 1827 Vestment Act, the trustees do not seem to have sold the Dorset properties but rather to have continued to manage them as trustees. However the final portion of the family property was sold on 8th June, 1882. Another property in the High Street was purchased in 1877 when Dorset property in the town was sold. If this property was strictly Dorset property as in the 1827 Act then 1877 might be the date that Sackville House was also sold and possibly named Sackville House. It is so-called in passing in an account of a Sussex Archaeological Society visit in October, 1885. By then the house had clearly acquired an antiquarian interest. Therefore the sale and present naming of Sackville House might be placed between the period of 1877 to 1885.

## East Grinstead – an Early Borough

'Green stede' means a pasture clearing and the original green stead was cleared within the Weald, or as the Romano-British called it, the Silva Anderida, the Forest of the great fort of Pevensey. In her poem The Land, written while she was in Ispahan in 1926, Vita Sackville West, describes the remoteness of the ancient Weald:

> For this was Sylva Anderida.
> Here Stretched Andredsweald, and joined the wood of Blean,
> Forest and warren, cropped by herds of deer,
> And droves of swine that stirred the oak-trees' mast;
> So wild a tract, so darkly green,
> No stranger might forsake the trodden way
> Or venture through the trees towards the dene,
> But on his horn must blow a warning blast;

The Weald dominated the northern part of the Rape of Pevensey. Domesday Sussex in 1086 was divided into five portions or Rapes: Hastings, Lewes, Pevensey, Steyning/Bramber, and Chichester. These units of local government were used for military purposes and they probably originated under the Saxon Kings: a rap is a measuring rope in saxon and reaps, a space. Each rape was in the hands of a single tenant-in-chief and contained a town or borough of maritime, military or commercial importance. This system, inherited by William the Conqueror, ensured him a safe passage from the Channel to his capital in London. In 1086 the Rape of Pevensey was held by the Count of Mortain.

The Domesday entry for East Grinstead Hundred does not refer to a town but a priest is mentioned and in about 1091 the gift of a church is recorded. At this stage, therefore there was probably the church and little else at the junction of the London to Lewes road and the road to Turner's Hill running along the ridgeway. This sideroad was the preferred location when the Borough was laid out sometime before 1224 probably by Gilbert de Aquila of Pevensey, no doubt because the main road slopes quite steeply and the flatter ground on what is now the High Street was more attractive.

The regularity of the layout and the obvious diversion of the main road to the west at Judges Terrace strongly suggests that the borough was planned on a virgin site. From 1269 until 1607, when it was acquired by the Sackville family, East Grinstead belonged either to the Crown or the Duchy of Lancaster. The owners of the burgage houses therefore paid their annual rent directly to the Crown or the Duchy.

The first stall market probably took place opposite the south door of the church until Middle Row grew up here between 1394 and 1435 when the fairs and markets were moved to the western part of the High Street, possibly making the eastern part where Sackville House stands rather more salubrious. The small group of buildings east of the churchyard next to Sackville College was known as the Manor of Rowses and was always outside the Borough. In the late 16th century, when Sackville House was rebuilt, many of the first burgage houses were altered and improved. Floors were inserted (although not at Sackville House which is a continuous jettied house and was rebuilt), along with staircases and chimneys, and many were enlarged.

Over the years, the Sackville family had been acquiring burgages in the borough of East Grinstead. In 1607 they acquired the borough of East Grinstead. For nearly three centuries they dominated the affairs of the town, especially through parliamentary elections because the system of burgage tenure and the right to vote was particularly susceptible to manipulation through acquisition of burgages. Thomas Sackville, a cousin of Elizabeth I on the Boleyn side, and a poet and playwright at court, was created Lord Buckhurst in 1567 and became the 1st Earl of Dorset in 1604, the year after he took possession of Knole. Sackville College is the family's most important memorial in East Grinstead.

Lying nearly opposite Sackville House, it is a remarkable survival, still fulfilling its original role as an almshouse. It was founded by the 2nd Earl of Dorset who died in 1609, the year after his father, but was not built until 1619 by Richard, the

3rd Earl. It is some measure of the town's importance that, despite the nearness of Knole, when the College was built, the Sackvilles had some rooms built there for themselves. At this stage East Grinstead could regarded as the second county town; the Assizes were held here or in Horsham in the winter when the weather was too bad to get to Lewes. It was a flourishing market town at the centre of a large agricultural and ironworking district.

The Sackville family is commemorated not only by the College but by Sackville House itself which, it seems was at one time owned by the Dukes of Dorset; by the Dorset Arms; and also by Amherst House next door. The 4th Duke's sister Mary, married secondly William Pitt (not be confused with the Prime Minister), 1st Earl Amherst, d.1857. The road leading north from the High Street is named after her eldest son, George, Viscount Cantelupe, the name of a town not far from Rome.

The church, a fine landmark, was struck by lightning in 1684 when it caught fire and the whole town was threatened. Luckily the wind changed direction and the danger was averted. In 1785 the tower collapsed again due to its poor construction a century earlier. In 1789 rebuilding began but funds ran out and an Act of Parliament was obtained authorising trustees to raise the necessary monies. The architect of the present Gothic building was James Wyatt, and the tower was designed by J.T. Groves in 1811 and carried out by William Inwood and his son Henry.

The young Princess Victoria passed through East Grinstead with her mother when her horses were changed at the Dorset Arms and she was ‘loudly cheered by a great gathering of inhabitants.’ The East Grinstead coaching business was operated by the Batchelor family by 1753. They lived at the Dorset Arms and ensured that the journey to Brighton took two days so their customers spent the night at the inn, paying coaching fees and lodging bills. The route from London to Lewes and Brighton passed through Croydon, Godstone Green, East Grinstead,

Uckfield and Lewes. An inn has been on the site of the Dorset Arms, at the end of the row from Sackville House, from the 16th century. At various times it has been called the Ounce, a heraldic name for the snow leopard, supporter of the Sackville coat of arms, the Cat (or leopard), and the Ounce and Ivy Bush. (The bush indicates that it was a tavern - i.e. licensed to sell wine.)

Until the advent of the railway, affairs in East Grinstead flowed smoothly but not too fast. Due to relative lack of prosperity in the 19th century, most of the old timber-framed houses have been left at a time when so many houses were torn down elsewhere. Happily for the old borough, the railway station was located well to the north so that this area has not been spoilt by Victorian development. With the present popularity of East Grinstead as a place to live and indeed to commute from, pressures from developers are ever-present. Mrs Honess was a doughty fighter against such forces and it was her particular wish that her house and garden should always be used as a home. The Landmark use ensures that this will be the case and the plot laid out before 1224 will remain intact and unspoilt for posterity.

## Sackville College

The most distinguished building in East Grinstead is Sackville College which was founded by Robert, 2nd Earl of Dorset, in 1608 and built by his son, Richard. The 2nd Earl's will reveals that he had long wished to build 'an Hospital or College towards the relief of one and thirty single and unmarried persons, thereof one and twenty to be men and the other ten to be women, there to live, to pray, serve, honour, and praise Almighty God.' His executors were to buy a 'fit place' in East Grinstead 'to thereupon erect and build a convenient house, of brick and stone,' and 'that it should be called Sackville College for the poor.'

They chose an admirable site, just outside the ancient borough boundary, on a slight incline from the High Street. It is believed that many of the building materials came from Buckhurst, the Sackvilles' house at Withyham, much of which was being dismantled at the time in favour of their house at Knole. The earliest date recorded for the College is 1619 which is on the knocker that used to adorn the great door. There were the usual rules governing such institutions: fines for disorderly behaviour, no illicit guests, no absence of over twelve hours, and no gambling other than at Christmas when the inhabitants were allowed to play games in the public, but not the private, rooms. In 1631 the rules concerning the use of tobacco were laid down with the utmost severity:

> If either the Warden or any brother or sister do take any tobacco in the house, or keep any in the said College or Hospitall, they shall forfeit five shillings … for that same is offensive to many, procureth much drinking and other conveniences most meet to be forborn by all and used by none.

The huge fine relects the enormity of the crime.

John Julius Norwich in his *Architecture of Southern England* describes it thus:

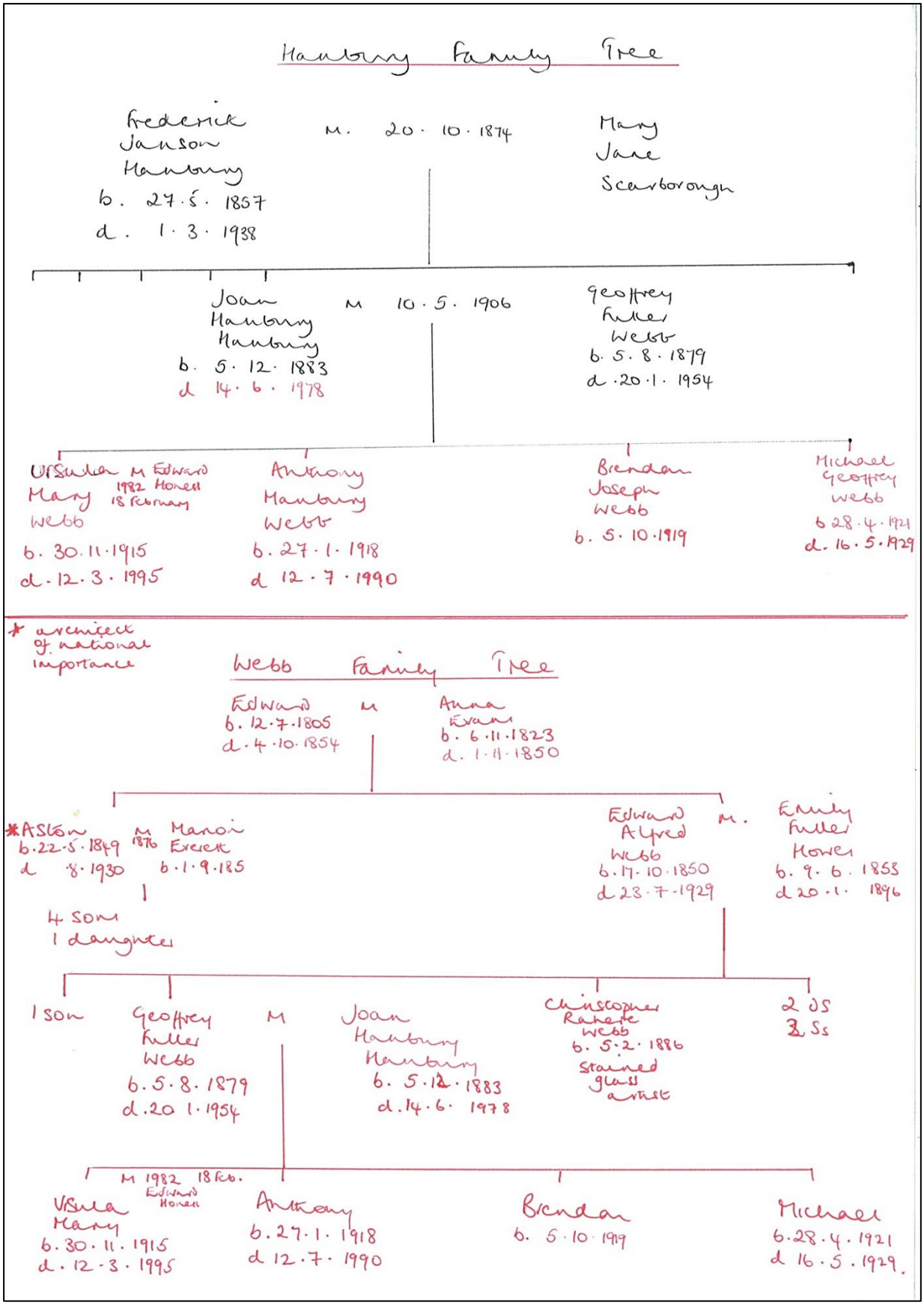
> Behind the long, low stone frontage with its three widely separated gables and tall chimneys lies a beautiful, square, near-symmetrical quadrangle like that of an Oxford or Cambridge college, around which are the almshouses, still used for their original purpose. The actual private accommodation is not shown to the public … but the Hall is

> worth a visit (especially for the sake of the screen at its west end) and so, in its Victorian way, is the Chapel, now largely the work of William Butterfield in 1850. (His work was commissioned by the Warden of the time, J.M. Neale, who wrote *Good King Wenceslas*.) The two styles blend more harmoniously than might have been expected.

The chapel has some stained glass from Munich and the Hall has a fine hammerbeam roof.

In 1632, soon after the College first opened its doors to the deserving poor, we read that the brethren were 'ready to perish for want of bread', due to the financial affairs of the College being much mishandled. The Founder's son had sold many of the Sackville estates and the purchasers disclaimed all knowledge of the additional rent charges on their land which formed the only income of the College. Eventually the numerous law-suits were resolved in 1700.

On 25th February, 1851 there was a riot at the College due to dissatisfaction with the way that burial services were being conducted there. When one of the female inmates, named Aichin, died, the relatives got hold of her corpse and carried out the funeral to their own wishes. That evening windows were smashed and there was general unrest outside the College. The main protagonists were sent to the Assizes at Lewes and subsequently they apologised for their unruly conduct. Since then, the affairs of Sackville College have run smoothly and today it is still used as an almshouse of rather special character.


Hanbury Family Tree
Frederick Janson Hanbury
b. 27.5.1857
d. 1.3.1938
M. 20.10.1874
Mary Jane Scarborough
Joan Hanbury Hanbury
b. 5.12.1883
d 14.6.1978
M 10.5.1906
Geoffrey Fuller Webb
b. 5.8.1879
d .20.1.1954
Ursula Mary Webb
b. 30.11.1915
d. 12.3.1995
M Edward Howell 1982 18 February
Anthony Hanbury Webb
b. 27.1.1918
d 12.7.1990
Brendan Joseph Webb
b. 5.10.1919
Michael Geoffrey Webb
b 28.4.1921
d. 16.5.1929
* architect of national importance
Webb Family Tree
Edward
b. 12.7.1805
d. 4.10.1854
M
Anna Evans
b. 6.11.1823
d. 1.11.1850
*Aston
b. 22.5.1849
d .8.1930
M 1876
Manon Ercleck
b. 1.9.185
4 sons
1 daughter
Edward Alfred Webb
b. 17.10.1850
d 23.7.1929
M.
Emily Fuller Howell
b. 9.6.1855
d 20.1.1896
1 son
Geoffrey Fuller Webb
b. 5.8.1879
d. 20 1.1954
M
Joan Hanbury Hanbury
b. 5.12.1883
d. 14.6.1978
Christopher Raherte Webb
b. 5.2.1886
stained glass artist
2 Ds
2 Ss
M 1982 18 Feb.
Edward Howell
Ursula Mary
b. 30.11.1915
d. 12.3.1995
Anthony
b. 27.1.1918
d 12.7.1990
Brendan
b. 5.10.1919
Michael
b. 28.4.1921
d 16.5.1929.

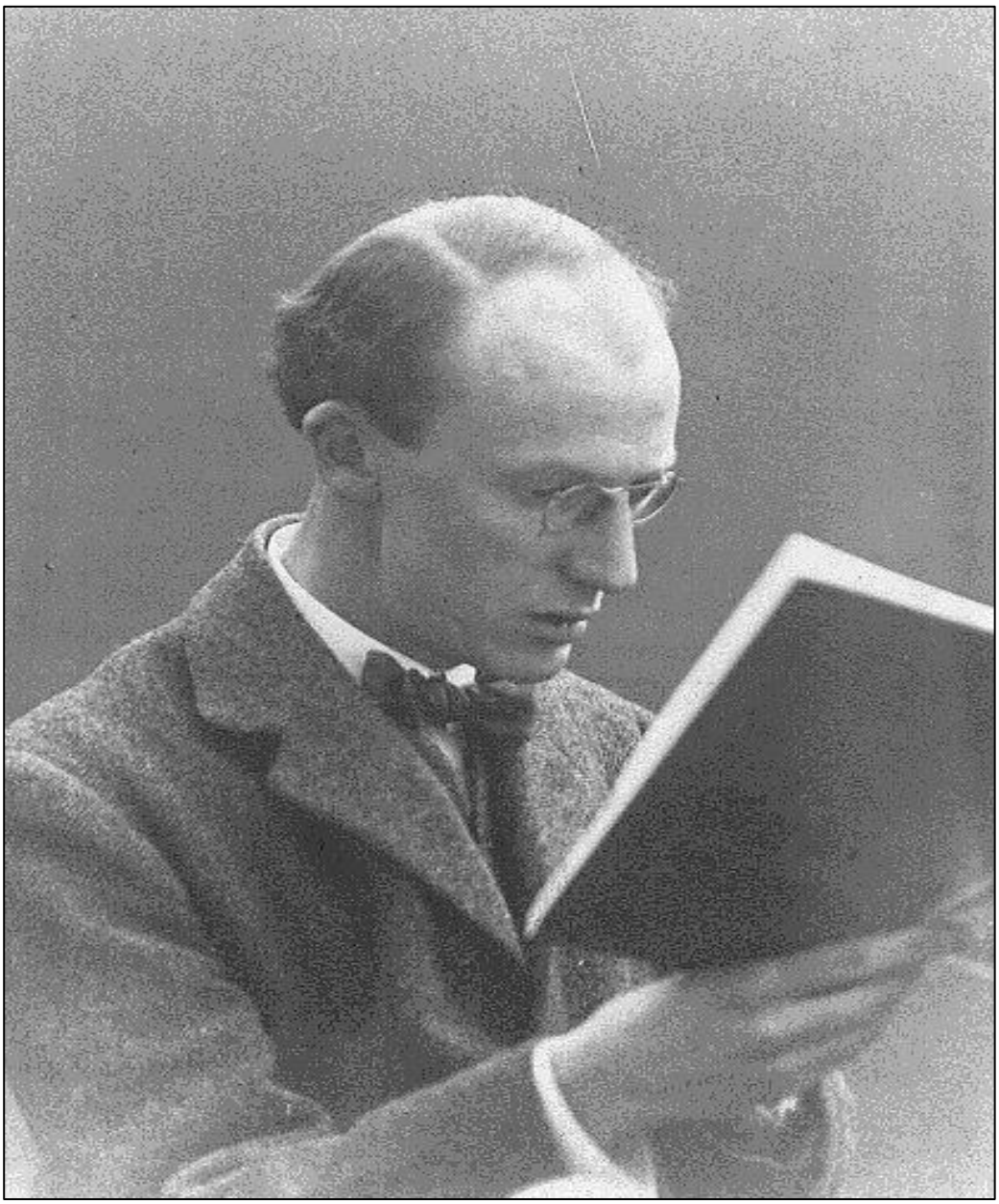
## Geoffrey and Joan Webb

**The Webb and Hanbury Families**

In December, 1919 Mr and Mrs Webb moved into Sackville House. During the First World War the house had been uninhabited and by February, 1919 it was ruinous. The present kitchen wall, facing the garden was covered with dilapidated weatherboarding and trees had been allowed to grow right up against the house. The Webbs' decision to save and live in an ancient house was a very brave one. Architectural conservation, which nowadays we take for granted, was rather unusual immediately after the War. A photograph of 1920 from the family album reveals just how much work must have gone on in the intervening year. Everything appears to be in perfect condition and the top lawn has been laid out with its flower beds planted and growing well. Along with Porch and Amherst Houses, Sackville belonged to Frederick Janson Hanbury of Brockhurst, Joan Webb's father.

Mr Hanbury was Vice-Chairman of the pharmaceutical company, Allen and Hanburys, which had been founded at an apothecary's shop in The Old Plough Court off Lombard Street, in 1715. The company, which was taken over by Glaxo in 1959, used to manufacture surgical instruments, operating tables, orthopaedic beds, cod liver oil, herbal remedies, and the famous Allenbury's redcurrant pastilles. Latterly it had factories and pharmacies all over the world.

Brockhurst, Mr Hanbury's country home, lay on the Eastbourne road between East Grinstead and Forest Row and had a famous rock garden. (It was sold in the early 1950's and has now been split up into a number of houses.) Mr Hanbury was a prominent member of the Royal Horticultural Society and he employed 43 gardeners there. Entomology and botany were his favourite subjects and he spent his holidays collecting examples. He accumulated material for the Flora of Kent and whilst working on this met Charles Darwin, who was living at Downe. The Hanbury family spent much time at La Mortola, a villa with a marvellous garden on the Italian Riviera, belonging to Mr Hanbury's cousin, Sir Thomas Hanbury.



**Geoffrey Webb**

It is probable that the garden at Sackville House was laid out with the help of gardeners from Brockhurst but to the plan of the Webbs, perhaps with the help of Mr Hanbury.

Two particularly unusual specimens which caught the eye of our gardener are the Persian ironwood tree, Parrotta persica, and the calico bush, Kalmia latiflora, both just below the bottom terrace, to the right and left of the yew arch respectively. The love of plants passed through the generations and Father Damian's (Anthony's) obituary, reprinted at the back, mentions the pleasure he obtained from ‘a tiny greenhouse in which he grew the rarest of orchids’, moreover he took his degree at Oxford in botany.

On 10th May, 1906, Joan Hanbury married Geoffrey Webb, a stained glass artist from another talented and prestigious family. His uncle was Aston Webb, just embarking on a series of commissions of national importance: the main facade of the Victoria & Albert Museum, 1909; Admiralty Arch, 1910; and the east facade of Buckingham Palace, 1913. In his obituary, H.S. Goodhart-Rendel wrote, ‘the planning of his buildings is simple and direct, and their ornamental character is what in their day was considered appropriate.’ Undoubtedly, their style was very different from those of another architect member of the family, Philip Webb, responsible for Standen, just outside East Grinstead.

Aston Webb's younger brother, Edward, was Geoffrey's father. He was a Fellow of the Society of the Antiquaries and compiled a history of the church of St. Bartholomew the Great at Smithfield. Geoffrey was educated at Rugby and Westminster Art School from where he joined the studio of Kempe and after a short partnership with Herbert Bryans, set up on his own. One of the advantages of living at Sackville House was that he could use the spacious North facing attic as his studio. Geoffrey Webb's obituary reprinted from the Journal of the British Society of Master Glass-Painters, also at the back of these notes, deals with his professional life and the key to his work seems to be the lines:

**The Webb family, from left to right, Anthony, Michael, Joan, Brendan, Ursula.**

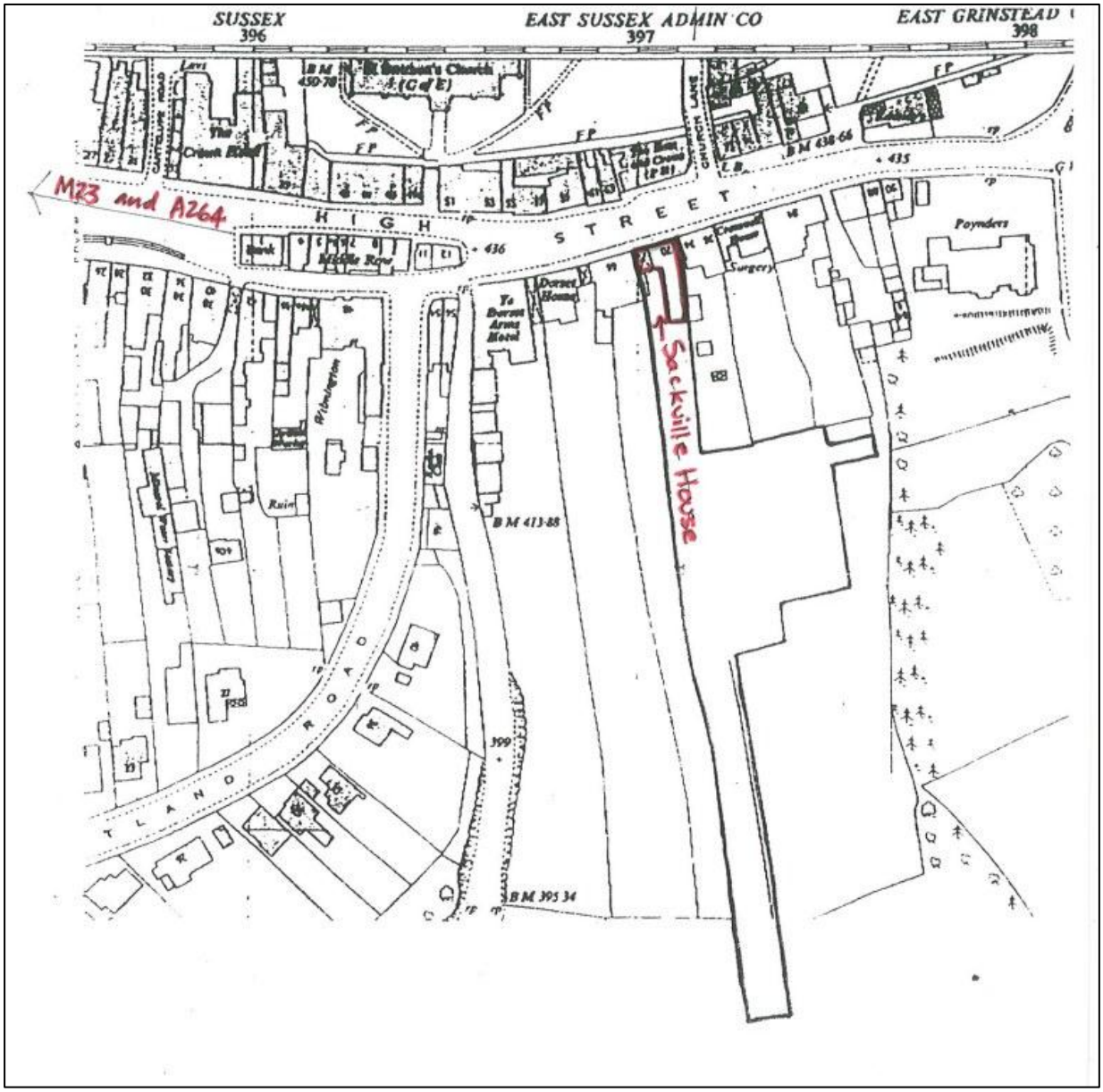
> No artist more firmly grasped than did Geoffrey Webb the principle that the first function of a window is to admit light, and where Kempe's rich windows often seriously darken an interior, Webb's glass brought gaiety of colour and richness of theme with no more than a softening of the light which still flooded through them into the buildings.

The two roundels in the chapel at Sackville House, were made by him. The marriage between Geoffrey Webb and Joan Hanbury, was the union of two artistic people, for Joan herself had attended The Slade School of Art.

When they moved into Sackville House, the Webbs had Ursula, aged five, Anthony aged two and Brendan, born two months before. Two years later, Michael was born.

Michael had a heart problem and died tragically young, aged eight. The family photograph album, beautifully captioned in white ink, shows family holidays in English resorts like Bembridge and Sheringham and then in September and October, 1926 there are pictures of the pilgrimage undertaken to Assisi and Rome.

By this time both Geoffrey and Joan Webb had converted to Roman Catholicism. They were a particularly devout family and the atmosphere of Sackville House with its chapel reflects this. Both Anthony and Brendan became Benedictine monks at Ampleforth Abbey in Yorkshire, from where they were appointed parish priests in Leeds and Liverpool. Geoffrey Webb died in 1954 but Mrs Webb lived until 1978 in Sackville House and in her final years was looked after by her daughter, Ursula. Mrs Webb's bedroom was the one where the paintings have been discovered. Towards the end of her life, she used what is now the double bedroom above the kitchen as her sitting room and it was known as the back parlour. The main sitting room with the chapel was always called the parlour.


SUSSEX
396
EAST SUSSEX ADMIN CO
397
EAST GRINSTEAD
398
M23 and A264
HIGH STREET
Sackville House
Poynders
Surgery
Dorset Arms Hotel
Dorset House
Ruin
BM 413-88
BM 395 34
436
435
399

Father Damian Webb, (Anthony) took a great interest in the origins of children's games, particularly those reflected in song. For a short while he worked with the 'Mouseman', the woodcarver in Yorkshire and he had correspondence with Heath-Robinson. Father Benedict Webb, (Brendan) trained as a doctor at St. Bartholomew's Hospital and during the War was a chaplain and doctor aboard ship. Until recently he has been a parish priest in Grassendale, a particularly demanding area of Liverpool. He is soon to be sub-Prior at Ampleforth.

Ursula Webb contracted Crohn's disease at a young age when it was still regarded as terminal. However, sustained by the family's faith, she survived. Later in her life, she worked as an auxiliary nurse at the Queen Victoria Hospital at East Grinstead, with Sir Benjamin Ryland, the great eye specialist. Ursula married Edward Walter Honess in 1982, four years after the death of her mother. Her bedroom was the one above the waggon way and Ted's was the room which is now the new bathroom and landing above the back hall. Like all her family, Ursula had a delightful sense of humour; and was a very capable person who loved her garden, growing vegetables and fruit at the bottom.

Her love of the portland at Sackville House and the view of Ashdown Forest from her bedroom inspired her to fight hard on behalf of the local protection society against development of the last portlands. As a young girl, she had riden her horse from the back garden to the Forest without having to go on any roads

In his first letter to the Landmark Trust, Father Benedict Webb ended saying 'Nothing would give our family more happiness than to know that the future of Sackville House is assured as a residence and with its beautiful garden intact.' Mrs Honess died in 1995 and in a gesture of great magnanimity, she left Sackville House to the Landmark Trust in her will. Our use will ensure that her own wish, as expressed by her younger brother, will always be respected.

**Windows by Geoffrey Webb in St Mary's Church, East Grinstead**

## Work by Geoffrey Webb iin East Grinstead[1]

**The North or Hastie Memorial Doors**

As well as designing some windows with his recognisable trademark spider's web in one corner at St Mary's Church, Geoffrey Webb was also involved in the design of the North Doors in nearby St Swithun's church. These are from the workshop of Robert Thompson of Kilburn, in Yorkshire, and bear two of his trade mark carved mice, running in opposite directions, on the lower part of the door.

The Vicar at the time of the installation of the north doors was The Rev'd Golding Golding-Bird. It seems the church doors were in need of attention: Golding Bird's predecessor, the Revd. E. L. Macassey, wrote in 1925:

> Such of the Church Doors as are oak have been treated with oil and we believe that it has resulted in their great improvement. We have hopes that other doors - at present unworthy of theParish Church - will soon give place to oak substitutes.

At Easter 1926, the Rev'd Golding Golding Bird wrote:

> We are glad to announce that Miss H.A. Hastie and Mrs Hastie and family are giving a memorial to the Parish Church in memory of Mr Arthur Hastie who died in 1901 and of his son, Mr Arthur Hepburn Hastie, who died in 1925. The memorial will take the form of an oak door for the north entrance of the Church. This will supply a long felt want and we very much appreciate the kindness of the donors, which will perpetuate a name so long connected with the parish and so respected.

In December1926, the Parish Magazine reported:

> The new North Doors are the much appreciated gift of Mrs & Mr Hastie and form a memorial to the late Mr Arthur Hastie, and to the late Mr Arthur Hepburn Hastie. They were dedicated on Sunday, November 21. They are from the hand of a craftsman in hand carving, Mr Robert Thompson of Kilburn, in Yorkshire, whose work is of more than usual interest, because at the present day his methods are unique. Mr Thompson buys all his own English oak within twenty miles of his own Yorkshire village, and will accept no oak under three hundred years old, by which time an oak tree is considered to have reached maturity. The oak used in these doors was stored and seasoned in his own sheds for ten years before it was used; and when once it was sawn, no machinery of any kind was used in its

[1] From reasearch done by Caroline Metcalfe, 2017.

construction and carving. In fact, Mr Thompson goes so far as to exclude the use of the plane altogether: all the surfaces of the panels, both back and front, are shaped with the adze, an old English tool like a large hoe. The result is that a surface of irregularity and movement is obtained, giving that delightful sense of variety to be found in woodwork up to the sixteenth century, and avoiding the monotony of the hard plain surface characteristic of modern work.

On the outside surface, facing North, it is worth noticing that all the ornaments which terminate the cusps at the head of all six lights are quite different, no pair being repeated. At the base of the door, along the bottom moulding, are carved two little casual mice, doing nothing in particular, except to prevent all sense of the conventional and the machine-made, which characterises so much modern ecclesiastical work. These mice are the signature used on all his work by Mr Thompson.

The inside of the door has a stout framing with one very wide rail just below the spring, to take the memorial inscription. The letters are carved in relief and the wording is:

To the Glory of God and to the memory of Arthur Hastie 1815-1901, and of his son Arthur Hepburn Hastie 1855-1925.

The design, which is by Mr Geoffrey Webb, had to contend with a badly proportioned arch formed by the stone head of the doorway: this difficulty was overcome by using a framing to the door, which creates a curve for the door itself different to that made by the stonework.

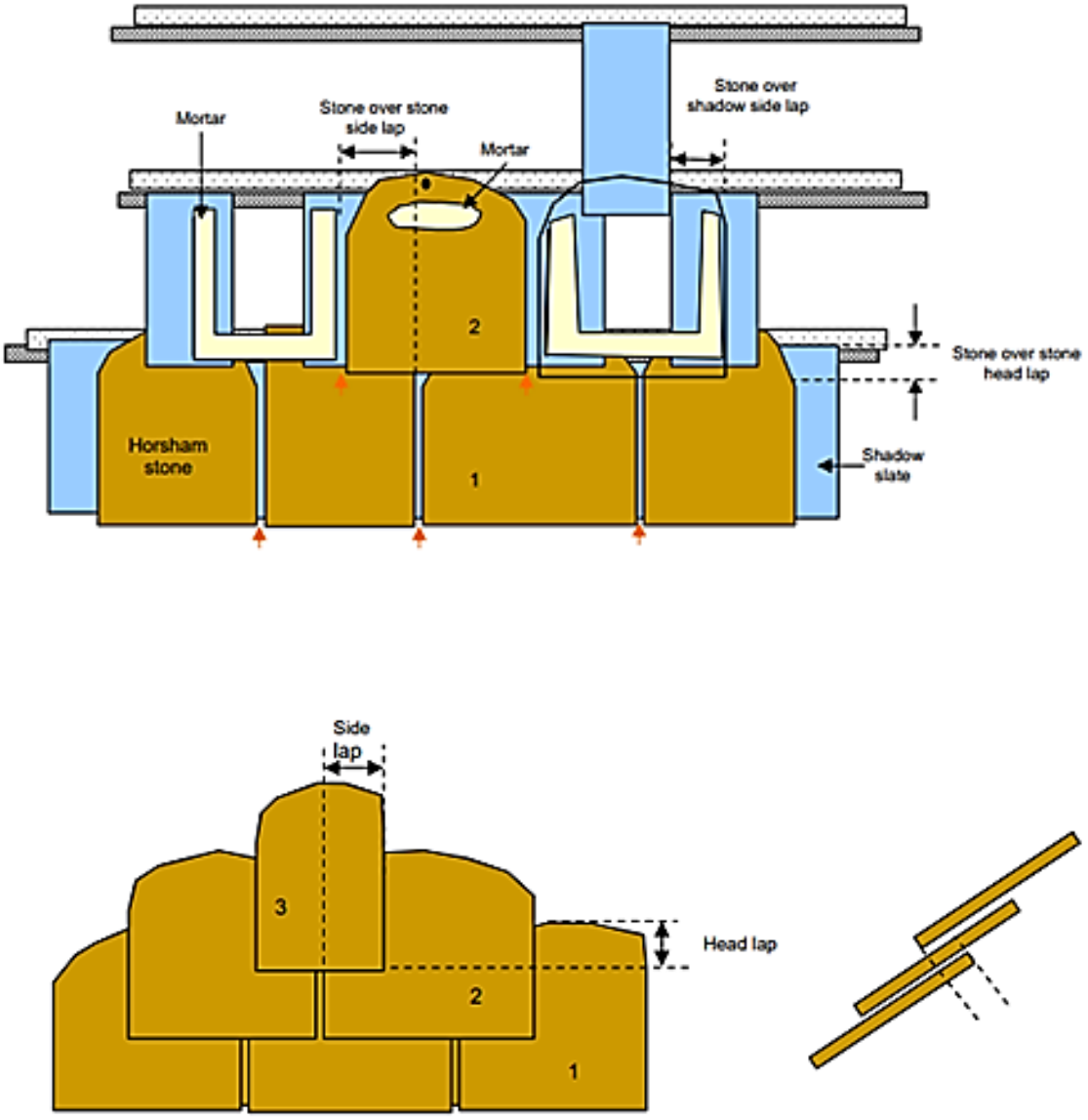
Staff at the Robert Thompson workshop in Kilburn have confirmed that the mice are early versions of the symbol and probably made by Robert Thompson himself. The firm have drawings from which the St Swithun's doors were made. The doors cost £93.

## Major works at Sackville House in 2021-22

When the COVID-19 global pandemic hit Britain in 2020, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport initiated a Cultural Recovery Fund, in support of the ongoing employment of the heritage sector during those difficult months. Landmark was fortunate to be the recipient of a major grant from the fund, which enabled us to press on with several, already planned major maintenance programmes while our buildings were enforcedly closed, leaving with our usual and holiday letting income. One of these programmes was the re-roofing of Sackville House.

Sackville House is part-roofed in Horsham Stone. Once plentiful, Horsham Stone is no longer available and there is no close geological alternative. Here, the roof already contained areas of red clay tiles as earlier repairs, meaning that it was very unevenly loaded. We had been keeping a close eye on the roof for some time, and scaffolding was already in place early in 2020 ready for work to begin. Once the pandemic hit, all works were halted, and did not re-start until January 2021. Once fully scaffolded with a shelter roof above the chimneys, the roof tiles could be stripped. From the ground it was clear that the Horsham Stone had at some point had mortar applied to it, which we knew would make salvaging the stone tiles even harder. When applying for Listed Building Consent, we therefore gave best- and worst-case scenarios. Best case would be that we could re-use most if not all of the Horsham Stone to cover the majority of the roof slopes. Worst case was that we could only cover the North (front) range in stone tiles, with the rest covered in red clay tiled. This approach is supported by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) when original material is short.

As the Horsham Stone tiles were removed, we were relieved to find that we were going to be able to reuse a lot more than we originally feared. By going from ‘double lap’ to ‘single lap’ we could further stretch the Horsham Stone tiles and evenly reload the roof.




**Tile lapping**

The timber roof structure was also in a better condition than we expected with only minimal repairs to some of the rafters. We have now fully insulated the roof with sheep's wool to improve thermal performance, plus new felt and battens..

However, another problem very rapidly became apparent. Our light touch approach to the refurbishment of this bequeathed building in the 1990s had resulted in a serious lack of rainwater goods. With the roof slopes stripped, we discovered extensive timber decay in the windows and the timber frame, from the water that had poured off these large roof slopes. We removed all the existing gutters and downpipes and started again. Our architect has now planned the rainwater goods to ensure that each roof slope, including the dormers, have gutters that can take the predicted water capacity, and downpipes that discharged directly into drainage. All the new rainwater goods are cast iron and have been decorated to match the windows.

Sackville House has two large chimneys and two smaller chimneys. The large and smaller chimney on the north range required only limited repointing, a few replacement bricks and new red clay chimney pots. The two chimneys on the south range required partial rebuilding, as the mortar had disintegrated and many of the bricks faces had blown. Both these chimneys were given new red clay chimney pots.

As the stone tiles were removed from the roof, it beacme apparent that the dormers on the north range especially were incredibly fragile and that the main structure of the window frames were rotten. We expected to lose at least one dormer to the inevitable vibrations caused during the building works. Thankfully, all dormers remained in place. We rebuilt six out of the eight with new dormer rafters and supports for the cheeks, which we insulated with sheep's wool. These six dormers were recovered in Keymer red clay tiles as used on the main roof. The two remaining dormers have been recovered in lead, since the angle on the roof slopes was too acute to relay tiles. One dormer in particular was found to be 70% rotted so we had to ensure it was properly weather proofed.





**Reconstructing a dormer.**

We found we had underestimated the extent of the works needed to the timber frame, and these soon becamce a significant component of the programme. As the massive weight of the roof was removed, it became clear that the frame needed further investigation and a team of carpenters was brought to site, initially a team of team of three who started to remove the rotted parts of the frame. It soon became apparent that the repairs needed to the frame were so extensive that they would impact the programme, to an extent unknown until we had discovered all the repairs that would be needed.

When inspecting the rest of the building, a good proportion of the plaster infill panels were noted to have shrunk quite significantly away from the timber structure. As the works to the roof began and some panels became loose or cracked, these had to be removed these for safety reasons. It soon became clear that a great number of the panels were ad hoc repairs of relatively modern construction, of gypsum plaster and several also with a bitumen waterproofing membrane and a metal expanded lath which had rusted. We replaced these panels with a mineralised wood fibre board and then lime plastered over this, more natural materials more sympathetic to the rest of the structure.

**The structural beam on the south side of the cross passage into the courtyard had rotted at both ends. When the infill panels were removed, we found that the wall above was formed of large cast concrete blocks.**

We found one major structural failure that required all work in that area of the building to stop. This was the structural beam on the south side of the cross passage into the courtyard, which had rotted at both ends. Indeed, it was unclear how the structure was being supported at all. To make matters worse, when the infill panels were removed, we found that the structure of the wall above was large cast concrete blocks. All this had to be repaired and rebuilt in more traditional materials.

Inside, when we removed netting and insulation in the basement under the sitting room, the timber floor structure was found to be in very poor condition with extensive rot. The timber affected was removed and replaced with treated timber to re-support the sitting room floor. We also carried out some floor repairs in the sitting room where the rot had also begun to affect the floorboards.

Before the works began, there was already some noticeable cracking in the internal plaster work on the first floor and in the attic space. As the works progressed some of these cracks became larger and in several areas the plaster detached completely. This was expected and we had incorporated replastering in lime into the project works. Once the lime plaster had gone off, the whole of the interior was redecorated.

Sackville House's re-roofing had turned into a major refurbishment over two years (in part thanks to Covid), with complete overhaul of the entire timber frame. It was an object lesson in the importance of ensuring that everything is put in good order at the point at which Landmark takes a building on, even one bequeathed to us, and of the perils that can lurk beneath if rainwater goods are inadequate. Sackville House re-opened to Landmarkers on 18th March 2022. While the works took much longer than we anticipated, we can now feel confident that Sackville House is fully sound and in good heart again.

Caroline Stanford/Olivia Mayell, Landmark Surveyor

March 2022

*Reprinted from the "Journal of the British Society of Master Glass-Painters," Vol. XI, No. 4, 1954-1955*

# Geoffrey Fuller Webb

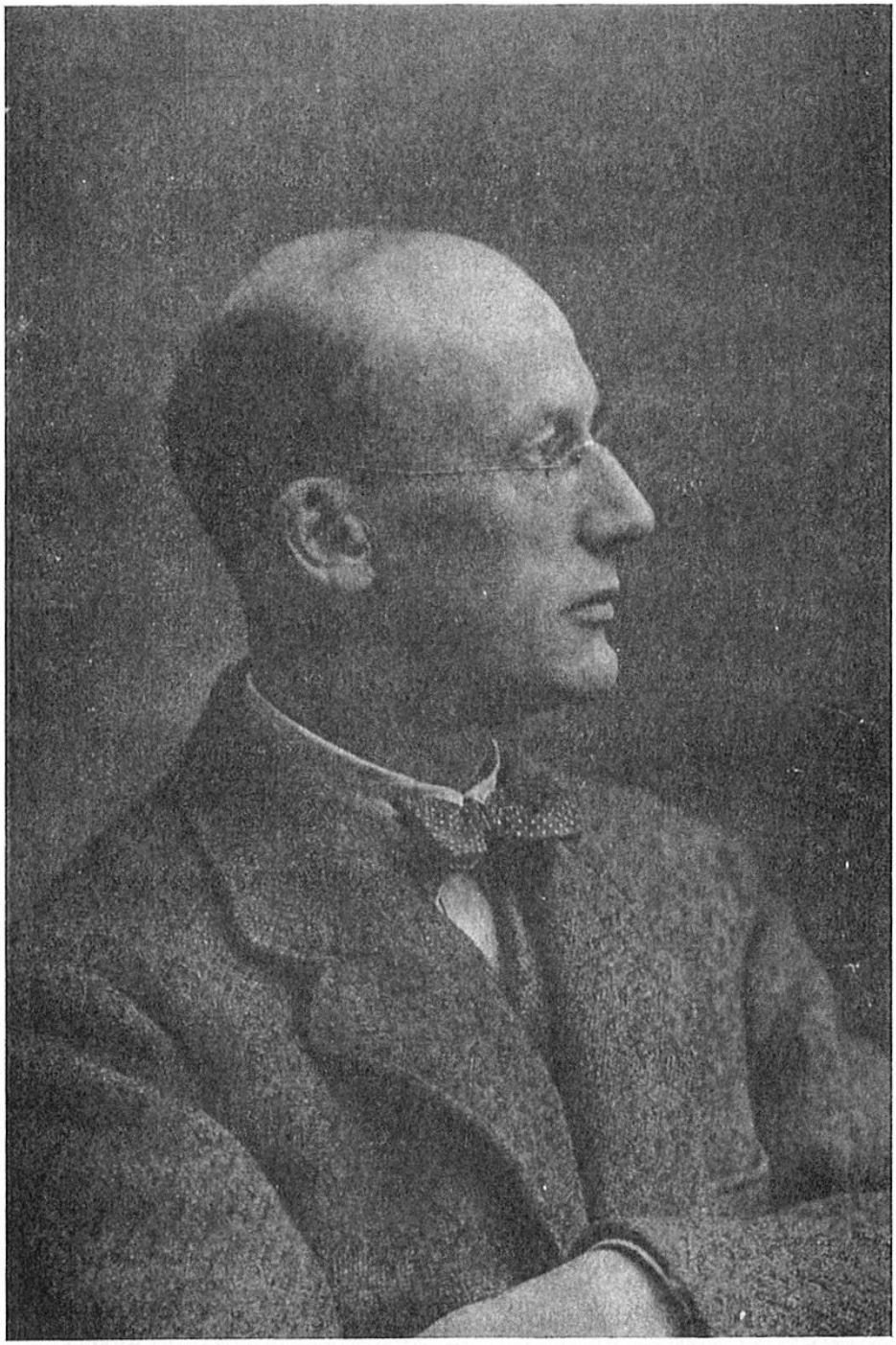


## Geoffrey Fuller Webb

THE death of Geoffrey Webb on 20th January, 1954, brought sorrow to a large company who had loved the man, and a great sense of loss to all who are concerned with modern stained glass, as indeed with the adornment and furnishing of churches generally, for his art and skill were by no means confined to the glass in which he excelled, and in which he took such delight. Born in 1879, he inherited tastes both scholarly and architectural, for his father, Mr. E. A. Webb, was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries who wrote a full history of St. Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield; while his uncle, Sir Aston Webb, was the distinguished architect who became President of both the Royal Academy and the Royal Institute of British Architects; the fruits of which were revealed in his work, for everything which came from his hand, in glass, sculpture, painting, or architecture, showed the range of scholarship and research which lay behind it all. His own book, *The Liturgical Altar*, not only proved his mastery of his subject, but was a valuable influence in the recovery of sound liturgical practice. Himself a devout and devoted son of the Roman Catholic Church, with sons and brothers in Benedictine Communities, he by no means confined his labours to his own Communion, and his windows and altars, rich and dignified, are to be found in a great number of Anglican churches, where his help was constantly sought.

Educated at Rugby and Westminster Art School, Webb's first association with stained glass was with Kempe, but after a short partnership with Mr. Herbert Bryans he set up his own studio, and thereafter produced his own most individual work. From his early training, perhaps, came his fine sense of colour, his care and skill in the choice of his pot-metal (which he often had made to his own requirements), and the beautiful detail in his drawing; but in one respect he markedly differed from, and far surpassed, his early master. No artist more firmly grasped than did Geoffrey Webb the principle that "the first function of a window is to admit light," and where Kempe's rich windows often seriously darken an interior, Webb's glass brought gaiety of colour and richness of theme with no more than a softening of the light which still flooded through them into the buildings. Always liking to employ plenty of white glass in his designs, and often setting his figures or groups on a background of plain quarries, Webb aimed at one time in his earlier glass at giving these the pearly quality found in plain mediaeval quarries; but as the years passed he abandoned this, and the windows became ever more and more translucent, without losing anything of the strength and clarity of their colour.

Webb's wide reading in history, and in the legends of the Saints, combined with his profound knowledge of the Scriptures, made him fertile in the choice of themes for his glass, and he took immense pains in verifying details for his subjects, while such elaborate designs as the



GEOFFREY F. WEBB
(1879—1954)

[Face p. 244


DARESBURY, CHESHIRE. LEWIS CARROLL MEMORIAL WINDOW (Detail only)
Designed by Geoffrey Webb and dedicated in 1934

Jesse Tree in the great East window of the restored Lady Chapel at Llandaff Cathedral involved immense research, which he never grudged, into all the Royal and Prophetic ancestors of Our Lord, who are shown in it.

This skill and scholarship also proved invaluable in another branch of work in which he distinguished himself, the repair and re-arrangement of ancient glass. To him was entrusted the formidable task of supervising the replacement of the famous early sixteenth-century windows at Fairford in Gloucestershire which, after removal from their lights for protection during the last War, had been bricked up in the cellars of a near-by mansion. The work occupied over a year, and he left this precious store of late mediaeval glass in better state than it has enjoyed for centuries. Every light was carefully re-leaded, the disfiguring patches of nineteenth-century filling to missing portions were removed and inconspicuously replaced, while for cleaning some almost totally opaque lights, particularly the window showing the Four Latin Doctors of the Church, he called to his aid the distinguished chemist, Mr. Noel Heaton, and their joint work has made visible figures and detail not seen for generations.

Another admirable achievement of this kind was his treatment of the early sixteenth-century glass formerly collected into the great West window of Cirencester church. Determined to free the figures from the incongruous borders of modern purple and yellow glass which had framed them there, he was reluctant to re-fix them in a window to which they had plainly never belonged, and he pressed for research which might reveal their original sites. Spurred by his enthusiasm, and aided by his constant suggestions, the writer of this note was privileged to help him and to determine that all but two of the main figures had come from the great South window of the nave to which they have now been restored; but it was Webb who settled the order of one row by deciphering the near illegible scrolls which they carried, and finding on them four consecutive verses of the 51st Psalm; and it was he who triumphantly identified the figure of a crowned Abbess, oddly labelled "S. Johanna," and conjectured to be St. Etheldreda, as that rare personage, St. Bathildis, Queen of France, further proving that the name Johanna rightly belonged to the kneeling donor who is seen beneath the saint. This great window, freed from disfiguring accretions, painstakingly re-assembled in its original form and site, is another monument to Webb's skill and learning.

He had another gift, invaluable to a glass-painter, in that he was an accomplished herald, and made good use of his powers, for his heraldic windows are as sound in form and matter as they are decorative. The little church of Quinton in the Cotswolds, which is full of his work, has a delightful series of windows entirely devoted to heraldry; and here also he combined very happily his work as architect and glass-painter, for the North aisle ends at the East in a square-headed Perpendicular window



of three lights, of which the central one is stoned up, and carried on its inner face a canopied, but empty, niche. Webb filled this with an admirable statue of Our Lady and the Holy Child, in full polychrome decoration, and entirely happy in its ancient setting, and the lights on either side with groups of small figures in stained glass, the whole forming the reredos to the altar which he set beneath them. Fairford also contains one of his earlier architectural achievements, the altar with an elaborate reredos of gilded and coloured albaster, beneath a rich heraldic dorsal, where again the work is in perfect harmony with the splendid glass which he was destined to handle so successfully thirty-four years after he had executed the reredos.

No doubt the training and experience derived from his architectural work were the foundation for another noticeable quality in his stained-glass, its invariably happy relation to the scale and character of the building in which it is set. The criticism has sometimes to be passed on modern windows that, however fine in drawing, colour and plan, they are yet in either scale or general treatment discordant with their immediate setting and surroundings, and so may fail both of their own best effect, and in completing and enhancing the appearance of the building which frames them. Webb's sensitive feeling for architecture always saved him from this weakness.

The total output of his glass was considerable, running into some hundreds of windows spread widely over Southern England and Wales, by no means rare in the North, and reaching abroad to the Queen Alexandra memorial windows at Copenhagen, and to Italy, South Africa, and the Argentine, among the latest being the East window of the ancient Slipper Chapel at Walsingham. They range from great windows in the Cathedrals to tiny, single, lights in small chapels, these last receiving from him exactly the same care in devising their themes, and in the execution, as the bolder works. In one such case, that of a Norman East window measuring little over 3 ft. by 1 ft., he met the difficulty of a wall, just outside, which left only the upper portion to be seen against clear sky, by picking for this half pot-metal of a slightly deeper tone than for the lower part, so that in the finished window no horizontal division can be detected.

Not less than the artist will his many friends mourn the man. Webb drew from all his clients affection as well as confidence, and he carried his range of learning so modestly and lightly that he was able to impart it with infinite charm. His life and his work should inspire younger artists to acquire something of his wide grasp not only of the history and needs of their own craft, but also those of the buildings which their windows are to adorn.

W. I. CROOME.

Diocesan & Advisc
Comm

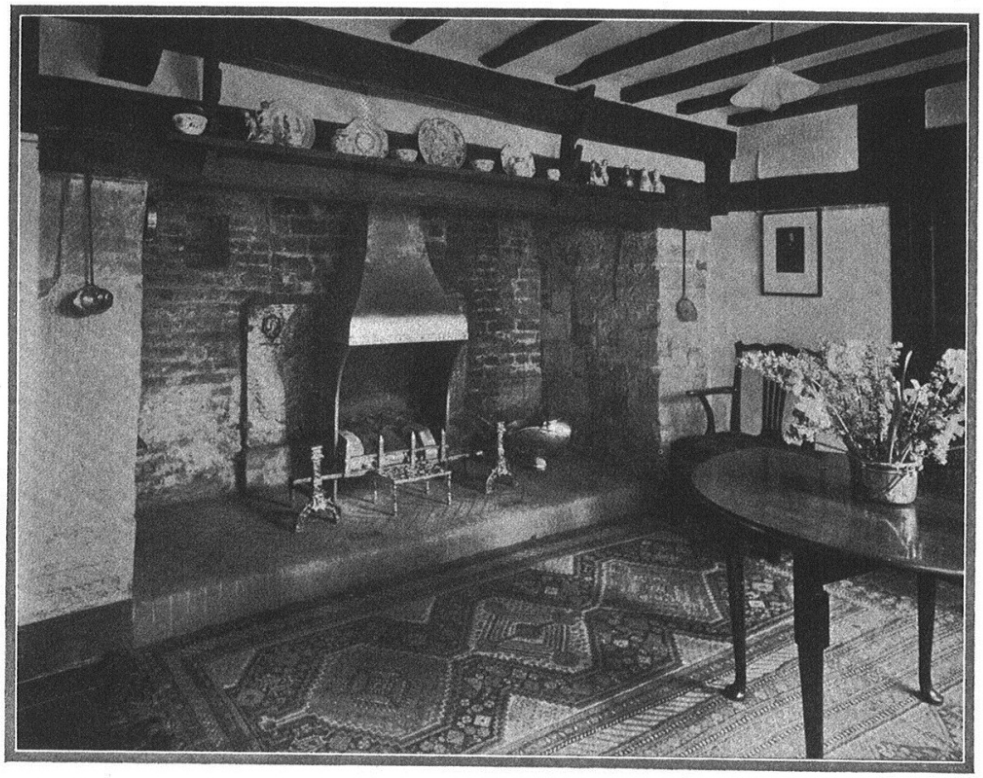
# SACKVILLE HOUSE · EAST GRINSTEAD

*Sackville House, seen from the street, is a perfect example of "black and white," although the rutted oak is weathered to a soft grey. Note the overhanging first story, with its fine timbering; the moss-grown roof of Horsham stone.*

*This photograph, taken from the entrance gates, gives the south-east elevation and shows the brick and timber construction. The dormer gables allow wide windows to the bedrooms. The terraced gardens look south towards Ashdown Forest.*

# SACKVILLE HOUSE · EAST GRINSTEAD

*The south wing has been added to, but in keeping with the rest of the house. The Horsham stone of the roof merges into weathered Sussex tiles above. The little garden shelter is open to the south.*



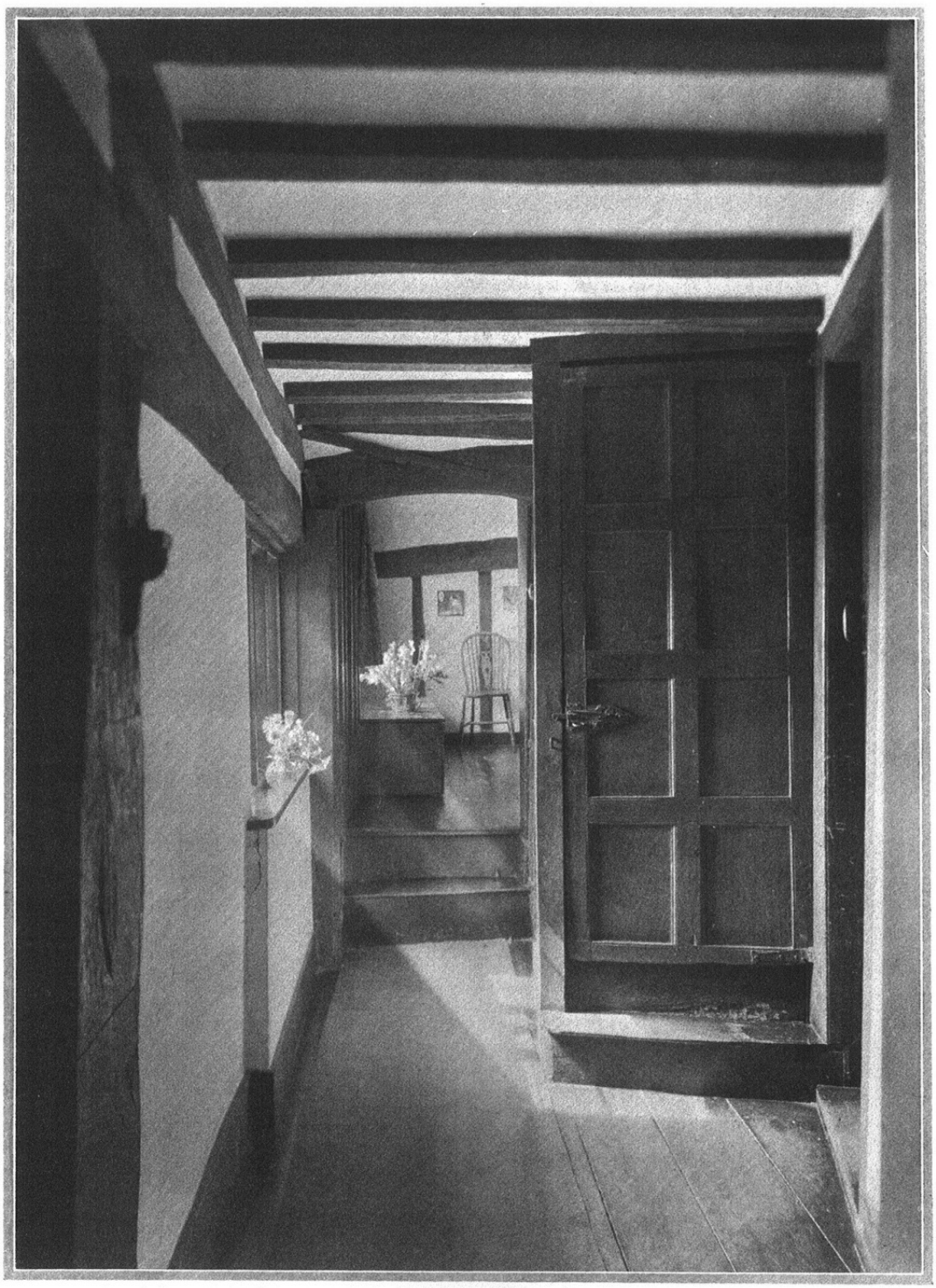
*The breakfast parlour is low-ceiled, with one long window. The fire-back on the open brick hearth is cast with the Sackville coat-of-arms. On the shelf above are choice lustre ware and Oriental china.*

# SACKVILLE HOUSE · EAST GRINSTEAD

*The principal liv ing-room is entirel panelled in the ori ginal dark oak, an the heavily-beame ceiling is supporte by two main up rights, forming chimney alcove.*

*This picture shows the original stone fireplace, discovered behind a Victorian grate, and now re-stored, with red Tudor bricks and a red-tiled hearth.*

# SACKVILLE HOUSE · EAST GRINSTEAD



*This passage has the inevitable steps up to each door. On the right is seen a panelled oak door, in its original condition.*

# SACKVILLE HOUSE · EAST GRINSTEAD

*Seen from the hall. Note the turned balusters and slab doors.*

## *Knole and the Sackvilles*

Thomas Sackville, the first Sackville owner of Knole, is quite an interesting figure. He has several claims to interest: he had a long descent from Norman times, he shared the Boleyn blood with Queen Elizabeth, he started his own life as a poet, he inherited an enormous fortune from his father, and eventually he became a statesman. Let us take these items in their order.

There is some suggestion that the Sackvilles were Danish by origin, and arrived in France with Rollo the Dane in 786, but this tradition cannot be substantiated. What we do know, for certain, is that Herbrand de Sauqueville was Lord of Sauqueville, or Saquevilla, in Normandy, south-west of Dieppe in the valley of the Scie; and that by 1070, that is four years after the Conquest, he is to be found in England as Lord of Fawley in Buckinghamshire. Thomas Sackville's descent can thereafter be traced without a break through generations of whom we need single out only a Jordan de Sackville who by his marriage with Ela de Dene, *c.*1200, acquires the lordship and estate of Buckhurst near Withyham in Sussex. This property, from which Thomas Sackville later took his title as Lord Buckhurst, is still a Sackville possession and now belongs to Lord de la Warr.

Coming down to the reign of Henry VIII, we find a Sir Richard Sackville as a man of such wealth that he was punningly known as Fillsack, buying country

*The First Earl of Dorset,* attributed to de Critz

*Lady Anne Clifford,* attributed to Larkin

50

properties in many parts of England, and obtaining from the Crown a grant of London property of immense value. Salisbury House, which then became Sackville House and presently Dorset House, extended from Fleet Street to the Thames and from Blackfriars to Bridewell. This estate, of fabulous worth considered in modern terms, included houses, wharves, shops, tenements, gardens, and orchards, all in the same area of the City, and cost Sir Richard £641 5s. 10½d. One hesitates to compute what it would be worth today.

This Sir Richard, whose mother was a Boleyn, aunt to Queen Anne Boleyn, enjoyed the favour of his cousin, Queen Elizabeth, but never rose to very high office in the State. That was reserved for his son, Thomas, Lord Buckhurst and 1st Earl of Dorset, K.G., 1536–1608. This young man succeeded to his father's fortune at the age of twenty-nine and early abandoned the pursuit of poetry to devote himself to politics – a pity, for even with his small output he occupied a most respectable place in the literature of our country. It must be remembered that he was Spenser's senior by some fifteen years, and that all his poetry was written before Shakespeare was even born. He thus stands very early in our literary history, and his *Gorboduc*, or *Ferrex and Porrex*, a five-act blank-verse composition of unbearable dullness, is recognised as the first regular tragedy in our language. Far more readable is his *Induction* to the *Mirror for Magistrates*, which contains some genuinely fine stanzas.

It is not necessary to enter in detail into the various appointments held by Thomas Sackville under the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James I. A brief list will suffice. He was twice sent on embassies to France, three times to the Low Countries; Chancellor of Oxford, Lord High Treasurer and Lord High Steward of England, a Knight of the Garter, he was created Lord Buckhurst in 1567, and Earl of Dorset in 1604. Most important from the point of view of the history of Knole, this property was given him, as already related, in 1566 by Queen Elizabeth, although it was 1603 before he could obtain complete possession.

His father's fortune was now put to good use, and account books at Knole reveal the large sums he spent upon the adornment of his home. The earlier accounts are missing, but we know that in ten months alone, from 1607 to 1608, he spent the equivalent of £40,000 of our currency; he is believed to have imported workmen from Italy, and there are payments to plasterers, upholsterers, masons, glaziers, none of which is surprising when we consider the amount of work traceable to his orders. There are payments to musicians too; he had a private orchestra of ten, and in his funeral oration it was noted that 'he entertained musicians the most curious, which anywhere he could have'. In spite of all this luxury and expenditure it appears from one of his letters that he possessed only one basin and ewer in which to wash.

This poet, builder, and grave statesman died at the Privy Council table in April 1608. He had been in many ways typical of his age, and the inheritance he bequeathed to his son was princely.

51

*Lady Frances Cranfield*, by Van Dyck

*The Sixth Earl of Dorset*, by Kneller

and house furnishings, besides begetting seven sons and six daughters. Of these seven sons, the most interesting is Charles Sackville, 6th Earl of Dorset, K.G., 1637–1706 (also Earl of Middlesex), a courtier of the Restoration, poet and patron of poets, author of that well-known song, *To all you ladies now at land*, the lover of Nell Gwyn, and friend of Dryden, Pope, Prior (who owed his education to Lord Dorset), Killigrew, Shadwell, d'Urfey, Wycherley, and William Penn the Quaker. A genial host, and very much a man of the world, many contemporary tributes are paid to him, which, after making all allowance for the exaggerated flattery of such eulogies, do succeed in giving a composite portrait of a munificent, rakish, splendid, witty, voluminous figure typical of the Court of Charles II. Dryden dedicated his *Essay on Satire* to him, and also his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, in which Lord Dorset figures under the name Eugenius. Lord Rochester, in a well-known line, described him as 'the best good man, with the worst-natured Muse', and Pope wrote his epitaph:

'Dorset, the grace of courts, the Muses' pride,
Patron of arts, and judge of nature died.
The scourge of pride, though sanctified or great,
Of fops in learning, and of knaves instate:
Yet soft his nature, though severe his lay,

He married Cicely, daughter of Sir John Baker of Sissinghurst Castle, near Cranbrook.

Robert Sackville, 2nd Earl of Dorset, 1561–1609, enjoyed his patrimony for one year only. Perhaps the most interesting thing that can be said of him is that he founded and built Sackville College at East Grinstead. Twice married, he was both times unfortunate: his first wife, Margaret Howard, daughter of the 4th Duke of Norfolk, died in childbirth, and of his second wife, Anne Spencer, it was said that her 'tempestuousness in domestical conversation was greater than flesh and blood could endure'.

Richard Sackville, 3rd Earl of Dorset, 1589–1624, his son, was a family disaster. A spendthrift, gambler, living for courtly show, and altogether an ostentatious person, he wasted most of his own inherited fortune, and would doubtless have wasted his wife's fortune also, had this remarkably strong-minded woman not refused to give it up to him. Lady Anne Clifford, daughter of George, 3rd Earl of Cumberland, was a woman one could never forget, once one had encountered her. She is one of the outstanding figures in the Knole gallery. Heiress in her own right to vast estates in Cumberland and Westmorland, she spent fourteen quarrelsome, unhappy years of marriage with Richard Sackville at Knole until his death in 1624, leaving a record of three of those years in a diary still preserved in a transcript in the Knole library.

Richard Sackville was in all respects an inferior being to Lady Anne. He stupidly squandered his inheritance. To pay his expenses he sold the Manor of Holborn and Shoe Lane in London, and other estates to the total value of over £80,000, or nearly a million of modern money. He mortgaged Knole itself, and sold most of the Sevenoaks property. Even so, he is said to have died in debt to the tune of £60,000. The only thing that can be said in his favour is that he did finish Sackville College at East Grinstead, begun by his father, and that he did seek the friendship of men of letters – Ben Jonson, Fletcher, Michael Drayton, and Henry King.

Knole was kept up with the utmost magnificence; and a list of the household, dated 1623, shows that a hundred and eleven persons were then employed. Yet Lady Anne records that she cut up her husband's shirts to make clouts.

Richard was succeeded in 1624 by his brother Edward as 4th Earl of Dorset, K.G., ?1589–1652, described as being 'of high spirit and universally esteemed'. He supported the cause of Charles I and suffered heavy losses of furniture, armour, and other goods at the hands of the Parliamentarians; his younger son was likewise captured and stabbed to death by one of Cromwell's men. He married Mary Curzon of Croxall in Derbyshire, who, a devoted Royalist, was Governess to the children of Charles I.

Richard Sackville, 5th Earl of Dorset, 1622–77, his son, succeeded him in 1652, and by his marriage to Lady Frances Cranfield, daughter and heiress of Lionel, Earl of Middlesex, brought considerable accretions to Knole both in money

*The First Duke of Dorset*, by Kneller

*The Third Duke of Dorset*, by Reynolds

His anger moral, and his wisdom gay.
Blest satirist! who touched the mean so true,
As showed vice had his hate and pity too.
Blest courtier! who could King and country please,
Yet sacred kept his friendships and his ease.
Blest peer! his great forefather's every grace
Reflected and reflecting in his race,
Where other Buckhursts, other Dorsets shine,
And patriots still, or poets, deck the line.'

Even if all this represents little more than the conventional homage paid to a rich patron, the following anecdote illustrates more sharply the jollity, humour, and humanity of this host and lord of Knole. Dorset, entertaining a party of friends, proposed that each guest should write an impromptu and that Dryden should act as judge. Dryden, having seriously examined all the entries, announced Lord Dorset as the winner. He then read out Lord Dorset's contribution:

'I promise to pay Mr. John Dryden five hundred pounds on demand. Signed, Dorset.'

Vivid little anecdotes such as this, make the life of Knole come alive far more effectively than lists of dates and facts. There is also a remark made by Matthew Prior, which has the ring of truth about it: 'A freedom reigned at his table which made every one of his guests think himself at home. His good-nature was supreme...' And Lord Rochester paid a real compliment to his personal charm, when he observed 'I do not know how it is, my Lord Dorset might do anything, he is never to blame.' One knows people like that; people who, as we should say today, can get away with anything.

Charles Sackville was three times married. He first married Mary, daughter of Harvey Bagot of Pipe Hall in Warwickshire. This was a love-match evidently; because Mary Bagot had first married the Earl of Falmouth, and there still exists a love-letter from Charles Sackville to Lady Falmouth before she was widowed. It is a very touching letter, enclosing a lock of his hair. 'You alone,' he writes, 'have the government not only of all my actions but of my very thoughts,' and he pleads with her to be early at an appointment, 'for tomorrow I may be so miserable as not to see you.' That is the true voice of love; and it is tragic to have to record that she died in childbed a year after their marriage.

He married secondly Lady Mary Compton, daughter of the 3rd Earl of Northampton. She died five years later of smallpox. 'The Countess of Dorset, young, beautiful, rich, and good, died yesterday, much regretted by the Queen whose lady-in-waiting she was.'

Charles Sackville's third marriage was to a woman of low extraction named Anne Roche. His mind was much enfeebled by then, and she kept him 'in a sort of captivity' at Bath, a sad and squalid end to a life which had offered much gaiety and splendour.

His son Lionel Sackville, 7th Earl and 1st Duke of Dorset, K.G., 1687–1765, was evidently amiable rather than brilliant and throughout his career was appointed to such offices of State as might be expected by a man in his position. Sent to Hanover to announce the death of Queen Anne to the new King George I, he was later created Duke of Dorset, and became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. He married Elizabeth Colyear, whom he was in the habit of addressing as his 'dear, dear Colly'. Sorrow entered his life when his favourite son, Lord George Sackville, got into trouble for disobeying orders at the battle of Minden. Another son, Lord John, suffered from melancholia; and his eldest son and heir, Charles Sackville, 2nd Duke of Dorset, 1711–69, was somewhat feeble-minded, dissipated and thoroughly unsatisfactory. Not so John Frederick Sackville, 3rd Duke of Dorset, K.G., 1745–99, son of the melancholy Lord John. His portraits show him to have been a handsome man, and from his friendship with contemporary painters such as Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, and Ozias Humphry, we may deduce him also to have been a man of taste and culture. He spent considerable sums on Knole, adding pictures,

furniture, and silver to the collection; many of his account books remain at Knole, and a number of receipts which throw much light upon current prices: for six pictures by Gainsborough for instance he paid one hundred guineas. It seems cheap according to present values.

The 3rd Duke, like several other members of his family, was a keen cricketer, and is said to have presented the Vine cricket-ground to Sevenoaks in 1773. At the age of thirty-eight in 1783, he became Ambassador to France, an appointment which terminated only in 1789, after the outbreak of the French Revolution. Still unmarried, though he had had love-affairs in plenty (it was believed that Marie Antoinette herself could be numbered amongst them), Dorset was now forty-five and chose for his wife Arabella Diana Cope, a considerable heiress and a woman of dignity and character. Seven years later, however, he became a prey to the melancholy from which his father had suffered, and after nearly two years of this sad condition he died, leaving as his heir a little boy of five, George John Frederick Sackville, 4th Duke of Dorset, 1793–1815. This child, to whom life seemed to offer so much, tragically met his death just after he had attained his twenty-first birthday, in a hunting accident at Powerscourt in Ireland. The title then passed away to a cousin, Charles Sackville-Germain, 5th and last Duke of Dorset, K.G., 1770–1843, the son of that Lord George Sackville who had got into trouble at Minden, and at his death with no male heir, the Dorset title became extinct. Knole, however, formed no part of this cousin's inheritance and after the death of the 3rd Duke's widow and her second husband, Earl Whitworth, passed successively to the two sisters of the young 4th Duke, as co-heiresses to his estates.

The elder sister, Mary (married first the Earl of Plymouth, and then William Pitt, Earl Amherst), died in 1864 when the surviving sister, who had already received Buckhurst as her portion, became the sole owner of all the Sackville properties. This sister, Elizabeth, 1795–1870, married George John West, 5th Earl de la Warr, and their children assumed the double surname of Sackville-West. As we are now arriving at modern times, and the succession to Knole becomes somewhat complicated, it will be convenient to tabulate briefly what happened to the six sons of Lord and Lady de la Warr:

The eldest son predeceased his parents and died unmarried.

The second and third sons, Charles and Reginald, both in turn became Lord de la Warr, and the Buckhurst estate remained with their branch of the family. Knole thus passes out of the picture, so far as the present line of the Earls de la Warr is concerned; but

The fourth son, Mortimer Sackville-West, 1820–88, inherited Knole as the portion of a younger son. He was created Baron Sackville in 1876, and at his death without progeny Knole passed to

The fifth son, Lionel Sackville-West, 1827–1908, 2nd Lord Sackville.

The sixth son, William Edward, 1830–1905, did not live long enough to succeed

his brother Lionel, and Knole accordingly passed direct to William Edward's son Lionel Sackville-West, 3rd Lord Sackville, 1867–1928, and subsequently to the 3rd Lord Sackville's brother, Major-General Sir Charles Sackville-West, 4th Lord Sackville, through whose generosity Knole – with an endowment sum for upkeep – in 1946 passed into the keeping of the National Trust.

Following the death of the 4th Lord Sackville in 1962 the furniture in the Show Rooms was acquired by the Treasury and placed in the care of the Trust. The pictures and some of the silver remain the property of the family.

The present Lord Sackville succeeded his uncle at Knole so maintaining the tradition of an unbroken family occupation since the house first passed into the possession of Thomas Sackville.

**Historians of vernacualr architecture love to debate the evidence. Here are some alternative interpretations of Sackville House.**

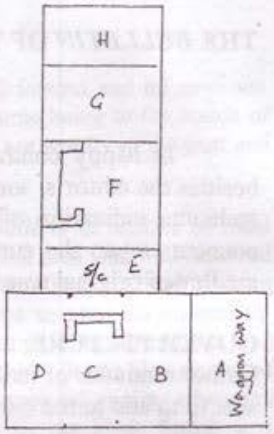
Bulletin of the East Grinstead Society, Summer 2003.



## SACKVILLE HOUSE, 70 HIGH STREET
## A STRUCTURAL REAPPRAISAL

A.G. Dyson

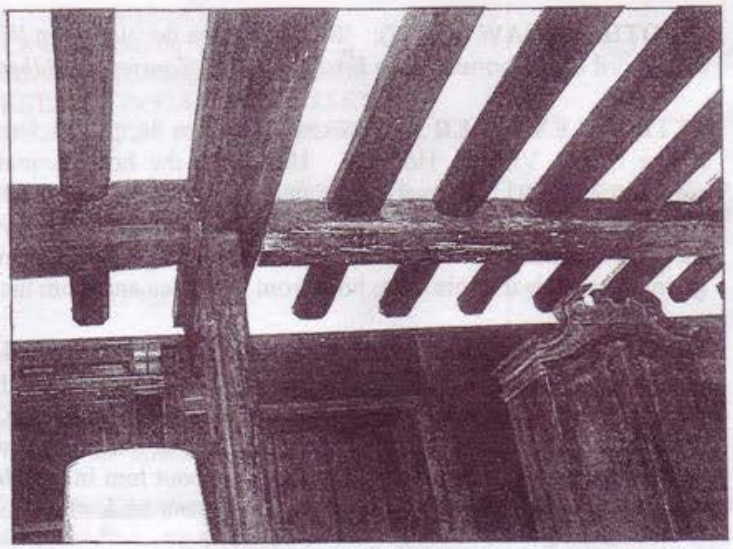
The present Sackville House is a 'continuous jetty' structure probably dating to c.1520 and comprising four bays, the westernmost [A on the plan] a waggon way. The account of the building's history in the Landmark Trust's 'History Album' (based on Peter Gray's report of December 1992 and available in the main room for inspection by visiting occupants) takes it for granted that the three easternmost bays of the house proper, designated D, C and B, represent a single integral construction.




RIGHT: Simplified ground-plan, c.1600, by the late Peter Gray

There is, however, good reason for supposing that bay B was not part of the c.1520 build, but was an entirely separate structure that was annexed to DC only in the later 16th century. The most probable occasion for this, consistent with other evidence, is the date 1574 carved on what is now the fireplace beam of the middle bedroom, itself likely to have originated within the building. There are several indications of a separate build. In the first place, B is up to two feet wider than either D or C, and consequently features six joists in its ceiling instead of five. In the second place, its spine girder (one of the series of beams which between them run along the length of the building midway between front and back) differs in a number of respects from those of the other two bays [as shown in the photograph below]. It is of a much less substantial and regular scantling, is of inferior and perhaps older timber, lacks chamfers, and is attached to the joists by pairs of pegs driven up from its lower face, whereas the joists are simply morticed into the tie beams of the other two bays. Also, its underside features a series of slots which may or may not be evidence of re-use. Most striking of all, it is conspicuously out of alignment with the girders of DC, being set some four inches further south. This makes it particularly difficult to believe that B was part of the same construction as DC, or that its girder could have been installed in any circumstances where their girders were visible.

In the third place, there is the evidence of the exterior of the building. D and C share a single bressumer, while B has one of its own butted up against it, and there is a distinctive and tell-tale sag in their alignment near their junction and the tie beam between C and B: evidently a weak point in the overall construction and consistent with the splicing together of two separate structures. In addition, the three westernmost jetties of bay D and the two easternmost of bay C, along with the tie beam terminal between them, are of a different form from all the other jetties, including those of bay B, in that their undersides are rebated by about ¾" some 7"



Tie beam between C (left) and B. Note different size and alignment of spine girders of the two bays and deep rebate on eastern (left) face of beam and corresponding gap (now infilled) at end of C girder.

back from their terminals. Whatever other significance this rather modest variant (one can hardly call it decoration) may have had – the position of an early street door is ruled out by the presence of the principal post – its occurrence on and to either side of the tie beam between D and C is intelligible only as marking the centre point of a two-bay structure: it takes no account of any third bay.

Not unrelated to all this is the question of access into the house. The 'History Album' justifiably sees the function of bay B in a three-bay structure as accommodating the services (buttery and pantry), which would have been entered directly from the hall (DC). This would tend to rule out the presence of a front door and screens passage, for anyone entering the house from the street could reach the hall only by way of a service room – more than a little unseemly and there is no evidence of such a passage leading from front to back, within bay B or elsewhere. The likelihood is that the property was entered instead from a door at the side or rear, accessed from the waggon way, and I am grateful to the Editor for pointing out that there was no street door at Porch House and that there is reason to suppose the same is true of several other High Street buildings with side access.

The insertion of the large brick fireplace that now spans the full width of bay C, most probably in 1574, is of great significance in this respect and in others. It provides one very good reason for DC to have annexed B, a development on which several other contemporary innovations also depended. For instance, there was the linking up of the hitherto detached kitchen with the street range, thus forming a complete rear wing that lay partly within B as well as within DC. This meant in turn that the back door could now only be placed in B, having been excluded from bay C by the new fireplace and from bay D by its location on the wrong side of the new rear wing, farthest from the waggon way. Moreover, the cellar beneath B abutted the footings of the fireplace and was of the same build: both clearly share the same date. Finally, access to the attic area below the roof (which was probably now heightened uniformly across all three bays) was by a stair within B.

An awkward question is that of the party wall between the original DC and B before their amalgamation c.1574, and this remains frankly problematic, for it is far from clear how their conjunction was managed. The interface between C and B shows little sign of each structure having had its own end wall, as might be expected if they were entirely separate properties, though the removal of the end wall of B could account for the bay's extra width. However, that would have necessitated the insertion of a longer spine girder and the provision of alternative temporary support for the associated ceiling joists while the work was in progress. This seems unduly laborious, and a simpler explanation would be that B was actually later in date than DC, built on to the end of it as a kind of ancillary lean-to but not initially considered as properly part of it. That would strongly suggest that B was in the same hands, which would of course have made its final absorption by DC all the easier.

All that can be said is that the existing beam between C and B includes two features of possible relevance. Along its underside are six timber slots of varying size, all but one of them now plugged, into which could have engaged the partition between either the service rooms or a screens passage. More remarkable is the fact that the eastern face of the beam, both north and south of the girder, has been roughly rebated, probably *in situ*, up to some five inches from its base, and consequently lacks the chamfer found on its western face and on both sides of the tie beam between C and D. This rebate was itself clearly intended to receive a partition or panelling, and is matched by the gap, just below and now rather ineptly filled in, between it and the western end of the girder of bay C. It seems clear that the girder was cut short here to leave space for the insertion of the same partition or panelling. Yet a partition against the eastern face of the beam can hardly have functioned at the same time as the one indicated by the slots on its underside: could the former have served to accommodate wainscotting and the latter to receive external wall studs? If so, the studs would have been removed when B was added to DC and the panelling retained to separate the DC hall from the service rooms.

## DENDROCHRONOLOGY PROJECT ARTICLES: ADDENDA AND CORRIGENDA

Since the earlier articles in this series were written, Mr A.G. Dyson has transcribed in full the few records of East Grinstead borough courts in the Public Record Office and corrected erroneous dating of two of them in the selective notes on which I had relied before. He and I have translated them from the Latin. In consequence some corrections and additions to the earlier articles are now possible, as detailed below, with other supplementary information. M.J. Leppard

**AMHERST HOUSE, 68 HIGH STREET** (*Bulletin* **80**, pp.10-12): The date of the Sackvilles' disposal of this property is established by the record in the Court Baron held on 15 September 1573 of the sale by Sir Thomas Sackville Lord Buckhurst to Richard Lystney of one messuage and one portland called Ryngars, rent 6d. p.a.[1] At the same court on 6 October 1576 John Ledger was presented for not having cleaned the ditches between his property [Sackville House, no.70] and Richard Lystnye's nor removing 'le Stocke' [the post], for which he was fined 12d. with another 20s. to pay if he had not dealt with it by 1 November. On 2 May 1577 he was presented again, for not removing 'le lyon' adjoining the house of Richard Listney nor making walls, with a penalty this time of 26s. 8d. if he had not complied by the next court. This at first sight alarming wording shows that Sackville House was being used as an inn, the *Lion*, and the 'Stocke' was its signpost, information that deserves fuller consideration when Sackville House comes to be written up. When the next court came on, on 16 October 1577, the position was unchanged and Ledger was fined 2d.[2] The next record is for 1581, so we do not know how it all ended.

[1] DL30/126/1876 [2] DL30/126/1872

Bulletin East Grinstead Soc. No 82 Spring 2004.

## SACKVILLE HOUSE, 70 HIGH STREET

M.J. Leppard

The evidence from the borough court rolls that Sackville House was, at least in 1576-77, an inn called the *Lion*, reported in *Bulletin* 82, p.8, throws new light on the structural development of that building. The late Peter Gray reported in 1992 that late 16th century alterations included raising the roof, changing the room lay-out, inserting a new chimney thus forming a corridor on both floors behind the stack, and connecting the detached kitchen at the rear to the main building. 'It may be', he wrote, 'that these alterations can be dated by the 1574 inscribed on a fireplace beam but the beam itself was placed in its present position when the first floor was split into two rooms in the 19th century.'[2]

The action against the standing inn-sign attempted in 1576-77 suggests that the conversion of the building and its change of use to (or refurbishment as) an inn were quite recent, very likely in 1574. Moreover the corridor arrangement on the upper floor has long seemed to me comparable to that found in inns of the period. Admittedly the usual arrangement is a continuous balcony rather than an internal passage, but such inns are usually larger and grander than Sackville House and purpose-built rather than conversions. The reason must be to ensure greater privacy of access and lodging than could otherwise be provided. I shall welcome informed comment on this suggestion.

No evidence is known for Sackville House as an inn at any other period.

[1] Their marriage licence, in my possession [2] Notes, in my possession, of a visit in Dec. 1992

Bulletin of the East Grinstead Soc. No. 83 Autumn 2004.

Bulletin of the East Grinstead Soc. No. 85 Spring 2005.

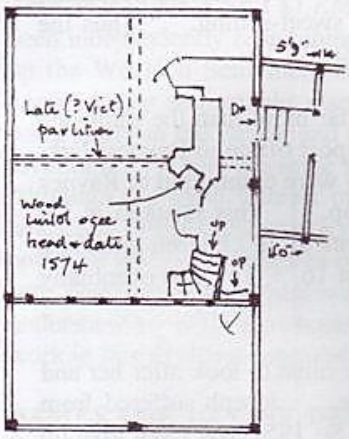


**SACKVILLE HOUSE** (*Bulletins* **82**, p.8, **83**, p.15):

Invited to comment on the connection between conversion to an inn and the corridors formed behind the chimney, Dr Janet Pennington, an authority on inns and their structural history in western Sussex, a subject on which she has lectured to our Society, writes

The 'new' corridor formation I am sure is connected with the gradual desire for greater privacy that grew, and the difficulty of accessing inn chambers, and also providing doors with locks for guests. I saw this at a small 17th century inn, the *Half Moon*, at Northchapel near Petworth, where three interconnecting first floor chambers (i.e. you went through two bedrooms to reach the third) had been made smaller on the same side so that a corridor had been formed and new doorways made to each room. The fourth room appeared to have had no access whatsoever, and I could only assume that an outside stair/ladder might have been used, and that it was a 'staff' room.

The growth of privacy really accelerates during the 17th century, but a larger inn in a 'big' town like East Grinstead would have been at the forefront of these new ideas, rather than a tiny country inn at Northchapel which took a while to get there. And money/backing was of course part of it all. Galleries appear for the same reason, usually at the rear of inns, as in some courtyard inns.




I was interested in the signpost dispute. A similar one arose at Midhurst with the post having been placed on someone else's piece of land – though this was probably a gallows-type sign right across the road that needed two big posts to support the tie beam with the sign hanging from it. I believe a rental was agreed for the post. I haven't come across the word 'stocke' for an inn sign post before. For my thesis I analysed 75 innkeeping probate inventories in the area I used (not including East Grinstead) with a few connecting wills and probate inventories. Inn sign posts were not regarded as movable but a few were listed in error and the values are from 5s. to £2 in the early 17th century.

LEFT: Part of plan of first floor of Sackville House by the late Peter Gray

## DENDROCHRONOLOGY

Our Society's dendrochronology project and the structural and documentary history of the buildings tested have been the subjects of articles and notes in *Bulletins* 73–77 and 79–83.

Two years ago the Surrey Archaeological Society and the Domestic Buildings Research Group initiated a project to date dendrochronologically 'clusters' of timber-framed buildings across the county. The Society's *Bulletin* 380 (Jan. 2005) reports some unexpected results from 42 buildings in the South Mole Valley cluster (Charlwood, Newdigate, Capel, Leigh and Ockley). Whereas it has long been thought that the transition from open-halls with a fire in the middle of the room to houses with chimneys took place fairly gently through the 16th century, it is now known to have happened almost suddenly, mostly between 1538 and 1540. Dennis Turner is quoted as pointing out that this is precisely the time historians think of as the end of the mediaeval period, when the dissolution of the monasteries, 1535-40, led to a downflow of wealth from the crown to landowners. If more buildings can be tested in East Grinstead, as we hope, it will be interesting to see if this finding is repeated here, particularly in the town, or whether town and country differed in this respect and, if so, how to account for it. It has already been shown that we fit an emerging national pattern of rebuilding in towns around the year 1450. (*Bulletin* 75, p.16)