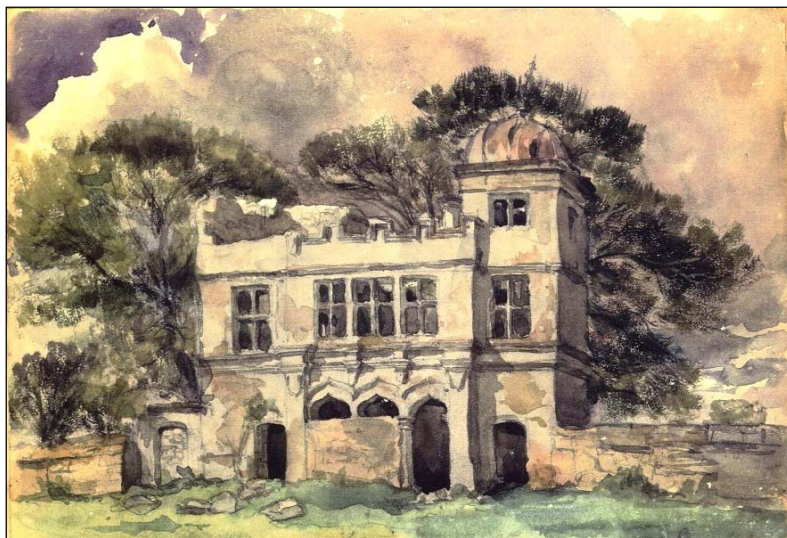


The Landmark Trust

SWARKESTONE PAVILION History Album



Written by Charlotte Haslam, 1989

Re-presented 2015

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KEY FACTS

Built:	1630-32
Possibly designed by:	John Smythson
Mason:	Richard Shepperd
Acquired by Landmark:	1985
Architect for restoration: Associates	John Bucknall of Rodney Melville
Contractor:	Linford Bridgeman Ltd
Foreman:	Dick Baker
Plasterers:	Graham Brindley
Glaziers:	Norgrove Studios
Work completed :	1986

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Swarkestone Pavilion

Summary

For a long time, little was known of the Swarkestone Pavilion; neither its precise date, nor its designer, nor its place in the wider arrangement of house (the vanished Swarkestone Hall) and garden. Even its name has varied according to differing opinions of its original purpose - from the Stand or Grandstand, through the Bullring to the Summerhouse. It has been widely agreed, however, that here was a distinguished piece of architecture. In type it belongs to the same family as the late Elizabethan and Jacobean prodigy houses, reduced to miniature proportions. Fortunately, more information has emerged about the whole of Swarkestone following research in the Harpur-Crewe archive by Dr Howard Colvin and Philip Heath, and this has since been added to by local historians.

A new house (28 hearths in 1662) was built at Swarkestone in the 1560s by Sir Richard Harpur, a lawyer who rose to eminence under the patronage of the Earl of Shrewsbury and by his own marriage to Jane Findern, an heiress. In 1622, the estate was inherited by his son's ten year old grandson, John Harpur. This John formally took up his inheritance in 1630, and was knighted in the same year. At the same time a marriage was arranged for him with Catherine Howard, grand-daughter of the Earl of Suffolk, and step-daughter of William Cavendish. Accounts for 1631-2 record the expenses of 'gloves, gauntlets and liveries' at their wedding, and for preparing Swarkestone Hall for their residence.

The arms of this young couple appear on the shields on the front of the Pavilion and it may have been built to celebrate the marriage. Entered in the same set of accounts for 1631-2 is a payment of £111 12s 4d to Richard Shepperd the mason for 'New Buildynge', together with a sum for 'Boardes' for the 'Bowl Alley house.' There seems every reason to identify these entries with the Pavilion and to date it therefore to 1631-2. The Shepperds were well-known masons in the area at the time. Whether Richard Shepperd was also its designer is uncertain: he also built the 'Gothic Survival' church at Staunton Harald but little else is known of him, although he describes himself in his will as 'Architecter.' The Harpur accounts also name a Mr. Woolridge as the Bowl Alley Surveyor, and Mark Girouard has suggested that the Pavilion could be attributed on stylistic grounds to John Smythson. This is credible, given Smythson's service with William Cavendish and Sir John Harpur's marriage with Cavendish's step-daughter, the closest of several links between the two families.

The accounts also help to disperse the bloodthirsty mythology that has grown up around the Pavilion, and establish it as belonging not to the activities of the park but to those of the garden; as a pavilion or banqueting house overlooking a bowling green, no doubt as part of a formal garden layout. It is worth noting that in estate papers of the last century it was commonly referred to in these terms, once even as the Bowling Green Pavilion. It may well have doubled as a banqueting house, to which small groups could retire to enjoy the 'banquet' course of fine wines and sweetmeats, play cards, or just enjoy the view of their host's estate.

The interpretation of the Pavilion's surroundings is confused by the later history of the site. Sir John's branch of the family died with him in 1679. The estate passed to the Harpurs of Calke and the house was dismantled in 1746-8. Surviving high walls containing windows and doors and even a fireplace may reflect its outline at least in part. While an element of picturesque management has been involved in this structure's

preservation, as in that of the Pavilion, a symmetry appears to exist between the two, in axis with the old door in the wall opposite. This fits too with a formal layout of gravel paths recorded during ploughing in 1988 in a paddock to the west of the walls; and with a rectangular pond, possibly a canal, which formerly lay to their east. However, in the early 19th century, Swarkestone was the scene of large scale breeding and sale of livestock. It is possible that some of the walled enclosures, even that in front of the Pavilion, relate equally to this activity.

Although the cupola roofs were carefully repaired in 1844 after one was struck by lightning, the Pavilion fell in dereliction. It acquired some notoriety in 1968 when it was used by the Rolling Stones to promote their album *Beggar's Banquet*, and another image from the same photoshoot was used on the back of a later compilation album, *Hot Rocks 1964-1971*.

Landmark had first approached the Harpur-Crewe estate to acquire the Pavilion as early as 1966, just a year after the trust was founded, but it was not until 1985 that it finally took it on. By then, it was a shell without roof or floors. The lead had been stolen from the tower roofs so that only their timber frames remained. Repairs were undertaken by Linford Bridgeman Ltd under the supervision of John Bucknall of Rodney Melville & Associates, and such was the dereliction that almost everything you see today except the masonry is new work.

The masonry is local gritstone, probably quarried on the estate, and used as rubble for the back and sides but carefully dressed to ashlar for the front elevation. It had mostly weathered well although some careful repointing was needed, using colour-matched lime mortar. The lime render on three sides of the Pavilion was renewed. Some of the window surrounds and sills were so cracked as to need replacing and so sections of new stone from a quarry in the Pennines were inserted.

The cupola roofs were found to have had their profile slightly changed in 1844, having been set back inside the line of the cornice. After some negotiation with English Heritage, who were reluctant to see this early repair lost, we reconstructed the slightly more generous seventeenth-century profile around the 1844 frame, like an onion skin. Permission was gained to transpose the old ball finials from the inner to the outer skin, and the cupolas then recovered with lead. The main roof would also originally have been covered in lead, but as one of the turrets was to become a bathroom, a surface less slippery when wet was necessary and so the new roof is stone paving laid on asphalt on top of a concrete structure. The water drains away between and under the stones.

The cellar, which had been deliberately filled with rubble, and steps were rediscovered and the residue of a lime ash floor was found at first floor level although it was decided that a wooden floor would be more practicable for today's needs.

Apart from a few old patches of plaster, no trace of the first floor chamber's decoration remained, even though it is likely that this would originally have been highly ornate. To avoid fakery, a simple heavy cornice moulding was applied to give the room dignity. The staircase had long since disappeared and so the architect has designed a new one in the position of the original, made to a quality to rival anything that the joiners of the 1630s might have produced.

The Swarkestone Pavilion

For a long time, very few solid facts were known about the Swarkestone Pavilion; neither its precise date, nor its designer, nor its place in the wider arrangement of house (the vanished Swarkestone Hall) and garden, of which it was only one element among many. Even its name has varied according to differing opinions of its original purpose - sometimes the Stand or Grandstand, sometimes the Summerhouse, sometimes the Banqueting House, or the Bowling Green Pavilion.

What has always been certain is that it is a skilful and distinguished example of the architecture of the period before the Civil War. In type it belongs to the same family as the 'prodigy' houses of the late Elizabethans and Jacobeans: a Wollaton or a Hardwick, reduced to miniature proportions to serve as an ornamental building.

Recently, more information has begun to emerge about the whole of Swarkestone, mainly due to the examination of the considerable archive at Calke Abbey by scholars such as Howard Colvin. From estate accounts, and the study of family history, and of parallel buildings and gardens, a much clearer picture is being built up, which though still based very much on guesswork, is beginning to seem convincing.

Who owned the Pavilion?

When the Pavilion was built, in the 17th century, Swarkestone belonged to the Harpur family. They came originally from Staffordshire, where they had existed as minor gentry for several generations before 1550. Then in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, they established themselves at a rather grander level. This was mainly the achievement of Sir Richard Harpur, a successful lawyer who rose to be Judge of the Court of Common Pleas and Chief Justice of the County Palatine of Lancaster. In an age of successful lawyers Sir Richard did exceedingly well,

building up large estates in Staffordshire and the neighbouring counties of Derbyshire and Leicestershire.

The manor of Swarkestone came to him through his wife, Jane Findern, who inherited the estates of her brother in 1558. The Finderns were an old county family who owned large estates around Derby, the chief of which was at Findern itself. They had only recently acquired Swarkestone from the Rolleston family, who lived there in the 14th and 15th centuries, so Richard Harpur was probably the first to build there on any substantial scale. This he did in the 1560s, making it his principal residence.

There he lived the life of a country gentleman, busy with local as well as national business, entertaining widely, and enjoying the patronage of the great Earl of Shrewsbury. In all of this he was followed and surpassed by his son, Sir John Harpur, several of whose letters to 6th and 7th Earls of Shrewsbury survive in the Talbot archives, mostly concerned with county business of one sort or another.

Sir John also continued his father's work of adding to the Harpur estates. At the same time he secured the position of himself and his sons among the county's leading families, either by marriage (his second son John to Dorothy Dethick, heiress of Breadsall) or purchase (Calke, by the third son, Henry).

Unfortunately Sir John's eldest son and grandson, and his second son, all died before he did. On his death in 1622 he was succeeded by the second son's ten-year-old son, John, who already stood to inherit his mother's estates at Breadsall, north of Derby. While he remained a minor the younger John's estates were controlled by trustees but in 1630, when he was 18, he formally took up his inheritance, and was knighted in the same year. At about the same time a marriage was arranged for him with Catherine Howard, grand-daughter of the Earl of Suffolk. Estate accounts for the year 1631-2 record the expenses of 'gloves,

gauntlets and liveries' at their marriage, and for preparing Swarkestone Hall for their residence.

This wealthy young couple must have wanted to make many improvements, to bring their home up to the latest standard of comfort and fashion. A badly damaged document of 1638 in the archive gives particulars of some object, sadly illegible, in 'Swarson Ho ... every man hathe or ought to have.' A more durable monument to their efforts lies in the Pavilion itself.

The 1630s were not a time in which many such delights could be enjoyed at leisure. No one in a position of responsibility could avoid the increasing bitterness resulting from the dispute, or series of disputes, between the King and his Parliament; what was happening at the highest level was reflected in each county between nobility and gentry, gentry and townspeople, or simply between men of different religious beliefs and political opinions. There was, sadly, no negotiable settlement nor peaceful solution to this.

Sir John survived the tragedy of the Civil War, in which his house was extensively damaged, and the difficult years of the Commonwealth, under which he faced a large fine for his support of the Royalist cause. Living on into the reign of King Charles II, he also survived his first wife and his only son, Henry, who died in about 1670. This meant that on his death in 1679 his estates of Swarkestone and Breadsall, together with land in Staffordshire and Leicestershire, passed to his cousin, Sir John Harpur of Calke, 3rd Baronet, to whose descendants the remainder of them still belongs.

Swarkestone Hall

Sadly no illustrations of the house built by Sir Richard Harpur in the 1560s have yet been found. William Woolley, in his *History of Derbyshire* written in about 1712, described it as 'a large, convenient stone building, pleasantly seated upon the banks of Trent.' A single fireplace and overmantel at Calke Abbey, richly carved with grotesque ornament, is said to have been taken from it. If the rest of the house was on the same scale of magnificence, we can imagine something grand and extensive, surrounded by formal gardens; and an inventory of 1620, containing a long list of rooms and chambers and closets, bears this out, as does its assessment at 28 hearths in 1662.

It could have been built round a courtyard, as many houses of the mid-16th century were, or else had wings projecting forward from a central range containing a Hall and Great Chamber. Certainly under the first Sir John it was judged capable of receiving exalted guests, such as his patron the Earl of Shrewsbury - which would have meant accommodating his very large retinue as well.

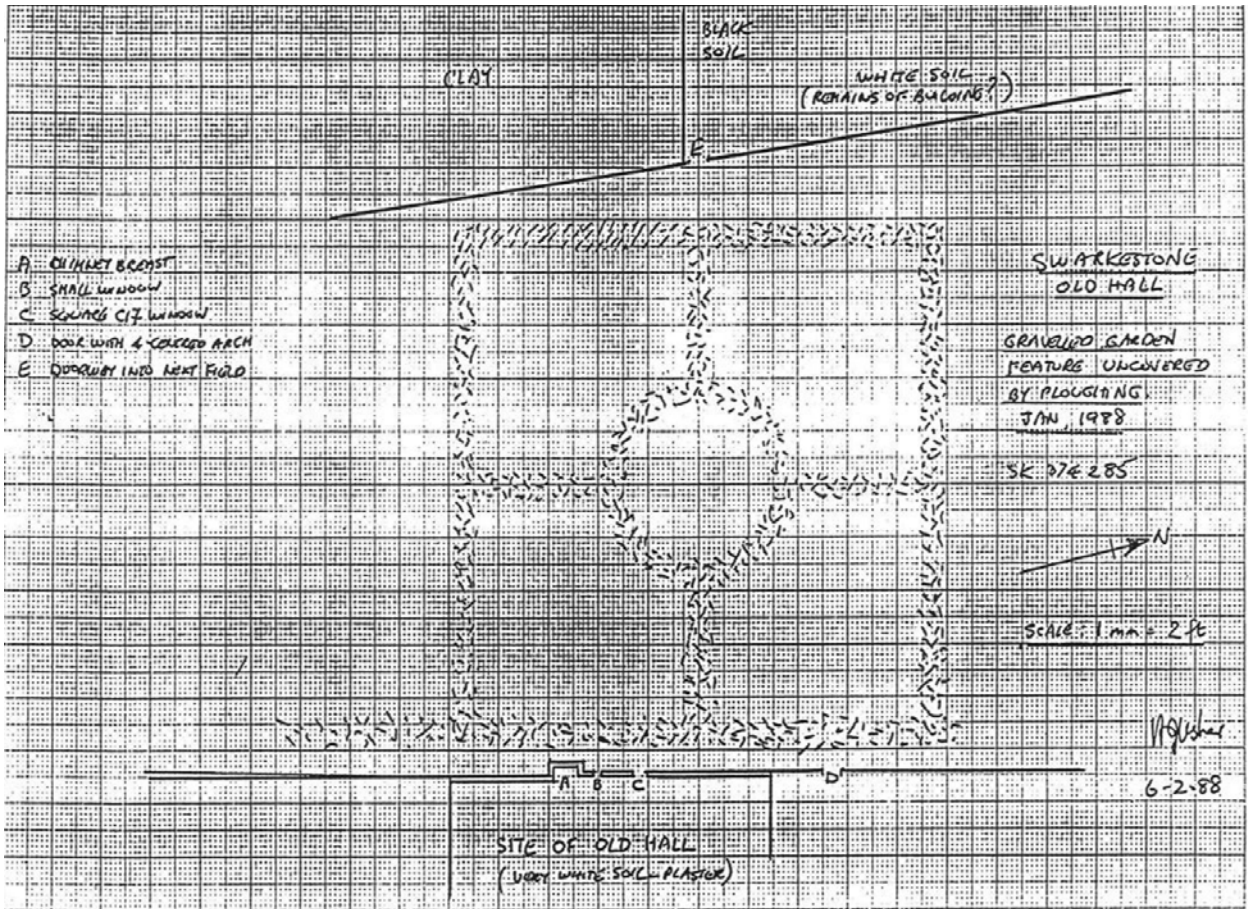


Elizabethan fireplace in the private apartments), said to have come from Swarkestone Hall. (The shield and coat of arms are a later addition).

As a great house it was to be shortlived, only flourishing as such for a little over a hundred years. But its eclipse was not, as has often been said, the result of events which took place there during the Civil War, momentous though these were, and great though the damage caused at that time may have been.

At the outbreak of war in 1642 Sir John, naturally enough considering his own record of service to the Crown, declared for the Royalist cause. By the end of that year a garrison was established at Swarkestone, with the Hall presumably serving as headquarters for a force whose main purpose was to hold the strategically important bridge over the River Trent. When a Parliamentary force arrived under Sir John Gell in January 1643, the house does not seem to have played any great part in the battle. The defenders quickly concentrated their efforts on the bridge itself. Two large holes in the back of the Pavilion, now marked by indentations in the wall, have been quoted as evidence of a siege of the house, but the real damage to Swarkestone Hall occurred later, after the Battle of Swarkestone Bridge had been lost by the Royalists. Before he marched away Sir John Gell 'dismantled' the Hall, to prevent it being fortified again. Tradition maintains that the damage was so extensive that the house had to be abandoned, and was never again inhabited.

The true story of what happened next is of a much less dramatic nature: Sir John, with apparently little delay, set about the complete repair of the house. He claimed at the time of his assessment by the Commonwealth authorities in 1649 that damage to the extent of £8,000 had been inflicted on his buildings and personal property, and the implication is that he had already spent this on them - as he was well able to afford to do. Certainly in the Hearth Tax assessment of 1662 no mention is made of any part of the building being in ruins. And for the rest of his life Sir John continued to be referred to as 'of Swarkestone'; if he had made another of his houses, such as Breadsall, into his chief residence, there must have been some reference to it.



Mr Howard Usher's survey of a garden feature uncovered when ploughing at Swarkestone in 1988

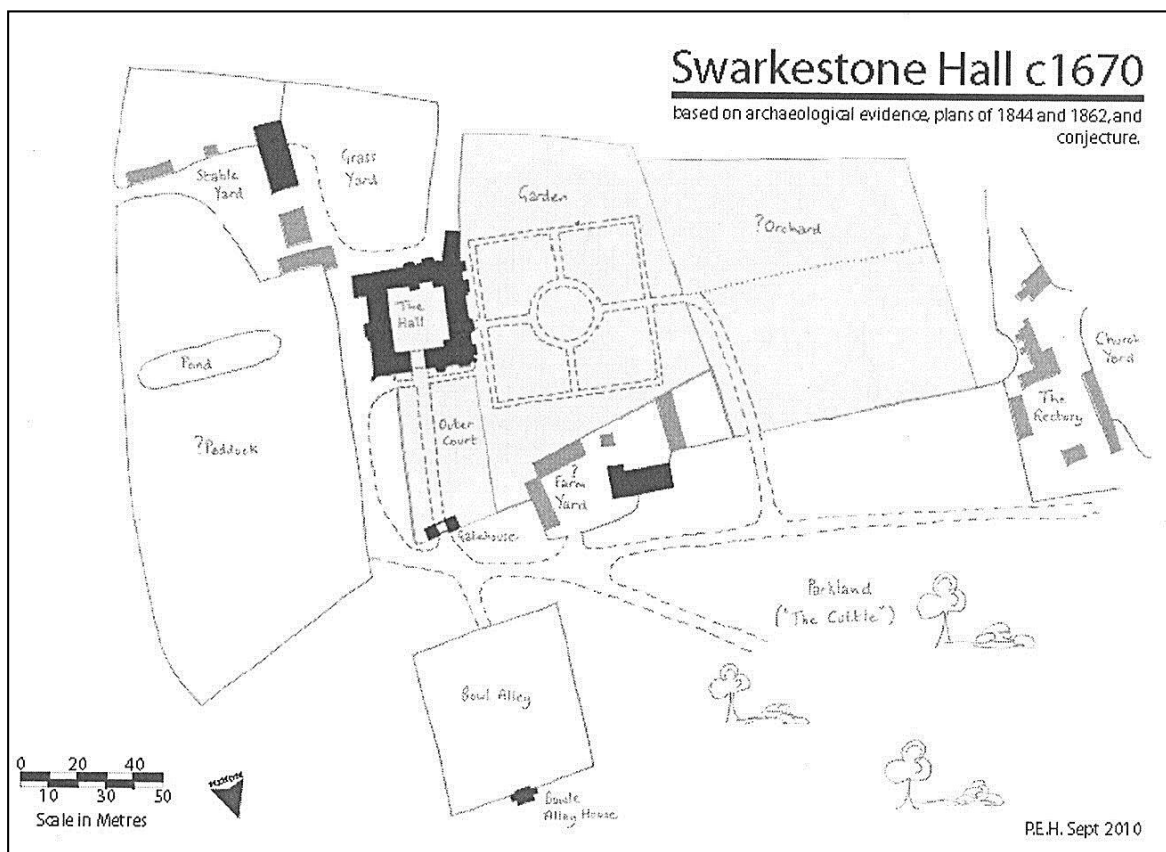
What really caused the house to be abandoned was the failure of the Swarkestone branch of the family with Sir John's death in 1679. His cousins had been established at Calke for three generations, and it was this house that they rebuilt in 1701-4. Swarkestone was relegated to the status of a secondary property. In 1712, according to Woolley, it was the 'jointure house' of the Lady Bellamount, the 3rd Baronet's widow.

In the long term Swarkestone Hall was too close to the main seat to be kept up as an occasional alternative residence. Between 1746 and 1748, the estate accounts record its dismantling and the transport of usable materials to Calke Abbey. Only some tantalising sections of wall were left standing, perhaps purposely so, for their picturesque value. These contain window surrounds, and in a taller fragment, a fireplace. They seem to belong to a range projecting towards, and even possibly aligned with, the Pavilion. Between, and surrounding another large enclosure, are fine walls topped with coping stones, and it is difficult now to judge the date and purpose of these, and of other enclosures beyond. Today's Old Hall Farmhouse was almost certainly the stable block, as described in more detail below. Thorough archaeological study of the wider remains and gardens has yet to be done. In 1988, when the paddock next to the main surviving fragment of wall of the Old Hall was ploughed, traces of a formal garden appeared, and were recorded by Howard Usher. They showed a formal parterre, of unknown date, in front of the Old Hall site: a large circular feature with paths intersecting the four side of a square.

Intriguingly, the Google Earth image of the Pavilion and its enclosure seems to show traces of another square parterre, with diagonal paths leading to a small circular central feature. Again, the date is uncertain, and such a layout would presumably have precluded playing bowls while (or if) it existed! Further study would surely tell us much. Until then the great house of the Harpurs must remain mysterious, the Pavilion its most notable survivor.



An apparent shadow of formal garden features also in front of the Pavilion is just discernible in this aerial photo (Google Earth).



Suggested layout of the Swarkestone Hall site in the mid-17th century, based on surviving features, archaeological evidence and 19th-century plans (South Derbyshire District Council). Key buildings are shown in black including the conjectured footprint of Swarkestone Hall.

The Pavilion

When was the Pavilion built?

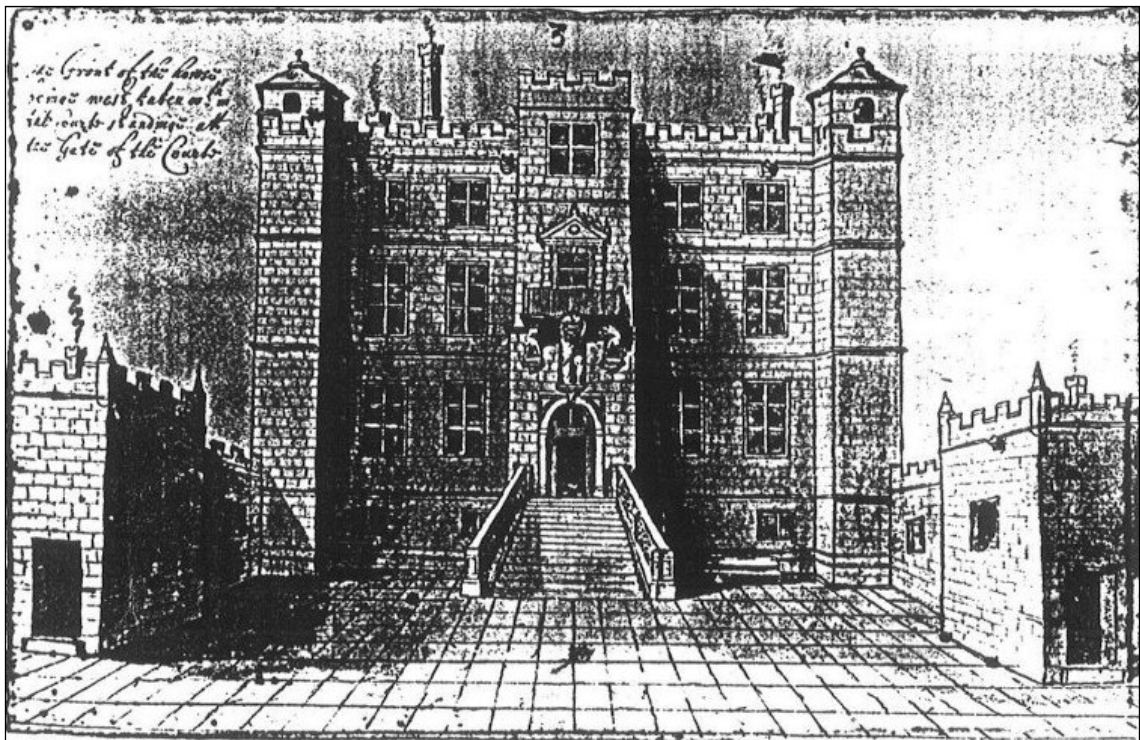
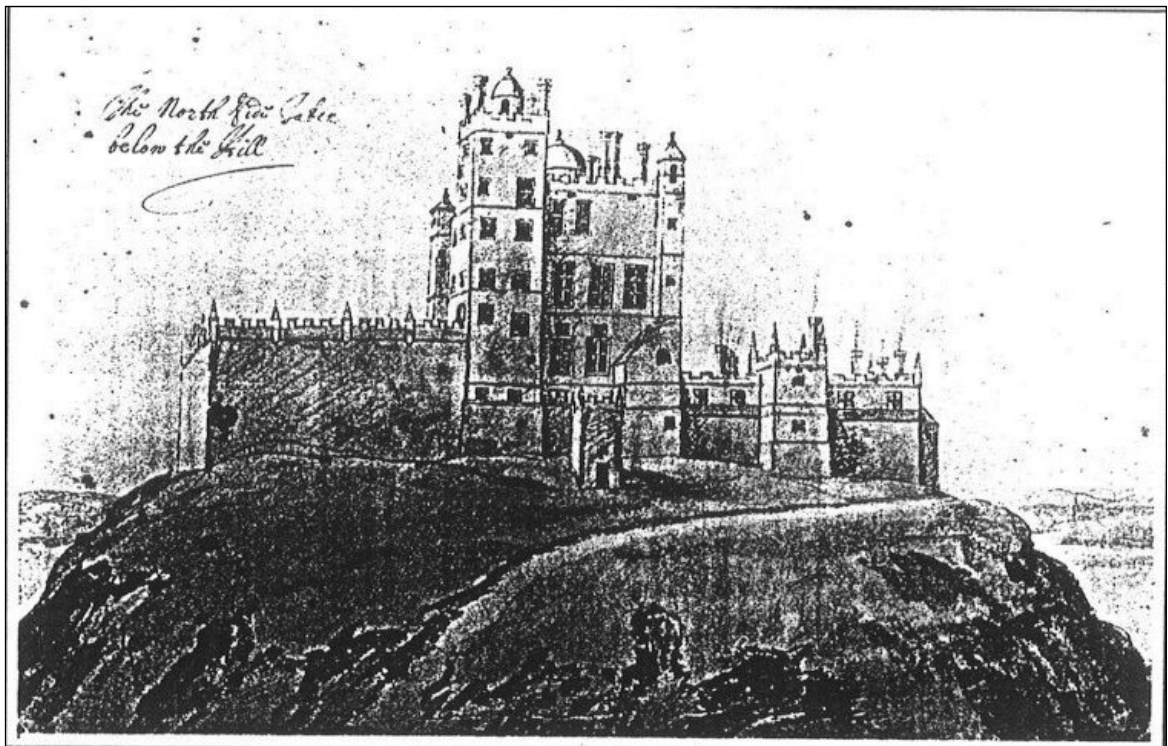
Luckily we are able to date the addition of the Pavilion to the already magnificent framework of Swarkestone Hall with reasonable certainty. The first piece of evidence lies in the two shields on the front of the building itself. One bears the coat of arms of the young Sir John Harpur, who took up his inheritance and was knighted in 1630; and the other that of Catherine Howard, to whom he was married in 1631-2. The Pavilion, it would seem, was a celebration of their marriage.

This evidence alone would still allow for a building date any time in the 1630s, but in the same set of accounts that records expenditure for Sir John's marriage is an entry for New Buildyng. Under this heading it is recorded that since 1630 £111 12s 4d has been paid to Richard Shepperd the mason; a sum that indicates more than a round of minor improvements. Taking the two pieces of evidence together, it becomes almost certain that the new building referred to is the Pavilion.

Who designed the Pavilion?

Architects as we know them were still a rarity in the early 17th century, so it is often very difficult to say who actually designed a particular building. Even with the grandest buildings several different people could be involved. To start with there was the owner himself, who may have sketched an idea for a plan or an elevation, or obtained a drawing from a friend, or from one of the Italian or Flemish Books of Architecture that were beginning to appear in England.

Then there was a Master Mason, who at least supervised and sometimes personally constructed the building, and often had a free hand when it came to ornament or detail. Frequently there was also a Surveyor or Comptroller, who saw to the financial arrangements, acting as Clerk of the Works.



The Little Castle at Bolsover; drawings dating from the 1630s.

In the later 16th century and throughout the 17th century it was not unusual for the last two - Mason and Surveyor - to take on, in addition, the role that we would recognise as that of the architect, having responsibility for the overall design as well as the execution of a building. On the other hand it was possible for a complete outsider to supply designs, someone who had gained a reputation for drawing plans. The chief difficulty for us today in identifying who did what arises for the very reason that the architect was not seen as having any separate professional status. As a result, very few names have come down to us credited both with the design of a building and with the supervision of its construction.

Some collections of drawings have survived, however, and of these one of the most interesting is that of the Smythson family. The Smythsons, our earliest and one of our ablest architectural dynasties, are the subject of a book by Mark Girouard, and there is no better way of gaining an understanding of Elizabethan and Jacobean architecture than by reading this. Moreover, he is of the opinion that the second of them, John, could well have been the designer of the Swarkestone Pavilion.

There are good grounds for accepting this. Firstly, the design is stylistically similar to other works by John Smythson. The genius of his father, the great Robert, had lain in the planning of his buildings; at Hardwick and Wollaton and 'divers others of great account', he combined the usual elements in new ways, and by their grouping and massing, and above all their tall proportions, achieved extraordinarily dramatic effects, the so-called 'high houses of the Midlands.' John's particular talent, on the other hand, lay in decoration, in his use of a Classical Mannerist style that was all his own. He also developed his own version of a revived 'castle' style, of which the pioneering and chief example was at Bolsover.

Here John, possibly with help from his father in the initial phases, had designed for (and with) Sir Charles Cavendish (younger son of Bess of Hardwick) the Little Castle. This was an entirely Romantic creation, outcome of a fascination with medieval legend and imagery which was then fashionable, and of which Sir Charles was an enthusiast.

John Smythson (d. 1634) designed other castles, and buildings which combined the elements of castellation with Jacobean details such as ogee domes or cupolas, and large expanses of window. From plans of his buildings it is also clear that he had a love of symmetry and of compactness. In all of this, and in the Mannerism seen in the ogee form of the loggia arches (a form which appears in fireplaces at Bolsover), the Swarkestone Pavilion is characteristic of Smythson's work.

Another characteristic which the Pavilion shares with works of the Smythsons - father and son - is its unadorned exterior. At a time when many buildings were richly encrusted, to show off the mason's skill at carving ornament and a patron's ability to pay for it, they achieved their effects by the simple relationship of one plane to another, by projection and recession, proportion and silhouette. It is this that lifts their work above that of contemporaries, and the Pavilion with it.

Family Connections

There are other circumstantial reasons for suspecting that John Smythson was involved at Swarkestone besides purely architectural ones. Like his father before him, John combined his architectural role with that of service as Steward or Bailiff to a great family: in Robert's case for the Willoughbys at Wollaton, in John's for the Cavendishes at Bolsover and Welbeck. But although John was for most of his life employed by William Cavendish (eventually Duke of Newcastle) on one or other of his great building operations, he also did works for others. Nearly always, however, there was some connection, by kinship, geography or friendship, between these other clients and the Smythsons themselves, or more frequently with their patrons.

There are many such ties to link the Harpurs and John Smythson. These go back into the 16th century, when Robert Smythson was employed by old Sir John Harpur's patron the Earl of Shrewsbury, stepfather to the Cavendishes. There were also close ties with the Beaumont family in Leicestershire, who intermarried with the Finderns and the Harpurs, and one of whom, an entrepreneur named Huntingdon Beaumont, was godfather to John Smythson's elder son. The Harpurs were also connected to the Cavendishes, having married into the same families, such as the Pierreponts; besides the inevitable encounters which must have occurred between the two families on shared county business.

The closest link of all was provided indirectly, however, by Catherine Howard, who in 1631/2 became the wife of the newly-knighted Sir John Harpur, and whose arms are with his on the front of the Pavilion: she was William Cavendish's step-daughter. Her mother, born Elizabeth Basset of Blore in Staffordshire, had been married, as her first husband, to Henry Howard, Catherine's father. After his death she remarried, in 1619, and her new husband was William Cavendish.

It is more than likely that Catherine was partly brought up in the Cavendish household, where John Smythson would have been a familiar figure; and by no means improbable that, in honour of the marriage that had been arranged between them, she and her future husband commissioned a design from him for a building.

Another contender

There is plenty of circumstantial evidence, therefore, for attributing the design of the Pavilion to John Smythson. The fact remains, however, of that payment of £111 12s 4d to Richard Shepperd the mason; and masons for several hundred years before the watershed of the 17th century were more often than not the designers of the buildings on which they worked. The late Howard Colvin, who

wrote the history of Calke Abbey and the Harpur family, thinks that we need look no further than this for the designer of the Pavilion.

The name Richard Shepperd occurs in connection with only one other building, but this too is a distinguished one, and one which bears some similarity to the Pavilion: the extraordinary 'Gothic Survival' church at Staunton Harold, just over the Trent in Leicestershire, built in 1653 as an act of defiance against the Commonwealth. There again his name appears in building accounts and, moreover, it is actually carved behind the crenellated parapet on the church itself.

Apart from his skill in these two cases at handling Gothic or castellated forms, nothing is known of him. The name Shepperd occurs in the Harpur papers in the 18th century, at the beginning of which one of them was agent for the Swarkestone estate. So Richard Shepperd was probably a local man. The Harpurs and the Shirleys of Staunton Harold, only a few miles away, were certainly known to each other, if only as joint patrons of the poet and epigrammist, Thomas Bancroft (d. 1658), who was born in Swarkestone.



The name 'Richard Sheppard' is carved behind the parapet of the fine Gothic Survival church at Staunton Harold, near Ashby-de-la-Zouche. It is a very rare example of a High Anglican church built during Cromwell's Protectorate (in 1653). The church is now in the care of the National Trust.

So the Pavilion could be entirely the work of Richard Shepperd, in which case he was a designer of whom we would like to know more. The similarity with Bolsover and John Smythson's work elsewhere could simply have come about through his patron's knowledge of, and admiration for it.

Alternatively, and perhaps this is the most likely answer, it could be another of those buildings which were, effectively, a work of collaboration. South Derbyshire District Council's Conservation Area Statement states enigmatically but without citing sources that the pavilion's surveyor 'is named as Mr Wooldridge' ('surveyor' was then used to describe the professional we would call an architect today). So perhaps Wooldridge saw John Smythson's work and supplied a sketch of the front elevation, which was then realised by Richard Shepperd, who made a contribution of his own in uniting the drawing to a three-dimensional building, perhaps varying the detail on the way to suit his own taste and skill.



An early photo of the pavilion, showing it windowless and derelict.

How was the Pavilion used?

It is easy enough to work out what the Pavilion itself was for, because it differs very little from the many pavilions and Banqueting Houses built in the formal gardens of the 17th and early 18th centuries. These were places of retreat, where refreshments were served in privacy to the family and their guests at the end of the main afternoon meal, or at some other time, away from the rest of the household; a custom still kept alive in the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, where the high table withdraws from the dining hall to a common room for dessert, coffee and port.

What was equally important, such pavilions provided at the same time the best possible view of surrounding formal gardens, or of the owner's estate, which explains the usual position of the main room on the first floor, or their site on raised ground. In the particular case of the Swarkestone Pavilion, the intention was also to provide a view of whatever activity went on in the enclosure in front of it.

In the grand room on the first floor, spectators could enjoy the fun in warmth and shelter, with the loggia below for participants; for the hardy, and the best view of all, there was the roof terrace. Privacy for senior members of the family was provided in the little closet leading off the main room, now the kitchen; and as in a greater house and a grander procession of rooms, the mouldings of the doors are on the outside only, showing the sequence to go from the stairs, to the main room, to the inner chamber. Here sweetmeats, nuts and delicate conceits were served, along with much refreshment of a liquid kind, to judge by the very generous cellar.

What is not so clear is the purpose of the walled enclosure, which has given rise to much speculation. Because of its walls it has been assumed that it was something to do with blood sports. Bull and bear baiting have been favourite contenders, and though they were of course popular in Stuart England, the

enclosures intended for them were much smaller, often round or oval, and with even higher walls, behind which the spectators could stand on a platform to watch.

Lucinda Lambton in *Beastly Buildings* suggests that it was indeed the kind of building known as a Stand, of which several genuine examples exist, which was commonly used for watching the hunt - at this period the quarry being stags not foxes. The enclosure would then have been intended for the slaughter of driven animals, which non-participants would have watched from the safety of the Pavilion. Some support is given to this theory by the tradition of calling the enclosure the Cuttle - which the Oxford dictionary gives as an early word for knife. However, the word may have a more recent and entirely local meaning: there is, for example, a Cuttle Bridge over the Trent and Mersey canal, not far away.

Another suggestion has been jousting. There was a revival of this in the early 17th century, part of the same interest in Chivalry that produced the Little Castle at Bolsover. Certainly, the Cavendishes were among the main participants in the sport; they had a tilting ground, and held tournaments. Tilting grounds tended to be long and narrow, however. An enclosure the size of that at Swarkestone would call for something in the nature of the Eglinton Tournament of a later Romantic Revival.

The argument against all of these is that they are activities of the park, of stable and kennel, and not of the garden; the rough rather than the polite, while the available evidence would indicate that the Pavilion was definitely part of the garden. Furthermore, we have no certain evidence that the walls themselves are contemporary, though the likelihood is that they at least reflect some earlier pattern of formal enclosure. Possibly the Pavilion itself was aligned, with the fine door surround opposite, on the main garden front of the Hall, forming a main axis in an elaborate layout of similar walled, embanked or hedged enclosures.

The Game of Bowls

An activity that was definitely a part of the garden was the Game of Bowls. Bowls had been played since the early Middle Ages but later on, and especially during the Tudor period, the game became so popular that legislation was introduced to control it. Ostensibly the chief reason for this was the threat that the male population would be distracted from its archery practice. There was also a genuine fear of the gatherings it attracted, which encouraged drinking and gambling, and gave opportunities to the 'idle' to make conspiracies. The fiercest regulation came under Henry VIII, in an act of 1541. Keepers of public bowling greens and alleys were threatened with a fine of 40s for every day's play; and the working classes were forbidden from playing at all, except at Christmas and under supervision.

These fines must have provided the government with a healthy income, since there seems little evidence that play was prevented. By the early 17th century, public greens were in existence in London and several other cities, often attached to inns and public houses. Some, it is true, became places of ill repute, but for the most part they were frequented by burgesses and merchant families, whose favourite recreation it was.

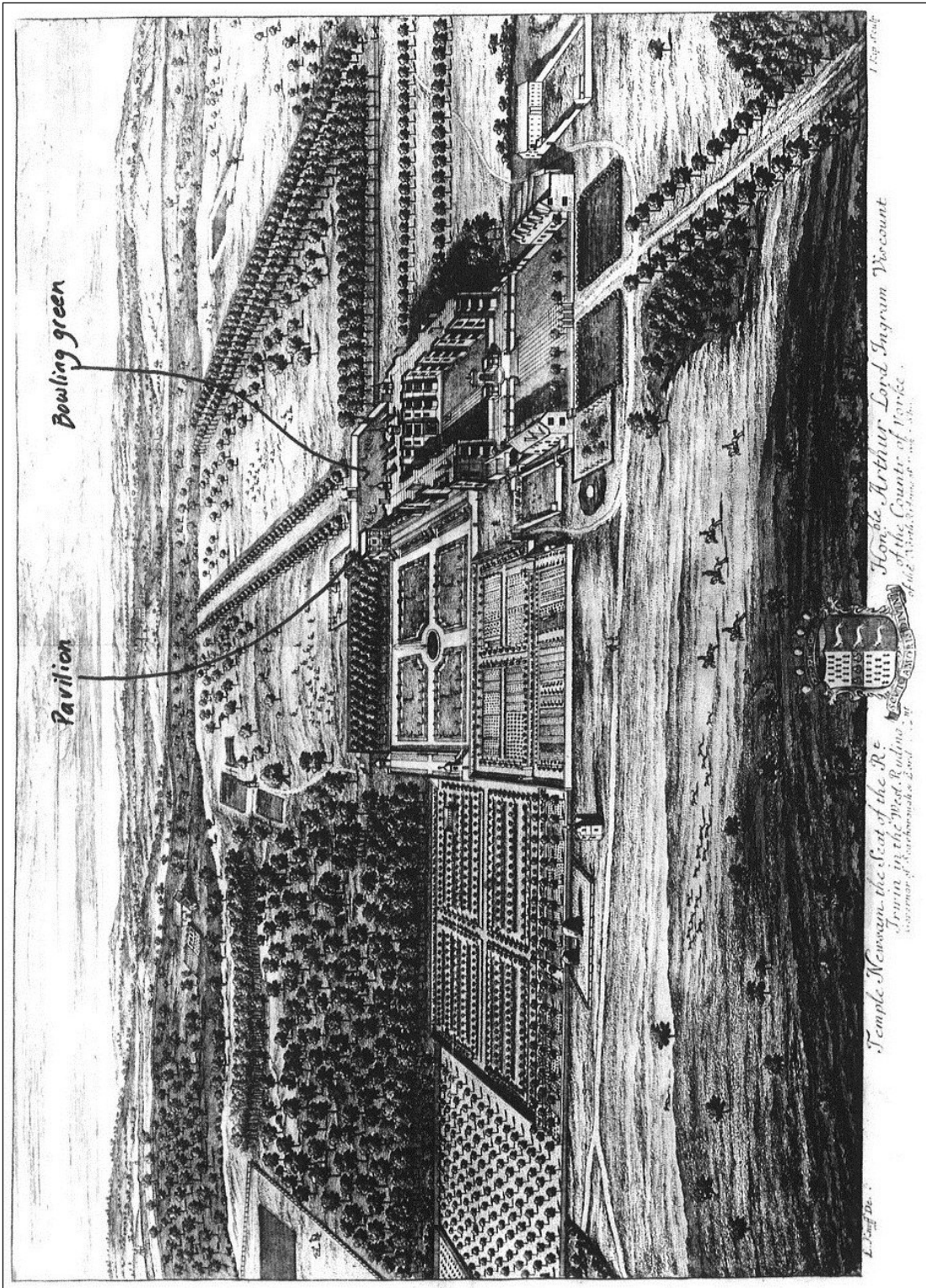
The game was no less popular among the gentry and nobility. Indeed, in the act of 1541 anyone owning land worth £100 or more a year was 'free to play bowls without penalty' as long as it was 'within the precinct of their houses, gardens or orchards.' Full advantage was taken of this permission, and most manor houses and great mansions were equipped with a green, just as today they might be with a tennis court or swimming pool. There was no lessening of interest in the game after the Restoration: it was Charles II who drew up the first formal set of rules in 1670.

To see how bowling greens were fitted into the formal and compartmental gardens of the 17th century, you have only to look at the series of bird's-eye views of country seats engraved by Johannes Kip, first published in *Britannia Illustrata* in 1708. In many of these, between the parterres and the complicated knot gardens is a square or rectangular lawn on which are figures unmistakably playing bowls. Sometimes the green is immediately by the house, sometimes it is further away at the outskirts of the garden. Very often it is surrounded by a raised walk, and equally often on its edge there stands a pavilion. Sometimes this was no more than a small shelter, in which to store the 'woods', or to provide cover for the players should it suddenly rain. More often it provided an excuse for something more elaborate, which could also serve as a banqueting house.

Most of these little pavilions and summerhouses were swept away by the designers of the great, open landscapes of the later 18th century, surviving only in paintings and engravings. Only a few examples stand today: the East and West Banqueting Houses at Old Campden House, Chipping Campden, the Library at Stevenstone and the Music Room in Lancaster, which also overlooked a bowling green at one time, are others that belong to the Landmark Trust.



The Game of Bowls in the 17th century, in a view of 'Hanbury hall from ye Bowling Green' drawn by Sir James Thornhill.

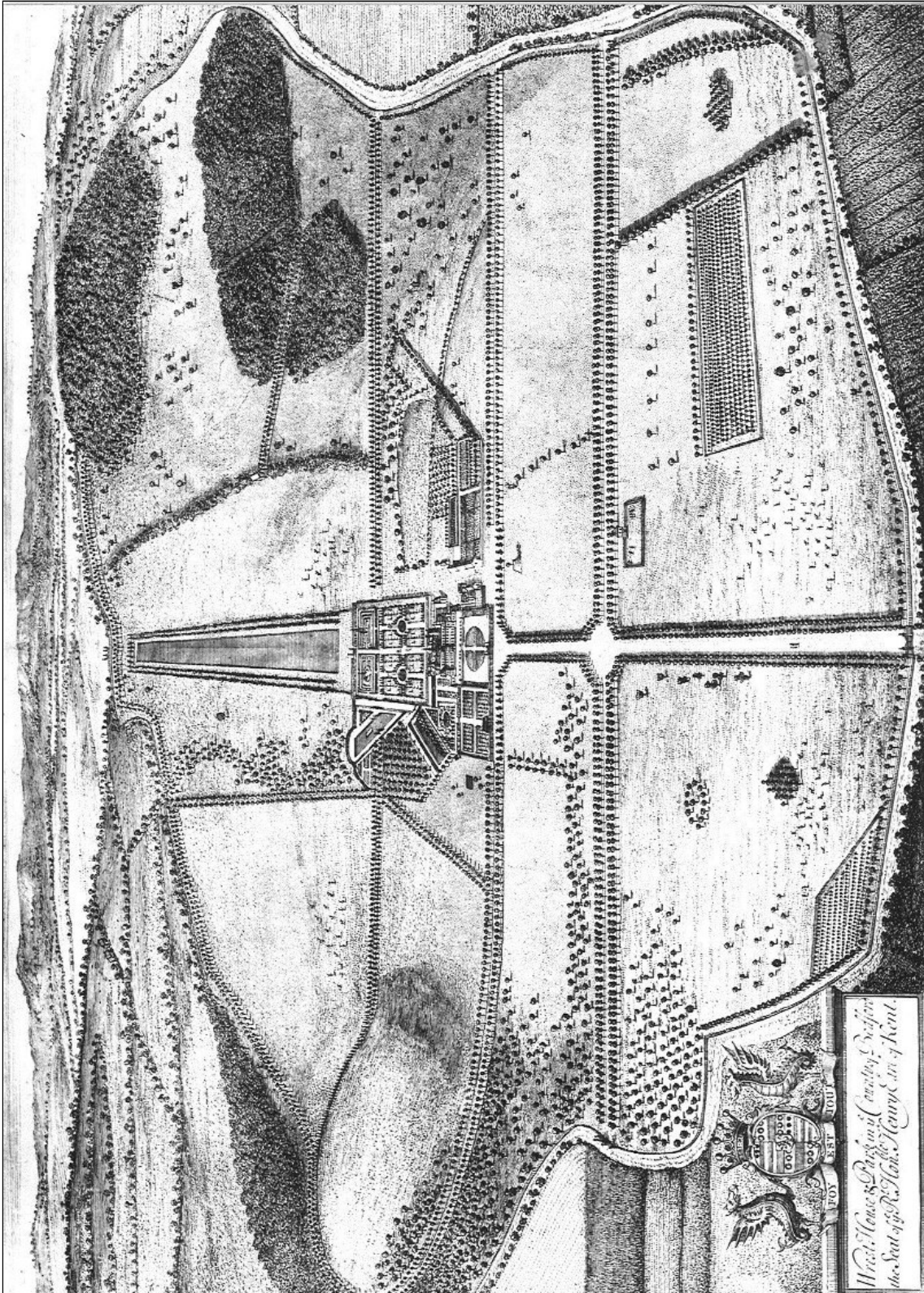


Kip's view of Temple Newsam, Yorkshire, with formal gardens and Bowling Green, overlooked by a Pavilion or Banqueting House.

Returning to Swarkestone, it seems entirely plausible that the newly knighted and soon to be married Sir John Harpur, and his smart young wife-to-be, should want their seat to be doubly adorned, by both the sporting and the architectural status symbol of the day: a bowling green overlooked by a more than ordinarily distinguished Pavilion? What is more, there is some hard evidence to support this, because the entry in the accounts for the 'new buildyng' of 1630-2, recording payment to Richard Shepperd the mason, goes on to list a sum laid out for 'boards' for the 'bowle alley house.' This must surely, as before, refer to our Pavilion. Further confirmation comes from the estate papers of the 19th century, when the building is referred to both as the Banqueting House or Room, and as the Bowling Green House, or sometimes the Bowl Alley House.

Without an illustration of the garden at Swarkestone, or archaeology, we can't know for certain how the green was laid out: whether it occupied the whole of the enclosure, which measures approximately fifty yards by sixty, or whether there were tree-lined walks and borders occupying part of it. The 1988 investigations described above suggested a parterre with diagonal walks across the centre of the enclosure. From undulations in the turf it looks as though there may have been something of that nature there at one time or another around the perimeter.

Nor do we know exactly how it stood in relation to the house. It seems likely that it was closer to the arrangement at Temple Newsam, where the green was overlooked by the house (and also by a Pavilion), than that at Wrest Park, where the walled green (also with its Pavilion) stands isolated in the park. Looking at the surviving field boundaries, the banks and traces of an avenue and a canal lying immediately to the east and south-east of the enclosure at Swarkestone, it is easy to imagine it surrounded by a very similar layout to those shown in Kip's engravings. Little further effort is required to people the green in front of the pavilion with little groups of figures stooping intently over their game.



Kip's View of Wrest Park, Bedfordshire. Here the Bowling green is in a walled enclosure in the park.

Swarkestone Old Hall Farm House

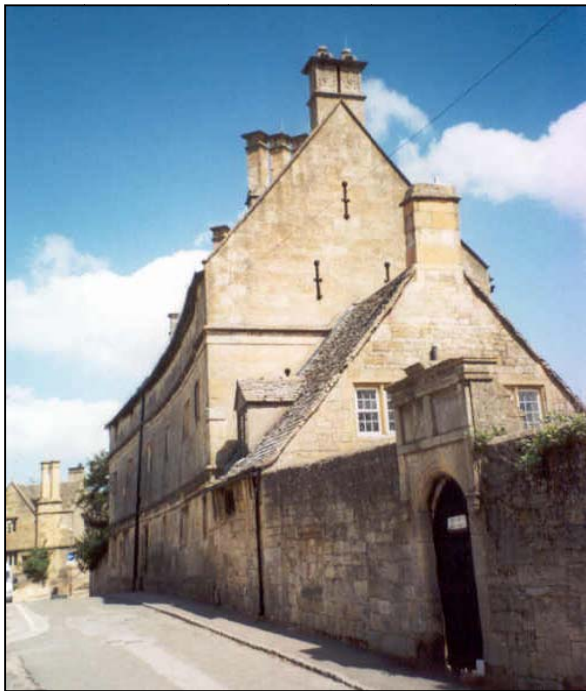
Today, Swarkestone Old Hall Farm provides the lynchpin for the evocative surviving grouping of gate piers, barn, banqueting house and walled enclosure. As a now domestic house, however, it presented something of a puzzle. Its fabric is plain but well-built and clearly 17th-century in style, so predates the loss of the main hall. Yet why would the Harpurs build such a sizeable dwelling so close to their great house?

The answer is that today's farmhouse was originally built as the stable block to the hall, for which further investigation by Philip Heath for South Derbyshire District Council has provided compelling evidence. The plain exterior of the building encompasses seven regular bays, with originally just one wide external door at centre of the front elevation. There were no primary windows to the rear, and most of the front ground floor windows have had their sills lowered. There was no service wing originally (the present one dates from the 19th century and replaces an earlier one). Internally, the partition walls, stairs and chimneys all appear to be later additions, and there is evidence at all levels that the internal walls were originally left as unplastered, coursed stone.

SDDC carried out dendrochronology, or tree ring dating, and found that the main structure of the building was built of timber felled in 1663 – an entirely plausible date, as Sir John Harpur took up residence again after the Restoration of Charles II and made his family home habitable again. The timber used for the farmhouse's plain staircase, however, was still growing in 1675, and missing some of its sapwood, making an early 18th-century felling date highly plausible, perhaps 1720, giving a possible date when the stables were first converted for domestic use. The dimensions of the building are also consistent with stable use, according to that bible for equestrian architecture, the late Giles Worsley's *The British Stable* (2004). It measures 22 feet wide, and seems to have been divided internally into divisions that were 10 feet wide, suitable for subdivision into twin



Swarkestone Old Hall Farmhouse, front (left) and rear elevations. This was originally the stable block for the Old Hall. Note the single, wide central entrance door. The rear service wing (extreme right) is a 19th-century addition. The windows in the front elevation have all had their sills lowered; those in the rear are all later insertions.



The Court House in Chipping Campden is an even more magnificent, early 17th-century stable block converted as a dower house in the 1650s after the destruction by fire of the main house during the Civil War. The ventilation slits in its gable end betray its working origins (left). Windows on the rear elevation are again haphazard insertions.

bays 5 feet wide for a pair of horses. The rear wall was left blank to hold the racks and mangers. The upper floors here were probably used for accommodation for the stable lads and storage: they often functioned as granaries and haylofts too, but there is no evidence of pitching doors here at Swarkestone.

Stable blocks are rare before around 1600, not least because they were reserved for the Court. In the 17th century, however, there began a great passion among the aristocracy for the French school of horsemanship (via Spain and Vienna) known as *ménage*, or dressage, quite apart from the fact that horses were then the only means of daily transport and so as essential (and status driven) as cars are to us today. The young Prince Henry, the 'lost prince' who died in 1625 aged just eighteen, was a great horseman, and one of his brother, the future Charles I's, chief mentors was William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle. Cavendish was obsessed with *ménage* and was responsible for the riding schools at both Bolsover Castle and Welbeck. (That at Bolsover, now in the care of English Heritage, is largely intact and still hosts displays of 17th-century horsemanship from time to time). More modestly, any Landmarkers staying at Wolveton Gatehouse will find another, extremely rare example of a surviving early 17th-century, purpose built riding school in the grounds of Wolveton House.

It therefore became most fashionable to dress the stage of your country house with a fine stable block that played its part in the scene just as much as banqueting houses, gate piers and curtain walls and lodges. The Swarkestone example was built during the lifetime of Sir John Harpur (d. 1679), whose marriage to Catherine Howard gave him close family ties to that passionate *cavalier*, William Cavendish.

The closest comparison within Landmark's portfolio to the Swarkestone site is Old Campden House, a great house built by Sir Baptist Hicks c. 1612. It too had banqueting houses (two, East and West), enclosing walls, and gate lodges linked with an apron wall. There too there was a formal parterre in front of the

banqueting houses. The Campden great house was more than just 'dismantled' during the Civil War as was the Swarkestone Hall, but rather destroyed, by fire in 1645. However, its stable block also survived, a handsome but plain early 17th-century building long since converted to residential use but which also clearly bears the marks of more utilitarian use originally, and whose name still refers to its inclusion within the 'court' of the great house.

There are other examples of former 17th-century stable blocks at Whitmore Hall (Staffs), Peover Hall (Cheshire) and Chawton House (Hants).

CS May 2014

Later History of Swarkestone

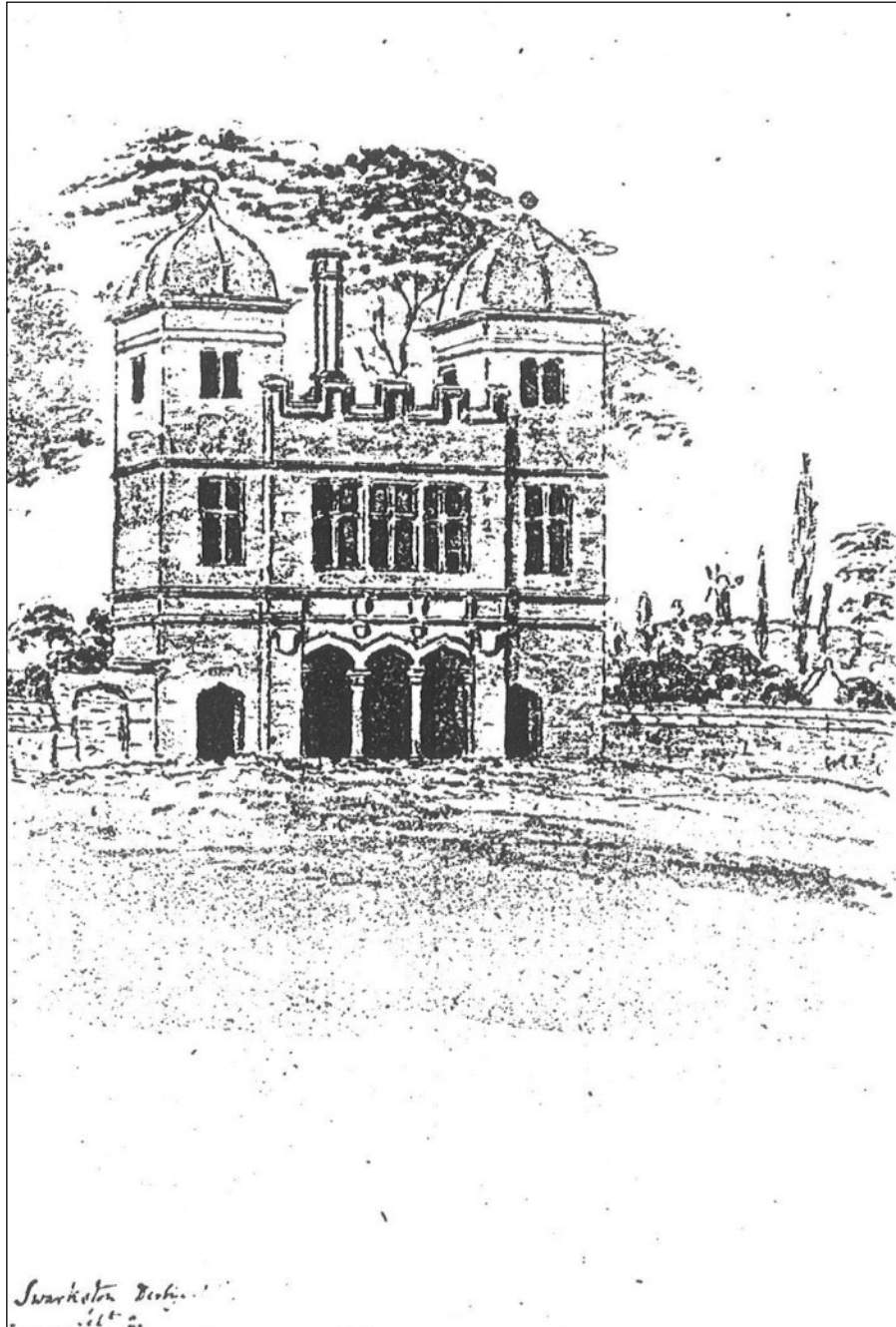
As we have already seen, the great house at Swarkestone gradually declined in status after the death of Sir John Harpur in 1679. First it became a dower house to Calke, and then in the mid-18th century, it was dismantled altogether - shortly after it had seen the Jacobites turn in their tracks to begin the retreat to Scotland, and Culloden, having held Swarkestone Bridge for two days in December, 1745. The Prince himself is thought to have ridden this way in a last attempt to raise support from the English gentry, among them Sir Henry Harpur.

The family still cared for the place, both as the seat of their founder and also for its situation on the Trent (the 7th Baronet built a Casina on the banks of the river here); and more prosaically as a very prosperous farm. In the early 19th century, again under the 7th Baronet who was a keen agriculturalist, large sales of livestock were held at Swarkestone Farm. It is possible that the several walled enclosures on the site of the Old Hall had some connection with these.

For how long the Pavilion remained intact is not known. It is likely that the main part of the building lost its roof and its floors at the same time as the dismantling of the hall itself; certainly its interior has been exposed to the weather for a very long time. Some confirmation for this was provided by excavations carried out in the cellar in 1985; it was found to have been purposely filled, largely with building rubble.

Prompted, perhaps, by the same impulse that left parts of the house standing for their picturesque value, the turret roofs were not taken off, so the Pavilion continued to look the same. Predictably it became an object of curiosity for artists and antiquarians, and several views of it survive. The respect and affection in which the Pavilion was held by the family was shown again in 1844 when one of the turrets was struck by lightning, and severely damaged. It was immediately repaired by Sir George Crewe, and both turrets were given new cupolas.

Meanwhile various activities went on in front of it; the hounds met there, and in the 19th century the village sports took place every summer in the enclosure. And legends grew up about ever more exotic activities in the past.



One of many sketches of the Pavilion. This one is by Sir Gardner Wilkinson, and is in the Bodleian Library. It was done in 1847, after the left hand turret had been rebuilt, following damage caused by lightning in 1844. The area of new masonry shows clearly.



**The Pavilion in 1983. The roofs are now unprotected,
their lead covering having been stolen.**



The rear elevation of the Pavilion, showing the two holes, supposedly connected with the use of artillery in the Civil War.

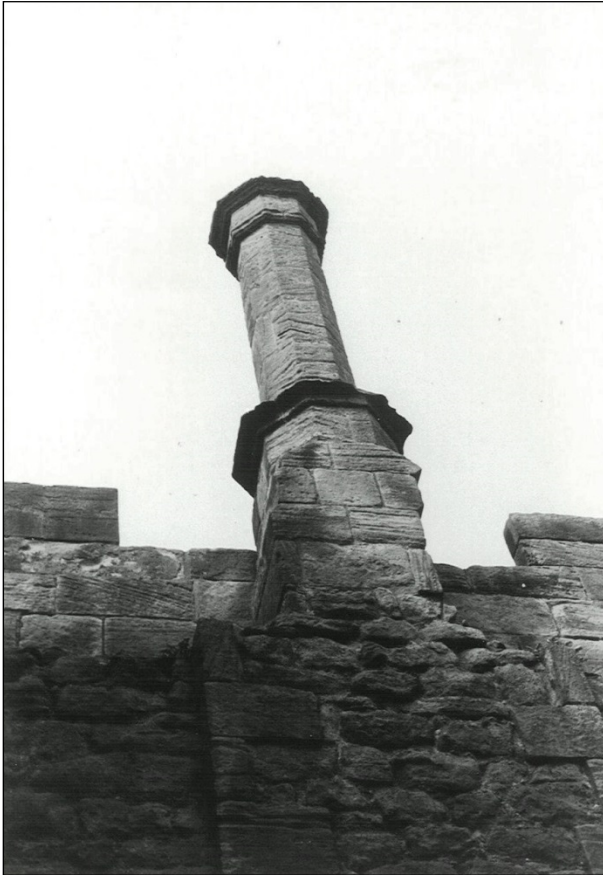




Doorway into east turret (the bathroom), in 1983.



First floor window





Open window, before repair.



The Pavilion in the 1960s, before the lead was stolen from the roofs.

Restoration of Swarkestone Pavilion

The Swarkestone Pavilion was one of the very first buildings to be suggested to the Landmark Trust: negotiations for it started as long ago as 1966. The plans then came to nothing, but contact was resumed from time to time and eventually, in 1985, the Trust purchased the Pavilion from the Harpur-Crewe estate - at the same time that the National Trust was beginning work on Calke Abbey, the family's principal seat.

At that time the building was simply a shell - roof, floors, windows and doors had all vanished long ago; only the wooden frames of the turret roofs remained, the lead having been stolen a few years earlier; and some traces of the original alabaster plaster remained on the turret walls. So almost everything apart from the masonry is new work, including water and electricity, brought in underground wiring to keep it invisible.

The walls themselves needed a certain amount of repair. The Pavilion is built of a local gritstone, probably quarried on the estate. This was used as rubble for the back and sides but cut to provide smooth ashlar and moulded dressings for the front, where for the most part it had weathered very well. In some places however, such as the window sills of the upper turret windows, and in parts of the central window surround, the stone had cracked or worn beyond repair. Sections of new stone, from a quarry in the Pennines, had to be let in. In other places, such as the moulded string courses, the stone had worn to the point where it no longer shed water, allowing it to seep back into the walls and cause damage. In this case, rather than replace the stone, a strip of lead was laid on top of the moulding, to enable it to do its job effectively.

Between the stones much of the old lime mortar and pointing survived in perfectly sound condition. Only where it was absolutely necessary was this hacked out and renewed. The new mortar was mixed to match the original as closely as possible, with local sand providing the right colour.

The back and sides of the pavilion had originally been rendered with a lime plaster, to prevent water getting in, and some patches of this remained. After quite extensive repairs the masonry, the walls were plastered again, copying the consistency of the original as closely as possible. They were then given a protective coat of limewash. The two holes at first floor level, supposedly made for artillery in 1643, have been left as slight indentations in the surface of the wall.

While building work was going on archaeologists from the Trent and Peak Archaeological Trust were pursuing their own investigations. Their chief discovery was the cellar. The existence of this had been suspected from the window at the back of the building, and from the lintel of the doorway into it at the bottom of the steps, which was just visible. The archaeologists simply dug down through the floor of the loggia, and kept on going until they found the stone-paved floor. The steps were uncovered at the same time. The cellar had been deliberately filled with rubble, and is surprisingly large and well constructed for its date.

The excavation also revealed details about the rest of the building. Fragments from a lime-ash floor were found, probably from the first floor. To make these, the residue from lime kilns was mixed to form a sort of concrete, laid on a base of straw. It dissolved if it got wet, so was only used inside a building, but was very common from the Middle Ages on, even for upper rooms. It is very difficult to recreate now, since lime is smelted in a different way - besides which it was felt that a wooden floor would be rather more comfortable.

The pockets for the beams and joists of the loggia floor were also uncovered, which enabled this to be put back at the correct level. The loggia floor is now supported on concrete beams, and paved with new Stanton Moor flagstones, but one small area of the old stone floor was found, and this has been left. The stone seat is entirely new.

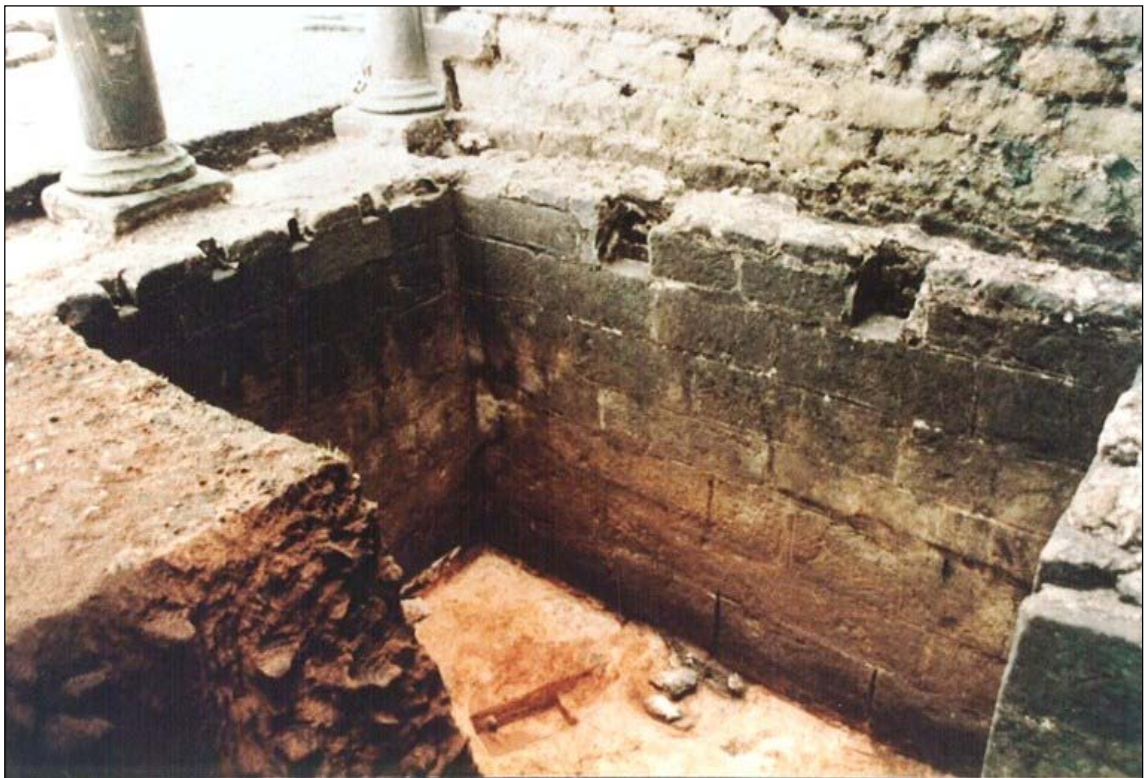
Another find in the cellar was a small fragment of glass, which indicated that the original windows were glazed with diamond panes. However, when deciding on the new glazing, with the aid of several panels containing different shapes and sizes, it was felt that plain rectangular panes suited the building best. Three different sorts of glass were used, to prevent a uniform finish. The marks for the stanchions, upright bars giving extra strength to leaded glass, were there in the window sills, so these have been replaced. They are of oak, which was usual for the windows of upper floors, rather than iron, which was reserved for the ground floor. The heavy sill board is oak, as are the others throughout the building.

Like the windows, the staircase is not quite archaeologically correct but is nevertheless of a form known to exist at the right period. It was possible to see the line of the 17th-century stair in the patches of original plaster that had survived on the turret walls. It appeared to have had a central newel post, forming a slightly awkward spiral with winders running into the corners. Although the new staircase follows the original line of treads and risers, it was decided to make it with an open well, to fit more satisfactorily into the square turret. It is made entirely of oak, finished with a polish of beeswax and turpentine in equal measures; and the finials on the tops of the newel posts are copies of the turret cupolas.

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The line of the original staircase showed in the plaster of the stair turret.



The beam and joist pockets showed the correct level of the loggia floor over the excavated cellar.

forming a slightly awkward spiral with winders running into the corners. Although the new staircase follows the original line of treads and risers, it was decided to make it with an open well, to fit more satisfactorily into the square turret. It is made entirely of oak, finished with a polish of beeswax and turpentine in equal measures; and the finials on the tops of the newel posts are copies of the turret cupolas.

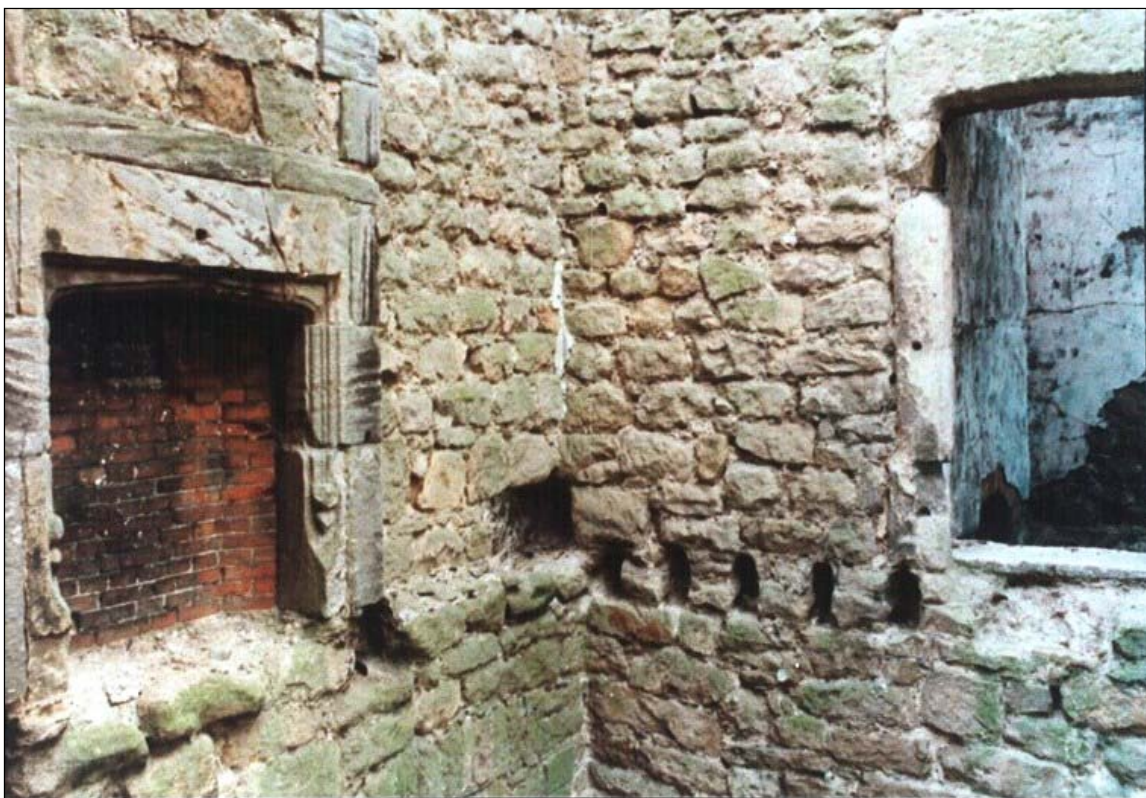
Not only did plaster survive on the walls of the turrets, which after all had always retained their roof cover, but small patches clung to the walls of the central block as well. It was made of almost pure alabaster, a material quarried extensively in this part of Derbyshire, which naturally takes on a pearly marble-like finish and so does not need to be painted when first applied. With time, however, it had become very grimy, and although the new plaster contains French Gypsum, which is basically the same thing as alabaster, to present an even finish between new and old the whole has been limewashed. The original finish can still be seen on the cellar steps, and in some small patches on the stairs which were covered with graffiti.

On the first floor, as in the loggia, it was possible to see the pockets for the main beams and joists, so the floor frame was reconstructed exactly as it would have been, and the floor laid with random width oak boards. The fireplace surround was cracked in places, but could be repaired with lime mortar without having to dismantle or replace any of it. Its rich colour, as with the window mullions and door surrounds, is due to it having been exposed to the elements for so long. Unfortunately the chimney had been blocked with concrete in an earlier round of repair, and so is unusable.

Apart from small patches of old plaster beside the fireplace, no trace of the room's decoration remained. It is possible that there were plaster friezes, even a moulded ceiling. Instead, John Bucknall designed the simple and heavy cornice moulding, which gives the room dignity without making grand conjectural



Traces of the original plaster can still be seen beside the fireplace, and in the turret (below). The joist pockets show the original floor height.



statements. The walls were then limewashed, like the staircase turret, with a small amount of ochre added to the mix to give it warmth.

The further turret, originally containing a private closet of some sort, was the obvious place to put the kitchen. The cupboards and shelves are all of oak, and the sink is placed, as usual, to have its full share of the best view.

The original roof would have been made of lead, on a timber frame. This would be very slippery when wet, and is also damaged by being walked on too much, so instead of being a replica the new roof consists of stone paving laid on asphalt on top of a concrete structure. The water drains away between and underneath the stones, which are raised on little stands, into spouts at the back of the building. As in the rest of the building the stone used is Stanton Moor.

And so we arrive at the bathroom. With only two rooms on the first floor, the top of the further turret was the only place left to put it. To make up for the bracing approach, it has been given a heavy oak door and lined with Douglas Fir boarding to make it snug and warm. Gaps at the top and bottom of the walls provide ventilation and help prevent condensation.

More than any other detail, the cupolas are the vital ingredient in the Pavilion's character, and quite apart from the loss of their lead, they did not look quite right. Instead of being aligned on the vertical of the wall beneath, as are other cupolas on the best contemporary buildings, they were set well within the top of the cornice, which gave them a rather skimped appearance. Although they contained some original timber, these were fixed in a rough and ready way, not typical of 17th-century carpentry, and other timbers were obvious later insertions. The answer seemed to be that after the staircase turret was struck by lightning in 1844, and severely damaged, both cupolas were rebuilt, but not copying the originals exactly.



The carpentry of the turret roofs was of poor quality, and in poor condition.



This supposition was born out by the discovery among the Harpur-Crewe papers of an elevation drawing made soon after the damage of 1844, which showed very clearly the remaining cupola springing from the outermost point. Landmark was keen to give the building back its character by getting this detail right. English Heritage were not so sure, and so a compromise was agreed upon with their architect. The existing, probably 19th-century, structure would remain there, fully repaired and sound, but would be encased, like an onion skin, with a new structure to the more likely 17th-century profile.

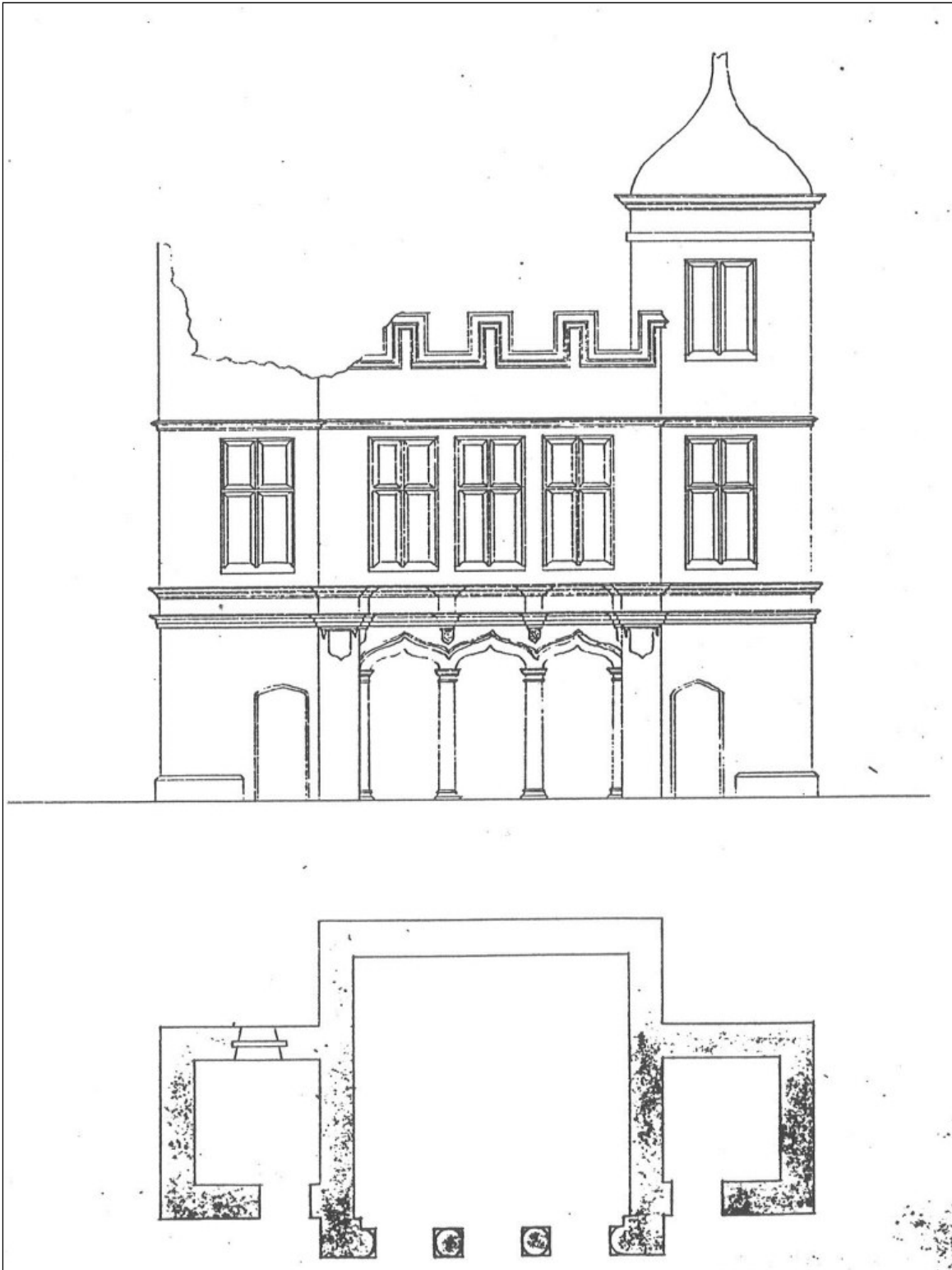
Permission was given to transpose the old ball finials from the inner to the outer skin. The whole cupola was then covered with new lead, and the Pavilion put back in its place as a worthy, if unproven, work of a man who proudly described himself in his will as Architect.

Charlotte Haslam

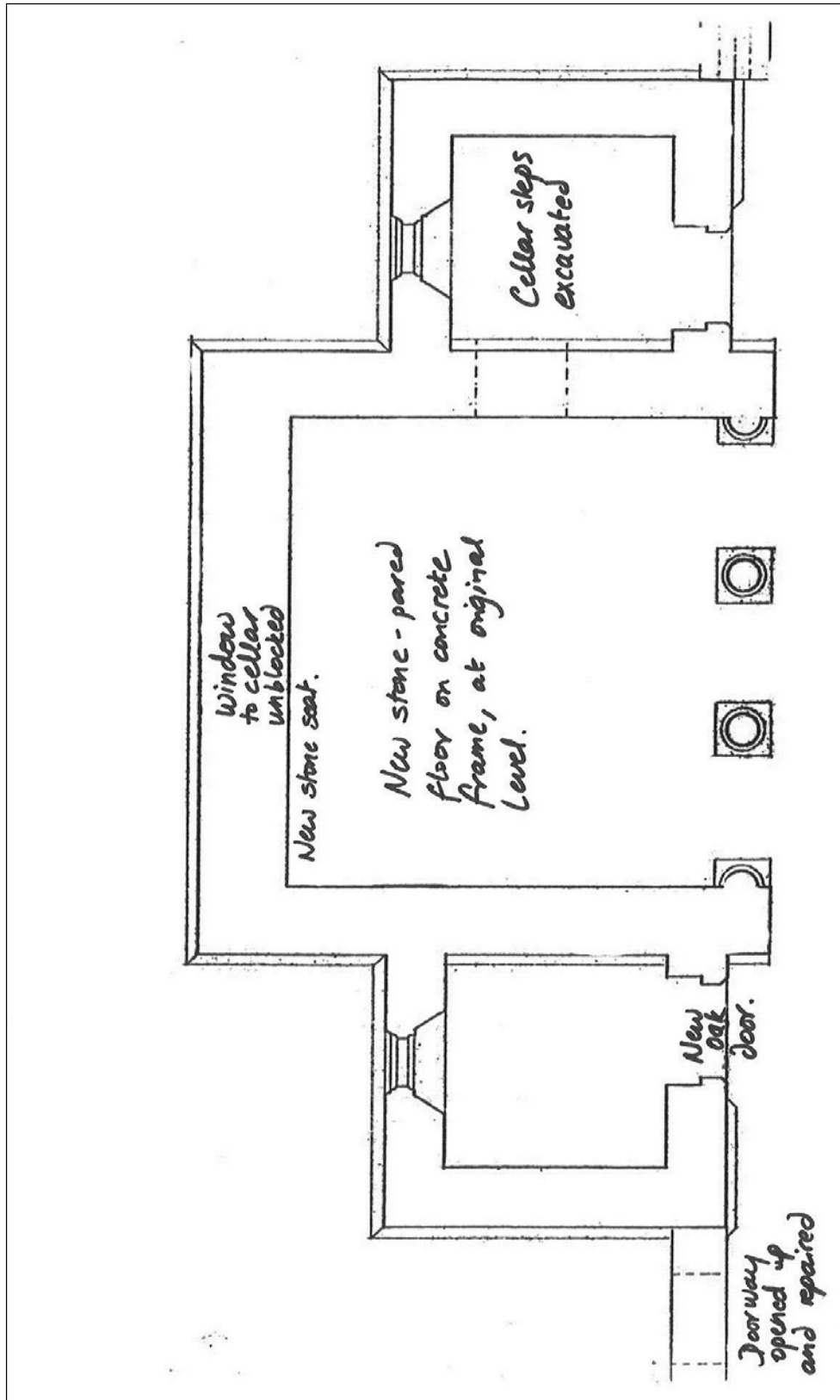
September 1989

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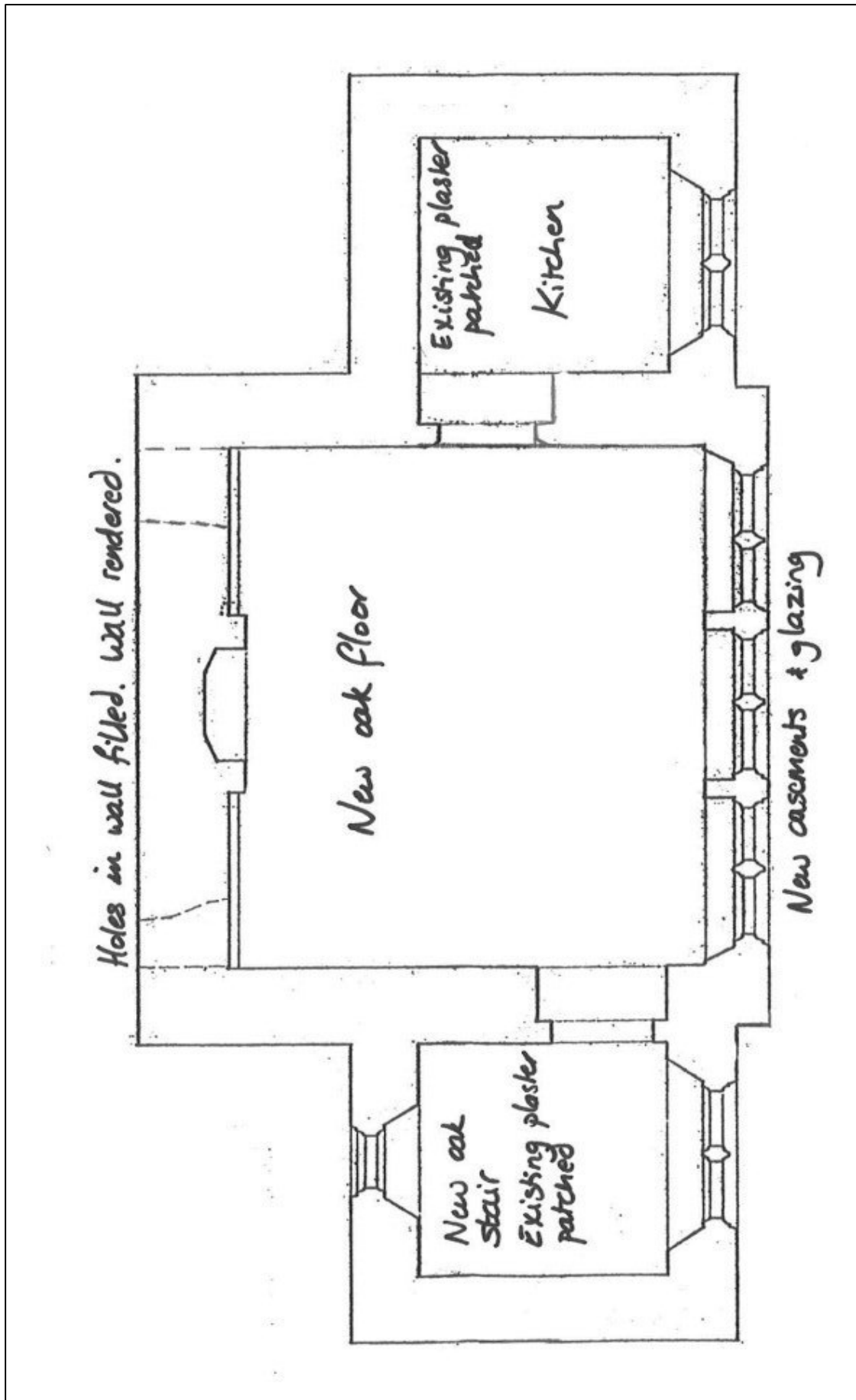
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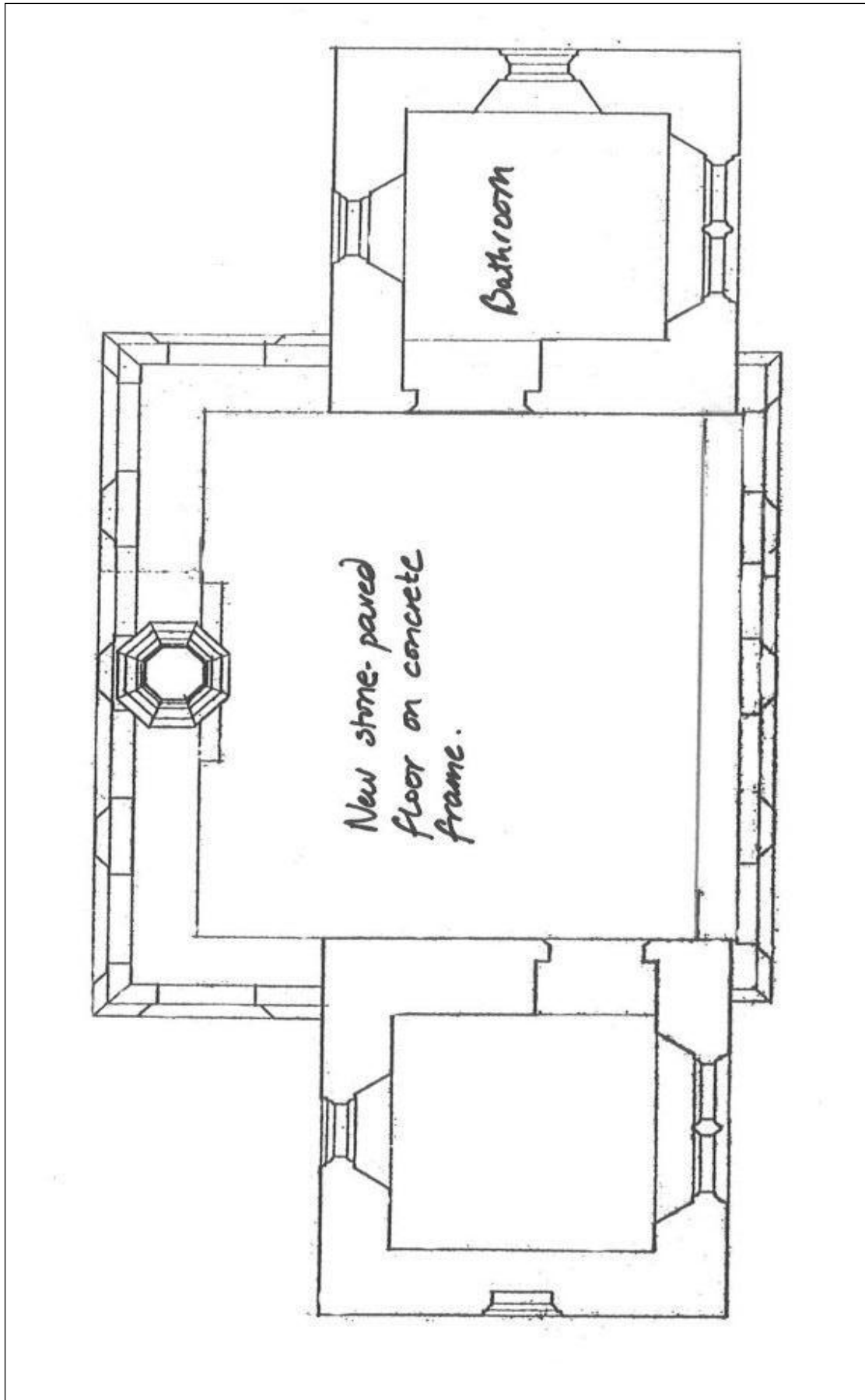
'Plan for the Ruins of Swarkeston (with elevation), The Banqueting or Bowling Green House, struck by lightning and subsequently repaired 1844'



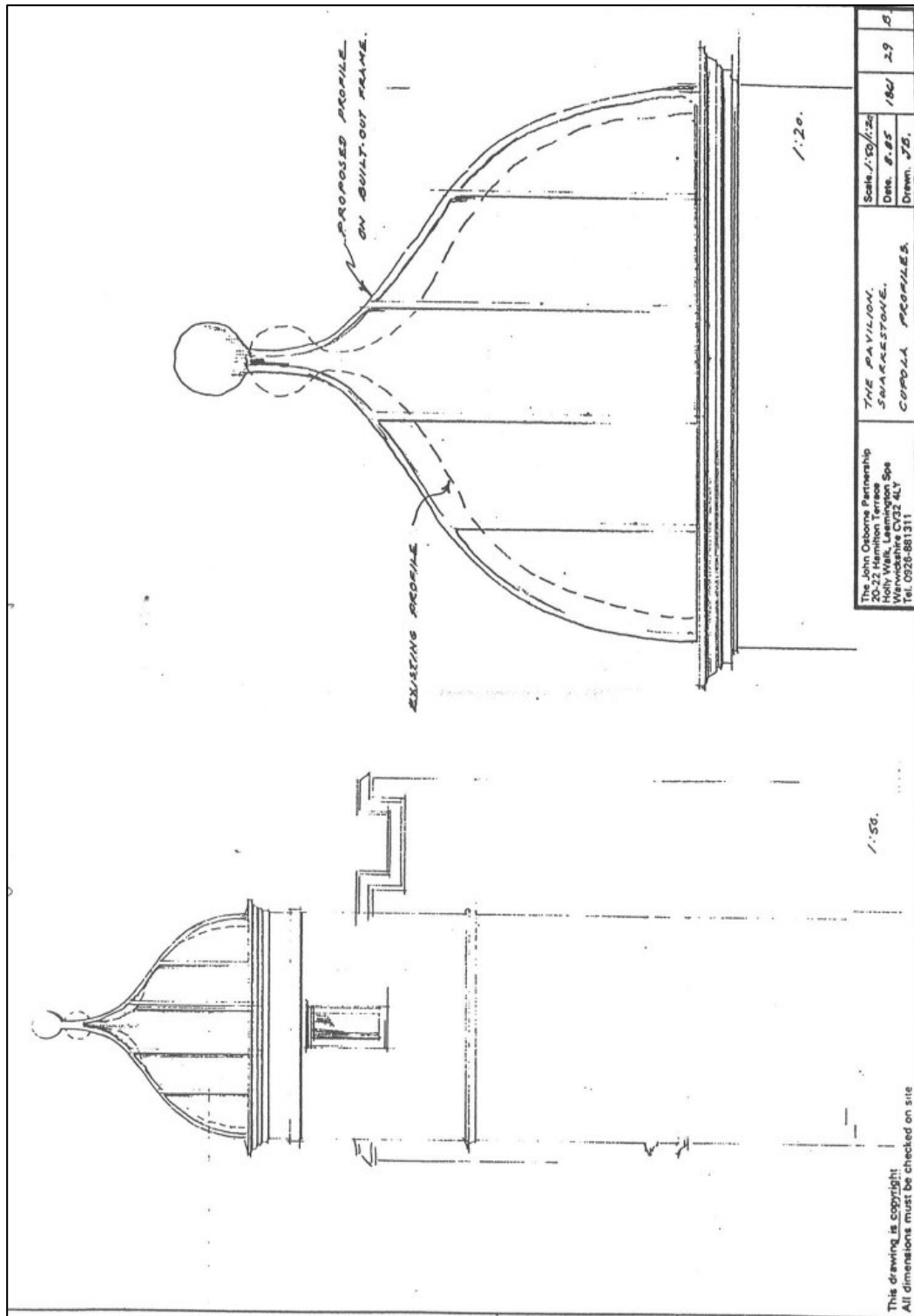
Plan at ground floor level.



Plan at first floor level.



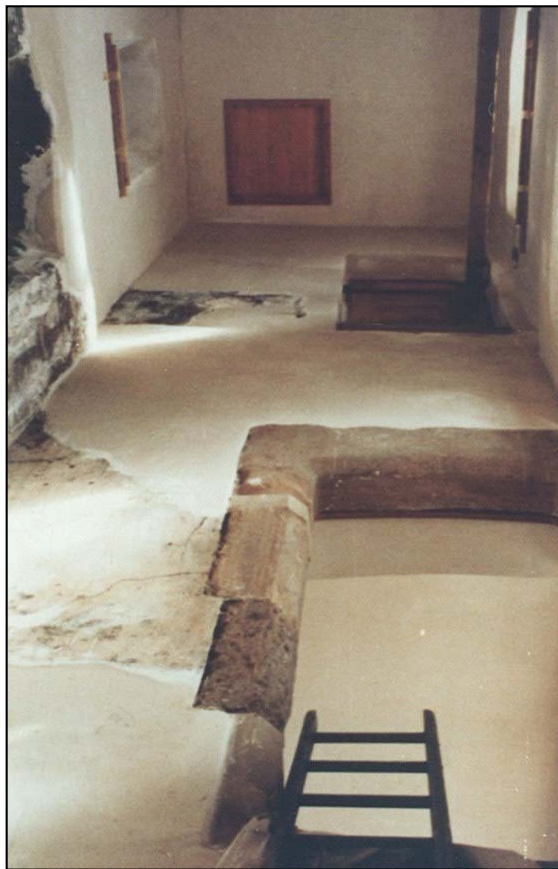
Plan at second floor level.



The onion-skin solution for the turret roofs.



The new floor frame, resting in the old pockets.



Old and new plaster in the stair turret.



Different patterns of glazing, and sizes of panes, were looked at in the building before a final decision was made (above and overleaf).



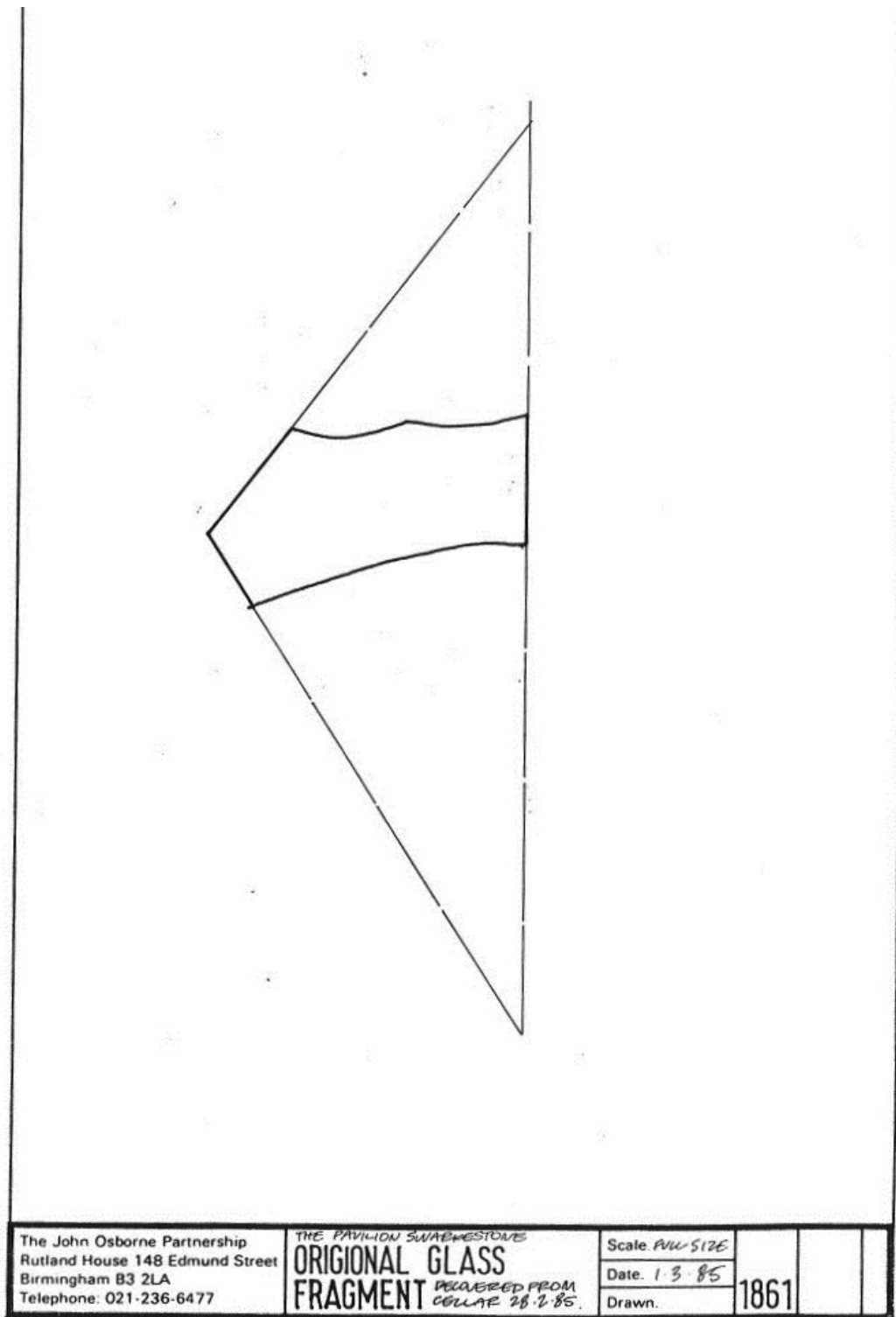
Objects found during the excavation of the cellar, February 1985



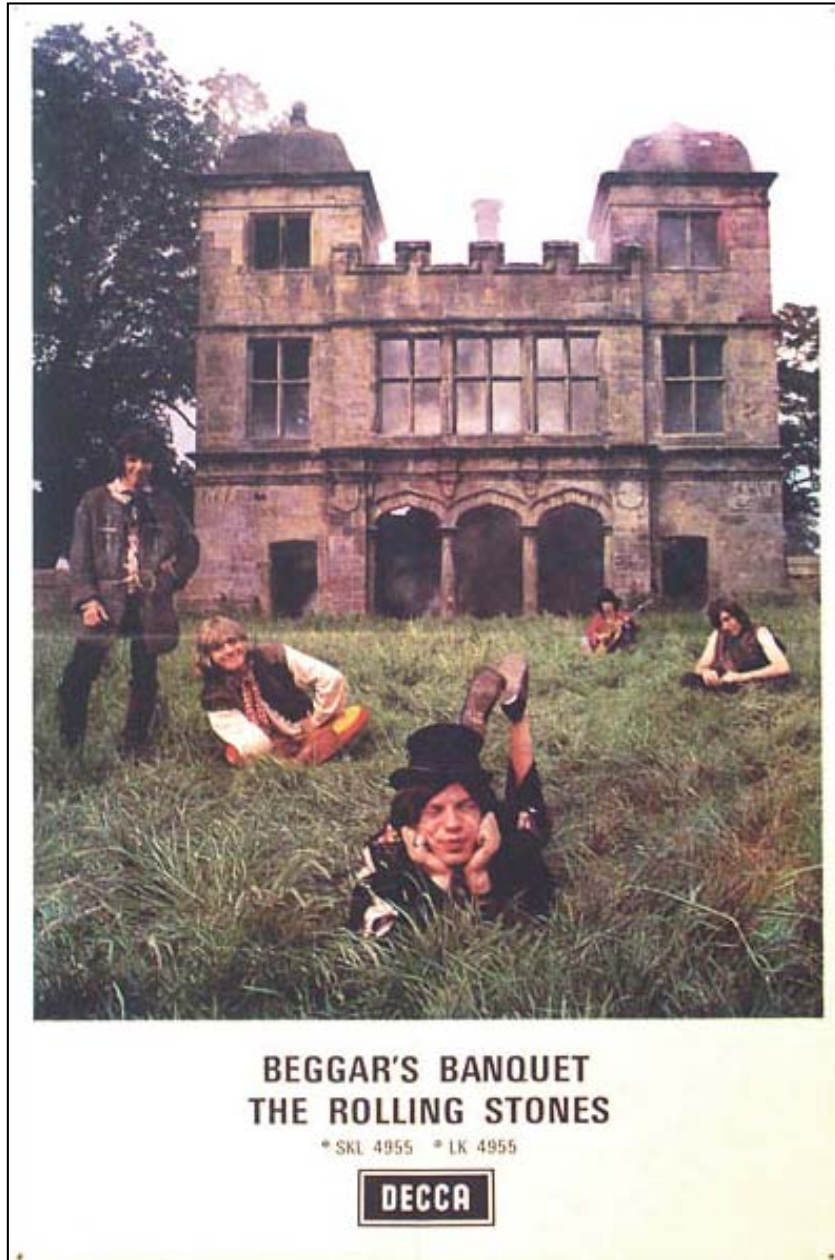
Glass vessels and glazing fragments.



A broken pot.



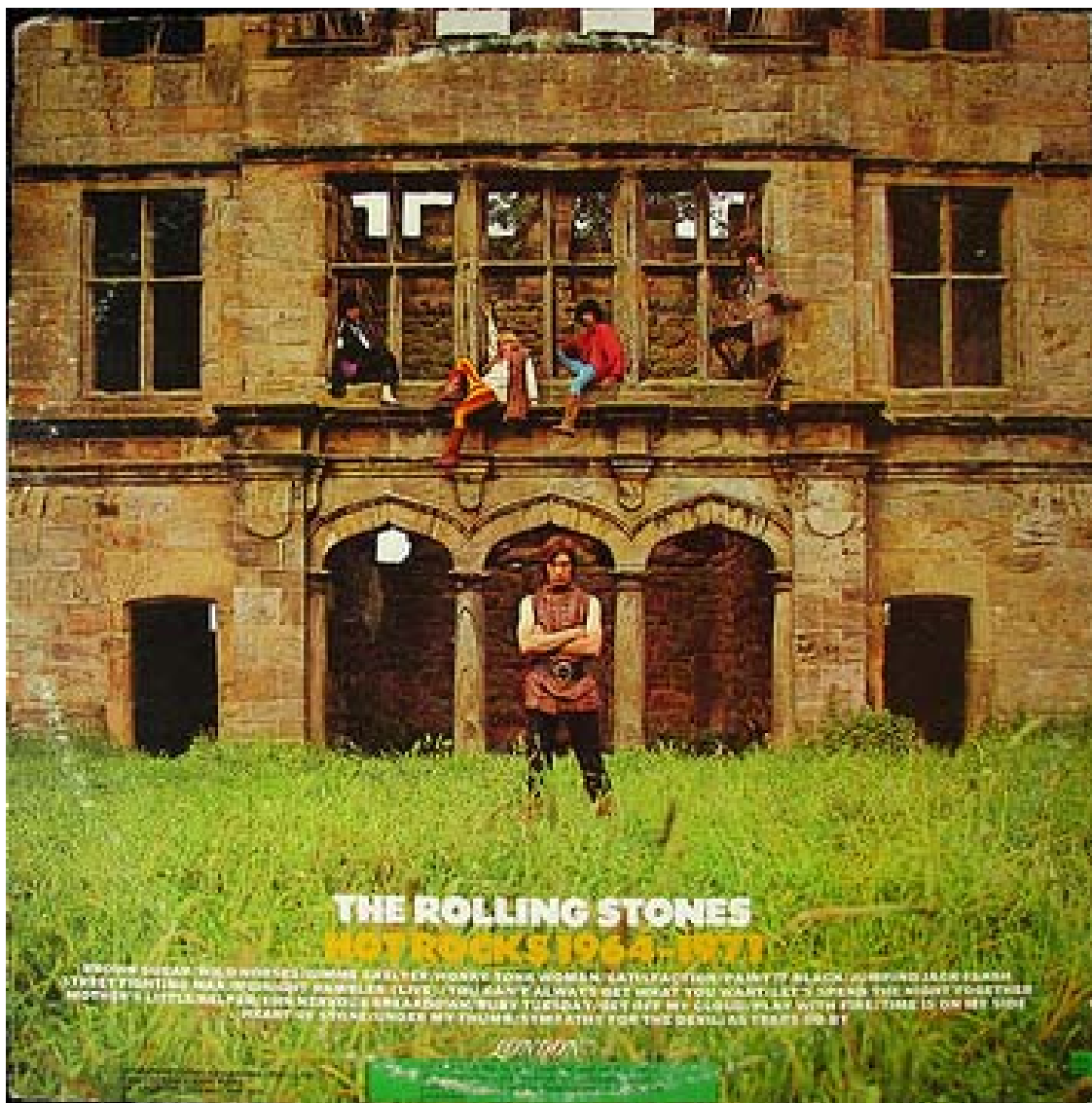
Fragment of glass found in the cellar, indicating the shape of the original panes of the Pavilion, or of another building nearby.



The Rolling Stones and the Pavilion

In the summer of 1968, Swarkestone locals were bemused and excited to discover the Rolling Stones in the local pub. The band had driven up from London to shoot the cover of their seventh album, *Beggars Banquet*, with photographer Michael Joseph. The result was an iconic set of images that captured the Stones 'at their most beautifully dangerous.' 'In the Grass' was used as the promotional poster for the album, but the band fell out with Decca over the album cover itself, which delayed its issue. The band won the argument, and a shot of a graffiti-covered toilet cubicle appeared on the cover, with an interior of a banquet shot at Sarum Chase used for the inside gatefold. The Pavilion had to wait another ten years for its moment of fame, when it appeared on back cover of the compilation album, *Hot Rocks 1964-1971*.

All this was presumably not considered noteworthy in 1986 when the Pavilion was restored (was it even noticed?) but the Stones may fairly be considered the most enduring troubadours of our time and the shoot a modern take on humanity's persistent fascination with ruins. On this basis, they now warrant inclusion!



FURTHER READING

(Some of these are on the bookshelf)

Howard Colvin, *Calke Abbey, Derbyshire*, 1985

Mark Girouard, *Robert Smythson & the Elizabethan Country House*

Marcia Vale, *The Gentleman's Recreations*, 1977

George T. Burrows, *All About Bowls*, 1948

Lucinda Lambton, *Beastly Buildings*, 1986

Derbyshire Record Society, Vol VI 1981; *William Woolley's History of Derbyshire* (1712) (edited Glover and Riden)

The Antiquary Vol 38 1902; G. Bailey, *Ramblings of an Antiquary*

Traditional Homes, January 1987, *Designed for Delight* (Renovation Case History No 28)