

The Manor Houses of Lackham  
1050 -1949

3<sup>rd</sup> edition



by Tony Pratt

Wiltshire College Lackham

2016

For a fuller history of the Lackham estate, and the people who have lived there, please see volumes of *The Manor of Lackham* : [Vol 1: The Bluets](#) - a baronial family 1066 - 1400. [Vol 2: The Baynards of Lackham](#) - a county family 1360-1650 [Vol 3: The Montagus of Lackham 1600 -1830](#) and [Vol IV: 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Owners of Lackham 1815-1950](#). Other works about the history of the estate are available online at <http://www.wiltshire.ac.uk/about-us/Lackham-house/a-further-history>

In 2003 I made a much briefer, and wholly inadequate, attempt to detail the development of the main buildings and drives at Lackham. By 2009 the first edition of this version was made possible because much more information has come to light. Some of this had been published in various places but it seemed a good idea to publish a new version - to tell the story of the Lackham Houses in much more detail than has previously been possible. It was hoped then that even more maps, photographs and pictures would be discovered and this has been the case. This second edition includes even more new information, particularly from the period of HB Caldwell and George Llewellyn Palmer, and even more illustrations.

Note that if you are reading this as a pdf file the figure numbers to the left of the illustration table are hyperlinks that will take you directly to the figure. If you click on the \*\* by each title in the text it will return you to the Figure contents table. Where references are from an online source the URL in the reference will open up the relevant web page if you are online - or they will at the time of writing.. It is usually possible to go to a reference to an illustration and then return to the text as well. If you come across any broken links please do let me know

Please do get in touch with comments or additional information or just to say hello

Tony Pratt,  
Chippenham, April 2011

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The use of the estate maps I have redrawn lately has made this essentially a new edition and some additional information has become available since the previous version. Tony Pratt 2017

Last update: 09 November 2017

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## Acknowledgements

I must acknowledge some of the people who have been so helpful during the research for this work.

I am, as always, indebted to all the archivists, librarians and historians who have helped, especially all the staff at Lackham College Library past and present, Dr. Lorna Haycock, previously at WANHS Library in Devizes, the Library staff at Chippenham Library and all the staff at the Record Office when it was in Trowbridge and in their newer identity as Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre located in Chippenham. I am indebted to W&SHC for their kind and willing permission to reproduce images from their archives.

Many individuals have helped and my sincere thanks goes everyone, but especially I must mention (once again, what would I do without you all?) Mr Mike Stone Curator and Manager Chippenham Museum and Heritage Centre, for unstinting advice and encouragement and for allowing me access to the material held by the Museum; Mr Tim Robey, Lecturer in Archaeology Wiltshire College, for undertaking the excavation, allowing me access to his discoveries and interpretations and for allowing me to take part; Mr Ron Cleevly of Devon for invaluable and essential assistance; Mrs Karen Repko and Pam & Manfred Mondt of Ohio (Montagu descendents) for their friendship, help and for reading drafts of the work and making many helpful suggestions; Mr and Mrs Wills of the Ornamental Lodge, Lackham for their interest and allowing me access to their property ; and to Wiltshire College Lackham, and especially Terry Duggleby (past Vice Principal) for allowing me access to the College records and the House and the current College management team for their active support of my historical investigations of the estate. For Figure 20 I am indebted to Mr. and Mrs Johnstone of Exeter for permission to copy and use this image, the original is in their possession and is their copyright . I am also grateful to their cousin Mr N Floyer who first made me aware of this picture and kindly put me in touch with them.

I can't begin to list all the other people who have given of their time and knowledge, but I sincerely thank you all.

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## The Manor Houses of Lackham

There are records for the manor of Lackham that go back to Saxon times, when it was part of Aelfstan's lands<sup>1</sup>. One of the richest of the Wiltshire thegns, Aelfstan of Boscombe held over 200 hides in eight shires, of which nearly 80 lay in Wiltshire. Aelfstan enjoyed the King's favour [Edward the Confessor] from the beginning of the reign<sup>2</sup>

After the Norman Conquest Aelfstan's lands were given to William d'Eu<sup>3</sup> who entertained King William I and "A large gathering of the leading magnates at his Manor of Lackham"<sup>4</sup>

The old manor house has been described as

*deserv[ing] a passing mention. It exhibited specimens of various periods from the Norman downwards, and presented an appearance of rude grandeur rather than the beauty of regular architectural proportion. It stood completely embosomed in woods. The great hall was hung with armour<sup>5</sup>*

It is noteworthy that the phrase "completely embosomed in woods" appears in both the article by Kite and this one. Neither is the source, however - it first appears in an article by George Montagu's daughter Louisa<sup>6</sup>, where she

---

<sup>1</sup> Brocklebank, Rev GR (1968) *The Heraldry of the Church of St Syriac in Lacock* The Uffington Press p11.

<sup>2</sup> Victoria County History of Wiltshire (hereafter VCH *Wiltshire*) II, p65

<sup>3</sup> Thorn, F & Thorn, C (1979) *Domesday Book : vol 6 Wiltshire* Phillimore 0 85033 160 3 p71d

<sup>4</sup> VCH *Wiltshire* II p101

<sup>5</sup> Cunnington W (1852) *Memoir of George Montagu* WAM III p87

It is interesting that the phrase "completely embosomed in woods" appears in both the article by Kite<sup>5</sup> and this one. This article is some 47 years earlier than Kite's, so this is probably Kite's source document

<sup>6</sup> George Montagu (1753 - 18150), a famous naturalist, was a younger son of the owners of Lackham. For details of the life of this extraordinary man see Pratt, T (2003) *Two Georgian Montagus* Lackham Museum of Agriculture and Rural Life Trust also available online at [Two Georgian Montagus](#)



discussed her memories of the old house<sup>7</sup>. These are probably valid, 'though she could not have written them from clear personal recollection because she was only a small child when the old house **ceased to exist**.<sup>8</sup>

The exact location of the old house had been lost for many years but Earthwork and probing surveys indicated the likely site, and various geophysical survey methods supported this. In late September 2001 an exploratory trench was put in by a team led by Tim Robey and Mike Stone<sup>9</sup>. This dig located the rear wall of the house, and more were found in the excavation that followed in April/May and August 2002<sup>10</sup>. It would seem that this house dates from the mid-14th century, as no Saxon or Norman remains were found. It may be that the original Saxon and Norman manor house might be located some 200 meters south, close to the Ponds that are east of the Back Drive and Home Farm. This remains to be seen.

The house located in 2001 is almost certainly that which is shown in seventeenth and eighteenth century records

### **Illustrations of the house.**

Of the few illustrations of the old house the earliest is dated 1684.

The original is found in Dingley's *History from Marble*, which is held in the Bodleian Library. The Camden Society produced a facsimile in 1869, which is faithful to the original<sup>11</sup>. Fig. 1 is not the original, however, but a reproduction by the author of a sketch by Edward Kite<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Crawford, L ( 1835) *Autobiographical sketches connected with Laycock Abbey and Lackham House* Metropolitan Magazine pp306-314

<sup>8</sup> Blackmore, M (1965) in a letter written to Ms. TE Vernon, Lacock, dated 25 September 1965. Louisa Montagu was between 5 and 7 when the old house was demolished, see below. I am indebted to Mr J Clevely of South Moulton, Devon, for making me aware of the existence of this document, providing me with a copy and the many other instances when he freely shared the results of his painstaking researches.

<sup>9</sup> + previously Manager and Curator, Chippenham Heritage Centre & Museum

<sup>10</sup> I count myself very fortunate to have been actively involved in these Excavations

<sup>11</sup> A copy of this edition was kindly made available to me in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries in London. My sincere thanks to the Society for allowing me access

<sup>12</sup> Kite EJ (1899) *Old Lackham House and its owners* Wilts Notes & Queries, III, p2

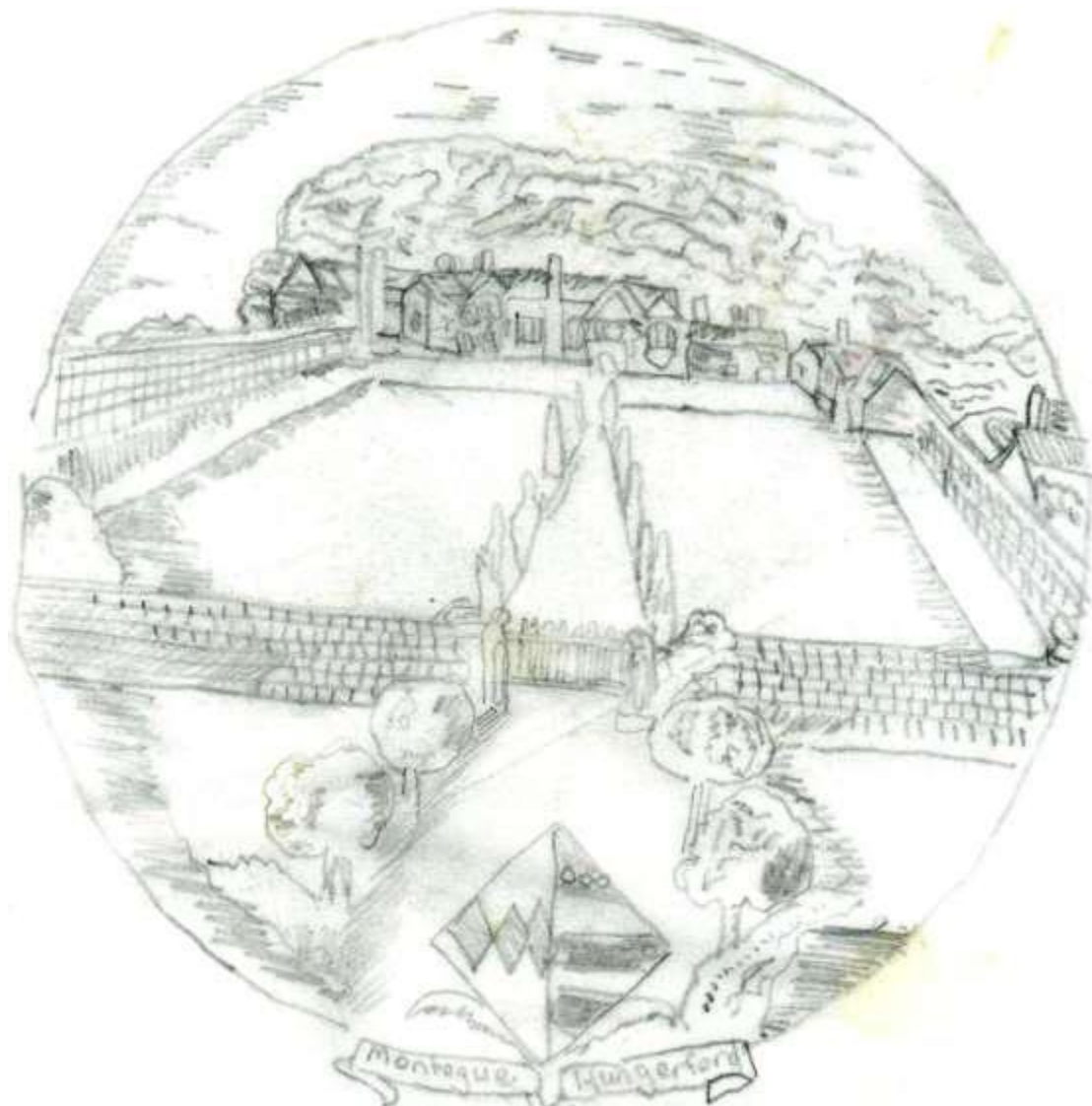


Fig. 1 Lackham House 1684 \*\* <sup>13</sup>

There are a number of versions of this illustration in existence. Some of the differences between the original and the illustration in Kite's article are

<sup>13</sup> Drawn by the author and based on the illustration held by Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Devizes

An online copy of Dingley can be found [here](#). To see the illustration type *cdxcvi* [496 in Roman numerals] into the page number box just to the right of [Contents](#)

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**History from marble: Compiled in the reign of Charles II. Printed ..., Volume 2** By Thomas Dingley, John Gough Nichols

★★★★★ 0 Reviews

Contents ▾ | *cdxcvi* | ◀ ▶

important as they affect interpretation. For example, Kite puts bushes at the western end of the building to the south of the curtilage wall. In the article the engraver missed an entire roof ridge. This omission has serious implications for anyone trying to work out the house floor plan from the published illustration.

There is also a watercolour by Canon Jackson (in his papers at the Society of Antiquaries) but this follows the published article, not Kite's or Dingley's originals.

The only other illustration of the early house is an engraving by Kite that reproduces an illustration made in August 1790 by Grimm. This is a sketch in one of the many volumes of superb illustrations compiled by him in the late eighteenth century. They are now held in the British library<sup>14</sup>.

It is clear from this, and the earlier illustration, that the porch formed a major feature, the "shield on the gable is...carved with the arms of Bluet and Baynard "<sup>15</sup>. The Bluet arms are on the front (western) side



Fig. 2 Arms of the Bluet family \*\*  
After Buckeridge (1995)<sup>16</sup>

and the Baynard arms are clearly visible facing south.

<sup>14</sup> British Library Additional MSS no. 15,547, dated August 1790

<sup>15</sup> Kite EJ (1899) *Old Lackham House and its owners* Wilts Notes & Queries, III,

<sup>16</sup> Buckeridge, D (1995) *Church Heraldry in Wiltshire*  
*Or, an eagle displayed gules, armed or*



Fig. 3 Arms of the Baynard family <sup>17</sup> \*\*

There is a funeral hatchment almost covering the upstairs window in this sketch of James Montagu, buried at Lacock in 1790, which shows the arms of Montagu and Mortimer impaling the arms of his wife Eleanor, (Hedges and Gore). It is likely that the original was as large as indicated - in Kimbolton church (the family seat of the senior branch of the family) there are a half dozen funeral hatchments that are anything up to 6 feet across. The sketch was made only four months after James' death, and it was common for such large shields to be placed on the bereaved house for anything up to a year afterwards.

These are the same arms as seen at the bottom of Fig. 1. These arms can be seen on a monument in the Lackham Aisle in St. Cyriac's, Lacock.

James Montagu (born 1714) had married Eleanor Hedges, the heiress to the nearby Alderton estate, in 1744 -three years before he inherited Lackham. Alderton came into the Montagu estates in 1751 upon the death of Eleanor's father, William

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<sup>17</sup> *Sable, a fess between two chevrons Or*



Fig 4 Arms of Montagu and Hedges from the memorial in St Cyriac's, Lacock \*\* .

The Hedges arms, on the right hand side of the shield, show the swan necks of the Hedges family, and the bulls heads of the Gores, the ancient owners of Alderton; The Hedges had inherited Alderton from the Gores in 1714 when that ancient line eventually failed<sup>18</sup>.

A shield immediately above the door was clearly the combined Bluet / Baynard arms used by the Baynard family at Lackham. This carving may still exist and be the carving that is incorporated into the western wall of the current house.

It is by no means certain that this carving is the one shown on the front porch of the original house, but it seems likely; it has been provisionally dated to the Tudor period <sup>19</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> For the history of the Gore family and the manor of Alderton see Pratt, T (2004) *The Manor of Alderton: Its owners and some historical connections* .

This can be viewed online at [Manor of Alderton](#)

<sup>19</sup> Tim Robey, pers. comm..



Fig. 5a Bluet / Baynard arms on Lackham House \*\*

This is not the only example of these arms, carved in stone and located prominently on a building; there are a number of references to the Lackham estate having owned land in Notton, for example Robert Baynard, and indeed one of the later Montagu owners was given as Edward of Notton. Until recently it was unclear whether Lackham owned any buildings at Notton. It was only in 2015 that the author<sup>20</sup> realised that on one of the original parts of the mostly Georgian Notton House another example of these arms can be found. The date for these arms is unknown but stylistically they seem similar to those on Lackham House, and the weathering is not inconsistent with a Tudor date or even earlier. These arms however include the supporters for the Lackham Baynard line.

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<sup>20</sup> Assisted by Colleen McDuling whose help is gratefully acknowledged





Fig 5b Baynard arms on Notton House <sup>21</sup> \*



Fig 5c Close-up of arms on Notton House \*

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<sup>21</sup> Photographs 5b & 5c copyright © to Colleen McDuling. My sincere thanks to her for allowing me to use her images

Kite does not discuss the heraldic carving below the window of the solar, which is curious. It is clear that they are the Tudor Royal Arms: the only explanation for its presence would appear to be a claimed visit by Henry VIII's visit 1535<sup>22</sup>.

There is an account of the old house, written by Louisa Crawford which refers to this visit, telling how "*The Banqueting Hall.. memorable for its size, was newly floored with the antique oak of the estate in the reign of Henry VIII*"<sup>23</sup>

Close by were the rooms

*occupied by that Bluebeard of husbands [which were] not much in request with the young folk of modern times and the old arched door, which conducted (as some rudely carved letters upon it instructed) to "King Henry's apartments" were rarely unclosed after night fall. In one of these chambers stood the antique carved bedstead on which the King reposed, the royal arms and those of the Lackham family were beautifully emblazoned on the dark polished oak at the head of the bed and the curious key which gave entrance to this room was presented by Col. Montagu<sup>24</sup> to the British Museum. The late Col. Montagu always slept in the apartments when at Lackham.*<sup>25</sup>

Until 2002 that was all that was known of the layout of the old house, but interleaved into the library copy of WAM III, in the Wiltshire Archaeological and

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<sup>22</sup> For a discussion on this alleged visit see Pratt, T (2008) "A brief note on King Henry VIII at Lackham, and why Sir Robert Baynard was unhappy with Thomas Cromwell". A copy of this is held in the Wiltshire College Lackham library or can be found online at [King Henry VIII at Lackham](#)

<sup>23</sup> Crawford, Louisa (1835) *Autobiographical sketches connected with Laycock Abbey and Lackham House* Metropolitan Magazine vol unknown pp307-308

<sup>24</sup> Louisa's father

<sup>25</sup> Crawford, L (1835) *ibid* pp307-308 interleaved in the Society's copy of WAM III in the Library at Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Devizes p307



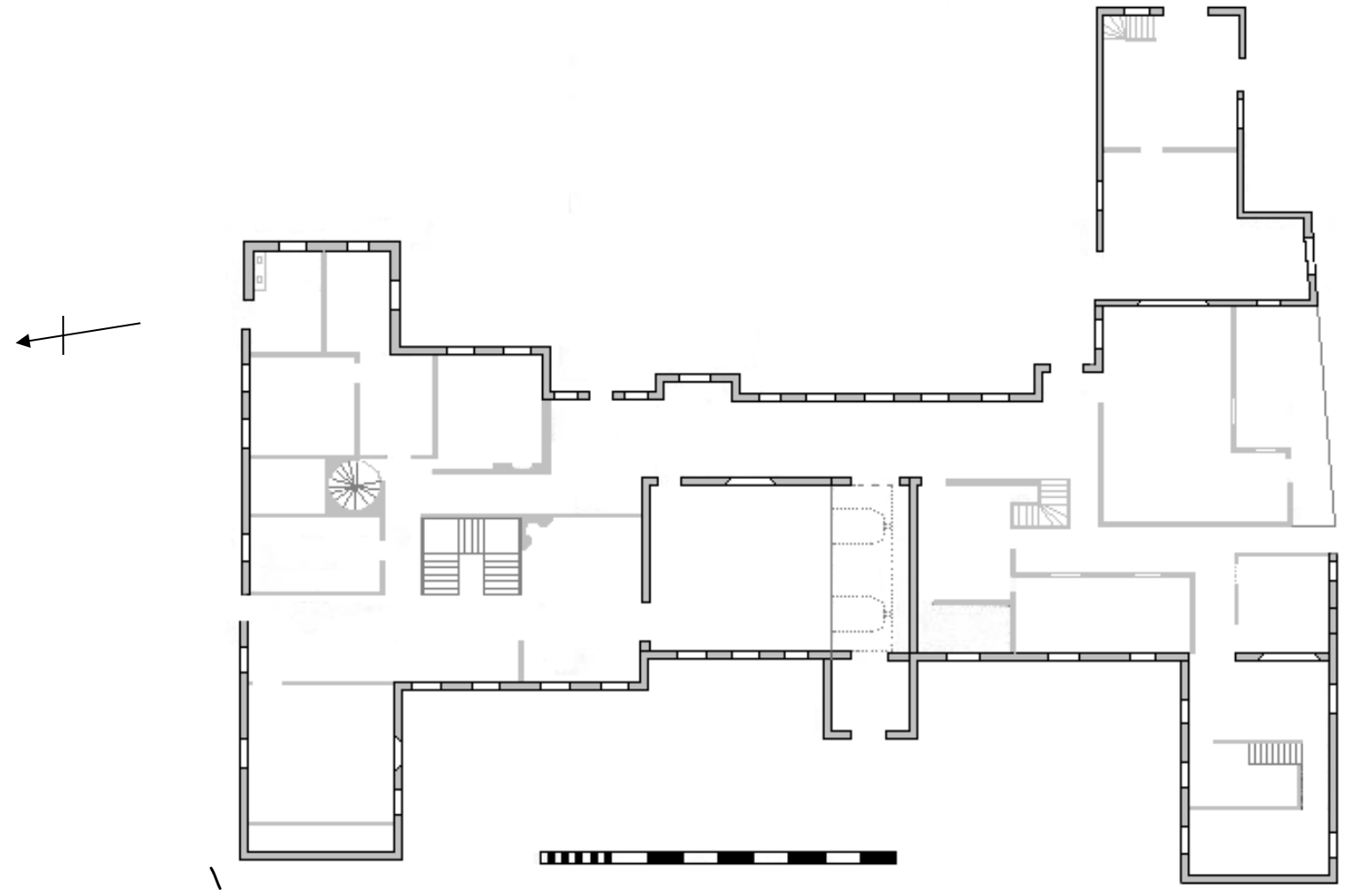


Fig. 6 Plan of medieval Lackham House (date unknown)  
(redrawn by the author from the original, ref WANHS 1982.1863)

Natural History Society <sup>26</sup> library at Devizes, there is an (undated) plan <sup>27</sup> entitled "*Ground floor plan of Lackham House*" <sup>28</sup> (above) It is a plan of the old house and as far as is known this is the first time this document has been discussed. It provides useful information on the layout of the old house.

There is no indication of orientation on the original plan, the compass rose in Fig. 6 has been placed using the excavated features for alignment. Fig. 6 is a plan redrawn from the original by the author <sup>29</sup>

The plan is to scale, and walls located in the excavations carried out so far confirm that it is accurate<sup>30</sup>. For further information on the layout of the house it is necessary to turn to contemporary maps.

It is likely that the original house was a fairly simple building, but its imprint may be visible in the plan. The Great Hall was possibly the original (Fig. 7a), with the building to the south (right) of the hall, with its undercroft and Solar. The Porch was possibly also present in this early house.

The rooms on either side, and the rear passage, may well have formed the next stage of development, they give a symmetrical balanced house (Fig. 7b). It is stressed that Figs. 7a and 7b are entirely speculative.

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<sup>26</sup> hereafter WANHS

<sup>27</sup> WANHS 1982.1863

<sup>28</sup> Thanks again to Mr. Cleevely for telling me about this document. I believe the author was the first to appreciate this is the old house, excitingly while taking part in the 2002 excavations

<sup>29</sup> My thanks to Wiltshire Natural History and Archaeological Society for permission to refer to the original and to use it as the basis for this figure

<sup>30</sup> This plan was not located until nearly the end of the second excavation in April/May 2002, the recovery of the walls in the excavation trenches was the result of experienced placement of the trenches by Mr. Robey and Mr. Stone, somewhat aided by the geophysical survey

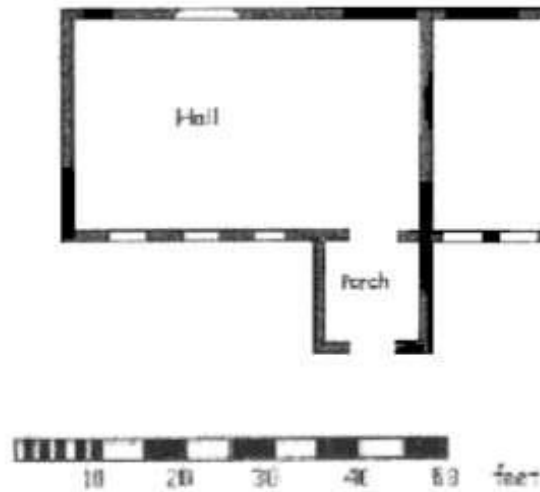


Fig. 7a Possible early plan of Lackham House \*\*

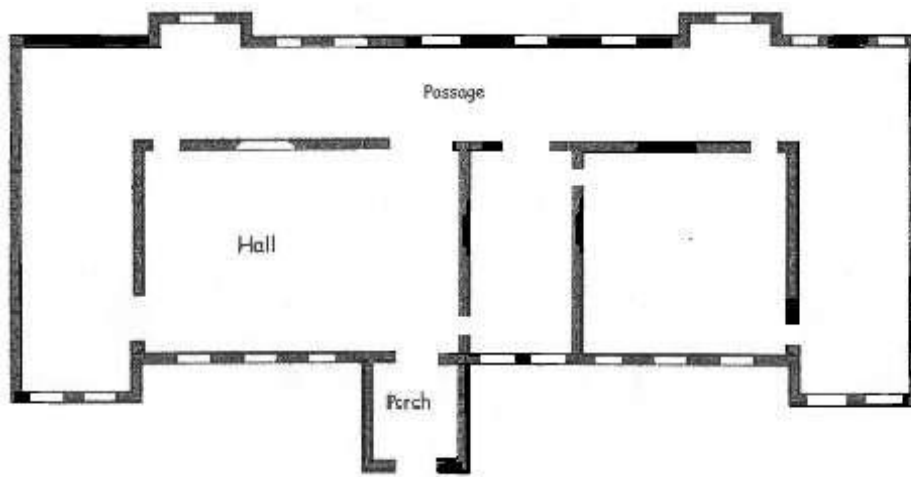


Fig. 7b Possible development of house by cross passage \*\*

### The Maps <sup>31</sup>

The earliest map so far found is that produced for Mr. Talbot, of Lacock Abbey, in 1764

This map gives wonderfully detailed information on the Lacock estate, the areas of the land holdings, who rented them and so on but only the vaguest outline of Lackham; it clearly shows the main drive and the outline position of the house, but the fine detail evident in the rest of the map is singularly lacking for Lackham.

<sup>31</sup> The illustrations are reproductions made by the author from the originals; the sources are all fully documented. The problems of establishing ownership of copyrights, and the costs of gaining permission to reproduce the originals, meant that generating my own versions was the only realistic option available

The abundant woodland, for which we have documentary evidence, is only shown by three small, token, and undefined, areas of woodland. This maps value will become apparent, however, when discussing the various entrance ways into the estate (see below).

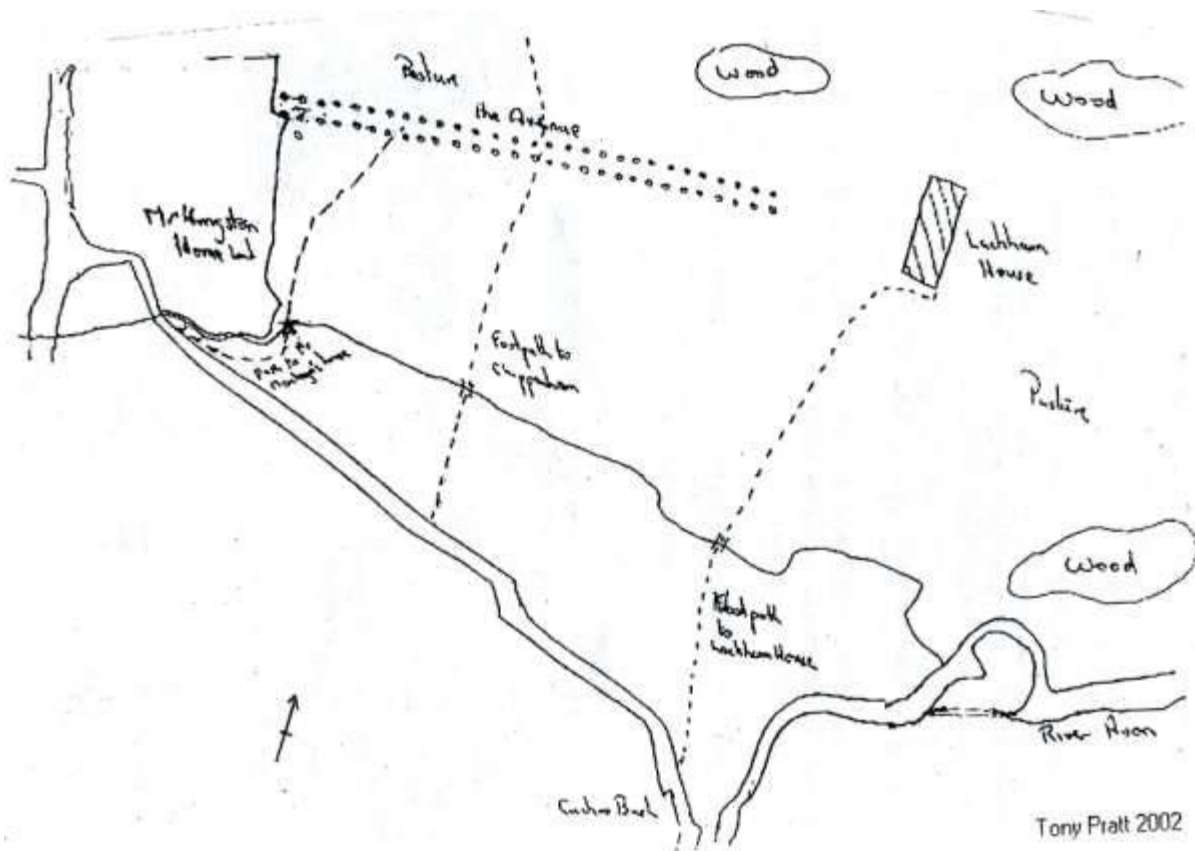


Fig. 8 Extract from the map made for Mr. Talbot, 1764 <sup>32</sup> \*\*  
(if visiting from below [click here](#) to return to text)

The footpath leading from Cuckoo Bush to Lackham House would appear to have run very close to the line now taken by the Back Drive. It is possible that when this drive was put in place (in about 1860) it followed the line of a path that had been in use for generations. Since the map was made the footpath to Chippenham, further to the west, has been diverted along the line of the brook eastwards, to hit the Back Drive about where the footbridge for the other path is seen on the map. The footpath to the House very clearly went to the east of the building, and enters somewhere "behind" the building, away from the avenue and the carriage drive. Servants use the back door.....

<sup>32</sup> Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, Chippenham (henceforth W&SHC) 244L

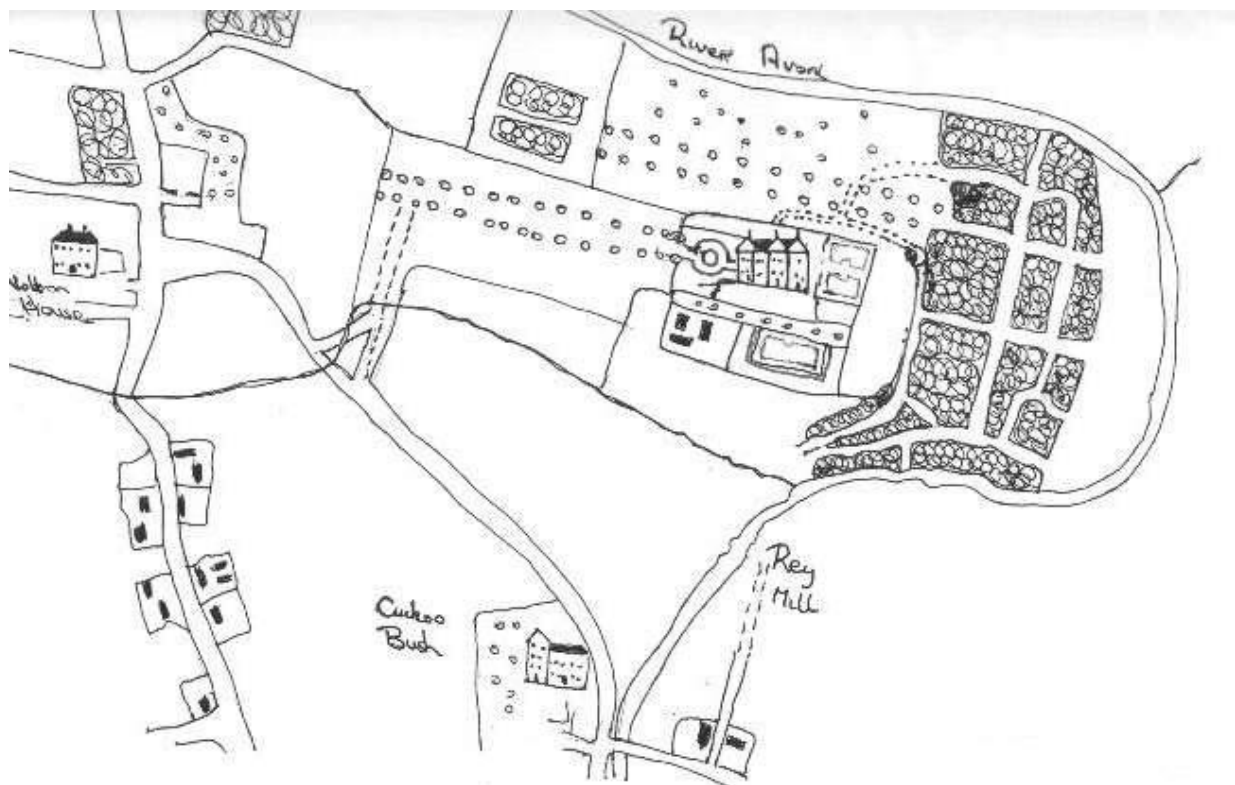
The western edge of Lackham, where "Mr Kingston's" land is noted, is identifiable today as being the large medieval boundary ditch still in existence.

The next map was made by Andrews and Drury in 1773 (Fig. 9).

The representation of the house is not totally accurate, given the other illustrations we have available, but the multiple sections are shown and the layout of the grounds and woods are almost certainly accurate in essence if not scale. The major Manor houses were all drawn so that their faces were seen, looking from the bottom of the map, irrespective of their actual orientation.

The next map was made by Andrews and Drury in 1773 (Fig. 9).

The house is shown with a garden to the east and south and the small buildings visible in Dingley's sketch are shown. The house area is shown as much longer east to west than it actually would have been and it doesn't work very well.



Tony Pratt 2002

Fig.9 Excerpt from Andrews and Drury's map 1773 \*\*  
(redrawn by the author from the facsimile in W&SHC)

The circular driveway close to the west side of the house is not shown in the 1684 illustration (Fig. 1).

The driveway from the Manor is clearly shown running down an avenue of trees that runs (roughly) westwards (down the page) from the house: this line is not the field track that runs from Notton Farm to Home Farm. There is documentary evidence for this avenue, Louisa Montagu recalled that "the approach to Lackham was through a long avenue of aged oaks"<sup>33</sup>

In the 1770's, the drive turned south just before the current location of Notton Farm and debouched onto the Notton - Reybridge road. This trackway can still be seen and is still in use.

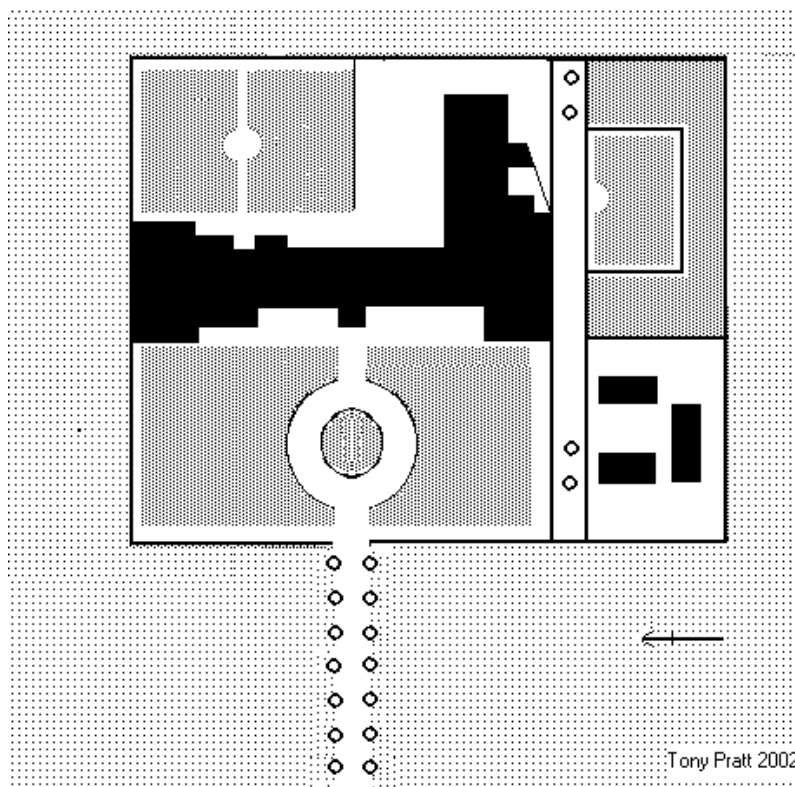


Fig 10 Old Lackham House and its environs (tentative) \*\*

Andrews and Drury's map (Fig. 9) shows a sharp, right-angled turn out of the avenue to the south, but this would have been a very awkward turn indeed for horse-drawn carriages<sup>34</sup>. Talbot's map, (Fig. 8) however, indicates that the drive turned slightly north-east, so that it entered the avenue at a much shallower angle.

<sup>33</sup> Crawford, Louisa (1835) *Autobiographical sketches connected with Laycock Abbey and Lackham House* Metropolitan Magazine

<sup>34</sup> Thomson, L *pers. Comm.*

Fig. 10 is a speculative plan of the house and gardens. There is evidence that the eastern garden did not extend completely across the width of the house and that the area south of this garden might have been a courtyard area. This would fit with the layout seen on the late seventeenth century floor plan (Fig. 7). There might be archaeological evidence to support this, as what looked to be a courtyard area was found in approximately the correct location during the 1992 dig, but until the exact locations of the excavations have been fixed onto the floor plan this is not certain.



Fig 11 a) Coping stone \*\*



Fig 11 b) Cross section of coping stone  
50p piece for scale \*\*

The stone work associated with the old house was impressive, examples of coping stones (from the garden walls ?) and dressed stone (Figs 11a and b) was found when a new water main was out across the field just to the east of the House location in 2012 . The buildings associated with the "vill", thought to lie under the Sports field to the east of the House were likely to have been much more substantial than had previously been thought, the blocks recovered from this part of the trench were of considerable size (Fig 12 below). For more information on the evidence found in this trench see the author's "Archaeology in the Water Mains Trench 2012" at [Water Main trench Archaeology](#)





Fig 12 Blocks in "vill" area of Sports Field \*\*



When James Montagu decided to build a new house in the late eighteenth century, only 4 years after inheriting Lackham from his father, he decided to position it along the line of the more northerly of the two avenues evident on the 1773 map [Fig. 9]. The new house was turned ninety degrees to the alignment of the original with a south facing aspect, rather than the westerly view of the original.

The exact date of this rebuild is unknown. For many years the best estimate was between 1790<sup>35</sup> and 1797. The Rev. Samuel Denne FSA wrote that a friend of his was staying with Col.<sup>36</sup>, with the likelihood being that it was closer to 1790.

The latest map that shows the old house would appear to be one prepared for the proposed Wilts & Berks Canal. (Fig. 11). It isn't very detailed, but clearly shows the three main parts of the old house and that the building is facing west, not north.

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<sup>35</sup> the date of Grimm's sketch

<sup>36</sup> The Rev. Samuel Denne FSA wrote that a friend of his was staying with Montagu who had been left "*by his brother a noble house built within the last five years*" WFHS The Monumental Inscriptions of Lacock Parish W&SHC microfiche 607477  
Col.



Fig. 13 Map of the proposed Wilts & Berks Canal, (after 1793) \*\*

The Wilts & Berks Canal was conceived late in the period now associated with "Canal Mania".....

*A committee of potential investors having been formed in 1793, [ they ] commissioned a survey of possible routes from Robert Whitworth and his son William, the former a pupil of the great canal builder James Brindley. With a suitable route identified, the necessary Parliamentary Act granting compulsory purchase and other necessary powers was duly obtained in 1795*<sup>37</sup>

Thus the old house might have still been standing as late as 1795. In WANHS Library in Devizes, however, there is another map produced to support the proposal for the Canal. It was probably James Montagu's copy as it bears his name on the outside.

<sup>37</sup> Scatchard, P (2001) *A Brief History of the Wilts & Berks Canal* on the Wilts and Berks Canal Amenity Group website, <http://www.wilts-berks canal>.

The map clearly shows the new Lackham house (Fig. 12) and as its inscription states it is for the "proposed" canal it must therefore predate the end of 1795. This ties the date for the building of the new house to between 1793 and 1795.

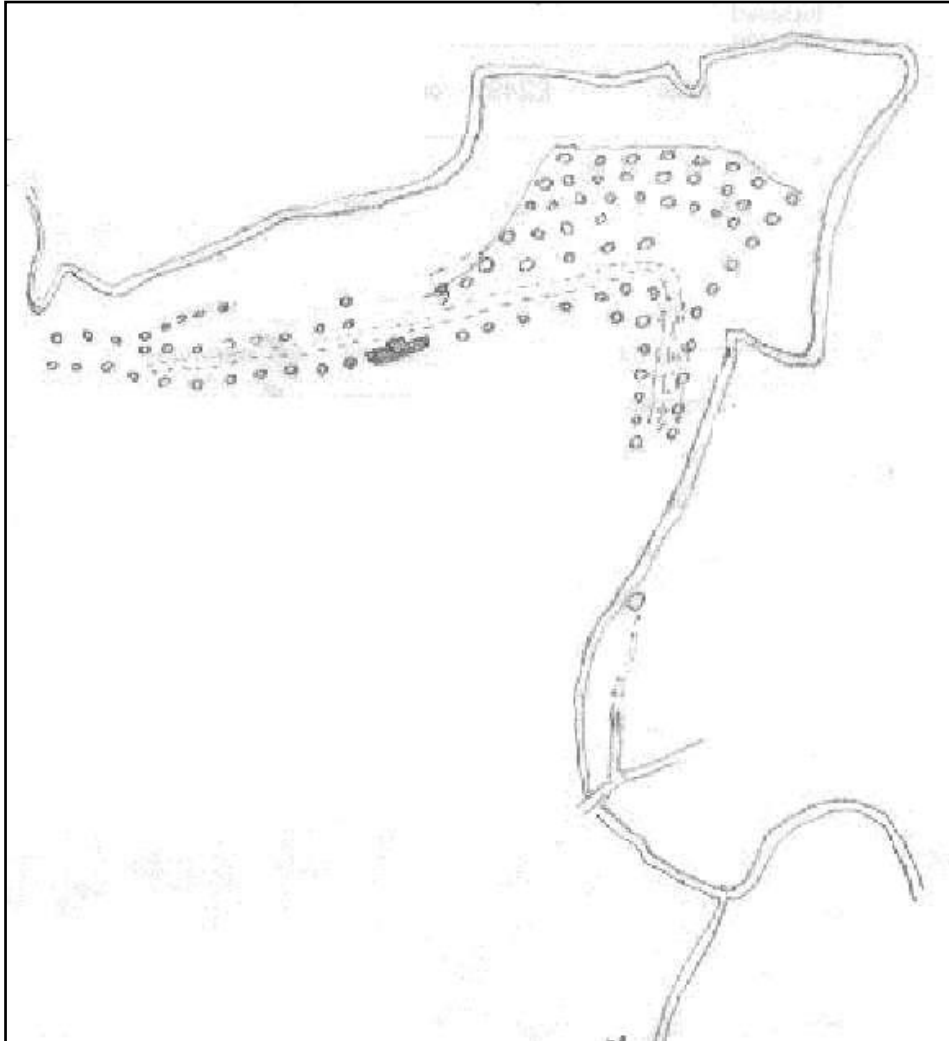


Fig. 14 Map for the proposed Wilts & Berks Canal 1795 \*\*  
(if visiting from below [click here](#) to return to text)

This clearly shows the new Lackham house, and as its inscription states it is for the "proposed" canal it must predate the end of 1795 <sup>38</sup>. Therefore the current Lackham House was built by James Montagu VI sometime between 1793 and 1795.

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There may be evidence that the new house was built by 1794; in Devizes there is another map, dated 1794 that also clearly shows the new house but the route of the canal follows the river to Chippenham, not the more easterly route with the branch canal to the town that is shown in the earlier map and which was the course actually built.

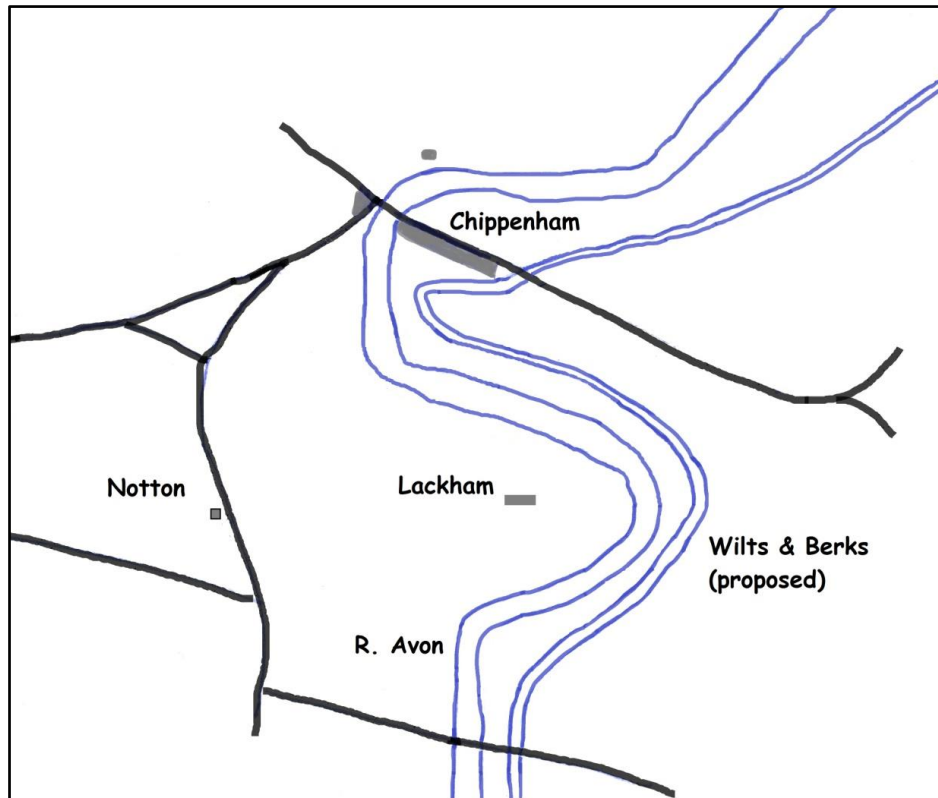


Fig. 15 Map of the proposed canal dated 1794 <sup>39</sup> \*\*

Because of this the reliability of the dating of this map is questionable and it is not felt that a date of 1794 for the existence of the new house can be definitely made.

The new house was a rectangular structure of two floors with a service block on the east and west end, separated from the main building but linked to it by a corridor running along the northern side of the building. Those who know Newton Park in B&NES will be familiar with this construction except that at Newton the connecting corridor is curved to bring the end blocks in front of the line of the main house; at Lackham the wall lines of the main house determine the north and

<sup>39</sup> W&SHC Map 140 V p58 "A plan of the Wilts and Berks canal with links to the Thames and Severn Canal" by W Fowden 1794. Redrawn for this work by TP from the original

south wall locations of the service blocks. There were areas between the wings and the main house, clearly seen on the maps above, open to the south.

The house didn't remain like this for long. The eventual owner after the Montagus lost the estate was Captain Frederick Rooke. He made "substantial improvements" see below.

A map used in the 1835 sale offer is thought to have been produced "about 1816"<sup>40</sup>, in which case it was made at about the time that the Trustees rented the estate to Col. Tufnell for a few years.. This map (Fig. 13 below) shows that the arrangement of the drives had been changed; the original entrance drive had been re-aligned at its eastern end to connect with the new house. It is clear that the drive arrives at the south side of the house rather than on the north as it does now. At this date the main entrance was where the current French windows open onto the garden terrace.

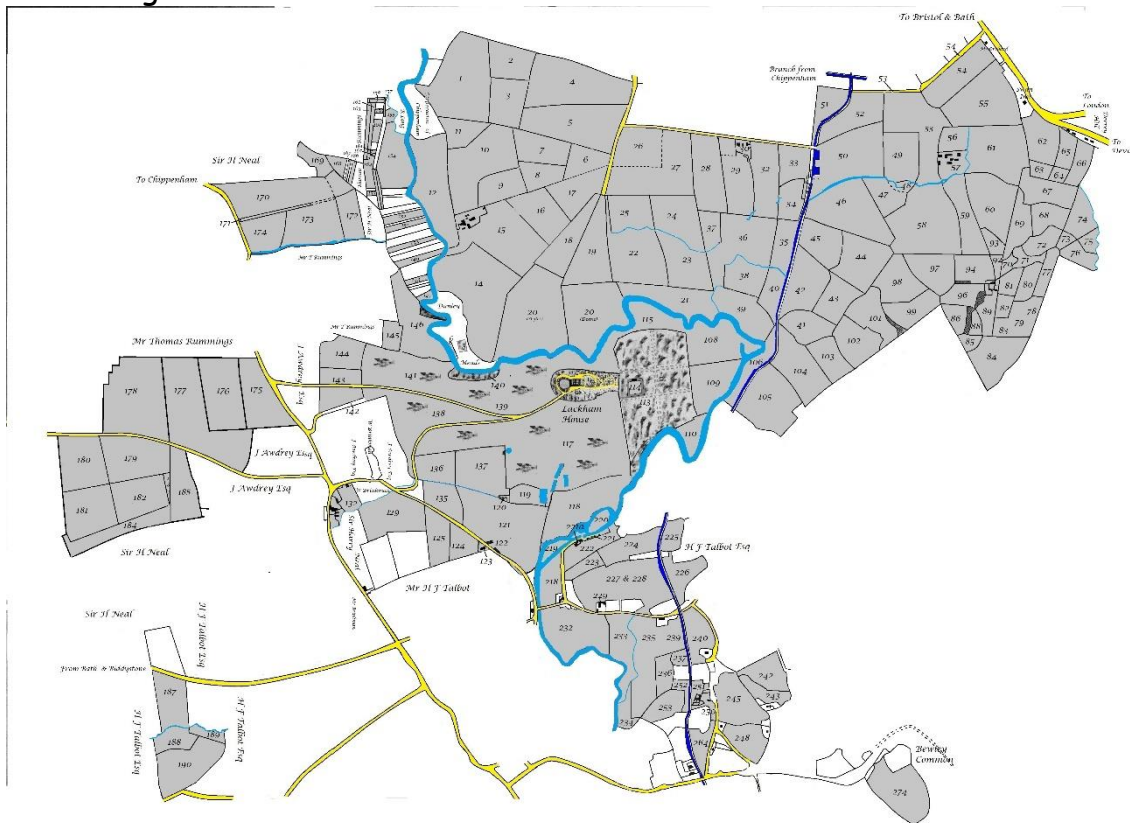


Fig. 16a 1835 Sale map <sup>41</sup> \*\*

<sup>40</sup> Harvey, RB (1991) *The Site of Old Lackham House* - a report drawn up in response to an enquiry by the late CAO of Lackham, Mr de Cordova, this report dated April 1991. Lackham College papers, Wiltshire College Lackham Library.

<sup>41</sup> W&SHC 137/125/14

Redrawn for this work, by the author, from the original in Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre



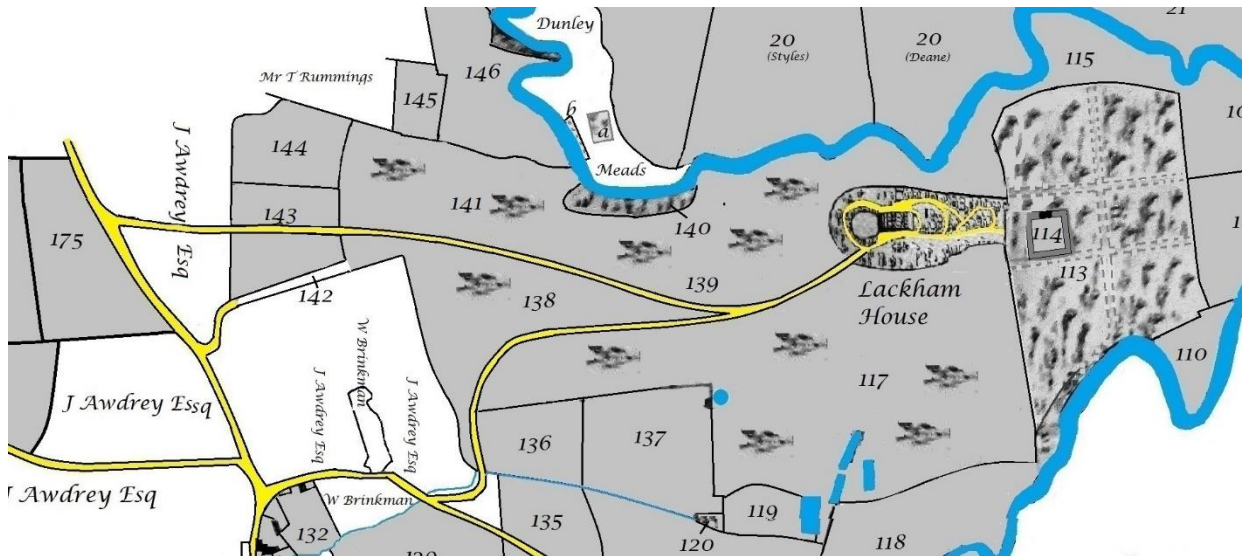


Fig 16b Central section of the 1835 map \*\*

The curving line running from the woods to the east of the house, all around the house and back to the woods might be a "ha-ha"<sup>42</sup> but would appear to be running along to the south of the ha-ha line, which runs along the southern side of the walk to the walled garden. The remains of this ha-ha can be seen both north and south of the house today. (For a discussion on the southerly haha [see below](#) )

The northern line is much less obvious but some stonework still exists, in the field to the north of the D lawn driveway<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Jellicoe, G, Jellicoe, S, Goode, P and Lancaster, M (1991) *The Oxford Companion to Gardens* p241

*Ha ha - a dry ditch with a raised retaining wall used to conceal the boundaries of an estate or landscape. This feature was French in origin, appearing at Versailles and elsewhere in the 17th c. The earliest English example though of small extent, was introduced c 1695 at Levens Hall by the French gardener Mssr Beaumont. Its use was also advocated in Dezallier d'Argenville's "Le Theorie et la pratique de jardinage" (1709) translated by John James. Switzer was probably unaware of the distant example at Levens but, following John James, he describes a feature like a ha-ha in Ichonographia Rustica (1718)*

A major function of the ha ha was to serve as a "hidden fence", keeping livestock out of the gardens without a visible barrier

<sup>43</sup> This stonework is located almost exactly where the second "a" in Lackham House is in Fig. 15, below



Fig. 17a Remains of boundary north of D lawn. \*

The date of this walling is uncertain; the construction is not like that of either the terraces or the southern haha although it is closer in makeup to that of the Terrace walls. Excavation to show the base of the wall might help clarify this.

The grounds around the House are shown very clearly on the map and there are curving interconnected walkways through what would appear to be an area planted with shrubs rather than trees. There appears to be a small building to the east of the house, this may be a "Summer house" and is not seen after this period.



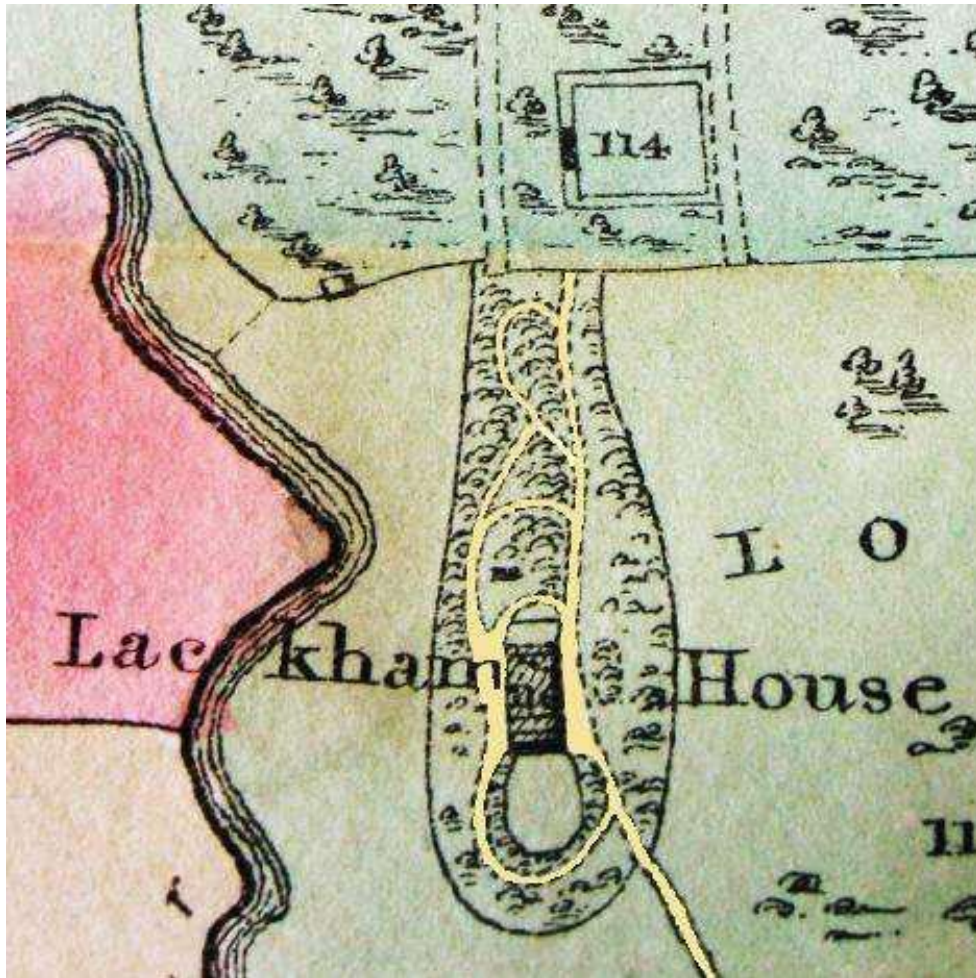


Fig. 17b Close up of the area around the house from the 1835 map <sup>44</sup> \*\*

This map is the first to show the Walled Garden in position with one building in the line of the northern wall. Excavations alongside the southern wall of the Garden <sup>45</sup> showed that the brickwork is supported by a foundation layer of dressed ashlar blocks that almost certainly came from the demolition of the old house, and so the garden was probably built at the same time as, or just after, the current house.

<sup>44</sup> All coloured excerpts from the 1835 Estate sale map are copyright to W&SHC and used with their kind permission. W&SHC 137/125/14 [Note that the yellow colouring of the pathways is not original but was inserted to make them more visible.] All the grey coloured estate maps have been entirely redrawn from the original by the author

<sup>45</sup> Undertaken by Stewart Matthews, a Lackham gardener for over 30 years, when he was putting in a water tank in 2008



A new drive left the old entrance way and ran north-east to intersect with the Chippenham - Melksham road a little north of the entrance where the later Front Lodge is now seen. <sup>46</sup> Note the original drive, on the right, is still clearly in use.

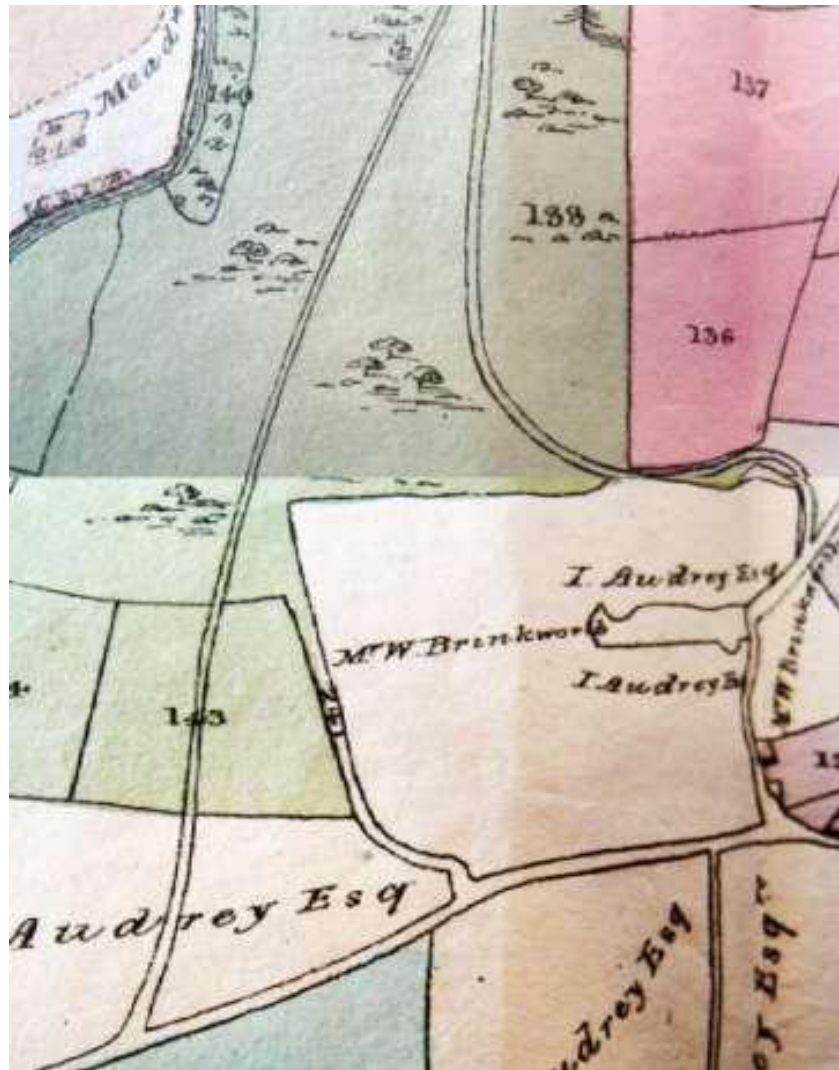


Fig. 18a Details of entrance locations 1835, map excerpt \*\*

<sup>46</sup> The "new" part of the current drive, running from the top of the hill on the Front Drive to the roundabout, was constructed in 2002, at the same time as Cepen Way South, the original drive continued west from the top of the hill to the Lodge.



Fig. 18b Detail of entrance locations 1835 <sup>47</sup> \*\*

The line of the drive can be seen immediately south of the much later "pillbox" on the current Main Drive as a slight depression in the ground



Fig. 19 Old drive depression - dotted line shows original drive profile \*\*

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<sup>47</sup> Excerpt from original map copyright W&SHC W&SHC 137/125/14

This map also shows that there were five separate ponds to the south, the most southerly of which is now probably the location the Alder Carr, and that Home Farm did not exist before this date; there was a large pond roughly where Home Farm is now.

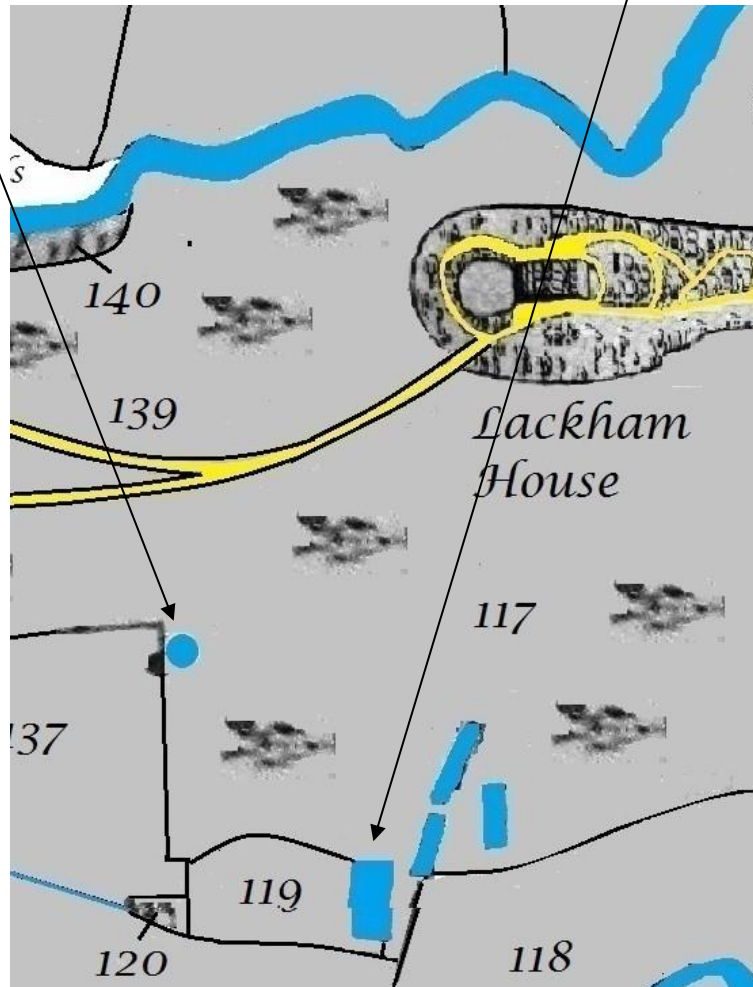


Fig. 20 Ponds (excerpt from 1835 map)<sup>48</sup> \*\*

The wooded area on the south side of the sharp bend in the river is also seen for the first time; this wooded area, Plucking Grove, still exists, but has been extended. The Front Drive now runs along its southern edge

In 1835 the estate was being run by Trustees appointed by the Courts, with Captain Rooke as their tenant. The sale advertisement mentions the site of Lackham House "soon to be pulled down"<sup>49</sup>. It is probable that it was felt that the house was worth more as a supply of building material than as a going concern.

<sup>48</sup> Copyright W&SHC 137/125/14

<sup>49</sup> Sale poster W&SHC 131/125/14

This was no idle suggestion; the ancient manor house at Alderton, also part of the Estate, had already been sold and demolished by this date. Happily, Captain Rooke was the purchaser, for the sum of £30,000.

Captain Rooke bought the estate in 1836. That was the year when the Tithe Commutation Act was passed <sup>50</sup> and two years later the Tithe Apportionment survey and map were made for Lacock. The map shows changes that had been made yet again in the layout of Lackham's drives.

The major change was brought about by the decision, probably by Capt. Rooke, to move the entrance to the House from the south to the northern side and making the northern driveway the major entrance to the Estate.

To mark this the Lodge had been built on the Chippenham to Melksham road (a on Fig. 18 below). This Lodge was made "of Stone and Thatch, [with] 4 rooms <sup>51</sup>". The drive was taken along the line of the already existing field track, replacing the more northerly line seen in Fig. 13. The line of this drive had been changed so that, instead of joining the original entranceway close to its eastern end, it now ran parallel to it, a bit to the south of the line of the current Front Drive, to arrive on the northern side of the House. The original drive was diverted from its course to the south side of the House and now ran north past the western end of the building to meet the new Front Drive at the same point as the current Back Drive-Front Drive junction.

The new entrance to the House was marked by a new oval porch (a in Fig. 19) and a widening of the drive in front of this (b) allowed carriages to turn around, draw up to the porch facing back up the drive and then proceed into the Stable Yard (c) easily. It is noteworthy that the drive did not go past the House further east

The Lacock map and survey are held at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre <sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy/other/tithe.htm>

"Tithe Commutation Act, 1836 (6&7 Will.IV, c.71) allowed payment of tithes in kind to be substituted by money payments. In most cases the principal records of the commutation of tithes in a parish under the Tithe Act 1836 is the Tithe Apportionment, altered apportionment and the tithe maps"

<sup>51</sup> W&SHC 173/61 Sale catalogue entitled "The Lackham estate in the county of Wilts 1864 by the auctioneers Daniel Smith, Son and Oakley, Land Agents and Surveyors 10 Waterloo Place London

<sup>52</sup> W&SHC Lacock TA



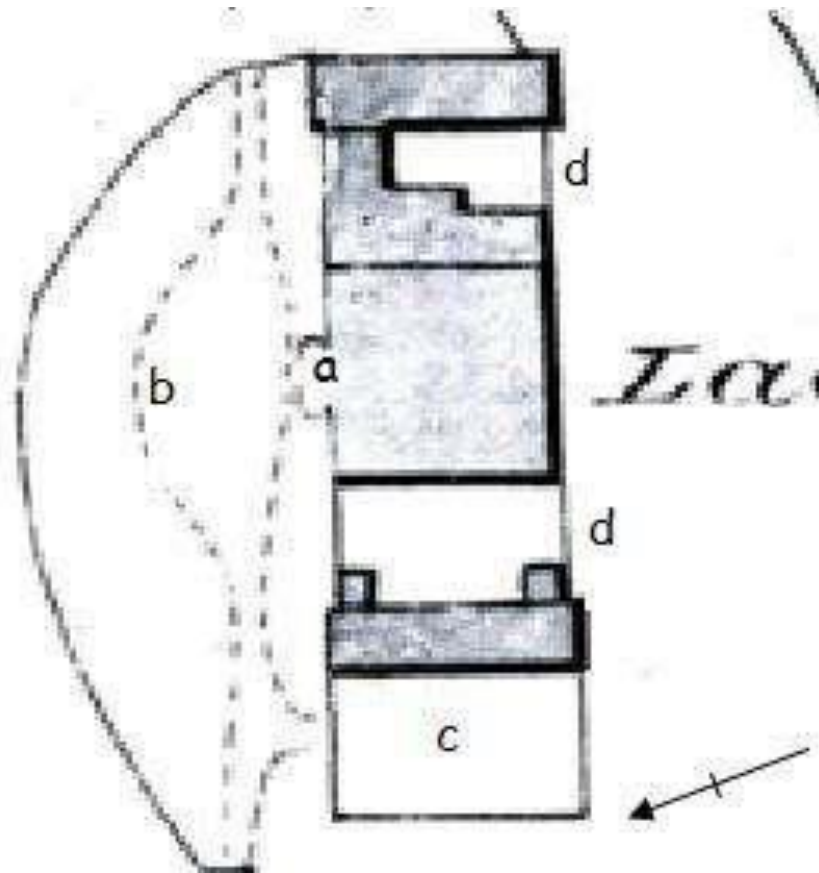


Fig. 21 Area around Lackham House 1838 <sup>53</sup> \*\*  
 (if visiting from below [click here](#) to return to text)

The "embayments" between the House and the service areas on either side had by this time been closed up with walls that make a solid line along the south side of the building (d)

These walls may be some of the "considerable improvements" mentioned above and they were made very rapidly. It was known that he made changes from the announcement of the sale of the estate in 1856 (after Captain Rooke's death)

*The handsome stone mansion with colonnade and wings, and on which the late proprietor expended several thousand pounds in substantial improvements, is delightfully placed upon a gentle elevation, with all its principal rooms opening to the South, and is suited in every respect for a family of rank and fortunes* <sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Figure 18 is a copy from a complete map held in the Diocesan office and included within W&SHC T/A Lacock. Copyright, and reproduced by the kind permission of W&SHC

<sup>54</sup> Devizes Gazette May 20th 1856



Fig. 22 Lackham House 1844 by William Wallace Rooke \*\*

but the scale of these improvements was only realised when, in 2009, an important watercolour dated 1844 came to light. This picture <sup>55</sup>clearly shows a three storey house with a colonnade in position.

This is the only known illustration of the house pre-dating the twentieth century. The large flag on the flag pole to the south of the house is the Red Ensign, which Capt Rooke was entitled to display being a retired naval officer.

Several items of interest can be seen in this picture; there has long been a question as to whether the specimen Beeches [*Fagus sylvatica atropurpureum*] in the garden area to the south west of the house are old enough to have been planted by the Montagus, when the house was built. They are close to, but not on, the line of the original entrance drive

The Orangery or Summer house, previously only known in 1864 from maps can be clearly seen, although it is displaced from the correct location much closer to the eastern end of the House. Nothing remains of it except the curve in the wall at the back of the Herbaceous border which was to accommodate the Summer House. It appears to have been a typical Orangery / Summer House of this period. A generation later it was described as being "a handsome Conservatory 35 feet by 18 feet with furnace and potting house in the rear" <sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Signed with the initials WWR 1849. I am very happy to record my thanks to Mr. and Mrs Johnstone of Exeter for help and hospitality and readily giving permission to copy and use this image, the original is in their possession and is their copyright. I am also grateful to their cousin Mr N. Floyer who first made me aware of this picture and kindly put me in touch with them.

<sup>56</sup>W&SHC 173/61 Sale catalogue entitled "The Lackham estate in the county of Wilts 1864



Fig. 23 Summer house 1844 [detail from Fig 20] \*\*

The top of the "ha-ha", the ornamental ditch that separates the lawn areas around the house from the productive countryside without forming a barrier visible from the house, is just visible in this picture, curving from its closest approach to the house on the eastern side (where it formed the southern side of a walk that linked the house with ornamental areas and the distant Walled Garden) to being three times further away from the building.



Fig. 24 The ha-ha [detail from Fig. 20] \*\*



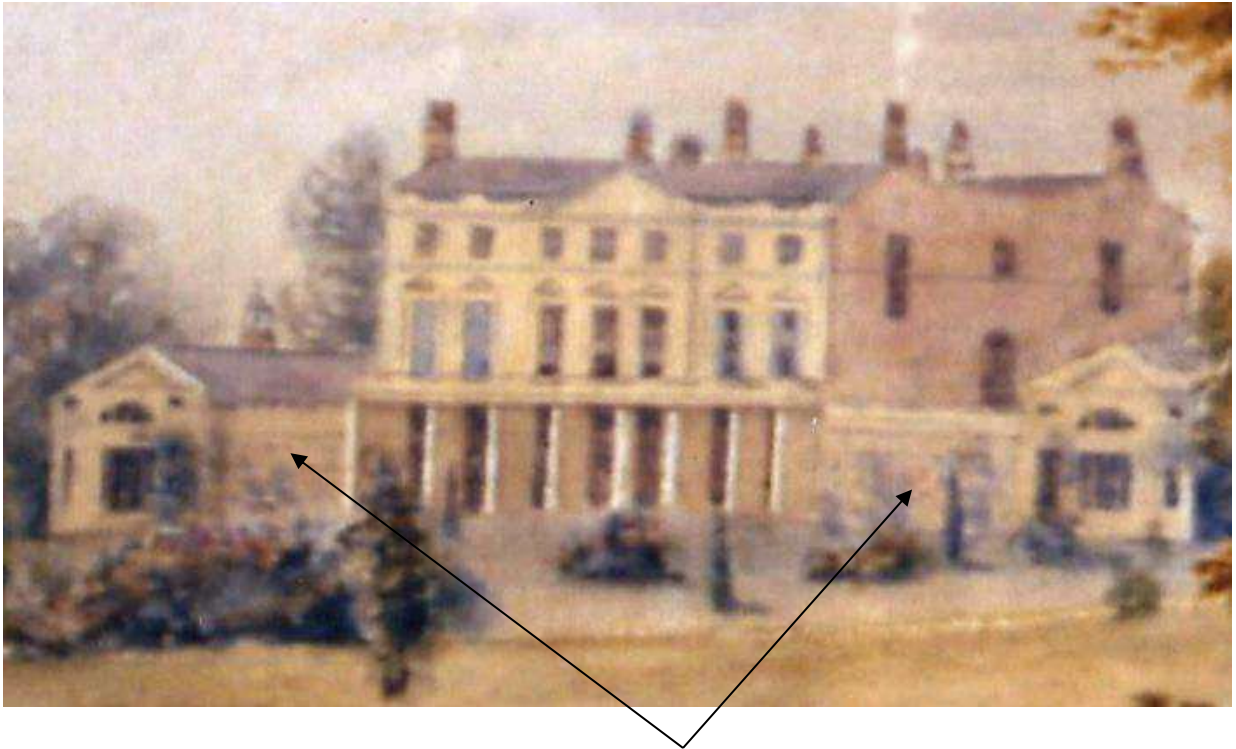


Fig. 25 House in 1844 showing the "new" walls [detail from Fig. 20] \*\*

The most obvious change was the insertion of a third floor, which Lackham tradition holds to have been to accommodate his large family <sup>57</sup>, but they were fully grown by the time Capt. Rooke and his second wife bought Lackham. It may have been to accommodate a large number of servants.

Looking at the house it appears that the roof and pediment were removed, the new floor built and then top and roof put back on. There is a line of decoration running across the west wall of the house that seems unconnected with anything but if the third floor is removed this decoration lines up with the base of the pediment. This would seem to suggest that the top decoration has been raised.

The map for the 1856 sale, when the estate was bought by Henry Berney Caldwell, doesn't show any changes in the arrangement of the drives around the House from the 1838 one.

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<sup>57</sup> 13 children!

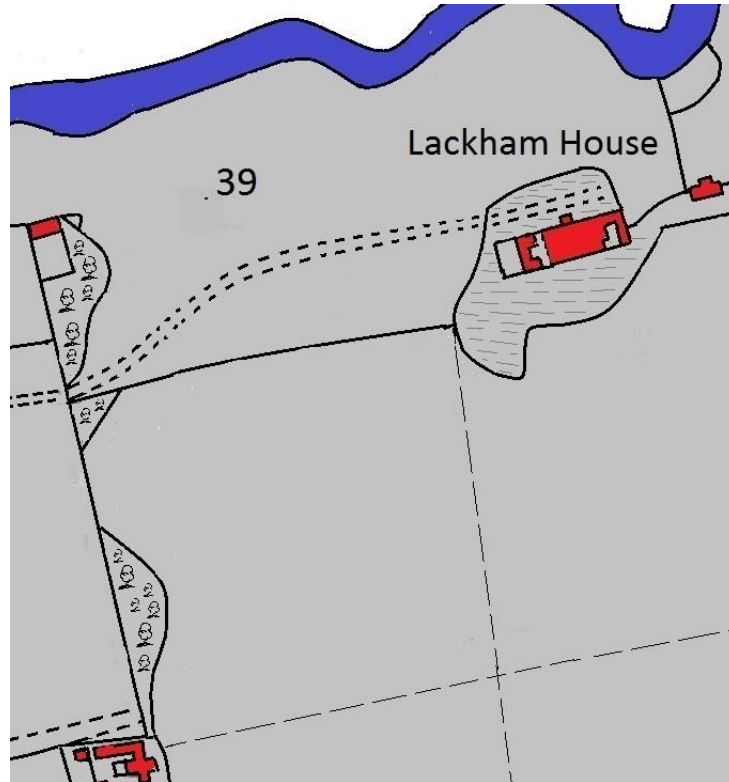


Fig. 26 Lackham House as shown on the 1858 map \*\*

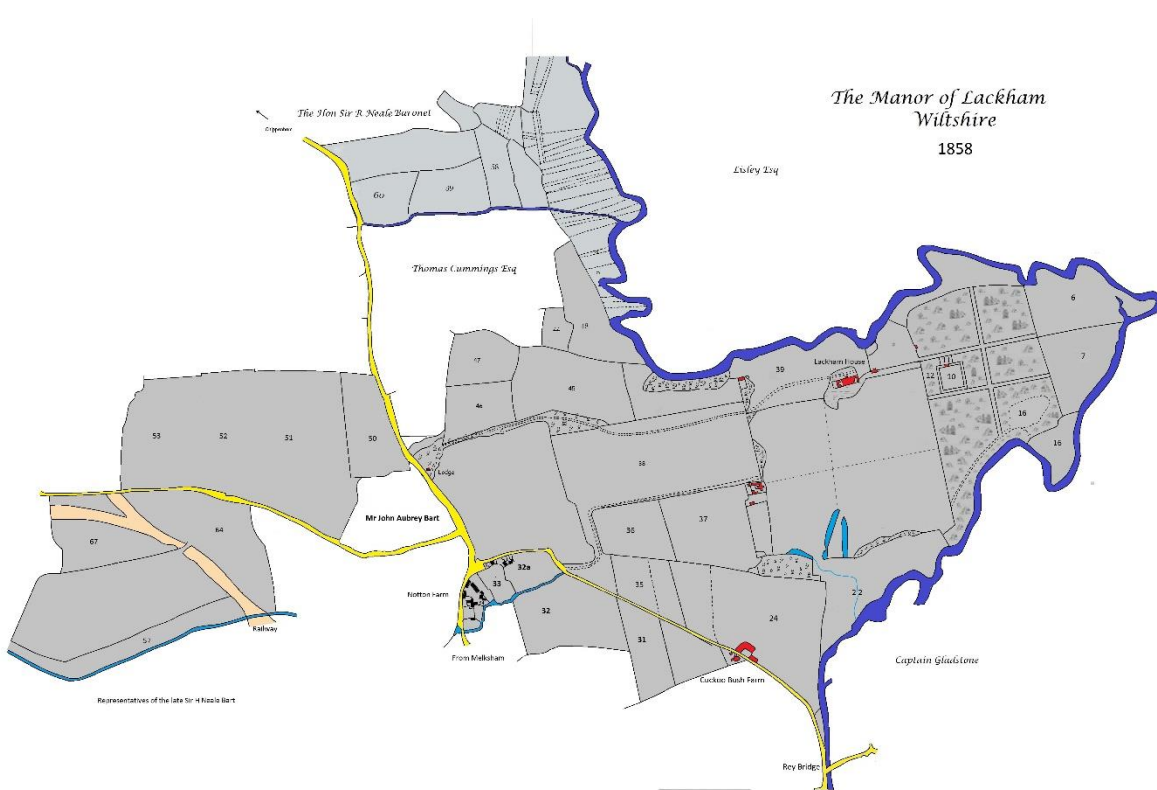


Fig. 27a. Map for the 1858 sale \*\*

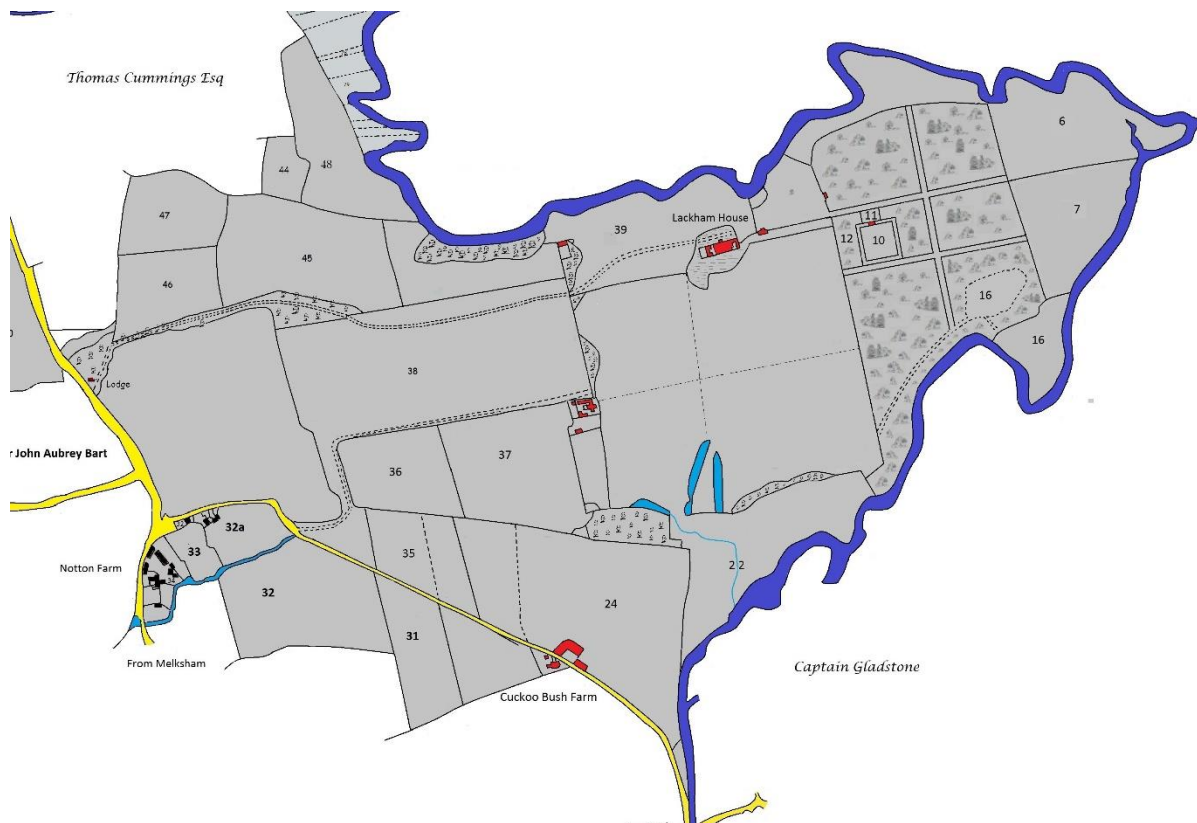


Fig. 27b. Centre of the 1858 map \*\*

The eastern block had a pediment to it; a photograph of the house (Fig. 25) taken in the early nineteen 1960s<sup>58</sup>, clearly shows one, but it is unknown if this was an original feature or added later, stylistically it seems to fit very well. It was removed when the roof was replaced some time in the mid 1970s<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> It is before the building of Kate Barret block, now part of the Reception area, which was started in 1964

Wilts. Times Sat July 11 1964 "New hostel for women students at Lackham "

<sup>59</sup> Brin Thornton, head gardener Wiltshire College Lackham for over 30 years, *pers. comm.*



Fig. 28 Photograph of eastern range (date uncertain, <1965) <sup>60</sup> \*\*

It should be noted that the glass roofing visible here is a later addition, built by Maj. Gen. Llewellyn Palmer

The Main drive had been changed and finally left the line established for at least 200 years, if not more, and took an alignment more closely relating to the arrangement seen today.

The drive still came out into the fields south of where the Pill box now is and then passed through two "screening" tree belts that were likely to have been put in to allow a surprise view of the house as the visitor passed between the trees. .

*"The approach to the mansion is by a neat lodge and iron gates from the Chippenham Road, with a carriage drive of about three quarters of a mile, chiefly through plantations".<sup>61</sup>*

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<sup>60</sup> From photograph in Wiltshire College, Lackham, papers, Lackham Library

<sup>61</sup> Devizes Gazette May 20th 1856



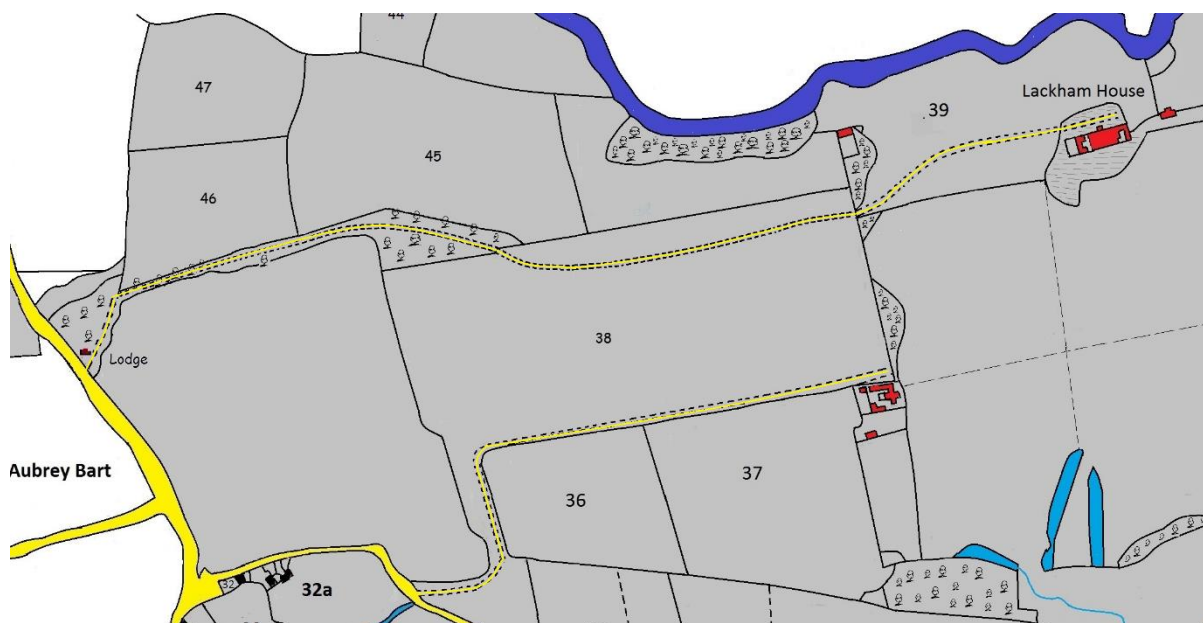


Fig. 29a detail from 1858 map showing driveways. \*\*

The clumps of trees between Home Farm and the Barton appear to have been carefully positioned; the Drive passed through a narrow gap [between the most northerly clump and its neighbour]. These clumps of trees screened the House from view from anywhere on the Drive until the visitor had passed through the gap when it would have suddenly appeared. This sort of "reveal" is a feature of English Landscape design in the eighteenth century and there is no reason to think it was accidental here. Fig 29b shows how the areas visible from various locations on the Drive do not include the House until the last position

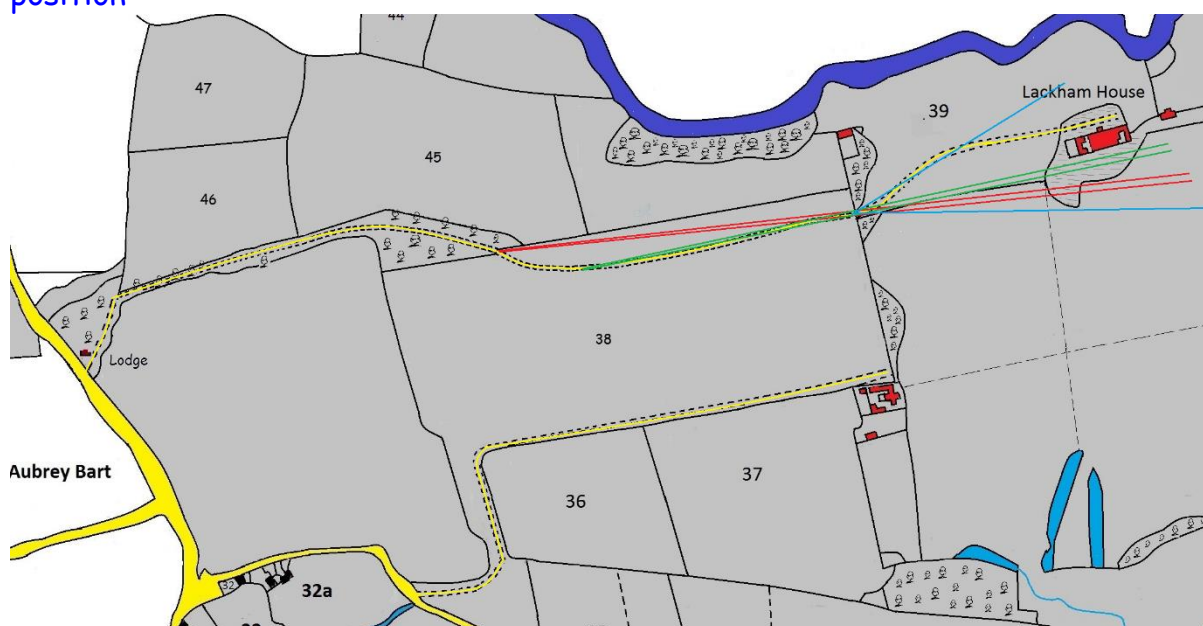


Fig 29b Sightlines from positions on the Main drive showing Lackham House would not have been visible until passing through the gap \*\*



Home Farm was built sometime between 1816 and 1858, it appears for the first time on this 1858 map. The original drive had been abandoned and a new trackway to Home Farm (the one seen today) had been constructed. It used, however, the same entrance as the old main drive but this no longer connected with the House.

Fig 29c shows that on the drive from Notton to Home Farm (which would not have had visitors for the House on it) the House is only visible on the early section, between the red and blue lines, the part coloured in green

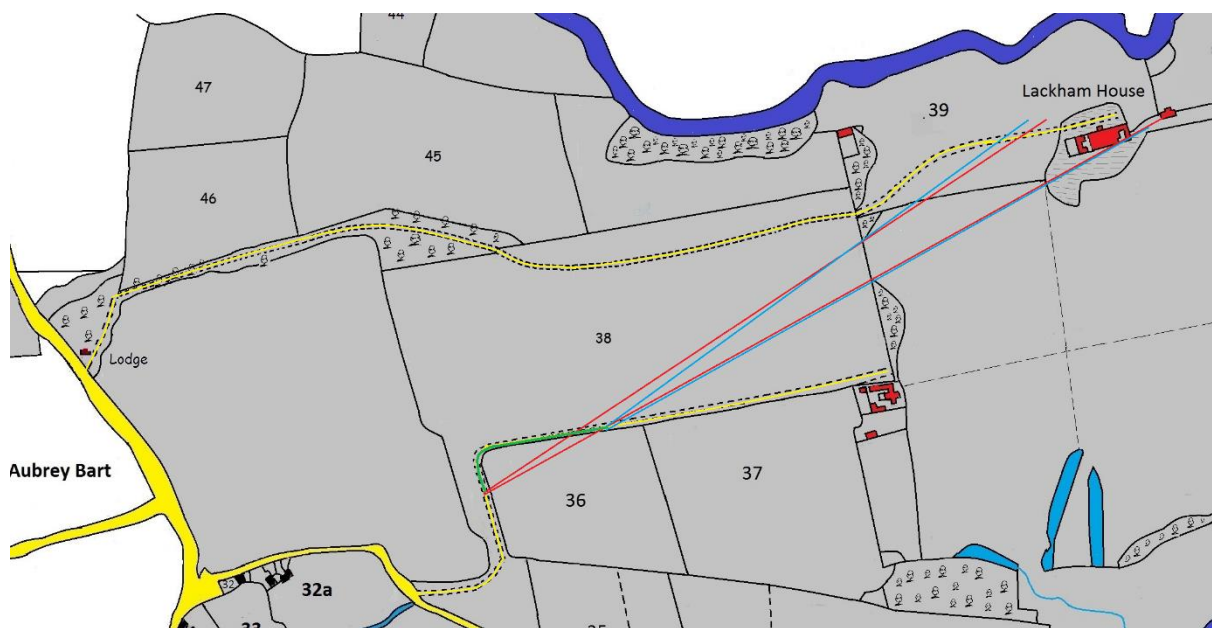


Fig 29c showing that the House could only be seen from the green part of the other drive \*\*

The next map is dated 1864, and was made for another sale that did not result in a change of ownership. It shows further development of the drive, see below.

There appears to have been changes made to the stream close to where it debouches into the Avon. A rectangular arrangement of channels appears to have been put in place, the reason for this is unknown, but it might have been to do with the shooting interests of the estate.

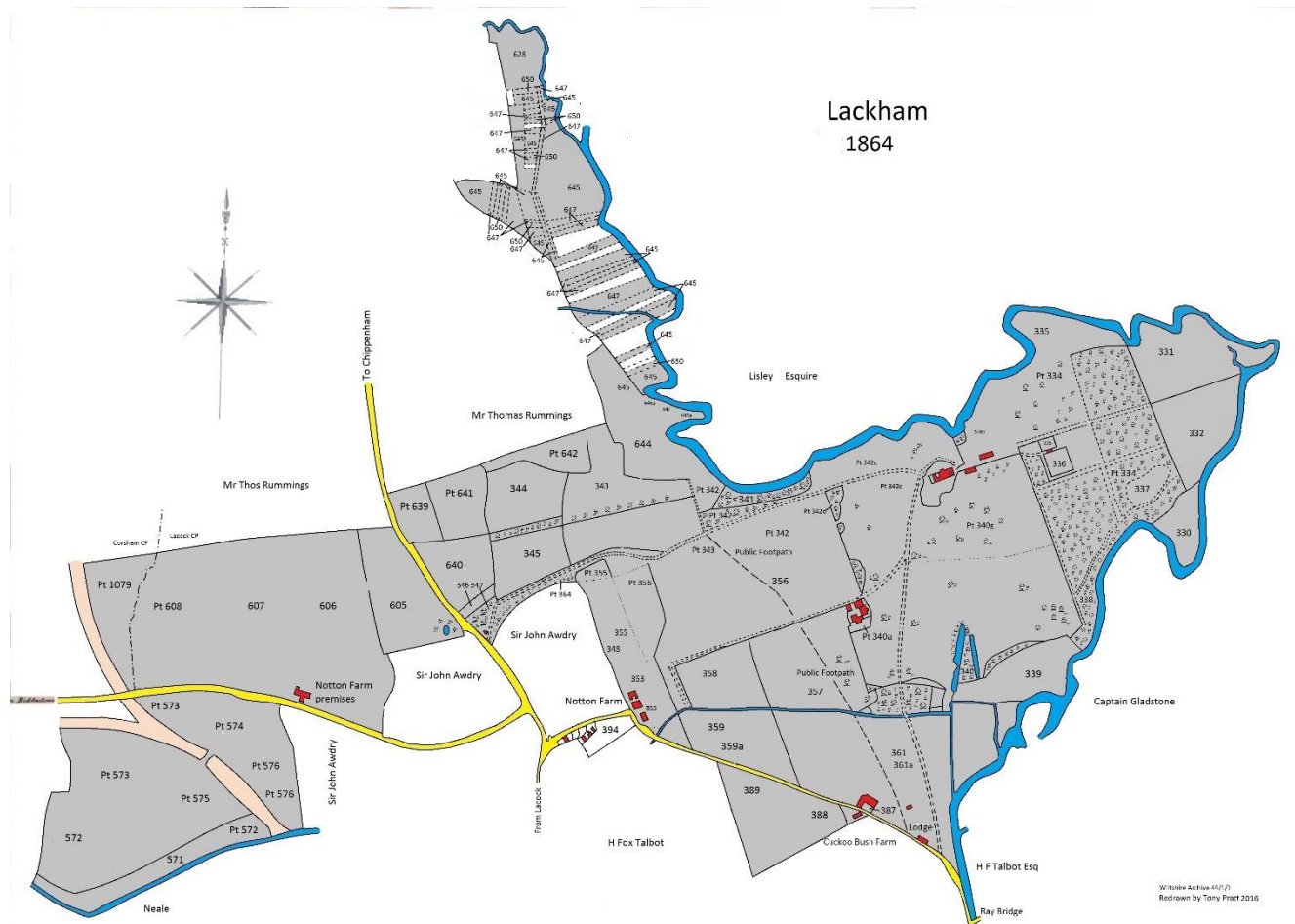


Fig. 30 1864 map \*\*

The drive close to the house had changed, the major access way ran north of the house. Access to the porch area, clearly visible for the first time since the 1795 map, (Fig. 12) was from the north-eastern side of the house.

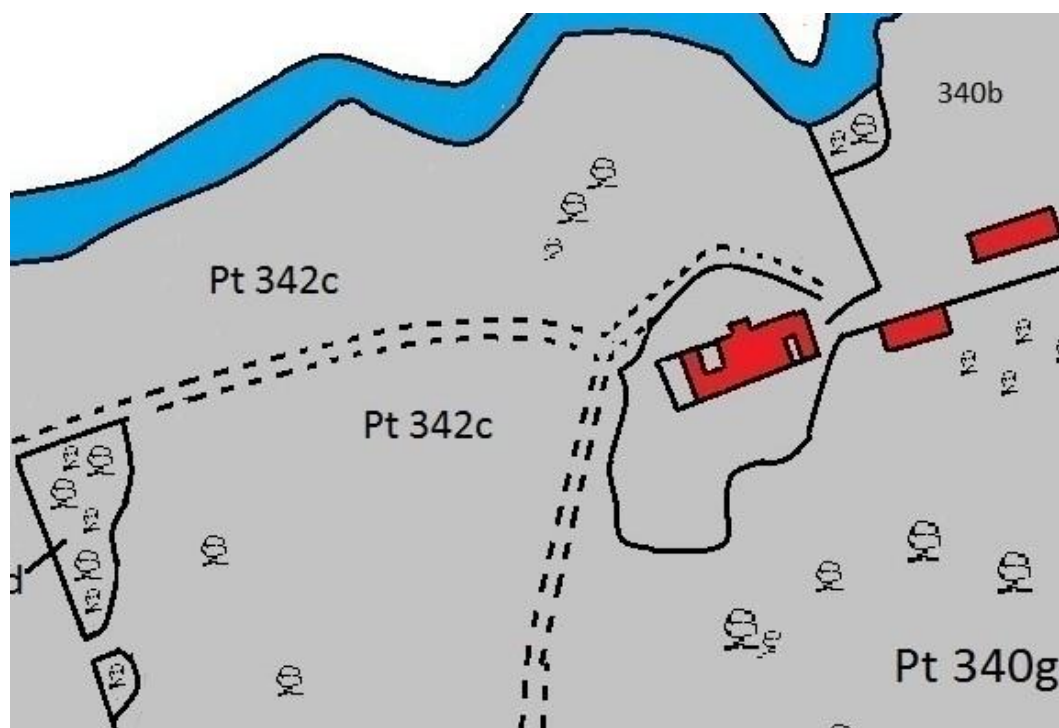


Fig. 31 Detail from 1864 map \*\*

The farm drive from Home Farm westwards followed its current line, going due south to the Reybridge road at its southern end, rather than following the line of the stream as seen in all the earlier maps.

There were three major changes, the first being the appearance of the Back Drive as it is seen today. This was an entirely new drive but following the line of the old footpath from the house to the Reybridge as seen in Talbot's map of 1764 (Fig. 8) and the construction of the Ornamental (Back) Lodge

The date of the building of the Ornamental Lodge at the end of the Back Drive is uncertain. The County Buildings Record shows it as 1833 but this is probably based on architectural style. The Lodge is a typical "picturesque pattern book" lodge with tufa walls and these are common in the third decade of the nineteenth century. The 1864 catalogue described it as being "of ornamental character built of rough stone with freestone dressings veranda &c containing 4 rooms"<sup>62</sup>.

The 1856 map does not show a building at this location (this part of the estate is not visible in Fig. 28 but is included on the full map held in W&SHC) but the

<sup>62</sup> W&SHC 173/61 Catalogue for the sale of *The Lackham estate in the county of Wilts 1864*

lodge is clearly visible in 1864. This puts the date of its construction between these two years.

This appears to indicate that the Lodge was constructed, like the Back Drive, by Henry Berney Caldwell. It is interesting to note above the front door to the Lodge a painted crest (Fig. 30) which fits the blazon for the Caldwell family of "Staffs, London and Worcs"<sup>63</sup>. The date of this crest is not known.

The Lodge retains most of its original external features, although the fine chimney stacks that are seen in a photograph <sup>64</sup>from the mid 1960's have gone, it is believed they were unsafe and were removed.



Fig. 32 Crest above the back door of "The Ornamental Lodge" <sup>65</sup> \*\*

The Front Drive had been straightened, passing north of the clumps of trees it had gone between only 8 years earlier, almost following its current line. Plucking Grove (the woodland north of the drive) had been extended. It is likely that the Balustrading at the eastern end of Plucking Grove, which allows the only view of the River Avon from any of the drives, was constructed at the same time.

<sup>63</sup> Fairburn, revised by Butler, L (1986) *Crests of Families of Great Britain and Ireland* New Orchard ISBN 1 85709 155 4 p 92 a cock's head, between wings expanded argent combed and wattled gules in beak a cross formee fitchet or

<sup>64</sup> I gratefully acknowledge the invaluable assistance given to me by the 2002 owners of the Ornamental Lodge, Mr and Mrs Wills; and for bringing the features discussed here to my attention

<sup>65</sup> May 2002, © Tony Pratt

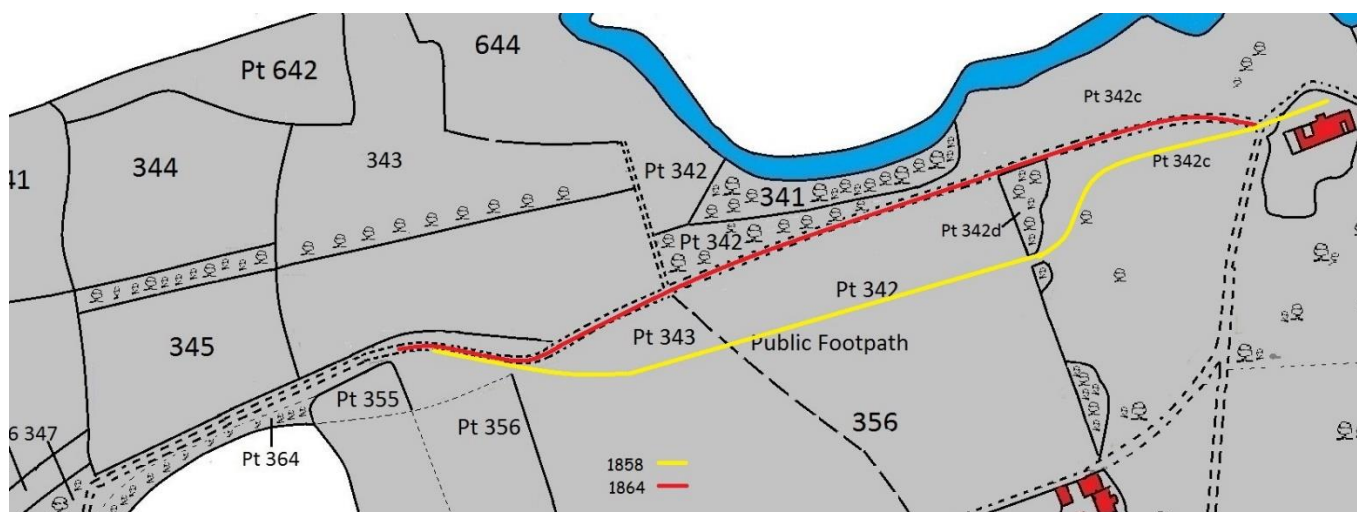


Fig. 33 Excerpt from the 1864 map showing the 1856 and 1864 driveways \*\*

A description of the interior of the house is given on the sale notice for the 1866 sale

*The interior accommodation of the mansion is as follows An enclosed portico entrance or vestibule conducting to a spacious paved hall of about 27ft by 19 ft on either side of which are a capital dining room about 27ft by 22ft; an elegant double drawing room about 31ft by 23ft and 27ft by 21ft, handsomely decorated; a library about 27ft by 21ft, a magistrates room, a billiard room, bath room, &c, 18 large and lofty sleeping apartments, with dressing rooms, and spacious domestic offices; with lawns, pleasure grounds, conservatories and vineries, walled garden, melon pit &c; excellent stabling for nine horses, coach houses, and out-offices, enclosed in a court-yard.<sup>66</sup>*

However the 1864 catalogue was able to go into much more useful detail and gives a very complete description of the House and associated buildings; the "capital dining room" had

*an ornamental cornice and ceiling black and gold marble chimney piece and mahogany doors and;*

the double drawing room had been decorated by Charles & Co of Great Castle Street with

<sup>66</sup> WANHS library ref 16.278



*ornamental cornices and ceiling with white and gold enrichments a handsome carved statuary marble chimneypiece in each and mahogany doors*

The library was "*fitted with a double iron repository in the wall between the windows and a variegated marble chimneypiece*".

A "*handsome modern staircase with ornamental brass balustrade and mahogany handrails*" gave access to "*four excellent bedrooms large and lofty, each being about 20 feet to 26 feet by 20 feet*" as well as two smaller rooms and closets. There was also a secondary (servants) staircase

The upper floor had 13 bedrooms, storage closets, a WC and gave access to the roof as well as a cistern for hot water from the kitchen boiler. The House water supply was contained in a "*spacious cistern supplying the house and grounds with abundance of pure water*" that was positioned above the whole of the third floor

The east wing held the "*domestic offices*", such as the Housekeeper's / Butler's room and store and a stone staircase led down to the Servant's hall with the Butler's Pantry and bedroom above it. *are in the* There was a kitchen and scullery and a washhouse underneath the laundry. Here also was located the dairy, the bakery and three servant's bedrooms. The eastern courtyard was "*partly roofed with corrugated iron*"

Underneath the entire house ran the cellars, which was stone paved and to keep the damp from the walls a dry area extended completely around the house at basement level.

The western wing was separated from the House by a courtyard (the Magistrate's room mentioned earlier had access directly into this courtyard) and housed the Stable department. On top of this wing there was, and still is - although now non-functioning - a turret clock. The stables had six loose boxes and three stalls, a double coach house with a loft above it. These buildings, the hay and straw storage and the tack room all opened onto a paved courtyard,,,, at the extreme western end of the complex, that was enclosed by folding gates.

The next owner to make changes to the house was Brig. Gen. George Llewellyn Palmer, who bought Lackham in 1893 for £17,562, from Lady Stapleton-

Bretherton, who did not make any changes that have been identified. Disappointingly no details from this sale are known and the estate map is not available.

However we are very fortunate to have a photograph of the interior of the house at the very start of George Llewellyn Palmer's ownership although it shows it when his tenant, Mrs Taylor, was living there.

It is very fortunate that this picture exists as most of what is shown was swept away very soon afterwards; George Llewellyn Palmer moved into Lackham in 1900 after making alterations. From the local paper it is known that the redevelopment was extensive and took almost an entire year



Fig. 34 The Drawing Room, Lackham House, 1895 \*\*  
(reproduced by kind permission of Daphne Damery)

*Mr G LI Palmer intends to remove from Springfields, Trowbridge, to Lackham between Chippenham and Lacock .. In January of this*

*year the house was handed over to builders and so extensive are the alterations that the interior of the building has been almost completely remodelled [sic]. The house is lighted throughout by electricity, even in the cellars and outbuildings, and altogether about 330 lamps are provided while hot water pipes are laid throughout.*<sup>67</sup>

Some of the plans for this work are available in W&SHC which provide a wealth of detail, not only of the construction but also of what was there previously. As mentioned above, George Llewellyn Palmer put the glass roof over the courtyard between the eastern block and the main house, to form a covered work area.

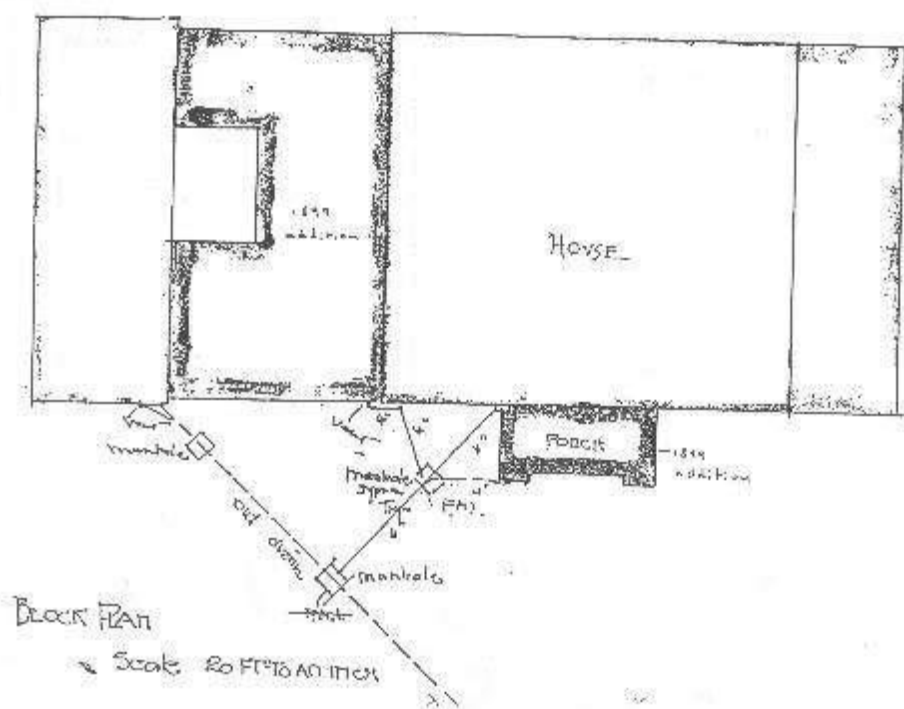


Fig. 35 Architectural plan for the 1899 development \*\*

A new servants' hall, a dairy extending into the first floor and a new kitchen facility were built in the newly covered area. The plans show where existing walls were to be removed and thus some idea of the original layout of the building can be gained. The building was extensively remodelled, to give the

<sup>67</sup> Wiltshire Times 20 Dec 1900, cutting in Kite, E (undated) *Pedigrees of Wiltshire* [mss] vol II WANHS Library

basic structure seen today, although further modifications have since been made.

Fig. 34 shows the ground floor of the area, Fig. 35 the first floor

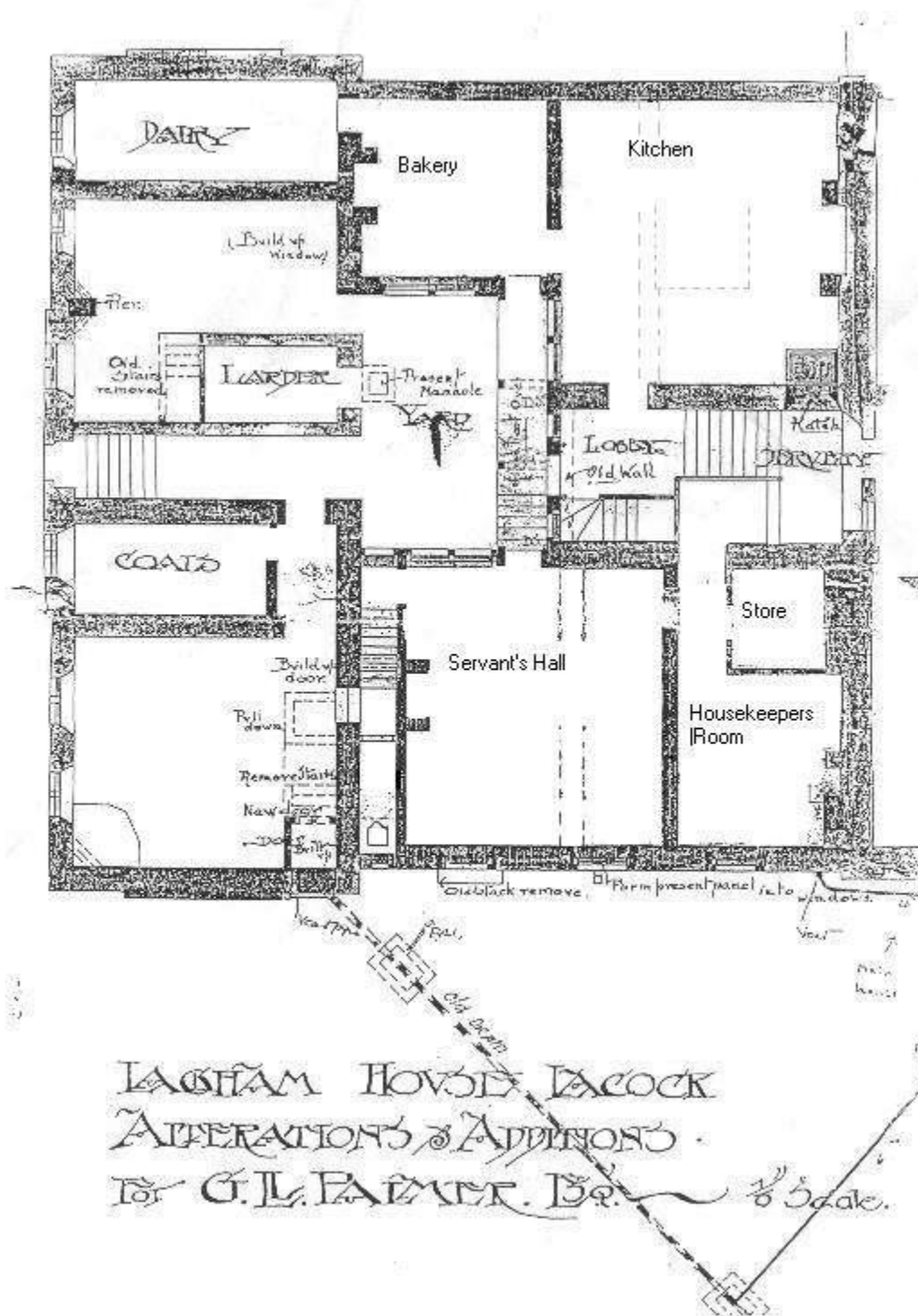


Fig. 36 Ground floor plan 1899 \*\*

During remodelling work in 2012 the floor of the old Dairy area was removed and the original tiled floor was revealed xxx

Changes were made to the first floor of the eastern block making bedrooms. It is likely these were for servants and it is probable that there was a direct connection between the Servants' Hall and the east end block. This may be why the Servants' Hall is shown elevated (Fig. 36)

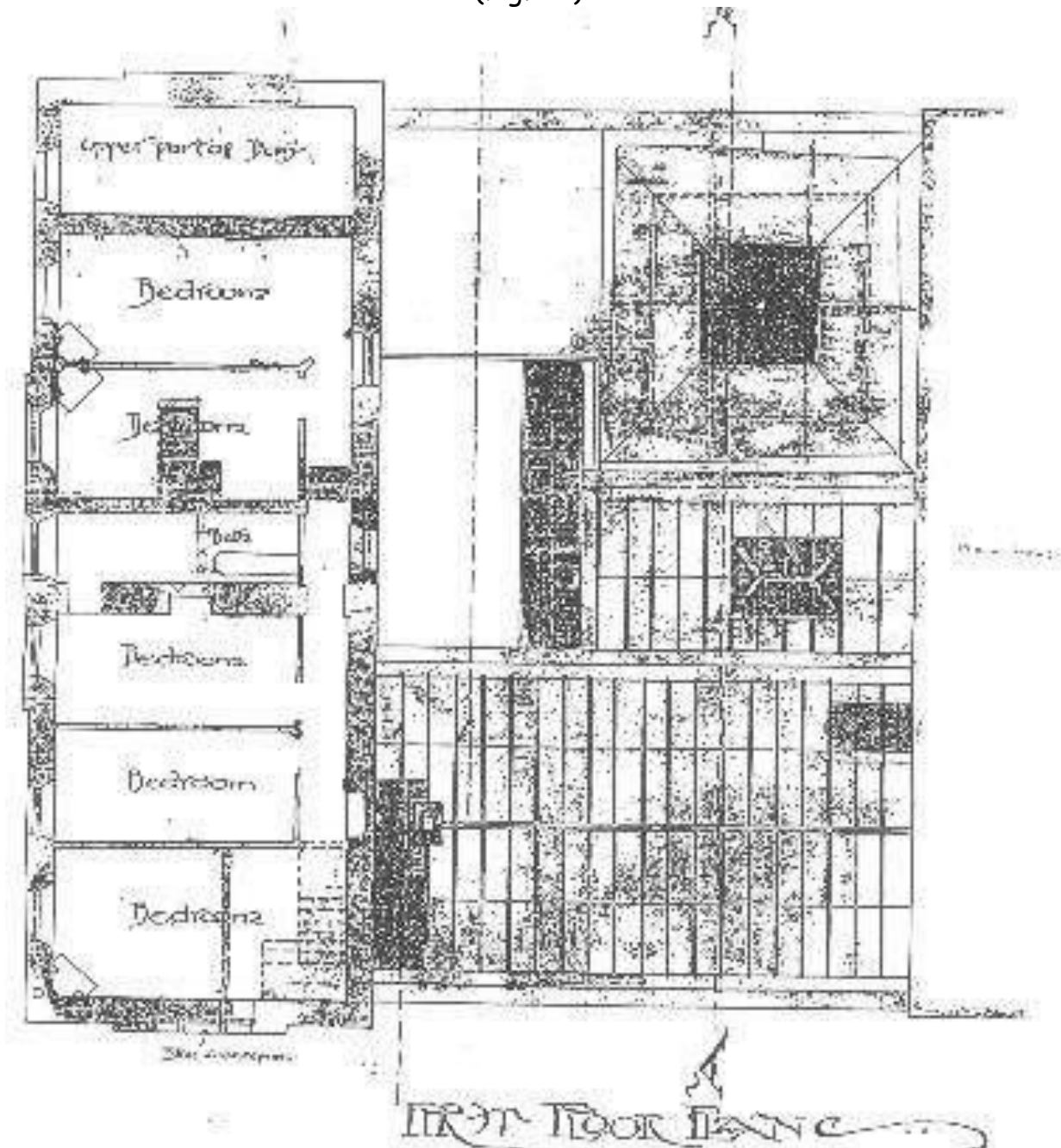


Fig. 37 First floor plan 1899 \*\*



If the plan shown in Fig. 33 and the photograph of the area (Fig. 23) are manipulated to align the two figures (Fig. 362, below) an exact correspondence can be seen between the plan and the location of the first floor windows

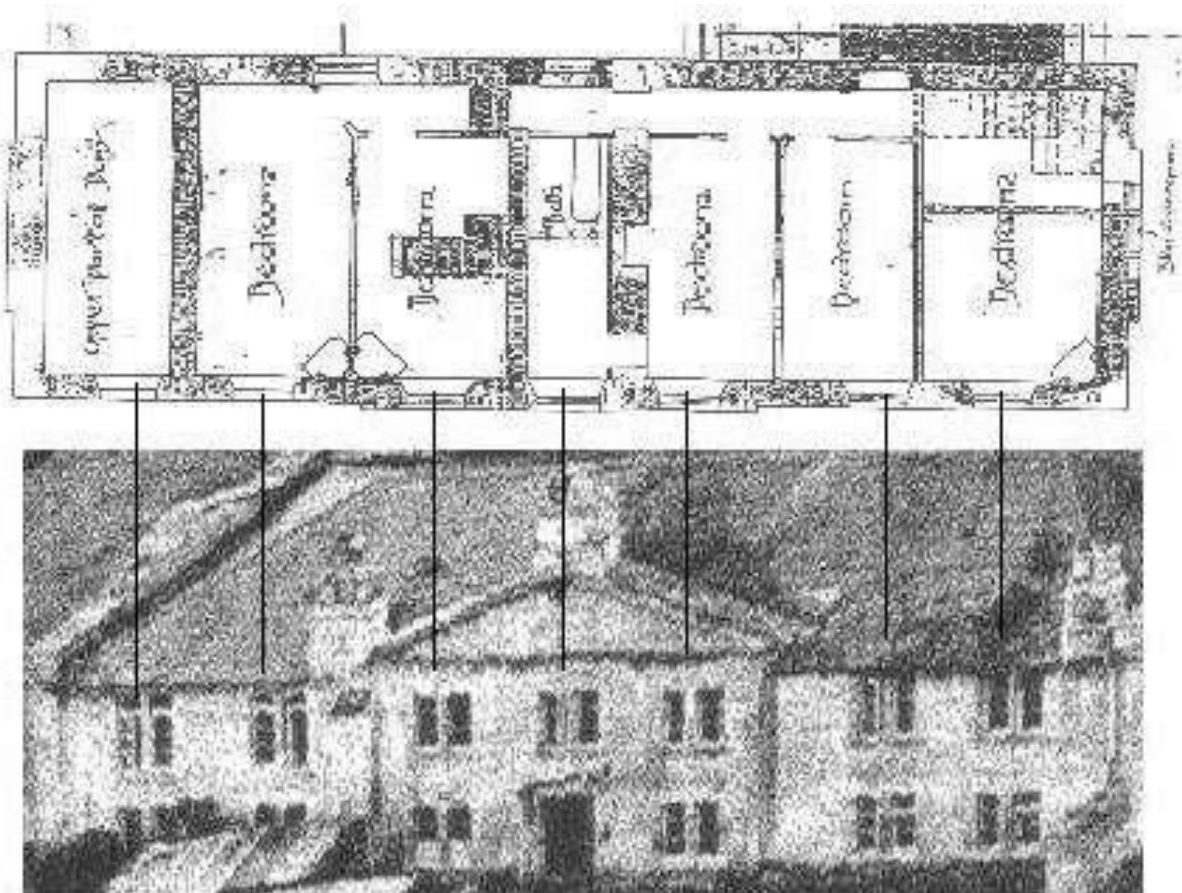


Fig. 38 . Comparison of photograph of the existing East block and the plan for the 1899 first floor plan <sup>68</sup> \*\*

The plans for the 1899 developments also have a cross section through the new building (Fig. 37) running through the Servants' Hall and the dairy, in the glassed area between the East End block and the House.

<sup>68</sup> There is some distortion in this image, a result of the skewing necessary to align the two illustrations, this does not affect the conclusion drawn

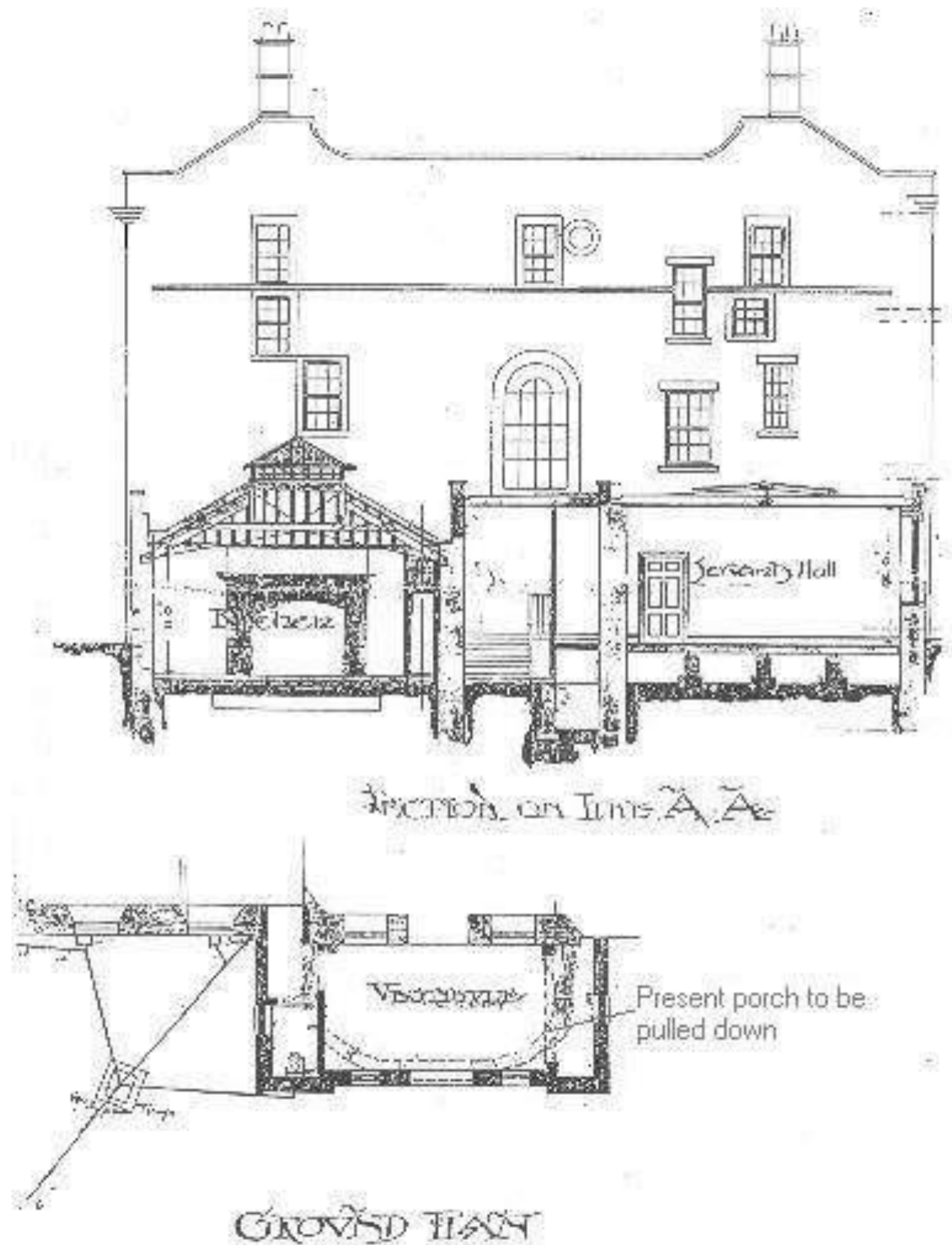


Fig. 39 Elevation plan 1899 \*\*

From this plan it is seen that the current Porch replaced the original oval structure, seen on the 1838 Tithe map ("a" on [Fig. 19](#))

The OS map for 1886 shows the same arrangement of drives as today, with the Front Drive running straight across the front (northern side) of the House, and the Back Drive joining it immediately west of the front of the House. There is a carriage pull-around, but whether there was a hedge as there is today is unknown.

The OS maps clearly show the change in the floor plan of Lackham House due to the 1899 building.

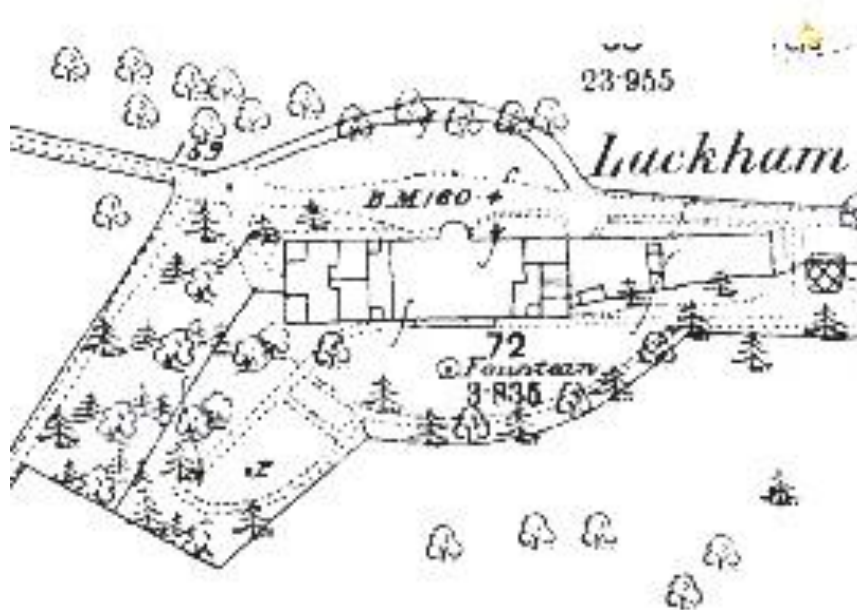


Fig. 40 Lackham House 1886, before the building work <sup>69</sup> \*\*  
(if visiting from below [click here](#) to return)

From this map the only clear information about the layout of the Walled Garden before modern times is found; the entrance to the garden appears to have been by the door in the north western corner. The map does not indicate any opening in the northern wall and none of the internal paths are shown connecting with it or the south wall. The layout of four quarter beds is very traditional and indeed is the arrangement seen in a photograph of c1950.

<sup>69</sup> Reproduced by kind permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Ordnance Survey

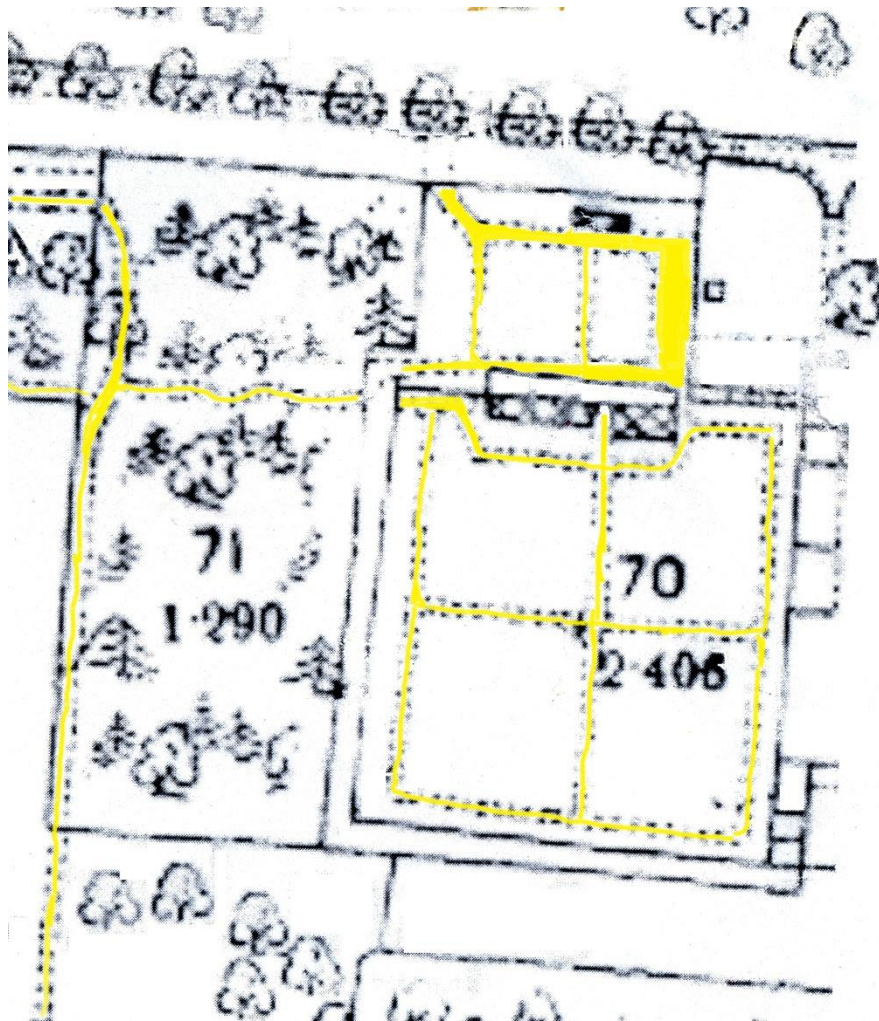


Fig. 41 Walled Garden (1886 OS map excerpt) \*\*

Although not specifically shown it is possible that the paths in front of the green houses detour around the "melon pits" mentioned in the 1864, or this may be an area of frames. If so they might have been there to help control the growth of grape vines inside the greenhouses. catalogue were

The 1886 map clears up a question that has been unanswered for some time - was the fountain that is such a feature of the Top terrace today part of the original gardens or bought in when the terraces were built. It is impossible to say that it is the same fountain but a fountain is clearly seen on the 1886 map. As the fountain now in place is stylistically even earlier than that, indeed mid eighteenth century or earlier it is very possible that it did come out of the gardens of the original house.



Fig. 42 Lackham House 1926,<sup>70</sup> \*\*

What is even more obvious are the terraces, constructed by George Llewellyn Palmer between 1900 and 1904 (the attributable date of the first image of them currently known, see [Fig. 42](#) below ).

There is a photograph which shows the ha-ha still in position, the line of old dry stone walling just visible in the bottom right of the picture. Thus the photograph must be later than 1899, although probably not much later.

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<sup>70</sup> Reproduced by kind permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Ordnance Survey





Fig. 43 Lackham House c 1900 from the south west <sup>71</sup> \*\*

The terraces are shown in a series of postcards <sup>72</sup> produced very soon after they were constructed, but at least a year later based on the plant growth to be seen. The images themselves are not dated but the earliest postmark is 1904, and indeed the date July 23<sup>rd</sup> 1904 is clearly written on the front, so the terraces must predate this.

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<sup>71</sup> Reproduced by kind permission of Chippenham Museum and Heritage Centre

<sup>72</sup> All cards reproduced here are held in the author's collection



Fig. 44 Postcard dated 1904 \*\* (if visiting from above [click here](#) to return)

The hedge to the west of the terraces, which blocks off the terraced area from view from the Back Drive may have already been in existence before the terraces were constructed; certainly a fence or hedge that follows the same line is clearly shown on the OS map of 1886 ([Fig. 39](#))

The path running alongside the hedge cut across what is now the western end of the terraces and the angled face of the pillar here is explained by the line of this path. The white object in the bottom left hand corner of [Fig. 42](#) was unidentified until the author visited Powis Castle <sup>73</sup> and saw their mobile garden seats from the same period.

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<sup>73</sup> To attend a HBGBS masterclass on "Garden Archaeology", supported by a staff development grant from Wiltshire College and an HBGBS bursary 2008



Fig. 45 Edwardian mobile garden benches : left from 1904 postcard, right photo taken at Powis Castle \*\*

In October 2004 a broken pipeline resulted in diesel oil contaminating the area east and south of the terraces and the ha-ha. Rapid excavation of the affected areas was carried out to avoid contamination of the River Avon, and this gave a unique opportunity to investigate the construction of the ha-ha and the terraces <sup>74</sup>.

Examination of the cross section of the ha-ha ditch showed that it was originally some 50cm deeper than it was before excavation, that the original width at the top was 1.1 metres and 75 cm at the base, which was gently curved. Figure 6 (over) shows the ha-ha ditch excavated. The drainage pipe at the bottom of the ditch is probably original and put in place at the time of construction; there as no indication in the section that the ditch infill has been disturbed by pipe laying post construction and subsequent silting of the ditch.

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<sup>74</sup> This section is partially taken from Pratt, T (2005) *A note on the late Victorian terraces at Lackham, Wiltshire , and their relation to an earlier garden feature* Monograph mss report in Wiltshire College Lackham Library. It also appears in Pratt T (2005) *The Manor of Lackham - its owners and some historical connections* Appendix 3 pp212 - 221



This photograph <sup>75</sup>shows the ditch just north of the bridge connecting the Sundial garden to the Anniversary garden to the east of Lackham House.



Fig. 46 Cross section of ha-ha ditch \*\*

The facing wall of the ha-ha is made of dry stone. The excavation revealed that this went some 40 cms below the base of the ditch. The lower two layers of stone are 5cm wider than the rest of the wall, and rests directly on the underlying clay (below).

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<sup>75</sup> © Tony Pratt 2005

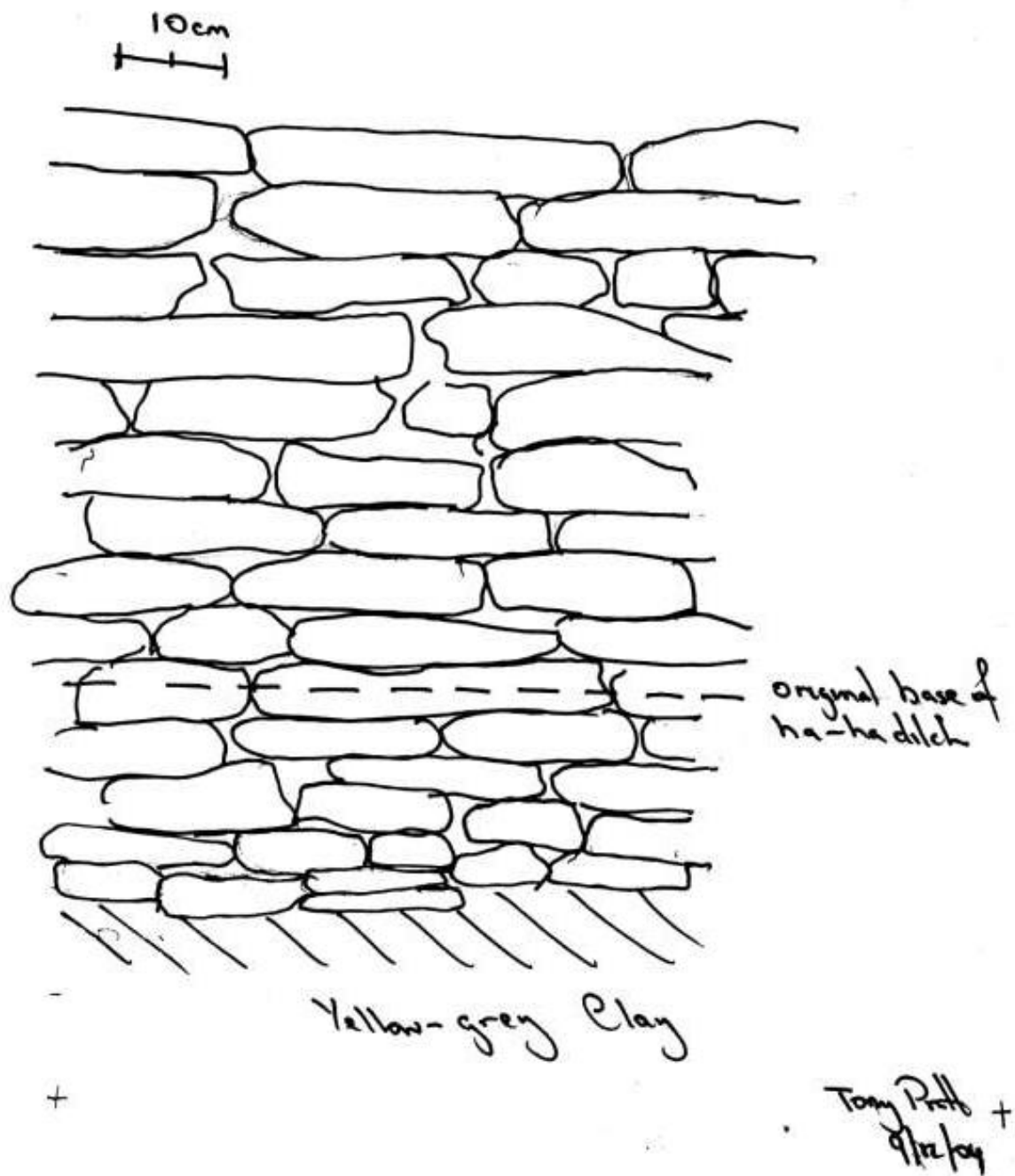


Fig. 47 Transverse section of ha-ha \*\*

The line of the ha-ha, if plotted onto the terrace map, reveals how far the terraces over run the line of the ha-ha.





Fig. 48 Terrace and ha-ha (dashed line) <sup>76</sup> \*\*

The profile of the terraces reveals a totally different construction method ( Fig. 47 below).

Here a layer of concrete, which is dark in colour and appears to include fire clinker and small rounded pebbles, was used as a foundation. It varies in depth, in the sections exposed it ranged between 5 cms and 16 cms. On top of this there are two layers of red brick laid in English bond and the blocks of the terrace walls are placed on top of the bricks. These blocks are mortared. The transverse section in Fig. 47 shows the ornamental relief of the terraces, commonly found on terraces in the area.

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<sup>76</sup> Based on material reproduced by kind permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Ordnance Survey

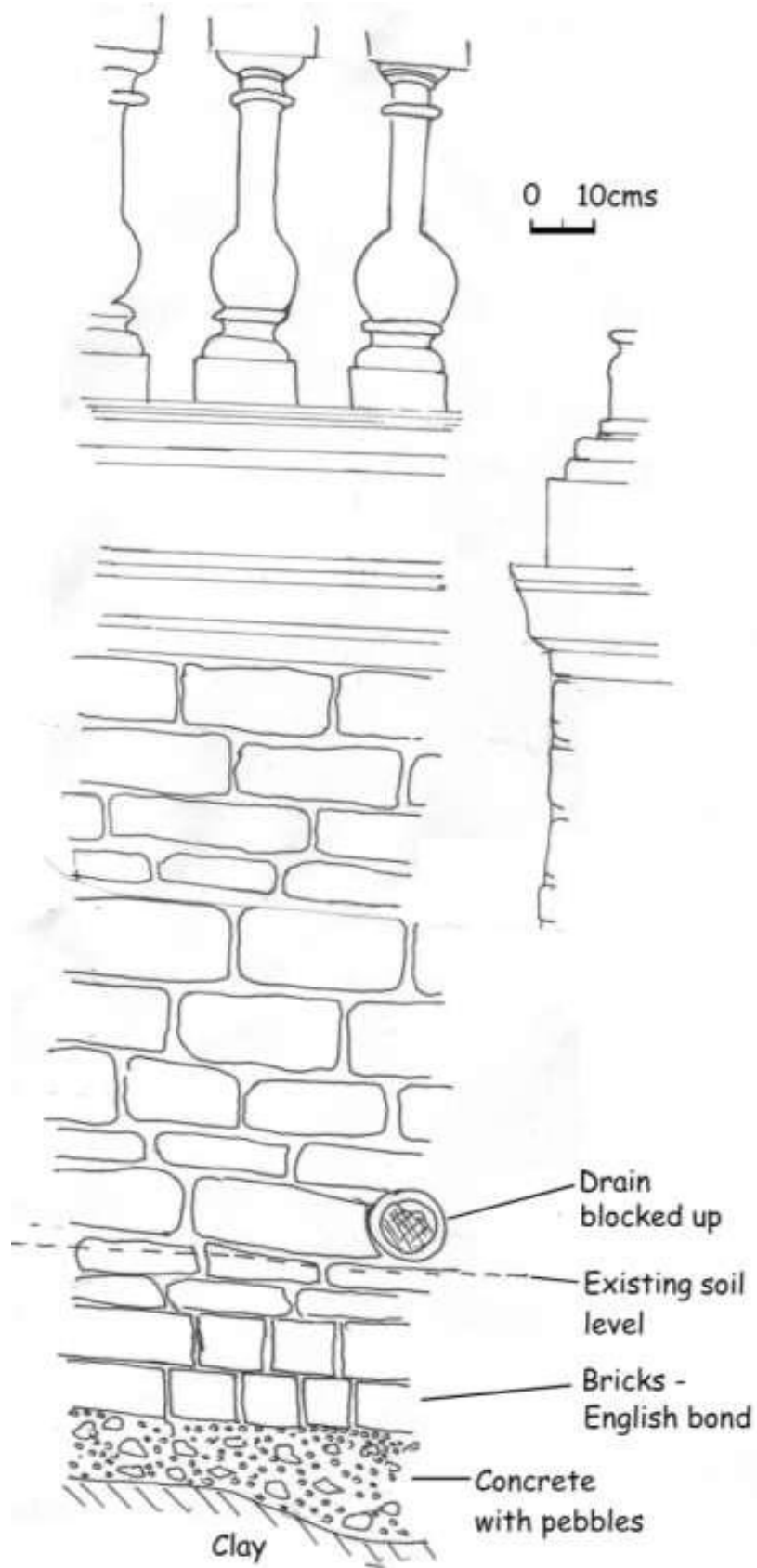


Fig. 49 Transverse section of Terrace \*\*

There are two terraces at Lackham. Figure 44 shows a section through these and the sundial garden to the ha-ha ditch <sup>77</sup>(A-A on the inset plan).

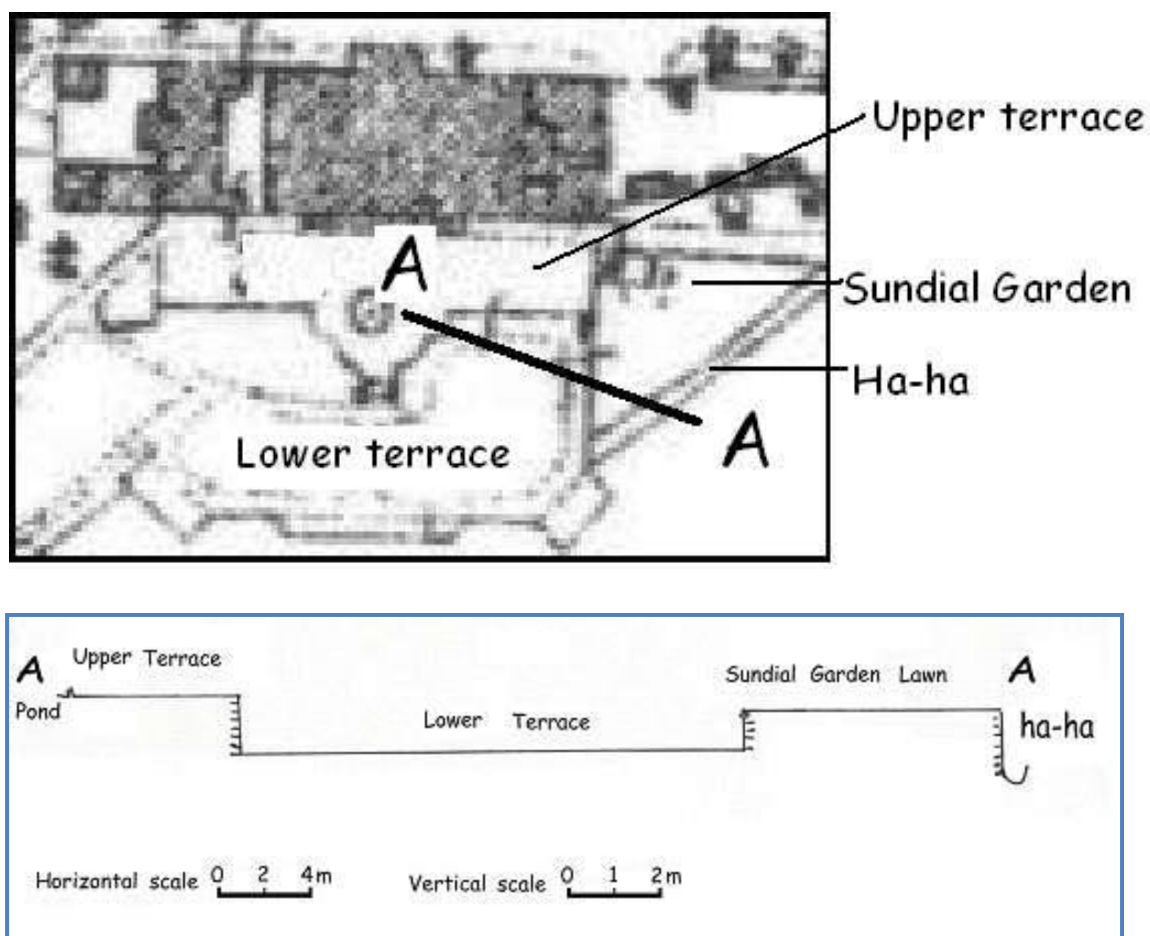


Fig. 50 Relative levels of Upper and Lower Terrace and Sundial Garden \*\*

From the relative heights the construction sequence can be worked out; the walls of the lower terrace were constructed first and the lower terrace was then made by cutting into the slope behind towards the house, a classic "cut and fill" operation. The lower terrace is 60cm below the level of the Sundial garden, and so this amount of soil was taken out from the top of the ha-ha. It has not been possible to excavate along the line of the ha-ha under the lower terrace to see exactly what was done (it is hoped this may prove possible at some time) and so it is not known whether the dry stone facing of the ha-ha was removed prior

<sup>77</sup> Levelling survey carried out December 2004. My thanks to my colleagues Francis Greaves (Garden Trainee 2004-2005) and Monica Ashman (Horticultural Technician) for their assistance in completing this survey

to terrace construction. It is possible it was retained as the stability of the ground behind the wall might be questionable. Whether the facing wall was removed or not, the soil removed from the cutting was then used to infill the lower areas behind the terrace wall and form the level surface of the lower terrace. It is noted that the original level of the lawns south of the house would only have dropped to that now only seen at the top of the remaining ha-ha. The creation of the lower terrace has made it seem as if the original lawns were steeply raked, which was not the case, having only a gentle slope.

The creation of the lower terrace would have given a vertical face on the northern side, and the retaining wall of the upper terrace could then be constructed. This terrace wall rises 1.04m above the level of the lower terrace. It is not known how deep the foundations are but it would seem likely that they are of similar depth to that of the outer walls. The upper terrace was then levelled.

At the western end of the Lower terrace the lawns are less than level, they rise into a considerable hump and it clear that the slop down from the upper terrace on the western side of the steps, and the northern side of the east lawn on the lower terrace are that original ground level; the terrace makers didn't level this area at all and utilised the original slopes.

The circular fountain on the upper terrace is clearly visible in a postcard dated 1907 <sup>78</sup>,

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<sup>78</sup> Kindly made available by the generosity of Andrew Davies, previously Museum Curator, Lackham Museum of Agriculture & Rural Life



Fig. 52 Postcard dated 1910 by postmark \*\*

Terraces such as those at Lackham are not uncommon in Wiltshire (Iford Manor<sup>79</sup>, Castle Combe Manor) but the opportunity to investigate their construction does not arise very often. The relationship seen at Lackham, with an extant earlier boundary feature, is less common.

George Llewellyn Palmer made more changes in 1902 when he moved the stables from their old location to the west of the main house to a custom built stable block east of the walled garden. The old stable area was then converted to a small chapel and servant's quarters.

George Llewellyn Palmer was a keen huntsman, indeed he was a founder of the Avon Vale Hunt, which frequently met at Lackham. In 1902 George built a brand new stable block on the east side of the Walled Garden, the stables themselves used the garden's east wall as one of their walls. The pillars at the entrance the Stable Yard have his initials and the date

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<sup>79</sup> Interestingly Iford Manor was owned by Capt. Rooke's oldest son, William Wallace Rooke, the painter of the 1849 picture of Lackham House but it was Harold Pito who installed the terracing there.



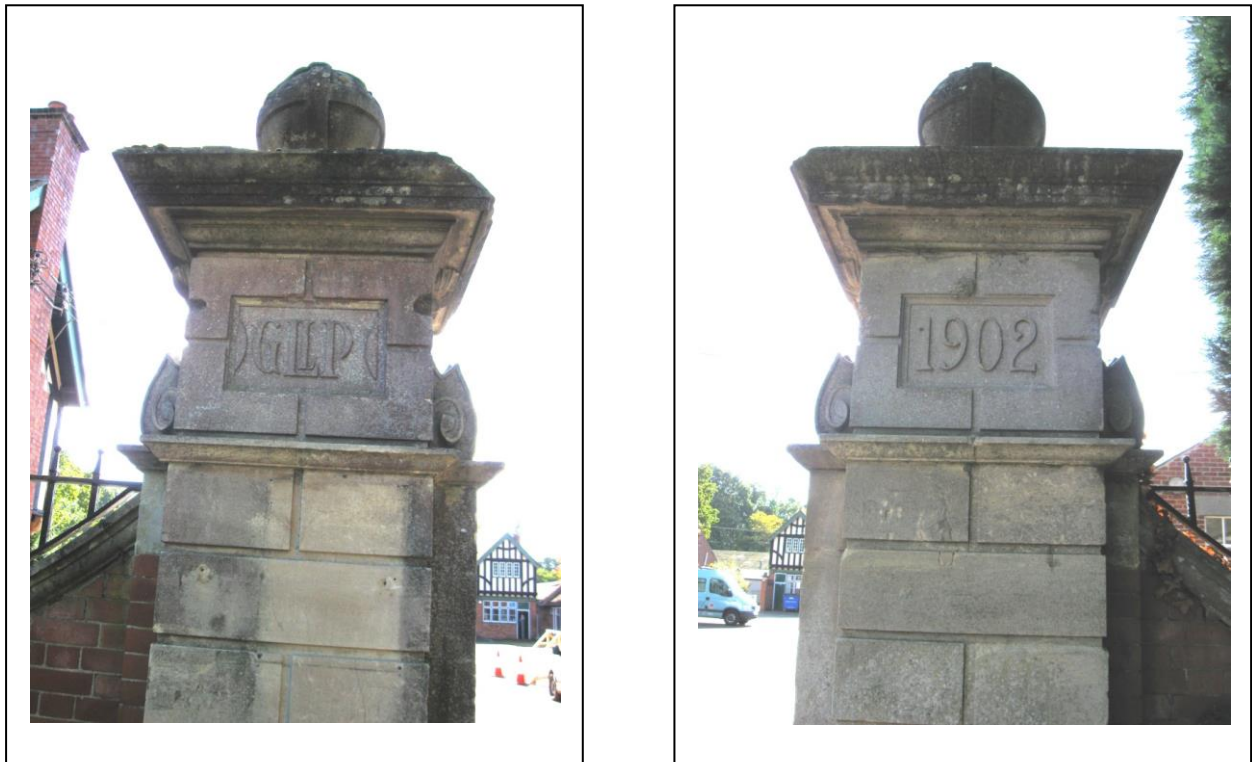


Fig. 52 Entrance pillars to the Stable Yard \*\*

A substantial building, housing the Head Groom and the Groom's Bothy was constructed on the southern side, with a clock tower, and an estate house in the north eastern corner. At the same time the Gardner's Bothy was built along the north eastern wall of the Garden.

The Stable staff were photographed early in the century, the date is not known but 1905 has been suggested for this image. Only one person in this photograph has so far been identified; the young man (probably about 17 or 18 years of age) standing third from the left is Charles Henry Maslen.<sup>80</sup> He married in 1908, when he was still at Lackham but was no present on Census night in 1911.

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<sup>80</sup> My thanks to Mr and Mrs Briggs for their kind permission to use the photograph and for information on Mr. Maslen.



Fig. 53 Grooms at Lackham c1905 <sup>81</sup> \*\*

Another photograph of the Stable Yard staff, taken at the same time, shows the Stable Yard Bothy in the background, which doesn't look very different from the view today. There have been some changes, the double doors on the east end of the block have been replaced, for example

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<sup>81</sup> Photograph copyright Mr and Mrs Briggs. Taken by JJ Hunt, the Studio, Calne.



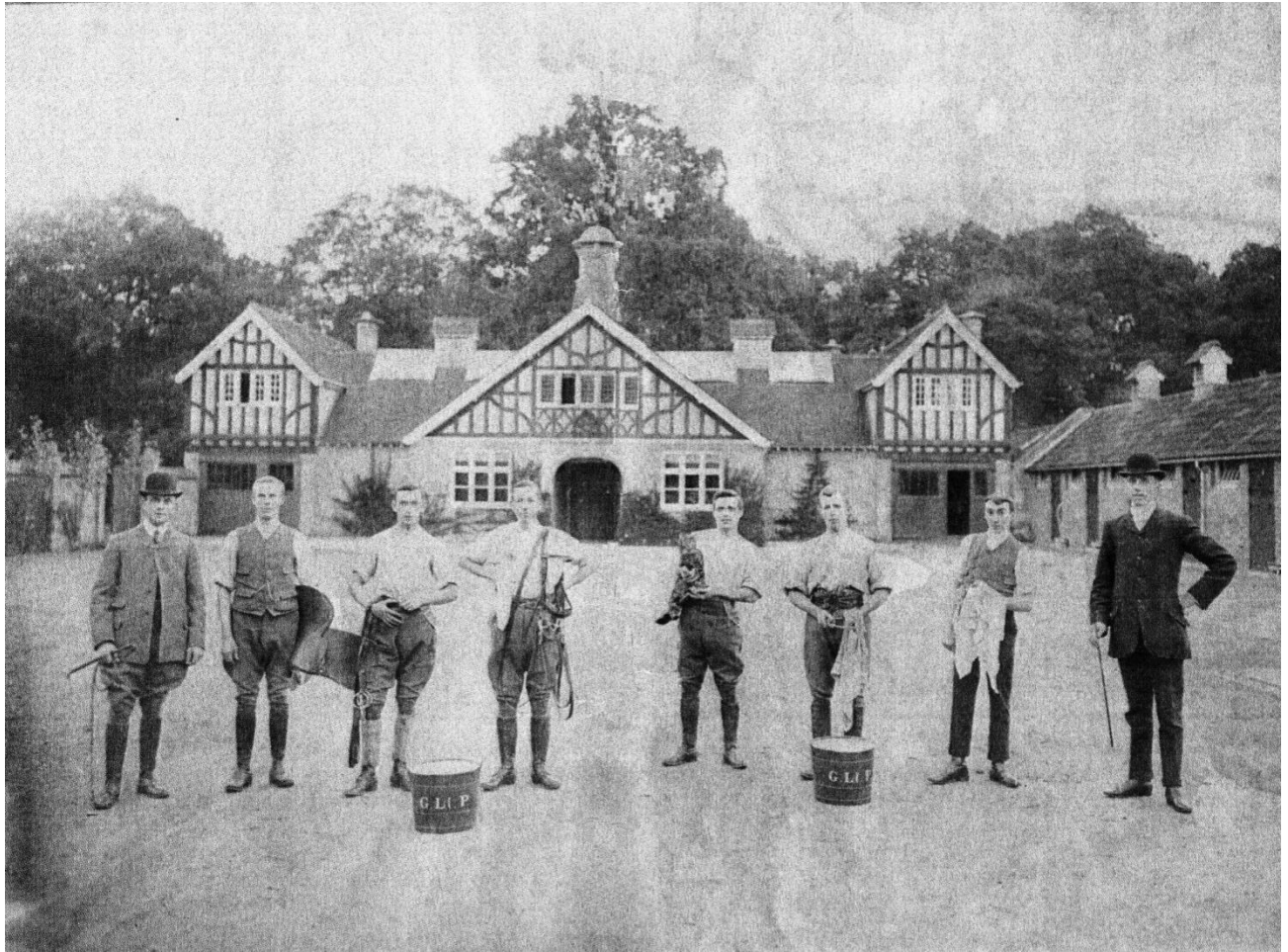


Fig. 54 Stable Staff c 1905 showing Stable Bothy \*\*

The double doors at the west end of the Bothy, however, are still in place and show that they were fitted with the wonderful cast iron hinges originally patented by Charles Collinge from those invented by his father, John <sup>82</sup> (although by the time these doors were put in place Charles was long since dead)

<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> [http://www.charlescollingehinges.com/charlescollingehinges.com/latest\\_discoveries.html](http://www.charlescollingehinges.com/charlescollingehinges.com/latest_discoveries.html)

<sup>83</sup> My very sincere thanks to my colleague, Patrick Taylor, Estates and Services, Wiltshire College Lackham, who made me aware of the importance of these hinges when he was renovating the doors [Autumn 2010] and for sharing the results of his own careful research.



Fig. 55 a) Collinge hinge in place on the doors a) before renovation



and b) afterwards \*\*

These hinges were "extensively adopted, especially in turnpike gates, where their neatness, efficiency, and durability, have established them almost a an indispensable appendage" <sup>84</sup> however they had a wide range of applications. More relevantly, perhaps, they were considered to be

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<sup>84</sup> Herbert, L (1836) *The engineer's and mechanic's Encyclopaedia* Vol 1 p675

*One of the best hinges for gates and external heavy doors, to coach-houses, stables, etc., is Collinge's spherical gate hinge, shown at H in Fig. 178, made on the cup-and-ball principle, the cup being on the post or pier and the ball-shaped pin on the gate strap. It will be noticed that the pin has a projecting lip, fitted with a leather washer to exclude water and dirt from the cup, which is filled with oil. These hinges are extremely durable and easy in their working.<sup>85</sup>*

The genius of these hinges was that Collinge used a socket and ball arrangement, in effect the pin of the normal hinge was made

*Into a sphere over which a spherical cap fixed to the other limb of the hinge is made to fit accurately; this is provided with a cavity for the reception of oil, having a small perforation to conduct it between the two spherical surfaces, which work with great truth and freedom <sup>86</sup>*

This spherical cap is not usually very visible, but when the doors were repaired their construction could be clearly seen

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<sup>85</sup> Brown, WH [Internal Domestic Fittings](#) in Middleton, GAT (1921) *Modern Buildings, Their Planning, Construction And Equipment* Vol6 Ch XIV, section *Hinges*

<sup>86</sup> Herbert, L (1836) *The engineer's and mechanic's Encyclopaedia* Vol 1 p675





Fig. 56 Socket cap for Collinge hinge \*\*

Most of the Collingehinges extant have on them the name "Charles Collinge", a crown and a hammer; the ones at Lackham only have the word "Collinge and the crown moulding



Fig. 57 Features on the Lackham Collinge hinges \*\*

Collingehinges of exactly the same design as those seen at Lackham can be found in Walmer in Kent <sup>87</sup> and at the Horseshoe Barracks at Shoeburyness garrison in Essex <sup>88</sup>

Modern services were naturally put in place in the house but the dates for these are not known precisely; it is certain that the telephone was in place by 1907 <sup>89</sup>

The water supply from Fox Talbot's land on Naish Hill was mentioned in the sale catalogue above. In 1909 George <sup>90</sup> made a contract with Charles Henry Talbot of Lacock Abbey to take water from Taklemoor Wood on the high ground, east of Lackham.

Palmer paid £7 5s per annum, and the lease could only be terminated at the end of 7 or fourteen years - although if Palmer had really wanted to get out of it he could have just not paid; in this case, after three month's leeway, the lease was void. The damage to his reputation however might have been somewhat costly..... This was evidently the same supply that had been originally purchased by Captain Rooke in 1844 and for which new pipes were laid by Henry Caldwell in 1863

The map for the supply <sup>91</sup> shows that the water was

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<sup>87</sup> <http://www.flickr.com/photos/markdodds/4824424647/>

<sup>88</sup> <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dbullock/2171113571/>

<sup>89</sup> "During the afternoon of Sunday 27 April 1908 Lackham received a "telephonic communication" informing the Palmers that their son Michael had been found dead at his lodgings in London". *Death of Mr Michael Palmer* Wiltshire Times Sat 2 May 1908 vol LIII no 3009 p8. He was 23 years old

<sup>90</sup> W&SHC 44/1/16 dated March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1909

<sup>91</sup> W&SHC 44/1/16 redrawn, onto an excerpt of the 1901 1:2,500 OS map of the area, by the author

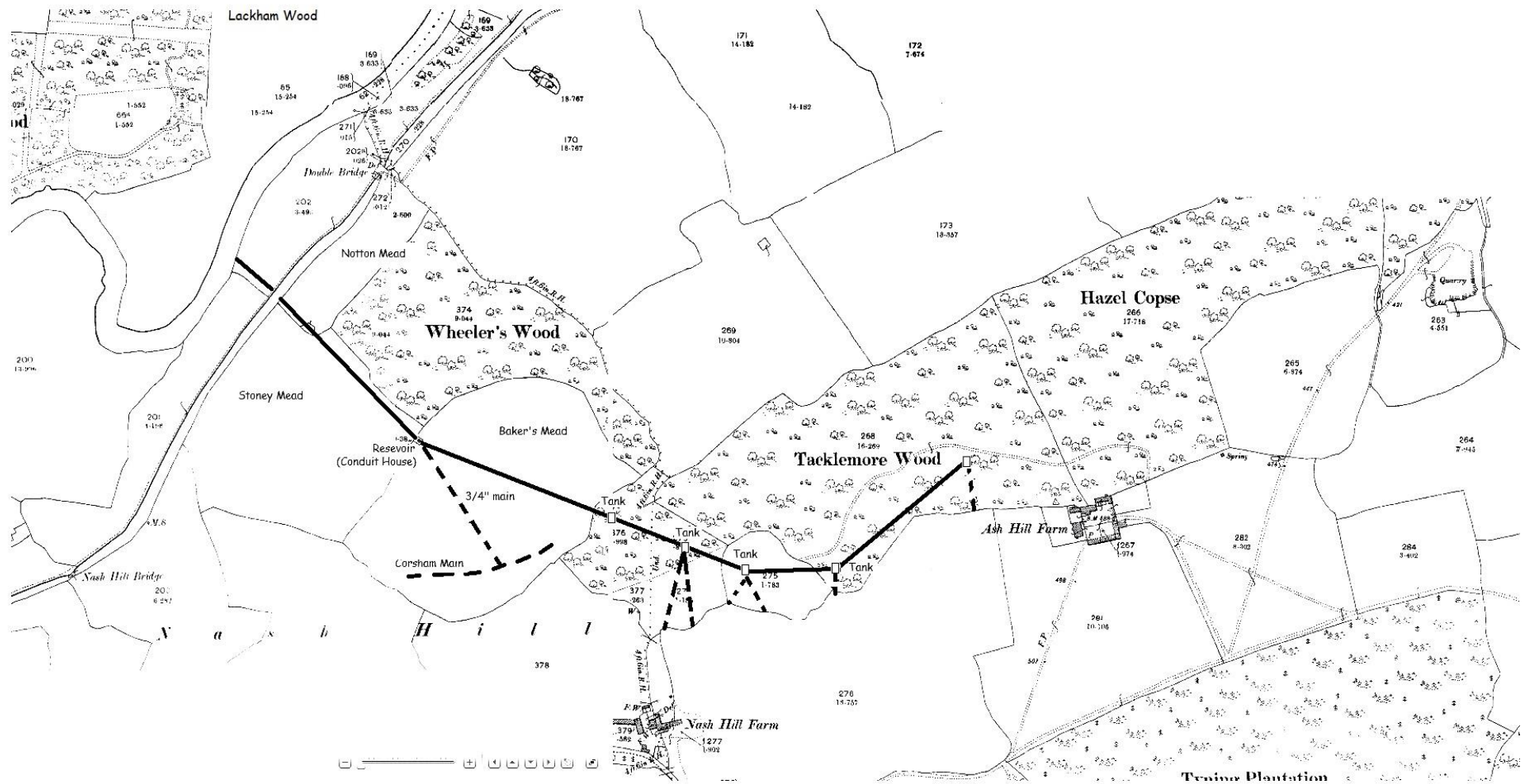


Fig. 58 Lackham's water supply pipeline on Naish Hill, as shown in 1906 \*\*

supplied via the reservoir, or "conduit house" on the western flank of Naish Hill. The course of the supply once off Talbot's land is not shown and there is no sign of the pipe at the location given today.

From the map for this agreement some of the field names on Naish Hill are known - Notton Mead, Stoney Mead and Cow Leaze

It has already been seen that Lackham had electricity installed in 1900, when the House supply was by a generator put in place and owned by the Electricity company. By 1910 the Chippenham Electric Supply Company was putting up poles and wires in the local area for power distribution. It is known where one of these early lines ran, over land that Palmer owned close to the Chippenham Workhouse (now the Hospital) in Rowden. George Palmer agreed to allow the electricity company "to erect and maintain wood or iron poles wires and appliances for the purpose of carrying electric overhead wires " <sup>92</sup>for an annual payment of 9shillings yearly payable, in advance, January. In 1916 he agreed to allow them to erect a tenth pole (shown in fig xx by the letter "A" just to the left of the "s" in the name Gypsy Lane) for a further shilling per year.

This is interesting, not only because it is a reasonably early example of this sort of agreement, at least locally, but also because it points out that Lackham owned land very close to the centre of Chippenham at this time.

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<sup>92</sup> W&SHC 44/1/16 agreement dated 7 Feb 1910



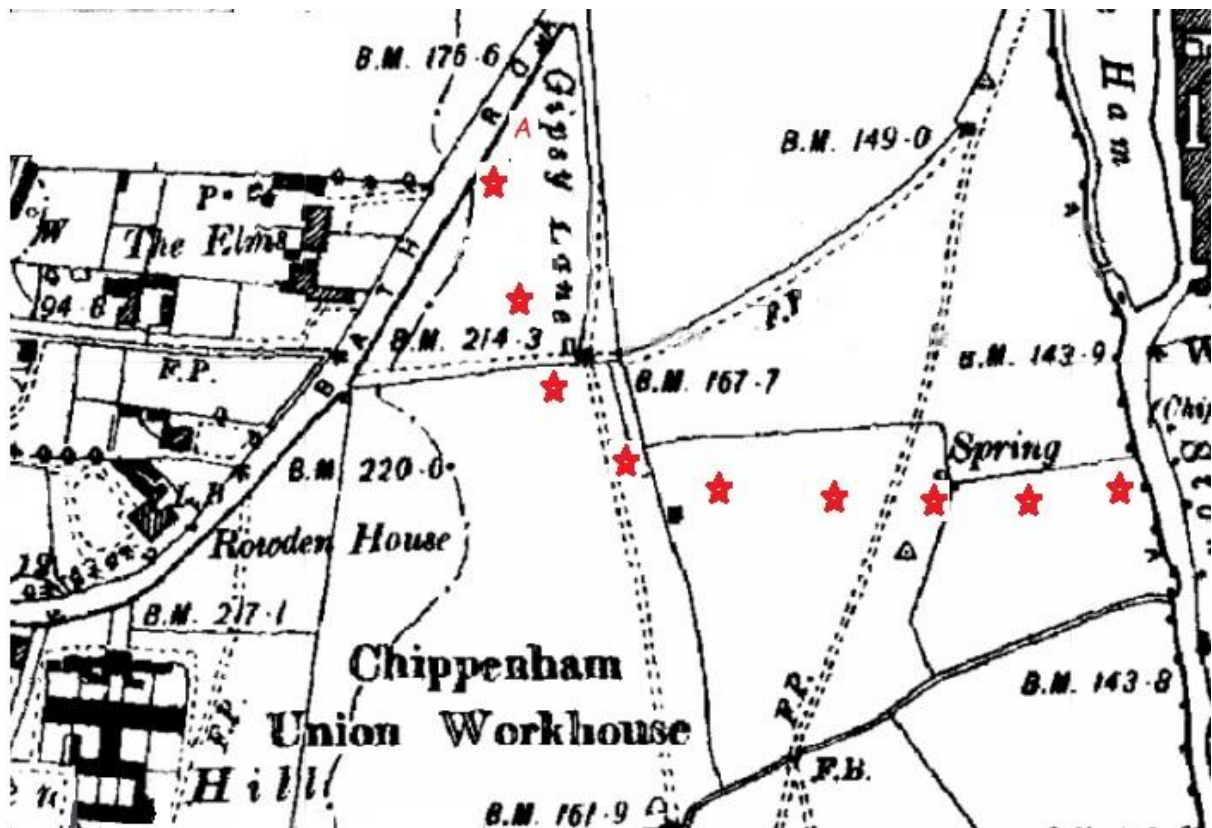


Fig. 59 Location of electricity poles 1910 <sup>93</sup> \*\*

Unfortunately no maps have been located between 1900 and 1926 but some interesting changes in the Walled Garden area are clear on the 1926 map. The clarity and detail of the 1926 map is far inferior to that of 1886, the interior pathways of the Garden are not shown, but can still be seen in the Garden now.

<sup>93</sup> The locations of the poles (the stars - red if seen online) have been taken, by the author, from the sketch map included in the agreement W&SHC 44/1/16 and put onto an extract from the 1901 OS map of the area



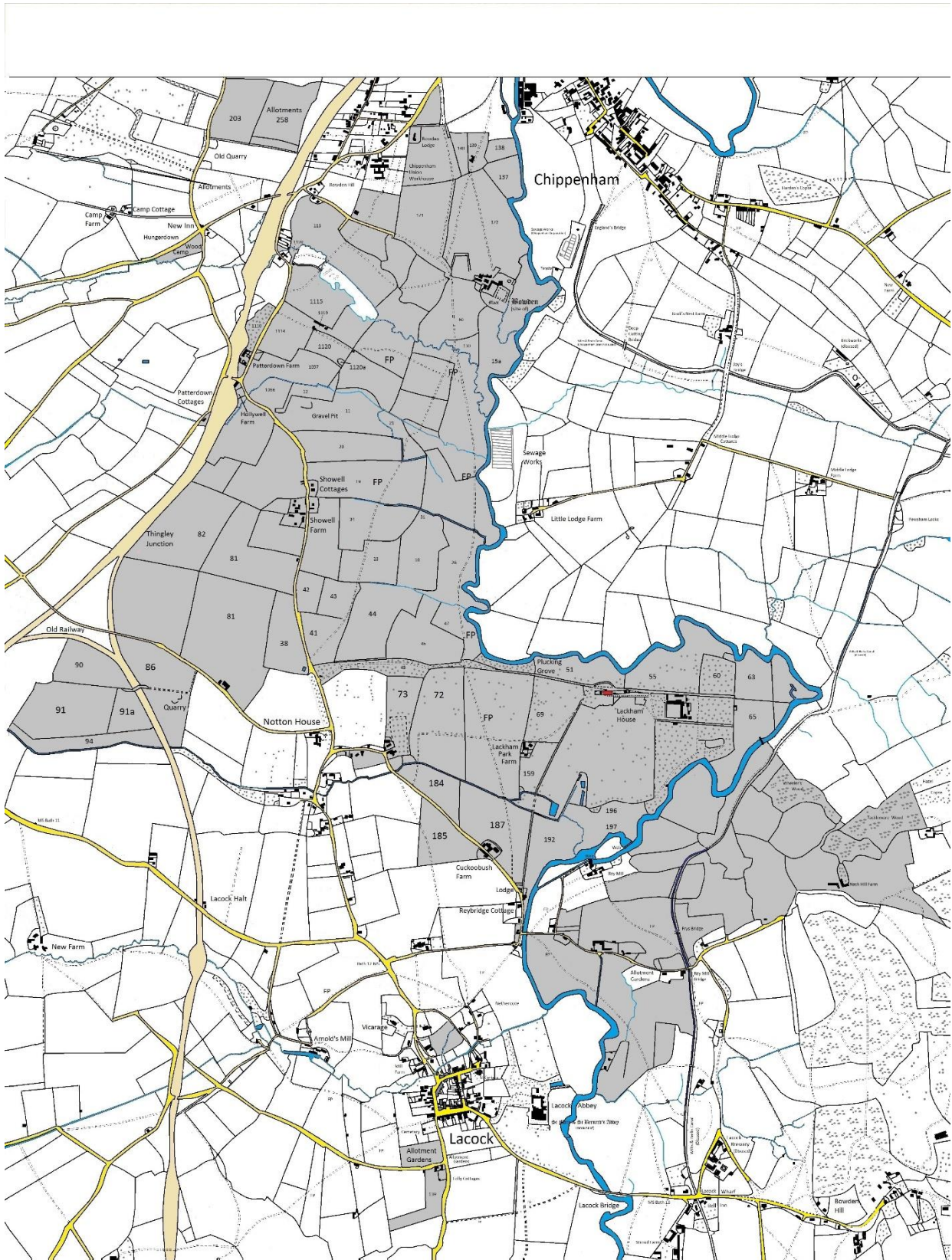


Fig 60 1921 Sale map \*\*

By 1921 the two large greenhouses had been added to, with four smaller blocks to the west of the larger houses. There is clearly a gate in the northern wall between the two larger houses.. Obviously the Gardener's Bothy and the buildings of the Stable Yard of 1902 are included here.

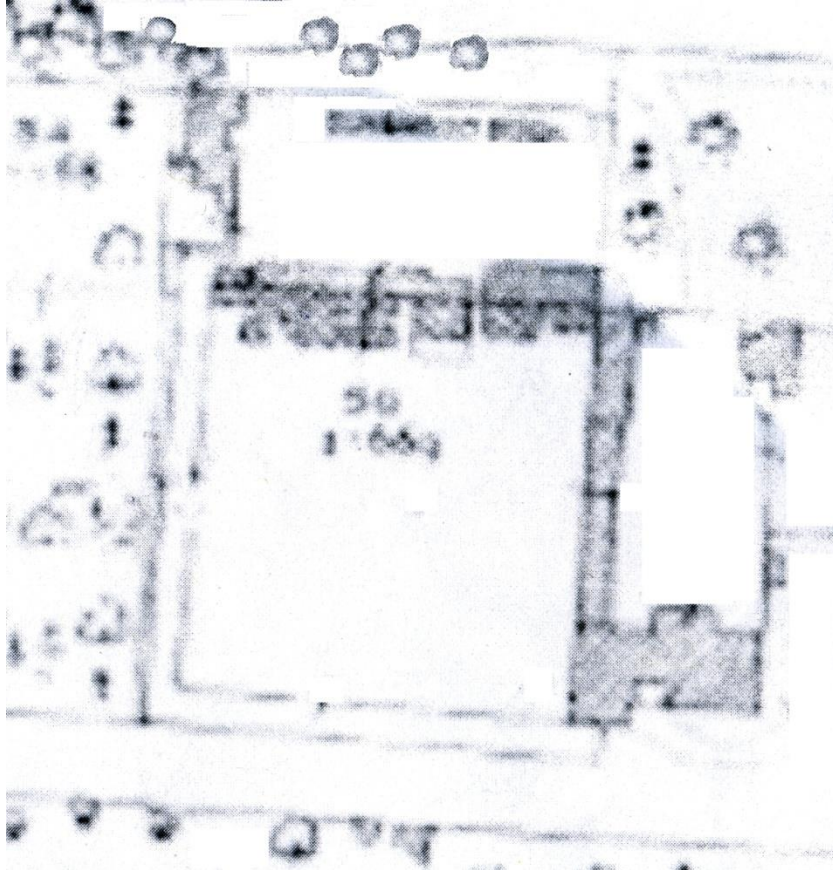


Fig. 61 Walled Garden /Stable Block 1926 OS map excerpt \*\*

Almost nothing is known of the interior of the house after 1895, but in 2002 small amounts of the Art Nouveau wallpaper that was used in the first floor rooms was uncovered.





Fig. 62 Art Nouveau (c 1910-20?) wallpaper from the first floor Lackham House (Photograph © Tony Pratt 2002) \*\*

During the Second World War (1939 - 45) the house was taken over by the United States Army and used for various military purposes, including being General Patton's headquarters in the United Kingdom. The room in the centre of the first floor on the south of the house was General Patton's rooms and the room where the wallpaper above was revealed, was the bathroom.

Lackham continued to be the property of the pre-war owner, Lt Col Holt, throughout the War but the House, cottages and gardens were requisitioned at a rate of £300 pa compensation plus £75pa for upkeep of the gardens. When the Butler's cottage was de-requisitioned the amount was reduced by £26 pa. Rent was paid separately for the land used for the Pillboxes on the estate, at 15s pa annum <sup>94</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> W&SHC f2/600/117/1 1945 - 1949 letter dated 21 June 46 ref DLA.51/1219/R

They didn't take control of all the estate, and maps held by Wiltshire College from the period indicate that the farms remained free (below). Lt Col Holt was paid an additional 10 shillings a year compensation for the land on which the 7 pillboxes guarding the estate stood. These must have been put in place when it was decided to use Lackham as Gen. Patton's HQ - similar estates locally that were also requisitioned do not have such features<sup>95</sup>.



Fig. 63 War Department areas of Lackham, the hatched lines indicate areas not solely WD land \*\*

An old servant who had worked on the estate all his life spoke of visits by Generals Patton and Eisenhower and how, immediately after 'D' Day, "the whole place became calm and desolate"<sup>96</sup>.

<sup>95</sup> For an in-depth investigation and survey of the pill boxes at Lackham see Pratt, T (2008) *The WWII hardened field defences of Lackham* copy in Wiltshire College Lackham library and online at [Pill boxes](#)

<sup>96</sup> From Thomas, JO (1984) *History of Agricultural Education in Wiltshire* Lackham College of Agriculture Part 1 p12. This book was transcribed by the current author in 2011 and is available online at [Agricultural Education](#). The original is held in the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre, Chippenham

After the invasion of Europe Lackham became a rehabilitation centre for wounded service personnel.

Lackham House almost lost its fine Hall panelling -In July 1945 Lt Col. Holt contacted the County Council, offering to buy the pine panelling in the entrance hallway of Lackham house "if the County Council desired to sell it and the price be reasonable"<sup>97</sup>.

Fortunately this offer was turned down; there is a pencil written note on Lt Col. Holt's letter, instructing

*The house is still requisitioned. I have spoken to the Secretary of the War Agricultural Committee who are to lease the property from the council and he says " do not remove panelling as it will make a dreadful mess and there is nothing to replace it with!"* <sup>98</sup>

After the war, the County Council purchased it to be the new County Agricultural Training facility. These all required substantial internal alterations to be made and, as the School of Agriculture developed, the construction of additional buildings.

The development of the College is not considered here but details up to the early 1970's are detailed in a book by the first County Council Principal of Lackham, Mr JO Thomas (Principal 1948 - 1970) <sup>99</sup>

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