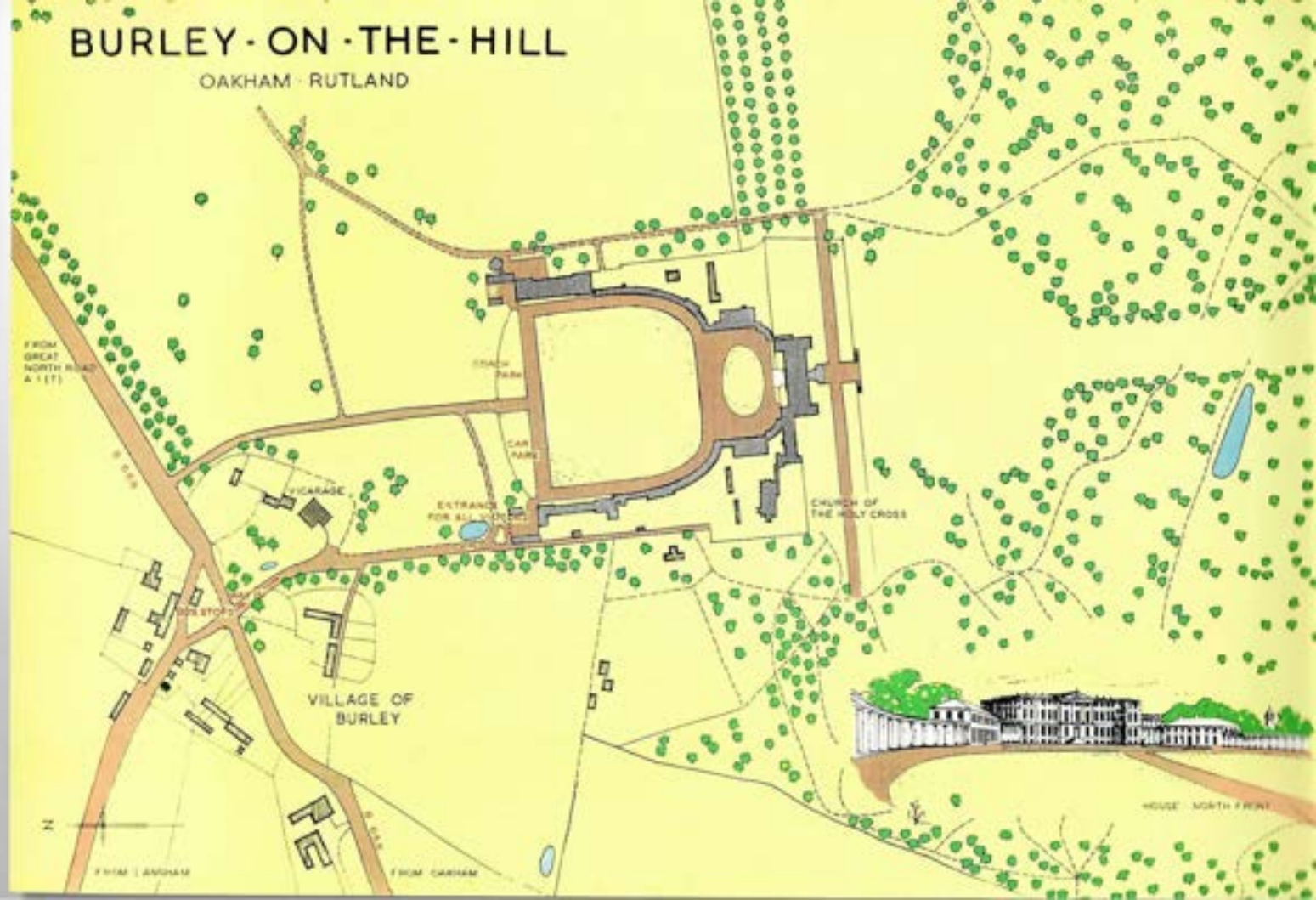


BURLEY ON THE HILL



BURLEY · ON · THE · HILL

OAKHAM · RUTLAND



FROM GREAT
NORTH ROAD
A1 (ET)

CHURCH
TOWER

CAR
PARK

ENTRANCE
FOR ALL VISITORS

CHURCH OF
THE HOLY CROSS

VILLAGE OF
BURLEY

HOUSE - NORTH FRONT

BURLEY ON THE HILL

An Illustrated Survey
of the
Historic Rutland Home
of the
Finch Family



Built for Daniel Finch
2nd Earl of Nottingham.
Now the Residence
of
Colonel and Mrs. J. R. Hanbury

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BURLEY ON THE HILL

A TOUR OF THE ROOMS

THE main door on the north front opens on to the FRONT HALL (Plate 2), which was originally hung with tapestries of *Hero and Leander* made at Mortlake. However, these were burnt when in 1908 a disastrous fire completely gutted several rooms, destroying original decorations which dated from the building of the present house at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries. The paintings now on the walls of the Hall are copies of the tapestries. The marble statue in the centre of the room represents *The Kiss of Victory* (Plate 1). The four armchairs are of the William and Mary period and they belong to the set made together with the State Bed (to be seen in a bedroom on the first floor); they are covered in their original Genoese velvet, though this is now badly worn and much of the colouring has faded. The pewter salvers and tankards bear the coat of arms of the Finch family, Earls of Nottingham and of Winchilsea, the historic owners of Burley on the Hill. The picture over the door to the left of the entrance is of Isabella of Spain.

THE MUSIC ROOM (Plate 4) was one of those damaged by the fire. The main objects of interest are the spinet, the set of Adam chairs and the blue Wedgwood wall sconces, which are also Adam. The picture on the right of the fireplace is a view of Loch Lomond by John Knok and opposite the

The "Kiss of Victory" Statue

The Entrance Hall



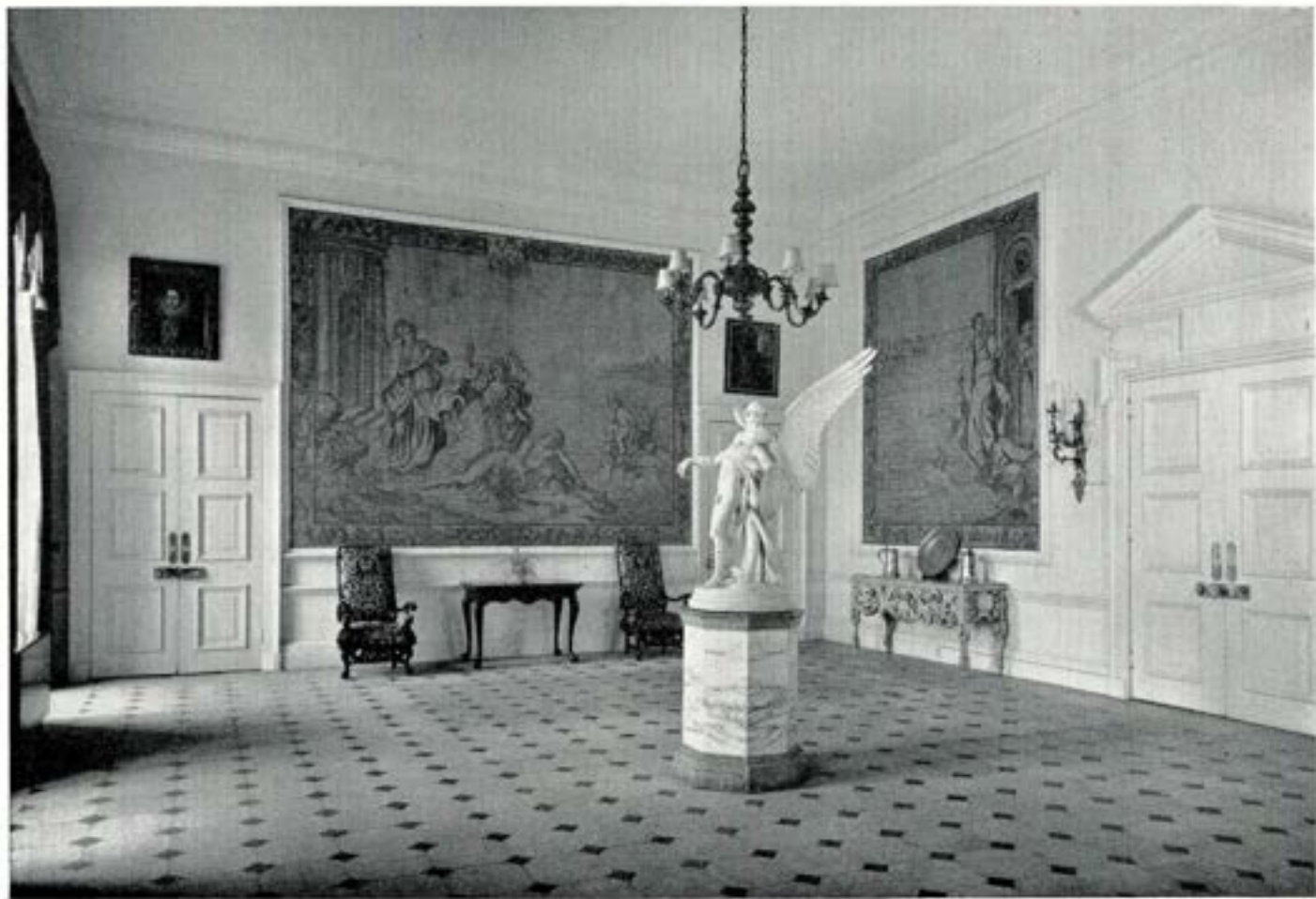




Plate 3

fireplace is a modern painting of the south front of the house by Felix Kelly.

The oak-panelled SMOKING ROOM (Plate 5) was restored after the fire, and the ceiling is a plaster copy of the original by Wren. The set of four sporting prints are originals and have the keys hanging under them naming the persons depicted. On the centre panel of the wall to the left of the fireplace is a small picture of Arthur Thatcher, the famous Cottesmore huntsman, with his favourite horse and hounds, each painted by a different artist. The small picture to the right of the fireplace is of Mr. Evan Hanbury, who was Master of the Cottesmore Hounds at that time. The hunting horns on the mantelpiece belonged to famous Masters and Huntsmen of Leicestershire.

On the facing wall of the CORRIDOR, beyond the Smoking Room, is a woodcut of the house and court showing the north walls and lodges which were pulled down in 1796. The visitor then passes through the Serving Room before entering the Adam Dining Room. In the china cabinet on the left of the passage is a set of Crown Derby china made for the Winchilsea family, each plate being hand-painted with a different flower. Here also are one of the original glasses with the Nottingham coat of arms, a Meissen tea-set, various small coffee-cups of original design, four of which have different views of Burley on the Hill painted on them, and a cup and saucer decorated with a design of finches in

One of the set of State Chairs

The Music Room



Plate 4



Plate 5

A TOUR OF THE ROOMS

punning reference to the family name: these are part of a set now in use at Burley.

The ADAM DINING ROOM (Plate 8), with its beautiful ceiling and fireplace both by the master, was restored to its original state and colouring after the fire. Immediately on the left of the entrance door is a portrait by Riley of Judge Jeffreys (Plate 9), who was notorious for his conduct of the Bloody Assize after Monmouth's Rebellion in 1685. Somewhat surprisingly, there are only two known pictures of Jeffreys: the other one is in the National Portrait Gallery. His great-granddaughter, Lady Charlotte Fermor, second daughter of Thomas, Earl of Pomfret, in 1746 married Thomas Finch, and this accounts for the Riley portrait being at Burley.

The next portrait, of King Charles II, is also by Riley. Among the papers at Burley is a letter from the King written to Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham, who was a Privy Councillor during his reign.

Another portrait is of George Finch, 9th Earl of Winchelsea and 4th Earl of Nottingham, at the age of 19, painted in 1771 by Nathaniel Dance (Plate 11). The Earl, who succeeded to the title in 1769 at the age of 17, was an undergraduate at Christ Church, Oxford, and in the portrait he wears the picturesque gown of that day, with the gold tassel of his college on his cap. In 1804 he became Groom of the Stole to George III, and in 1822 accompanied George IV on his tour through Scotland.

The Smoking Room

China pieces from Corridor display





Plate 7

The quaint little picture of a child, painted by Cornelius Jansen, is of Lady Margaret Sackville, who became Countess of Pembroke and Montgomery. She was the eldest daughter and co-heir of Richard, 3rd Earl of Dorset, and his wife, Lady Anne Clifford, sole daughter and heiress of George, Earl of Cumberland, and his wife, who was the Baroness of Clifford and Vesey in her own right. Lady Margaret Sackville married John, 2nd Earl of Thanet, in 1629 and had six sons and three daughters. Her daughter, Cecilie, married Viscount Hatton and was therefore the mother of Anne, second wife of the 2nd Earl of Nottingham.

The portrait of Elizabeth, 1st Countess of Winchilsea, is by Marc Gheeraerds. She was the widow of Sir Moyle Finch, and was created Viscountess Maidstone in 1623, and Countess of Winchilsea in 1628, in consideration of the public services of her late father, Sir Thomas Heneage, who had been Vice-Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth.

The portrait of Frances, Countess of Winchilsea and Nottingham, is by Vanderbanck. Daughter of the Earl of Denbigh, she became the wife of Daniel, Lord Finch, 8th Earl of Winchilsea and 3rd Earl of Nottingham.

These are the few remaining portraits of the original Winchilsea family.

On the table are silver plates with the Winchilsea coat of arms; the cutlery, which has the Finch family crest showing Pegasus, the flying horse, is of a later

Vista through the State Rooms

The Adam Dining Room





Plate 9

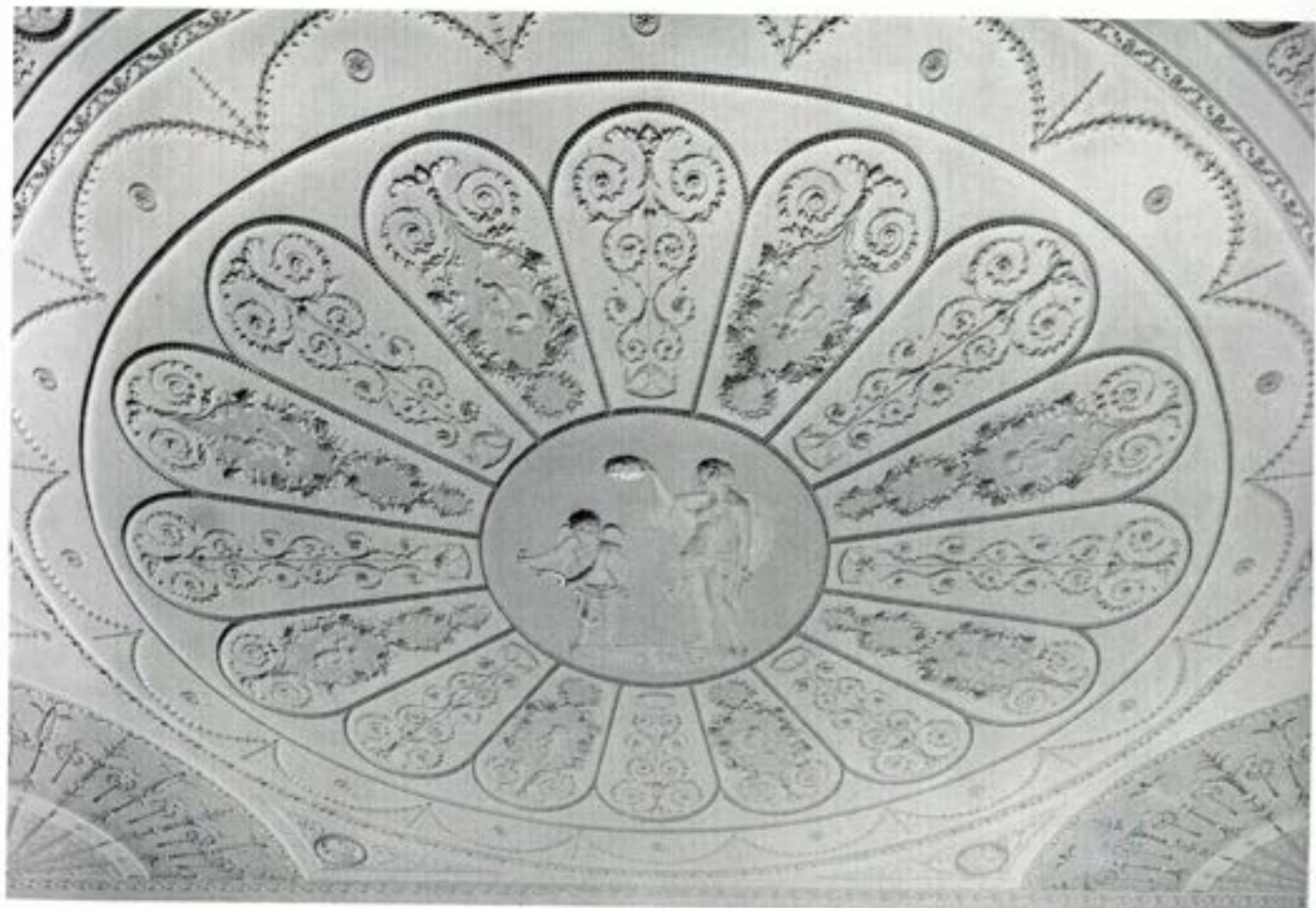
date. The candelabra are of the time of George III, as are the gold fruit bowls and the gold pepper pots. The gold cup in the centre of the table was won by the present owner's father in 1908 at Croxton Park races.

Though the SALOON (Plate 12) has none of its original Regency decorations, it is a most pleasant room. The gilt mirrors are fine examples from the time of George II. The picture over the fireplace is of Mr. George Henry Finch, M.P., first elected in 1867 and the representative of the County of Rutland for thirty-four years. His daughter married Colonel Evan Hanbury, grandfather of the present owner of Burley on the Hill. The pair of pictures on either side of the mirrors are by Houdecoeter. The pair of gilt sofas are Italian and the urns on either side of the door Chinese.

Visitors now enter the original rooms that were untouched by the fire of 1908. The SMALL DRAWING ROOM (Plate 14) is Regency, and has circular gilded decorations on the ceiling and a beautiful Georgian chandelier. The fireplace, by Adam, was put in at a later date. The two gold and white settees and the pair of armchairs are Regency, as is the set of six small chairs. The picture on the left as one enters the room, of Lady Emily Peel (wife of Sir Robert Peel), is unusual in that it was painted by Landseer, who generally painted only landscapes (Plate 13). The pair of pictures on either side of the fireplace are by Robert, and the one over the fireplace is by

Portrait of Judge Jeffreys

Section of Dining Room ceiling





George
Earl of Winchilsea
& Nottingham
1771

Guardi. The portrait between the windows is of Mrs. Hanbury's grandmother.

The ceiling of the BOOK ROOM (Plate 16) has an unusual Queen Anne shell design and is of earlier date than the Regency bookcases. The chandelier is Regency, and the fireplace is Adam. The picture over the fireplace, by Boltby, shows the Earl of Winchilsea's horses with Burley in the background. The small pictures of horses above the bookcases are of the pre-war hunters of Colonel Hanbury and include Away, which ran in the Grand National. Between the windows is a portrait of Colonel Evan Hanbury, presented by subscribers of the Cottesmore Hunt on his retirement, after being Master from 1900 to 1907.

The visitor passes through a concealed door in the bookcase (Plate 15) into the East Passage. The set of six chairs here are Stuart and hanging on the wall are manuscripts of the time of Charles II. The adjoining stairs are much older than the present house and were probably part of the earlier house that belonged to the Duke of Buckingham.

Beyond the East Passage is the oak-panelled Hall. The set of three mirrors and the pair of dogs' chairs here are Italian. The mauve and gold coloured vase in the window is Wedgwood.

The GRAND STAIRS, of the William and Mary period, are of English red oak with a very simple oak balustrade (Plate 18). The painting on the walls was the work of Gerrard Lanscroom, a native of

Portrait of the Earl of Winchilsea

The Saloon



Plate 12



Plate 13

A TOUR OF THE ROOMS

Flanders, who came over to England and assisted Verrio and Laguerre. It represents the history of Perseus and Andromeda, the Gorgon Medusa being depicted, as well as Pegasus, which was one of the Nottingham crests. The ceiling has Mars riding in the sun and Juno driving her chariot of swans. At two of the corners is the Nottingham coat of arms, supported by two female figures, and at the two remaining corners is the cipher D.N., with a coronet and the same supporters (Plate 17).

The BALLROOM (Plate 20) was originally painted in the same style as the walls of the Grand Staircase, but unfortunately it was completely destroyed by the fire in 1908. Still however a room of fine proportions, 60 feet long and 40 feet broad, it is half the height of the house and the entire breadth, and commands a wonderful view to both north and south. On a clear day Rockingham Castle and the chimneys of the ironstone works at Corby in Northamptonshire can be seen to the south.

The oak for the panelling was grown on the estate and the carvings were done by estate employees. The manuscripts in this room were kept until recently by the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

The collection of dolls depicts the rulers of England and their consorts from William and Mary to our present Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip. They are all dressed to the smallest detail in the clothes of their period (Plate 19).

The State Bed with its original Genoese velvet

Portrait of Lady Emily Peel

The Small Drawing Room

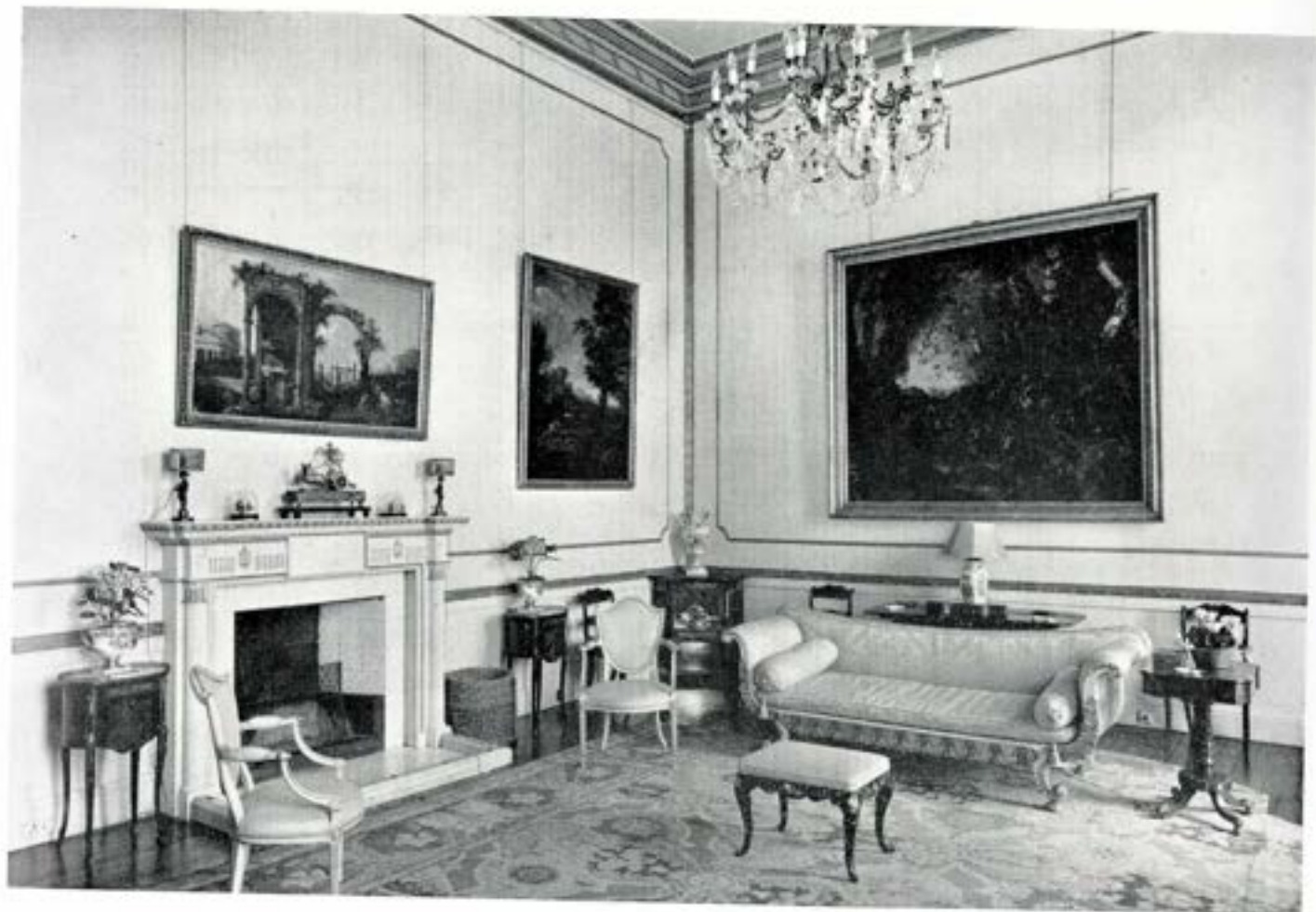




Plate 15

A TOUR OF THE ROOMS

hangings, now in the STATE BEDROOM (Plate 22), was made in 1693 when Queen Mary, wife of William of Orange, stood godmother to Lady Charlotte Finch, daughter of Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham. The queen stayed with the Nottinghams for the occasion, probably at Kensington House (now Kensington Palace), which in those days was their suburban residence. The house was sold by the Earl's grandson to William III and the bed was moved to Burley on the Hill, together with the chairs and two matching stools of the same covering as the bed which are also here. The beautiful walnut cabinet and the inlay table and chest of drawers are of the same period.

In 1814 the Prince Regent stayed at Burley. The only information however respecting his visit is that he was to have occupied the State Room but objected to sleeping in the State Bed.

The paintings on the walls of rural subjects are copies of the notable Dutch or Flemish tapestries originally here, designed by Teniers. The tapestries themselves were sold and have gone to America.

The bed and furniture in the ADAM BEDROOM (Plate 24) are all by Adam, and the dark mahogany chest of drawers is a particularly fine piece. Immediately on the left of the entrance door is a small oil painting by Zoffany, of George, Prince of Wales and Frederick, Duke of York, children of George III, to whom Lady Charlotte Finch was governess. The large picture, of which this is the original sketch,

The Bookcase Door

The Bedroom





Plate 17

A TOUR OF THE ROOMS

is at Windsor. The two oval mirrors are Irish ones of the Regency period. Over the fireplace is a picture of Miss Charlotte Finch, sister of George Finch, 9th Earl of Winchilsea and 4th Earl of Nottingham.

The small Ante-Room or BOUDOIR (Plate 25), furnished in the Victorian style, has black lacquer furniture and a very fine black marble table with a beautiful coloured flower design. The picture over the fireplace is by Wheatley, and those on the walls are reproductions of the *Cries of London* by the same artist.

Finally the visitor descends the oak stairs leading to the panelled Oak Hall, on the west, and the Tea Room, which before the fire was the Long Library (Plate 26). A passage (not open to visitors) from a door at the end of this room leads to the Church and is still used by the family.

From the Oak Hall visitors may walk along the Great Terrace to the gardens.

HISTORY AND THE GROUNDS

BURLEY ON THE HILL was built for Daniel Finch, the 2nd Earl of Nottingham, between 1674 and 1704. The recorded history of Burley goes back however to just before the Norman Conquest, when the manor was held by a Saxon named Ulf. In medieval and Tudor times it belonged to a succession of families, the last of whom, the Haringtons, acquired it by purchase in the reign of

The Staircase Hall ceiling

The Staircase Hall





Plate 19

Edward VI. They were already very large land-owners in these parts.

King James I was entertained at Burley on his progress down from Scotland to ascend the English throne in 1603, and the then owner was created 1st Baron Harington of Exton at the coronation. Later in this reign Burley was sold to the King's favourite, George Villiers, the famous Duke of Buckingham. He married Lady Frances Manners, daughter of the Earl of Rutland. On one occasion they entertained King Charles I and his Queen at Burley, the magnificent festivities including the first performance of Ben Jonson's masque, 'The Gypsies', with a cast of courtiers. The famous dwarf Jeffrey Hudson, 'the smallest man in the smallest county in England', was served up in a pie at table and presented by the Duchess to Queen Henrietta, who at once took him into her service.

The position of Buckingham's house was, we gather, precisely the same as that occupied by the present house. On the assassination of Buckingham in 1628, Burley became the possession of his eldest son, 'The Witty Duke', who on the outbreak of the Civil War served on the Royalist side until after the battle of Worcester, when he fled into exile, Burley being taken by the Roundheads, who kept a garrison there. In 1644, the Parliamentary garrison, fearing an attack from the Royalist army, set fire to the house and furniture and left. The stables escaped their malice and remain to this day the

Miniature figures from Ballroom Display

The Ballroom





Plate 21

noblest of, or at least, equal to, any building of that kind in England. These stables still exist, but were repaired and slightly altered by the 2nd Earl of Nottingham.

In 1651 Buckingham secretly returned home, and became later a prominent and flamboyant figure in Restoration England. He was the Zimri of Dryden's satire 'Absalom and Achitophel', and was himself a playwright and poet. His extravagance at length obliged him to sell his Burley property to Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham and 7th Earl of Winchilsea.

The Finch family is said to be descended from Henry Fitzherbert, Chancellor to Henry I. On inheriting the property of the Finches they took that name. In an old inscription in Brabourne Church is the following:—'Finch alias Herbert'. There are several monuments to these Finches of early times in that church. In an illuminated pedigree of great pretensions, now at Burley on the Hill, their descent is traced from Ethelred, King of England, and his Queen.

The Finches of the 15th and 16th centuries played parts of modest distinction in public affairs and as soldiers. The Winchilsea title came to the family, as has been mentioned, in 1628, when Elizabeth, widow of Sir Moyle Finch, was created Countess of Winchilsea. On her death in 1629 her second son, Thomas, succeeded to the title. There was in effect no 1st Earl of Winchilsea, and

Dutch Chest of drawers in State Bedroom

The State Bedroom





Plate 23

in most peerages Thomas is named 2nd Earl, though a few call him 1st Earl.

Sir Heneage Finch, Elizabeth's third son, was the most celebrated of all her children and was the founder, so to speak, of the Nottingham branch of the family. He was born in 1580 and became Recorder of the City of London and Speaker of the House of Commons. In the second Parliament of Charles I, in 1626, he delivered to the King the address for the removal of the Duke of Buckingham. He married Frances, daughter of Sir Edmund Bell (a judge) of Beaupre Hall, Norfolk, and they lived splendidly in Kensington House (now Kensington Palace) which was afterwards sold to William III.

Their eldest son Heneage Finch is perhaps the most distinguished person of this name. He was born in 1621 and educated at Westminster School, and in the year 1635 he became a gentleman commoner at Christ Church, Oxford. On the sudden death of his father he left before taking his degree, but entered the Inner Temple and read for the Bar. In 1645 he was called to the Bar and at the Restoration he was returned as Member of Parliament for the City of Canterbury. In 1666 he became Solicitor General. The King further showed his favour by creating him a knight and a baronet. On the death of Sir Jeffrey Palmer in 1670, Sir Heneage was made Attorney General. In 1673 his ambitious hopes were rewarded and he received the Great Seal. In the following year he reached the summit of his

*Section of Tapestry mural in State Bedroom
(Photo: Rutland Features)*

The Adam Bedroom





Plate 25

profession and attained the Chancellorship. For nine years he held the Great Seal and presided over the Court of Chancery. In 1681, as a further reward for his services to the Crown, he was created Earl of Nottingham. In 1646 he married Elizabeth Harvey, daughter of Mr. Daniel Harvey of London.

Their eldest son, Daniel, was born in 1647. On leaving Christ Church, Oxford, he was sent to travel in Europe, chiefly in Italy. It was doubtless these months spent in Italy which inspired him to build a house in the Italian style. On his return from abroad he was made one of the Commissioners of the Admiralty. During the reign of Charles II he became a Privy Councillor. In 1674 he married Lady Essex Riche, daughter of the Earl of Warwick. In 1682 he succeeded his father as 2nd Earl of Nottingham and 7th Earl of Winchilsea.

The only architect known to have been employed by Lord Nottingham in the building of his magnificent new mansion at Burley, on the site of the old one which he bought from the Duke of Buckingham and pulled down, was John Lumley of Northampton. There is no proof that Lumley designed the whole building, but certainly he did provide some plans for it. There is on the other hand some evidence that the Earl to an extent acted as his own architect. Undoubtedly his was the inspiration and the enthusiasm for Italian architecture. A dominant feature of the design was the Great

The Boudoir

The Tearoom





Plate 27

Courtyard, with its long colonnades, reminiscent of those of St. Peter's at Rome. The measurement from one colonnade to another is 500 feet, and the distance from the iron gates to the house is 800 feet. The gates are particularly beautiful and graceful in design. Erected in 1700, they are possibly to be attributed to the French craftsman Jean Tijou.

The house was made of stone from the Clipsham quarry ten miles from Burley, and the stone for the colonnades came from Ketton, eight miles away. The building was begun in 1694 and the house roofed in 1700, but the whole work, including the gardens, was not entirely completed until 1724.

One hundred and eighty workmen are mentioned as being employed in the work, and about £80,000 (equivalent to about a million pounds now) was spent on the complete project, including house, colonnades, court, stables, gates and ironwork, and gardens.

Some unfortunate changes took place in the time of George Finch, 4th Earl of Nottingham and 9th Earl of Winchilsea, who succeeded to the titles in 1769. In 1796 the lodges were pulled down on the advice of Humphry Repton, the destroyer of many fine places. The gates were happily allowed to remain, but they stand surrounded by some inferior iron railings and lose half their beauty by having nothing to throw them into relief.

In the time of Buckingham there were three terraces to the south of the house, rising one above

Sunk Garden on South Front

The South Front and Terrace



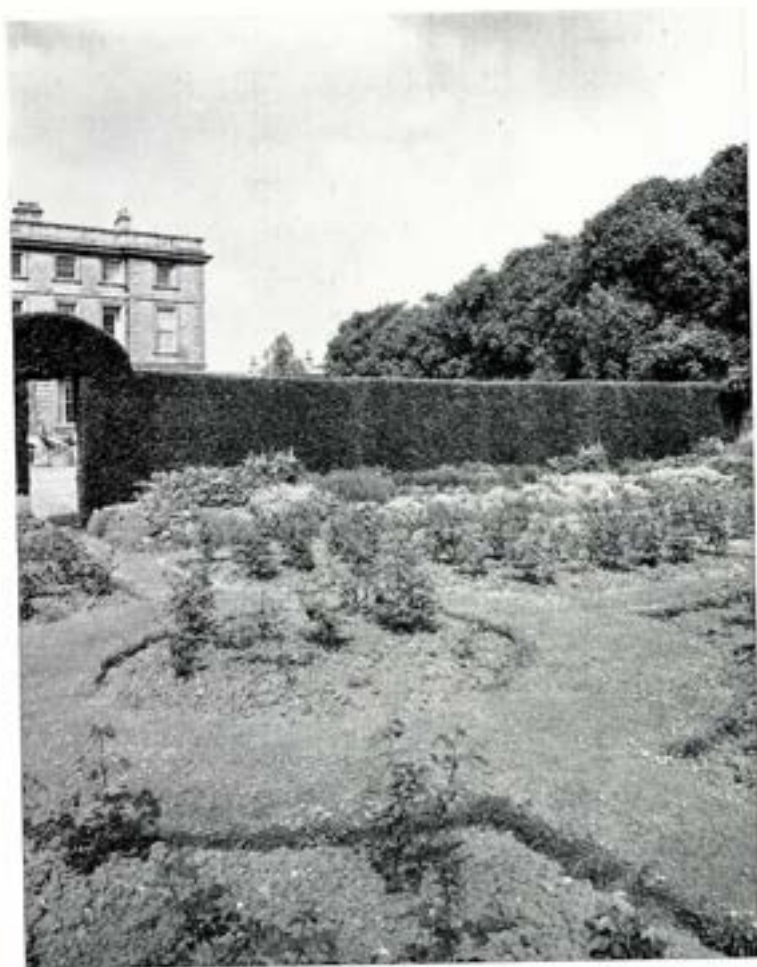
the other, the first fifty-nine feet long, the second and third fifty-four feet; these terraces were evidently slightly altered or enlarged by the 1st Lord Nottingham and two others added. In 1795, however, they were all swept away, with the exception of the Upper or Great Terrace, which still exists. It is needless to state that this destruction was the work of Repton. It is well for the place that his alterations ended here, for he wished to destroy the fine elm avenue at the bottom of the wood.

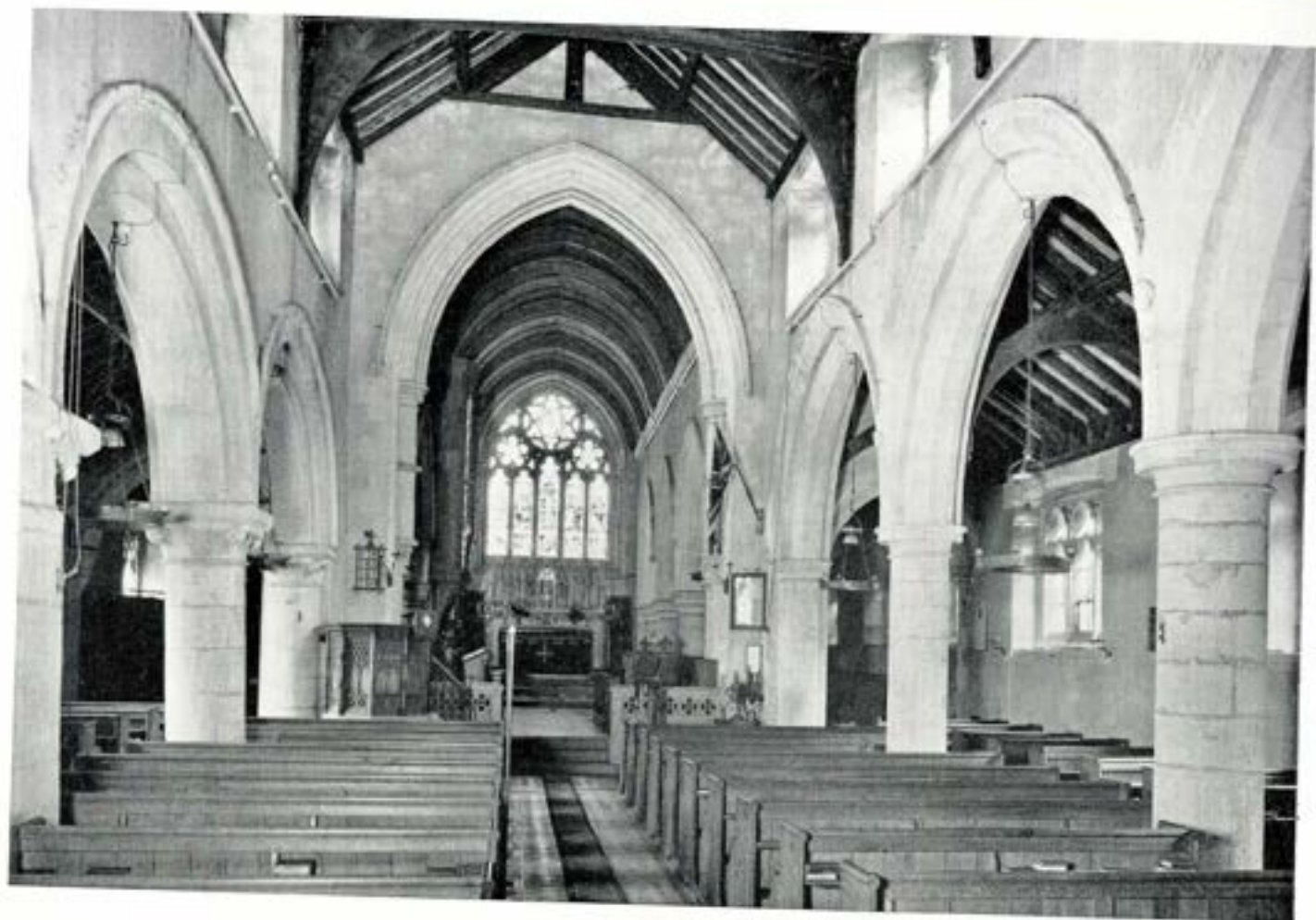
When the 4th Earl died unmarried in 1826 he was succeeded in his titles by his cousin George William Finch-Hatton. The Burley property was, however, inherited by his illegitimate son, George Finch, who was born in 1794 and granted the use of the Finch arms in 1809. He was twice married: firstly in 1819, to Jane, daughter of Vice-Admiral John Richard Delap Tollemache, who lived only two years after her marriage; secondly, to Lady Louisa Somerset, daughter of the 6th Duke of Beaufort. On Mr. George Finch's death in 1870 his eldest son, George Henry Finch, inherited the property.

Mr. George Henry Finch was born in 1835 and was also twice married. In 1861 he married Emily Eglantine, daughter of John Balfour, of Balbernie, Fife. They had a son, Alan George Finch, born in 1863, and two daughters, Magdalen, who died in 1935, and Gwendoline, who married in 1886 Evan

The East Front Rose Garden

The Church





Hanbury, of Braunston, Oakham, grandfather of the present owner.

On the death of George Henry Finch, in 1907, he was succeeded by his son, Alan George Finch (of his first marriage), who died in 1914. He was succeeded by his half-brother, Wilfred Henry Montgomery Finch, who was born in 1883 (of the second marriage) and died, unmarried, in 1939. The Burley property then passed to the great-nephew of George Henry Finch, Colonel James Robert Hanbury, the present owner of Burley on the Hill.

BURLEY CHURCH

THE parish church of the Holy Cross in Burley is a 13th century church which was restored by Pearson in 1870, at the instance of Mr. G. H. Finch, in memory of his wife, Eglantine.

Inside the entrance, the first object of interest is a very fine 15th century font on the right of the main door. Adjoining the font stands the west tower, which is in the Decorated style. It was restored to its present state by Mr. Alan George Finch in 1913. On the floor in front of the tower are two recumbent effigies in alabaster, one of which has been mutilated, possibly in Cromwellian times. The persons whom these figures represent are not known but it is likely that they date from before the Battle of Agincourt. The north arcade is Transitional Norman work and the south arcade Early

English. To the right of the choir there is a fine monument to the memory of Lady Charlotte Finch who died in 1796. This is the work of Chantrey (of 'Chantrey Bequest' fame) and in its execution the statue bears a striking resemblance to this sculptor's *Sleeping Children* in Lichfield Cathedral. The sanctuary has remarkable dignity for such a small building and the fine reredos behind the altar well repays inspection.

Burley Church has been hallowed by the lives, the prayers and the witness of local men and women for centuries and the fragrance alike of their memory and of their influence still lingers in the precincts of Holy Cross. Even the most unthinking person cannot fail to be impressed by the peace and serenity which permeate the building. Every visitor will surely wish that this ancient and lovely church may long continue to be what it has been for so many generations: 'The house of God and the gate of Heaven'.

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