12 The Descent

The War virtually killed Arts and Crafts architecture. Ashbee very rarely practised as architect afterwards—though he did sterling service as civil advisor to the Palestine government between 1917 and 1923, repairing Jerusalem's walls according to SPAB principles.

A few anachronistic clients clung to the free style after the War, but Arts and Crafts architecture had been dying for a decade before 1914. Without a radical change in society, it was impossible for the movement to have any more permanent basis than the production of luxuries for the upper middle class. When upper middle class taste began to change, the architect and designer had to change too. As the social ideals of Morris and Ruskin lost their force in the imagination of the time, the Gothic spirit withered, and architects turned increasingly to classical styles for inspiration. The few Arts and Crafts men who stuck to Gothic principles were increasingly left out.

After 1906, for instance, Voysey got few architectural commissions, and those he did get were not large; he began to use overtly Gothic detailing which must have made him increasingly less popular. Lethaby built nothing after 1902. Prior gradually faded out as an architect. The lesser followers of Pugin, Ruskin and Morris: people like Troup, Dawber, Blow and Ricardo, gradually changed their style to classic symmetry and severity in the decade around the War, though almost all of them returned to less formal designs occasionally.

The change in style was related to a change in the status of England. In the two middle quarters of the nineteenth century, Britain had been the workshop of the world, achieving her economic pre-eminence by unparalleled commercial exploitation of the machinery against which Ruskin and Morris had railed so fiercely. But from the 1870s, Britain's success became her undoing; the civilized nations began to erect tarif walls against British goods, and by 1900 the Continent, the US and even the white colonies such as Australia and Canada were protected by high import levies. Real incomes in Britain, which had grown throughout the last decade of the nineteenth century, virtually stagnated between 1900 and 1914.

The prosperous middle classes on whom the Arts and Crafts movement had relied so much had the butter taken off their bread—particularly after the Liberal government of 1906 increasingly introduced reforms to alleviate the lot of working people, a process that culminated in Lloyd George's notorious 1909 budget which raised death duties, income tax from one shilling to a grievous one shilling and twopence and introduced super-tax and (abortively) Land Value duties. If you were wealthy and middle class, the years after 1906 were not a good time to build. But even if you felt secure enough to do so, your attitude to what was proper in building was likely to be very different from that of the previous generation.

To ensure a balance of trade and to finance reforms at home, Britain was increasingly forced to exploit colonies in Asia and Africa and semi-colonies like China. With the colonization of Africa a new element had entered British imperialism; economic necessity forced Britain to promote forms of serfdom and near slavery. Instead of being left to the doubtful mercies of the market, natives were exploited by government. For instance, all the land in Kenya was declared forfeit in 1898, forcing natives into overcrowded reserves on inferior soil whence they were obliged to toil on farms owned by Europeans by a punitive system of taxation. In South Africa, the last war of Victoria's reign was fought to obtain control of the Johannesburg gold fields; when Britain won, mass immigration from India was encouraged to provide indentured labour to work the mines.

This was the dark side of an Empire on which Britain was ever more dependent. London was rebuilt as an imperial capital in the first decade of the century and Ruskin would not have been surprised to find that the great schemes—for example Admiralty Arch, built by Aston Webb between 1906 and 1911—were all erected in the high classical style which he had so scathingly decried as the architecture of slavery.*

Throughout middle class life, from the boy scout movement to the Stock Exchange, there was new emphasis on order and leadership, on things established, old looking and tested. Antique collecting became the rage to the detriment of working craftsmen. In architecture, the main spokesman of the new mood was Reginald Blomfield. Though a member of the Art Workers' Guild and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society from their earliest years, friend of Lethaby and Gimson, Blomfield had long been a classicist and published several books calling for increased formality in building. His *Short History of Renaissance Architecture in England* (1897) paralleled Prior's book on English Gothic, and in the 1900 edition Blomfield made his position clear. Commenting on the late nineteenth century he urged that because "the co-operative art of the Middle Ages was no longer possible, some-one must take the lead. A strong individual intelligence was needed to restore order in this chaos of eclecticism."[1]

Made professor of architecture at the Royal Academy in 1906, Blomfield was in a strong position to proselytize. He hoped "against hope to divert students from the fashion for the picturesque and abundance of ornament prevalent at the time to a loftier conception of architecture as the art of *ordonnance*."[2] In his lectures, he stressed that the student "need not concern himself with dogmatic theories of the relation of art and morality in studying architecture"[3]: it was the perennial conservative plea that art has nothing to do with politics and that it should implicitly support the *status quo*. His ideal was a return to eighteenth-century traditions of craftsmanship in which the workman could be guaranteed to turn out work by

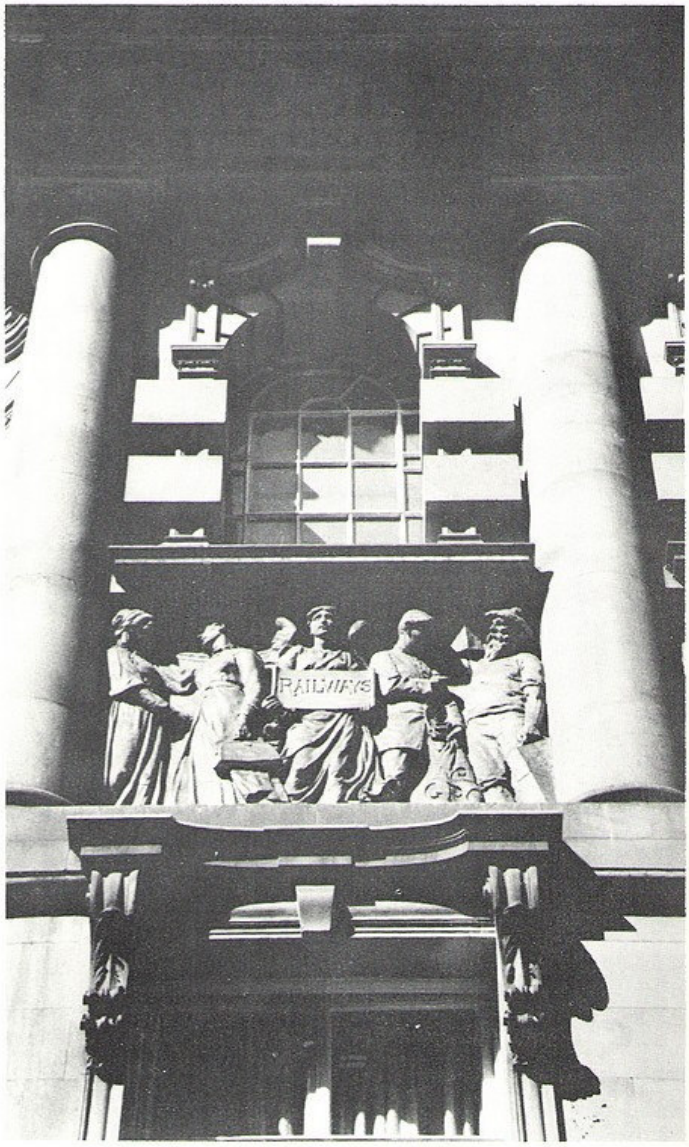
* Classicism was not limited to London. It permeated the whole empire. Herbert Baker was sent by the great imperialist Cecil Rhodes, to "visit the old countries of the Mediterranean to get inspiration for any 'thoughts' he might 'undertake'." Rhodes's "thoughts" included war memorials and a great Greek temple half way up a mountain. (Baker, Herbert *Architecture and Personalities*, Country Life, London 1944, p. 35.)

174 *R. Norman Shaw. Bryanston, Dorset (1889–1894)*

rote without any troublesome individuality creeping in. "When an architect can depend on his men, he is spared the necessity of spending half his time in explaining to builders details which ought to be matters of common knowledge, he has leisure to devote his energy to his real business of thinking out the central conception of his design."[4]

In 1906, classical architecture was no recent introduction. From about 1890 on, Shaw was almost entirely a classicist, creating buildings of great formality like Bryanston (1889–1894) and the Lower Regent Street Quadrant (finished by Blomfield after many vicissitudes). By 1902, Shaw believed that "we have now no proper traditional architecture, for it died away imperceptibly at the beginning of the last century . . . From the date of the Exhibition of 1851 until recently we were all intensely Gothic—and intensely wrong. We were trying to revive a style which was quite unsuited to the present day. Since 1880, however, we have been gradually awakening to this fact. After spending millions of pounds we came to the conclusion that it had been to no purpose. The Gothic revival, for all practical purposes, is dead, and the tendency of late years has been to return to the English Renaissance. I was trained on the older Gothic lines, I am personally devoted to it, admire it in the abstract, and think it superb; but it is totally unsuited to modern requirements. When it came to building, especially in places like the City, we found it would not answer."[5]

Another early user of classical forms was John Belcher (1841–1913), who had sat in the chair at the meeting which founded the Art Workers' Guild. He produced the Institute of Chartered Accountants building between 1889 and 1893. With its mansard roof, free use of tuscan columns and heavy rustication, it was immensely influential. Less influential was the way in which, in proper Art Workers' Guild fashion, it incorporated an intricate frieze of figure sculpture above the windows of the piano nobile (by Hamo Thornycroft, another AWG man) and delicate female figures above the ground floor columns. Inside, Belcher and his assistant Beresford Pite gave the newly respectable accounting profession an appropriately grand setting with a council chamber lined with vast murals and topped by a staggeringly tall drum and dome. The building was the work of an older generation of Guildsmen than Prior and Lethaby but it was one which demonstrated all their love of working together and incorporating painting and sculpture into architecture. That it lacked any allegiance to the principles of Ruskin and Morris, so revered by the younger men, showed the contradictory nature of the Guild.



175 *John Belcher. Institute of Chartered Accountants, London (1889–1893)*

In the next two decades, free neo-baroque became a major style for new civic architecture throughout Britain, with many grandiose buildings to its credit—Deptford Town Hall (1902–1904) by Lanchester and Rickards for instance, and their Central Hall, Westminster (1905).

Other classical idioms emerged. There was a Wrenaissance following Bryanston in which Wren became a model for country houses and less grand town buildings. Early in this century, a much more severe and correct classical style emerged—based on the French renaissance (the style was not unrelated to the monarch's continental predilections). One of the

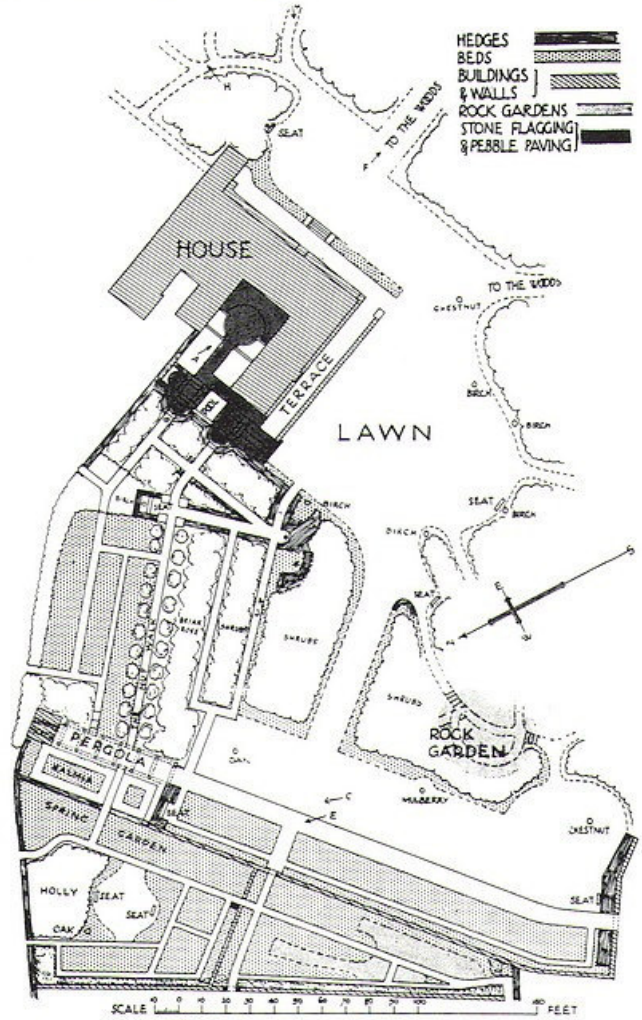
first examples was the Ritz Hotel in Piccadilly by Mewès and Davis (completed 1906). It made a tremendous impression. Charles Reilly, professor of architecture at Liverpool from 1904, recalled that when the Mewès and Davis work first appeared, "they seemed to set a new, and for an Englishman, an almost impossible standard of elegance".[6] The schools had joined the profession in support of classicism.

Yet against this background, two Arts and Crafts architects, Lutyens and Baillie-Scott, continued to get work and even increase their practices. Each coped with the new climate in his own way.

Edwin Landseer Lutyens (1869–1944) was the eleventh of fourteen children of an army captain who retired from the service to train under Landseer and became a moderately successful sporting painter. Because of illness and the relative poverty of his parents, Ned (as Edwin not surprisingly preferred to be known) was educated at home, and was virtually self-taught, in the Surrey countryside, until at sixteen he was sent to what became the Royal College of Art to study architecture. At about this time, he met Norman Shaw and "after a little conversation the PRA of the future was telling Norman Shaw RA of his experiments in the type of building suited to agricultural enterprise; just mud-encased on wooden piles, roofed with heather, resistant to wind and weather, warm in winter, cool in summer, conforming with the surroundings . . . with what he called 'my fixed principles'—this made Shaw smile—and those were that anything put up by man should harmonize with what Nature, who had been there first, should dictate. Materials should be drawn from those obtainable in the area and foreign elements strictly eliminated. 'Very interesting, my boy, but not always feasible', interrupted the great man. 'All right for cowsheds, but human beings demand something a little more in keeping with the age in which we live, and if you had my experience you would find that the newly-rich, who are after all the patrons of today, demand replicas of something they have seen in other countries they have visited.'"[7]

Shaw, the early Shaw of Old English, was Lutyens's model when he set up on his own at twenty after a couple of years at school and another two in the office of Ernest George & Peto. Lutyens's early houses are rather clumsy, heavy with brick, half-timber and great tile roofs. He found Webb's work in the early '90s and became an immediate disciple. He recalled, of his first sight of Webb's Joldwynds: "'That's good . . ., I wonder who the young man is.'

176 *Edwin Landseer Lutyens. Munstead Wood (1896), for Gertrude Jekyll*



177 *Gertrude Jekyll. Garden plan for Munstead Wood*

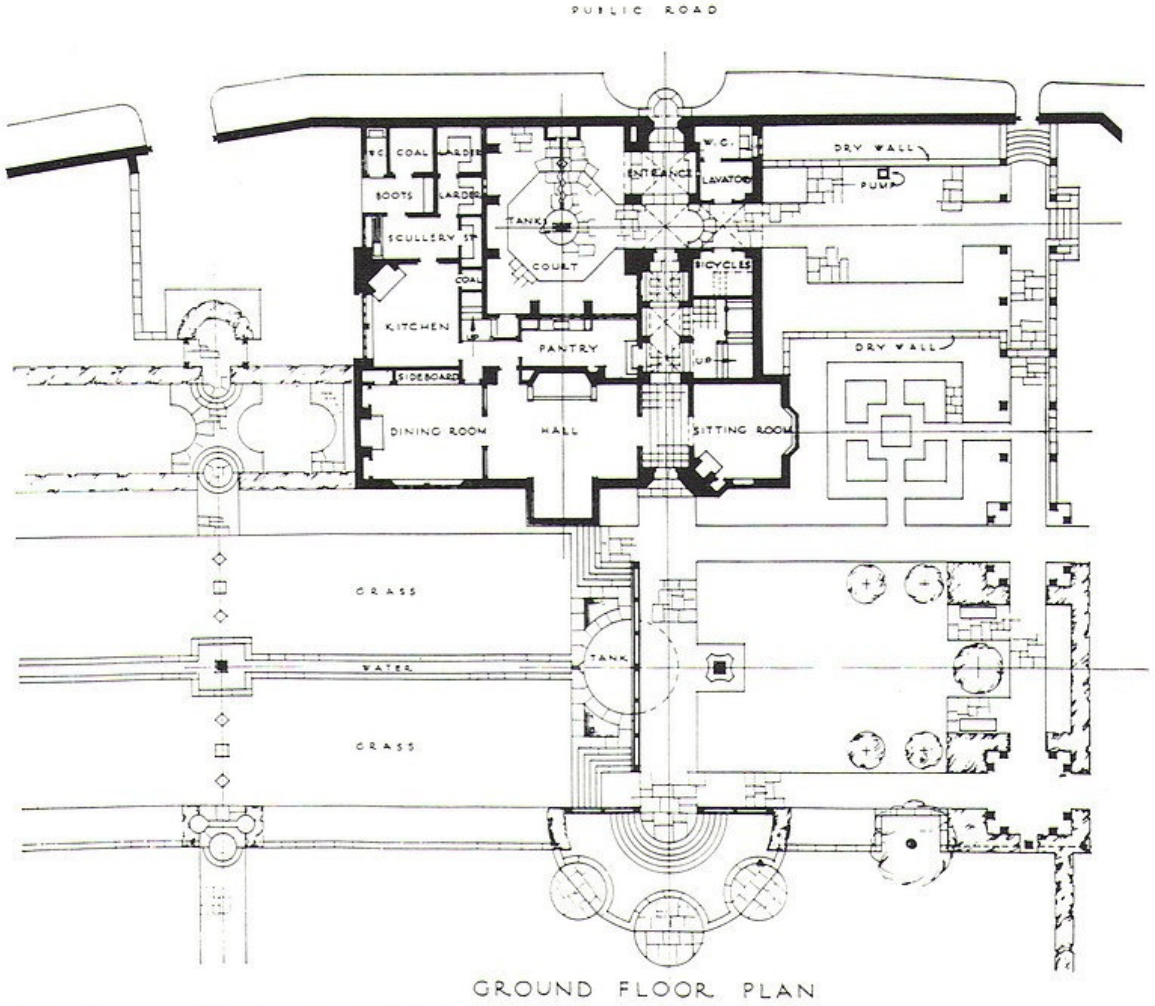
The freshness and originality which Webb maintained in all his work, I, in my ignorance, attributed to youth."[8]

Another strong influence on the young Lutyens was Gertrude Jekyll. Munstead Wood, which Lutyens built for Jekyll in 1896, was made with all the thoroughness and attention to tradition that Webb would have wished. Miss Jekyll recounted that "the architect has a thorough knowledge of the local ways of using the sandstone that grows in our hills, and that for many centuries has been the building materials of the district, and of all the lesser incidental methods of adapting means to ends that mark the well-defined way of building of the country, so that what he builds seems to grow naturally out of the ground . . . I hold as a convincing canon in architecture that every building should look like what it is."[9] The tiled roof comes right down to the top of the doors and is relieved by large gables containing the first floor rooms; windows are strips of oak-framed casements with leaded lights—a Voyseyish composition, but Munstead Wood is Voysey made particular: virtually every detail is derived from a Surrey precedent.

It was the first of a succession of lovely Surrey houses in which, while being faithful to vernacular motifs, Lutyens began to show his powers of invention. Deanery Garden, Sonning, built in 1899 for Edward Hudson, managing editor of *Country Life* (to which Miss Jekyll contributed gardening articles) is a fine example. Lutyens took the room-and-a-corridor plan and cranked it round three sides of a courtyard (he was one of the first Arts and Crafts architects to bend the plan in this way and often used three- and four-sided courtyards later). But, even more inventive, he rammed the south-eastern corridor straight through from back to front of the house, making a partly open, partly covered route for the family from entrance to garden with stairs, sitting room and hall (a big drawing room in country house tradition) opening straight off it. This convenient, economical, yet grand plan was given walls of small local bricks, roofs of sandy tiles (to attract lichen) and a great double-height square bay in the hall made of oak with pegged joints and leaded lights.

At Deanery Garden the main (south-west) front would have been virtually symmetrical about the hall

178 *Lutyens. Deanery Garden, Sonning, Berkshire (1899)*



179 *Deanery Garden, ground floor plan*

180 *Lutyens. Homewood (1899)*

bay if it had not been breached by the arch opening of the corridor which was balanced by a large Webbian chimney (much bigger than it need have been to serve three small fireplaces). The changefulness soon disappeared. In the same year Lutyens completed Homewood. The house owes much to Webb's middle period, with boarded gables similar to Webb's at Jolwynds (p. 35), and symmetrical elevations. And for the first time Lutyens introduced overtly classical detailing on the outside: the timber gables are, curiously, supported on walls enriched with rusticated classical pilasters. As Roderick Gradidge has pointed out in his perceptive analysis,[10] it is significant that this first emergence of the orders* was in an Arts and Crafts house executed for a vicerene of India—Lutyens's mother-in-law, the wife of Lord Lytton, one of the odder viceroys.

Symmetry became increasingly important to Lutyens. His finest work of the early 1900s is in vernacular style, set to symmetrical plans: for instance Marsh Court near Stockbridge in Hampshire (1901), and his variant on Prior's butterfly plan, Papillon Court near Market Harborough (1903—now demolished).

The introduction of symmetry was not without problems. As A. S. G. Butler explained in the Lutyens Memorial,† "the deliberate disorder cultivated by romantic-minded architects of his youth did not appeal to him . . . He preferred increasingly to avoid a rambling plan, to constrain the wings of a house into a balanced form and even to fold them back neatly within a rectangle, roofing the house as he could. For it is difficult to accomplish exact symmetry in a domestic building and, at the same time, house the inmates quite as they should be . . . It postulates nearly always some sacrifice of convenience by the owner."[11] How Pugin would have agreed.

But, Butler emphasized, symmetry "does provide the only channel through which an architect may touch the highest performance. For if, through all the intricacies of modern requirements and the technicalities of up-to-date building, he can produce a work which can be enjoyed in detail when explored both inside and out, and, at the same time, can be appreciated in one delightful glance from any direction or distance, he is supreme."

* Classical detailing was to be seen in Lutyens's *interiors* at least as early as Fulbrook (1897).

† A large three volume work full of detailed drawings and photographs. No other British architect has ever been so quickly and magnificently memorialized.

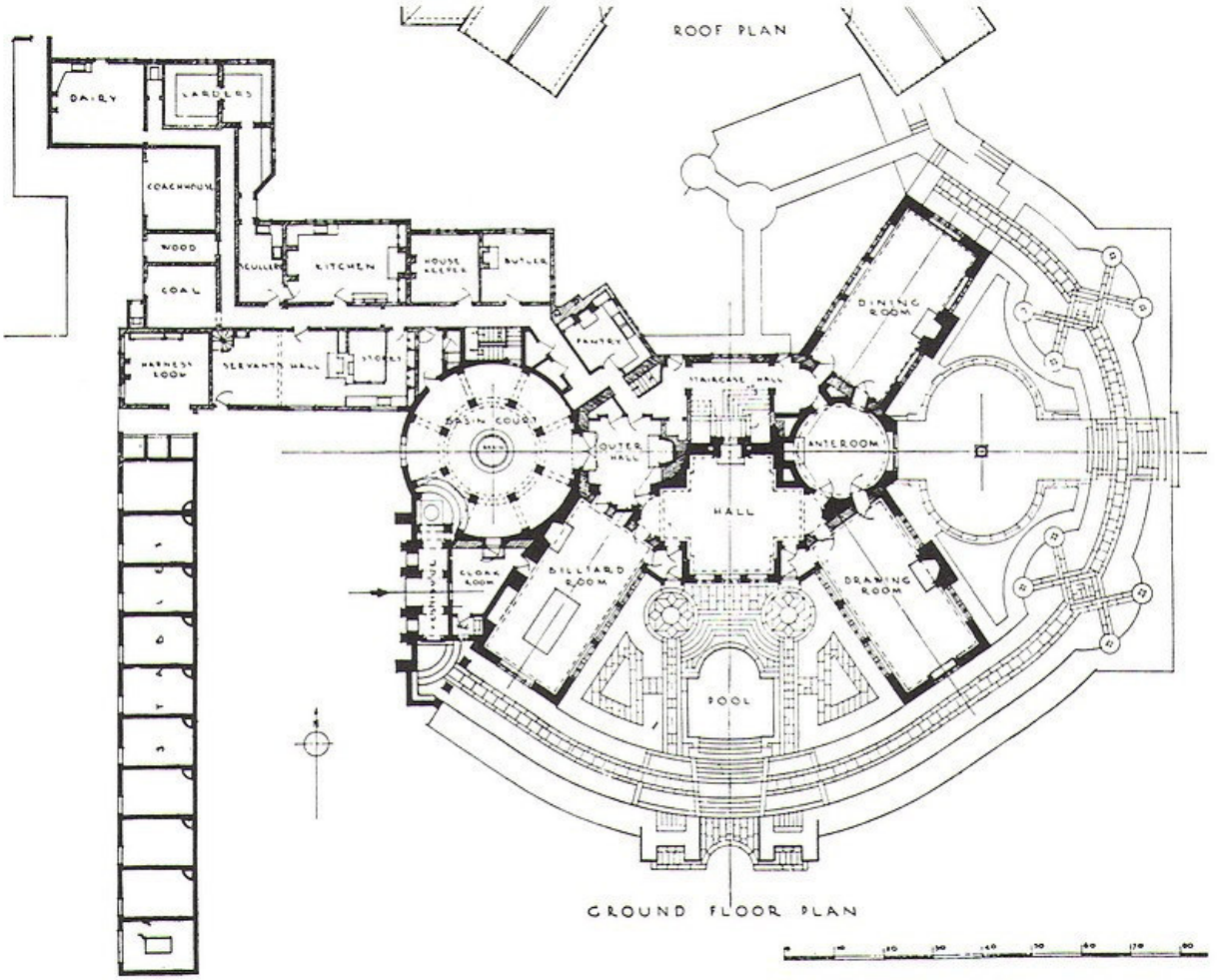
Inside Papillon was a round baisin court, hugged between two of the diagonal wings, in which the roof of the cloister was supported by impeccable Tuscan columns and pilasters. Next year, Lutyens came out with the full blown neo-classical elevation of the *Country Life* building in Covent Garden, totally symmetrical and formal with a high tiled roof, rusticated ground floor and stone dressings to the brick upper floors, all in a lively Wrenian fashion.

Lutyens was becoming a convinced classicist. In 1903, he wrote to Herbert Baker, "in architecture Palladio is the game. It is so big. Few appreciate it now and it requires considerable training to value and realize it. The way Wren handled it was marvellous . . . It means hard thought all through. If it is laboured it fails . . . it is a big game, a high game."[12]

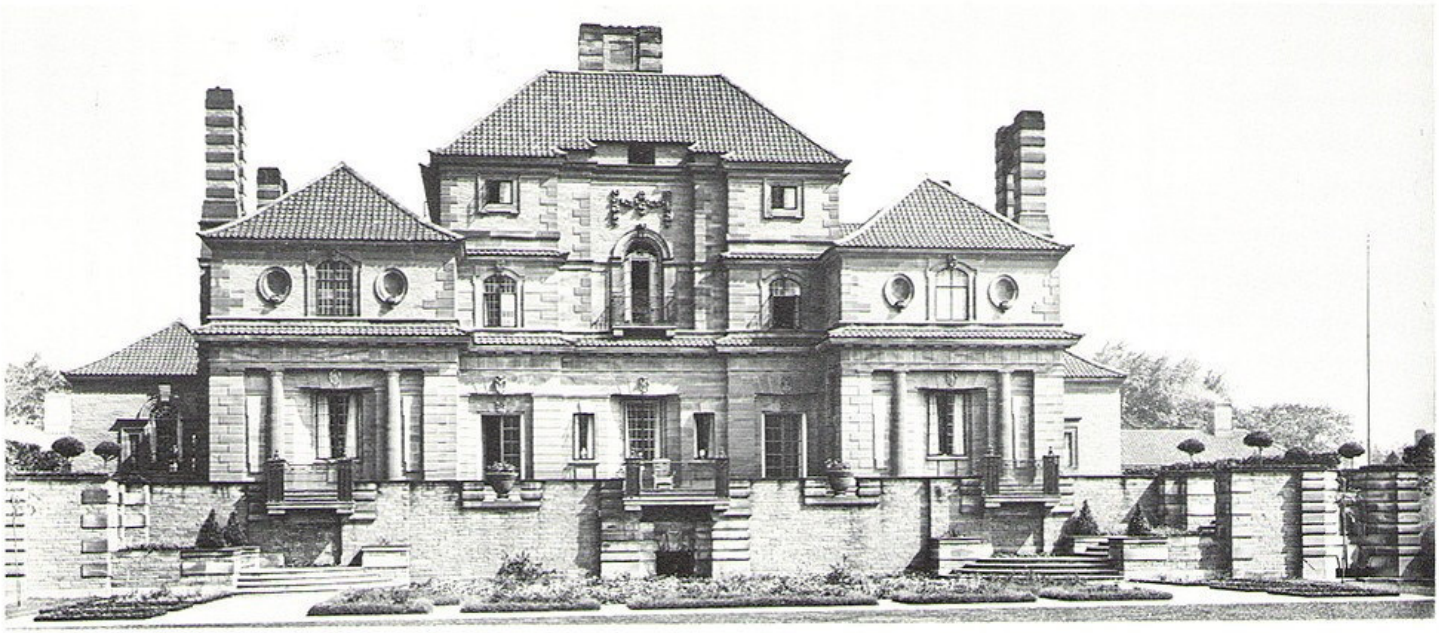
In 1906, Lutyens completed Heathcote, a villa in the suburbs of Ilkley in which for the first time he embraced the full panoply of Roman Doric, not just a few columns or pilasters but metopes, guttae, tryglyphs—the lot. The plan is fiercely symmetrical with the sitting room balancing the dining room across a country house hall on the main front. Lutyens knew he had been daring. A few years later, he wrote to Baker, "I have been scolded for not being Yorkshire in Yorkshire. The other view—have a window for this, a door for that etc.—a pot-pourri of ornithological details. The result is futile, absolutely unconvincing. My house stands there plumb. I don't think it could have been built anywhere else! Would Wren (had he gone to Australia) have burnt his knowledge and experience to produce a lame marsupial style, though it reflect the character of her aborigines? He would surely have done his best. . . In modern work—unlike the old—the thinking machine is separated from the labour machine so that the modern architect cannot have the same absolution as we give the old men when the thought and labour was the same individual. . . The thought and design should, in that they are specialized, become superthought—and, in that we specialize—must be in advance and distinctly beyond the conceptions of the architect's fellow men."[13] It was the architecture of authority, of an Empire which stretched from Ilkley to India.

As a viceregal son-in-law and author of some of the most distinguished classical buildings in England, Lutyens was an obvious choice for his greatest work—the viceroy's house in Delhi; a commission he gained in 1912, though the vast building was not completed until 1930. In its overpowering symmetry and blend of classical and Indian detailing, its endless

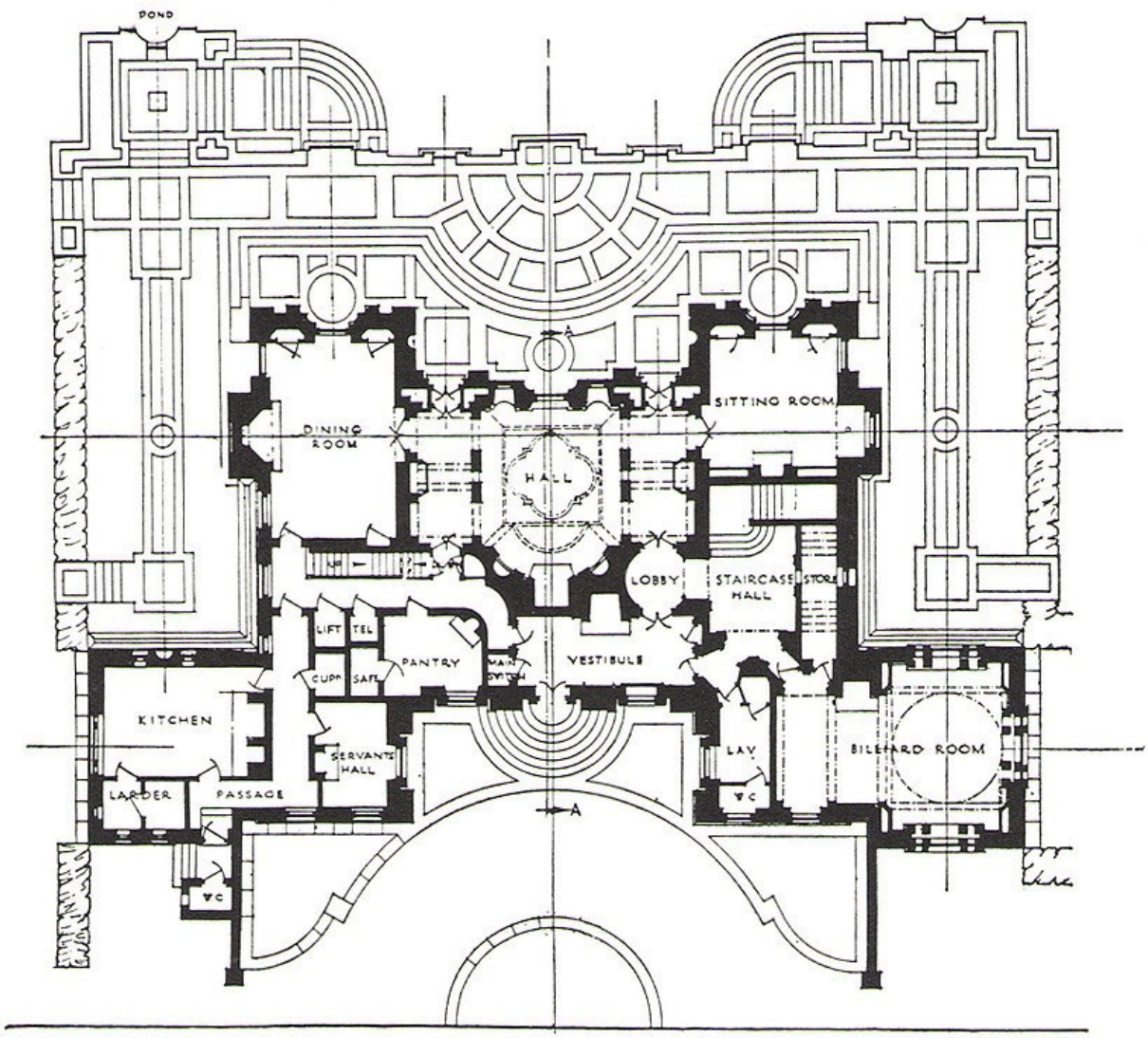
181 *Lutyens. Papillon Court, near Market Harborough, Leicestershire (1903, now destroyed)*



182 *Papillon, plan*



183 *Lutyens. Heathcote, Ilkley, Yorkshire (completed 1906)*



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

184 *Heathcote, ground floor plan*

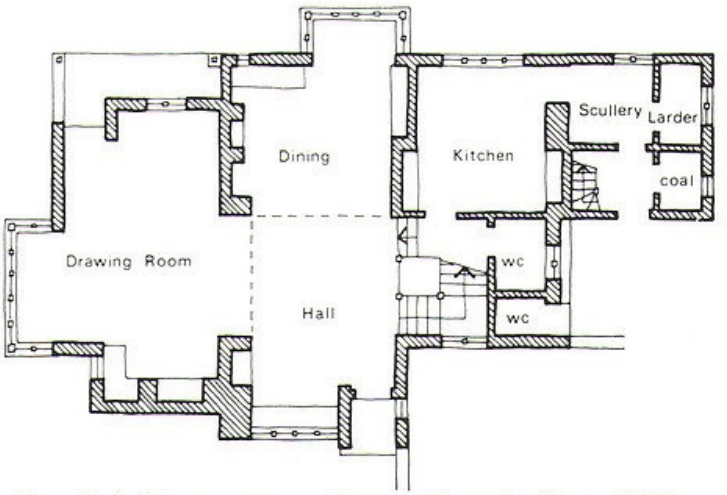
corridors and jokey incidents, the palace summarizes the worst—and the best—of the last decades of Empire.

The job ensured Lutyens's continuing popularity amongst the upper and upper middle classes. In the '20s and '30s Lutyens rarely returned to the full blown classicism of Heathcote but preferred a more gentle neo-Georgian, used inventively in many country houses and spread lamentably thinly over Park Lane. But he never wholly forgot his Arts and Crafts origins: many of the later country houses, though almost always symmetrical, are informed by local vernacular.

And, in India, he was brought back to a closer relationship with craftsmen. He advocated making the Delhi works "a training centre of craftsmanship, a kind of technical university, not only for carvers and painters but engineers and plumbers; and not merely for the immediate needs but as the missing counterpoint to the immense material and intellectual benefits brought to India by the English. For he felt strongly that whilst the raj had suppressed abominable practices, given India the finest engineering in the world, medicine and sanitation and virtually abolished famine, it had destroyed the Indian arts though not more than we have done in England".[14] The British. said Lutyens, had taught the Indians "all our evil bureaucratic tricks and little else." His proposals had no more success than Ashbee's a decade before. They were turned down out of hand by bureaucracy.

Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott (1865–1945) would have applauded Lutyens's idea for a school of craftsmanship for, throughout his long life as a practising architect, he never abandoned the pursuit of craftsmanly architecture or the teachings of Ruskin and Morris.

Scott was born near Ramsgate, the son of a minor



185 *Red House, plan. Dotted lines indicate folding screens*

186 *Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott. Oakleigh, Douglas, Isle of Man (1892–1893)*

but wealthy Scottish aristocrat. He was originally trained at Cirencester agricultural college with a view to running the family's sheep stations in Australia. But, though he passed all the examinations in 1885, he decided on no very clear grounds* to become an architect, and in 1886 he was articled to Major Charles Davis, the city architect of Bath who was responsible for the podgy Empire Hotel which, until the desecrations of the last twenty years, was one of the few cancers on Bath's Georgian fabric.

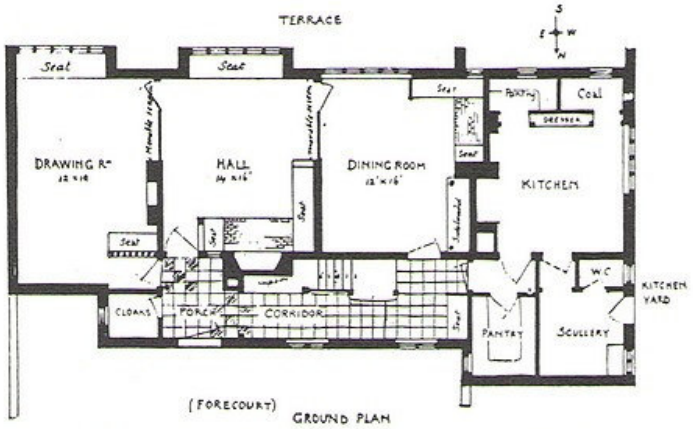
After this inauspicious beginning, Scott left Bath and settled in the Isle of Man in 1889—again an apparent whim. John Betjeman, as a young *Architectural Review* editor, was told by Scott that, "I went to the Isle of Man for a holiday. I was so seasick I couldn't face the journey back so I set up in practice there."[16]

His first buildings were mostly heavily half-timbered variants of the Old English style, owing little to their surroundings and much more to the early Shaw and to Ernest George. Inside, they were not so conventional. In his own house, the Red House in Douglas (1892–3), Scott invented a new way of planning in which the living room/hall was separated from the drawing and dining rooms by folding screens so that all three could be thrown together into one large irregular space or separated into individual rooms. Living halls modelled in miniature on those of country houses and folding screens allowing interconnected spaces were to be Scott's passions, despite their multitudinous disadvantages for families with children.

In 1894, Scott wrote an article in the *Studio* in which he described the virtues of a hypothetical house* in which a high hall flanked by drawing and dining rooms, all separated by folding screens, were stretched in Arts and Crafts fashion along a corridor where "to get some idea of its general effect I must transport you to some old Cheshire farm house, somewhere in the country where people have not yet grown to be ashamed of plain bricks and whitewash."[17] The hall itself had an inglenook over which Scott placed a small gallery in much the way that Shaw slung his study over the dining room inglenook in his own house (p. 40)—but with much less practical purpose; the gallery was intended to house musicians who would entertain the family taking its ease round the fire, or strike up for a dance when the three main rooms would be thrown into one by folding back the screens. The idea of a late nineteenth-century mini Medici living in suburban splendour complete with a court band now seems preposterous, but it was sufficiently attractive and credible at the time to earn Scott many commissions.

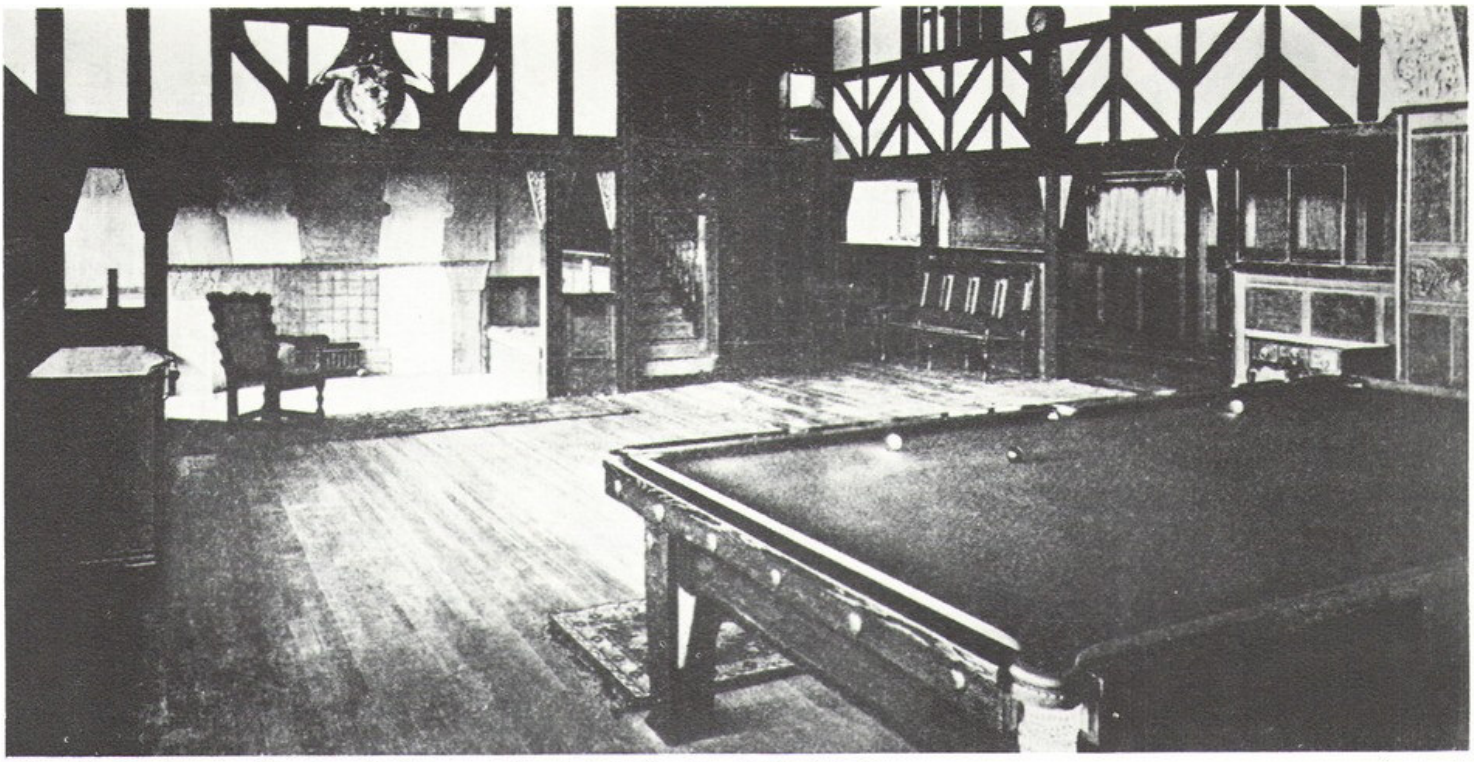
The finest manifestation of Scott's inglenook and gallery is at Blackwell, a large country house near Bowness in Westmorland (1898–1899) where he adopted a Voysey-like purity outside; white harling and strips of stone-mullioned windows sat under a slate roof with Scottish gables. The half-timbering was brought inside, where it ran rather Teutonic riot round the hall which contained a giant inglenook supporting a half-timbered gallery. The drawing room—a space which Scott thought ought to be "dainty"—was all white and delicate. Slender columns were topped by hemispherical foliated basket

* For lack of personal papers, Scott's personality and private history remain shadowy, despite the attentions of James D. Kornwolf who has written down everything there is to know about Scott and a great deal more.[15]

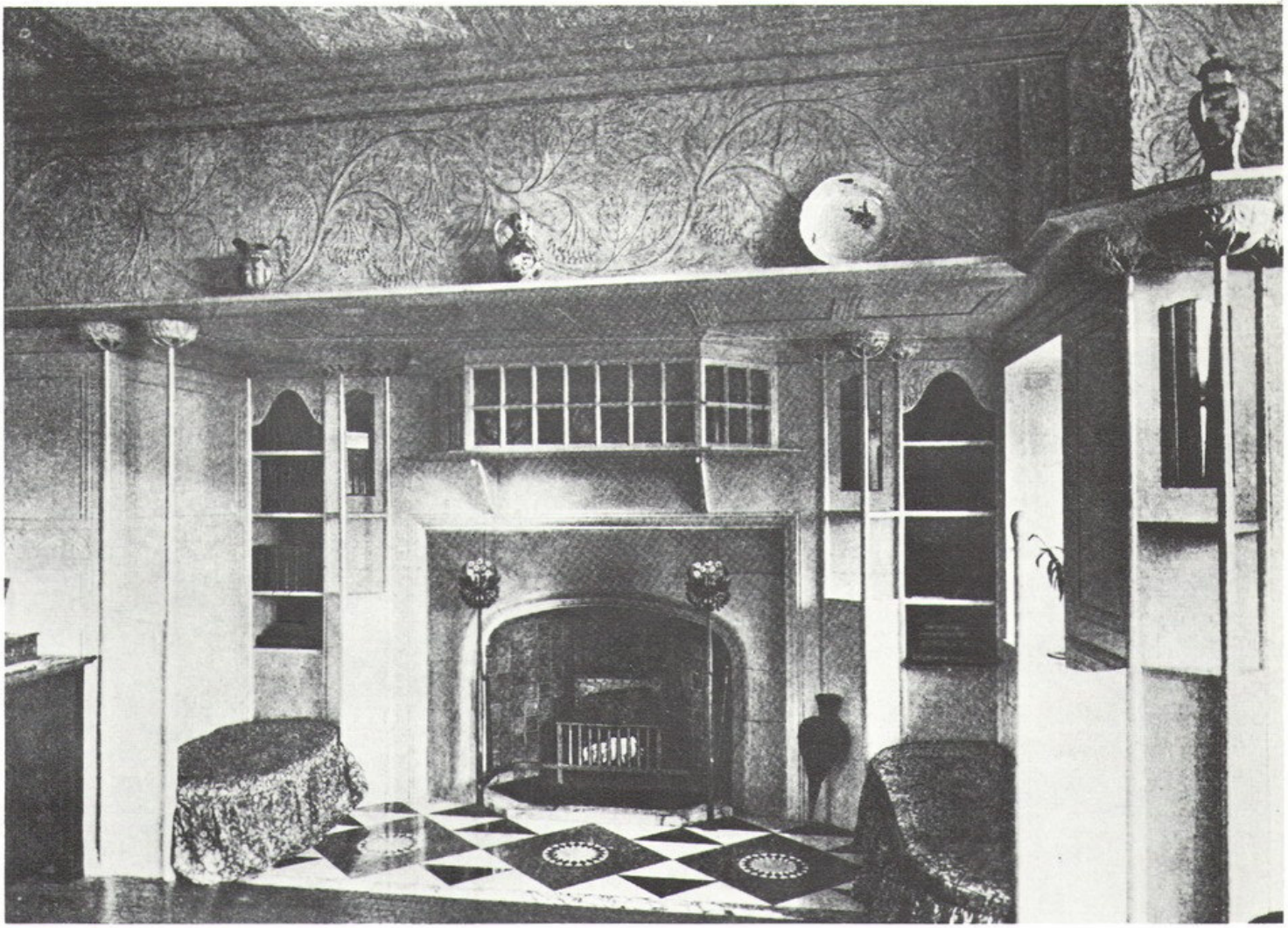


187, 188 *Baillie Scott. Ideal house, published in the* "Studio" *1894*

* Just as Voysey got his first commission after publishing hypothetical work in the *British Architect*, Scott's earliest commissions from England and the Continent followed his articles on ideal houses in the *Studio*.



189 *Baillie Scott. Blackwell, Westmorland (1898–1899) The Hall*



190 *Blackwell, drawing room*

191 *Baillie Scott. White Lodge, Wantage, Oxfordshire (1898–1899)*

capitals supporting a thin shelf which ran round the whole room.

The design had all the fine-drawn Mackmurdoish elegance of Mackintosh at Hill House three years later. As Muthesius remarked, "In Baillie Scott's work each room is an individual creation, the elements of which do not just happen to be available but spring from the over-all idea. Baillie Scott is the first to have realized the interior as an autonomous work of art."[18]

In the same years, Scott was building the White Lodge at Wantage in Oxfordshire for the chaplain of St. Mary's Convent. Externally the house could easily be mistaken for a Voysey until you notice the absence of strong horizontal string courses and the slightly elongated proportions of the mullioned windows—it is a Voysey house yawning. Inside there was yet another decorative approach in the first floor drawing room, which had a white semi-circular vault under which were elaborate and unclerical paintings of colourful peacocks and flowers.

This richness is an echo of Scott's work for the Grand Duke of Hesse at Darmstadt. In 1897, Scott and Ashbee were separately commissioned by Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig to design interiors for the palace. Scott did the white-panelled dining and drawing

192 *Baillie Scott. Dining room for Grand Duke of Hesse, Darmstadt (1897)*

rooms which were made rich with embossed leather friezes of Voysey-like birds and flowers executed by Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft. In the drawings, published in *Building News*, the furniture looks overcarved and lumpen. Yet, in fact, most of the forms were simple. Perfectly flat surfaces bore painted or inlaid floral ornament which like other Arts and Crafts work, however luxuriant, avoided the sinuous intertwinings of Art Nouveau in favour of heraldic stiffness.

Darmstadt was the foundation of a flourishing continental practice for Scott which, though commissions never again reached the magnificence of the Grand Ducal palace, included the interiors of a tree house for the Crown Princess of Romania (a Hesse offspring) and several large aristocratic mansions in and around Germany.

At home, life was more humdrum. To be near J. P. White's Pyghtle works for which he designed furniture, Scott moved in 1901 from the Isle of Man to Bedford, one of England's least romantic country towns, where he adapted a large cottage and worked in rural ease. His Voyseyish style continued well into the decade, and Scott was not afraid to confess his admiration of the older architect. "If one were asked to sum up in a few words the scope and purposes of Mr. Voysey's work," he wrote in 1908, "one might say that it consists mainly in the application of severely sane, practical and rational ideas to home making."[19]

One of Scott's largest white buildings was Waterlow Court, an Associated Home for ladies, in Hampstead Garden Suburb. It is a courtyard surrounded by flats. Here, as *The British Architect* enthused,

193 *Baillie Scott. Landhaus Waldbühl, Switzerland (1907–13)*

194 *Baillie Scott. Waterlow Court, Hampstead Garden Suburb (1909)*

195 *Baillie Scott. The Cloisters, Regents Park, London (1912–1913, destroyed)*

"Mr. Baillie Scott has shown that our old type of almshouse design, built in quadrangular form, may be dealt with in a sensible modern spirit so as to make economical and artistic housing a possibility. A lady may live here with a companion in charming rooms at a cost as low as four and threepence per week."[20] The quadrangle is all whitewashed brick (one of his favourite aphorisms was "when in doubt whitewash"[21]). Big round arches form the cloister above which strips of Voyseyish windows nestle under the eaves of the steep, red-tiled roof. Outside, the block is less severe with a half-timbered first floor on top of dusky reddish purple brick.

By the time Waterlow Court was built in 1909, Scott had moved away from Voyseyish austerity. At Bill House, Selsey on Sea (1906–7) he relieved the white roughcast with jolly chequered patterns of local brick and stone. The Cloisters, Regents Park (1912–13—now demolished) was one of his largest houses, all diapered brickwork enclosing a great half-timbered hall and sumptuously panelled living rooms. It was built for Sir Boverton Redwood, a petrol magnate, and it was so consciously anachronistic that even Lawrence Weaver, one of the most faithful publicists of Arts and Crafts architecture, had a few qualms: "Redwood", he wrote, "can shut his door, entrenched in the Middle Ages tempered by bath taps (h and c) and electric light . . . As to whether the Cloisters represents *him* and his contribution to civilization as well as it represents Mr. Baillie Scott's devotion to the spirit of medieval craftsmanship is one of those difficult questions which it would be impertinent to explore."[22]

Only a year after the Cloisters was finished, Baillie Scott designed his first neo-Georgian house: he had stood out against the new fashion as long as he could. The house was an ordinary little red brick box with a plan contorted to allow the windows to be arranged in regular rows. It was the antithesis of everything Scott had stood for up to that time. He had increasingly adopted symmetry throughout the previous decade, but the planning had been linear and free and all his forms had been derived from local models.

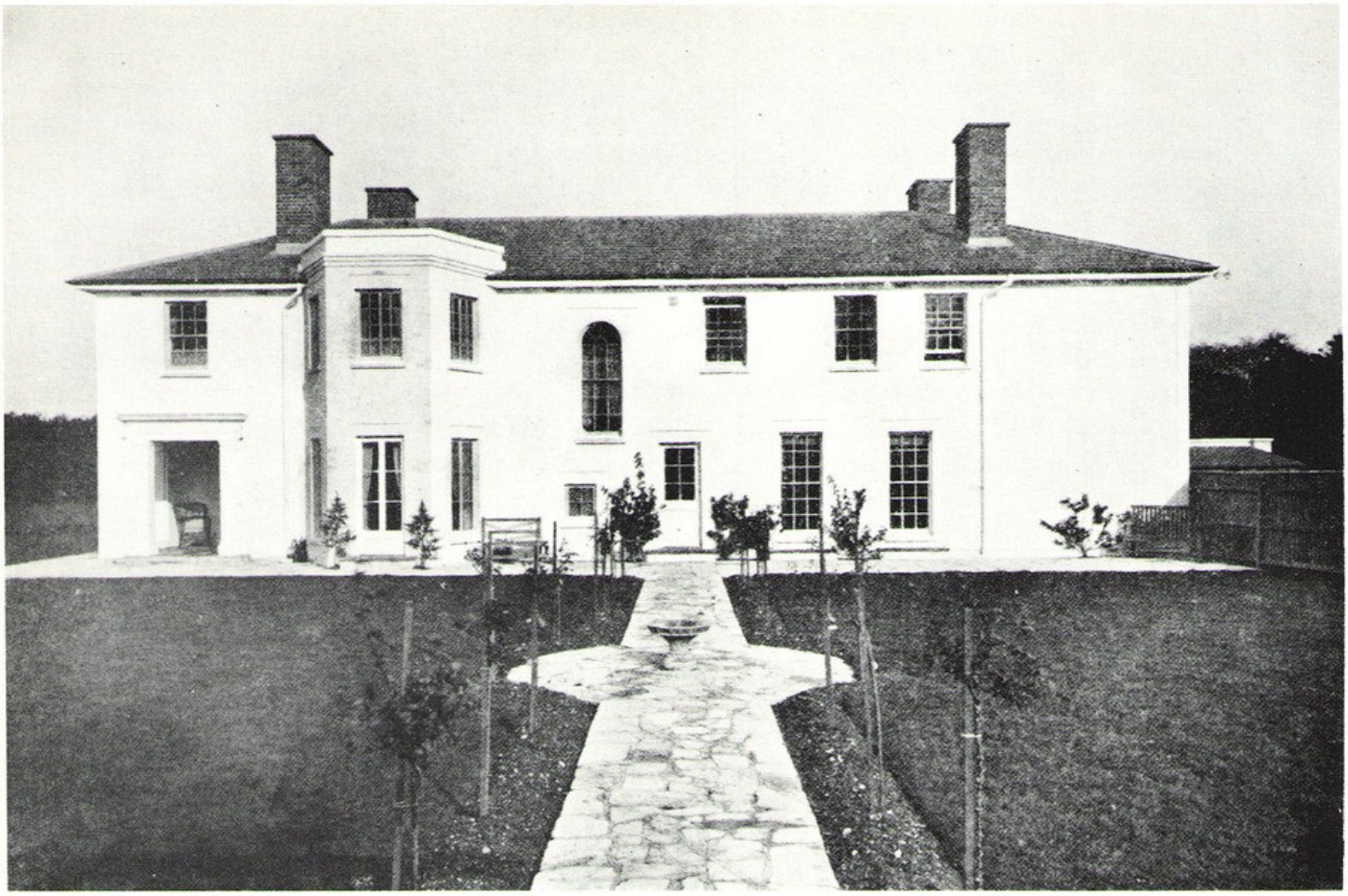
Neo-Georgian was to be one of the several styles between which Scott alternated in the '20s and '30s. He continued to preach against machine production and regularity, developing his theme that "instead of the callous, brutal methods of the modern factory, art makes the workshop into a school, where materials may be 'educated' in the literal sense. And the chief aim of this education is not to force the material into the strait waistcoat of preconceived forms, but so to deal with it that, having first sympathetically discovered its character, that character may be expressed properly subordinated to the fulfillment of practical functions."[23]

But Scott, though he seems to have had no financial compulsion to go on working (he owned, amongst other property, the Kensington Palace Hotel) continued to attract clients, and he had to fall in with their taste, which in many cases was for neo-Georgian discipline. Occasionally, as in his house at Mudeford Green, Hampshire (1924), he achieved a clumsy originality by changefully disposing Georgian elements in a style similar to Queen Anne. But usually, his houses were small, well built, well mannered brick boxes. The Tudor derived style continued and there were other idioms too—a flat-topped, white-walled bungalow in Hong Kong and flat-roofed, castle-like houses in Cornwall.

Whatever the style, contemporaries still respected his craftsmanship. In 1925 John Clarke wrote, "His plain brick wall is a joy. There is the same difference between it and the average brick wall that there is between a Persian rug and an Axminster carpet. It brings us back again to the old question that has been discussed and debated so often. Can we with our modern machine-made materials and machine-like labour hope to produce as satisfying work as was produced before machinery came to curse or bless us? Mr. Baillie Scott says 'No'. His answer is: 'A study of old building one finds in . . . villages, suggests that it is not only better than any modern building, but has some essential difference. . . This difference largely consists in the character of the workmanship which, like handwriting, conveys personality instead of being a lifeless mechanical formula.'"[24]

So Scott retained his beliefs, however much his clients demanded neo-Georgian and the bye-laws required him to use fire-resistant fake half-timbering rather than the real thing. Yet his talent had been eaten away. Even his best architecture rarely achieved the originality of Voysey, Prior, Lethaby, Ashbee or Lutyens; after the War, he became a pasticheur of whose work the chief characteristic was, according to Clarke, ". . . charm. There is no other word that describes it so well. It is all charming, whether it be Tudor or Georgian. It is pookish, unexpected. It has the same quality that appears in Barrie's plays; a quality that is at the moment held lightly."[25]

It still is. Scott's later houses were a part of Barrie's Never-Never Land, owned by middle-aged



196 *Baillie Scott. House at Mudeford Green, Hampshire (1924)*

Wendies—a sugary upper-middle class realization of the Nowhere to which Morris's hero had been transported.

Arts and Crafts architecture had descended to scene painting. Yet Scott should not be judged too harshly. He did his best but the times were against him. As A. L. N. Russel wrote towards the end of Scott's long career, surely few architects "have built so much all over England and done so little violence to its amenities"[26]—not a bad epitaph for the big, quiet, unassuming man who loved the country and lived in it all his life.

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