

Hawksmoor's house at Easton Neston

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INTRODUCTION

The mansion house at Easton Neston is Nicholas Hawksmoor's first masterpiece. It was substantially complete in 1702. The first of these two statements is supported by the architect's own claim; the second is inscribed on the entablature of the east front as well as on rainwater heads. But few documents or drawings have ever been found, and the house reveals only limited evidence of its early history. The name of Sir Christopher Wren also has consistently been linked with it, but the meaning of this connection needs re-examining.¹ It is now possible to trace most of the stages by which a drawing by Wren became a building by Hawksmoor, and to show that the building begun in the early 1680s was not designed by Wren; that possibly Sir William Fermor having rejected Wren's good advice was offered that of his assistant Hawksmoor and accepted it; that while the author of the service wings is unknown, the body of the house, as Hawksmoor called it, is his alone; that it was built only once and is not a stone cladding of an already completed house.² Some further evidence is added of the rôle of the Arundel Marbles in the adornment of the house. Although dates are still extremely hard to find, there seem still to be good reasons for, and none against, the view that the main house was begun in or soon after 1695.

LORD LEMPSTER AND HIS HOUSE

In 1661, at the age of thirteen, Sir William Fermor succeeded as Baronet and as the owner of Easton Neston, a house of substance. Nothing of this building is known except that it stood south of the parish church whereas the present house is to the north; the village had disappeared before 1720.³ Sir William received his MA at Oxford in 1667. In 1691 he bought the Arundel Marbles, perhaps for show rather than for scholarship, but he later devoted some energy to their arrangement and sought the advice of the learned.⁴ In 1708 he wrote to Dr Covell, Master of Christ's College, Cambridge, 'I am now setting up all my marbles in the manner I intend to leave them in', and sent him the copy made by his chaplain of a Greek inscription. 'Wee had much ado', he wrote 'to pick it out of its ancient worn characters, but if you find it any way doubtfull wee have here frequent learned men whom I will consult to decypher it better'.⁵ He was a keen horticulturist, and his will of 1705 shows great pride in his collections, which were to be preserved, and in his 'choice mansion or seat'.⁶

Sir William married three times. His first wife died in 1673 after only two years. His second, Catherine, daughter of Lord Poulett, wed him in 1682 and died in 1687. It is

tempting to suppose that this second marriage provided both the impetus and some of the money for the building of the wings (of which the north one survives) which are certainly earlier than the main house; further, that work stopped on Lady Catherine's death.

In March 1691/92 he married Sophia, widow of Donough O'Brien and daughter of the Duke of Leeds. According to Narcissus Luttrell she brought him £10,000 and the Duke got him the Barony of Lempster within six weeks of the wedding.⁷ Her dowry, while not adequate for the cost of Hawksmoor's house, certainly would have made all the difference between a conventional late Stuart hip-roofed building and the elaborate construction and fine masonry, joinery and plasterwork we see today. It is tempting also therefore to place the rise in Sir William's architectural ambitions *after* 1692, allowing some time for the money to become available.

In 1970 Howard Colvin argued on the basis of three newly found documents that the house was built c. 1685–95, owing more to Wren than to Hawksmoor (because the latter was only twenty-four in 1685) and completed in brick, and that it was soon afterwards encased in the present stone giant order.⁸ Quite different conclusions can be drawn from broader evidence, but the idea has spread that Easton Neston today is somehow a Wren house. Moreover, the idea of changes during construction is attractive and perhaps fashionable, and indeed the house was put together in a remarkable way.

THE DOCUMENTS

The fabric is formally dated 1702, though the interior may not have been completed then. The crossed Ls (for Lempster) in the staircase wrought iron work must be between 1692 and 1708 when a visitor saw it; in 1711 the 1st Baron died, leaving an heir of only fourteen. Four early printed sources refer to Easton Neston. The earliest, Morton's *Natural History of Northamptonshire* (1712), mentions no architect but describes a remarkable conduit.⁹ Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1715) names Hawksmoor, using his drawings, and gives the completion date as 1713; the un-executed cupola and the dressing up of the wings in his plates must represent Hawksmoor's hopes nearer that date than to 1702.

The third and fourth sources were published posthumously. *A Description of Easton Neston* was printed in 1758 by William Bathoe, but must have been written in the 1720s;¹⁰ it seems to have been among George Vertue's papers and has been attributed to him among several possible authors. The writer names Wren as the architect, but since he says there was nobody on the site to tell him anything such a guess is not entirely surprising. Finally John Bridges's *History of Northamptonshire*, published in 1791 from notes made before his death in 1724, says that the wings, of brick (Fig. 18), are by Wren and about twenty years before 1702, when the house (Fig. 7) was finished to the design of Hawksmoor, 'who hath very much departed from the first design'.¹¹ Bridges's original notes in the Bodleian show that he used his eyes, asked questions and took a draughtsman along with him; otherwise they add little here to the printed record.¹²

Of manuscript sources and drawings, the first is a letter from Wren to Fermor which has been at Easton since the beginning of this century:

Sept. 5th.

Sr, Mr Murry hath given me some account of the progresse you have made in your walling. It is hard to give particular directions for the highthes of the walls on the corner of the Garden next the church, but this I say in generall that they must not be higher than will give you the Libertie of a prospect towards Tocester from the great Garden and also that the windowes of your parlor may looke over them. Let the workemen set up some small poles & tack a board levell upon them wch you may set higher or lower till you are your selfe satisfied what highth the walls may be not to prejudice your prospect, & that highth you may continue along your Church Yard wall also. Your Green houses may have Staircases without as I have shewn Mr Murry with a Chimny for the roome above, but then you must have more Luthernes because of the room above. I hope you provide to carry up one Story at least of the great house next yeare it will be better worke & give it time to settle the stone & brick together. Give me leave to advise you to one thing, You will never be satisfied with your floores unlesse you provide your boardes early; this is the cheapest time of the yeare, you may deale with a Marchant heer to deliver your boardes at Wisbich from whence you may have them brought to St Ives wch I take to be your esiest way. 400£ well layd out will furnish you, & out of such a Stock you may pick out good boardes for your best roomes & the rest will be used for the garrets, & your roomes over the kitchin, for the boardes that are there are only for your pigsties. I am the more earnest in this because though you may fit your selfe with all other materialls at hand, yet these materialls may be noe otherwise supplied. by that time you have Earth enough in your great Garden I will if I can set it out. I wish you all health & remaine

your most humble Servt

Chr Wren.¹³

The letter bears no year. Fermor was first cousin of the second Lady Wren and was godfather to her son William in 1679; he and Wren dined with Evelyn in May 1681.¹⁴ The family connection was a sufficient reason for the involvement of Wren, who was extremely busy with other matters; indeed perhaps it was the only possible inducement to him to become involved. Nevertheless Avray Tipping, who first printed the letter, already drew the inference that Wren was not the author of whatever Fermor was building or hoping to build at the time.

It is clear that whenever Wren wrote the main house had reached no more than foundations, if that far; that a good deal of work had been done on the gardens — a not uncommon order of events — and that most of the materials were local. The remark about boards only for pigsties may or may not indicate that Wren had visited the site; the rest of the letter with its careful detailing of generalities suggests that he had not. The letter gives two other clues to Fermor's intentions: (1) the reference to rooms over the kitchen suggests that it was to be on the ground floor of a wing building rather than, as now, in the main basement under the hall; (2) Wren's mention of stone and brick settling together implies that ashlar was envisaged, if not for the whole exterior, at least for central frontispieces.

It is tempting also to relate this letter to a drawing in the V & A which contains four bits of information.¹⁵ Two are inexplicable: a pencil plan of a pentagonal temple-like building and a pencil drawing of what appears to be a basement window. The other two bits are in ink and probably related to each other: a sketch section of a walled terrace with sight lines, and a note reading 'July 23 1686. Memd. for Easton. To make the Grasse on the Garden side 4 fot deep from the top of the water table'. A water table is here a sloping ledge to throw off rainwater from a wall, and the order of words suggests

that gardening, rather than house-building, was the matter in hand. There is no reason to doubt that the writing is Hawksmoor's. So in July 1686 Hawksmoor was involved in Easton Neston with matters similar to those raised in the Wren letter, which must date from 1685 or 1686.

Confirmation that Fermor's building intentions were serious at this time comes from the first of Colvin's three documents, the notebook of James and later John Grove, carpenters.¹⁶ The first nine folios refer to work at Whitehall in 1686, but on the back of fols 8 and 9 is a series of prices and rates 'at Sr Wm Farmers at Easton nr Towster', including 'Luthern' [i.e. dormer] windows with caps and pediments, clearstory windows, four- and six-light windows, eaves boards, flooring, ceiling joists, partitions, tables and trestles, centering for chimneys, for inside brick and outside stone arches, and 'roofing & boarding of the Great Pedements'.

Several points need to be made about this list. Its place in the notebook suggests a date about 1686. It is not a bill but a price list; consequently there is no indication whether the work was carried out, either before or after the schedule was compiled. Features such as pediments and dormer windows are not to be found in the present house (except in the wing). On the other hand almost all the items listed can be identified in the next document, a drawing at All Souls which shows the elevation and long section of a country house, which has pediments of equal height — and therefore probably equal width — in both the wing and main centrepieces. Incidentally, the notes make no mention of a roof-top cupola.

One of Wren's few drawings for country houses has continued to be associated with Easton Neston ever since its publication in the *Wren Society* (Fig. 9).¹⁷ However, the connection has never been fully explored, partly because there is no scale on the drawing; figures such as a '10' in the right-hand wing cannot be in feet. There are obvious dangers in the trial-and-error method, but since architectural history is not algebra it is legitimate to work backwards from the desirable answer in order to establish the givens. If we take the scale to be 16 ft to an inch the results are encouraging: they give us a house 116 ft 9 in. wide — let us for the moment call the present one 120 ft — and a court width of 137 ft, or 8 in. short of the present figure. Moreover, the five-bay two-storey central part in the drawing is 66 ft wide against a corresponding width today of 67 ft 3 in. at basement level, or about 1½ ft less across pilasters 3 to 8.

The results become more interesting when we superimpose the elevation on the present house (Fig. 12).¹⁸ Both in width and in spacing the five centre windows correspond quite closely, and the discrepancies in height do not exceed what one would allow for the difference in architectural character between the two elevations. A working hypothesis therefore would be that the All Souls drawing represents the penultimate design for the house whose wings were begun about 1682 as Bridges implies, and whose main body was under consideration about 1686 when Hawksmoor was concerned with garden walls and James Grove was concerned with prices. The design is penultimate and not final because the wings were built otherwise and designed, as other evidence will suggest, by another hand now unknown.

A second Wren letter was convincingly dated to 1687 by Margaret Whinney on grounds of the combination of references to Whitsun and to James II's policy of appointing Roman Catholics to office.¹⁹

May 14th

Sr.

I hoped to have had an easy opportunity to have waited on you by going first to Tring this Whitson week, but Mr Guy is not certain of his Journey, & thinges soe fall out with me that I can goe noe whither till the King be setled at Windsor, & other thinges now incumbent upon me be at least put into such a method as I may safely leave them, You are happy who can enjoy your Quiet in a Garden undisturbed, with wealth & plenty about you, wee are bound to our good behaviour uncertain wch. way the next wind may tosse us, wee are afraid of being absent from our charge, & therefore watch as those who travell in suspected places. if Mr Guy had been assured, I had wrote to you as wee had agreed when I last had the honour to see you, but businesse detained him till the end of next weeke & the beginning of the following I must be engaged, soe that I must begge your excuse for this time, being desirous to hear how your affaires prosper as well as of your health. if you aske me any questions wee can resolve by letter, I shall readily serve you till I can find opportunity to wait on you. I remaine

Your most affectionate & most
humble servant

Chr. Wren.

Wren had hoped to visit Fermor, although he seems to have made less effort to do so than to excuse himself, and he is ready to answer any questions that can be dealt with by correspondence. Negative evidence is suspect, but Fermor also had other preoccupations at the time. His second wife had recently died and he had obtained letters of administration three days before Wren wrote.²⁰

An amusing sidelight is provided by a letter in the Hatton-Finch papers. Fermor's young cousin Charles Hatton wrote to his father on 6 June 1688 that he had been to Easton where I surpriz'd Sr Will. Farmer who was said by his servants to be at London he received me very obligingly, enquired with great concerne after yr Lopp declaring you might command anything in his garden. but what he hath I find he neither knowes nor ever will but yet (wch is strange) he much affects choice and curious plants he shew'd me great variety of mirtles (wch at this season) by slipps doe easily propagate. 4 sorts of lazaroles [medlars], 2 quite different from any you have.²¹

This perhaps tells us only that Sir William was at home and his gardens were flourishing; we cannot be sure that Hatton saw no building works or that there were none. But as he seems to have walked about the garden the omission may be significant.

On 19 March 1691 Evelyn dined at Sir William's London house in Duke Street; he saw many good pictures there, and remarked that the Arundel Marbles which Fermor had recently bought had been sent to his seat in Northamptonshire.²² The conjunction is important. The pictures were in the London house, in good order and part of Fermor's life-style; the marbles, on the other hand, having been despatched to the country, would have to wait some years to be set up. Indeed we know that they were still emerging from disorder in 1708 when Lord Lempster, as he was by then, sent Dr Covell the Greek inscription. Was this delay not because the new house to put them in was not yet built in 1691 and was only recently finished in 1708?

In the autumn of 1694 a new main water supply was laid to the site. Colvin's second document is Hawksmoor's pocket notebook, which details craftsmen's rates and prices of materials, in general or at specific sites. On fol. 38^v are references to 'lead at my Ld.

Lempster's . . . Sept. 4 1694', to its carriage from beyond Derby, and casting into one-and-a-half-inch pipes on site.²³ The next page of the book in fact shows the purpose of the pipes: there we find an account of 600 yds of oak pipes laid underground, diminishing from 4 in. to 2 in. bore and thence to 1½ in. so as to 'Joyne with the lead' which then ran for 1,400 yds making a total of 2,000 yds. Unless hydraulics was another of Lord Lempster's hobbies this can hardly be other than the 2,000-yd conduit from Tiffield described in corresponding detail by Morton in 1712 as one of the curiosities of the county.²⁴

Now building is a wet trade, and laying a water main is one of the first requirements in any large undertaking. At Kingston Lacy in 1663 the bricklayer's contract stated 'that he shall make use of his own labourers only to all intents and purposes, saving only that the water shall be set ready for him by those of Sir Ralph in some part of the intended kitchen court'.²⁵ If Sir *William* (Lord Lempster) did not manage to set the water ready until the autumn of 1694 it seems unlikely that work on the main house finally began before the spring of 1695. The question of how he managed water for the wings cannot be answered, but this would appear to be just the kind of problem that needed a Hawksmoor rather than a Mr Murry in charge.

The question of what design was put in hand once the water was on site must follow consideration of two further documents. In 1708 John Lumley, the master mason at Burley-on-the-Hill called the staircase at Easton Neston 'noble staires by reason which Sir Christopher Renn and Mr Hawksmoor designed them'.²⁶ Did they design them by concensus or in succession? Was one of them not equal to the task? It is much easier to say what makes them 'noble' stairs: *scale nobili* is the Italian term for the stately 1 in 3 gradient which puts the Easton Neston ascent among the grandest examples of the time in Italy, France and the Empire. But as to who designed the house, Bridges is really a more informative source than Lumley.

There is also another testimony: Hawksmoor's letter of 1731. He told Lord Carlisle: We . . . went to my Ld pontfracts. The Body of the House has some virtues, but is not quite finished, the Wings are good for nothing. I had the honor to be concerned in the body of the house, it is beautifully and strongly built with durable stone, The State and the Conveniencys are as much as can well be in soe small a pavilion. One can hardly avoy'd loveing ones owne children.²⁷

For a man who was sparing of words except in polemic, this is a remarkably full, if modest, assessment. Against the sprawl of Castle Howard the packing together of state and private rooms at Easton within the width prescribed by the wings, as expertly as items in a Christmas hamper, still invites our wonder (Figs 1 and 21). What he meant by 'not quite finished' is uncertain: no house is ever quite finished. But the most significant points concern his and Wren's part in the house. Hawksmoor separates the body, in which he was concerned, from the rest. The body is one of his own children; the parental phrase is not uncommon among seventeenth-century architects, and in his case it is distinct from his reference to Blenheim where he compared himself to 'the loving nurse that almost thinks the child her own'.²⁸ At Easton Neston his part involved conception as well as nurture.

The wings on the other hand he considered 'good for nothing'. Now from other letters to Lord Carlisle it is evident how highly Hawksmoor continued to regard his old

master Wren, and the same flavour occurs in his obituary, which was written within the family circle and conveys his *persona*.²⁹ He would not have been so dismissive of wings in which Fermor followed Wren's drawing rather than merely asking his advice.

THE BUILDING, THE MODEL AND THE COLEPEPER DRAWINGS

Consideration of the house must start, inversely to the documentation, with the present. The bay widths at Easton Neston are unequal with a precision that must be deliberate. So too are the slight divergences between the two main fronts in the spacing of windows and pilasters. Left-right symmetry, on the other hand, is within an imperceptible tolerance of ± 1 inch.³⁰ But the complexity of the elevations, as well as of the plan, does have a pre-history which can in part be traced, and will need to be considered later in detail.

The hall of the house was until about 1900 in three parts, the centre being two storeys high. There are a grand staircase, an upper gallery on the short axis, a drawing room in the south-east corner, and three square rooms on each floor. Around these, which Hawksmoor called the State, were built the Conveniencies: by means of mezzanines the northern corners became the four-storey pavilions of apartments with their own staircases. At the south end the upper half is also divided into two levels of small rooms reached by the backstairs.

Two systems articulate the outside elevations. One is that of windows and forward breaks; the other is that of giant pilasters, continuous on the main fronts and intermittent on the ends (Fig. 8). One step back in time from the house itself is the wooden model, made to a scale of 5 ft to an inch (Fig. 13). It is painted grey outside to suggest stone, but that is probably not original (nor the slate blue of the roof), and as an indication of material the scoring on the end pilaster strips of the entrance front remains ambiguous.

In my 1959 book on Hawksmoor I claimed that the width/depth ratio differs between model and house.³¹ They are in fact identical; however, in ratio of *height* to plan the model is lower. While the ground-floor rooms are about the same height, the upper gallery and the stair cage are lower in the model, and less of the roof is concealed. Externally the difference lies not in the window heights but in the dimensions of the enormous entablature of the giant order. The shape of the elevation was also changed from model to building by placing a string course immediately under the ground-floor windows; this gives the impression that they come down to the floor and that the basement is raised much higher (Fig. 7). Only the doorway reveals that the floor level is a couple of feet lower than it otherwise appears to be. Next to the giant order, this is the most significant external change between the model and the building.

The model's articulation depends virtually on fenestration and changes of plane, though there are the same differences as in the fabric between bays, and between the fenestration of the two main fronts. On the west (court) front the end breaks are double, there are raised panels between the end and penultimate bays, and the pilaster strips between bays 2 and 3 (and 7 and 8) are narrower than on the garden front. The frontispieces differ, Corinthian over Ionic on the west and Ionic over Doric rusticated

on the east. Among a small group of Hawksmoor drawings in the Minet Library, Camberwell, is an elevation of what seems to be the east frontispiece (Fig. 16).³²

Inside, the model shows the same complex packaging of rooms as the house.³³ There is one important difference in plan from the building: the south walls of the north corner apartments are in a straight line, whereas in the fabric the north-east apartments extend slightly further south (Fig. 21).

A prominent feature of both house and model is that the backstairs passage is not coaxial with the whole plan: its party wall with the hall stands almost in the centre line, because the hall is wider than any other room (Fig. 1). This was a change from a previous stage in the design which is recorded in the plan sketched, for reasons best known to himself, by Colonel Thomas Colepeper, together with attempts at the upper floors and partial north and west elevations (Figs 14, 15 and 20). These, Colvin's third document, are among his miscellanea in the Harleian MSS, some under L for Lempster and others (including the west front) under B, perhaps for Building or Brickwork.³⁴ The latter possibility, and the serrations on the corner pilaster strip of the elevation, encourage Colvin's contention that Colepeper drew a brick building. A reference here to brickwork is indeed possible, and if one consequence of a windfall of £10,000 was a change from brick to stone in an area of England where both are used, then we might imagine that Colepeper copied a design that was current at the time of Lempster's ennoblement and enrichment but not for very long afterwards.

Colepeper's plan shows a more regular set of internal walls (Figs 3 and 15). The hall is thus narrower and also much shorter, a single space and only one storey high — unless it is 36 ft high, which a two-storey hall would have to be. It is also evident how broadening the hall meant turning the backstairs through ninety degrees to run across the house.

There are however two difficulties with these drawings. First, Colepeper gives the dimensions as 119 ft (or elsewhere 120) by 74 ft, but by his own scale the length is only 115 ft — so his scale (of 5 ft, the same as the model) may be approximate. Secondly, the back of one half of his plan also has notes and sketches of house-fronts in Dover Street, Mayfair with what seem to be the dates 1696 and 1697. But normal diagnostic methods do not establish which side was drawn first.³⁵ We can only say that in plan the change from Colepeper's drawing to the design completed in 1702 (and found in the model) alters the whole equilibrium of the interior structure right down to the foundations.³⁶ On the other hand, Colepeper's north end elevation (Fig. 20) shows only five windows across the north wall, instead of the seven in model and building, and gives no indication of the mezzanines at the north end, although those features certainly formed part of the design copied by Colepeper, since he included rough plans of them.

In his 1970 article Colvin discerned an extra break of plane in Colepeper's elevation, between bays 1 and 2 (Figs 14 and 3); he argued that this break appears in the fabric but not in the model; that therefore Colepeper drew a brick house which had been built, and which was then dressed up in stone and a giant order. None of this is so, for several reasons.

First, there is no sign of such a procedure in the fabric. The examination made in 1982 by staff of the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England showed a remarkably homogeneous structure, although more stone and less brick seems to have

been used in the upper parts of the internal structure. In the contrary case of Moor Park, Herts, where the Duke of Monmouth's brick house was certainly recased for Benjamin Styles in the 1720s, the process is quite visible, for example round the windows.

Secondly, as we have seen, the internal structure is significantly different from Colepeper's plan at all levels, and to alter this would have been extravagant and a potential source of later subsidence.

Thirdly, the spacing of windows 2, 3 and 4 is equal in the model and the building, but in Colepeper's design the wall between windows 2 and 3 is wider than between 3 and 4. The reason for this change will be shown later.

Fourthly, as the plan shows, except in the basement and entablature the house has no wall break at this point, though Hawksmoor's juggling with detailing gives the illusion of one (Fig. 5).³⁷

Fifthly, Colepeper did not draw a break. There is indeed a faint line in this position, but its nature is not immediately obvious and it is easy to misread. If a document gets damp and is pressed into an album some of the image may transfer in reverse to the paper it is folded against. Comparing lines and old folds shows that this line was never drawn at all but is offprinted from another vertical, and in fact several other lines including whole windows have offprinted in this way.³⁸

Finally it is important to see how Colepeper prepared his drawings. When he drew the house fronts in Dover Street he measured horizontals in feet and counted brick courses for verticals, a practical way of obtaining heights without ladders or instruments. But the drawings of Lord Lempster's house he set out first by scoring, then in chalk or pencil and finally in ink. The serrations on the Easton elevation *may* indicate bricks, but he did not count the courses. Moreover, his total omission of the wings also suggests that rather than drawing the house on the spot he saw and copied a set of drawings, probably in London, which omitted the wings because they were already built.

FROM WREN TO HAWKSMOOR

The basic sequence from Wren's drawing to Hawksmoor's house is now fairly clear in that the Colepeper design certainly preceded the model and that there was an intermediate stage between the All Souls drawing and the Colepeper design, a stage represented for us only in the wings. It is not clear who designed either that stage or the Colepeper design, and four limiting factors must be borne in mind.

Firstly, it has already been suggested that Wren did not design the existing wings; this implies that he did not design any main house to accompany them.

Secondly, there is no good evidence that Wren became involved again except to recommend Hawksmoor to his kinsman.

Thirdly, some important aspects of the Colepeper design are not recorded, including two which particularly affect its appearance. Although the north end drawing shows a substantial balustrade above the cornice, there is no indication of the pitch or height of the roof, or whether it was high enough to accommodate dormers or a central cupola. And it is impossible to say whether what seems to be an excessively plain elevation was to have had any more of a frontispiece than the coupled Ionic pillars on either side of the front door, which are all that Colepeper put down (Fig. 14).

Fourthly, it is not so far possible to offer dates for any of the stages in the sequence.

Within, and in spite of, these limitations, many details of the sequence can be filled in. To start with, some inferences about the plan of the All Souls house can be made from the elevation and section which alone survive. Its basic symmetry and the placing of the eight chimneys (four behind the four visible) suggest a regular grid of thick internal walls broken only by the shape of the hall and the curious and inexplicable turreted apses one of which contains the turn of the main stairs (Figs 5 and 9).³⁹

This design is at least as rationally ordered as that of Winslow, Bucks, which Wren designed in 1699, and more so than his Tring, which though traditionally dated 1670 must belong to the mid 1680s.⁴⁰ Tring indeed has a two-storey hall and a gallery across the upper floor, but it lacks the spatial surprises of Easton Neston. Hawksmoor's plan for a 'Villa Chetwiniana' at Ingestre, dated 1688, is between Tring and the final Easton design in date and in logicity. There we find the regular symmetrical layout of passages and secondary stairs, of spaces and spine walls, and the plan is based on a modular grid of 10 ft. But there are also in the Ingestre plan the changes of direction and of room height that make Easton Neston so exciting.⁴¹ The single-storey ends of the main house in the All Souls design have two windows, flanking a niche with a festoon which anticipates the raised panels at that point in the model.

Most of the rational plan implied by Wren's drawing is carried over into the Colepeper plan, including the way in which the house is divided into a central nearly square block of five bays flanked by two-bay sections, and also the system of thick spine walls running both across and along the centre of the house (Figs 4 and 5). There is, however, an important departure from this scheme at the north end, where the north-south spine walls are prolonged northwards, as in the fabric, to support the extended staircase above. This dramatic change seems closer to Ingestre than to Tring, that is to Hawksmoor rather than to Wren; it required in turn a new elevation in which the whole house was of two full storeys.

The All Souls drawing shows a basement in the section but no windows to light it in the elevation. Close inspection reveals that the (probably semicircular) steps in front of the house lead not directly to the door but to a terrace which runs from one wing to the other: this reading is confirmed by the break at terrace level in the edge of the shadow cast by the north wing. The basement was therefore to be lit, at least on the court side, by windows facing a sunken area or a series of light wells. Colepeper's west elevation shows a rather similar arrangement, with no more of the basement windows visible than narrow horizontal slits. His north elevation on the other hand shows the basement windows extending down to ground level; in the model and the fabric there is no raised terrace; this change significantly affects the appearance of the house.

The fenestration of the ground floor in the All Souls drawing is divided into two groups of two windows each on either side of the central frontispiece; what is of particular importance is that the width of wall between windows 2 and 3 (across the quoined break in plane) is appreciably greater than between windows 3 and 4. This is also true of the Colepeper elevation, although there, with the elimination of the festoon and niche between them, windows 1 and 2 are brought closer together.

Two other features of the All Souls drawing are of special importance, because they were carried over into the building as we know it: the interior of the north wing and the

basement vaulting. Both section and elevation in Wren's drawing show the north wing with two storeys beneath the roof space, the upper one being lit by roundel windows set within the tall relieving arches that correspond to the arched end windows of the south wing. This arrangement was incorporated in the north wing as built (Fig. 18), where parts of the windows on the main south façade are blind so as to hide the upper floor.⁴²

The second feature, the basement vaulting, must be considered in detail. In the All Souls drawing vaults are shown only in the northern half (Fig. 9); in the fabric itself (Fig. 2) the southern half is vaulted only in the kitchen underneath the hall. But this correspondence may be accidental or of no great significance; what is more important and not easily explained is the way the vaulting in the building is arranged. The vaulting under the hall is unique in design and so idiosyncratic that it must surely be Hawksmoor's response to the particular problem of supporting the hall above it (Fig. 17). The room to the left (north) of the centre line has groined vaulting based on a regular arrangement of corner and intermediate imposts and a central pier; this seems entirely reasonable.

But the three rooms that form the north end of the basement seem to have been planned as one, with corner and intermediate imposts and a row of four piers running east–west across the centre. This produces an *almost* regular groin pattern of lozenges that are slightly longer from west to east than from north to south, taking very little account of the extended spine walls that carry the main staircase up above. On the other hand the vaulting is perfectly adapted to the slight difference in width (about a foot) between the north–west and north–east rooms which results from a displacement along the line of their south wall. This displacement cannot have been accidental, but nothing deliberate seems to account for it: it relates neither to the forward breaks of the long elevations nor to the layout of the apartments above, which are basically similar to each other (Fig. 1).

Moreover, unless the model-maker was led to disregard it, the displacement was only made, as we have seen, in the last stage of designing Easton Neston, between the model and the house itself. The lateness of the change implies that, while many details of concept were retained from one stage to another, very little of the pre-model house can have been constructed. The walls under the staircase, on the other hand, go back as far as the Colepeper design (Fig. 4), and their discrepancy with the vaulting pattern implies that the piers, if no more, were built before the enlargement of the staircase or the extension of the whole house from a centre block with one-storey sides to a complete two-storey elevation — for this was necessary to accommodate the larger staircase. The foundations and layout of this vault, therefore, seem to be the oldest part of the main house and may possibly be the only trace of the building whose construction Wren anticipated in his 5 September letter and which proceeded no further.

Confirmation of this hypothesis comes from the doorcase that leads from the main basement into that of the north wing.⁴³ The passage to the wing is a double-decker one, giving separate access on both the ground and basement floors. The round-arched doorway from the north–west corner of the house into the lower passage to the wing has an architrave surround with mouldings similar in type to the outside doorcases of the wing building yet unlike anything else in the main house; this suggests that at least

this corner of the basement was begun at a date close to the wings. A basement way through from the house to the north wing is already implied in the All Souls drawing. It is however, unlikely that more than the piers, footings and the corner containing the doorcase belong to this early period, because the fenestration of the north wall was changed subsequent to the Colepeper design. Moreover, the usual practice — in for example Hawksmoor's churches or the Castle Howard Mausoleum — was to turn the vaulting after the carcase was finished. It is difficult to believe either that the spine walls (which are of stone) were jammed under and continued over completed brick vaults or that the latter were cut away to allow the insertion of the walls: structural good sense suggests that if they were not actually built together the vaults must have been partly taken down and rebuilt with these walls.

An additional complication is that whereas the ground floor in the All Souls and Colepeper elevations is about 4 ft 9 in. above ground, in the model and the fabric it is about 7 ft, a change which is large enough to be both dimensionally significant and to add to the monumental effect of the house. This suggests that the vaults were not turned before the adoption of the model design; if this interpretation is correct, then the blocked doorways referred to below (and in note 45) are probably red herrings.

Further significant changes were made to the Colepeper design, from basement level upwards, in order to reach the model stage: they involve principally the hall and the fenestration, but also other aspects of the external appearance. In the model for the first time the hall is greatly enlarged in all dimensions. Its centre is moved southwards from bay 6 to bay 7 and it is extended as far as the south end of the house; bays 6 to 8 are raised to two full storeys with single-storey bays (5 and 9) at the ends. The whole hall is also extended eastwards towards the long axis of the house, interrupting one quarter of the previously consistent pattern of spine walls (Fig. 1).

Since the hall and staircase were to become the principal rooms for the display of the Arundel Marbles, it might be argued that the expansion of the hall was prompted by their purchase in 1691. This may indeed be the case, but even if it could be proved it would only date the model no earlier than 1691 and would not exclude a later date for it. The expansion, however, does also explain other features of the model and the fabric, both inside and outside.

Inside, the eastward broadening of the hall meant that the backstairs had to be turned through ninety degrees to run lengthwise instead of across the house as in the Colepeper plan. Consequently the door shown in Colepeper's plan, leading from the backstairs passage to the room east of it (now the library), could not be used. Another unexplained peculiarity of the house is that this doorway was actually built. It was identified from the library side about twenty years ago by Mr Roderick Gradidge⁴⁴ in the course of alterations to the panelling, and the opening in the wall survives on the backstairs side as a service cupboard. However, Colepeper's plan and the model both show a fireplace in the library behind the backstairs north of the blocked door, and Mr Gradidge found no trace of this.⁴⁵

The enlargement of the hall to comprise 1 plus 3 plus 1 bays involved both the illusion and the reality of symmetry. The illusion can still be seen on plans of both basement and main floor (Figs 1 and 2); the south end bay of the hall is about 2 ft shorter than the north. This discrepancy has been obscured by later alterations to the hall, and it

can never have been perceptible because one end of the hall was always seen in perspective and partially screened from the other. The need for it seems to have derived from the desire for symmetry in the central part of the hall. In all stages of Easton Neston there appears to be a constant in the width of the five central bays of the main front, which differs only by a few inches between the All Souls elevation and the present house.⁴⁶ If this constant was accepted, then the internal wall elevation of the hall centre, fronted by bays 6 to 8, could only be symmetrical if the wall masses between windows 6 to 8 were made equal (Fig. 6). This was done in designing the model; for the first time we thus have a rational explanation for the variations, already noted, in bay width in the house (and in the model).

On the east front the dimensions are not quite the same. The span across pilasters 3 to 8 is something over 1 ft less, the windows of the central five bays are accordingly placed slightly nearer the middle line of the façade, and the wall masses between windows are not equal (Fig. 6). The most reasonable explanation for these differences is the desire for symmetry between the windows inside the two rooms in the southern half of the east front. In the northern half of the house, in contrast, no room on either side has perfectly symmetrical window placing.

These differences do nothing to explain the displacement in the walls between the northern mezzanines and the main rooms south of them, a change only made, as we have seen, between model and fabric (Fig. 21). On the other hand, the enlargement of the hall, the re-orientation of the backstairs and the change in bay widths all seem to belong together. Moreover they are all part of what can only be regarded as the design whose conception Hawksmoor claimed as his own. This is true also of two other exterior changes to be seen in the model, involving the basement and the mezzanines.

The removal of the terrace in front of the house still recorded by Colepeper (Fig. 14) means not only that from the model onwards the basement windows could receive direct light but that the building seems to stand higher, since the elevation now starts from ground and not terrace level (Figs 7 and 12). Visually the change is enormous; scarcely less so are the changes in the north elevation, by which the number of window bays is increased from five to seven and the mezzanines are used as the stimulus for a display of large and small windows in which two- and four-storey elevations alternate and merge. It should be remembered that this display only partly corresponds to the internal disposition, and mezzanine floors run across the large corner windows (Fig. 8).

The biggest difference between the model and the building itself is of course the substitution of a giant order for a virtually astylar two-storey elevation (Figs 7 and 13). Even this is not simple. The spacing of the pilasters on the main fronts reinforces the slight departures from an even rhythm that were noted in discussing the window and bay pattern. Moreover, the order is an unfluted Composite with extremely simplified mouldings in the entablature. This irony between richness and frugality even extends to the capitals, which seem to be based on the Arch of Titus as recorded by Perrault.⁴⁷ While the rosette between the volutes is replaced by a lion's head (for *Leominster*), the lower part of the capital is again simplified, there being only one row of rather spiky acanthus leaves.

The increase in height of the elevations, compared with the model, has been mentioned; it is a consequence of the large entablature required by the giant order, but

it would be unwise to say categorically which of the two changes — in overall height or in the kind of articulation — came first.

Most of the other features of the house are already present in the model, but there were changes to the hall. Firstly, the triple arches shown in the model to screen off the ends from the middle, and to carry the cross walls of the upper part of the hall (Fig. 19) were replaced by beams carried by a detached column at either end; thus the hall became effectively a single space. Secondly, the model shows windows from the gallery into the upper part of the hall; instead the gallery was built as an enclosed space without these downward views.

THE MARBLES AND THEIR SETTING

Finally there is the role of the Arundel Marbles in the original decoration of the house. They are well studied before 1691 when Fermor bought them — for £300 — and after 1755 when his son's widow gave them to the University of Oxford, having bought them to pay her son's debts.⁴⁸ A collection of ancient sculptures exudes a particular atmosphere of history, scholarship, taste, tradition and solemnity, and before his death Lord Lempster had managed to capture this atmosphere in the hall and staircase and the new gardens; possibly his intention in buying them was in part to commemorate his grandfather Sir Hatton Fermor who died in the year the Civil War began. Sir Justinian Isham of Lamport recorded in his diary for 20 August 1708:

Went to Easton, my Lord Leimster's house. My Lord's house stands not far from Towcester of which one hath a prospect from it, in a very dirty country. The house is a noble structure built by My Lord with 11 windows in front, and this motto upon it, *Hora e Sempre*; the wings to the body are not at all suitable, but I believe they design to pull them down one time or another. The hall is large and lofty being 40 ft high with several antique statues, busts, &c. about it, the staircase is paved as well as the hall with good stone, hath handsome iron rails with several antiques in niches and the wall is to be painted. From the gallery one hath a through vисто; some of the apartments are furnished with grand tapestry, pictures &c, and the gardens are very well especially the parterre before the house where is a fountain and antique statues.⁴⁹

Isham remembered the house as two bays wider than it is, and noted the poverty of the wings in comparison. His belief that the wings were to be rebuilt is consistent both with the plates in *Vitruvius Britannicus* and with Hawksmoor's later strictures on them. He also gives a date for the completion of the staircase ironwork and a terminus for the commencement of Thornhill's monochrome murals in the staircase. And his account suggests that the initial installation of the Marbles was then complete. But most published accounts of the Marbles dwell on their disarray in this period of their history — a state which grew worse with the passage of time.

Bridges's notes in the Bodleian reveal that he visited Easton in July 1719,⁵⁰ noting, as in the printed work, that Wren built the wings and 'Haukemore', a name evidently new to him, the body of the house. He also met the Revd Mr Cook who told him of many broken statues which 'for want of a Man of skill they could not tell how to put 'em together'. These he noted were 'not drawn' by his draughtsman.

Views of the exterior are correctly placed in Bridges's surviving album of drawings,⁵¹ these show that the present curved front steps and quadrant links to the wings are not original (Figs 10 and 11). There are also forty-six small sheets of

drawings of sculpture, erroneously placed under Boughton although not only recognizable to anyone familiar with the Marbles but also identified by the pedestals with crossed Ls supporting some of them.⁵² Thus by 1719, only a year after the second Lord Lempster came of age, many of the more complete figures were seen and drawn in position in the gardens. Others are shown in the niches they occupied in the hall and staircase, and there is a drawing of the hall overmantel.

In 1721 Bridges returned, and found Giovanni Battista Guelfi restoring the Marbles. Mrs Webb suggested that Guelfi went to Easton Neston as soon as Lord Burlington realized his mediocrity, and it now appears that, if Burlington brought him back, untried, from his second trip to Italy at the end of 1719 rather than the first in 1715, then Kent and Lord Lempster were also involved. Bridges is the only eye-witness of Guelfi's activity, for which a later date has always been assumed.⁵³ This witness also provides one terminus for the anonymous *Description* published in 1758, mentioned earlier, which refers to Guelfi's work. This account is detailed about the placing of statues in the gardens, and attributes the hall fireplace to William Kent. It must also have been composed before 1732, when Vertue visited Easton and recorded that the figures 'stood many years an ornament to the Gardens . . . but are lately taken within doors'. It thus gives a nearly contemporary attribution of the fireplace to Kent.⁵⁴

The catalogue of pictures following the *Description* shows that two rooms on the ground floor were classed as bedrooms and that the large room in the south-east corner known in modern times as the drawing room was then the Great Dining room; there were also a large and a small drawing room upstairs.

CONCLUSION

Easton Neston probably survived almost unaltered until the end of the nineteenth century, except for the removal of the statues, the deterioration of the gardens and the demolition of the south wing.⁵⁵ The hall survived in its original form long enough to be photographed, but about 1900 the centre part was reduced to a single-storey room and screened off at either end; its original north wall was removed to make an entrance hall to the left (north) of the front door. The present coupled Corinthian columns that carry the north wall of the gallery in place of this dividing wall are of more recent date, for a photograph taken in the 1920s shows single Doric columns instead.⁵⁶ Outside the house, the formal gardens are a sympathetic modern replacement; the drawings made for Bridges (Figs 10 and 11) show that the present quadrant links between wings and main house are substitutions for the original square ones, and so are the steps on both fronts.⁵⁷ What remains of Hawksmoor's house is a very great deal, and still very perplexing.

We may regard as certainties that both Wren and Hawksmoor were concerned with the house or the garden around 1686; that Hawksmoor designed the main house and probably neither designed the wings; that Hawksmoor saw the main water supply installed in the summer of 1694; that Colepeper drew a design which precedes the model but in some ways prefigures it. Having recently reviewed once again the beginnings of Vanbrugh's career as an architect, I feel that the spectre of his influence on the final design should be laid to rest once and for all.⁵⁸ The fabric is dated 1702 and the house seems to have been complete in a visitor's eyes — if not in its architect's — by 1708. The stages by which Wren's rejected drawing turned into Hawksmoor's house

are no longer in doubt, but what cannot be determined even now is whether the present building incorporates any traces of earlier constructions or merely of earlier ideas.

It seems a pity not to be able to make use of the date of 1697 (if that is what it is) on Colepeper's notes about houses in Duke Street.⁵⁹ It would still be possible to suppose that the design he drew was the one for which the water was laid on in 1694; but in that case not much can have been done, because several of the windows would be in the wrong places. We should have to suppose a further delay, with Colepeper in 1697 perhaps copying a design that was about to give way to that of the model, and the change to the final design following during 1697–98. It would still be possible for the masonry and roof to be finished by the autumn of 1702.⁶⁰

In industrial production the development of a new model does not ensure the designing out of all traces of earlier layout or components, and in writing it is common for revisions still to betray an earlier draft. Nevertheless to say what those traces mean is often difficult or impossible, because they were not intended to survive. Without entering the philosophy of historiography we may admit that any hypothesis which exactly fits all the known evidence is suspect, because real life is not so tidy. In the present case the greatest difficulty is that archaeological evidence and that from documents — fragmentary in both cases — allows only some things to be put in chronological order before implying a reverse order for others.

It is part of an architect's job at least to repair the pitfalls of his brief and if possible to turn them to advantage. Such pitfalls may be not only factors of siting, cost, physical laws and the client's ambition, but also changes of mind, both on the client's part and, certainly in Hawksmoor's case, on the architect's also. Hawksmoor's own words remain ironically appropriate: in later years he asked a client to 'let us have some inscriptions to inform posterity when this work was done, for I wish our progenitors had so obliged us'.⁶¹

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Figs 1, 2 and 6 are based, by permission, on plans prepared by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (Crown Copyright). Fig. 17 is from the same source. Fig. 9 is by permission of the Warden and Fellows of All Souls, Oxford. Figs 10, 11, 14, 15 and 20 are by permission of the British Library. Fig. 16 is by permission of London Borough of Lambeth Archives Department.

NOTES

1 Some of the documentary material was summarized in the second (1979) edition of my original monograph on *Hawksmoor*, p. 274, as Appendix H; however, I have worked over the whole problem again two or three times since then. I am especially indebted for information and fruitful discussions to Robert Taylor and John Heward of the Cambridge office of the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME), who in researching for the Commission's forthcoming volume on Northamptonshire Country Houses have investigated the fabric more thoroughly than has ever been done before. Thanks are also due to Howard Colvin, John Wilton-Ely and John Kenworthy-Browne for their helpful observations on many aspects of the subject; to John Bold who helped me take measurements in an April snowstorm; to Lord Hesketh and the Dowager Lady Hesketh for many kindnesses at Easton Neston; to those who have given permission for documents to be reproduced; finally to the Hon. Editor for his patience.

2 This last suggestion was made by H. M. Colvin, 'Easton Neston Reconsidered', *Country Life*, CXLVIII (1970), 968–71. The Socratic value of this article will appear.

3 For a plan based on ground surveys see RCHME, *County of Northampton*, IV (1982), 43, fig. 46.

4 For the history of the Marbles, acquired in the early seventeenth century by Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, see D. E. L. Haynes, *The Arundel Marbles* (published by the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford 1975).

- 5 BL MS. Add. 22911, fol. 77.
- 6 PRO PROB. 11/525, fol. 11. For the Barony of Leominster, or Lempster as contemporaries spelled it, see *Complete Peerage*.
- 7 N. Luttrell, *Brief Relation of Historical and State Affairs*, II (Oxford, 1857), 380.
- 8 Sec n. 2. In subsequent correspondence with Messrs Kenworthy-Browne and Wilton-Ely (who kindly showed me copies of some of it) Colvin modified the details of his argument, and the statements under 'Hawksmoor' and 'Wren' in his 1978 *Biographical Dictionary* reflect the changes.
- 9 John Morton, *The Natural History of Northamptonshire* (1712), 493–95.
- 10 *A Catalogue of the Curious Collection of . . . George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. In which is included . . . a Description of Easton Neston* (1758), 53–66.
- 11 John Bridges, *The History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire*, I (Oxford, 1791), 289.
- 12 Bodleian MS Top. Northants. f. 1. Bridges quoted 'Dr Alderich' (presumably Henry Aldrich) as saying that through the cramping effect of the earlier wings 'my Lords wings were clipt'. Further notes are in MS Top. Northants. e. 3.
- 13 First printed, with some errors, in H. A. Tipping and C. Hussey, *English Homes*, IV. II (1928), 124; wrongly described by Colvin, *Dictionary*, p. 925, as unpublished. 'Luthern' windows are lucarnes or dormers. Sir Roger Pratt noted that 'Fir timber etc, is best to be bought at London not at the beginning of the year, as about April when it first comes in; nor towards the latter end of it, as about Christmas' (R. T. Gunther, *The Architecture of Sir Roger Pratt* (Oxford, 1928), p. 326).
- 14 Evelyn, *Diary*, 17 June 1679, 5 May 1681.
- 15 V & A E415–1951. A Hawksmoor drawing for a gateway, identified by the device of crossed Ls, cannot be dated, and no conclusions can be drawn from its presence in what are collectively known as the Wren Drawings at All Souls (I. 17A; *Wren Society*, v, pl. IX).
- 16 BL MS Add. 30092. The front case is titled JOHN GROVE HIS BOOK: 1713.
- 17 All Souls II. 83 (*Wren Society*, XII, pl. XII), in Wren's own hand. The drawing is in pen and grey wash.
- 18 Overlays of images provided useful demonstrations of similarities and differences between the various stages of the Easton Neston design, but their value is in suggestion rather than in proof, since there are no measured elevations of house or model to make accurate comparisons.
- 19 M. D. Whinney, *Archaeological Journal*, CX (1953), 210 (amplified in personal discussion). The letter was printed in *Wren Society*, XII, 23 and, with a facsimile, in Sotheby's sale, 6 July 1953 (298). For Tring see n. 40.
- 20 Administration 11 May 1687.
- 21 BL MS Add. 29573, fol. 142.
- 22 Evelyn, *Diary*, 19 March 1691
- 23 National Maritime Museum MS ART/8 (Accession No. MS 62/030). The title-page in Hawksmoor's early round copperplate hand reads *Arcana Mecha in Re Adificattora Nec Non altri Scientiis*; in time it extends from c. 1683/85 to 1700.
- 24 Colvin, 'Easton Neston Reconsidered' p. 970, unaccountably refers to half-inch piping and therefore concludes that 'by 1694 . . . the plumbing was being installed' in the house.
- 25 Gunther, op. cit., p. 233.
- 26 Pearl Finch, *Burley-on-the-Hill*, I (1901) 110. James Lees-Milne, *English Country Houses, Baroque* (1970), p. 145, interpreted this reference as to the entrance steps at Easton Neston, which ignores the meaning of the Italian term; in any case the entrance steps are not original. It is perhaps unfortunate rather than significant that in his discussion of house design Roger North made no mention of Easton Neston. His manuscripts on *Architecture* and *Of Building* were compiled about 1687–91 and before 1696 respectively (H. M. Colvin and John Newman, ed., *Of Building: Roger North's Writings on Architecture* (Oxford, 1981)).
- 27 *Walpole Society*, XIX (1931), 126. The second Lord Lempster was created Earl of Pomfret or Pontefract in December 1721.
- 28 David Green, *Blenheim Palace* (1951), 309; now BL MS Add. 61353, fol. 239.
- 29 The obituary, reputedly by Hawksmoor's son-in-law, is reprinted in K. Downes, *Hawksmoor* (1959), pp. 7–8. For Hawksmoor's service under Wren see, for example, *ibid.* p. 245.
- 30 Measurements of individual bays at basement/ground level. The exact overall dimensions are 120 ft 4¼ in. by 73 ft 8¼ in. The plans reproduced here are based on those made for the forthcoming RCHME volume, and are Crown Copyright, reproduced by permission.
- 31 Corrected by John Kenworthy-Browne, *Connoisseur*, CLVII (1964), 73; the error has nevertheless survived, as errors do.
- 32 Minet Library, Camberwell, No. 2524.
- 33 There is only one correct arrangement of the mezzanines in the model, though it is possible to put them in — and photograph them, as in Fig. 21 — in the wrong order.
- 34 BL MS Harl. 7588, fols 512–17; Harl. 7597, fols 99–100.

35 Hypotheses about which was drawn first are in this case reversible, because we do not know when the two sheets that make up the plan were first joined together; they are not accurately matched now, but this may be either Colepeper's fault or that of a later repairer. The redrawn versions illustrated here of Colepeper's plan and elevation are based on full-size copies (including the use of the north elevation to complete the plan), measured from the originals, which are creased, torn and dog-eared through having been bound into a volume too small for them.

36 I would again thank John Wilton-Ely for his notes about alterations to the model. These seem to me mainly to involve the insides of the outer walls, and the infillings suggest repairs rather than changes of design.

37 Pointed out to me by John Heward. One of the major uses of brick within the house seems to be in surfaces to be plaster rendered.

38 In 1984 Mr Colvin very kindly re-examined the originals and expressed his acceptance of this description of what they show.

39 Some parts of the cross-section are inexplicable, and Wren may not have fully worked out the interior.

40 There is no good reason to doubt Wren's authorship of Winslow. For the dating of Tring to the 1680s see K. Downes, *The Architecture of Wren* (1982), 103–04, where the plan is reproduced. For the plan of Winslow see *Wren Society*, xvii, pl. LVIII.

41 K. Downes, *Hawksmoor* (1969), fig. 10; J. Lees-Milne, op. cit. fig. 13.

42 This raises the question of what Wren meant in his letter of 5 September by 'greenhouses'; whether indeed the south wing was intended as an orangery (for greenhouses were not yet glasshouses). Bridges saw 'In a Corridor or room adjoining to the S end of the H. . . 15 Statues & bassi rilievi' (MS Top. Northants. f. 1, p. 59). But the 1758 *Description* mentions two greenhouses at the end of a walk, one full of 'greens' and the other of statues (p. 56), and Vertue saw many statues in 'a large greenhouse under cover' in the gardens (*Walpole Society*, xxvi (1938), 104). A mid-eighteenth-century account of the statues (BL MS Add. 6269, fol. 244^v) refers to the two doors at the south end of the hall (shown in Fig. 1, no longer extant) as false; there may have been no direct way from the main house to the south wing. See also n. 43.

43 It might be supposed from the plan that the westernmost detached pier of the vaults was aligned on the piers in the rooms under the two ends of the hall, but close examination shows that they are not in line. The upper link to the north wing is through a window adapted to a doorcase and therefore is probably not original; the links shown in the Bridges drawing (Fig. 10) look too low to accommodate entrances above basement level.

44 Letter of 26 February 1970.

45 Two other blocked doors have been found, and are shown on the ground-floor plan, Fig. 1. One is in the room left of the entrance, behind a fireplace which archaeological evidence suggests was in existence by 1702. The second, in the east wall of the main staircase, appears to be of the same date as the house, and indeed occurs in the model. That on the backstairs does not. The chimney-piece behind the backstairs in Colepeper's plan and the model also occurs in the plan engraved in *Vitruvius Britannicus*.

46 See above: dimensions in the main text following the reference to n. 17.

47 C. Perrault, *Ordonnance des Cinq Espèces de Colonnes* (Paris, 1683). Also in Vignola. Hawksmoor cited the Arch of Titus to Lord Carlisle in 1733 (*Walpole Society*, xix (1931), 146), giving Evelyn's translation of Fréart's *Parallèle* as a reference. However, none of his uses of this order is exact; the single row of leaves occurs in a more succulent form inside St Anne, Limehouse and Christ Church, Spitalfields.

48 The plate (by J. Green after Samuel Wale) illustrating the *Oxford Almanack* for 1757 shows Lady Pomfret in an architectural landscape accompanied by some of the Marbles. A proof before letters is in an extra-illustrated copy of Bridges's *Northants* (BL MS Add. 32118).

49 Northants County Record Office 1. L. 5275; communicated by Robert Taylor.

50 Bodleian MS Top. Northants f. 1, p. 59.

51 BL MS Add. 32467, fols 92–94.

52 Ibid. fols 19–64. For the metrological relief see Eric Fernie, 'The Greek Metrological Relief in Oxford', *The Antiquaries Journal*, LXI (1981), 255–63.

53 *Burlington Magazine*, xcvi (1955), 139–40. On 15 November 1718 William Kent wrote from Rome to Burrell Massingberd, 'I am still in my resolution to get out next Spring, and my Lord Lempster has agreed with a very good sculptor to come along with me' (M. I. Wilson, *William Kent* (1984), p. 32).

54 This could have been at any time after Kent's return to England in 1719 (see preceding note).

55 The south wing was probably demolished before 1841 since in that year G. Baker, *History and Antiquities of the County of Northampton*, II, 144–45, refers to both wings as destroyed.

56 Tipping and Hussey, *English Homes*, fig. 179.

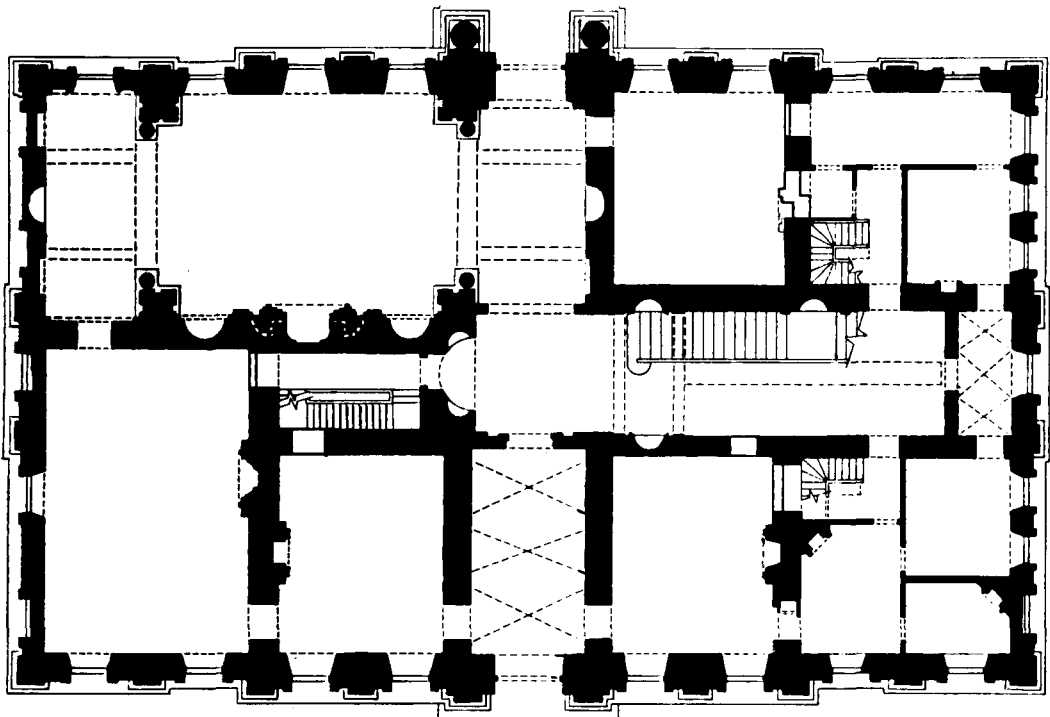
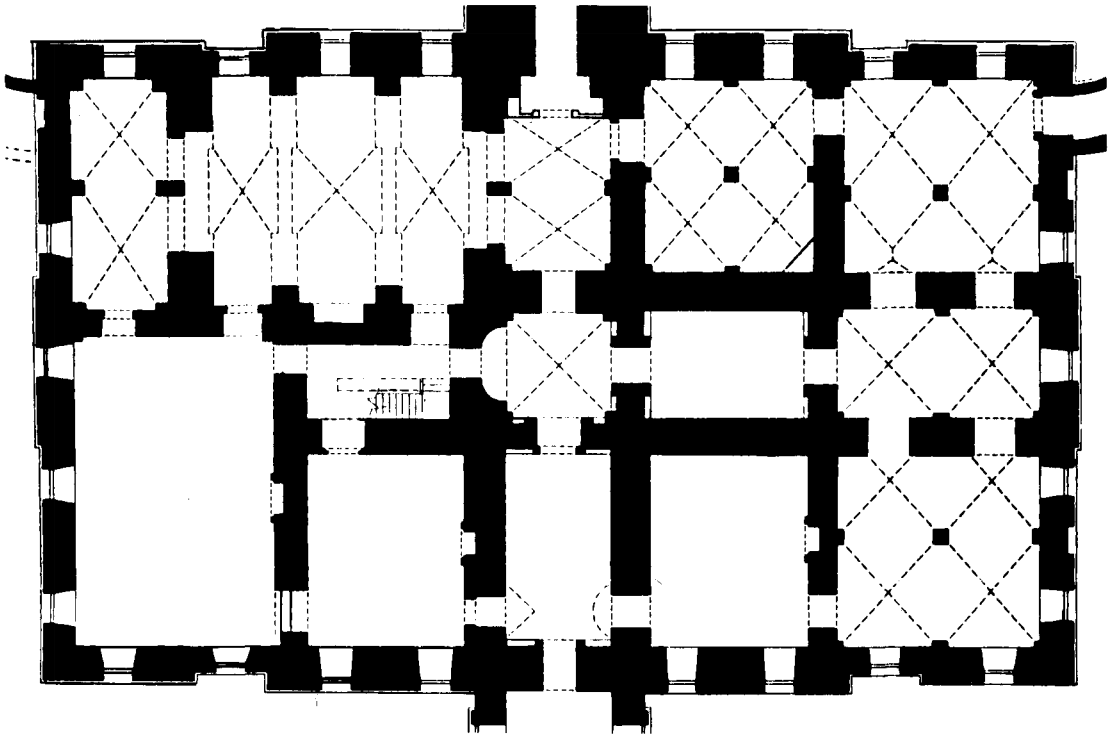
57 See n. 50, and also n. 26. Vertue's notes (n. 42) include a confirmatory sketch.

58 This ghost is still entertained by Colvin (1970), p. 971.

59 No better suggestions have been offered to make sense of Colepeper's erratic handwriting.

60 At least it is possible to exclude Wren's 5 September letter from the middle of the 1690s, since it is addressed on the back to 'Sir William Farmor'.

61 Hawksmoor to the Dean of Westminster, 18 March 1735 (Downes (1959), p. 260).



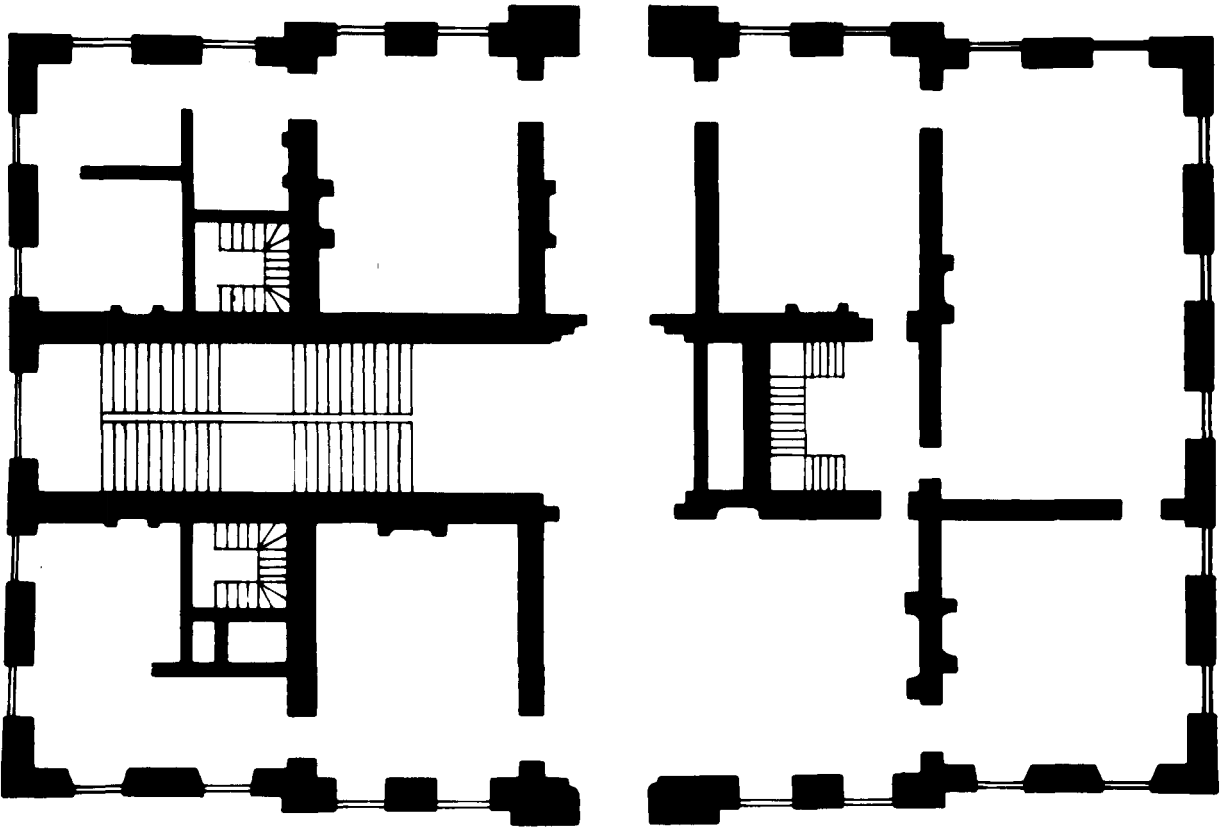
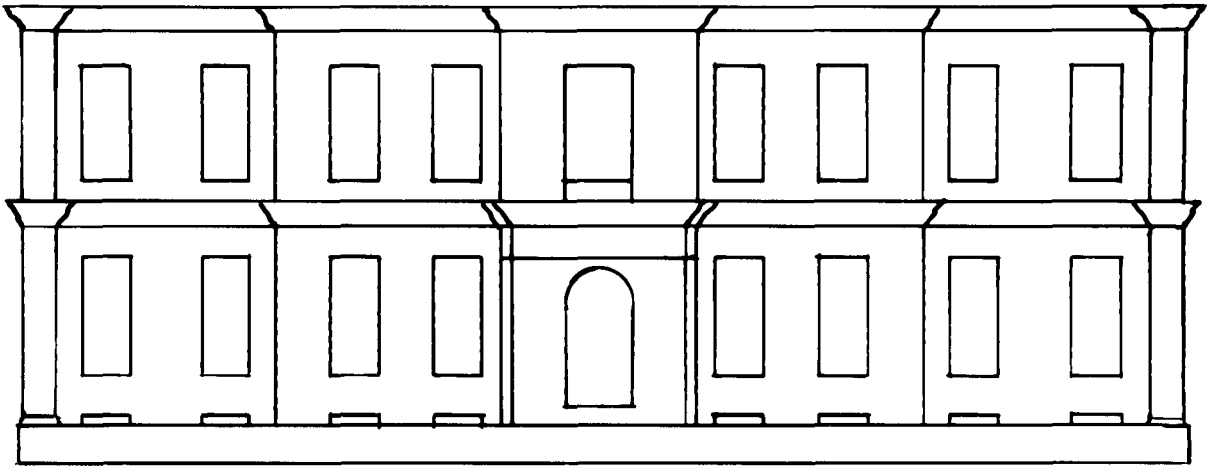


Fig. 3 Colepeper's west elevation, redrawn from Fig. 14

Fig. 4 Colepeper's plan, redrawn from Fig. 15

OPPOSITE

FIG. 1 Ground floor plan as in 1702

Fig. 2 Basement plan as in 1702

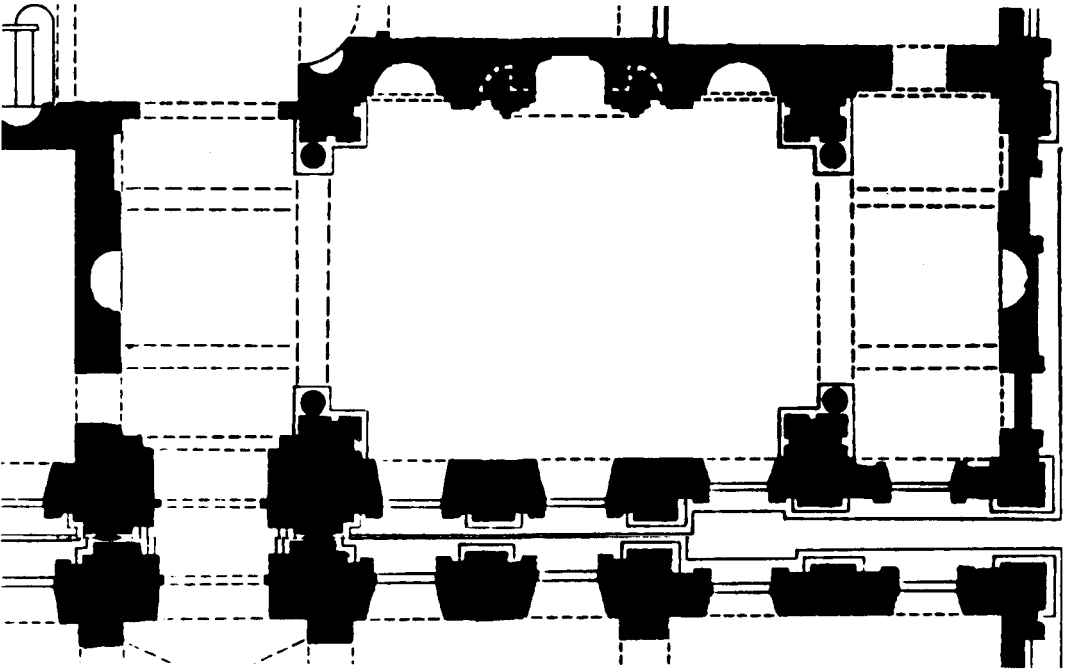
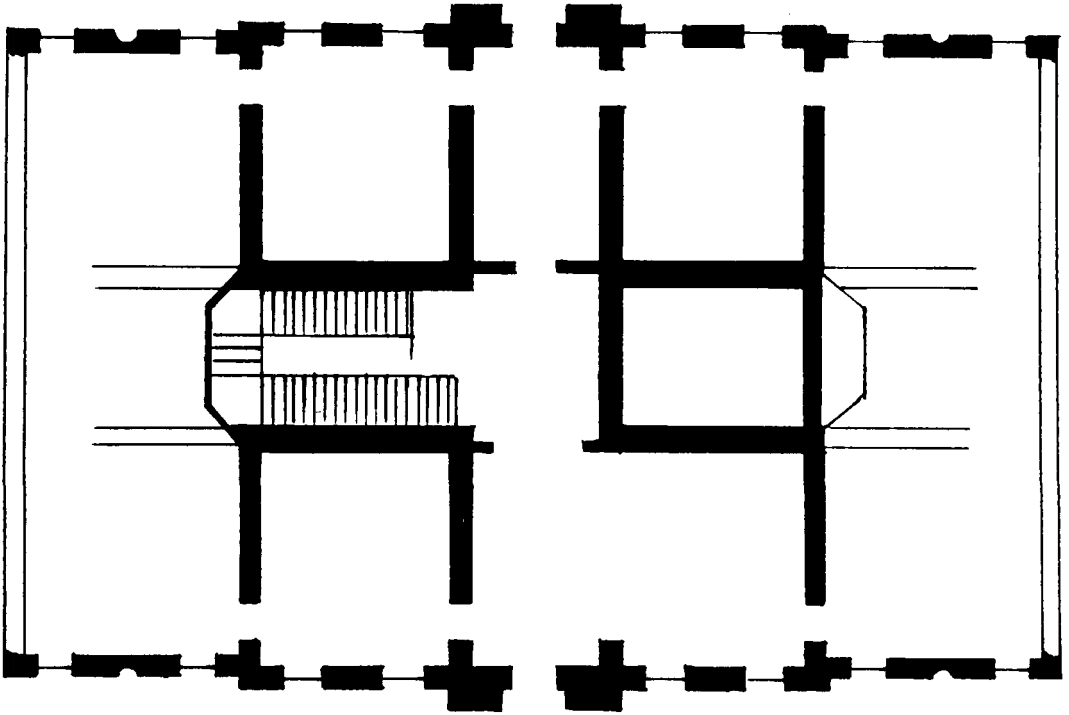


Fig. 5 Reconstructed plan of the design shown in Fig. 9

Fig. 6 Detail of Fig. 1 showing hall juxtaposed with part of east outer wall

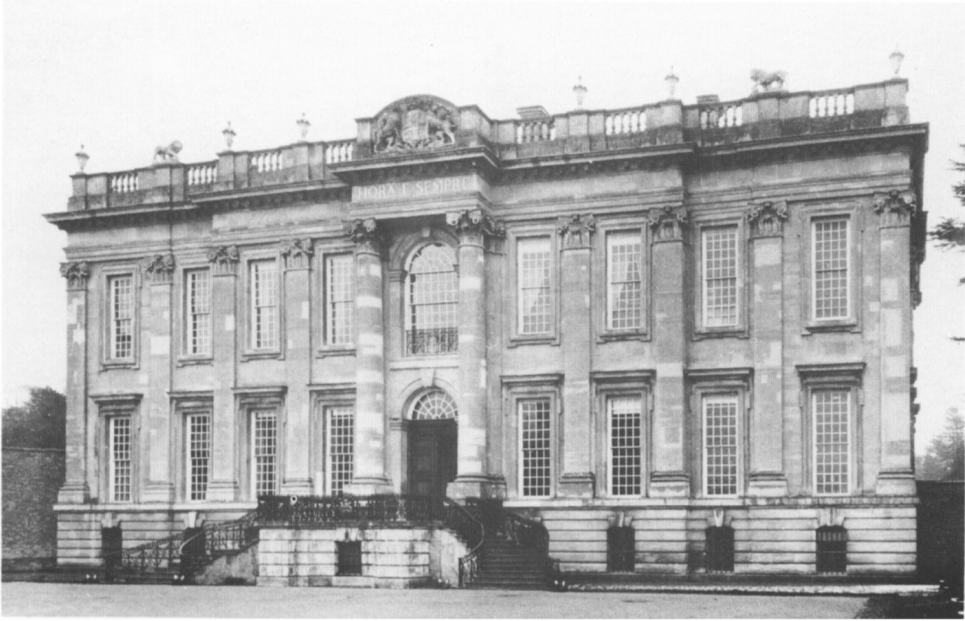


Fig. 7 *Easton Neston from the west*

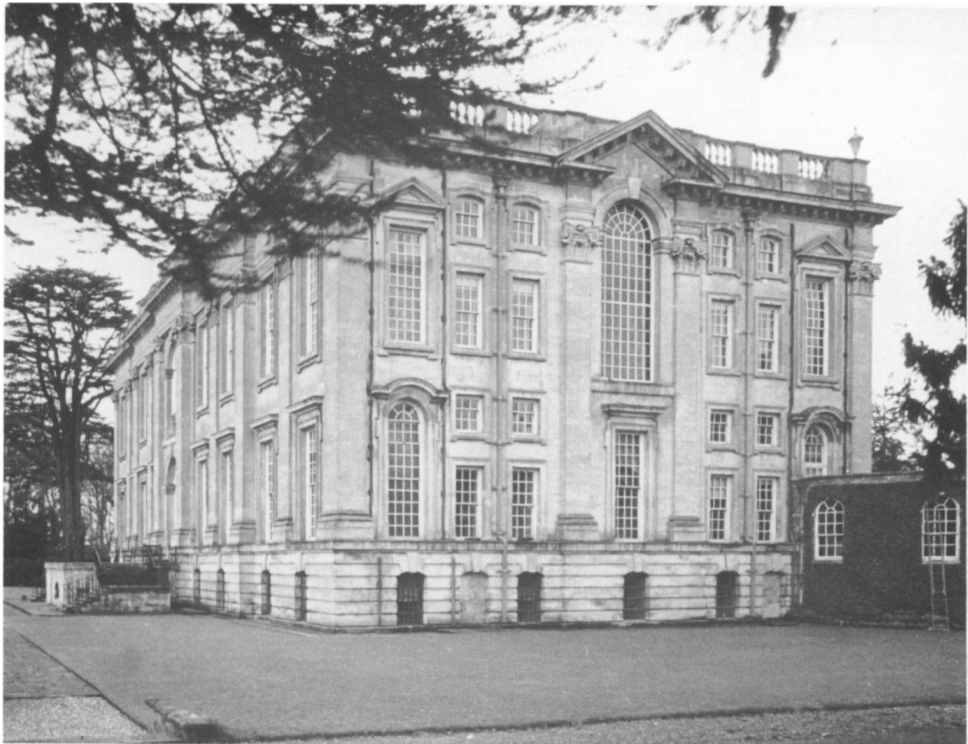


Fig. 8 *Easton Neston from the north-east*

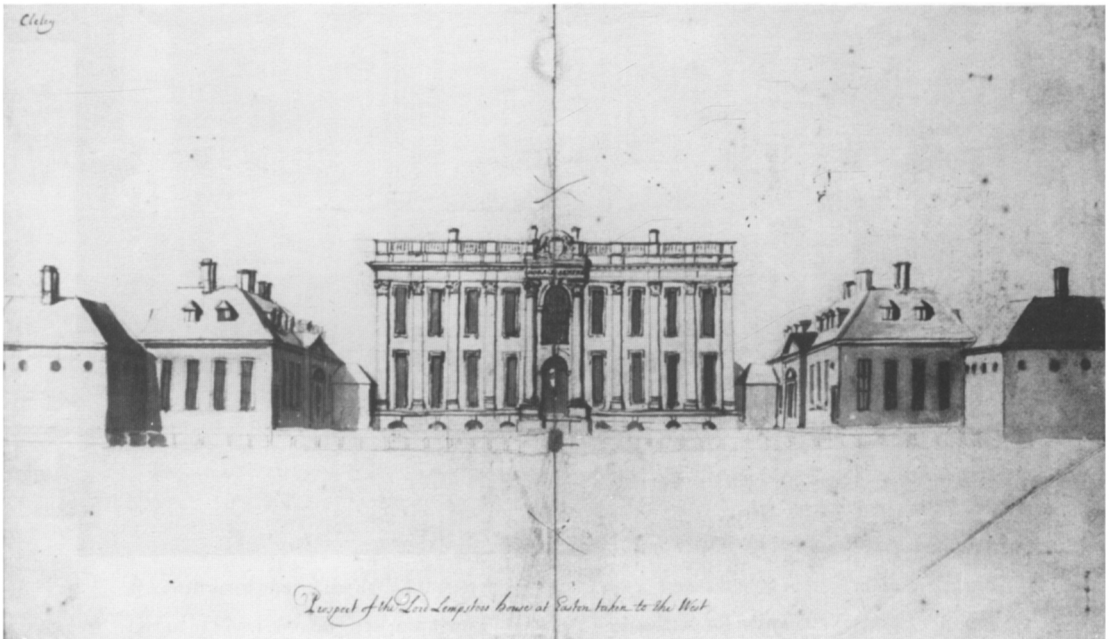
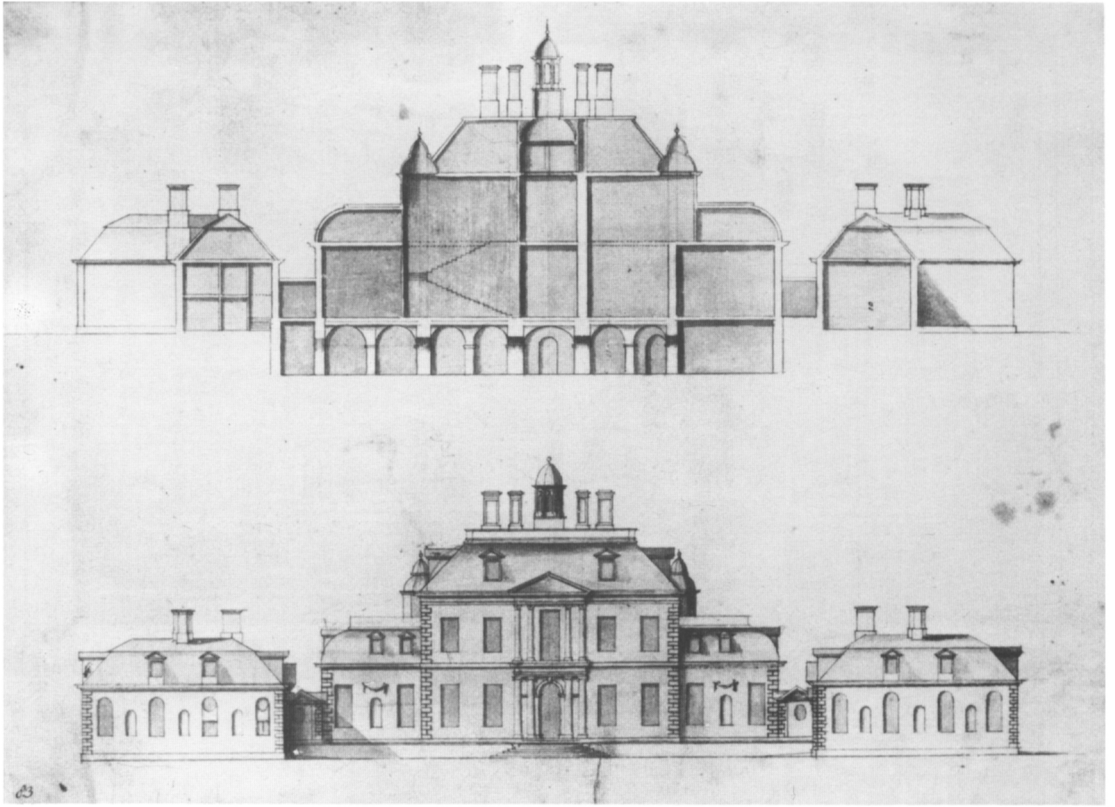


Fig. 11
Easton Neston from the east in 1719 (British Library, MS Add. 32467, fol. 92)

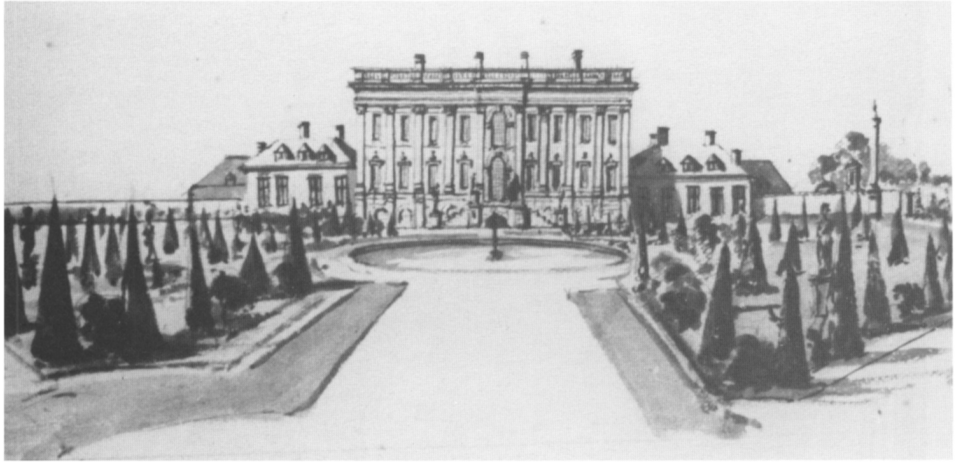


Fig. 12
The All Souls elevation (Fig. 9) superimposed on the west front of the house

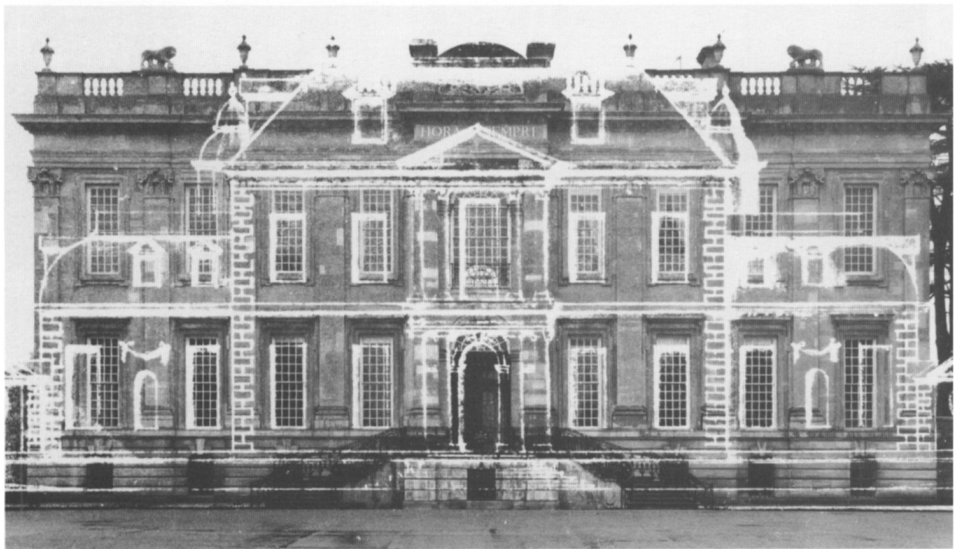
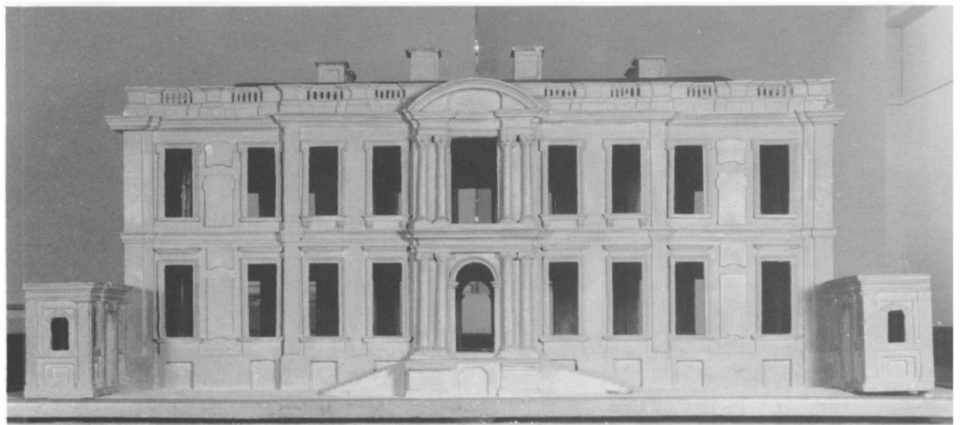


Fig. 13
The model for Easton Neston, west front



OPPOSITE

Fig. 9
Wren. Design for a country house (All Souls II.83)

Fig. 10
Easton Neston from the west in 1719 (British Library, MS Add. 32467, fol. 93)

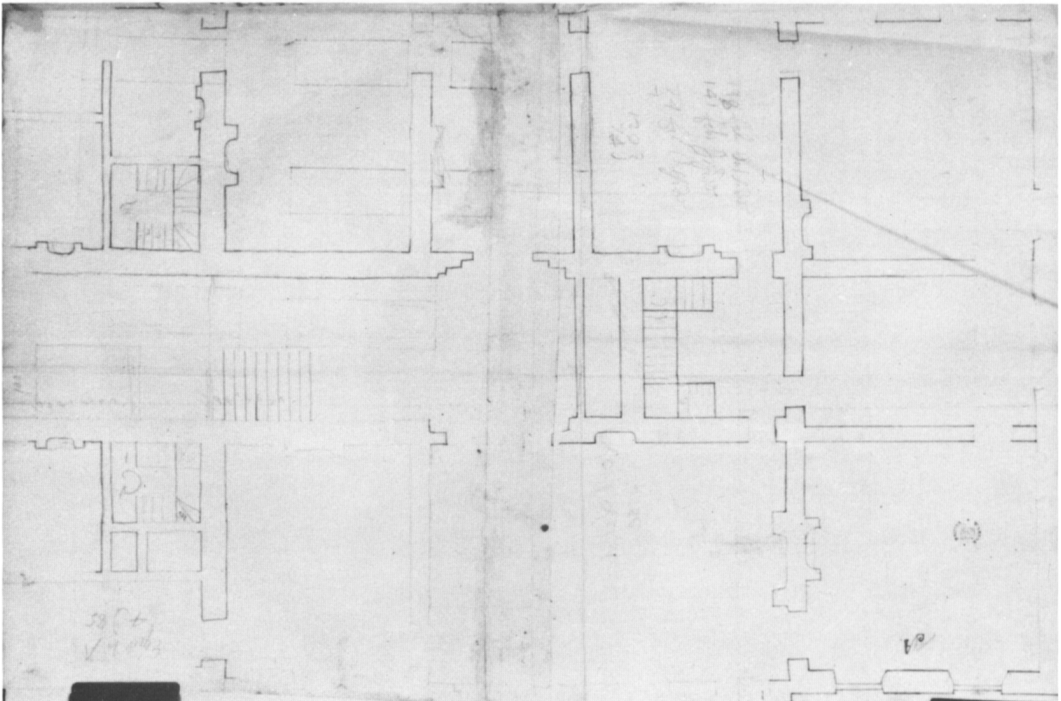
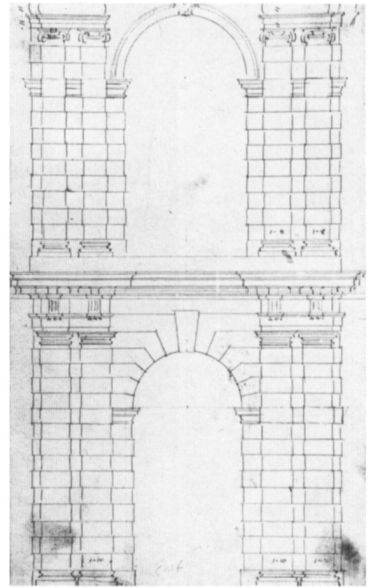
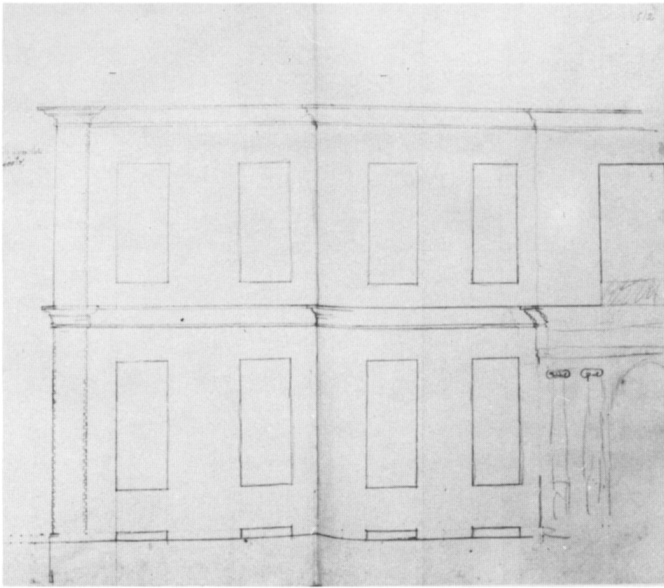


Fig. 14 West elevation sketched by Thomas Colepeper (British Library, MS Harl. 7588, fol. 512)

Fig. 15 Plan sketched by Thomas Colepeper (British Library, MS Harl. 7597, fol. 100^v)

Fig. 16 Design for frontispiece (Lambeth Archives Department, Minet Library, LP123/188/OCK p(2524))



Fig. 17 *Easton Neston. Kitchen, looking south*



Fig. 18 *Easton Neston. North wing*

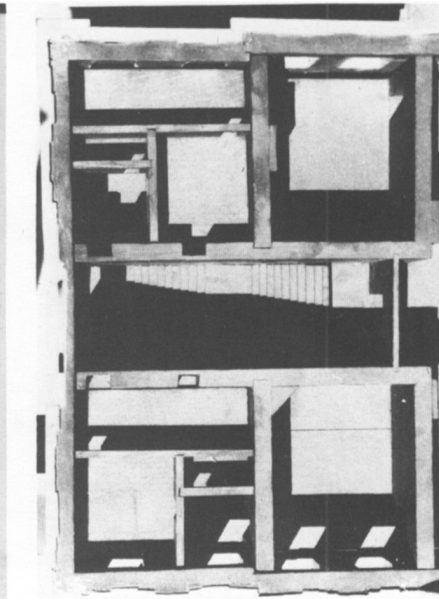
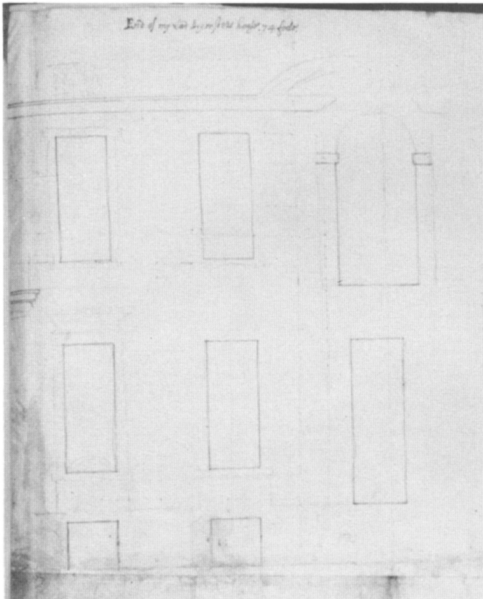
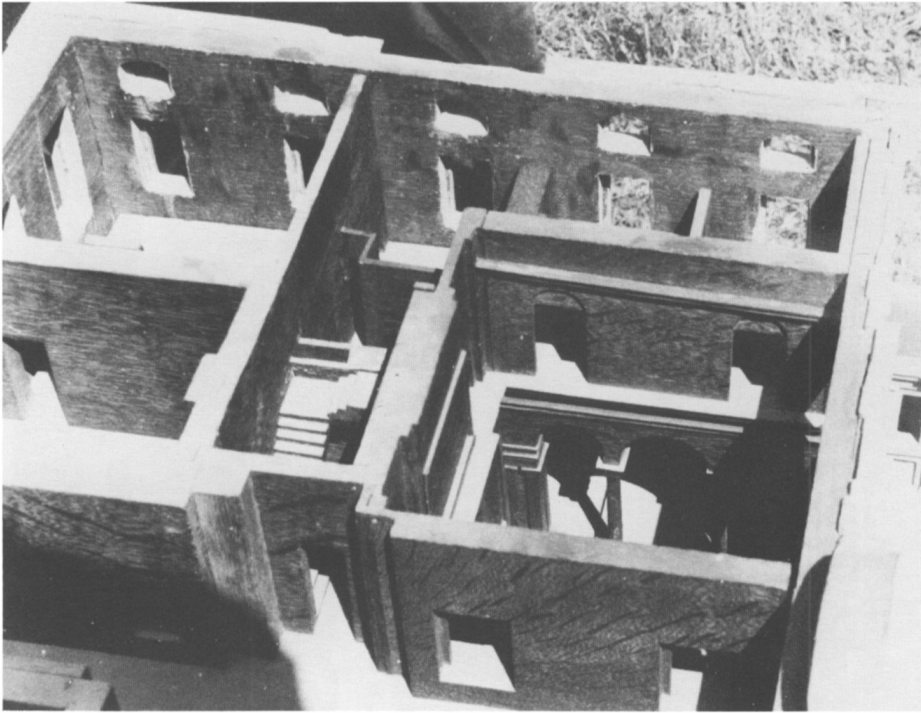


Fig. 19 *The model, detail of south end*

Fig. 20 *North elevation sketched by Thomas Colepeper (British Library, MS Harl. 7597, fol. 100)*

Fig. 21 *The model, detail of north end*