GREYS COURT

ROTHERFIELD GREYS
OXFORDSHIRE

VOLUME 2

THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES

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THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES -
SIR FRANCIS KNOLLYS AND FAMILY

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VOLUME 2.

GREYS COURT:
THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES -
SIR FRANCIS KNOLLYS AND FAMILY

HISTORY AND CONTEXT, 1500-1600:
THE RISE AND PRE-EMINENCE OF THE KNOLLYS FAMILY

Interregnum and acquisition by Robert Knollys, 1521

The acquisition of the manor of Rotherfield Greys by the Knollys family, early in the 16th century, was protracted and convoluted. Following the death of Jasper Duke of Bedford in 1495,[1] the manor reverted to the Crown and the title was not, for some years, conferred on a new owner. During this period, in the late 1490s and early 1500s, the manor fell into the hands of three consecutive occupants whose status at Rotherfield Greys is unclear. What is certain is that their tenure was short-lived. Amongst them were Thomas Kemys and Thomas Hales, both referred to as 'gentlemen' and who, although they occupied the manor, do not seem to have held title.[2] Thomas Kemys is recorded in occupation between 1495 and 1501/02; Thomas Hales in the years 1501/02 to 1503.[3] In 1503, Robert Knollys (d.1521) was at Rotherfield, apparently on a similar, insecure, tenure.[4]

Robert Knollys (d. 1521) and his wife Lettice, daughter of Sir Thomas Penyston of Hawkridge and Marshall, Buckinghamshire,[5] appear to have lived unhindered at Rotherfield Greys until 1514, when an 'inquisition' was held into the ownership and occupancy of the manor.[6] A statement of the inquisition reveals details of the changing tenure outlined above and the obscurity surrounding rights of occupation.

> '2 March 1514 in the 5th year of King Henry VIII. An inquisition taken at Henley on Thames: "The Jurors state, that the manor of Rotherfeld Grey was held by Francis Lovell, knight, on the 21st day of August in the 1st year of Henry VII, as well as the advowson of the church of Rotherfeld Greys, and that Francis Lovell was convicted, and attainted by a certain act of Parliament, held at Westminster on the 7th of November, in the 1st year of Henry VII, the manor was forfeited, and is worth 40 marks; that Jasper, late Duke of Bedford, occupied the manor of Rotherfeld Greys from the time of the attainder of Francis Lord Lovell until the time of his death, to wit, the 21st day of December, in the 11th year of king Henry VII and received all the profits of the manor during that time: and Thomas Kemys, of Henley aforesaid, in the county of Oxford, Gentleman, occupied the manor aforesaid, from the 21st day of December, in the 11th year of king Henry VII, until the Festival of Saint Michael the Archangel, in the 17th year of the same king, and received all the profits; and Thomas Hales, of Henley aforesaid, Gentleman, occupied the manor from the Festival of St. Michael, in the 17th year, until the Festival of St. Michael, in the 19th year of Henry VII, and received all the profits, and that Robert Knollys, of Rotherfeld Grey, aforesaid, Esquire, occupied the manor from the Festival of St. Michael, in the 19th year of Henry VII, until the date of the Inquisition, and received all the profits, but by what title or right, the Jurors, on their oath, are altogether ignorant." [7]

Despite the ominous findings of the inquisition, four months later, on 9 July 1514, Robert and Lettice were granted, jointly, the manor of Rotherfield Greys in survivorship, at an annual rent of a red rose to be presented at midsummer.[8] Within a few years, Robert Knollys and Lettice received, conjointly, for their own lives and that of one successor, a grant of the

manor and advowson of the church of Rotherfield Greys by Letter Patent dated 5 January 1517-18.[9]

Robert Knollys, who also possessed land in London and Henley-on-Thames, served Henry VIII as a Gentlemen Usher of the Privy Chamber,[10] and the grant of Rotherfield Greys almost certainly reflected his rank and position at court. Robert was fifth in descent from Sir Thomas Knollys, Lord Mayor of London in 1399 and 1410 and member of the Grocers' Company, who, in 1400, directed the rebuilding of the London Guildhall.[11] Alternative historical accounts offer a different lineage, placing Robert Knollys as a descendent of Sir Robert Knollys, a soldier knight in the service of Edward III.[12] However, the *Dictionary of National Biography* refutes the claim - reiterated by Dugdale - that Robert Knollys was descended from Sir Robert Knollys (d.1407), soldier, stating that the claim is 'wanting' in proof.[13] Robert and Lettice had four children: Francis, Henry, Mary and Jane.[14] Francis Knollys, the eldest son, was born at Rotherfield Greys, either in 1514[15] or 1515.[16] Robert died in 1521 and was buried in the church of St. Helen's Bishopsgate. His will, dated 13 November 1520, was proved on 19 June 1521.[17] After Robert's death, his widow married Sir Robert Lee of Burston, Buckinghamshire.[18]

Sir Francis Knollys: courtier and exile, 1521 to 1558

Figure 84.

Portrait of Sir Francis Knollys, circa 1586, by an unknown artist. (AA046058) (Reproduced by permission of The National Trust, Greys Court)

Robert's eldest son, Francis - later titled Sir Francis Knollys – was a prominent figure in political and religious affairs, achieving status at court and serving Queen Elizabeth as an outspoken statesman, advisor and confidant. His building work at Greys Court proved to be instrumental in the development of the house, defining the building with which we are familiar today. It is likely that Francis received some education at Oxford, but assertions, made by Napier in the mid-19th century,[19] that Francis was a member of Magdalen College, are unconfirmed.[20] His first position at court was that of gentleman pensioner to Henry VIII, which reflected the king's favour to his father.[21] In 1538, Henry extended his favour to Francis, securing him in fee, the paternal estate of Rotherfield Greys.[22] In 1539, Francis' courtly duties required that he attend Anne of Cleves on her arrival in England.[23]

On 26 April 1540, Francis married Catherine Carey, grand-daughter of Thomas Boleyn: Catherine being first cousin to Elizabeth I,[24] thereby paving the way for the Knollys family's role in the Elizabethan court. Francis and Catherine's standing at court was reflected in the grant, as a wedding gift from the King, of lands in Devon.[25] This was followed by Acts of Parliament, between 1540 and 1541 and 1545 to 1546, attesting the grant of Rotherfield

Greys, the latter Act making his wife joint tenant.[26] In November 1542, Francis was granted a thirty-year lease of Caversham, for which he received the site and lands of the manor, with the 'great garden and orchards, the flour mills, ferry and the lock etc.' and licence 'to pull down and build upon the said site at his pleasure'. The previous lord of Caversham manor, since 1496, was the abbot of Notley, Buckinghamshire who is said to have had no interest in the house.[27] Francis was to keep his interest in Caversham for about twenty-two years, before losing possession in 1564, for a similar duration. Whether or not Francis undertook any substantial building at Caversham during the 1540s or early 1550s, prior to his departure from England during the reign of Mary I, is unclear. However, Malpas, in his unpublished manuscript *Sir Francis Knollys & Family* states that, until 1558, Greys Court remained the property of Francis's mother Lettice, a statement repeated by Macleod.[28] If this proves correct, then it implies that, during the 1540s and for most of the 1550s, Francis was not engaged in modifications to the house at Greys Court. It is probably significant that the earliest identified, 16th-century, phase at Greys Court has been dated to 1559.

Figure 85.

Copy of a 16th-century portrait of Catherine Carey, wife of Sir Francis Knollys. Artist unknown. (AA046054) (Reproduced by permission of The National Trust, Greys Court)

Francis and Catherine spent a great deal of time at court, concerned with matters of State and the Royal Household. Francis is known to have engaged in recreational pursuits, particularly jousting, otherwise known as 'tilting', and it is recorded that on Christmas Day in December 1539, at Calais: 'after dinner Sir George Carew and Knollys ran together at the tilt'.[29] In 1543 it is recorded that Francis 'ran the ring': a pursuit similar to tilting, but with the aim of getting a spear through a ring hung above the contenders.[30] On a more serious note, Francis entered the House of Commons for the first time in 1542, as Member for Horsham.[31] At the beginning of the reign of Edward VI, Francis accompanied the English army to Scotland and was knighted by the commander in chief, the Duke of Somerset, at the camp at Roxburgh on 28 September 1547.[32]

Despite apparent social and political successes, Francis Knollys' letters indicate a contradictory aspect in his life. These demonstrate that he was having financial difficulties, in which he experienced a significant disparity between the level of his personal revenue and the financial demands of his social rank. In March 1547, Francis wrote a letter to Secretary Paget, complaining of the fact that he had only fifty marks per year for himself and his wife and that, as a consequence, he had to sell land worth 53L per year. In June the following year, he received licence to export 2,000 tuns of beer, a grant which may be interpreted as an answer to his complaint.[33] His position must have been alleviated further when, on 7

March 1551, Francis was appointed Constable of Wallingford Castle, Steward of the Honour of Ewelme, and Keeper of Ewelme Park, with power to appoint the keepers, to hold for his life.[34] Furthermore, in April 1552, he was granted the manor of Cholsey in Berkshire.[35] Never-the-less, his circumstances continued to change and he experienced increasing costs and encumbrances, financial security re-emerging as a crucial issue during the 1560s.

Francis and Catherine's family grew prodigiously during the 1540s and 1550s, their first child, Henry, born in 1541, followed by Mary, born October 1542 and Lettice, born November 1543.[36] The arrival of their first three children was soon followed by the births of William, in March 1545, Edward in 1546[37] and Maud in March 1548. A daughter, Elizabeth, was born in 1549, and sons Robert in November 1550 and Richard in 1552.[38] A son, Francis, was born 14 August, 1553, a daughter Anne on 19 July 1555, and a child that did not live long enough to be christened, was born sometime in 1557.[39] The family grew still further with the birth of Thomas, born 1559 and Catherine, who arrived in October 1559.[40] A seventh daughter, Cecily, died young.[41] Malpas reports that a copy of a dictionary, by Marius Nizolius, published in Venice 1551, once belonging to Francis Knollys and kept at Greys Court in the 1970s, had, written inside the front cover in Francis Knollys' handwriting, the date of his marriage and the dates of births of his children.[42] Five sons were knighted, the exceptions being Edward (d.1580) and Richard.[43] In total, Lady Catherine and Francis had fourteen children who survived birth: seven sons, seven daughters and at least one baby who died in infancy. All fifteen are represented as effigies on the Knollys monument at Rotherfield Greys church.

Figure 86.

Copy of a portrait of Lettice Knollys, in circa 1590. Artist unknown. (AA046053) (Reproduced by permission of The National Trust, Greys Court)

Francis was to gain reknown for his religious beliefs during later life, but his commitment to the puritan faith also predominated while he was a young man. He was present at Sir William Cecil's house for a conference between Catholics and Protestants on 25 November 1551[44] and throughout the reign of Edward VI he distinguished himself by his zeal for the Reformation.[45] At Mary's accession, in July 1553, his religious views placed him in opposition to government and at grave risk of religious intolerance and persecution. He, like many contemporaries of similar rank and puritan belief, crossed to the continent, spending time in Switzerland and Germany.[46] On his departure, the Princess Elizabeth wrote a sympathetic note to Catherine Knollys, expressing a wish that they would soon be able to return to England in safety.[47] During this period of exile, Francis studied, matriculating at Basle University in 1556, and in June the following year he was living at Frankfurt, with his wife and five of their children, the remainder of the family possibly staying in England with

friends or relatives.[48] He was admitted as a church member in Frankfurt on 21 December 1557, but later moved to Strasburg.[49]

Francis probably returned to England shortly before Queen Mary's death in November 1558.[50] In the same year he inherited Rotherfield Greys on the death of his mother Lettice, whose third marriage had been to Sir Thomas Tresham, a devout Catholic.[51] Both events were to prove pivotal to his future wealth and position and to the history and evolution of the mansion at Greys Court.

Sir Francis Knollys: status and property - the early years of Elizabeth's reign (1558 –1569)

When Francis Knollys returned to England his position in state and in society was already established and he was known as a man 'of assured understanding and truth'[52] – a position strengthened immeasurably by his resolute protestant belief. Within a few months, in December 1558, he was admitted to Elizabeth's privy council and was sworn in as Vice-Chamberlain of the Household on 14 January 1559.[53] The same year he was chosen as Member of Parliament for Arundel, under the patronage of Henry Fitzalan, 18th Earl of Arundel, and his wife and her sister, first cousins to Elizabeth I, became women of the Queen's privy chamber.[54] In 1562, Francis was appointed Member of Parliament for Oxford and awarded a stewardship of the same town.[55]

These appointments were accompanied by a succession of property grants to Francis and his wife, presumably to reward his position at Court and her attendance on the Queen. In May 1560, he was appointed Keeper of Syon House, Middlesex, and the following year received a thirty-one year lease 'of the reversion and rent of lands in Iselworth Syon, co. Middlesex', awarded 'for the service of Francis Knolles, knight, councillor, vice-chamberlain of the household, to him and Catherine his wife'.[56] On 14 July 1561, Francis and Catherine were granted the manor of Taunton[57] in a 'lease for the service of F. Knolles' and 'Catherine his wife, the queens' kinswoman…for life in survivorship, with remainder to Robert Knolles, one of their sons, for life'.[58] The lease included 'the Castle of Taunton, the manor of Taunton and Tandeane, the borough of Taunton and the manors of Stalpulgrave, Naylusborne, Poundesford, Hull, Holeway, Rounton and Otterford, co. Somerset, all late of the bishopric of Winchester'.[59] Later, Francis was able to exchange these manors for others sited closer to his interests in Oxfordshire and at court, including Cholsey, Hagbourne, Aston Upthorpe and Stanford-in-the-Vale.[60]

In addition to this new income and status, in 1560 and 1561, Francis Knollys received grant of four wardships, from which he derived considerable income.[61] These included Francis Willoughby of Wollaton, Nottinghamshire, who went on to build Wollaton Hall.[62] Francis and Catherine also received the fees of their various offices and free board and lodging at Court.[63]

However, to an extent, these gains were off-set by the loss of Caversham for a lengthy period between 1564 and 1588.[64] Caversham, which had belonged to the Duke of Northumberland, fell to a disagreement over ownership, which concluded in 1564 with Francis Knollys surrendering the manor to the widow of the Duke of Northumberland's eldest son, for her lifetime.[65] Francis regained possession only after her death in 1588.[66] It is,

perhaps, significant that this period, when Caversham was surrended, coincided with that when most of the alteration and rebuilding was undertaken at Rotherfield Greys.

In 1564 Francis accompanied the Queen on a visit to Cambridge, where, during a visit to the University, he was conferred Master of Arts on 10 August 1564.[67] Two years later he received a Master of Arts from the University of Oxford.[68] His sons, were, in the same period, receiving education at Eton, the Register of Eton College recording, in 1560, the attendance of Knollys senior and Knollys junior, presumably William and Edward, and in 1561, that of Knollys' minor and minimus, presumably Robert and Richard.[69]

Francis Knollys continued his ascendance at court and was appointed Treasurer of the Chamber in 1566,[70] before being entrusted, two years later, with his foremost commission to that date, as Warden to Mary Queen of Scots. Following Mary's escape to England in May 1568, she took refuge in Carlisle Castle and Francis Knollys and Henry Scrope, ninth baron Scrope, were entrusted with her safe keeping.[71] Francis Knollys was chosen because his faith was 'entirely opposed' to that of Mary.[72] He arrived at Carlisle on 28 May 1568.[73] However, it is evident from his personal correspondence, that Knollys, on arriving at Carlisle to take charge of Mary, was at soon 'prepossessed in her favour'.[74] He supervised her transfer to Bolton Castle, the seat of Lord Scrope, on 13 July 1569, where he tried to amuse her by teaching her to write and read English.[75] In August of that year Mary gave Francis a present for his wife and expressed the desire of her acquaintance, writing a note: reputedly one of her first attempts at writing in English.[76]

During his time at Bolton, Francis continued to complain of receiving an income that was insufficient to support his status and family. He tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain the manor of Ewelme, commenting, in a letter to William Cecil, that he had sought to achieve this by some exchange for 'other lands' which would have been 'most beneficial to me, with least loss to her Highness'.[77] The Queen, however, had refused, prompting Francis to write to Cecil complaining that, from then on, he would 'rather lower his position to meet his income than hope to raise his income to suit his position'.[78] He continued:

> 'I have six sons living, beside my eldest, and I fear that their youthful stout hearts would not abide misery, and yet if God took me away tomorrow I should not leave four nobles yearly revenue and should be sorry to think they should adventure the gallows for lack of living. But if my courtly countenance were taken away, I would leave them such an example of contented poor life that they should better contain themselves to live within their compass. My daughters also are far too chargeable to keep in this order; experience teaches what foul crimes youthful women fall into for lack of orderly maintenance. My will is good, they can not lack as long as I have it, but the'e is no more to be had of a cat than the skin...'[79]

A series of personal letters, exchanged during 1568 and 1569, provide a fascinating insight into the relationships between Francis, Catherine and Queen Elizabeth. In a letter, dated 29 July 1568, from Francis to his wife, he writes that he is sorry to hear that she (Catherine) had fallen into a fever and that 'I would to God I were dispatched hence that I might only attend and care for your good recovery; I trust you shall shortly overcome this fever and recover good health again'.[80] Lord Leicester was able to write to Francis, shortly afterwards, that

Lady Catherine was well again and wished to travel to Bolton Castle to join her husband, but that the Queen would not agree. A letter by Francis Knollys, written at Christmas 1568 reads:

> 'And for the outward love that her Majesty bears you, she often makes you weep with unkindness, to the great danger of your health; so that if these be the only fruits of your love and my trust, happy were we if we were disgraced….that we might retire us….to lead a poor country life…..whereunto I thank God I am ready to prepare myself for my part, if you shall like hereof'[81]

On 17 January 1569, he wrote a letter to the Queen, complaining of her treatment of him and his continued position as Warden to Mary:

> 'If I may be so bold as to repeat one thing often, you shall never be well served unless you back and encourage your faithful councillors. But now I had need to fall down prostrate for pardon of my rudeness – yet it proceeds of good will, or I stand in very hard terms with you – for please your eye I can not, as nature has not given it to me, and to please your ego I would fain, but my calling, oath and conscience force me to rudeness. Wherefore, if your Majesty think as I do, that you can never make me a good courtier, I most humbly beseech you, dismiss me to the country rather than aggravate my grief with noisome and fruitless service'.[82]

Francis sent the letter to William Cecil, asking that he forward it to the queen should he see fit. What Francis did not know was that Catherine had already died aged thirty-nine, on 15 January 1569.[83] It may be that Cecil withheld the letter on account of these events - unknown to Francis - and that it probably never reached Elizabeth.[84] On 20 January 1569, the Queen's orders arrived at Bolton, authorising Lord Scrope and Francis Knollys to take Mary to Tutbury Castle, where she was to be placed into the custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury.[85] Francis, who was unaware of his wife's death, took Mary from Bolton, remaining with her until 3 February 1569.[86] While he was attending Lord Shrewsbury, at Tutbury Castle, Elizabeth sent a messenger bearing the news of Catherine's death. Napier's draft manuscript includes a transcript of a different letter, dated 26 February, from Nicholas White - at that time a member of the Council of Ireland. He writes:

> 'The Queen of Scots understanding by his Lordship, that a servant of the Queens Majesty of some credit was come to the house, seemed desirous to speak with me, and thereupon came forth of her privy chamber into the presence chamber where I was, and in courteous manner bad me welcome, and asked of me how her good servant did. I told her Grace that the Queens Majesty (God be praised) did my will saying that all her felicities gave place to some natural…grief, which she conceived in the death of her kinswoman and good servant the Lady Knollys, and how by that occasion her Highness fell for a while from a prince wanting nothing in this world, to private mourning, in which solitary estate, being forgetful of her own health, she took cold, wherewith she was much troubled, and whereof she was well delivered'.[87]

In April 1569, Catherine was buried in St. Edmund's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, at royal expense.[88] The queen's grief was undoubtedly genuine, but the contrast offered in Francis's letters, written immediately prior to his wife's death, points to a more capricious side to the Queen and the manner in which she dealt with those around her. After Catherine's death a marked change occurs in Francis' wealth and position at court: a change almost certainly occasioned by this event, perhaps as a reaction to Catherine's death on both the part of the Queen and Francis, who resorted to a life at court as opposed to withdrawing into a 'poor country life' as he had proposed, perhaps factitiously, shortly before Catherine's death.

Figure 87.

Effigies of Sir Francis and Lady Catherine Knollys, the Knollys monument, Rotherfield Greys Church. (AA97/04251)

Sir Francis Knollys: elder statesman and builder, 1569 to 1596

In the same month as Catherine Knollys' death, in January 1569, Francis was appointed Treasurer of the Household, a prestigious position offering scope for power and influence at court and which he was to hold until his death. This new position required his attendance at court, which caused Francis to erect a townhouse in Whitehall. Since his wife's death, Francis no longer required rooms within the Palace of Whitehall, those which he had shared with his wife having been close to the Queen's private apartments.[89] On 18 December 1570 Francis received transfer of a cottage adjacent to the Tilt Yard at Whitehall Palace: a site opposite that occupied later in the 17th century by the Whitehall Banqueting House, and which in 1570 stood adjacent to a piece of waste ground used as a carpenters' yard.[90] This land had been on a lease from the Queen to a gentleman by the name of Brown.[91] In 1572, Francis obtained a new lease for sixty years at a rent of £6 13s. 4d and which included the cottage and a part of the timber yard.[92] A lengthy description of the extent and location of the land is published by the Survey of London, part of which reads as follows:

> 'The soyle, parcell of the saied voyed ground wherein the saied Cottage is scituate, doethe conteigne in length from the este to the west upon the Northe syde ioyninge upon the Carpenters yarde one hundreth and eightene foote withn the walls, … upon the southe syde buttinge upon the highewaye into St. James parke and Tylteyarde..'[93]

Knollys acquired the land with the intention 'to buylde a convenyent house''.[94] He asked the Queen for an allowance of £160 'towards the charges of the buylding thereof', but he was actually granted £120.[95] At the beginning of August 1572, the house was sufficiently complete to enable him to give a dinner there for the French envoy.[96] A description of the house, in 1610-11, is included below and mentions certain new work, the house then being the property of Sir William Knollys, Viscount Wallingford, from which the mansion derived the name 'Wallingford House'.[97] The house remained in his possession until 1622, when it was sold to the Duke of Buckingham.[98]

Soon after completing the mansion at Whitehall, Francis Knollys turned his attention to building at Greys Court. In 1573-4 he commenced remodelling the house, demolishing buildings in the upper court and erecting a large new range, which later came to form the main block of the reduced house that has survived. Construction progressed to the base court by 1578, the details of which are discussed below. Francis' presence at Rotherfield in the period is demonstrated by letters to the Queen, written by Francis while at Greys Court, one dated 9 January 1578.[99]

Clearly, Francis Knollys' building work at Whitehall was undertaken in response to his position at court and the exigencies of rank. It is likely that these factors, as well as improving finances, were instrumental in instigating and facilitating the work at Greys Court during the 1570s. Complementary to this is the probability that his building at Greys Court was executed in readiness for potential royal visits. Dr Rawlinson, writing in his '*Collections for Oxfordshire*' in circa 1718,[100] notes that at Greys Court there was a *'Queen's Gate, erected by Sir Fra. Knowles, for Q. Elizabeth's coming from Henley to Grays-Court where there was formerly an Iron. Room for keeping the Records of Master of the Wards'*.[101] The location of the Iron Room – a fascinating allusion to the deliberate use of iron for security and possibly safeguarding against fire? - is unknown. Possible locations for the 'Queen's Gate' are discussed in the text below. Court Calendars record that between 15 July and 25 September 1574, the Queen was on Progress, residing for some of that time in mansions in Berkshire and Oxfordshire. She was at Binfield, Reading, between 15 and 23 July, Caversham, or Rotherfield Greys, as a guest of Francis Knollys on 23 July, Ewelme 23-24 July and Holton, 24 July, as guest of Christopher Browne. However, the surrender of Caversham to Northumberland between 1564 and 1588[102] implies that the Queen probably visited Rotherfield Greys, and not Caversham, on 23 July 1574. Court Calendars also record that the Queen was a guest of Francis Knollys at Rotherfield Greys on 8 October 1576, but that, as in 1574, she probably did not stay at the house, instead resting 8-9 October at Hurst, as the guest of Richard Ward.[103]

There is documentary evidence implying that Francis Knollys was engaged in building work at an earlier date, during the 1560s, and that he employed the master mason Robert Smythson. In 1568, Smythson arrived at Longleat to serve as chief mason for Sir John Thynne, and accompanying him, a team of five skilled masons and a letter from Humphrey Lovell, the Queen's Master Mason:

> 'Accordenge to my promes I have sent unto yowe this bearer Robert Smythson, freemason, who of laytt was with Master Vice Chamberlaine (Francis Knollys), not dowting hem but to be a man fett for youre worshepe''[104]

Lovell's recommendation of Smythson, referenced by the latter's work for Francis Knollys, begs the obvious question as to where Knollys had employed Smythson to work. Girouard states that Smythson had probably been working on Knollys' 'great house at Caversham, across the river from Reading'.[105] He continues that in 1613, Thomas Campion described the house at Caversham as 'fairly built of brick', but that it was falling into ruin when Evelyn visited in 1654.[106] Girourd makes the important point that, as with many great Tudor houses, no picture of the Caversham house is known to survive.[107] However, the Northumberland interregnum at Caversham implies that Francis engaged Smythson there before 1564, or that Smythson was working for Knollys after 1564 at a site elsewhere. Unfortunately the answer to this question remains elusive. However, with the death of the Dowager Countess of Warwick in 1588, Francis regained possession of Caversham Manor and Park and in the register of wills he is described as 'of Caversham', suggesting that this was an important focus of his affairs by then.

Lying behind Francis Knollys's building during the 1570s and 1580s is his continued rise at court. Elected Member of Parliament for Oxfordshire in 1572, he sat for the same constituency until his death.[108] As was customary among courtiers, his position and favour engendered the exchange of gifts with the Queen at New Year, and it is recorded that on 1 January 1578, while at Hampton Court, Francis gave the Queen £10 in gold as a new year's gift.[109] As a statesman, Sir Francis Knollys was a close advisor to the Queen, but one who kept his own mind and was prepared to speak independently on issues of state and religion, even when he was aware that his own view would not please the Queen. He was often critical of her acceptance of flatterers and implored her to take steps to avert potentially damaging situations such as Spain's ambition to conquer the Low Countries, the rise of papists at home and the revolt of Scotland.[110] In 1579 he was reprimanded by the Queen for his reluctance to support the Queen's proposed marriage to Alençon, and Elizabeth threatened that Knollys' 'zeal for religion would cost him dear'.[111] Despite such warnings, Francis was greatly concerned with the religious affairs of the country, both in parliament and in council, and urged for Queen Mary's execution in 1587.[112]

In 1578, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, the Queen's favourite, married in secret Francis Knollys' daughter, Lettice. Francis then forced them to marry a second time in his presence as a witness, fearing that Leicester might disavow Lettice, as he had done Lady Sheffield. The queen forbade Lettice ever returning to court and threatened Leicester's imprisonment.[113]

During the late 1570s, aged in his sixties, Francis was clearly looking to secure the future wealth and position of his family. In April 1578, Henry, the eldest son, was granted his father's offices as Constable of Wallingford Castle[114] and Keeper of Ewelme Park.[115] In June 1584 his second son, William, was appointed to succeed his brother Henry at Wallingford and Ewelme and shortly afterwards, was appointed Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant.[116] This confirmed William's public position and provided him with a house of his own. Francis also made arrangements so that Stanford and Blewbury would pass 'in due course' to Richard and Thomas. The legal arrangements for Stanford were complicated and the Queen and Burghley misunderstood Francis's intentions, prompting him to write to Walsingham: 'My meaning was to have settled my small portion of land to my sons, because I do think they are able and willing to serve Her Majesty'.[117] In 1587, Syon was mortgaged to

Duke of Northumberland, by Robert Knollys, another of Francis's sons, and the property stayed thereafter with the Northumberland family.[118]

The closing years of Francis Knollys' life reflect no diminution in his pursuit of his religious and political goals. He was unwavering in his support of the puritans and on 20 June 1584, he wrote a letter to Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, condemning the Archbishop's attempts to prosecute puritan preachers in the Court of High Commission as unjust and treading 'the highway to the Pope'. In July 1586 he urged the banishment of all recusants and the exclusion from public offices of all who married recusants.[119] However, his religious struggles in support of puritans and the Queen were often fraught with difficulties, prompting him to write, in May 1591, that he would prefer to retire from politics and political office rather than cease to express his hostility to the bishops' claims with full freedom.[120] His affairs of state were conducted with similar rigor. In 1588-89 he was placed in command of the land forces of Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire, which had been called together to resist the Spanish Armada.[121] On 23 April 1593, he was elected Knight of the Garter[122] and at his death on 19 July 1596, aged 82, Sir Francis Knollys remained Treasurer of the Royal Household and Member of Parliament for Oxfordshire.[123]

Sir Francis Knollys' funeral took place in Rotherfield Greys church on 18 August 1596, an account of his funeral recounted by Napier as follows:

'The ii conductors.
Then the poore men lxxxii (in number)
Then all Gents, and Knights' Servants
The Servants to Sir Francis Knolles.
The Servants to Sir Thomas Knolles and Robert.
Then the Lord's servants in clokes.
Then Sir Wm Knolles' Servants.
The Trompeter, Mr Blunt.
Then all Sr Francis Knollers' Servants – lx.
Then his Steward, and ii chaplens – Hughes and Farnshaw'

Then named xxii individuals

'The Cushion and Carpet.
The Preacher, Doctor Holland
The Banner, Mr Thomas West
The Treasurer's Staff, Mr Burges.
The Helmet
The Cott (Coat), and Sward
The Corpse (borne by viii men)
Garter
Sir William Knolles, Chief Mourner.

Sir Henry Lee	Sir Francis Knolles
Sir Thomas Knolles	Sir William Spencer
Mr Robert Knolles	Mr Baker
Lord Hunsdon	Lord La Ware'[124]

A poem on his death was penned by Thomas Churchyard under the title 'A Sad and solemne funerall', London 1596.[125] The poem reads as follows:

> 'Chaste life wins laud, clean thoughts through clouds do mount;
> True heart gains friends and makes proud enemies blush;
> Plain dealing still comes quickly to account,
> In shocking world good minds abides the push;
> Who stands upright, fears neither foil nor fall,
> Who fears God well, and Princce's law obeys,
> Is happy here and (hence most blest of all)
> Lives like a saint and gains immortal praise!
> These virtues rare did blaze like stars in thee,
> With greater gifts, in blest and highest degree.'[126]

Fuller, writing in 1662, noted that the Norris's - a distinguished Oxfordshire family, contemporary with Sir Francis Knollys and who were continually feuding with the Knollys family[127] - were all 'Martis pulli', men of the sword, and never out of military employment. He states:

> 'The Knollys' were rather valiant men, than any great soldiers, as little experienced in war. Queen Elizabeth loved the Knollys' themselves, the Norris' for themselves and herself, being sensible that she needed such martial men for her service. The Norris' got more honour abroad, the Knollys' more profit at home, conversing constantly at Court: and no wonder if they were the warmest who sat next to the fire'.[128]

Three days after the funeral, on 21 August 1596, Francis' son Richard was also buried at Rotherfield Greys church.[129] The Will of Sir Francis Knollys, proved 5 Sept 1596, left William Knollys as sole executor. The Will mentions sons Robert, Richard, Francis and Thomas, and daughters Lady Leicester, Lady Leighton, Lady Gerald and Lady La Warr.[130] Francis desired that within three months of his death, 'as a poor remembrance of his humble duty to her Majesty, one ring of gold, with a diamond of the value of 40 pounds, be provided, and given to her'.[131] A copy of 'The Laste Will and testament of Sir Francis Knollys' is kept in the 'Cromwellian Stables' at Greys Court, taken from the original at the National Archives at Kew. It is significant that the document makes no mention of Rotherfield Greys, perhaps reflecting an earlier transfer of the manor to William, the second son, who outlived his elder brother Henry (d. 1583). Extracts from the will read as follows:

> 'To William Knollys, eldest son (knight) all my Manor of Caversham in Co. Oxon & Berks, and all other my lande tenements & heredytamente in Caversham, also Thorpe, Bowdowne, Chiplake and Reading, Oxon & Bers, with the house built by Hugh, late Abbot of the monastery of Reading'. Also, 'Landes & tenements in Co. Berks in or near Cholsey aforesaide And all other my Landes tenements & heredytamente in this Realme of England'. 'To each daughter, Countess of Leicester, Lady Leighton, Lady Oswald and Lady Delaware a piece of gilt plate. To each servant a year's wages. To Lord William Burleigh, Lord treasurer of England and Sir Robert Cecil his son, ovverseers of will, a gold ring value of 40 shillings'.

Sir Francis Knollys' Will left the manor of Battel to his son, also Sir Francis, and the manor of Stanford-in-the-Vale, Whitehorse, to his granddaughters.

All of Sir Francis Knollys' sons were prominent courtiers. Henry, the eldest son, described as 'of Kingsbury, Warwickshire', was elected Member of Parliament for Shoreham in 1562-63 and for Oxfordshire in 1572.[132] His will was proved 14 May 1583.[133] William, the second son, and eventual heir, is described below. Edward, the third son died about 1580.[134] Robert, the fourth son, was appointed keeper of Syon House in 1560 and Usher of the Mint in the Tower on 5 February 1578.[135] He was Member of Parliament for Reading from 1572 to 1589, and later for Breconshire and Berkshire, and Abingdon in 1623-24 and 1625.[136] He was knighted 24 July 1603.[137] Richard, the fifth son, described as being of Stanford-in-the-Vale, Berkshire, was Member of Parliament for Northampton in 1588, and died at Rotherfield Greys on 21 August 1596, having married Joan, Daughter of John Higham of Stanford.[138] She was buried at Rotherfield Greys 10 October 1631, after remarrying to Francis Winchcombe of Bucklebury, Berkshire.[139] Sir Robert Knollys (d.1659), her son by her first husband, was knighted 10 January 1612-13 and acquired Rotherfield Greys from his uncle William on 4 March 1630-31.[140] Francis, sixth son of Sir Francis Knollys, was well known at court as 'young Sir Francis' and was Member of Parliament for Oxford 1572-88.[141] His will was proved in 1648. He married Lettice, daughter John Barrett of Hanham, Gloucestershire, in 1588, and they had a son, Sir Francis (d. 1643), and a daughter, Lettice or Letitia, who became the second wife of a John Hampden.[142] The seventh son of Sir Francis Knollys, Thomas, distinguished himself in warfare in the Low Countries, acting as Governor of Ostend in 1586.[143]

Figure 88.

Effigies of three sons of Sir Francis and Lady Catherine Knollys, depicted on the side of the Knollys monument, Rotherfield Greys Church. (AA97/04250)

Figure 89.

Portrait of Sir Francis Knollys the Younger (circa 1550-1648), sixth son of Sir Francis and Lady Catherine Knollys. Possibly painted circa 1630. Artist unknown. (AA046057) (Reproduced by permission of The National Trust, Greys Court)

Sir Francis Knollys' family are depicted as sculptures on the Knollys monument located in the family chapel at Rotherfield Greys church. Chapel and tomb were built in 1605 by William Knollys, second son of Sir Francis.[144] The monument, thought to be the work of the Southwark School of Sculptors,[145] depicts Sir Francis and his wife Catherine recumbent, with the figure of a small child lying to her side, signifying a child lost during, or shortly after, birth. The couple are flanked on either side by a row of seven statues representing the couple's fourteen children. One row depicts the sons, the other the daughters, both comprising figures of diminishing sizes from front to back, representing the order of birth. The eldest daughter wears the coronet and robes of a peeress – she married Walter, Earl of Essex, then secondly, Robert, Earl of Leicester. The canopy carries the kneeling figures of William, Earl of Banbury, who erected the monument and chapel, and his first wife, before a 'prie-dieu'.[146] There is an achievement of arms at the eastern end of the base, which comprises the Knollys coat of arms: 'azure crusilly and a mill cross voided gold, quartering gules a chevron argent with three roses of the field'.[147]

Figure 90.

The Knollys monument, Rotherfield Greys Church. (BB97/04813)

BUILDINGS ANALYSIS, 1500-1600: THE ELIZABETHAN MANSION

Introduction and overview

Greys Court in the mid-16th century

The surviving evidence indicates that by the close of the medieval period the capital messuage at Rotherfield Greys formed an extensive walled complex, articulated by towers, and enclosing an irregular group of stone, brick and timber-framed buildings. Significantly, this view of the house is reinforced by a description recorded by John Leland in the period 1535 to 1543:

> 'Rotherfeld about a mile from Henley. There is a parke. It is of moste men caulled Rotherfelde Gray, by cause that one of the Gray of Ruthyne came to be owner of (it). Sum put this addition onto it, Gray Murdach, sayynge that this Murdach was a bysshope, and in comprobation of it there be dyvers myters sene in the haule in Rotherfeld.
>
> There appere enteringe into the maner place on the righte hand 3. or 4. Very olde towers of stone, a manifest token that it was sume tyme a castle. Ther (sic.) is a very large courte buidyd about with tymbar and spacyd with brike; but this is of a latter worke. Men of Henley may yet remember that it was the Lord Lovel's pocession. Sens by attainture it can by gifte to Knolls.'[148]

Leland's account summarises the condition of the house before later extensive remodelling, but also offers additional clues about its state of development to that date. His description suggests that the number of towers had already been reduced to leave only those that we see today. To what extent the medieval curtain wall survived is unclear. Also, the account infers that the approach to the house, leading '*into the maner place'* took the visitor towards the south-east corner of the house, thereby explaining Leland's comment that the 'olde towers' are on the *'righte hand'*. This may point to the probability that the medieval gatehouse was located towards the south-east corner of the curtilage or, alternatively, was sited on the south front. Leland's account also describes the scale of what we may assume was the base court: *'a very large courte',* within which stood the jettied timber-framed wing of 1450-51, consistent with the phrase *'buildyd about wuth tymbar',* and the crenellated brick range perhaps partly reflecting the description '*spacyd with brike',* or, alternatively, referring to brick nogging? However, alternative interpretations of Leland read this phrase as 'paved with brick'.[149] However, the layout of the surviving buildings and walls, as described in the preceding phases, point to a more complex plan with courtyards other than that mentioned by Leland. One, the upper court, was associated with the 'Great' and north-east towers and adjoining apartments, the other, a service yard near to the well, although there is insufficient evidence to determine whether or not the service and base courts were segregated entirely.

The buildings evidence is not forthcoming about Robert Knollys' tenure, and is equally opaque regarding the period after Robert's death, in 1521, when Rotherfield Greys belonged to his wife, Lettice Knollys (d. 1558) - Sir Francis Knollys' mother. Although the lack of buildings evidence of this period does not necessarily denote that no work took place, it is,

perhaps, less likely that Lettice possessed the independent wealth required to undertake major work, while her second and third husbands may not have been inclined to invest in improving the Knollys' house?

The Knollys' mansion, 1558-1588

The buildings evidence relates to the period after the death of Lettice, when Francis Knollys inherited Rotherfield Greys, and reflects a series of building campaigns that took place between 1559 and 1588. These involved the 'Keep', the front or main block (Greys-Court house), the west range (the remnants of this range extend south from the main house), the east or lodging range (reduced to form the 'Cromwellian Stables'), the 'Well House' and the south-west tower (refer to 16th-century phased plan). The remains of these buildings create the impression of a random group of structures, almost pavilion-like - a haphazard assemblage that is far removed from the original form and appearance of Francis Knollys' imposing and coherent scheme.

Figure 91.

Parchmarks on the 'Green Court', summer 2003, viewed from Greys Court House. These define the footprint of the outer court wall and gate (left of centre) of the Elizabethan mansion. (DP004072)

Francis partially demolished the buildings of the upper court, building one or more new ranges in their place, and refurbishing those that remained. He superimposed a significant degree of regularity on the earlier base court, by demolishing the south curtain wall (if it had not already been removed) and building brick elevations to the base court with its extensive south front facing the old Henley road. In so doing, he dispensed with the antiquated, inward-looking layout of the medieval house, which he transformed into a contemporary mansion with its prospect opened to the park and to the outside world. A sense of balance and symmetry was contrived by the construction, in separate campaigns, of two substantial ranges (the west and lodging ranges) on either side of the main courtyard. These were probably linked by a (now demolished) inter-court range crossing the north side of the base court and forming a division between this and the upper court. On the south front, the octagonal south-west tower was built, mirroring the medieval tower to the south east, and the 'Well House' was put up between the south-west tower and west range, all of which were connected by a matching court wall. This expansive south front, flanked by the octagonal towers at each corner and measuring over 113.4 metres (372 feet) long, probably centred on a gateway, or gatehouse, now evidenced by parchmarks which occur during dry weather, in the south part of the 'Green Court'.

The mid-to-late 16th-century building campaigns fall conveniently into three groups, defined by date, building materials and location within the overall plan. Most have been dated by dendrochronological sampling. The earliest and least pretentious campaign took place in 1559 and involved building an unassuming range (modern name, 'the Keep') in the service courtyard, adjacent to the well. This range was probably originally of timber-framed

construction, but was later cased in flint and brick. The second campaign includes the main block of the present house, dated to 1573-74, and built in the upper court using flint and brick with reused dressed-stone blocks, the latter probably derived from buildings demolished on the site. It it likely that these random materials were never intended to be on view, and that the walls were probably rendered originally. Possibly also falling into this period, although detached from the mansion, is the 'Tithe Barn', which is built using a similar combination of materials. This survives as a ruin incorporated into the walls of the 'Cherry Garden' and has not been sampled for dating purposes. It may have formed one of the agricultural buildings of the '*maner place'* described by Leland earlier in the century. The third group uses predominantly brick with ashlar detailing and includes the lodging range, dated to 1578, the west range (undated), 'Well House' and south-west tower, the latter two dated to 1586-88. However, the south-west tower uses flint, brick and render, possibly in an attempt to match the medieval south-west tower at the opposite end of the south front. A further ruined barn associated with the '*maner place'* is incorporated into the north-east corner of walled garden, close to the 'Archbishop's Maze'. This probably also dates from the 16th century, although unlike the 'Tithe Barn' is built predominantly of brick, surmounting a rubble plinth. As such, it bears comparison to the brick phases of the base court.

Figure 92.

The main range dated 1573-74 (centre). Viewed from south east. (AA042025)

The earliest identified phase, 1559, coincides with the historical context, the date falling immediately after key events in Francis Knollys' life: his inheritance of Rotherfield Greys in 1558 and, in the same year, his return from exile and ascendance in the court of the new queen. However, the modest nature of the work and the fact that - as far as we know from the surviving fabric – a delay of about fourteen years ensued before Knollys' began building in earnest, also corresponds with the historical context in which Francis experienced a prolonged period of financial stringency during the 1560s. The varied approaches to construction during the ensuing phases - in particular the choice of brick, a high-status material, for the later work - almost certainly reflects Knollys' growing wealth and rank as the century progressed. His second identified (or surviving) work, that to the upper court in 1573-74, uses salvaged materials, concealed by a render finish – perhaps a

Figure 93.

The 'Cromwellian Stables' – in fact the truncated remains of Knollys' rebuilt base court, dating from 1578. Viewed from Greys Court House. (AA044775)

compromise employed to limit expense at a time when Francis' privilege and income was still burgeoning. Within four years, or less, he was in a position to build with new materials, in particular brick with ashlar dressings, used in a forthright and unadorned manner around the base court. The unprepossessing style of these buildings - which Mark Girouard describes as *'agreeable but unassuming'*[150] - and the overall design, perpetuating the multiple courtyard plan, with elongated wings reaching out from the centre of the house, may be read as staid. However, other examples of this type include Gorhambury, Hertfordshire, built for Sir Nicholas Bacon in the period 1563-68,[151] and the earlier façade of Thornbury Castle (that also had a wall-walk), which was under construction in the 1520s.[152] Gorhambury, now a ruin, took the form of a large courtyard house, built of brick and with octagonal corner towers on the outer façade – a similar arrangement to that used at Greys Court in the 1570s and 1580s. These houses, including the Elizabethan mansion at Greys Court, are direct descendants of the great houses built in the earlier part of the 16th century, paying reference to the palace-style mansions built during the reign of Henry VIII, while Sir Francis was a young man at Court. These great houses, such as Richmond, Hampton Court and St. James' Palace, for example, demonstrate the same fundamental components: a frontage, standing before a base court, with central gatehouse and octagonal corner towers or turrets, the multiple-courtyard plan with flanking ranges, leading, in the correct hierarchical order, to the upper court with hall and principal apartments. Certainly, by the standards of fashionable mansions built in the final quarter of the century - such as Wollaton (1580s), Longleat (1570s) or Hardwick (1590s)[153] - the work at Greys Court bears little comparison, in terms of progressive architectural ideas and classical reference. This relates especially in plan terms, that of Greys Court - patently derived from the restraints of the partially-retained medieval house with its long branching wings - contrasting with the stylish, monosyllabic, forms spearheading the progress of country-house design in the closing decades of the 16th century. A similar point can be made in terms of architectural detail and embellishment, although the loss of the original render from the 1573-74 range at Greys Court may diminish our appreciation of the original work.

Overall, the work at Greys Court has rather more in common with the not too distant Shaw House. Built by the wealthy Newbury clothier Thomas Dolman, or his son of the same name, in the 1570s and 80s,[154] a similar combination of brick and ashlar occurs there, although Greys Court is less prepossessing, both in terms of the quantity of ashlar detail and its refinement, an aspect particularly evident in the quality of the fenestration at Shaw. The modest approach to style at Greys Court during the 1570s and 80s, in what was a substantial project to virtually rebuild the house, might be ascribed to the background, age and persuasion of the builder, Francis Knollys - a staunch puritan elder adopting a simplicity of style to reflect the adjure of his belief? The fact that the completion of this project took place in the late 1580s, when Francis was in his mid-70s, may imply the involvement of another family member, probably William, the second son, who outlived his elder brother Henry (d. 1583). As is discussed above, the Will of Sir Francis Knollys makes no mention of Rotherfield Greys, perhaps reflecting an earlier transfer of the manor to William.

The surveyor or master-mason responsible for executing Knollys' building works at Greys Court is unknown. However, as described above, Knollys' association with Smythson, freemason, of whom it was noted in 1568 that he (Smythson) 'of laytt was with Master Vice Chamberlaine' (Francis Knollys),[155] may, at least, implicate by association. As discussed above, Smythson may have been working on Knollys' mansion at Caversham during part of

the 1560s – a house which Thomas Campion described, in 1613, as 'fairly built of brick'.[156] Whether or not this was the case - considering Knollys' loss of Caversham in 1564 - is uncertain, as is any connection between Smythson and Knollys' work at Greys Court. The lack of stylish architectural detail at Greys Court certainly weighs against any presumption towards Smythson's involvement there. However, Smythson, who is documented as working at Longleat for protracted periods during the 1570s, is not identified at Longleat in the same sources during 1574.[157] He returned there in 1575.[158] This period of absence corresponds with that in which the partial rebuilding of the upper court took place at Greys Court, the timber for which was felled in the winter 1573-74. Whether or not these circumstances are coincidental remains to be seen.

A timber-framed building in the service court, 1559 ('The Keep')

Phase summary

This is the earliest building at Greys Court that can be ascribed as work of Francis Knollys. Dated by dendrochronology to 1559, it survives encapsulated within 'The Keep', encased by Knollys' own additions, built nearly thirty years later in 1587-88. The first phase post-dates the significant events of 1558, when Francis returned to England from exile and inherited Greys Court from his mother, Lettice. This phase saw the construction of a modest range in the service courtyard, to the west of the well: a building that, in its original form, differed considerably in appearance to that imposed upon it in the late 16th century. The distinctive octagonal south-west tower and brick and flint walls are all of the second phase, as is a half-bay stair area providing access to the tower from the south end of the building. Also, 'Stable Cottage', which adjoins to the north, incorporates walls which may be coeval with the second phase, but contains no work of the original phase. 'Stable Cottage' was heavily rebuilt in the 19th and mid-20th centuries.

Figure 94.

The south-west tower, viewed from the west. (AA046033)

In its original form, 'The Keep' comprised a partially or fully timber-framed building of two storeys and two bays length, standing on a north to south alignment. The bays respect a probable two-room plan in the original phase, including a possible heated bay to the north, which was probably open from the ground to the roof. The south bay, which was unheated, may also have been open, or could have been floored to give chambers on both storeys. The small size of the heated bay and the wing's location in the service court associated with the well, suggests that the building may have had a service function, possibly a bakehouse or brewhouse.

The original timber-framing, visible internally, comprises medium-sized rectangular panels formed by a mid-rail and studs. The three original roof trusses have tie-beams, collars, with clasped purlins, and principal rafters diminished above the collars. The style and quality of the carpentry is inferior to that demonstrated by the earlier timber-framed range of 1450-51 or the later roof carpentry used in Francis Knollys' ensuing work. This almost certainly reflects the status of the building within the larger house and probably also the limited wealth at Francis' disposal in the first years of Elizabeth's reign. Alterations made to 'The Keep' during the late 1580s took place as part of a broader campaign aimed at completing the refashioning the mansion as a whole and creating a near-symmetrical frontage facing south onto the old Henley road, and hence display a greater concern for the appearance of the building. These alterations are dealt with in the final section on the Elizabethan house.

Date, extent, timber frame and roof structure

Dendrochronological sampling produced felling dates in the summer of 1559, the date derived from two rafters associated with the primary build. The **original extent of the building**, to the north and south, is defined by the roof structure, with its three original trusses (marked on plan of west services), and one surviving timber-framed wall positioned beneath the southern truss - visible within the half-bay stair area to the south. This timber-framed wall provides evidence of the original southerly extent of the building. The timbers exposed on the south side of the wall exhibit a slight degree of erosion evident in the surface of the timber - a characteristic indicative of exposure to the weather. This demonstrates that the south face of the wall was probably part of an external elevation, prior to the construction of the half-bay and tower. This interpretation is supported, to a degree, by the fact that there are no original doorways in the timber-framed wall: all of the existing doorways having been cut at a later date. The north face of the northern truss is also weathered, indicating that this formed the original, northern end of the range, at a point where there is now a party wall dividing 'The Keep' from 'Stable Cottage'. Original timbers elsewhere in the structure do not exhibit signs of weathering.

Figure 95.

'The Keep': the first-floor landing, showing the original timber-framing and tower doorway. (AA046064)

The **original timber framing** can only be seen in the wall beneath the south truss. On the ground floor, the brick plinth, timber cill and two main studs are all secondary, the result of later repairs and alterations. Part of the mid-rail, at the west end of the passage leading to the tower, is original, as is an interrupted stud beneath it. The original timbers may be identified by the presence of pegged joints. On the first floor, a greater proportion of the original timber-framing has survived. This includes a central, full-height stud, an interrupted mid-rail and an interrupted stud beneath the mid-rail. The original infil panels were probably of wattle and daub, but most have been replaced with brick nogging or concealed by internal plasterwork.

Evidence located on the tie-beams of both the north and south trusses suggests that the eastern wall was also fully (or partly) timber-framed. This evidence is comprised of redundant paired pegs, associated with redundant mortices (concealed) in the tie-beam soffits, which may have secured braces extending downwards from the tie-beam to putative posts supporting the trusses. The paired pegs are located towards the end of the tie-beams, an arrangement that is also consistent with such an interpretation, while the use of paired pegs contrasts with the method of jointing the studs, which only employs a single peg. No further evidence was observed, due to internal plasterwork and wall finishes. It cannot be assumed that the form of the original timber-framing on the east or west walls was necessarily identical to that used on the south gable wall. In the future, exposure of the wall plates on the east or west walls might provide evidence, in the form of redundant pegs and mortices, to demonstrate the form of the timber-framing used on the side walls.

The **form and characteristics of the roof structure** elucidates a number of significant aspects of the building's original form. There are three original trusses, each comprising a cambered tie-beam, queen struts, diminished principal rafters and collars with clasped, through purlins. There were probably upward braces beneath the tie-beams (as discussed above). There are surviving windbraces beneath some of the purlins, set out in a single row on each slope of the roof. Redundant seatings indicate where windbraces are missing, although all are associated with this single rank of purlins.

Figure 96.

Roof truss and windbraces in 'The Keep'. (AA046067)

Evidence of original plan and function

The roof space contains evidence relating to the original plan form. All three trusses are closed by stud partitions, those of the central and northern trusses relating to an early, although not original, ceiling discussed below. However, in the case of the central truss, there is evidence of an original partition, in the form of a groove cut into the upper facet of the collar, indicating that this truss was probably originally closed. Similar grooves may exist on the tie-beam, but the relevant surface of this timber was inaccessible. The existence of an original partition on the line of the central truss is also inferred from evidence of differential smoke-blackening: the timbers in the northern bay having slight smoke-blackening, whereas those of the southern bay are clean. The same line of division can be picked up on the ground floor, beneath the central truss, where there is an **original beam, visible in the present living room**. The beam has a series of redundant mortices in the soffit, which conform to the pattern of the studs in the timber-framed wall beneath the southern truss. These features indicate that the beam is probably original and therefore, that there was a partition on this alignment in the primary phase. (There are also two crudely-cut mortices, which probably relate to the insertion of a doorway through the partition during a later phase.) Further evidence of changes to the partitions associated with the central and northern trusses are discussed below, under work of the 1580s.

Figure 97.

'The Keep': the living room, viewed from the north east, showing the original beam beneath the central truss. (AA046061)

The **evidence of original partitions** on the same alignment on both the ground floor and in the roof space indicates that there was probably a full-height division on this alignment, which in turn **establishes a two-room plan**. What remains uncertain is whether or not either or both bays were floored originally to give a two-storeyed form. The axial beam on the ground floor of the southern bay has a slender chamfer and scroll stop indicating that it is a later insertion, probably of the late 17th or early 18th centuries. The transverse beam on the central line of division (also on the ground floor) has a redundant mortice in its north face, a feature that may have received the end of a further axial ceiling beam spanning the length of

the northern bay. However, the smoke-blackening found on the roof timbers in the northern bay may be evidence that this area was open from the ground to the roof, and thereby point to the likelihood that the redundant beam mortice is secondary. The limited extent of the smoke-blackening may imply that the northern bay was heated by an oven rather than an open fire, and certainly reflects the fact that these roof timbers were ceiled-in within thirty years of the original build (see under ‘South-west tower and alterations ‘The Keep’).

The use of the northern bay for some form of heated service function is consistent with the building’s location in the service court, adjacent to the well. The precise nature of the building’s use can no longer be proved from the physical evidence, and to date, no documentary sources have been identified which might clarify its function. However, its use as a bakehouse and/or brewhouse would be consistent with the evidence, certainly in the late 1580s, after the convertion to form the smoke bay.

Unfortunately, there is no evidence of the original entrance, the form or position of original window openings or an original stair (assuming that one was required). Most or all of these features were probably lost during alterations in the 1580s, superceded by the addition of new windows in the masonry walls and by the provision of the southern half-bay, which contained an entrance and stair.

Remodelling the upper court, 1573-74 (building the front range of Greys Court House)

Phase summary

This phase, for which dendrochronology produced timber-felling dates of 1573-74, marks a significant period in the development of the house, involving the construction of the substantial triple-gabled range that forms the frontage of Greys Court mansion. However, at the time of its construction, this range was part of a larger complex of domestic buildings and was built, almost certainly, as part of a broader scheme that entailed extensive remodelling of the upper court of the greater house. On its completion, this new range - built of flint, brick, dressed stone and salvaged materials – defined the west side of the Elizabethan upper court, over which the present frontage, then rendered, faced. Considering the range's position in the upper court and the volume of reused masonry employed in its construction, it is highly likely that one or more buildings were cleared in order to prepare the site and to enable the refashioning of this area of the house.

The building's scale, its place in the important upper court and the quality of the original mullion and transom windows - with their characteristic, four-centred, arched lights - implies a high-status function, probably invoking a number of important chambers or apartments. However, repeated alterations to the interior – reflecting the building's subsequent use as the mansion's principal accommodation - have obscured the original plan and precise nature of the room functions. Despite numerous external alterations over four centuries, renovations carried out in the mid-20th century returned the gabled façade closer to its original 16th-century appearance - notwithstanding the absence of render. However, a consequence of this work is that the central entrance and all the ground-floor windows date from the mid-20th century, although original windows survive on the upper floors. The nature of the original ground-floor fenestration, or the position of the original entrance, is no longer clear. Prints and drawings depicting the façade without ground-floor fenestration all originate from a period at least one hundred and twenty years after the original phase, and therefore the idea – stated in some earlier interpretations - that this 'blind' treatment was original, is unproven. Similarly, it has been suggested that the building contained a long gallery. No conclusive proof, for or against such a theory, has been forthcoming.

The 1573-74 range partially obstructs the jettied front of the 1450's timber-framed wing: a relationship implying that the 1573-74 phase probably entailed changes in the line of division between the two principal courtyards, extending the margins of the upper court. This change may have been associated with a long thin inter-court range (now demolished – but visible as parchmarks and through resistivity survey) that would have segregated the base and upper courts. Although, the provenance of this range cannot be tested without recourse to excavation, the presence of a first-floor (blocked) doorway in a corresponding position on the façade of the 1573-74 range implies that the inter-court range was probably in existence in the 1570s. Although the blocked doorway's precise function remains uncertain, its position in relationship to these archaeological features is consistent with the established interpretation as a doorway leading out onto a wall walk, or perhaps more likely onto a 'walk' located on the roof of the inter-court range. Such 'walks' were fashionable in gentry-houses at this time.

It is possible that this phase of alterations on the west side of the upper court was accompanied by further changes on its eastern side, involving the medieval apartments adjoining the east curtain wall. Although there is no definite link between these alterations and the construction of the 1573-74 range, the associated features on the east side of the upper court are consistent with a 16th-century date and, therefore, for the sake of discussion, all the known changes to the upper court are considered in conjunction with this phase. These changes include the probable truncation of the medieval apartments and north curtain wall and the insertion of a brick fireplace and chimney in the east curtain wall. The treatment of the medieval towers, in the vicinity of the upper court, at this time is unclear. However, evidence of the truncation of the north curtain wall implies that certain features of the medieval fortress-style house were dismantled in the period, while others (including the 'Great Tower, north-east tower and east curtain wall) were retained, at least in part, presumably because they continued to perform useful functions within the greater house. Furthermore, it is evident that changes of a similar nature took place in the base court between the late 1570s and late 1580s (discussed later in the text).

The main range: date, significance and broader meaning

Figure 98.

The main range of Greys Court House, viewed from the south east. (AA042028)

The date of the main range has been determined by dendrochronology, using samples taken from timbers in the main roof, in particular rafters and an interrupted tie-beam, which produced felling dates in the winter 1573-74.[159] The accuracy of the dates, coupled with what is thought to be the established, contemporary, carpentry practice of working 'green' timbers,[160] suggests that construction occurred shortly after felling, therefore late in the year 1573 and during 1574. This places construction shortly after Sir Francis Knollys had completed his Whitehall residence, during or prior to 1572. The latter answered Knollys' requirement for a London mansion close to court, while the work at Rotherfield was an endeavour to aggrandise the manorial seat and perhaps to prepare for a royal progress visit. The date coincides with a likely visit to Greys Court by Queen Elizabeth, recorded in Court Calendars between 15 and 23 July, 1574.

The significance of this phase in the development of the house has been outlined in the *Phase summary* above and is not repeated here, other than to reiterate that the construction of the main range almost certainly invokes a comprehensive reconstruction of the medieval house, which probably involved much of the upper court. The scale of building during 1573-74 marks a stark contrast with Knollys' earlier, modest, timber-framed service wing built in 1559, which probably signified a new range added within the curtilage of the medieval fortress-style house. In 1573-74, we are in no doubt that this is a substantive re-working of that house into a contemporary and extensive courtier house, which, in terms of plan-form, at least, is representative of the mid-16th century. The meaning, sequence and form of construction reflect Knollys' growing wealth and rank as the century progressed. His work of

1573-74, uses salvaged materials, concealed by a render finish – perhaps a compromise employed to limit expense at a time when Sir Francis Knollys' fortunes were still in ascendance and/or as a means of disposing of at least some of the waste building materials produced by demolition of medieval fabric?

The unprepossessing style of the new buildings is matched by the conventional, and perhaps staid, plan form, which perpetuates the multiple-courtyard arrangement - a direct descendant of the palace-style mansions built in the earlier part of the 16th century, which were derived, in turn, from the evolution of medieval castle-style houses and palaces: a sequence of development mirrored at Greys Court. However, there are suggestions of fashionable and more frivolous influences, notably the putative notion of a **wall-walk** traversing the inter-court range. This type of recreational feature was employed at Thornbury Castle, Gloucestershire in the early 16th century and by Sir William Sharrington (circa 1495-1553) at Lacock Abbey, acquired by Sharrington in 1540.[161] Sharrington, courtier to Henry VIII and Vice Treasurer to the Bristol Mint amongst other positions of office, built his wall-walk in the 1540s. It crossed the roof of a new range erected during the conversion of the former abbey, and led to a banqueting room contained in a polygonal tower.[162] His treatment of the architectural details, including the domed stair turret and carved banqueting tables, represented high fashion for the time and were all, or partly, executed by mason John Chapman, who had gained experience in the King's Office of Works.[163] However, the surviving fabric at Greys Court demonstrates little by way of stylish contemporary architectural detail and embellishment, although the loss of internal details and the original external render from the 1573-74 range may diminish our appreciation of the original work. This modesty in style, in what was a massive project to remodel Greys Court, might be ascribed to Francis's background and religious persuasion, as stated above: simplicity of style reflecting adjure of belief? It may also reflect his years: Knollys aged 58 or 59 when this phase began, his life's experience rooted in the courts of Henry VIII (reigned 1509-1547) and Edward VI (reigned 1547-1553).

The surveyor or master-mason responsible for executing Knollys' building works at Greys Court is unknown. However, as described above, there is a hint of a possible association with Smythson, whom it is suggested, may have worked on Knollys' mansion at Caversham.[164] However, at Greys Court, there are no surviving architectural details to support a direct association with Smythson. Nevertheless, Knollys' position as Treasurer of the Household and the location of his house at Whitehall, close to the heart of the Office of Works, points to the possibility that individuals or projects conducted by the Works - with its leading architectural craftsmen and artificers – may have exerted some influence over the design and/or reconstruction of the house at Rotherfield Greys.

External form and materials

The two-and-a-half-storeyed main range stands on a north to south axis and measures 19.57 metres (64 feet) by 6.7 metres (22 feet). It is a single-room deep and has two large projecting chimney stacks on the rear (west) elevation. These are now encapsulated within other ranges to the rear of the house. There are various wings abutting the main range, including the timber-framed wing of 1450-51, a stair block toward the centre of the rear (west) wall, and a 'north-west wing', standing to the north of the stair block and set at ninety degrees to the main range. (In the 18th century, this north-west wing was extended to form the 'School Room'.) Of these ranges, only the stair block – or a building on the same site - is

likely to be contemporary with the main range, as it alone is respected by the form of the original roof structure. These adjoining ranges are discussed below.

The walls are built using an irregular mix of flint, brick and reused ashlar blocks, with dressed limestone quoins and window surrounds. There is a moulded stone plinth course, much of which has been replaced during alterations to provide (and subsequently remove) bay windows. The walls incorporate irregular diagonal brick bonding, which may be read as possible diaperwork, although its erratic distribution probably indicates that it was actually employed as a method of bonding the flint walls. Included among the reused stones is part of a medieval engaged shaft, with capital, set low-down in the front wall, immediately south of the main entrance. The irregular nature of the main walling materials, in which the brick and reused masonry occurs in random bands, implies that the external walls were originally rendered. Supporting evidence in favour of this interpretation occurs in a roof void located between the rear (west) of the main range and the timber-framed wing of 1450-51. This void contains substantial remains of an early, if not original, rendered finish with a rough, gravely texture. This area of the rear wall, that was originally external, also defines the profile of an earlier gabled roof (pre-dating the present lean-to roof structure), imprinted in the render. Furthermore, the stone surrounds, particularly that of a little-altered attic window in the south elevation, are set into the wall leaving a slight projection that is indicative of a key for receiving a rendered external wall treatment. Finally, documentary evidence (discussed below) and historical photographs indicate that, for much of the 18th and 19th centuries, the building was rendered and that this was finally removed in the mid-20th century.

Figure 99.

A 19th-century view of Greys Court House, showing the rendered treatment of the elevations. (ER000018) (Reproduced by permission of Mrs Fulford-Dobson, Shepherds Green, Rotherfield Greys.)

The main range has an axial tiled roof with gables at the north and south ends and three gabled dormers to the front (east). The latter, rising directly from the walls of the facade, are respected by the form of the original roof construction, thereby demonstrating that they are original. The use of multiple gables in this way is typical of larger residences of the period. The form of the original roof covering was probably tiles, based on the ancient tradition of tile-making in the locality and the prevalence of reused tiles found during even the earliest phases of the medieval house. The dormers have triangular-section stone coping and turned stone finials. The coping surmounts courses of bricks laid on edge and set at an angle to respect the dormer roof pitch. The large proportions of these bricks, and the fact that they are laid in such a manner, indicate that they and the stone coping have been renewed and, therefore, are not original. There are two front valleys formed between the dormers, both of which have been altered by raising the brick wall head, thereby reducing the depth of the valleys and consequently this has altered, slightly, the scale of the gabled dormers in

proportion to the façade. The characteristics of the brickwork imply that this change probably took place at the same time as alterations to the coping, perhaps during the 19th century.

The two large chimneys projecting from the west wall, both have chimney breasts contained within the body of the house. The southern chimney incorporates the remains of an added flue, projecting westwards, and visible in the same roof void that contains the remnants of the early render. The chimney-tops, exposed above the roof line, are built of brick and have diagonal-set flues. These have been repaired and partly rebuilt and the present fabric is probably no earlier in date than the 19th century.

Plan, form and function

The original plan form and room functions have been lost through extensive changes that took place from the 18th century onwards, when the range gained the distinction of being the mansion's principal accommodation. It is important to bear in mind that prior to this the range formed one element in a much more extensive suite of accommodation associated with the upper court. The ground floor retains no visible features attributable to the original phase, although some may be hidden beneath floor and plaster surfaces. The earliest identified plan of the mansion, dated 1864,[165] shows that at that time the ground floor was similar, if not identical, to the present arrangement, with a central entrance hall giving access to reception rooms on either side. Although it may be reasonable to assume that this plan existed at least as far back as the 18th century – indeed it respects a standard arrangement for the period, with central entrance hall leading onto a decent stair towards the rear - it is not reasonable to assume that the same plan pertained when the main range formed part of the greater house, i.e. during the 16th and 17th centuries.

The position of the original entrance is unknown, although the south porch, probably added in the late 16th century, may have perpetuated an earlier entrance in the same position. Perhaps related to this entrance is a putative early internal doorway leading between the 1450-51 wing and main range. This doorway is suggested on the basis of a concealed timber lintel, located immediately north of the dining room chimney breast (at BD on plan of ground floor of Greys Court House), which can be seen in a void located between the ground and first floors (above the modern kitchen). In the same position, the rear wall of the main range incorporates a recess (now a cupboard accessed from the present kitchen). The sequence of later alterations associated with this void implies that this lintel served an opening that became redundant at a relatively early time in the evolution of the house, although the date of this change is unknown. The presence of the south porch also invokes the existence, at an early date, of a link block standing between the timber-framed wing and main range. The sum of this evidence invokes a circulation route through the south porch, leading into the link block, from where the internal doorway led into the south end of the main range. The plan of the latter, at that time, is unclear.

It is probable that in the original phase, the ground floor of the main range was of lower status than the first floor. This differential is confirmed by the relatively low ground-floor ceiling height: 2.88 metres, measured floor to ceiling, on the ground floor, compared to 3.57 metres on the first floor. (It should be noted that, at the north end of the range, this ratio was changed in the 18th century, when the ground-floor ceiling was raised to improve the scale and proportions of what, by then, had become a main reception room.) The differential can also be read from the fenestration. Despite the lack of information regarding any original

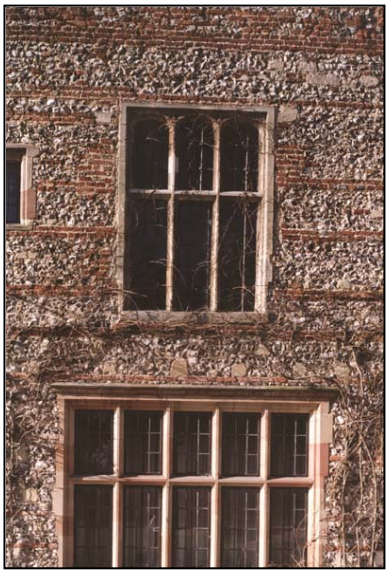

Figure 100.

Windows in the northern bay of the façade: the original window is on the first floor, above a 20th-century reproduction window surround lighting the drawing room. (AA042031).

ground-floor windows, the quality and scale of the original mullion and transom windows on the first floor - with their characteristic, four-centred, arched lights - implies a high-status function, probably invoking the existence, originally, of important chambers and/or domestic apartments on that storey.

The upper floors would have been reached by means of a stair of suitable size and form, whether contained in this range or in an adjacent wing. The location of the present main stair may correspond to that of the original phase, or an alternative location might have been within a putative range thought to have adjoined the north end of the main range (discussed below). However, the present main staircase, altered extensively in at least two phases during the 18th and 19th centuries, is not Elizabethan. The main stair is discussed in greater detail below, in the text relating to the house in the 17th century.

Evidence for the original first and second-floor plans is illusive. There are few visible features of 16th-century date, other than the windows (discussed below) and a partly mutilated stone fireplace in the bedroom at the southern end of the first floor. This has a stone surround with a defaced four-centred arch, with a cavetto moulding, set within a rectangular bas-relief panel, framed within an ogee moulding. The brick fire-back, hearth and right-hand jamb have been reinstated in the mid-to-late 20th century. This fire surround is set in one of the two projecting rear chimney stacks, both of which now provide fireplaces on all three floors. Whether or not this degree of heating existed in the 16th century is no longer clear, simply because the other fireplaces have chimneypieces dating from the 18th century or later. In the future, any building work on the chimneys might reveal the number of original flues in each stack.

Figure 101.

16th-century fireplace in the front bedroom, at the south end of the main range. (AA044727)

The arrangement of paired chimneys projecting from the rear wall, one towards each end of the main range, may point to an original plan comprising heated rooms at each end of the range, although the possibility of a large single room, or long gallery, on the first floor cannot

be excluded. No proof for or against a long gallery has been forthcoming. The roof structure, which has interrupted tie-beam trusses, would have facilitated usable room spaces on the top floor, although the interval of less than 3 metres between the queen struts would have been unsuitable for a long gallery. It is more likely that the attic floor was subdivided into modest chambers, lit by the original dormer windows.

The first floor was distinguished by the size and number of large windows, with views across the upper court. The southern first-floor chamber is associated with the blocked doorway which we have attributed as evidence of a wall walk. Alternative interpretations might be as an oriel window or the remnants of an internal doorway connecting with the first floor of an adjoining range. However, neither of these interpretations sits particularly well with the proximity of the large triple-light window lighting this southern bedroom. Other pertinent aspects of this doorway are the stone surround, with its square quoins, and a depression in the flint and brick wall face above the blocked door head. The depression, which is scarcely visible unless seen under raking light conditions, is shaped in a near triangular form, perhaps with a slight bell-cast, and may be evidence of a small roof or canopy above the doorway. Nothing further is visible. If the purported wall-walk is the correct interpretation, then the presence of the blocked doorway confers additional significance on the first-floor chamber as part of the 'circuit' of the walk, and may denote that the first-floor chambers were used in conjunction with the entertainment of close family and prestigious guests.

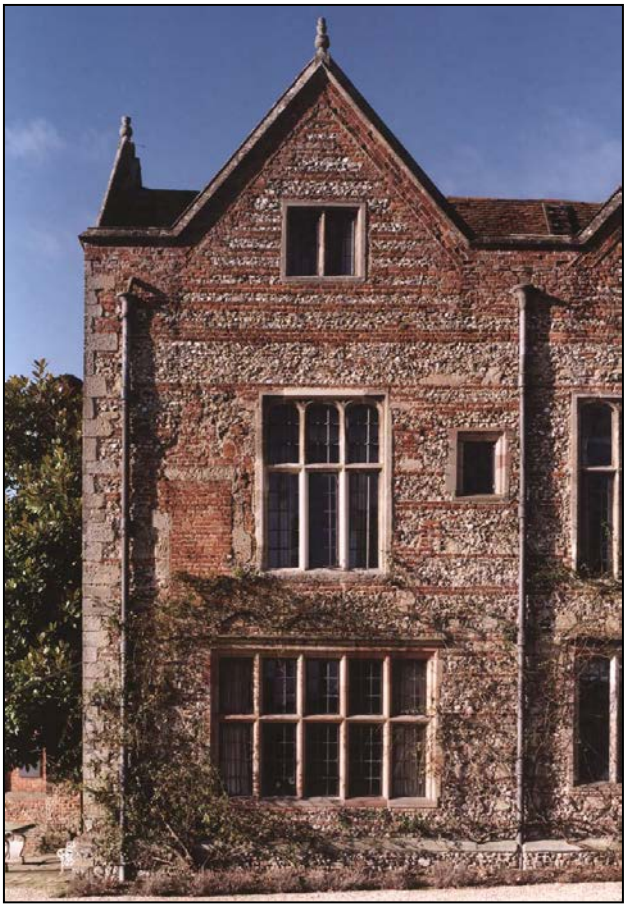

Figure 102.

The façade of the main range, showing fenestration and blocked first-floor doorway in southern bay. (AA042032)

Figure 103.

An original stone window surround, on the first floor, lighting the front bedroom at the southern end of the house. (AA044734)

The original fenestration

The fenestration has undergone repeated alterations, chiefly associated with the construction and subsequent demolition of bay windows during the 19th and 20th centuries. Despite this, a number of original windows survive on the front and south elevations, including the multiple-light windows on the first-floor and an attic window in the south gable. The intact original windows on the first floor are typical for the period: mullion and transom window surrounds of limestone construction, with a four-centred arched head to each light. The surrounds are rebated and cavetto-moulded, and the arched heads have plain recessed spandrels. The original attic window in the south gable matches those on the first floor, although the low attic proportions determine that it has mullions, but no transom.

Figure 104.

The original window surround in the south gable of the main range. (DP004054)

The first-floor front window lighting the southern bedroom is a triple-light window with important, early, wrought-iron fittings. These include arrow-headed bars in the upper lights (above the transom) and plain bars below. The central light contains an early iron-framed casement with external stay, an internal catch, back plate and scrolled iron handle. The mullions beneath the transom have been renewed in recent years. Internally, the sill has been altered – probably historically – in a similar way to those of the central bedroom: the stone beneath the left mullion is carved with a square aris, whereas the remainder of the sill is chamfered.

A further triple-light window, on the first floor, at the northern end of the frontage, also has a three-light stone surround with mullions and transoms. This has been blocked internally, although it remains visible on the external elevation as a 'false' window. This surround is probably also original and was probably blocked in the 18th century, following the construction of the two-storeyed bow window on the north elevation.

Figure 105.

Early window fittings in southern bedroom. (DP004007)

The first-floor window surrounds incorporate evidence that the window sills have been lowered. Externally, the jambs of the surrounds incorporate a change in the quality of the dressed stonework, at a position approximately 0.5 metres above the present sill height, and where more substantial stone jambs - typical of the original work - give way to inferior stones of more variable quality and which are generally more slender. The point of change probably marks the height of the original sills. As mentioned above, the presence internally of random, squared sills confirms that the first-floor window sills have been altered. Small, single-light, windows on the first-floor of the façade have sandstone surrounds and date from the mid-20th century. Many of the first-floor windows have reused 18th-century panelling in the reveals. This has raised and fielded panels.

Figure 106.

Detail of alterations to window sills and mullions in southern bedroom. (DP004008)

The attic rooms also retain stone-mullioned windows, on all except the rear (west) elevation, which is blind. The window on the south front is the best-preserved example, although the three iron-framed casements, with loop handles and decorative back-plates, are attached with modern cross-head screws, as are the 20th-century internal stays, all demonstrating that they are late additions. The stone surround has cut rebates indicating that wooden casements, or fixed lights, have been installed and subsequently replaced by the present iron-framed casements. Similar changes were made to the front dormer window surrounds.

All other windows in the main range are later in date, including the 'gothic', first-floor window in the south wall.

Figure 107.

Attic window on the south front. (DP004053)

Figure 108.

Detail of the roof structure above purlin height. (DP004068)

Roof structure and dormers

The roof structure reveals a number of important aspects of the original build, including carpentry or constructional detail that is of intrinsic interest, and evidence pertaining to the phasing of the dormer gables and adjoining ranges. The form of the roof trusses (as described below) and the fact that the roof has no windbraces are points of particular interest. The truss form is reasonably advanced for its period, employing interrupted tie-beams and queen struts to enable full use of the attic space.

Interestingly, given the discussion of the wall walk above, comparable trusses were used by Sir William Sharrington at Lacock Abbey in the 1540s, slightly earlier than the roof at Greys Court. The absence of windbraces is interesting because the roofs of all the other surviving ranges built at Greys Court in the 16th century have windbracing, including that of the 'Cromwellian Stables' which also included an original attic storey (see below). The absence of windbraces in the main range implies that the roof was not meant to be seen, but also that windbraces were not considered a structural imperative.

Each original truss has principal rafters, interrupted tie-beams, a collar and queen struts, the latter extending down to a cross-beam at a lower level, beneath the wall-plates. The ends of the cross-beam are set into the masonry walls and do not appear to be attached to any part of the truss, other than the queen struts.

Figure 109.

Roof truss, showing interrupted tie- and cross-beams. (DP004070)

There are eight original trusses, including one truss set into the south gable wall, with a numbering sequence running south to north. The south truss (truss one) is infilled with brickwork and flint, which is probably the original treatment. The fifth, sixth and seventh trusses have diminished principal rafters above collar height. These are achieved by deliberate, square-cut, set-backs, but do not occur in a consistent pattern: trusses five and six are diminished on both pitches, whereas truss seven is only diminished on the west pitch. The irregular distribution of these diminished principals probably reflects nothing more than the scantling of the felled timber, rather than a deliberate form intended to accomplish a structural aim. It is interesting that diminished principals of similar form are found in the roof of the 'Cromwellian Stables', built in 1578, four years after the main range.

There is a ninth truss set into the north gable wall, but this has a contrasting form of construction and is associated with later fabric built during the 18th century, to contrive the positioning of the two-storeyed bow window on the north elevation. This ninth truss demonstrates carpentry techniques differentiating it from the remainder of the trusses. It has smaller pegs and a tie-beam which has its east end set into secondary brickwork. The truss is largely concealed by boarding, but it can be seen to incorporate at least one pair of studs and a collar, the studs pegged at their joint with the collar. There are no original longitudinal timbers (e.g. purlins) connecting the eight and ninth trusses, thereby providing further evidence that the ninth truss is a later feature, probably associated with the 18th-century bow window.

The original roof is constructed with bays of unequal lengths, an arrangement designed to accommodate the dormer positions on the front elevation. The fact that the dormers are respected in the form of the original roof, demonstrates that they are an original part of the design of the range. The arrangement of the purlins and common rafters also respects the dormer positions. In the bays associated with the front dormers, the purlins occur at a slightly lower level, in comparison with the staple height of the purlins elsewhere in the roof. The lower-level purlins are of greater scantling, measuring 0.18 metres square, compared to 0.12

by 0.22 metres used for the staple purlins. The contrast in scantling and sectional form reflects the fact that the conventional, or staple, purlin allows the common rafters to ride over the back of the purlin, whereas the purlins used at the dormers form a termination of the common rafters, which extend up to the ridge, but do not descend below purlin height. Here the common rafters are tenoned into the purlin and pegged, this method of jointing determining the need for the greater timber thickness. This approach allows an uninterrupted internal space connecting the dormers and main attic.

The roof structure and evidence of adjoining ranges

In addition to confirming that the front dormers are original, the roof structure provides evidence regarding the phasing of adjoining ranges and the existence of a putative range to the north. It demonstrates the existence of a rear (west) dormer, or wing, in the centre of the west elevation, in the position of the main stair block. The existence of this dormer or wing is proven by the treatment of the purlins and common rafters, which are treated differentially in the centre of the west roof slope, in the same manner as that used to accommodate each front dormer. The original purlin in that position is placed at a lower level and the common rafters are pegged into it. However, the issue is complicated by evidence on one of the associated trusses (truss four), which has a principal rafter incorporating a redundant purlin mortice and peg hole at a level above the in-situ purlin, corresponding with the standard original purlins elsewhere in the roof. This redundant mortice probably denotes a mistake by the carpenters during preparation of the principal rafter, or perhaps less likely, may be the result of a change in intention at an early stage in the construction of the building. Although the stair is not Elizabethan, it is unclear if the stair block dates from this period, or if the form of the main roof structure merely denotes the existence of an original dormer lighting the main range.

Figure 110.

Detail of truss four, showing redundant mortice and peg hole. (DP004067)

The roof over the stair block has been altered and comprises two roof structures at contrasting heights: a taller roof to the west and a lower roof to the east. The eastern roof is the earlier of the two and adjoins the roof of the main block. It is gabled, with a ridge orientated east-west, and built using hardwood coupled rafters. The later roof stands at a higher level, above an attic room accommodating a large water tank. This roof is orientated north to south and is also gabled, with a weather-boarded gable to the north. It is probably of common rafter construction, although it is under-drawn by internal boarding. This roof is probably an addition dating from the 19th or early-to-mid-20th centuries.

The treatment of the purlins and common rafters reveal that the north-west wing is not accommodated in the original design of the main roof structure. This probably indicates that the north-west wing is not contemporary with the main range: an interpretation that is

supported by the wing's roof carpentry, which is inferior to that of the main range and is probably indicative of a 17th-century date. It is discussed under the relevant part of this report.

The original truss at the north end of the main range (truss eight) incorporates evidence of a putative building adjoining the north end of the main range. The truss is not located at the north end of the main range, as is the case at the south end of the building, where truss one is bedded into the gable wall. Instead, at the northern end, a half bay is located to the north of truss eight, and yet this truss incorporates no purlin sockets or redundant pegs or mortices, features required to carry the necessary longitudinal timbers in this half bay. The contrast in the treatment of the two ends of the roof structure is deliberate and requires explanation. The use of a half bay probably denotes the need to accommodate another major, structural element to the north of truss eight. Also, the absence of purlins, or evidence for removed purlins, implies that an adjoining structure in that position would have been required to complete the northern end of the main-range roof. This evidence, therefore, implies that the main range was built adjoining an existing or contemporary structure, which was used to close the north end of the range.

Figure 111.

Detail of truss eight, showing half-bay at north end of main range. (DP004069)

There is additional evidence, in the north elevation of the main range, which may be related to this putative range. On the north wall, to the west of the 18th-century bow window, the main wall incorporates a vertical strip of flint, preserved amongst later brickwork (see Figure 227, Volume 3) – the latter associated with 18th-century alterations to the north end of the house. There are ragged joints formed between this brickwork and the strip of flint wall - these joints indicative of contrasting phases, represented by the contrasting materials. Although the reason for the existence of these features remains uncertain, it is likely that the flint remains from an earlier arrangement – pre-dating the addition of the bow window and a northward extension of the north-west wing (to form the 'School room'). This earlier arrangement may, simply, be remnants of the original northern end of the main range (pre-dating the 18th-century work), or could, possibly, be fragments of wall remaining from the intersection of the main range and putative north range. The issue is unresolved.

Alterations to the remainder of the upper court

It is possible that this phase of alterations on the west side of the upper court was accompanied by further changes on its eastern side, involving the medieval apartments adjoining the east curtain wall. Although it is not certain that these alterations are linked, historically, with the construction of the 1573-74 range, the associated features are consistent with a 16th-century date. Also, a putative link with the construction of the main range in 1573-74 may be implied by the fact that this range engenders a substantial phase of alteration to the upper court. Whether or not this took place in one campaign, or more, cannot be answered by the evidence visible above ground.

Figure 112.

Fireplace and associated features on the east curtain wall. (AA045576)

These changes elsewhere in the upper court include the probable truncation of the medieval apartments and north curtain wall, which invokes the likely construction of a new wall (or façade) facing west onto the upper court. Associated features of this work – although not necessarily all contemporary – are the insertion of the brick fireplace and chimney in the east curtain wall, an associated recess, possibly for a stair, and an adjacent stub wall, which served as a means of subdivision on the ground floor of this range.

There is evidence of extensive changes to the medieval north curtain wall. This appears to have been truncated using brick quoins to form a return, which is now partially buried in a small rockery, where the wall is terminated on the site plan. The brick quoins form the return between the stub of the truncated medieval north curtain wall and a thinner, later, wall of reused stone. The latter extends on a north to south axis, but is only visible for a short distance before disappearing below ground. It appears to follow an alignment that is parallel, or close to parallel, with the medieval east curtain wall. These features demonstrate that, to the west of the quoins, the north curtain wall was demolished, while this in turn indicates that the medieval apartments - that adjoined the curtain wall in this position - were altered substantially, the brick-quoined return indicating a possible re-fronting (and/or substantial rebuilding) of the apartments, probably involving the construction of a new wall facing west into the upper court (and/or abutting other ranges in this area of the greater house). There is an area of stone paving slabs, set diagonally, within this area, to the south-west of the north-east tower. The age of this floor is uncertain, although it may be associated with a building in this position.

The east wall of the medieval apartments survives and, of course, forms part of the substantial, medieval, east curtain wall. This incorporates an inserted brick-built fireplace and flue - the latter cut into the wall thickness. The fireplace, which has a chamfered, depressed, three-centred brick arch, is consistent with an early date, probably the 16th century, and bears a superficial resemblance to the brick fireplace in the timber-framed wing of 1450-51. However, the two fireplaces actually demonstrate significant contrasts in brick sizes and details of construction. The fireplace in the curtain wall does not include a relieving arch, as used over the fireplace in the 1450-51 wing. The bricks used to form the arch over the curtain-wall fireplace have average dimensions as follows: length, 0.245 to 0.25 metres; greatest thickness, 0.055 to 0.06 metres; length to start of chamfer, 0.20 metres; chamfer, 0.06 metres. These differ notably from the dimensions of the brick voussoirs used in the fireplace in the 1450-51 wing (stated in the relevant text above), implying that, despite the similarity of the three-centred arched form, the two fireplaces are probably not contemporary. The fireplace in the east curtain wall is built using hand moulded, or rubbed-bricks, tapered to form voussoirs, and have a decorative chamfer at the fire opening. The fireplace also has

a rectangular opening (with straight reveals or jambs) and retains fragmentary evidence of a brick blocking, which was removed in recent years. Part of this blocking incorporates the remains of a secondary brick oven.

To the north of the fireplace, a ruined cross-wall abuts the east curtain wall at ninety degrees and extends westwards from it. The cross-wall is built of irregular flint, ashlar blocks, bricks and tile, much of which has the appearance of salvaged or reused materials. The wall does not incorporate any diagnostic features for dating purposes, but a straight joint formed between it and the east curtain wall denotes that the wall is post-medieval. It appears to have subdivided the medieval apartments or the 16th-century building that replaced them. (The wall incorporates a secondary brick jamb relating to a window, with a splayed reveal. The date of this window jamb is unclear, but it does indicate that the window lit a room on the north side of the wall. This implies that the window was a borrowed light or that it represents a phase when the southern part of the range (associated with the brick fireplace) had been demolished. There is an area of brick paving fronting the brick fireplace. The age of his brick floor is uncertain.

There is a large irregular niche cut out of the east curtain wall, in a position above the cross-wall. The niche has an asymmetric segmental plan and has brick and ashlar jambs. It has a segmental arched head formed using ochre-coloured ashlar voussoirs, which contrast with the stone voussoirs of the original medieval window openings in the east curtain wall. The contrast in treatment of the voussoirs indicates that this cut-away recess is not an original feature. The distinctive asymmetric shape of the curve, which is gradually curved towards the south jamb and squared to the north, may be evidence that this accommodated an inter-mural stair. There are putative beam sockets, blocked with brick, to either side of the fireplace arch and which may denote a secondary floor structure. These sockets are set at a height corresponding with the upper threshold of this putative stair recess, perhaps invoking a first floor reached by the inter-mural stair. This floor would have been at a level below that of any medieval floor, as implied by the doorways in the north-east tower and the medieval windows in the east curtain wall.

Re-building and remodelling the base court: re-fronting and extending the 1450's timber-framed wing to form the 'west range'; the addition of the south porch; and construction of a new lodging range (the 'Cromwellian Stables') in 1578

Phase summary

This phase includes a series of building campaigns that were close in date and which culminated in a near-complete rebuilding of the base court. This work, as with the preceding alterations to the upper court, was part of an on-going endeavour by Sir Francis Knollys to modify the great house, in which he dispensed with much of the medieval fabric and concealed that which remained. The surviving structures associated with this endeavour comprise the 'west range' (formed by re-fronting and extending the 1450s timber-framed range); the 'east range', probably built as a lodging range; and the 'south porch', which stands in the angle between the west and main ranges. All three additions are marked by the use of brick with ashlar dressings. The sequence of construction may be read from subtle changes in the treatment of these materials from one structure to another, while dendrochronological sampling has yielded an accurate date of 1578 for the construction of the east range, giving a broad indication of the period in which the associated, but undated, elements were probably built.

It is likely that the earliest of these campaigns involved re-fronting the medieval timber-framed wing, accompanied by a contemporary, southward extension that was probably a new build of the time. To this wing was added, in a separate campaign, the two-storeyed south porch, with oriel window, the position of which was contrived to conceal the awkward inter-section of the west range and earlier main block (of 1573-74). The eastern side of the base court was defined by a new range, dated 1578, and which was probably built as a lodging range, the ground floor provided with a repeating pattern of windows and wall niches. Contrasts in the details of construction suggest that the west range and lodging range were not built simultaneously and that the lodging range may be the later of the two. Nevertheless, the two ranges were built to achieve a common aim – that of creating a more unified and near-symmetrical base court – implying that they represent sequential campaigns in one scheme, perhaps separated chronologically by no more than a few years.

The contemporary fate of the medieval fortress-style house may be deduced from the position and extent of the lodging range, which – to the south - projects beyond the medieval curtain. This denotes a southward expansion of the base court and indicates that the medieval south curtain wall and associated structures must have been demolished in order to affect the new scheme. The extension of the west range also served to segregate the service yard surrounding the well from the remainder of the base court, a division that may not have existed earlier. It is virtually certain that this remodelling included the construction of a court wall enclosing the base court to the south, and was probably associated with a gate, or gatehouse, near the centre of the frontage. These elements have been destroyed, but are now reflected in archaeological evidence, including seasonal parchmarks that appear in the lawn. Similar evidence implies that the north end of the base court was closed by the inter-court range, with an inner gateway, this range surmounted by the wall walk, as discussed above.

The west range: re-fronting and extension of the medieval timber-framed wing

Date, chronology and meaning

In the 1570s, the medieval, timber-framed wing - with its close-studded, jettied frontage facing east across the Base Court - had been in existence for over one hundred and twenty years. It is assumed, on the basis of the brick and stone re-fronting, that in the 1570s the wing's appearance was considered antiquated and undesirable, whereas in contrast the fabric and accommodation within were considered worthy of retention. The wing's location rendered it suitable for inclusion within Knollys' new scheme for the base court, although this necessitated a change in alignment, visible on the plan, where an extension was required. The latter, matching the new façade, enhanced the scale and appearance of the base court, supplemented the range of service accommodation provided and formed a physical and visual barrier between the base court and the service functions conducted in the small courtyard surrounding the well. The fact that the extension stands at an oblique angle to the medieval wing may reflect the fact that the extension had to be disposed to avoid buildings or structures adjoining the well, or that the change in angle served to lessen the visual impact of the oblique medieval range (of 1450-51) and the irregularity that its alignment introduced into the plan of the base court.

Figure 113.

Remains of brick wall built to front the medieval wing. View from west, showing former internal face. (AA045585)

The date of this re-fronting and extension is uncertain, although a number of factors serve to place it within the chronology of the Elizabethan phases. The style of construction resembles, closely, that of the 'Cromwellian Stables' – timber felling date 1578[166] – while the two ranges clearly form part of a common scheme of work to the base court. Both factors point toward a date in the 1570s or 1580s. Furthermore, the re-fronting of the medieval wing terminates at a position corresponding with the south end of the main range of 1573-74. To the north of this point (located internally, within the present kitchen), the jettied wing has not been re-fronted. The fact that the extent of the re-fronting respects the location of the main range implies that the former probably post-dates the construction of the main range, thereby placing construction of the west range after 1573-74.

Subtle contrasts in the brickwork of the west range and lodging range may provide further evidence of separate building campaigns. Although both are built in English bond, bricks of different dimensions were used in the construction of the respective buildings. The west wing uses bricks with the following dimensions: the length varies in the range 0.24 to 0.245 metres, with some slightly longer at 0.25 metres; width, or header length, varies in the range 0.115 to 0.12 metres; the height is more consistent and is 0.06 metres. The dressed limestone plinth course projects 0.09 metres from the main wall face and is 0.13 metres high.

By way of comparison, the bricks of the lodging range have the following dimensions: the length varies in the range 0.235 to 0.24 metres long; the width or header length varies in the range 0.11 metres to 0.115 metres; and the height is notably smaller than the bricks of the west range, measuring 0.045 to 0.055 metres. The plinth course also differs, with a projection of 0.11 to 0.115 metres and 0.14 to 0.15 metres tall. These contrasts in detail imply that the west range and lodging range were not built in the same campaign.

Figure 114.

Detail of dressed-stone plinth, visible within later south porch. (AA042051)

There are also notable contrasts in the construction of the quoins at the southern corners of the two buildings. The west range has larger dressed limestone quoins, located at the southern extremity of the wall bounding the west side of the 'Green Lawn', the size of which ensures that they are set deeply into the wall thickness and fulfil a structural role in bonding the corner of the building. The original south end of the lodging range, located to the south-west of the 'Dower House', contrast in that they are formed of thin stones, of smaller dimensions, their proportions determining that they fulfil a chiefly cosmetic purpose - giving the appearance of quoins rather than achieving structural bonding. There may be some value in comparing this with the construction of the Well House, which has timber-felling dates of 1586-87,[167] and was built with corners built entirely of brick. Whether this contrast is symptomatic of phasing, function or status, or any combination of these factors, is open to debate, although the use of a moulded stone plinth course, as found on the other buildings of the base court, was considered an imperative for the prominent south front of the Well House. These clear changes in approach to the construction of the corners of the brick-built Elizabethan ranges could, arguably, demonstrate a developing sequence of campaigns, perhaps reflecting confidence in the use of brick, and possibly related to the availability of freestone for use in dressings. It is an interesting, and possibly related, point that the 'Well House' uses brick window surrounds, as opposed to stone – the latter used in the west range and lodging range. If there is validity in this thesis, then the putative 'evolution' of the dressings and quoins of these ranges may be offered, tentatively, as possible evidence that the erection of the west range pre -dated that of the lodging range in 1578.

Extent and description of the remaining fabric

Despite extensive demolition, the overall extent and form of the west range can be largely understood from the surviving fabric, enhanced by comparison with the remaining portion of the lodging range. The brick, stone-dressed, ground-floor, front wall survives, facing east onto the site of the Elizabethan base court (now the 'Green Lawn'). This wall also survives fronting the remaining part of the timber-framed wing (see 16th-century phased plan), where

the latter projects south beyond the main range of 1573-74. In this vicinity, adjacent to the south porch, the brick façade also survives at first-floor level. However, a brick gable, closing the south end of the timber-framed wing, is built to match this 16th-century brickwork, but dates from the mid-20th century, when a substantial part of the west range was demolished (discussed below).

Figure 115.

Interior view of mid-20th-century brick gable and reused window surround at south end of the timber-framed wing. (AA044767)

The ground-floor wall extends southward to a point where a change in angle marks the probable extent of the medieval wing (as described above). The change in angle is achieved using shaped bricks formed to respect the forty-degree change in the orientation of the façade. The brick and stonework is consistent on both sides of the angle and there is no evidence of a phase joint, factors which point to the probability that the re-fronting and extension took place in one phase. This involved partially under-building the medieval jetty, although the new façade comprised a full-height brick wall placed sufficiently forward (east) of the medieval, timber-framing so as to allow the concealment of the original, oversailing first-floor. In the ceiling void above the present kitchen, the medieval jetty fascia survives, carried on a set-back in the 16th-century wall, the set-back built to fit around the medieval jetty.

From the change in angle, the wall continues in a southerly direction for a further 17.4 metres (57 feet 4 inches), terminating in the stone-quoined return mentioned above, which marks the extent of the 16th-century west range. These sections of the wall have survived due to their continued function as a boundary between the service courtyard to the west and the ‘Green Lawn’ to the east. During the late 18th or early 19th centuries, part of this wall was re-faced using flint to give the impression of a blocked archway, the flint facing rising to a height of two storeys to front an east-facing gable. The range’s west wall has been destroyed and any archaeological remains are buried beneath metalled yard surfaces and a garden fronting the custodian’s wing. The plan, internal features, timbers and roof of this period no longer survive.

The west range: form and comparison with the lodging range

The surviving part of the west range indicates that it was of two storeys, although in the 16th century, there may have been an attic over part of the wing. This is inferred from the sectional form of the lodging range, which retains conclusive evidence of an attic, including a surviving gabled dormer facing onto the base court. When the lodging range stood to its original extent (refer to 16th-century phased plan), it would, almost certainly, have been articulated by a series of dormers on the base-court façade - a typical arrangement for a building of its type and date. Historic photographs dating from the early to mid-19th centuries demonstrate that the west range also had a gable (demolished) above the area refaced in flint in the late 18th or early 19th centuries. This gable would have stood directly opposite that which survives on the lodging range. This may be cited as further evidence that the form

of the west range was probably reflected in that of the lodging range. However, the sectional form of the west range was determined by that of the adapted medieval building. The latter is not as tall as the lodging range and its roof structure would not have permitted a full attic storey in the manner demonstrated in the lodging range (discussed below). The contrast in heights was off-set by the sloping contours of the site, which drops away to the east, thereby dictating that, in order for both ranges to match, the lodging range was required to stand to a greater height.

Figure 116.

Historic photograph showing upper floor of west range (left of centre). (DP004079) (Reproduced by permission of Mrs Fulford-Dobson, Shepherds Green, Rotherfield Greys)

Originally, the east front of the west range, facing into the base court, was provided with an extensive series of windows, the positions of which appear as straight joints and blockings at intervals all the way along the surviving wall. The west elevation, which was originally internal, preserves the splayed reveals, some retaining fragments of internal plaster, and the blocking can be seen to incorporate the rebated and cavetto-moulded fragments of window jambs and mullions. These are consistent with a 16th century date and are almost certainly the remains of the original window surrounds, which, it is assumed, were removed when the building was demolished and the wall tidied-up in order to serve as a garden wall. This interpretation would explain the use of the stone surrounds as a blocking material.

The surviving part of the first floor (located in the angle adjoining the south porch) incorporates an original stone window surround on the east elevation, which lights a small dressing room above the present kitchen. The two-light window has a stone surround with cavetto-moulded jambs and mullion, although the stonework has been cut-back to allow a wooden frame to be inset at a later date. This has since been removed and has been replaced by a 20th-century iron casement with decorative back plates. Below this, there are two window positions: one is blocked by the commemorative plaque marking the donation of Greys Court to The National Trust, which is set in a contemporary (1969) sandstone surround; the other, now within the south porch, retains an excellent window dating from the 17th or early 18th centuries. This has a small, two-light, wooden-frame with leaded lights, some retaining early glass panes. There is a central wooden mullion with slender moulding, and each light has three diamond-set iron bars.

Figure 117.

The original entrance to the west range. (DP004764)

The re-fashioned and extended west range was provided with a formal entrance, near the centre of the east front, which may have served as a through passage linking the base and service (well) courtyards. The entrance was mirrored by the provision of an opposed doorway, with similar characteristics, positioned on the west front of the lodging range. The implication of a through passage is drawn from evidence associated with the entrance in the lodging range (discussed below). The use of opposed doorways in this manner is indicative of a formal, planned design reflecting contemporary taste for a sense of drama and hierarchy through the use of formal relationships and sight lines within the design and layout of the house. This also entailed the use of symmetry, at least a contrived symmetry at Greys Court, as necessitated by the encumbrance of earlier fabric. The fact that these two doorways do not align perfectly may be cited as possible evidence that the 'lodging range' and west range are not contemporary - a perfect alignment would, typically, have provided a potential clear view across the base court and possibly extending right through both ranges. Examination, using plan evidence, of the position and orientation of the doorways indicates that they would not have facilitated a perfect line of sight in this manner, although a partial view would have been possible. It is probable that these opposed doorways were connected by a formal path crossing the base court. Also, there is evidence, discussed below in connection with the lodging range, that the opposed doorways provided a route connecting two service courtyards - one associated with the well, the other, smaller, courtyard to the rear (east) of the lodging range, in the vicinity of the present 'Knot Garden'.

Figure 118.

The original entrance to the lodging range. Note the dropped plinth course respecting the door surround. (DP004765)

Figure 119.

View from former lodging range, across site of base court, towards the original entrance to the west range. (DP004766)

The east range: a putative lodging range of 1578 (the 'Cromwellian Stables')

Date, extent and form

The east range - built on the east side of the base court – has been dated by dendrochronological sampling of the roof timbers, which produced an accurate timber-felling date of summer 1578.[168] Traditional carpentry practice implies the on-set of construction within a comparatively short time of felling. At its original extent, the range extended for a total length of one hundred and thirty-three feet (40.69 metres), its' uniform, straight side walls reflecting the fact that, apart from the north end wall, it was built from new in a single phase. However, the north wall of the building is not at ninety degrees to the side walls, an alignment that reflects the incorporation of a length of medieval brick wall, surviving from the crenellated, single-storey building, of phase V. This medieval wall forms the lower part of the

Figure 120.

The 'Cromwellian Stables', viewed from the south east. (AA045580)

east range's north elevation and continues to the east of the building where it forms a garden wall extending to meet the east curtain wall. A short, low stub of the same wall continues westwards beyond the footprint of the east range. At first-floor level, the north wall of the east range is built directly on top of the medieval fabric. The Elizabethan brickwork abuts the medieval fabric in such a way that straight joints were formed where the medieval crenellations were incorporated into the later building – discussed in detail in connection with the associated medieval phase.

In contrast to the west range, a considerable part of the lodging range has survived, including the northern third of the building which remains in its entirety, with numerous window surrounds and internal carpentry, including the floor and roof structures. As is the case with the west range, despite demolition and relegation to use as garden walls, the full extent of the lodging range's base-court elevation remains defined by surviving walls (see 16th-century phased plan). Unlike the west range, both of the south corners of the lodging range are intact, although the connecting south wall has been cut through, in a rather crude manner, probably to allow access to the 20th-century garage adjoining the west end of the 'Dower House'. A substantial part of the lodging range's rear (east) wall has also survived, extending from the original south-east corner, where it is encapsulated in the west wall of the 'Dower House'. Here, the walls of the first and second floors remain, complete with brick set-back at first-floor height, as well as a narrow blocked doorway in the gable of the 'Dower House'. This has irregular jambs formed where the brickwork has been cut through, a characteristic indicative of an inserted opening. The doorway would have provided access from the lodging range attic to the roof space of the 'Dower House', or another building of an earlier date adjoining in the same position. Alternatively, the doorway may have served a garderobe or projecting stair block, although the fact that the doorway was a later addition may detract from this interpretation. It is unclear how the space between the lodging range and octagonal corner tower was arranged in the late 16th century.

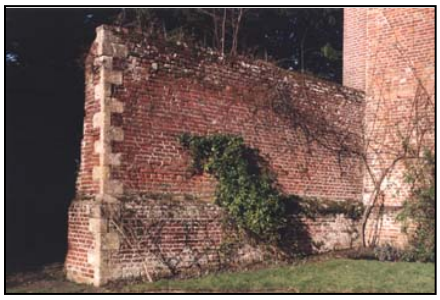

Figure 121.

The remains of the south end of the lodging range, projecting from the façade of the later 'Dower House'. (AA042043)

The south wall of the 'Cromwellian Stables' is not an original part of the lodging range, a point demonstrated by the presence of straight and ragged joints formed where the wall abuts the original brickwork. These joints can be seen most clearly on the ground floor where there are well-defined straight joints formed where the south wall abuts the former internal face of each side wall (to the east and west). On the first floor, the joints take a contrasting form, where the south wall was wrapped round the truncated ends of the side walls, thereby creating ragged joints on the east and west elevations.

Figure 122.

Joist seatings provide evidence of the original attic floor. (AA046050)

The remaining part of the east range is of two and a half storeys, although the greater part of the attic floor structure has been removed. The existence of an attic during the

original phase is indicated by redundant joist seating on the tie beams and by a dormer window, with stone-mullioned surround. Furthermore, the original roof structure respects the dormer, employing a differential purlin treatment where the dormer interrupts the west slope of the roof. The trusses to either side of the dormer have no redundant mortices, indicating that the purlin has not been altered to accommodate the dormer and, therefore, was provided when the roof was first built.

The contours of the site, which slope downwards to the south, influenced the form and appearance of the east range. At the south end of the range, the ground floor is raised above ground level, whereas to the north, it is slightly sunken below the external surface level. Also, the stone plinth course respects the sloping ground, descending using 'drop returns' at regular intervals on the west façade, facing into the base court. There is no such moulding on the rear (east) elevation: this and the south wall have a bevelled brick plinth course of 20th-century date. That on the east wall possibly replaced an earlier plinth course, perhaps built of brick rather than stone. The plinth on the south wall, like the remainder of this elevation, dates from a later phase when the building was truncated.

The lower sections of the east wall include some blue/grey brick diaperwork. This is not found on the west elevation, facing into the base court, although the west wall uses some random blue/grey bricks. The ground-floor wall on the east elevation, where the diaperwork occurs, would have been visible only from within the modest service courtyard described above. As a point of comparison, the 'Well House' – built in the 1580s – also employs diaperwork on one elevation only, in that case on the north wall, which also faced into a service court. This implies a deliberate use of the technique in this differential manner on both the 'Well House' and lodging range.

Plan and function

The east range, which has assumed the name the 'Cromwellian Stables', was not built as a stable, the nature of its original function reflected in a series of features preserved in the west wall and which are consistent with a lodging range. On the ground floor, this wall incorporates an irregular, repeating pattern of windows and wall niches, which occur throughout the entire length of the original building. The spacing between these features varies, with wider spaces occurring towards the north end of the original building (refer to *Plan of East Lodgings and Dower House*). This arrangement is accompanied by a passage entrance plan (referred to above) associated with the original entrance near the centre of the west wall. The entrance, which has a limestone surround with a four-centred arched head, now forms a gateway between the 'Green Lawn' and the 'Knot Garden'. To either side of the entrance, on the former internal

Figure 123.

Windows and niche on ground floor of 'Cromwellian Stables'. (AA046038)

elevation of the west wall, the remains of two brick stub walls mark the positions of cross-walls that defined the entrance passage (refer to plan, as above). The passage sub-divided the ground floor into two areas, to the north and south. There were probably internal doorways leading through these cross-walls, providing entry to the ground floor on either side of the passage. This type of plan form is paralleled in 16th-century college lodging ranges, as represented by examples found in the 16th-century Great Quad at Christ Church, Oxford and the west range of the front quad at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. The plan form is particularly distinctive and identifies the east range at Greys Court as a purpose-built lodging range, probably envisaged as accommodation for the retinues of prestigious visitors to the mansion. The arrangement of niches and windows formed a series of 'cells', each of which would be allocated to one or more inhabitant, the niches providing storage, perhaps originally in the form of a cupboard. The variation in spacing demonstrated in the niches and windows may reflect contrasts in the status of the various 'cells', with the larger examples – presumably reserved for more important visitors - to the north, nearest the top end of the base court. Whether or not the 'cells' were segregated from one another is no longer clear, as there is no evidence of masonry cross-walls, other than those defining the entrance passage. Timber partitions may have been used instead, but the ceiling beams, which are chamfered with scroll stops, do not respect the inclusion of full-height partition walls.

Figure 124.

The remains of the front wall of the lodging range, showing the entrance flanked by stub walls. (AA055584)

The ground floor is heated by a fireplace set into an internal chimney breast, the form and construction of the latter indicative of a 20th-century date, and incorporating a relieving arch formed using modern tiles set on edge. The fireplace has an earlier limestone surround with a depressed, four-centred, arched head and jambs incorporating high broach stops and ogee and cavetto mouldings. Simple incised lines are used to define the spandrels above the arch. Although the form of the fire surround is in keeping with the date of the building, its position in this later chimney breast indicates that it has been reset, and therefore, potentially, may have been brought into the building from elsewhere. The chimney breast is surmounted by a reused cornice with egg and dart moulding, which is probably of 17th-century date.

Figure 125.

Fireplace on ground floor. (AA046039)

Figure 126.

Detail of moulded cornice over ground-floor fireplace. (AA046041)

The first floor is heated by a fireplace set into the wall and which is served by a projecting chimney stack corbelled out externally from the first floor. The chimney is supported by brick corbelling, using moulded bricks laid to form ogee and cavetto-mouldings. Slight irregularities in the brick coursing between the main wall and the projecting chimney may denote that the stack is a later addition, perhaps of the early 17th century. This is also inferred from the use of an ovolo moulding on the first-floor fireplace, this moulding being more typical of the 17th century. The fireplace has high broach stops and a flattened arch virtually of triangular form, with curves used in the angles at the jambs and head. The brick fireback dates from the 20th century. The chimney has two flues served by renewed brick uppers, replaced during the mid-20th century. However, the twin-flue form may be authentic, while the existence of a double flue need not necessarily reflect the presence of two fireplaces: i.e. on the ground and first floors. This point is demonstrated by a double flue used for a single fireplace in the east curtain wall at Greys Court. The evidence for heating in the original phase is, therefore, ambiguous, with definite evidence of a fireplace on the first floor probably originating from a secondary phase in the early 17th century. It would not be uncommon to find unheated lodging ranges during the 16th century.

Figure 127.

First-floor fireplace. (AA046048)

The wooden-framed spiral stair, with solid oak treads, is also a 20th-century addition, reputedly a reproduction based on a stair in the collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum.[169] The location of the original stair is uncertain, although it may have been accommodated in the demolished part of the building, perhaps associated with the through-passage, as is typical in buildings of this type during the period. The chamfered and stopped tie beams forming the original first-floor ceiling indicate that the surviving part of the first floor formed one large chamber. The original decoration of this large room is no longer certain, as it is now fitted, as is the ground floor, by a compilation of reused panelling chiefly of 17th-century date. The provenance of this panelling is unknown, although it is almost certain to have been brought into the building from elsewhere. It is similar to reset panelling that was fitted in the present kitchen in the 1930s. However, the modest treatment of the beams and joists (where these survive) implies that this was not a high-status chamber, such as a long gallery for example, while its location in the east range may denote a possible function as a large communal chamber forming part of the specialised accommodation of the lodging range.

Figure 128.

Spiral stair on the ground floor of the 'Cromwellian Stables'. (AA046046)

Evidence of a later function as stables

Despite its original function as a lodging range, the building's use as a stable, as attributed in local folklore and perpetuated in the name the 'Cromwellian Stables', is supported by secondary evidence in the building fabric. This evidence, on the ground floor, includes two small openings, similar in form to ventilation slits, positioned at high level in the east wall and notches cut into the ceiling beams (refer to plan of east lodgings and Dower House). The latter are consistent with posts set beneath the beams and which could have formed stalls partitions. The notches are off-centre, disposed to the west side of the building, which implies that there may have been stalls against the east wall and a passage to the west. This would work in conjunction with the opposed wide entrances in the north and south walls, which are also disposed to the west side of the building. Neither entrance is original. The notches cut the original beam chamfers, thereby indicating that they were formed in a secondary phase. The two ventilator openings (now glazed) have deep splayed reveals and are rather crudely-formed, implying that they are also later. The form of the openings is consistent with keeping livestock within the ground-floor of the building, while their location is consistent with putative stalls against the east wall. All of these features relate to a secondary phase and denote a change in function, but never-the-less, give creedance to the idea that, in the past, the building has functioned as a stable. The date of this change of use is unclear, although it may be recalled in the later building name, implying use as a stable during the mid-17th century. This is uncertain.

Figure 129.

Probable ventilation slit in east wall, ground floor. (AA046044)

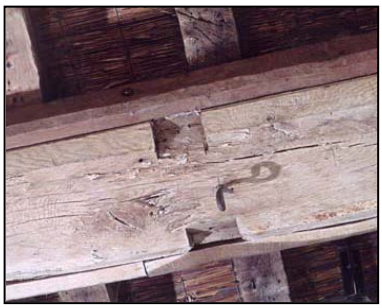

Figure 130.

Notches cut into ground-floor beam soffits. (AA046043)

Fenestration

The windows have dressed-stone surrounds with rebated cavetto-mouldings on the jambs and lintels, although contrasts in details indicate that the windows are of a variety of dates. The majority are of two-light form, with cavetto mouldings on the mullions. The mouldings are uniform, except for the attic window in the southern gable, which has squared jambs and a mullion chamfered on the internal face - the location of this window denoting that it

Figure 131.

Ground floor, showing entrance in north wall. (AA046037)

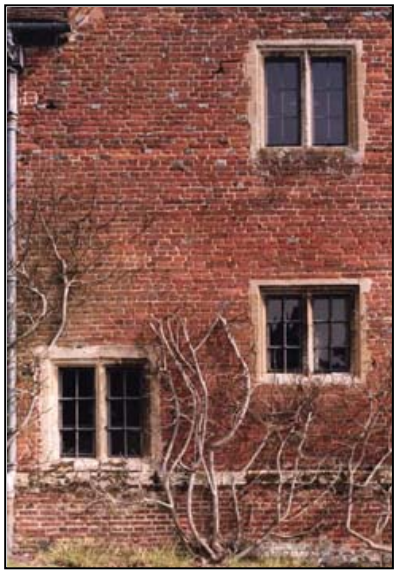

Figure 132.

Windows in west wall. (AA045579)

originates from the later phase of truncation. The ground and first-floor window surrounds in the south wall also match the originals, implying that they were probably reused when the building was truncated. Some of the windows show evidence of having been inserted, with ragged joints and slivers of brick at the meeting between the brick walls and the stone surrounds. The ground-floor window near the centre of the west elevation differs slightly from the majority type, in that it has bevelled or angled corners formed where the mullions and jambs intersect with the lintel. There is a ragged joint to the north of this, indicating that the window is inserted, although weathering of the stonework may indicate that the window is of some antiquity, possibly reused from elsewhere.

A tall three-light window on the ground floor rear elevation, and a single-light first-floor window above, both have machine-cut surrounds and therefore are not original. The single-light window surround was probably cut during the mid-to-late 20th century and the three-light window formed at a similar time, but probably an enlargement of an earlier window. It has crisp, clean mullions, matching the northern jamb, but the south jamb is made up of authentic weathered stonework. The height from cill to lintel is also far greater than is typical of the original windows.

A high-level window on the ground floor, on the west elevation (see Figure 132), is raised above an area of blocking in the wall, the blocking extending down to the ground. There is an alcove in the internal face of the wall in this position, which indicates that the window is positioned above a blocked doorway. However, this is not an original doorway, as it cuts the original plinth.

Main door and ground-floor ceiling

The present entrance to the building is located in the secondary south wall, and, therefore, is not original. The door is probably a reproduction, as denoted by the presence, on the reverse face, of reused panelling of probable 17th century date, set between two vertical styles. The external face is made using old planks, with driven nails, while there are horizontal planks across the top and bottom which are less eroded and are probably further, later, additions. The strap hinges appear to be of considerable age, but are fixed with cross-head screws, denoting that they have been reused. They are ornamented with scrolls.

Figure 133.

The entrance to the 'Cromwellian Stables'. (DP004012)

The ground-floor ceiling joists and beams are largely original, although the beam ends are carried on stone

corbels, added in the 20th-century to provide support where the timbers were failing. The joists are squared and are spaced by a traditional type of read matting, also fitted in the 20th century.

Roof structure

The roof structure is three and a half bays long, the half bay to the south formed where the building has been truncated. There are four trusses, including one set into the north gable wall, which is in-filled with original brickwork. Each original truss has principal rafters, tie beam, a collar and raked struts, the latter extending to the principal rafters. The carpentry joints are morticed, tenoned and pegged. The trusses have diminished principal rafters above collar height, with deliberate, square-cut, set-backs: a feature that occurs in the roof of the main range, built a few years earlier (discussed above).

There is single rank of butt-purlins, each purlin pegged from the soffit of the adjoining principal rafter. There are long straight windbraces, except where the front (west) dormer is respected in the form of the roof. In this bay, the purlins occur at a slightly higher level, in comparison with the standard height of the purlins elsewhere in the roof. As mentioned previously, the fact that the dormer is respected in the form of the original roof, demonstrates that it was an original part of the design of the range.

The east and west ranges and associated evidence of the Elizabethan base court

The east and west ranges denote the creation of a new Elizabethan frontage that entailed a southward expansion of the base court. Its construction dictates the prior loss of the south curtain wall and associated structures, either demolished to accommodate the new scheme or destroyed at an earlier date. The re-fashioned base court extended over a considerable area, measuring approximately 40 metres (131 feet) by 50 metres (164 feet), between the

Figure 134.

Stone and brick quoins marking position of former entrance. (AA045595)

flanking ranges. The creation of the west range segregated the service yard, surrounding the well, from the remainder of the base court, a division that may not have existed previously. Also, the construction of the lodging range created a small courtyard to its east (on the site of the 'Knot Garden', as referred to above), which in the 16th or 17th centuries was provided with a separate service entrance leading out to the east, beyond the domestic curtilage. The remains of this entrance (marked 'quoins' on the plan of the ground floor east lodgings and 'Dower House'), located due east from the south end of the 'Cromwellian Stables', are set into the post-medieval section of the east curtain wall and comprise a straight joint, defined by alternating limestone and brick quoins located on the north side of the joint. Although the precise date of these features is undetermined, their treatment using brick and stone and the character of the brickwork is consistent with a date in the 16th or 17th centuries.

The base court was enclosed, to the south, by a court wall which extended across the south boundary of the court, linking the east and west ranges (refer to plan: *Greys Court, 16th Century*). Although destroyed, this court wall is known from a number of sources, primarily archaeological, which have revealed the existence of associated, buried wall footings. Resistance data procured through gradiometer survey,[170] and corresponding parchmarks recorded in times of dry weather, define the wall's alignment and are superimposed onto the site plan (refer to plan: *Greys Court with Resistivity Plot*). The former existence of this wall is also demonstrated by the brickwork of the west range, which incorporates a vertical scar on its east face, defined by gaps in the brickwork for 'keying-in'. This evidence aligns with the archaeological evidence for the wall. At its east end, where the wall abutted the lodging range, the former existence of the court wall is marked by traces of mortar which define a vestigial, vertical line where the wall would have abutted the building. In this position, an absence of gaps in the brickwork - for 'keying-in' the former court wall - contrasts with the evidence on the west range and may be interpreted as possible evidence of a change in building campaign. It may be suggested, tentatively, that the court wall and west range were contemporary – hence the keyed-in brickwork - whereas the lodging range and court wall were not. This, however, is uncertain.

Figure 135.

Parchmarks in 'Green Lawn'. The wide, scorched, line marks the course of the Elizabethan base-court wall. (DP004066)

The same gradiometer survey and corresponding evidence gleaned through measured survey of the parchmarks, reveals the footprint of a former gateway or gatehouse located near the centre of the court wall. The presence of these features in this location is entirely consistent with typical courtyard-plan houses of the period, in which the outer gate to the mansion is located at the centre of the principal, outer façade. The evidence appears as a pair of short, parallel wall footings, approximately 5.5 metres in length, orientated roughly north to south, at ninety degrees to the court wall. They define a gateway approximately 2.4 metres wide, internally, and with an overall width of 4.5 metres. The central placement of the

buried features and their association with the court wall implies that this gateway or gatehouse was probably Elizabethan. The evidence defines a plan that lacked rooms to either side of the gateway, implying that it was probably a compact gatehouse that did not extend beyond the entrance. Whether or not this was surmounted by a chamber, housed in an upper storey, is unknown. The Napier view, which, as stated above, belongs to a later period, depicts a gateway, rather than gatehouse - a form which may reflect the original arrangement. However, given the status of Greys Court in the Elizabethan period and the outlay embodied in the remainder of the work to the base court, there is a strong possibility that an imposing gatehouse might have been preferred to a low gateway. If this was the case, then it might be suggested that the upper storey was demolished by the time the Napier view was drawn. Furthermore, the question must be raised as to whether this entrance could be the 'Queen's gate' mentioned by Rawlinson in the 18th century.[171] The lawn immediately south of the parchmarks, incorporates a raised earthwork consistent with the presence of a ramp leading to the entrance. This is also shown on the site plan. There may also be buried footings of earlier buildings in this area.

Figure 136.

Parchmarks revealing footprint of former gateway and court wall. (DP004074)

Figure 137.

Parchmarks defining inter-court range and probable inner gateway (centre). (DP004073)

This formal entrance, whether gateway or gatehouse, opened into the large base court, whereupon entering, visitors would have been presented with a view directly northward to an inner gateway near the centre of the inter-court range (discussed above). The gradiometer data reveals the probable location of this gateway, and a formal path, the latter connecting the outer and inner gates and extending roughly north to south. The path would have provided the Knollys family and their prestigious visitors with a means of reaching the more important buildings and accommodation of the upper court. Whereas the outer gatehouse is associated with evidence that is linked directly with the Elizabethan phases, the inner gate and inter-court range cannot be ascribed with the same degree of clarity. However, the inference drawn from the putative wall-walk doorway implies the existence of the inter-court range in the 1570s, and it is highly likely that it formed part of the Elizabethan multiple-courtyard plan. The evidence for the inner gate appears to show a possible turret or small room positioned on either side of the entrance.

Beyond this, it is possible to discern a series of long thin rooms. These features were recorded in a resistivity survey, carried-out in 1983 by the University of Bradford, School of Archaeological Sciences.[172] This described the range as being coincident with scorchmarks recorded in the summers of 1955 and 1956, measuring 9-10 metres wide, and appearing to 'represent a wing or suite of rooms'.

The south porch

The formal approach from the outer gate to the upper court, as described above, was supplemented by the addition of a secondary entrance porch, built in the angle between the west and main ranges. The porch, which leads into the modern kitchen, is built of brick with limestone dressings and has an open ground floor, with semicircular-arched openings to the south and east. It is surmounted by a first-floor chamber with a south-facing oriel window. The precise date of construction is unclear, although the form of the arches, with brick imposts and moulded-brick surrounds, is consistent with a date in the late 16th or early 17th centuries. There is clear physical evidence to demonstrate that the porch post-dates both adjacent ranges. This is demonstrated by straight joints formed where the porch walls abut those of the west and main ranges. Also, the external plinth and brickwork of the west wing are visible within the ground-floor of the porch.

Figure 138.

Chamber lit by porch oriel: converted into a bathroom in the 20th century. (AA044721)

It is likely that the porch provided a less formal entrance to those areas of the mansion where the activities of both the base and upper courts coincided. The porch, which now has a 20th-century inner doorway, would have allowed entry without the need to pass through the inner gateway – perhaps a matter of convenience and hierarchy, retaining the inner gate as an entrance for more prestigious guests. However, the treatment of the south porch does not imply low status. This is demonstrated most clearly by the elaborate oriel window with its moulded brick corbelling. The quality of the oriel implies that it served a chamber of reasonable quality, although this is contradicted by the practical constraints of providing a room in the associated, cramped, wedge-shaped space between the west and main ranges. We know from the physical evidence, visible in the floor void beneath the oriel chamber (now a bathroom), that at some time in the 16th or 17th centuries this room was enlarged by moving back the timber-framed first-floor wall of the 1450-51 wing. The enlargement of this room would be consistent with the provision of a reasonable chamber, lit by the porch oriel, and may denote that the two changes are contemporary. The precise function of this chamber is unclear, although its proximity to the main range may imply a connection between the first-floor chambers in porch and main range.

Figure 139.

Detail of oriel window sill. (DP004011)

The oriel window is canted and has a cavetto-moulded surround with king mullions at the angles. The main facet, which faces south, has a stone transom with a central mullion above. There is no corresponding mullion beneath the transom – an unusual window treatment. However, the lack of evidence for a ‘struck-off’ mullion – in the

form of a mullion nib, on either the transom or cill - infers that this may be the original form. This central light, beneath the window, retains early iron casements, with clover-leaf back-plates to the catches. The side lights have renewed ironwork to match. The window has 20th-century leaded glass in rectangular panes. A two-light window on the east wall of the porch chamber is a 20th-century addition, with mullioned, cavetto-moulded stone surround, iron casements and decorative back plates.

Figure 140.

Early clover-leaf back plate on iron-framed casement, oriel window. (DP004010)

Figure 141.

Reproduction back plate on inserted window, east wall of porch chamber. (DP004005)

The porch roof is gabled to the south and has a tile covering, which probably reflects the original treatment. The roof structure comprised common rafters with a plank ridge and a single rank of diagonal purlins - a form indicative of a later period. That the roof has been altered is confirmed by the presence of a scar, visible in the roof void between the medieval timber-framed wing and the main range, which reveals the outline of an earlier roof. The scar is only marginally lower than the present roof, and is also gabled to the south, indicating that the present roof profile has probably changed little, despite these alterations.

Completion of south front and alterations to the service courtyard, 1586-1588: the 'Well House', donkey wheel, south-west tower and associated work

Phase summary

The work of this period brought about the completion of the extensive south front, probably through two building campaigns, and entailed construction of the 'Well House' in 1586-87 and the octagonal south-west tower in 1587-88. Both have been dated by dendrochronology. The 'Well House' and its contemporary donkey-wheel mechanism, a functional addition to improve the supply of water to the mansion, was never-the-less incorporated into the scheme for the south front, which on completion of the south-west tower extended a distance of 372 feet (113 metres). The tower, built to mirror the medieval tower at the south-east corner of the frontage, served principally as an architectural device, balancing the contrived symmetry of the design, which, however, by the late 1580s, was already becoming less fashionable. This probably reflects the fact that this phase marked the culmination of work begun in the previous decade by Sir Francis Knollys, who by that time had already reached his sixties. Knollys was in his late seventies when the work was completed, which may imply some involvement from his eldest surviving son William. The execution of this phase probably required the demolition of earlier buildings within the service courtyard, possibly even an earlier well house, and the loss of the south-west corner of the medieval fortress-style house, if this was not destroyed previously.

The most impressive survival of this period is the 'Well House' and donkey wheel – the latter measuring 5.79 metres (19 feet) in diameter and described by J. Kenneth Major, as the finest and largest donkey wheel in England.[173] *This animal-powered water-drawing mechanism is a stunning piece of 'vernacular engineering', exemplifying the ingenuity of its time. The building, chiefly of brick with some stone dressings, was purpose-built to contain the mechanism, the design of which is respected by the form of the floor and roof structures. Although the mechanism is preserved in an exceptional state, there is important evidence of historic alterations, including changes to the winding system and installation of the present timber-framed, lead-lined water tank. This system provided domestic water until the early 20th century.*

The south-west tower appears to have been designed to match its medieval counterpart to the south-east. However, it displays a number of significant differences, notably the use of brick quoins and dressings instead of stone and a stone plinth matching those used on the buildings of the Elizabethan base court. It is likely that, during this period, both towers were roofed in a similar manner, with a pyramidal tiled roof similar to that which survives on the south-west tower. The Napier view, discussed previously, illustrates both octagonal towers surmounted by such roofs and confirms that the battlements now in place on the south-east tower are a later alteration. The erection of the south-west tower involved extending the earlier service wing of 1559 and casing the timber-framing within brick and flint walls. The wing, tower and 'Well House' were linked by a contemporary court wall that formed an integral part of the design of the great south front.

The Well House and donkey-wheel mechanism

Date and context

Dendrochronological sampling of roof timbers has produced timber-felling dates in the summer of 1586 and winter of 1586-87.[174] The integral construction of the roof structure and donkey-wheel mechanism indicates that these dates are also valid for the latter, although it is possible that earlier elements were reused in its construction. This question, which is discussed below, might be clarified by more extensive dendrochronological sampling, a programme that was not possible within the scope of this survey.

Figure 142.

'Well House', viewed from north. (DP004767)

As has been stated in the *Phase summary*, the 'Well House' formed an integral part of the scheme for the south front of the mansion, a factor that is reflected in the use of brick, the application of a moulded-stone plinth course on the south front and by the integral construction of the 'Well House' and court wall. The brickwork continues, uninterrupted, across both of these structure, the end of the building marked by the plinth being dropped and returned – a device used also on the Elizabethan elevations flanking the base court. This is convincing evidence that the 'Well House' and court wall are contemporary and formed part of one scheme of works. The rear elevation of the court wall, facing north, is of flint construction, further emphasising that brick was favoured for the prominent elevations. It is worth noting that the south elevation of the 'Well House' has been obscured by the addition of a stone-built outshot, erected in the 18th or 19th century.

The provision of a new well house in the 1580s poses a question as to whether this building replaced an earlier example. There is no serious doubt that the well - 200 feet deep and with a large shaft 6 foot 6 inches in diameter - dates from the medieval period, and this has been referred to previously in the report. Major ascribes it to the 'early part of the thirteenth century'.[175] Evidence of alterations to the upper part of the well-shaft lining - most probably repairs - includes straight and ragged joints and patched repairs using limestone blocks, the latter of a colour and size that is notably similar to reused stonework found in buildings erected elsewhere on the site in the 16th century, including the front of the main block and the so-called 'Tithe Barn'. The significance of this evidence

Figure 143.

View down well shaft. (AA047426)

lies in that it may imply that the shaft wall was repaired, or strengthened, in the late 16th century and, not unfeasibly, as part of the plan to erect the 'Well House' and wheel mechanism. There is also the notion, which is highly tentative, that the timber wheel shaft may be reused (also addressed below), which might also invoke a putative water-drawing mechanism of an earlier date. Whether or not this timber shaft is reused, the depth of the well and the girth of the well shaft point to the probability that there was an earlier mechanism for drawing water from the well.

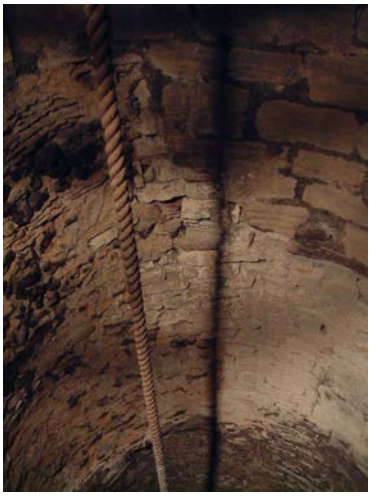

Figure 144.

Detail of shaft lining, showing repairs in the masonry, near the head of the well. (DP004014)

The mechanism erected in the 1580s is of exceptional interest and importance, based on its state of preservation, evidence of continued maintenance and repair and because of its high significance in the context of the development of animal-powered machines during the 16th century. J. Kenneth Major writes that the vertical wheel, such as that in the Well House, was one of the first mechanical devices illustrated in mechanical textbooks produced after the invention of printing.[176] He adds that '*Agricola's De Re Metallica* of 1556 was the first to look at the vertical wheel and to demonstrate its potential as a means of the haulage of men, minerals and water from mines'.[177] The donkey-wheel mechanism at Greys Court was erected thirty years after the publication of *De Re Metallica,* a point which underlines the machine's importance and rarity. Major also comments that 'the vertical wheels dating from

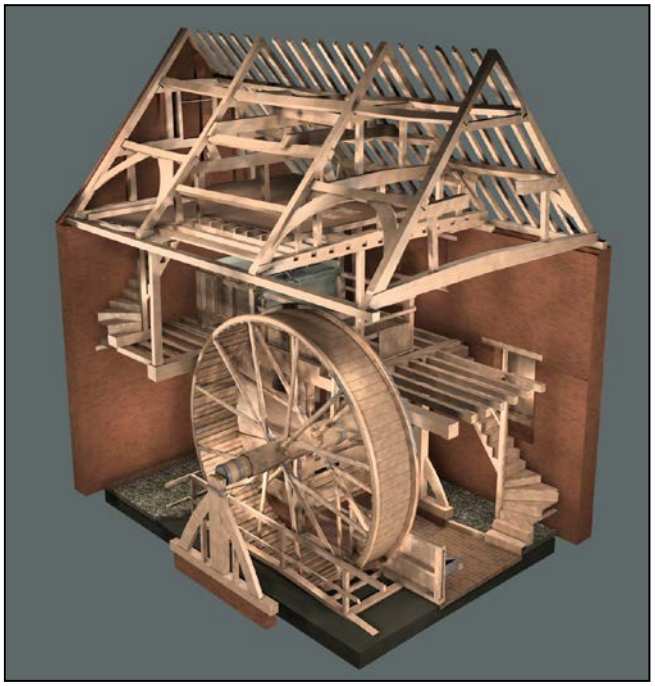

Figure 145.

Detail from 3D CAD survey of 'Well House', showing mechanism and carpentry details. View from north east.

the sixteenth century which remain in England, e.g. Greys Court, Oxfordshire and Carisbrooke Castle, Isle of Wight, show the same form of construction as the examples in Agricola's textbook'.[178] Measuring 5.79 metres (19 feet) in diameter by 1.16 metres (3 feet 10 inches) wide, the vertical wheel at Greys Court is the largest British example known to survive.[179]

Mary Russell Mitford, writing in her *Recollections of a Literary Life*, published in 1857, writes an interesting account of the donkey wheel at Greys Court:

> 'One of the old buildings is still occupied by the well of the castle, a well three hundred feet deep, which supplies the family with water. It will give some idea of the scale of the great mansion to say that the wheel by which the water is raised is twenty-five feet in diameter. Two donkeys are employed in the operation. One donkey suffices for the parallel but much smaller well at Carisbrook, where the animal is so accustomed to be put in for the mere purpose of exhibiting the way in which the water is raised to the visitors who go to look at the poor king's last prison, that he just makes the one turn necessary to show the workings of the machine, and then stops of his own accord. The donkeys at Gray's, kept for the use and not for show, have not had a similar opportunity of displaying their sagacity.'[180]

Figure 146.

Historic photograph of working donkey posed outside 'Well House'. (DP004048) (Reproduced by permission of The National Trust, Hughenden Manor)

The 'Well House': form, materials and evidence of phasing

The 'Well House' is of two-and-a-half storeys and has a single-room plan beneath a gabled, tiled roof. The floors are, in part, open through to one another in order to accommodate the donkey-wheel mechanism, while part of the attic floor has been removed at a later date. The internal timber structure, which unites floor and roof structures with the donkey-wheel mechanism and frame, is arranged in three bays, defined by floor beams between the main storeys and by the roof bays (refer to plan of 'Well House'). The external brick walls are laid, chiefly, using English bond, although there are deviations resulting from later alterations and

the use of diaperwork on the north elevation. This decorative feature, achieved through the use of grey/blue bricks, is only present on the one elevation, facing into the service courtyard. This differential use of the technique is comparable with the diaperwork on the rear elevation of the lodging range built in 1578 (as discussed above). Similarly, blue/grey bricks are used in an irregular fashion on the east and west walls of the 'Well House'. In the 18th or early 19th centuries, the south-east and south-west corners of the 'Well House' were improved by the addition of stucco quoins, remnants of which survive.

The bricks are larger than those used for the lodging range, but are of the same dimensions as those used in the construction of the west range: the length varies in the range 0.24 to 0.245 metres, with some slightly longer at 0.25 metres; width, or header length, 0.12 metres; the height 0.06 metres. Despite the inference, inherent in the comparable brick sizes, that the 'Well House' and west range may be contemporary, there are reasons to discount this evidence and to suggest that the two buildings are of different phases. This is implied by the awkward relationship between the two buildings, in particular the fact that the 'Well House' and associated court wall are not on the same alignment as the south end of the west range. A further noteworthy contrast between the two buildings is found in the virtual absence of stone dressing in the construction of the 'Well House', compared to the abundance of the same in the west range. This contrast might be attributed to the relative status of the two buildings, although the close proximity of the two ranges and the fact that both contribute to the south frontage, probably undermines this idea. Alternatively, the contrast may reflect the passage of time between the respective phases of construction.

Figure 147.

West gable, showing window (now blocked) cutting original roof timbers. (DP004021)

The gables at either end of the 'Well House' incorporate evidence of alterations. The west gable is built using bricks of a darker colour and incorporates a contemporary window, now blocked, interrupting the original collar of the westernmost roof truss. The collar has been cut through, rather crudely, to accommodate the window and an original strut has been lost as a result of the loss of the central section of the collar. The position of this strut, which was pegged to the tie beam, is marked by a vertical recess in the brickwork, indicating that the stud remained in place after the window opening was formed. The modifications to the truss and the contrast in brick colour found in the gable, almost certainly indicates that this is not the original treatment of this feature. However, the construction of this brick gable is probably an early alteration, probably made soon after the original phase, as is indicated by the form of the window, which has a chamfered brick mullion and matching brick jambs, and by the cavetto and ogee-moulded bricks used to embellish the eaves.

The gable wall on the east elevation is also built using a contrasting brick type, although in this case of inferior quality compared to the original brickwork. This later brickwork, which has proved susceptible to weathering, is laid in an irregular bond and is much thinner than the original brick walls: a single header's thickness, which is exceptionally thin, for a gable wall of any period. Internally, this gable has a series of brick piers, which also stands out as

being a later detail of construction. All of this evidence indicates that the brickwork in the gable is a much later alteration, possibly of the 19th or early 20th centuries. The original truss in this position contrasts with that at the west end, in that it has a second pair of struts set at a higher level, between the two collars. These struts, and an adjacent inserted stud, frame the remains of an inserted window (now blocked) that pre-dates the brickwork in the gable.

Figure 148.

East gable, with secondary brickwork and blocked window opening. (DP004026)

Precisely why the gables were altered in this way is no longer clear. However, a tentative interpretation may be that, originally, both were closed by panels set between the truss timbers, or perhaps by timber cladding. The west gable, being the more prominent of the two, may have been altered for aesthetic reasons - based on the fact that it formed part of the mansion's south front – and was certainly replaced with brick at an early stage. In contrast, the east gable remained unaltered for a considerable period. This might be explained by the proximity of the west range, which would have obscured views of the east wall of the 'Well House'.

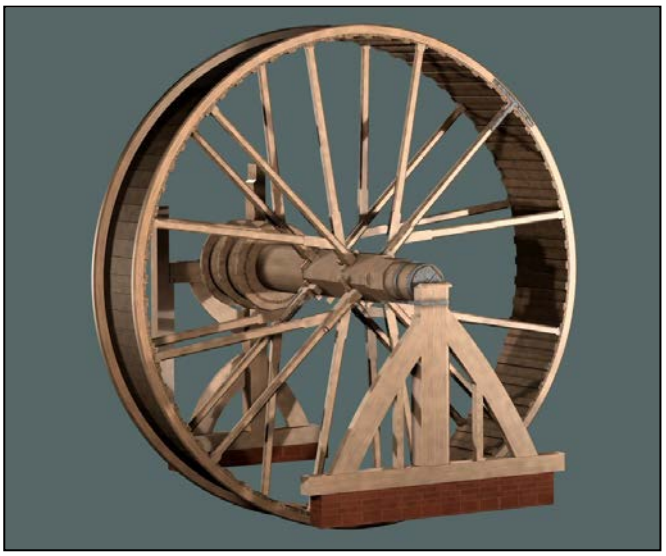

Figure 149.

Detail from 3D CAD survey, showing tread wheel and supporting timber frame at north end of wheel shaft.

The north wall has a flush-boarded wooden projection which houses a timber frame supporting the north end of the tread-wheel shaft. This projection serves to cover the end of the shaft and its bearing, and is topped by a hinged, wooden lid which gives access for maintenance of these features. The wall above retains a mortar scar defining two pitches of an earlier gabled roof, which has been removed.

Entrance and fenestration

The entrance is located in the north wall, adjacent to the north-east corner of the building. It has a plain brick surround, with a later head, although it does retain its original pegged and chamfered wooden frame and part of the original timber lintel. The latter was cut through – probably in the 18th or 19th centuries - to provide a ventilation opening above the door. This change would have improved air circulation within the building and assisted in the husbandry of the donkeys set to tread the wheel. The door opens outward, but a redundant internal door rebate indicates that the door has been re-hung and that originally, it opened inward. One early iron hinge pin survives on the eastern jamb. The doorframe's original chamfer has been partially cut-back in order to allow a door to be hung on the external face. Planks have been applied to the frame to conceal this change and the form of the original chamfer. The door is of the plank and batten type, with strap hinges, and probably dates from the 18th or early 19th centuries.

The original fenestration is distinctive in that, unlike the earlier Elizabethan ranges, it is characterised by the use of chamfered-brick surrounds, with external rebates, and chamfered brick mullions. The contrast is in the use of brickwork and the choice of chamfers as opposed to cavetto mouldings. Also, originally, the windows were left unglazed, a factor that clearly reflects the building's modest function.

The north wall has an original, unglazed, three-light window which has traces of later stucco finish that imitates ashlar. This may be contemporary with the remnants of stuccoed quoins on the south-east and south-west corners. This window is placed on the first floor, although it lights the area of the tread wheel which rises through two storeys. The west wall has three-light windows on the ground and first floors and a two-light window, blocked and rendered, in the attic. The latter is original in form, whereas the windows on the lower floors have modern cement render, probably used over earlier, possibly original, brickwork. The south wall has original windows on both principal floors, although both windows are blocked. That on the ground floor had two lights and retains the chamfered brick mullion; that on the first floor was a three-light window, which retains its original surround, although the mullions are not visible internally.

Figure 150.

An original window, with later cement render, on first floor, west wall. (DP004029)

Layout and function of ground floor

The ground floor is dominated by the tread wheel, positioned close to the north wall. This is off-set to the west, occupying the central and western bays, in order to allow clearance for the entrance, located in the north wall of the eastern bay. A post and rail fence protects a narrow inspection walkway positioned between the tread wheel and the north wall. The well

shaft is located in the central bay and is enclosed by a timber frame fitted with plank lining. Although this structure is not original (discussed below), it does incorporate reused original timbers and replaces an original frame, the evidence for which takes the form of redundant mortices in the ceiling beams. The plank lining protects the head of the shaft, reducing the potential for accidents, and is fitted with hinged double doors on the east face, which give access to the well. This is placed near to the entrance – presumably for convenience.

Figure 151.

Detail from 3D CAD survey, showing layout of entrance passage, shaft mechanism and carpentry details. View from south east.

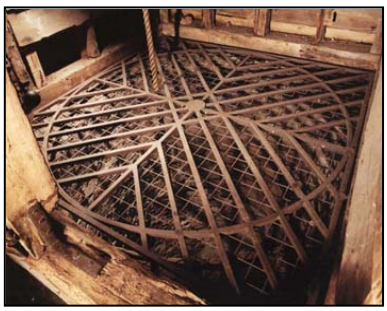

Figure 152.

Well head, with framed wooden surround and iron grill. (AA047425)

Figure 153.

Water trough. (AA047424)

The floor is set with small cobbles, with a brick drainage channel internally against the east wall, leading to a stone drain. In the centre of the west bay, there is a donkey stabling area segregated from the tread wheel by a plank partition which incorporates an opening through which the donkey can be led into the tread wheel. The stabling area is paved with brick and has a small cast-iron water trough in one corner, against the external wall. At a later date, the north corner of the stabling area was provided with additional light and ventilation by cutting a new window, fitted with an internal wooden frame, in the west wall. This window, now blocked, had two lights and, externally, is treated with a stucco surround. The stabling area also contains the tread-wheel shaft, winding drum and brake mechanism, although the latter two features are not original. The brake is operated from a position close to the entrance to the tread wheel. The brake mechanism is formed by an iron band which extends

Figure 154.

Tread-wheel shaft, winding drum and brake mechanism (to left of drum). (AA047440)

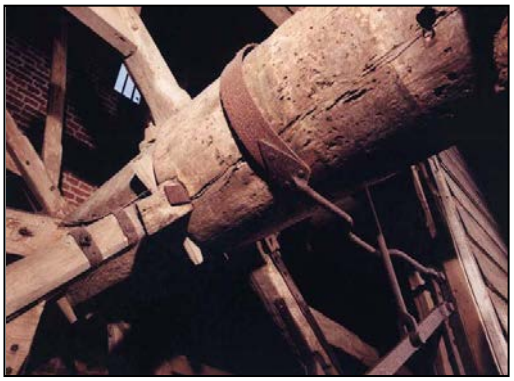

Figure 155.

Detail of brake mechanism. (AA047423)

part-way round the shaft. This band is attached to a long arm or lever through which the band can be tensioned against the shaft, the resulting friction impeding the turning motion of shaft and wheel.

The internal carpentry, including the ground-floor ceiling beams and roof structure, is arranged in three bays with a wider bay in the centre, accommodating the well shaft and winding ropes. The first floor is supported on transverse and lateral beams, whose arrangement is shown on the plan and 3D survey. The west bay has an interrupted cross-beam, carried at its north end by the lateral beam. This arrangement allows the donkey wheel to extend through the greater part of the two main floors.

The upper floors are reached by means of a stair located in the south-west corner of the building, adjacent to the stabling area. The presence of a floor rebate and redundant joist in the adjacent walls indicates that this was probably not the original stair position. No alternative stair position can be detected, although there are later joists in the east bay, beneath the water tank. It is possible that the original access to the upper floors was by means of a wooden ladder. However, the form of the present stair, with its solid wood treads, that are triangular in cross-section, is indicative of an early date. It has a wooden newel post rising to the ceiling and comprises a short quarter-turn with winders at the base, leading onto a straight run. The stair also provides access into a loft contained in the later outshot that adjoins the south wall. This is reached by means of doorway leading through the south wall of the original building. The doorway has rough brick jambs indicating that it was cut at a later date, characteristics concurring with the later addition of the south outshot.

Layout and function of the upper floors

The first-floor plan reflects that of the ground floor, except that there is no stabling area. Gaps in the floor accommodate the tread wheel, the area above the well shaft and an adjacent gap where the ropes extend up from the winding drum (on the ground floor) to the pulleys located in the attic. The well shaft is protected by a plank and newel balustrade. This is of nailed construction, using wood cut on a circular saw, and therefore, is probably of a late

Figure 156.

Detail from 3D CAD survey, showing first floor looking north east.

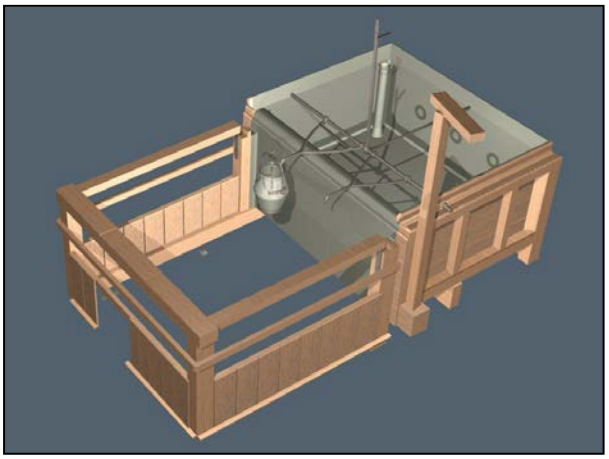

Figure 157.

3D CAD survey. Detail of first floor, with water tank and timber structure surrounding well head.

date, perhaps erected in the mid-to-late-19th or early 20th centuries. Immediately alongside this, to the east, there is a substantial water tank, placed to allow the water buckets to tip directly into the tank. The detail of tank and bucket-tilting mechanism are discussed below.

The west bay is now open from the first floor to the roof, although redundant joist seatings in the beams indicate that an original floor structure has been removed from this bay. In the same area, one of the tie beams is supported by a post formed from a reused medieval timber.

Figure 158.

Redundant joist seatings on roof truss. Detail from 3D survey.

Figure 159.

Reused timber and part of tread wheel, first floor. (AA047428)

Figure 160.

Detail of reused medieval timber on first floor. (DP004019)

The stair to the attic is placed alongside the east wall, reached by a narrow passage extending round the area of the well shaft and water tank. This stair is of similar construction to that on the ground floor.

The attic floor structure in the central bay has been altered, and there are redundant joist seatings marking the positions of the removed original joists. The present floor is formed using later joists placed over the remainder of the original joists and associated plank floor. These modifications were made in order to provide clearance when the arrangement of the winding ropes was altered, a change which probably coincided with other alterations to the winding drum and the installation of the automatic bucket-tilting mechanism.

The roof structure

The three-bay roof structure has four trusses, including two set above the end walls of the building. The trusses have tie-beams, collars with clasped purlins, and queen struts. The trusses have contrasting forms relating to the structure of the donkey-wheel mechanism and their location in the building. The two end trusses differ from those flanking the central bay, the latter provided with two sets of queen struts, one beneath each collar, and a further pair of raked struts associated with the tie beam and the lower collar. There is also an additional central strut extending from the tie beam to the lower collar. This specialised form enables the trusses to support a greater loading and a contrasting purlin arrangement in the central bay - all associated

Figure 161.

Roof truss on western side of central roof bay. Viewed from east. (AA047430)

with beams bearing the rope pulleys. Contrasts in the forms of the two end trusses – which one might expect to be of matching form – have already been discussed in connection with the changes to the gable walls.

Figure 162.

Detail of truss, showing collar with raked strut and clasped purlin. (AA047433)

The roof has staggered, clasped purlins, and one set of curved windbraces in each of the end bays. The windbraces are omitted from the central bay in order to accommodate the structure supporting the pulley mechanism referred to above. The carpentry of the entire internal structure and the donkey-wheel mechanism is of high quality, with regular, well-carved timbers. The detail of the roof construction has been recorded accurately in the 3D survey and, therefore, is not described in the text.

Interpretation and description of changes to the donkey-wheel and water-raising mechanism

(As with the roof structure, the constructional details of the donkey-wheel mechanism have been recorded in great detail in the 3D survey, and therefore the following text is concerned with points of interpretation rather than general description.)

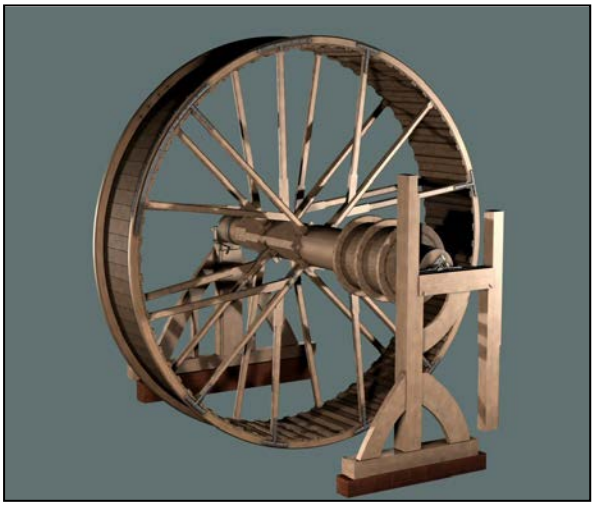

Figure 163.

Tread wheel and frame supporting south end of wheel shaft. Detail from 3D CAD survey.

The tread wheel is mounted on a massive timber shaft. This is dressed to an octagonal section where the wheel is mounted and a circular-section to accommodate the brake, winding drum and bearings. At the north end, adjacent to the tread wheel, the transition between the two sectional forms is achieved by the use of decorative scroll stops, where the diameter is much reduced. The arrangement of the spokes is distinctive, allowing gaps of a size sufficient to admit the donkey. Each of the main spokes appears to be formed from a single piece of timber spanning the full diameter of the wheel. These are threaded through the shaft using over-sized mortices. These cross in the centre of the wheel shaft, where they interlock with half-lap joints. These are secured with a small wooden block, used to fill the excess space within each mortice. The spokes are fixed with wedges and spikes driven through the spokes, and positioned against the edge of the shaft. The main spokes are

chamfered and embellished with bell stops adjacent to the shaft. The stops face the outer edge of the wheel, although one spoke has been fitted in reverse – most probably the result of a carpentry mistake made during the preparation of the spokes.

Figure 164.

Tread-wheel shaft and wheel spokes, viewed from first floor. (AA047419)

Figure 165.

Tread wheel rim. Note spliced timber repairs and later iron straps. (AA047421)

There have been many repairs to the tread wheel. The plank floor has been renewed, as have lengths of the outer rim (forming the circumference of the wheel). The latter is marked by remnants of the original rim attached to the ends of some spokes. Segmental iron straps are used to fastened lengths of renewed timber rim to the earlier work.

The wheel shaft and winding drum. An important aspect of the design of the mechanism is that the tread-wheel shaft is not mounted on the brick walls of the building. Instead, to the north, it sits on a timber-framed support standing outside the envelope of the building and protected from the elements by the weather-boarded cover described above. The south end of the shaft is supported by a similar timber frame standing inside the building, and which is not framed-in with the primary timber work of the remainder of the 'Well House'. The manner in which the shaft is supported on timber, independently of the brick wall, requires explanation. It may be that this arrangement was favoured because it limited the damaging effects of vibrations generated during operation of the tread wheel, or alternatively, it might relate to a water-drawing mechanism pre-dating the 'Well House'. The question may be resolved through dendrochronological analysis, which, due to funding limitations, was not possible during this project. Assuming that there was an earlier mechanism for drawing water, the shaft would constitute a major component and would be an eminently reusable item. However, the form of the decorative stops, used on the shaft, is inconsistent with a medieval date – evidence that the shaft is not reused, or evidence that the shaft was altered to suit the 16th-century mechanism?

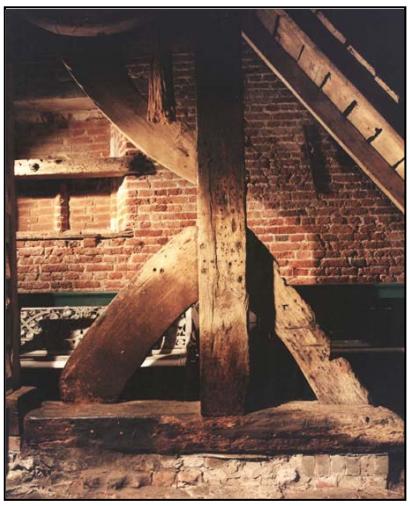

Figure 166.

Timber frame supporting south end of tread-wheel shaft. Viewed from north. (AA047435)

The shaft has redundant circular holes, associated with a white band of discolouring, on the north side of the drum, and which probably relate to an earlier rope-winding arrangement. Also, adjacent to the white band, there is a dark brown band, which may be evidence of a further phase of winding, or may mark the position of an earlier braking system. This may be the result of changes to the winding system of the 16th-century mechanism, or may relate to an earlier use of the shaft. However, the present winding drum, which is attached to the shaft, is a later addition. This is shown by the 'clean' finish of the timber winding drum, which does not show appreciable signs of wear, and by the fact that the original beam above the drum has been cut-back to accommodate the positions of the ropes as determined by the drum and contrary winding system.

Timber frames supporting the south end of the tread-wheel shaft. This timber structure has characteristics indicating that it has been altered extensively. It comprises a rail - supporting the shaft bearing - the ends of which are notched into the sides of two flanking posts, one to the east the other to the west. The posts are set on wooden cills, which in turn rest on brick plinths. The cills are clearly of two phases abutting one another. That to the east is virtually clean, whereas that beneath the main post is discoloured with a heavy build-up of oil, concentrated where the two timbers abut. This demonstrates that the build-up of oil on the western cill took place before the clean cill was placed adjoining it. The west cill is therefore the earlier of the two.

Figure 167.

Detail of brace beneath shaft bearing. (DP004015)

This interpretation is supported further by the form and treatment of the two posts. The western post and corresponding cill are framed together with a mortice and tenon joint that is pegged twice. There are large down braces from the post to the cill. The ends of the braces are jointed in a similar manner. However, in contrast, the shorter post, to the east, has no braces and all the timbers are clean and squared-off. The cill, braces and base of the western post are worn heavily and badly discoloured with oil.

The horizontal rail supporting the shaft bearing has a curved up-swinging brace extending from the post. This brace also has a pegged mortice and tenon joint at each end. On the rail soffit, adjacent to the top of the brace, there is a redundant mortice, demonstrating that a second brace – mirroring the other - was intended to support the bearing rail. However, the redundant mortice is truncated where the rail is notched into the shorter post forming the east end of the bearing-support frame, demonstrating that the bearing-support rail has been cut short. This probably occurred when the eastern brace was removed, along with associated eastern post, and the present shorter east post was fitted above the new cill. The reason behind this change is no longer clear, although it may have been part of alterations and/or repairs associated with building the frame enclosing the shaft head, and/or the installation of the present water tank on the first floor.

Changes to the floor structure and probable association with the installation of the water tank. On the ground floor, the principal cross-beam dividing the central and eastern ceiling bays, is set in 'plugs' of later brickwork, inserted in the north and south walls at a time after the original build. This is shown by changes in mortar and by ragged joints defining a patch of brick surrounding each beam end. Also, of interest is the fact that, at either end, the beam does not sit centrally on a timber pad set into the wall. This might be offered as evidence that the beam has been moved to a new position. However, other evidence indicates that this was not the case. This is shown by the ceiling of the ground-floor east bay, where the original lateral timber joists are chamfered and stopped at either end. The original joists can be identified by the fact that the timber matches the original timber throughout the building and that the joists are lodged into sockets in the beam. The original joists are stopped at either end where the joists abut the east wall and beam (some joists have been altered, but these are easily distinguished from the originals – as outlined below). This evidence demands an alternative interpretation. It is possible that the beam was moved temporarily for some purpose - either repair or modification. A likely explanation is that this work was done to facilitate the installation of the present water tank, which is not original, and that the pads beneath the beams were used, perhaps, as a means of manoeuvring the beam to allow the tank to be lifted into position. An alternative interpretation might be failure of the brickwork surrounding the ends of the beams, followed by subsequent repair.

Figure 168.

Cross-beam on ground floor, with blocking in associated north wall. (DP004032)

There is an original lateral beam, extending east to west, to the south of the tread wheel. This beam extends from the west wall and originally extended to an intersection with the cross-beam to the east of the tread wheel. However, the lateral beam has been truncated and made-up to the required length by applying a secondary beam above it, lapping the original and extending over the top of the cross-beam. This arrangement may be further evidence that the cross-beam has been moved, or alternatively is a change made in association with the construction of the timber enclosure surrounding the well head.

Figure 169.

Lateral beam (centre and right), with lapped beam above. (AA047420)

On the ground floor, the ceiling joists in the central part of the eastern bay, beneath the water tank, contrast with the original joists, to the north and south of the tank. These secondary joists are spaced irregularly and some are formed from reused timbers.

Others are not chamfered or have an irregular stop-chamfer arrangement that is inconsistent with the dimensions of the ceiling bay. It is possible that the replacement of these joists was also associated with the installation of the water tank.

Figure 170.

Ceiling joists on ground floor. Note also lead pipe from water tank above. (DP004031)

Further related changes were made to the **timber structure surrounding the well head.** The cross-beam referred to above has redundant mortices in the soffit, positioned to either side of the well, and which relate to original timber posts, now removed, which supported the beam. There are later, or re-positioned, posts adjacent to, but not respecting, each mortice. This indicates that these posts are not in the original positions.

The present arrangement supports the loading from the water tank – a substantial weight when full of water – and it is reasonable to assume that the mortices relate to the positions of original posts fulfilling a similar purpose. The fact that this arrangement of posts has been altered may also relate to alterations noted in the brickwork surrounding the east cross-beam, on the north and south walls.

The posts rising to the soffit of the cross-beam form part of a timber structure surrounding the well head. This structure is comprised of a brick plinth carrying a timber plate, which in turn supports the posts rising to the floor structure between the two main storeys. None of the timbers are framed using carpentry joints, and the individual timbers forming the posts and cill are fastened to one another using iron angle plates. The posts are attached to the original floor structure in a similar way, and the absence of carpentry joints and the awkward intersections between the posts and the original timbers, indicate that this area has been re-arranged, probably in the late 18th or 19th centuries. Again, there is every possibility that these changes were made at the same time as alterations to the water tank and/or winding drum.

Figure 171.

Timber-framed water tank. Detail of north side. (DP004023)

The large **water tank** on the first floor is of timber-framed construction, lined with horizontal planking overlaid with lead. The carpentry joints on the frame are marked-out using pencil, denoting that the tank is not original.

Figure 172.

Pencil scribe marks at joint on frame of water tank. (DP004024)

However, the use of framing denotes that the tank is of reasonable age, although the period of its installation is not known. The lead has three circular features, like rings, which appear to have central blockings. There is also an ornamental strapwork motif, executed in lead, on each internal elevation of the tank.

Figure 173.

Interior of water tank, showing detail of leadwork. (DP004027)

A moulded wooden rim applied to the top of the tank is made of contrasting timber and may be a further alteration designed to raise the high-water level within the tank. The tank rests on an ad-hoc arrangement of beams and wedges - further evidence of adaptation and alteration.

Figure 174.

Moulded wooden rim applied to top of water tank. (DP004025)

The tank has an overflow device rising in one corner. This comprised a lead pipe set vertically inside the tank and formed with two concentric, cylindrical pipes, one inside the other. The outflow from the tank takes the form of a lead pipe, leading from the bottom of the tank, visible beneath the ground-floor ceiling. A second pipe nearby has been truncated, but a stub remains visible. It is assumed that one of the pipes connected the water tank to the domestic water system. Perhaps the other served as an overflow? The east wall has three small holes on a uniform height at first floor level, and one taller blocked hole at storey height. One or more of these may be associated with pipes stemming from the water tank.

Figure 175.

Overflow in north-east corner of water tank. (DP004028)

Figure 176.

Winding drum and ropes. (AA047437)

The **bucket winding and tilting mechanism** operated in the following manner. Water was raised by two buckets suspended on separate ropes. One descended empty while the other rose full. The weight of the empty bucket countered some of the weight of the ascending bucket that was laden with water. The present arrangement for achieving this action, including the winding drum on the drive shaft and the pulleys located in the roof, is not original, neither is the mechanism for emptying the buckets. The latter comprises two iron hooks – one per bucket – attached to the water tank on the first floor. These hooks are hinged to allow them to rise and fall with the action of the buckets. The hooks engaged the rising buckets as they rose past the top edge of the tank, thereby tipping them into a horizontal position and discharging the water into the tank. The brake was applied at that position to halt the bucket rising further. The donkey would then be turned round to raise the second bucket and lower that which had just discharged into the tank.

Figure 177.

Water bucket. (AA047422)

Figure 178.

Pulleys in roof. (AA047431)

The **buckets** are of riveted tin fabrication. Evidence indicates that both buckets pre-date the tilting mechanism. Two v-shaped features on the sides of the bucket, near the rim, are the remains of the original handles. These were replaced by the present iron handles and ring above the rim, the later placed to engage the trip hooks and effect automatic tipping into the water tank. The original handles have been cut off near the original rim, and the later ironwork can be clearly seen as additional, bolted through the walls of the bucket.

Figure 179.

Detail of water bucket. (DP004017)

Figure 180.

Water buckets. Detail from 3D CAD survey.

1587-88: construction of the south-west tower and alterations to the timber-framed service wing of 1559 ('The Keep')

Date, scope and meaning

The work of this phase has been dated, by dendrochronology, to the years 1587-88.[181] A sample taken from the south-west tower, extracted from one of the sturdy oak doorframes which form a distinctive aspect of this phase, produced a timber-felling date of spring 1587.[182] Another sample, taken from a secondary stud set into one of the earlier roof trusses in 'The Keep', produced a slightly later felling date of summer 1588. This date is associated with changes made to the original roof of 1559. The two dates indicate the likely period during which the distinctive, octagonal, south-west tower was built, and in which alterations were being made to the earlier building of 1559. The latter involved casing, or largely replacing, the original timber-framing with new brick and flint walls, and extending the earlier building southward with the addition of a short, 'half-bay' in which the tower entrance and stair were sited. It is likely that the earlier building continued to provide a service function, possibly combined with domestic accommodation, for minor servants of the manor, contained in modest chambers within the tower.

Figure 181.

The south-west tower, photographed by E. T. Long, circa 1941. (NMR, Red Boxes, Rotherfield Greys, 594)

These changes appear to have been concerned, primarily, with completing the extensive south front. The tower, built to mirror the medieval tower at the south-east corner of the frontage, balanced the somewhat contrived symmetry of the design and extended the frontage to the considerable length of 372 feet (113 metres). Because these alterations were executed as part of a broader campaign, aimed at refashioning the mansion, the form of the buildings is dictated by the wider scheme, rather than being defined purely by practical, functional, considerations.

Form, extent and phasing

The south-west tower is three-storeyed and has a single-room plan with an internal octagonal footprint reflecting the external form. The narrow bay added to the earlier wing is of two and a half storeys, the attic level occurring only in the added narrow bay, not in the refurbished, earlier wing. This differential treatment reflects the narrow bay's function as a stair and landing serving all three floors of the tower. That the narrow bay and tower were built as a single phase is indicated by the moulded stone plinth which incorporates a return at the junction of the two blocks, and by the provision of doorways on each floor of the tower, these leading into the respective storeys of the narrow bay. The results of the dendrochronology survey indicate that the narrow bay was added to the earlier service wing,

and this is supported by evidence of slight weathering on the earlier timber frame, in a position where the latter is abutted by the narrow bay (as discussed in reference to the 1559 phase).

The narrow bay has a tapering plan determined by the angle of the court wall connecting the building with the Well House, dictated by the requirements of the overall scheme. Also, the bay retains a chamfered wooden doorframe in the east wall (now converted into a window and obscured by a 20th-century outshot), the form of which is consistent with those of the tower. This doorway identifies this as the principal entrance during this phase, possibly replacing or augmenting an earlier entrance in the two main bays.

Evidence retained in the much-altered walls of 'The Keep' and 'Stable Cottage' indicates a possible sequence of changes involving both buildings. Despite extensive alterations to the latter, it does retain portions of wall, built of flint and brick that are consistent with a likely date in the late 16th or early 17th centuries. Whether or not any of this fabric is contemporary with the casing of the timber-framed wing is inconclusive, although the present form of both buildings is the result of numerous phases. The nature of the evidence, and the fact that many of these phases potentially date from the late 16th or early 17th centuries, determines that these aspects are included for discussion in this section of the report.

This evidence takes the form of straight joints formed in the side walls, at the intersection of the two buildings (maked 'SJ' on plan of the west services). The east wall has a straight joint interrupted by a 20th-century window jamb, but which emerges above and below the later window, and is almost certainly indicative of a joint originally extending the full height of the wall. To the south of this joint, the wall associated with casing the timber-framed wing has brick quoins indicating that this formed the corner of the building and that 'The Keep' is the earlier of the two areas of masonry. Similar evidence occurs on the west wall, although only at first-floor level. On the ground floor there are no quoins and the wall – which is built of flint - continues across the line of the joint. Although unexplained, the differential in the straight joint evidence has some meaning, possibly reflecting changes that involved removing quoins on the ground-floor of the west elevation. Alternatively, the evidence may imply that the phase in which the timber-framed wing ('The Keep') was encased also entailed the provision of a smaller building aligned only on the western elevation – hence allowing for the occurrence of a full-height straight joint to the west. The extent of later alterations to 'Stable Cottage' probably means that this question will remain unresolved.

Materials and external features

The south-west tower is built of rough flints, interspersed with random bricks. There are large limestone quoins near the base of the walls, where there is an ogee-moulded limestone plinth course. The larger quoins gradually give way to smaller limestone quoins, and above these the corners are treated with false quoins of cement render. Elsewhere, the tower has brick dressings, many rendered to give the appearance of stonework. Although the render is derived from a number of periods, most is cement-based, indicating that it is late in date. The contrast in the treatment of the quoins may be indicative of repairs to the walls and/or the availability of stone during construction, some of which may have been salvaged from buildings demolished on the site. This is inferred from the presence of small blocks of ochre-hue which are found on many of the 16th-century buildings at Greys Court.

The walls encasing the earlier timber-framed wing and forming the narrow south bay are also built of random unknapped flint, although using brick quoins. The west wall has bricks interspersed in the flint in a way that follows a crude diaperwork pattern. The south wall is built in two contrasting ways: brick, with the ogee-moulded stone plinth course, is used to a height corresponding with the top of the court wall leading to the Well House. The bricks used throughout these structures have matching dimensions – given above. The upper part of the wall is of flint with brick quoins and moulded, or chamfered, bricks at the eaves. The lower, brick-built, part of the south wall is contiguous with the adjoining wall of the tower. The upper part – built of flint – is not bonded into the tower walls, where a straight joint is formed between the two structures. This probably reflects the contrast in materials and the method of building the tower – its structural integrity ensured by the use of quoins at the corners, thereby forcing a straight joint at the intersection with the south wall of the stair bay.

The tower has a pyramidal, tiled, roof with a slight bell-cast and is surmounted by a tapered lead-clad finial. The eaves are formed using bricks with ogee and cavetto mouldings. It is probable that this is the original form of the roof and that, during this period, a similar roof was used for the medieval south-east tower. The Napier view, discussed previously, illustrates both octagonal towers surmounted by this type of roof. It also depicts the gabled south wall of 'the Keep'.

There are windows on all but one of the tower's external facets - that facing north west, where there is an internal brick chimney stack confirming that the tower was heated from the outset. The windows are narrow and, superficially, resemble loops, a characteristic that reflects the intention to replicate the appearance of the medieval south-east tower. The windows are largely the originals and have brick surrounds with flat heads and chamfered jambs. Many have been rendered at a later date. The ground-floor window surround on the east-facing facet, is least altered, with the brick surround exposed and un-adulterated by later changes, many of which have been associated with widening the narrow lights or the installation of wooden window frames at a later date.

The east wall of 'The Keep' retains two original, first-floor window surrounds, which have matching chamfered-brick jambs and flat heads. That nearest the south end of the elevation is a single-light window; that to its north retains the nib of a brick mullion, indicating that originally it formed a two-light opening. This surround contains an early wooden window frame, which is chamfered and pegged and has two diamond-set, vertical, iron bars. The loss of the brick mullion indicates that the frame is not original, although its form is indicative of an early alteration, possibly in the 17th century.

Plan, function and heating

The plan is the result of the aggregation of the probable two-bay plan of the original 1559 phase, with the narrow tapered bay to the south and the octagonal single-room plan of the south-west tower. This arrangement is repeated on the first floor, but not on the second floor, which - as stated previously - does not extend above the earlier wing.

Figure 182.

Ground floor of south-west tower. Viewed from north east. (AA046062)

The east wall of the narrow bay retains an original timber doorframe denoting that this was the entrance, reached from the service courtyard adjacent to the Well House. The doorframe is chamfered and has a flat head on which the chamfer is returned by the use of a mason's mitre. Similar doorframes survive on all three floors of the tower. That on the first floor retains a contemporary door, which is of framed construction, faced with diagonal planking and hung on large spoon-ended strap hinges. On the ground floor, the narrow bay served as the entrance lobby, giving access to the tower and to the ground floor of the earlier wing.

The doorway connecting the narrow bay with the earlier wing was formed by cutting through the original timber-framed south wall. In order to achieve this, part of the original timber-framing was removed and the wall repaired using timber studs and rails. Some of the timbers are reused, possibly from the same wall, or from elsewhere, although those inserted on the ground floor have been framed and pegged, but not respecting the detail of the original framing (as described in the 1559 phase).

On the first floor, a doorway was cut through the timber-framed wall in a corresponding position. This provides access between the landing in the narrow bay and a chamber in the southern bay of the original range. The fact that these doorways are located one above the other probably reflects the layout and position of the stairs and landings during the 1580s phase. It may also indicate that this arrangement has not undergone any considerable change. The stair has been replaced, and then altered in the mid-20th century, giving the impression of a stair of that date. However, the structure of the stair is probably of 18th-century date. A ceiling joist visible on the first floor may be an original trimmer beam associated with the mid-16th-century stair. The joist is chamfered and stopped. A later joist has been carved to match and is used in the second floor ceiling.

The tower rooms are lit by the small openings described above. The fact that the fenestration on all three floors of the tower respects an internal chimney stack, built in the thickness of the north-west wall, indicates that the ground-floor chamber was heated. The quality of the tower's internal doorframes also implies that these chambers were probably attributed to some form of domestic use, conceivably as modest, but private rooms for the respected servants of the household.

There is good evidence to suggest that during this phase the north bay of the original wing was modified to form a plaster-lined smoke bay, extending through both floors of the building. It is likely, although unproven, that this smoke-bay served the larger bay to its south, a change that would have brought about the dismantling of a timber-framed ground-floor partition between the two original bays. The redundant mortices of this partition can be seen in the soffits of the cross-beam on the ground floor. It is likely that this bay was floored-in to provide a first-floor chamber, as implied by the existence of original first-floor window surrounds in the east wall.

Figure 183.

Detail of roof structure, showing plaster smoke bay. (AA046069)

The evidence for the smoke bay is as follows: Dendrochronology has revealed that in 1587-88, this bay was ceiled-in. The stud from which this date was derived is associated with the remnants of plaster panels set between the timbers of the original trusses – located at either end of this bay. These panels carry the remains of the ceiling, visible in the roof void. The panels and the truncated stubs of the plaster ceiling display a high degree of integrity implying that the whole is of the same phase. The plaster is used to form a good face on one aspect of each truss, thereby enclosing the northern bay, protecting all the timbers behind a thick facing of plaster.

The ceiling was set at a high level, above the purlins, and survives in fragmentary form as a few large pieces of plaster. These also survive on the underside of the eastern slope of the roof. Also, many of the common rafters are stained by lath and plaster - subsequently removed - and there are various joists, nailed to the common rafters, which bear the same markings and clearly formed part of the same ceiling. That this formed a smoke-bay is demonstrated by the plasterwork of the ceiling and partitions, which carries a heavy build-up of smoke-blackening, indicating that this bay was either heated by an open fire (as opposed to one contained in an enclosed fireplace) or was used for smoking or curing meat. The existence of the smoke-blackening also indicates that the north bay was open from the floor to the high ceiling, near the apex of the roof. One of the common rafters near the centre of the bay is truncated in a neat square cut, close to the roof apex. Although the reason for this is uncertain, it is possible that this feature was associated with a wooden louvre to allow the smoke to escape from the roof.

The construction of a smoke bay at this date is significant, particularly when considered in contrast to the use of brick chimney stacks in the south-west tower and elsewhere at Greys Court during the same period. The preference for a smoke bay, as opposed to a chimneystack, may be attributed to the function of the building and probably indicates a heated service function suggested above. The smoke bay was replaced at a later date by the substantial, lateral, brick chimney located on the western side of the northern bay. A second brick chimney, located at the south end of the bay, was built to serve a fireplace located in the ground-floor room to the south. The form and size of both chimneys implies that they were built in the 17th century. The lateral chimney provided a fireplace on the ground floor but has never served a fireplace on the first floor. This indicates one of the following: either that the room remained open to the high ceiling in the roof, perhaps because it continued to function as a back kitchen; or, that the room was ceiled-in to provide an unheated first-floor chamber.

Figure 184.

Chimney serving southern room. Viewed from first floor, northern bay. (AA046066)

Evidence of changes to the roof of ‘Stable Cottage’

The original roof structure of ‘Stable Cottage’ was demolished, probably in the mid-20th century, and replaced with a softwood structure that makes no reference to the form of the

earlier roof. The only remaining clues as to this earlier structure are found in the roof space, on the north truss of 'The Keep'. The north face of this truss is marked by a line of mortar flashing relating to an earlier roof over 'Stable Cottage'. This mortar flashing demonstrates that, at an early, but unknown, date, the range to the north of the truss did not continue the line of 'The Keep' roof and was set at a lower level. The position of the mortar indicates that this lower roof was a later addition.

At the north-west end of 'Stable Cottage', the west wall retains a low brick buttress, the top of which coincides with a projecting band of brickwork, characteristic of a string course, or eaves detail. The latter may be consistent with the provision of a lower roof during an earlier phase.

Later changes to 'The Keep'

A number of alterations occurred during the 18th and 19th centuries. These were minor in nature and could be described as relating to an extensive period when the building was used as a cottage or small house, presumably occupied by persons in the service of the main house and estate.

An entrance lobby was formed in the original southern bay, indicating that the 16th-century entrance on the east wall had been replaced, or that a second entrance was required, perhaps because of the manner in which the building was subdivided for use. The entrance lobby has plank-lined partition walls and is fitted with an early 18th-century internal door leading from the lobby to the main ground-floor room. The door has two raised and fielded panels, altered in appearance on the east face (to the lobby) with planks attached to the door to give the appearance of a four-panelled form. It has one HL hinge fitted with cross-screws, which may indicate that the door has been repositioned from elsewhere. There is an early 18th century two-panelled door on the first-floor landing. This has spoon-ended strap hinges fitted with crosshead screws, again suggesting that it may have been repositioned or re-hung.

The present staircase is probably of 19th century date, but has been altered in the mid-20th century. The newels have redundant pegged mortices - evidence of an earlier arrangement. On the first floor of the tower, there is an area of cut-away walling visible internally. The reason for this is no longer clear, although it disturbed the splay to one side of a window on the eastern side of the tower.

HISTORY AND CONTEXT, 1600-*c*1700: WILLIAM KNOLLYS AND DESCENDANTS, AND ACQUISITION BY WILLIAM PAUL OF BRAYWICK

Sir William Knollys, Earl of Banbury

Under the terms of Sir Francis Knollys' Last Will and Testament, proved on 5 September 1596, William Knollys (1547-1632), sole executor and second son, inherited the majority of his father's estates, having outlived his elder brother Henry (d. 1583).[183] William Knollys, granted the title Baron Knollys of Rotherfield Greys by James I, on 13 May 1603 and subsequently conferred with the Earldom of Banbury by Charles I, on 18 August 1626,[184] inherited numerous manors and properties listed in his father's will. As mentioned previously, the will does not mention Rotherfield Greys: a significant fact that probably reflects an earlier transfer of the manor to William. In addition, he received from his father:

Figure 185.

Effigy of William Knollys, Knollys monument, Rotherfield Greys church. (AA97/04248)

> 'all my Manor of Caversham in Co. Oxon & Berks, and all other my lande tenements & heredytamente in Caversham, also Thorpe, Bowdowne, Chiplake and Reading, Oxon & Berks, with the house built by Hugh, late Abbot of the monastery of Reading'. Also, 'Landes & tenements in Co. Berks in or near Cholsey aforesaide And all other my Landes tenements & heredytamente in this Realme of England'.[185]

Despite the absence of Rotherfield Greys from Sir Francis' will, the Knollys family's continued possession of the manor is reflected in the erection of the family chapel at Rotherfield Greys church in 1605 and evidence of subsequent documentation, including indentures dating from the 1630s to the 1670s.[186] These rule-out any possibility that Rotherfield Greys had passed from the family's hands when William inherited the remainder of his father's property.

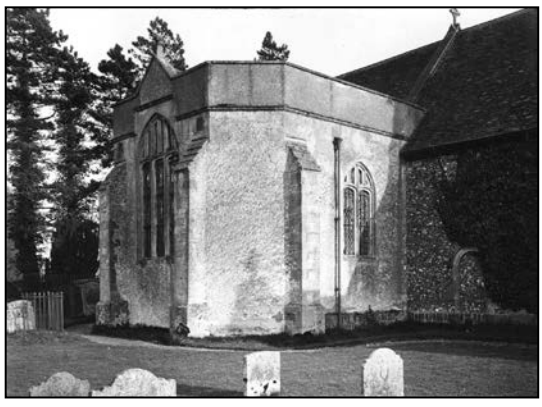

Figure 186.

The Knollys chapel, photographed in 1933. (NMR, Red Boxes, Rotherfield Greys: Y. Howard, Oxford)

Sir Francis Knolly's legacy to William extended beyond title to lands. Elizabeth I extended him much of the privilege shown to his father, and on 30 August 1596 the Queen granted William the offices of Privy Councillor and Comptroller of the Royal

Household.[187] However, the grant of these high offices followed earlier achievements in the service of the Crown. While in his mid-20s, in 1569, William served as a captain in the forces sent to repress the northern rebellion, in 1588 he was colonel of the Oxford and Gloucester regiments of foot, enrolled to resist the Spanish Armada.[188] He was elected Member of Parliament for Tregony in 1572 and for Oxfordshire in 1584 and 1593.[189] He also held the latter office in 1597 and 1601.[190] In December 1602 he succeeded Lord North as Treasurer of the Royal Household, and four years later became Cofferer of the Royal Household to Henry, Prince of Wales.[191] On the inheritance of the estates in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, William became Joint Lieutenant of both counties, in November 1596, and sole Lieutenant in July 1601.[192] He became Lord-Lieutenant on 22 March 1612-13.[193] His pre-eminence at court and in the affairs of the counties echoed many of his father's achievements and maintained the Knollys family's status and fortune through the change from the monarchies of Elizabeth I to James I in 1603.

In September 1601, Sir William entertained Elizabeth I while she was on Progress, staying in Reading between 28 August and 1 Sept. Sir William received his monarch for dinner at Caversham.[194] Chamberlain records that 'Mr Controller made great chere, and entertained her with many devises of singing, dauncing, and playing wenches, and such like'.[195] The following year, Sir William received the queen on a second occasion, this time at his Whitehall mansion, built by his father in 1572.[196] A further royal visit is recorded in May 1613, when Queen Anne of Denmark, consort of James I, visited the Knollys' mansion at Caversham: 'a house of the Lord Knollys, not far from Reading, where she was entertained with revels and a gallant mask performed by the Lord Chamberlain's four sons, the Earl of Dorset, the Lord North, Sir Henry Rich, and Sir Henry Carie'.[197] The queen was presented with gifts to the value of £1,500, including a cabinet and coverlet.[198] The entertainments were provided by Thomas Campion and are described in *A Relation of the Late Royall Entertainment given by the Right Honorable the Lord Knowles, at Cawsome House, neere Reading.*[199]

The royal visits to Caversham and William's mansion in Whitehall - known as Wallingford House, after Sir William Knollys' title, Viscount Wallingford[200] – highlight the continued roles of these houses in the life of the Knollys family during the early 17th century. On 20 March 1610-1611, William obtained a grant in perpetuity of Wallingford House, the premises described as follows:

> 'all that our mansion house and all those our gardens, lands, building and new structures…now in the tenure …of the said William, Lord Knollys, situated…between the common way…leading from Charing-crosse to Westminster on the east, and our garden commonly called the Springe garden in part and our park called St. James Parke in other part and a certain building now or late in the tenure…of Sir Thomas Walsingham and Awdrey his wife…' [201].

The grant also refers to work carried out to the house, although the date of this is vague:

> 'all that part…of land…commonly called the Timber yard…which is next to and immediately adjoins the north side…of a certain new 'le Gallery' or of the aforesaid new buildings…' [202].

'Wallingford House' remained in William's possession until 1622, when it was sold to the Duke of Buckingham for £3,000.[203] Subsequently, in 1693-4, the house was 'razed to the ground' and replaced by new buildings put up for the Admiralty.[204]

By 1601, the mansion at Caversham, regained by Sir Francis Knollys following the death of the Dowager Countess of Warwick in 1588, offered surroundings suitable for the reception of the queen and in 1613, Thomas Campion described the house at Caversham as 'fairly built of brick'.[205] However, Evelyn's later reference of 1654, stating that it was falling into ruin,[206] reflects the demise of the Caversham mansion in the second half of the century.

The venues chosen for the earlier royal visits clearly exclude Greys Court, a fact that must reflect the queen's itinerary as much as it may be taken as an indication of the place of Greys Court in the life of the Knollys family at the time. William Knollys was at Greys Court in 1611 and from there, in December 1612, wrote to the mayor and burgesses of Reading, where he was High Steward, rebuking them for the meanness of their contribution to the wedding expenses of Princess Elizabeth.[207] However, it is probably significant that, at Greys Court, the scale of building work in the 17th century was entirely inconsequential compared to that undertaken by Sir Francis in the 16th century, a circumstance implying a shift of attention away from Rotherfield, more significantly during mid-century.

Whatever the degree of truth in this assertion, Rotherfield Greys' place at the heart of the Knollys family in the early 1600s is attested by the Knollys' chapel and vault at Rotherfield Greys parish church. Both chapel and monument (to Sir Frances Knollys) were built by William in 1605, and included kneeling figures of himself and his first wife. The monument carries a later inscription, placed there in the 19th century by Lieutenant-General Knollys, of Blount's Court, reading "GULIELMUS KNOLLYS, ….. VIII JUNII AD 1632".[208] Dr Rawlinson, writing in the early 18th century, describes the Knollys vault beneath the monument:

> 'within on the south side lyes one coffin with these letters C(atherine) H(oldenby) 52 A 1707. At the east end there are two coffins, one on another. On the uppermost F. K. 69. In the middle L(etitia) K(ennedy) 1708 aged 55. At the west end is a body in sear clothes as hard as a piece of brown wood sett'.[209]

The burial of Catherine Holdenby is not recorded in the parish registers. That of Lettice Kennedy is recorded on 12 January 1708. The inscription FK 69 does not relate to any entry in the register of burials, but might be interpreted as a referring to the burial of Francis Knollys in 1596? The vault was opened again in 1823 and an account of the 'Leaden Coffins' found there published in Gentleman's Magazine the following year.[210] A further opening took place in 1953 when the same details were disclosed.[211]

William Knollys' personal life embroiled him in a number of controversies that affected his position at court and which have done more to mark him in history than any of his attainments of office. He was married, firstly, to Dorothy, daughter of Edmund, Lord Bray, during which union, in the early 1600s, he gained notoriety at court for his infatuation with Mary Fitton, Maid of Honour, daughter to Sir William Fitton of Gawsworth Hall, in Cheshire – this period of doting occurring at a time when William was married to Dorothy.[212] His attempts at courtship with Mary Fitton, and his conduct in other matters at court, have led to

William Knollys being attributed as the inspiration for William Shakespeare's Malvolio in Twelfth Night.[213]

On 31 October 1605, Dorothy died without issue.[214] She was buried at Rotherfield Greys on 1 November 1605.[215] Two months later, on 16 January 1606, William, then in his late fifties, married a nineteen-year-old girl: Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk.[216] The early years of this marriage seem to have passed without recorded difficulties, excepting the absence of an heir to Sir William, one child ensuing, a daughter who died young, before 1610.[217] It was through Elizabeth Howard's sister, Frances Howard, Countess of Somerset, that Sir William Knollys became associated with the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, an affair that did much to reduce his position at court. In 1615 Lady Howard and her husband the Earl of Somerset spent the summer at Greys Court, Napier writing in the 1850s stating that: "The Lord Chamberlain (Somerset) lies much this summer at Greys, a house of the Lord Knollys', by Henley, where his lady makes account to lie".[218] In autumn 1615, Frances, Countess of Somerset, was placed on trial for the murder of Overbury, and 'all her kinsfolk were suspected of complicity'.[219] On being charged with the murder, the commissioners appointed to inquire into the accusation instructed the Countess to keep to her chamber, either in her own house at Black Friars or in that of Knollys, 'near the Tilt Yard'.[220] The latter refers to Knollys' Whitehall mansion. The Earl and his wife were eventually imprisoned in the Tower of London.[221]

On 18 January 1622, the King released the Earl and Countess of Somerset from the Tower, under the direction that they should be "confined to some convenient place; it is therefore, according to his Majesty's gracious pleasure and command, ordered, that the Earl of Somerset, and his Lady, do repair either to Greys, or Caversham, the Lord Wallingford's houses in the County of Oxfordshire, and remain confined to one or either of the said houses and within three miles compass of either of the same, until further order be given by his Majesty".[222] Further instructions must have been forthcoming, because the Countess eventually died "afflicted with fearful bodily sufferings', 'an object of disgust to others', on 23 August 1632", and was buried at Saffron Walden.[223] The Earl of Somerset died in 1645 and was buried at Covent Garden.[224]

In the immediate aftermath of these events, Sir William Knollys lost some favour at court and was forced to withdraw from certain offices, including Treasurer of the Household in 1616, which he surrendered to Sir Thomas Edmondes[225] and Master of the Wards in December 1618.[226] On 16 January 1619, the king sent Sir Lionel Cranfield to Lord Knollys, for his patent of the Mastership of the Wards, which he surrendered to him.[227] Romance of the Peerage relates that in the same month:

> 'The Lord of Wallingford is retired into the country, but was not sent empty away; for besides the fee farm of Ewelme Park, he hath somewhat also in consideration: and when he delivered up his patent, the king told him, that, having been a long servant to Queen Elizabeth and him, he was loth to remove him, neither would accuse him of negligence, insufficiency or corruption: but only he had one fault, common to him with divers others of his friends and followers, which could not stand with his service, nor of the state, - that he was altogether guided and governed by an arch wife'.[228]

Clearly, Sir William was never banished and was compensated by advancement to the position of Viscount Wallingford on 7 November 1616.[229] His position improved and in April 1621 he took a leading part in the House of Lords in the case of Bacon.[230] The grant of the Earldom of Banbury, conferred on Knollys in 1626, may have been an endeavour by the King to complete his reconciliation with the Howard family.[231]

Sir William suffered further difficulties as a consequence of his marriage to Elizabeth. Childless from his first marriage and the loss of his daughter (d. before 1610), late in William's life Elizabeth gave birth to two sons, giving rise to controversy over their legitimacy. The first son, Edward, born on 10 April 1627, was followed by Nicholas, born on 3 January 1630-31 at Harrowden, Northamptonshire, the home of Edward, fourth Lord Vaux.[232] The controversy deepened when, five weeks after Sir William's death, Lady Banbury proceeded to married Lord Vaux.[233] The controversy began with a legal decision in favour of the claim to legitimacy and Edward received the title Earl of Banbury.[234] He was killed in France in 1645 and his younger brother, Nicholas Knollys assumed the title third Earl of Banbury. However, in 1661, the House of Lords denied his claim to the precedency.[235] The question of the boys' legitimacy continued for generations, the House of Lords, between 1641 and 1813, repeatedly denying their descendants the title Earl of Banbury, on the grounds of the Earl's age at the date of their birth and his alleged ignorance of their existence at the time of his death.[236]

In the closing years of his life, Sir William made arrangements for the disposal of his estate, and rather than dealing with this through his will, he undertook to arrange the sale or vesting of lands prior to his death. In 1629 he settled Caversham on his wife, if she outlived him, but Caversham was mortgaged for £6000.[237] In February 1630 he sold the manor of Whitley to Sir Thomas Vachell and the park to his brother Sir Francis Knollys, while the manor of Hagbourne was sold early in 1632.[238] It is likely that some of these estates were sold to raise money, although others were disposed of in order to allay concerns over his estate, if he were left childless, and gives rise to the theory that he did not accept the parentage of Nicholas and Edward. In the case of the manor of Cholsey, in 1630, Sir William obtained a patent from Charles I to settle the estate on his great-nephew, the Earl of Holland, particularly because he had no heirs of his body and therefore the manor was in danger of reverting to the crown on his death.[239] As regards Rotherfield Greys, Sir William sold the manor to his nephew, Robert Knollys of Stanford-in-the-Vale, the son of his brother Richard.[240] A related indenture, held in the Berkshire Record Office, dated 1630 and described as being of the 'sixth year of the reign of our Sov. Charles' (27 March 1630 to 26 March 1631) relates to this sale. The indenture records the sale between the 'Right Honourable William Earl of Banbury and the Lady Elizabeth wife of the first part and Sir Robert Knolllys of Stanford in the Vale' and relates to 'all the Manor of Rotherfield Greys'.[241]

William Knollys died at Dr Grants, his physician's house, in Paternoster Row, London, on 25 May 1632.[242] He was buried in the family vault at Rotherfield Greys church on 8 July 1632, recorded in the Parish Register as 'lately Master of the Wardrobe and Royal Tutor'.[243] Like his father, William was in his eighties when he died, although it is noted that 'he rode a hawking and hunting', within half a year of his death.[244] His will, dated 19 May 1630, makes no mention of children and was proved by his widow.[245] Napier, writing in the 1850s states that 'His (Sir William's) Will, proved on 2 July 1632, after mentioning two legacies to servants, gives and devises all the rest of his goods and chattels, not already disposed of by

his will, or former deeds, to his dearly beloved wife, Elizabeth, Countess of Banbury, whom he appoints sole and only executrix of his will. He makes no mention in it of any children, and directs that his body should be buried in his chapel at Greys'.[246] The funeral certificate at the College of Arms describes him as dying without issue.[247]

Sir Robert Knollys (d. 1659) and Rotherfield Greys during the Civil War

It has been suggested that Sir Robert Knollys moved to Greys Court, leaving his former seat at Stanford-in-the-Vale, which purportedly was taken over by his brother Francis.[248] The Knollys connection with that manor eventually came to an end in 1670, following the death of Alice Becher, Francis Knollys' second wife.[249] However, in 1637, Sir Robert is recorded, by Bulstrode Whitlock, owner of nearby estates including Fawley Court, as having 'tooke up his parke pales att Greys & sold many of them, the ground being converted to tillage', Bulstrode purchasing 'a parcell of those old pales & set(ting) them about 20 acres of his ground adjoining to Fawley'.[250] Furthermore, a documentary source at the Berkshire Record Office indicates that Sir Robert Knollys 'of Stanford in the Vale' was leasing Greys Court to a John Russel.[251] It is likely, therefore, that Sir Robert may not have lived at Greys Court during this period. Neither does the buildings evidence indicate that he was involved in any substantial new building at Greys.

The details of Sir Robert's involvement in court life require further inquiry, as does his affiliation during the course of the Civil War. Knowledge of the role of Greys Court and Sir Robert Knollys during the Civil War is patchy, although considerable inference may be drawn from local and regional events during the conflict. In Spring 1643, the Parliamentarians held Henley, which they retained for the remainder of the war, and where one of Bulstrode Whitelock's houses, Phyllis Court, was protected with earthworks and gun emplacements to counter the Royalist occupation of nearby Greenland House - belonging to Sir John Doyley.[252] In October 1643, Sir Jacob Astley dispatched Sir Charles Blunt to view 'Grays House' and in November put 50 musketeers into 'Gray's House and 100 into Greenlands House',[253] perhaps implying that Greys Court was a further Royalist centre? In December 1643, about 200 men were making bulwarkes at Greys and Greenland house.[254] In Autumn 1664, the King took up occupation in Oxford, which became the Royalist capital, while closer to Rotherfield, the Royalists held the town of Wallingford.[255]

The wealthy owners of large houses, such as those mentioned above, usually defended them with their servants, tenants and small detachments of soldiers.[256] The houses of those considered delinquents, were made to take large numbers of soldiers for billeting, a process seen as a means of punishment to the owner.[257] Cases of destruction and pillaging of the houses of the wealthy are prolific, both at the hands of the enemy and soldiers of the owner's own side. Greenland House suffered pillaging and was battered by heavy artillery and thoroughly looted by Browne's ill-disciplined soldiers in 1644.[258] Troops also wrecked Bulstrode Whitelock's Fawley Court in 1642 and another of his houses, Phyllis Court, was damaged by soldiers of his own side who were garrisoned there, who in addition to damaging the house, mutinied against their governor and threatened to kill him.[259] Near the end of hostilities, Whitelock invited the people of Henley to come and 'slight' the wartime defences around Phyllis Court.[260]

There are contrasting accounts of the fate of Greys Court during the hostilities, one noting how the house 'remained unscathed at a time when Essex marched across from Henley to lay siege to Reading.[261] Alternatively, Oman states that

> 'Rotherfield Castle was completely gutted at the end of the Civil Wars of 1642-46 – having been held as a royalist garrison, much incommoding the Parliamentarians at Henley and Reading. No attempt was made to restore any portion of it, but a new house was built just outside the old precincts in the time of Charles II'.[262]

It is possible that Oman interpreted the ruined condition of the house as the result of the Civil War, just as he inaccurately judged the 'new house' to be a later addition of Charles II's time, whereas we now know that was built in the 1570s. Never-the-less, it seems inconceivable that Greys Court escaped without some damage, or other change - questions that are addressed below. The former Knollys house at Caversham, then in the hands of the Earl of Raven, was used by King Charles I as a Royalist headquarters during the siege of Reading.[263] Charles I was held prisoner at Caversham in 1647, but the mansion was later badly damaged in the fighting.[264]

Sir Robert Knollys and heirs: the last of the Knollys at Rotherfield Greys

Sir Robert died in 1659, parish records noting his burial on 26 June of that year, and that of his wife Joan, on 29 December 1660.[265] Malpas notes that William succeeded his father Sir Robert,[266] although an indenture dated 1656, refers to 'William Knollys of Graies in County Oxfordshire', pointing to the possibility that William assumed a role in affairs at Rotherfield Greys prior to his father's death.[267] A further indenture, dated 17 June, 34th year of Charles (1659), records the name of Lettice Kennedy of Rotherfield Greys and relates to deeds of the Manor of Rotherfield Greys.[268] This may be the same Lettice Kennedy, daughter of Walter Knight, recorded in the parish registers as baptised at Rotherfield Greys on 14 March 1652.[269]

William Knollys married Margaret Saunders and they produced five children, born at Greys Court,[270] although only one, Margaret Knollys, is recorded in the parish registers, her baptism taking place on 10 February 1642.[271] In 1661, William was elected Member of Parliament for Oxfordshire and in May 1662, granted the title of Freeman of the City of Oxford. He died in 1664, aged forty-four[272] his burial taking place at Rotherfield Greys on 4 September of that year.[273] This William Knollys was the last of the Rotherfield branch of the family to make an impression in the affairs of court and county. His son Robert became Lord of Rotherfield Greys at the age of nineteen. Robert's younger brother William died a few months before their father and was buried on 28 March 1664.[274] His older sister, Margaret, was buried on 2 October 1667.[275]

During Robert Knollys' tenure, Greys Court was used as security for raising substantial sums of money. An indenture of 1667 relates to 'Robert Knollys of Grayes in the County of Oxfordshire, son and heir of William Knollys of Grayes', and describes Greys Court as follows: 'All that Manor or Lordship of Rotherfield Gray in the County of Oxford ….with the park called Grays Park, and the Capital Messuage or Mansion House of Rotherfield Greys …..messuages & tenements….'.[276] A further indenture, dated November 1667, reads: 'between Robert Knollys of Grays son and heir of William Knollys late of the same place

deceased to Richard Harper of Holbourne & John Houghston of Chancery Lane', '£5000 to Robert Knollys in return for that he' 'Hath granted, aliened & released' 'All that Manor or Lordshipp (sic.) of Rotherfield Grey in the County of Oxford' ….'And all that parke' 'known by the name Grays Park' and all that 'Capital Messuage or Mansion House of Rotherfield Greys aforesaid with all the Barns & Stables, outhouses and buildings, yards & orchards'.[277]

Robert died in 1679 and was buried on 20 April that year.[278] He left no children. The Greys Court estate was, ultimately, vested in Lettice Kennedy, daughter of Robert Knollys (d. 1679) who sold Greys Court, either in 1686[279] or in 1708 to William Paul of Braywick, Berkshire.[280] However, William Paul, in 1688, reputedly held a one year lease of Greys Court, from Lettice Kennedy,[281] implying that he had not bought the manor before that date. Parish registers record the burial of Lettice Kennedy on 12 January 1708.[282] William Paul married Lady Catherine Fane, daughter of Vere Fane, Earl of Westmorland, the marriage producing a daughter and heiress, also named Catherine.[283] Catherine Paul married Sir William Stapleton (4th Bart.) in 1724, bringing Greys Court into the Stapleton family.[284]

BUILDINGS ANALYSIS, 1600-*c*1700: THE DECLINE OF THE COURTIER MANSION

An overview of the period

Introduction

The buildings evidence demonstrates that, following the death of Sir Francis Knollys, in 1596, his prolific interest in building was not repeated and what little building did take place amounted to minor adjustments, peripheral to the Elizabethan mansion. The culmination of this period, in the 17th and early 18th centuries, ultimately brought about the large-scale demolition of the great house, leaving the reduced, fragmented group of buildings with which we are now familiar. The circumstances responsible for bringing about these changes are both varied and sparsely documented and revolve around issues such as the decline of the Knollys family as courtiers, the possible intervention of the Civil War and the eventual sale of Greys Court out of the Knollys family, probably in 1708. Crucial evidence regarding the fate of the mansion during the period is provided by the Napier view, referred to previously (see Figure 12). The significance of the drawing lies in its depiction of the mansion in its reduced condition - after the great Elizabethan house had been largely abandoned and many of the buildings demolished - and in its date, which has the potential to provide a terminus ante quo for this work. Documentary research has enabled a reappraisal of the likely date of this image, formerly ascribed to circa 1600, but which is in fact an engraving produced in the 1850s, based on a contemporary sketch of yet another, earlier, drawing, probably of the 17th or early 18th centuries. This is discussed in more detail below.

Knollys additions of the early to mid-17th century

The work of this period comprises the construction of three ranges, all physically remote from one another, but which originally constituted probable additions to the one great mansion – prior to reduction and demolition. These are the 'Dower House', the north-west wing of the mansion - abutting the rear of the main range of 1573-74 - and the house's south-west wing, the latter forming the present 'Custodian's Wing' (refer to plan: *Greys Court, 17th and Early 18th Centuries*). Their contrasting forms and details of these buildings indicate that they are the result of separate phases. The order in which they were built is less certain, although the following order of presentation may reflect the sequence of construction. The reasoning behind this interpretation is presented below.

The 'Dower House', built in English-bond brickwork on Francis Knollys' extensive south front, incorporates the surviving medieval south-east tower and fragments of the medieval east curtain wall. However, its two other main phases date from the 17th and early 18th centuries. The carpentry of the roof, in particular the extensive reuse of medieval oak timbers, sets the building apart from the higher-quality carpentry employed in the Knollys' buildings up to 1588. The 'Dower House' also lacks the moulded stone plinth that forms such a distinctive feature of Sir Francis' buildings. However, the location of the 'Dower House', and its relationship with the retained medieval south-east tower, imply that it may have been built to respect the false symmetry of the Elizabethan mansion's great south front and base court – effectively as a 'balance' to the 'Well House' and mirroring the position of the latter in its relationship with the south-west tower of 1587-88. This in turn implies that the 'Dower House' may have been built early in the 17th century, perhaps as an early work of William Knollys. This is uncertain. Also, it is not clear how the space between the lodging range of 1578 and

south-east corner tower was arranged in the period prior to the construction of the 'Dower House'.

The western end wall of the 'Dower House' makes use of part of the east side wall of the former lodging range of 1578, confirming that the latter is the earlier of the two and that it remained standing to its full height and extent when the 'Dower House' was first built. This implies that the 'Dower House was built prior to the reduction of the great house. Indeed, evidence in the west gable (which in fact is an adaptation of the lodging range fabric) indicates that the two buildings were interconnected at attic level. Differential survival of the lodging house wall in the northern extension of the 'Dower House', probably built in late 17th or early 18th centuries, may imply that this phase took place after the lodging house was reduced to its present length.

The addition of the north-west wing, built using flint with brick quoins and standing at ninety degrees to the main range of 1573-74, probably took place in the early 17th century, although there is a slight possibility that it incorporates earlier fabric. It is difficult to be more precise about the date and to attribute original functions, due to extensive internal and external alterations. The wing retains few defining features, the principal exceptions being a prominent shouldered gable on the west (rear) elevation and a substantial brick chimney stack ornamented with false crenellations. The wing was altered in the mid-18th century to facilitate the enlargement of the ground-floor reception room (now known as the 'School Room') and first-floor bedroom above.

The south-west wing, also built using flint with brick dressings, stands abutting the west elevation of the timber-framed wing of 1450-51. It is distinguished by the use of ovolo-moulded beams which probably identify the wing as the latest of the three additions, probably erected during the early-to-mid-17th century. Used as a domestic service wing during the 18th and 19th centuries, its' original function was probably of higher status, as a back parlour, or winter parlour, with a chamber above, the latter reached from the main part of the house. The form of this parlour wing is quite low – a marked contrast with that of the tall, slender north-west wing. Both wings appear to reflect the contrasting scales of the respective ranges they augmented. The south-west wing was altered extensively during the mid-late-20th century, including the short-lived addition of two extra storeys, since removed, and now provides accommodation for the site custodian.

The demise of the great courtier mansion

It is likely that the mansion at Greys Court was affected, physically, by the intervention of the Civil War. As has been stated above, there is documentary evidence that the house was strengthened with bulwarks, while evidence of alterations, using reclaimed freestone, to the southern section of the east curtain wall may speak of endeavours to render the house defensible. The folklore enshrined in the name ascribed to the northern part of the lodging range – now referred to as the 'Cromwellian Stables' - is also redolent of this period in the history of the house. The possible clues to the building's adaptation for stabling (described above), albeit at an unknown time, also lend circumstantial credence to this notion. How this period of use relates to the date of the building's truncation is mere speculation, although the use of a style matching the original for the new closing wall constructed after the lodging range had been partially dismantled, either infers that this took place in the 17th century or that the work was deliberately archaic, respecting the original fabric.

There is every possibility that the destruction of parts of the great house took place in more than one phase. Although this is unproven, it is likely that some damage, or deprivations, took place during the course of the Civil Wars, but unlikely that the full extent of demolitions – resulting in the present fragmentary form – took place in that period. Clues are found in the index to Oxfordshire Hearth Tax of 1665, which records a far greater number of hearths than can be accounted for in the present buildings attributable to that date or earlier. The relevant returns are as follows: 'Knollys Robert, HenT, 3, 3r: William, Esq, Roth G, 39'.[285] This translates as Robert Knollys of Henley on Thames, 3 hearths, membrane 3: William Knollys of Rotherfield Greys, 39 hearths. A maximum of 21 or 22 hearth can be accounted for in the present buildings, including Greys Court house, the 'Keep', 'Dower House' and 'Cromwellian Stables' and all of the locations in these buildings where fireplaces are absent, but their existence is inferred by the presence of a chimney flue or chimney breast. Not withstanding the vagaries associated with interpreting hearth tax returns, the likelihood remains that the large number of hearths quoted reflects the scale of the house at that time. An interesting side issue is that William Knollys died the previous year, his burial noted in the parish register for Rotherfield Greys on 4 September 1664.[286] This is noted by Geere who comments that 'the Michaelmas 1665 roll was based on an earlier return' as shown by 'the inclusion of at least two people who had in fact died a year or two previously'.[287]

Further evidence in support of the supposition that much of the great mansion was destroyed at a later date can be read from a reference made by T. Hearne in 1722, published in *Remarks and Collections*, 1906.[288] He writes on Wednesday 6 June, 1722: 'I saw a man yesterday, born at Henley, who told me that a great deal of the old buildings at Rotherfield Grays have been pull'd down, and the Stones carried to build with at Henley'.[289] Clearly, there is a great deal in this statement that is left open to interpretation, most notably the absence of a specific date when the buildings were pulled down. However, the reference may be interpreted as reflecting a comparatively recent event, or at least one that occurred within living memory of the mysterious man born at Henley.

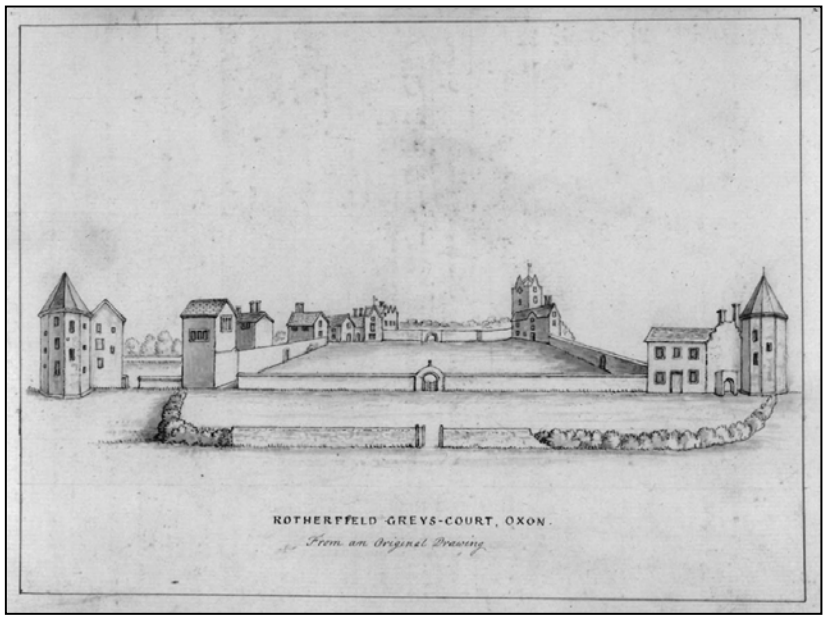

Figure 187.

Drawing of Greys Court, from Napier's manuscript. (Reproduced by permission of The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford: Ms. Top. Oxon. d.480, opposite page 181)

The Napier engraving provides us with an indication of a date for this most significant change, because – as stated above – it depicts the buildings in a form that equates to that which pertains today: i.e. after extensive demolition of the Elizabethan mansion. The source for this engraving is the Bodlieian Library,[290] which comprises the original manuscript text, in three volumes, and the published volume, of H. A. Napier's *Historical Notices of the Parishes of Swyncombe & Ewelme in the County of Oxford*, published in 1858. Within volume II of the manuscript, originally entitled *Regarding the Parish of Swyncombe, Oxfordshire* (this title is crossed out and replaced by the published title) is a drawing titled 'Rotherfield Greys-Court, Oxon' and annotated 'From an original drawing'. The drawing is of no great antiquity and appears to be a copy, probably made for the benefit of producing the engraving that was eventually included in the published volume in 1858. This interpretation is supported by the view of an anonymous 19th-century commentator who visited Greys Court with the Oxfordshire Archaeological Society in 1888: 'A rude bird's-eye view of the buildings in M.S. is preserved in the house, done in the 17th or 18th century after the fortifications were destroyed. A reduced copy of it is given in Napier's Historical Notices of Swyncombe and Ewelme, p 209'.[291] He goes on to say that 'Many alterations have been made since it was done, and it is evidently inaccurate in many parts. In this drawing this tower has four gables at the top and no battlements'.[292] The fate and whereabouts of the original drawing, seen at Greys Court in 1888, is unknown, although Napier's drawn copy is probably accurate – based on the evidence of the surviving buildings. In fact, the discrepancies referred to in the 1880s are due, principally, to the distorted perspective used in this 'rude view' and changes made at Greys Court in the period post-dating the original drawing's creation - as demonstrated by the physical evidence for gables at the top of the 'Great Tower' (referred to previously).

The erroneous attribution of a date of 1600 (as cited in The National Trust guide book for Greys Court) for the Napier view may be explained by the engraving's placement, in the 1858 publication, alongside a text describing events of 1600.[293] It should be noted, however, that the caption accompanying the engraving describes it as 'Reduced from an Old Drawing', while a study of the book as a whole reveals that the images are placed at random and are not referenced directly to the accompanying text.

Demolition: the resulting form of the house and possible origins of the main staircase

The Napier drawing and engraving reveals the loss of virtually all the buildings of the upper court, excepting the 'Great Tower' and the main range of 1573-74, although the upper and base courts are shown segregated by a court wall and gateway - now demolished. This may be the remains of the earlier inter-court range reflected in parchmarks and the results of resistivity surveys, as described above. If this was the case, then it invokes a phase in which the inter-court range was partially dismantled, leaving the wall and gate shown in the Napier engraving. Significantly, the sequence of reduction to create this court wall from the partial dismantling of the inter-court range parallels changes evidenced by surviving fabric in the base court, where fragments of both the lodging range and west range were retained as court walls. Therefore, this sequence is also suggested, tentatively, for the demise of the inter-court range. The Napier view shows the lodging range in this reduced state, recognisable as 'Cromwellian Stables', while the west range is reduced in a similar way. The Napier view shows a building between the 'Well House' and main house, which may be

interpreted as further remains of the Elizabethan west range. Plans dated 1934 and 1940 (referred to in detail later in the report) reveal that parts of this wing were demolished at that time. The Napier engraving also shows the southern court wall and gateway to the base court – demolished in the 18th century, but which are also defined by parchmarks revealing the survival of the associated wall footings.

As a result of the demolition of much of the great mansion, the house assumed a compact design, rejecting the extensive quarters, chambers and lodgings of the preceding generations for a nucleate house with a series of walled courts interspersed with fragments of the earlier house, retained as pavilions, some perhaps used as detached function rooms, others as service buildings. What is certain is that by this time the surviving medieval walls and towers were already viewed in a romantic way, perceived as landscape features worthy of incorporation into the grounds of the house. The reason for this radical change can only be surmised as perhaps the result of decay, lack of funds and a diminished concern for the 'ancestral' mansion of the Knollys. This may help in suggesting that much of the demolition may have taken place after the house passed from Knollys hands, following the death of Lettice Kennedy in 1708. This inference, when taken with the Hearne reference, points to a period between 1708 and 1722 as a likely contender for the demolition of the courtier mansion, with possible damage sustained earlier as a consequence of the Civil War?

During this period, Greys Court house effectively retrenched to one principal block – the main range of 1573-74, augmented by remnants of the cased jettied wing of 1450-51, as incorporated into the Elizabethan west range. The impact of this change must have had a huge bearing on the way the surviving buildings were used - simply because the demolished buildings of the upper court would have contained principal rooms, including the great hall and suites of apartments reserved for the use of the lord of the manor and his immediate family. Unfortunately, the extent of subsequent internal re-fashioning, principally during the mid-18th century, has obscured the details of the plan and function of the various rooms in the reduced house. One exception is the main stair, which, although altered extensively in the 19th century, incorporates earlier oak balusters with later balusters and newels worked from pine. This should be considered in conjunction with the overall form of the stair before alterations in the 19th century - a framed-newel arrangement with quarter turns, indicative of a date in the late 17th or early 18th century. This indicates that the present stair probably has origins in the putative phase of reductions and invokes the possibility that it was built to replace a stair lost during the programme of demolition, or perhaps upgrading an earlier stair to the rear of the main range. What is certain is that the placing of the new stair in a position conforms to contemporary (c. 1700) notions of house planning, with the central entrance hall leading to a good staircase toward the rear.

The ‘Dower House’

Phase summary

The ‘Dower House’, standing at the south-east corner of both the medieval and Elizabethan mansions, incorporates the octagonal medieval corner tower and an attached portion of the east curtain wall. The name ‘Dower House’ is of later derivation and replaced the name ‘Batchelors’ Hall’, which first appears in identified documents in the 18th century. The main body of the ‘Dower House’, built in English-bonded brick in the 17th century, comprises a north and south wall, set between earlier end walls, and has two rooms on each floor. The front (south) wall is likely to be closely aligned with the former south curtain wall of the medieval curtilage. The roof, also aligned east-west, contains five trusses of mainly reused medieval oak members, indicating economy in this phase and setting the building apart from the higher-quality carpentry demonstrated in the Knollys buildings up to 1587. The west gable end wall makes use of part of the east side wall of the former lodging range, on a skewed plan alignment. Similarly, there is no contemporary east wall and the building seems, at the east end, to have abutted a pre-existing framed wall which presumably formed part of the intramural structure attached to the corner tower – incorporating, inter alia, the stairs to the tower chambers. This adaptation of existing fabric highlights the possibility that the ‘Dower House’ represents a substantial rebuilding of an earlier building, at least partly, on the same site.

In the late 17th or early 18th centuries, the house was extended to the north on both floors, with the addition of four parallel north-facing gables. The new north wall, of flint with brick dressings, abuts the medieval curtain wall at the east end. The west wall, again, makes use of the former lodging range’s east wall, although only on the ground floor, above which the wall is composed of 18th-century brick and reused freestone. The differential incorporation of the wall of the lodging range, built in 1578, indicates that the latter had been altered before the ‘Dower House’ was extended northwards. The new north wall is almost square in plan to the former lodging range, but produces a trapezium plan to the new extension. The implied intention was to affect a more regular shape to the yard area to the north, at the expense of the newly-created rooms inside the house. Modernisation of the house in the 20th century and replacement of some internal walls has masked the 18th-century plan.

Figure 188.

The ‘Dower House’ and south-east tower photographed by E. T. Long, circa 1941. (NMR, Red Boxes, Rotherfield Greys, ref. 595)

The ‘Dower House’: date, form and features

A 17th-century date is ascribed to the ‘Dower House’ on the basis of the roof construction, the characteristics of the brickwork and existence of a distinctive chamfered and cavetto-moulded stone window surround on the ground floor (now an internal borrowed light). The building was erected in two phases, excluding the medieval and Elizabethan fabric already mentioned. The first phase, visible

from the south, comprising a two-storeyed range, aligned east to west, and built in English-bonded brick, with external plinths. Evidence of the internal room divisions at this stage has been removed by later alterations. However, on both floors, the north wall ends at a point (marked 'SJ' on *Plan of Ground Floor East Lodgings and Dower House*) approximately 1.6 metres west of the medieval curtain wall, and the gap is now closed by a thinner stud wall. A roof truss and timber-framed partition on the first floor coincides with this change. A reasonable interpretation of this arrangement is that the Dower House abutted an earlier (perhaps timber framed) structure. A plan of Greys Court made in 1889, by H. Dryden (refer to Figure 266), also shows a wall on the ground floor in this position, which has since been removed.[294]

The timber-framed wall on the first floor appears to contain reused timbers, as does the roof truss above it. Four other roof trusses are of similar construction. They have reused medieval tie beams (although the two end tie beams are not reused), principal rafters, slender queen struts and collars, not reused. These are spaced to suggest that the house then contained two rooms on each floor, annexing also the earlier tower and associated east bay. A curved scoop in the wall in this bay prompts the suggestion that this was the site of a stair.

Figure 189.

Roof truss visible from western bedroom, front range. (AA046029)

Figure 190.

Roof truss over eastern bedroom, front range. (AA046032)

Only one window of this phase survives, located in the north wall of the east room (refer to plan of Ground floor east lodgings and Dower House). The window has a flat head and three lights defined by stone mullions of a peculiar form, incorporating plain chamfers internally and hollow chamfered externally (north). Chamfered internal brick sills are not matched by the mitred chamfers of the mullions. The four windows on the south front have been replaced, but jointing in the bricks close to the window jambs suggests they had stone dressings originally.

Both bressumer fireplaces on the ground floor have been partly rebuilt at various times, as has the external stack of the east room. The rectangular plan of the west room has been achieved by building the stack and west roof truss offset from the (earlier) skewed west wall.

Planning of the major structural components in this way suggests that the stack is original. Certain doors belong to the 17th century, notably the eight-panelled scratch-moulded door to the cupboard in the east bedroom. This has HL hinges and seems still to be fixed with original nails to the frame, although the whole feature appears to have been moved from elsewhere.

Figure 191.

Fireplace in dining room (west). (AA046020)

Figure 192.

Fireplace in living room (east). (AA046024)

Access to the tower chamber on the ground floor is obtained from the east room of the house, descending one step. Splays for three medieval loop openings are visible and a fourth was probably removed by a later opening for a door, now blocked. To judge from the height of the loop sills, the present floor level has been raised about two feet. The doorway has a simple oak lintel, the deal plank and batten door, of 17th-century date, incorporates two narrow planks with raised keels, but the hinges are modern. The chamber on the first floor retains its medieval stone doorway, as described previously. The chamber floor level appears to be unaltered although that of the adjoining landing is now three steps higher, so that the original stop chamfers are hidden. The back of the plank and batten door appears to be adze finished, and is hung by strap hinges on pintles. Five loops remain on this floor, of which three are now blocked, while an 18th-century casement, with two lights, was added to the north-west facet. Other improvements made in the 18th century include replacement of the ceiling joists, now exposed, and the addition of a chimney flue within the thickness of the wall. A small fireplace in the north facet has since been blocked, but the one above on the top floor now has a small cast-iron stove, identified by the name cast into the fire door – 'No. 4 Improved Dumpy'.

Figure 193.

Ground floor of south-east tower, viewed from south east. (AA046018)

Alterations to the top floor are more extensive. The internal stone dressings above window sill height have been replaced with brick, and

the (presumed) loops have been replaced with small rectangular stone windows originally fitted with a single ♦ iron stanchion and glazing set inside. The plank and batten door with strap hinges seems to be 19th century, but the heavy oak door frame, to which deal boards have been nailed, may be reused and awkwardly set in the cut-away face of the wall. Repairs to the exterior masonry and crenellation are also apparent at this level. These are discussed at a point elsewhere in the text.

The 'Dower House': the gabled rear block

In the late 17th or early 18th centuries, the house was extended to the north, on both floors, by constructing a rear block with a distinctive row of four gables facing north. The new block was formed by building a north wall of flint, with brick dressings, between the medieval curtain wall on the east and the lodging-range wall on the west. A new wall, to the west, was built of brick and reused freestone above the ground floor, which appears to have used brickwork from the earlier lodging range. This differential treatment may indicate that the lodging range had been altered by the time this phase took place.

Figure 194.

'Dower House' viewed from north. (DP004768)

Alterations to the internal layout, carried out in the 20th century, have masked the 18th-century plan of this part of the building, however the survival of early-18th-century doors and doorcases give some indications. A lobby between the two main bedrooms retains three doorcases, which bear large corner beads: two of the doors have two raised and fielded panels. Other doors of this form in the house are recent copies. The plan dated 1889 shows stairs, now removed, rising to the north towards the lobby. It is suggested that the cellar under the west room was also excavated at this stage, with stairs descending, as they do now, beneath those to the first floor.

The band of flint footings visible above floor level in both north and south cellar walls is likely to belong to the construction of the 'Dower House' in the 17th century. Next to the chute, a brick-vaulted drain is visible running diagonally through the south wall, above floor level. The drain evidently predates the cellar - it also seems to be overbuilt, not disturbed by the flint footings, and while possibly it served the early phase of the 'Dower House' its association with the former lodging range is also likely. The coal chute for the cellar, cut through the plinth of the south wall, gives no clue if it was added at this time or later.

Other notable features of this phase include a simple 18th-century fireplace, with ovolo-moulded surround, in the west bedroom, and a three-light wooden casement window, with pierced catchplate, in the north-east bedroom. Three small bulls-eye windows on the first floor in the east wall, two of which are now blocked, are likely also to belong to this phase.

Figure 195.

Bulls-eye window, east wall. (DP004769)

The north-west rear wing (adjoining the main range)

Phase summary

The addition of the two-and-a-half storeyed north-west wing probably took place in the early 17th century. However, the wing has undergone extensive alterations and as a result its original form and function are largely concealed, although it is possible that it contained a parlour. The slight possibility that it may incorporate fabric from an earlier range is suggested, given the building's position within the medieval upper court. It is possible to gain an impression of the wing's appearance in the 17th century from the upper part of the elevations at its south-west corner. Here, the west elevation has a prominent shouldered gable, in flint with brick quoins, and the south wall retains a substantial brick chimney stack, ornamented with brick crenellations and surmounted by three diagonal-set flues. However, the west elevation has been extended northwards, rebuilt on the ground floor and changed by the addition of a timber oriel window in the 20th century. The north elevation dates from the mid-18th century, when the original north wall was dismantled and the wing extended to the north to allow the enlargement of rooms on the ground and first floors. This led to the creation of the 'School room' and first-floor library (room names attributed in the 20th century). Despite the extensive nature of the alterations, the original common-rafter roof survives, as does a 17th-century door surround in the attic.

Figure 196.

Detail of crenellations on chimney stack. (DP004052)

Date, form and function

The north-west wing stands at ninety degrees to the main range of 1573-74, which it abuts on the north side of the main stair block (refer to phased plan: Greys Court, 17th and early 18th centuries). The phasing of these ranges is explained partly by the form of the roof structure of the main range, which does not respect the north-west wing. Also, the carpentry of the wing's roof structure is of inferior quality compared to the roof of the main range, indicating that the two are not contemporary. The characteristics of the wing's roof structure and the form of an attic door frame, which is pegged and chamfered, indicate that the wing probably dates from the 17th century. Therefore, the sum of the evidence implies that the wing is an addition, post-dating the main range

Figure 197.

Rear elevation of Greys Court House, showing north-west wing (left). (AA045588)

of 1573-74, although it is possible that earlier fabric may be encapsulated in the thick south wall and its associated chimney breast. Any evidence which might prove or discount this theory is concealed behind internal plaster surfaces.

The north-west wing originated as a tall, thin building of two storeys and attic (now standing over an 18th-century cellar), whose form is demonstrated by the gabled west elevation. Here, the gable is off-set to one side of the elevation, to the south, with a straight horizontal parapet to its north. The disposition of the gable reflects the wing's original width and its' subsequent extension to the north. A straight joint is formed between the two phases, visible at first-floor level beneath the gable's northern shoulder (partly hidden behind a rainwater pipe). The gable has a brick coping laid in diagonal brick courses that conform to the roof pitch and is built using large bricks indicative of a later reconstruction. This matches the coping used to restore the gables of the main façade, probably in the 19th century.

It is likely that the wing originally had a single-room plan, although the room was considerably narrower than that achieved later-on, in the 18th century. The ground floor was probably heated by a large fireplace on the south wall (in the same position as that in the 'Schoolroom') and may have been a back parlour – a private withdrawing room for the family. The first-floor chamber, almost certainly, augmented rooms on the first floor of the main range, although its original function is unclear. In contrast, the attic room - confined by the angled roof pitches - was probably used as accommodation for low-ranking members of the household, probably servants' quarters.

Figure 198.

Attic room, north-west wing, viewed from east. (AA044752)

Photographs dating from the mid-20th century, held at the National Monument Record Centre, show that the west wall had a large, four-light, mullion and transom window on the first floor, in the position of the later oriel window. The form of the earlier window is

Figure 199.

Rear elevation, photographed by P. S. Spokes in July 1941. Note the large mullion and transom window surround (subsequently removed) on the first floor of the north-west wing (left). (NMR, Red Boxes, Rotherfield Greys, ref. 600)

consistent with a date in the early 17th century, although plans of the house in 1934 and 1940 (refer to text on the house in the 20th century) indicate that it was inserted in that period.

Figure 200.

Rear elevation, photographed in 1982. Note the wooden oriel window replacing the stone surround shown in Figure 199. (DP004050) (Reproduced by permission of The National Trust, Hughenden Manor)

Internal features and roof structure

The ground and first floors are entirely devoid of contemporary features, excepting the possibility of those concealed behind later surface finishes. The fireplace on the first floor, in the present library, has a 17th-century overmantel and panelling, although this has been altered to fit its present position and was probably installed in the 20th century, reused from another location or building. However, the attic retains the early door frame mentioned above. This comprises a sturdy wooden frame, with a straight lintel, and which is pegged and chamfered, the latter treated with a mason's mitre at the lintel. The chamfers are step run-out stopped. The frame carries an early plank and batten door, with strap hinges on pins, which may originate from a similar period. The attic has a mid-20th-century fireplace, of tile and stone, and a wooden-framed window of a similar date, located in the south elevation.

Figure 201.

Library fireplace and overmantel. (AA044740)

The roof structure is partly concealed by plaster, although it has a continuous row of exposed collars, of modest scantling, which denote a probable coupled-rafter roof, almost certainly devoid of trusses. The roof is now exposed to the apex, but the collar soffits show stains and nail markings where lath and plaster has been removed. The attic over the north-west wing connects with an addition room (now a bathroom) set in the northern extension to the wing. The partition between these rooms is formed within an impressive timber roof truss designed to span the entire length of the wing and carry the original roof clear across the extended first-floor room beneath. This arrangement is described below in connection with the mid-18th-century changes to the main reception rooms.

Figure 202.

Door to attic bedroom. (DP004058)

The south-west wing (the 'Custodian's Flat')

Phase summary

This phase involved the addition of a modest two-storeyed wing, possibly with an attic, abutting the west elevation of the earlier timber-framed wing of 1450-51. The addition, built of flint with brick dressings, probably dates from the early to mid-17th century, although it probably incorporates a small area of medieval brickwork in the south wall. The presence of good-quality, ovolo-moulded, crossing beams on the ground floor implies that, originally, it may have functioned as a back parlour, with a chamber over reached from the main part of the house. During the 18th and 19th centuries it was used as a domestic service wing, with small additions built to the west in two phases. It was altered extensively during the mid-late-20th century, including the short-lived addition of two further storeys, since removed, and now provides accommodation for the property's custodian.

Materials, date, form and function

The scope and extent of alterations to the south-west wing have obscured much of its' original character, especially the external elevations and details. Large areas of the original walls, with random, unknapped, flint and brick quoins and bands, have been altered, but survive best in the vicinity of the projecting chimney breast on the west wall (although the upper part of the stack has been rebuilt in the mid-20th century) and on the first floor of the north wall. The walling materials are consistent with a date of construction in the early-to-mid 17th century, although the principal dating criteria for this phase is the ovolo-moulded beams on the ground floor. The roof is covered with plain tiles, although alterations associated with the short-lived third storey, determine that this is of recent origin, although probably reflects the original roof cladding. There is a small area of earlier brickwork (at W on plan of ground floor of Greys Court House) incorporated into the east end of the south wall, in the vicinity of the back porch to the main house. The existence of this earlier fabric, which is probably associated with the adjacent medieval wing of 1450-51, is implied by a straight joint and change in brick type and wall alignment in the south wall (refer to plan).

Figure 203.

The south-west wing (left of centre), viewed from south. (AA045586)

Figure 204.

Ovolo-moulded beams on the ground floor of the south-west wing. (AA046071)

Figure 205.

Fireplace on the ground floor of south-west wing. Viewed from south east. (AA046073)

The wing originally had a single-room plan, but has been sub-divided internally, to form the custodian's lounge, a rear entrance lobby and large walk-in larder, the latter two used In association with the main house. The original plan is proven by the rebated, ovolo-moulded beams, referred to above, which continue through the dividing wall between the lounge and larder. The beam mouldings, and the reasonable proportions of the original ground-floor room, are consistent with an original function as a back parlour, as opposed to a kitchen or associated service function, which it assumed throughout much of the 18th and 19th centuries. The absence of an original entrance implies that the wing was probably originally reached from the adjoining wing of the main house, and did not function as a separate dwelling, as it does today. Internal connecting doorways remain in place and the present front entrance to the custodian's wing was provided in the early 1980s.[295] The fireplace also dates from the 1980s, although it occupies the position of an original firepace. It has a reused timber lintel, with redundant mortices and pegs holes, finished with a newly-cut chamfer. The form of the original fireplace is no longer clear, although a square-headed niche to the north of the present fireplace may have been formed within part of an earlier, larger, fire opening. The fireplace was altered again in the early 1990s, as shown in plans dated 1990, by architect John Manning of Streatley, Bedfordshire.[296] These show that the fireplace was reduced in size by inserting brickwork within the fire opening.

Figure 206.

Corner fireplace on first floor of south-west wing. (AA046072)

The original plan of the first floor is less clear, the current arrangement dating from the mid-to-late 20th century, although the presence of a fireplace in the north-west corner of the wing may shed some light on the question. The fireplace, which has a three-centred, chamfered, brick surround and high broach stops, probably dates from the 17th century, and, if original, indicates the provision of a heated chamber. Its position across one corner of the room may imply that the first floor was sub-divided into more than one room. This, however, is unproven. The plan form of any attic rooms - assuming that an

attic was provided in the original phase - is no longer clear. There is no indication of an original stair within the wing, which may denote that the upper floors were reached through the adjoining wing.

Fenestration

The south-west wing's fenestration and entrance date from the early 1980s, although there are two earlier single-light windows - with wooden frames, iron casements and leaded lights - located in the west wall. These probably date from the mid-20th century and demonstrate a derivative Arts and Crafts influence. One is located on the ground floor, in a small projecting block in the angle to the north of the main chimney stack. The other, on the first floor, is positioned to the south of the chimney and lights the western bedroom. A four-light window in the south wall of the kitchen is of a similar design, although this is located in a secondary range adjoining the west end of the wing.

Figure 207.

Window on ground floor, in projection to north of fireplace. (AA046070)

Details of the wing's main windows, as they existed prior to the 1980s alterations, are shown in elevations by Francis Pollen, architect, drawn in 1982. The north wall retains evidence, in the form of ragged joints in the masonry, of redundant window openings on the first floor. No

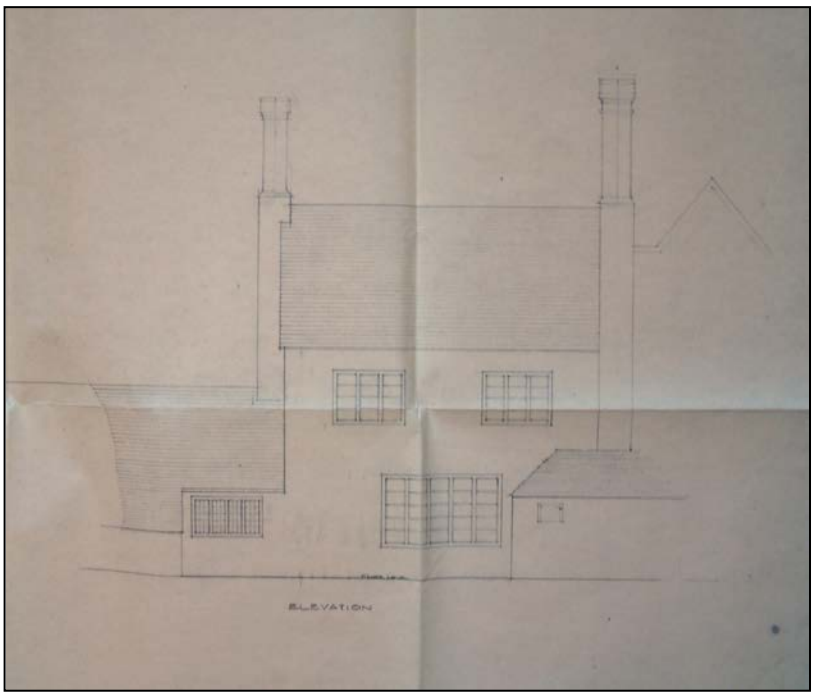

Figure 208.

Elevation drawing of south-west wing, by Francis Pollen, 1982, prior to alterations of that period. (DP004089) (Reproduced by permission of The National Trust, Hughenden Manor)

surrounds survive externally, although some of the joints probably correspond with a blocked window, visible internally, in the north wall of the west bedroom. This blocked window, converted into a shelving recess, retains an early-19th-century moulded wooden architrave and panelled reveals.

Evidence of the original roof structure

To either end of the main bedroom (at the west end of the wing) there are transverse beams embedded into the walls. The beams, which have been partly adzed back, are probably the original tie beams and therefore provide likely evidence of the original roof trusses, which, otherwise, have been removed. The beam to the east (nearest the centre of the wing) has a crude camber that probably respects the shape of the felled timber, rather than being a deliberate carpentry feature. The west beam, set into the west wall, is straight. The exposed, upright facet of each beam has redundant peg holes. The west beam has two sets of paired peg holes, consistent with queen struts or studs above the beam. The peg holes in the side of the east beam are less distinct, but where visible, they are consistent with a corresponding arrangement of studs or struts.

Evidence of later service functions, including minor additions to the west

The change of use to domestic services, most probably a kitchen, probably took place in the late 17th or 18th centuries and is manifest in the provision of what was possibly an oven, but now forms an alcove in the north-west corner of the ground-floor room. This is housed in a small projecting block standing in the angle formed by the projecting chimney stack, and is built of brick, partly rendered. It has a later, monopitch, tile roof. The scar of an earlier roof can be seen in the west of the main wing, which reflects the form of a double-pitch, consistent with a gabled or hipped roof. The alcove, now lit by the single-light window mentioned above, has a brick-vaulted ceiling incorporating a hole that measures 0.23 by 0.13 metres and appears to be a blocked flue.

A large semicircular-headed blocking in the north wall, retains a brick-arched head and jambs on the external elevation, and appears internally in the form of a plastered recess with a matching head. The form of the opening is indicative of a doorway, perhaps leading to the small courtyard on the north side of the wing. The characteristics of the brickwork indicate that this opening is a later feature, while plans dating from 1934 and 1940 indicate that it is probably an alteration, of that period, to an earlier window opening.

In the late 17th or early 18th centuries a small single-storey block was built adjoining the west end of the wing. That this is an addition is indicated by a straight joint formed in the north wall, where the two blocks abut. The latest date that this block may have been added is indicated by the presence of a date, 1702, scratched into a brick at the north-west corner of the building. The walls and roof make use of materials similar to those used in the south-west wing. The addition has a single room plan and its form and scale are indicative of a service function, although the precise nature of this is no longer clear. The roof structure is of common rafter construction, the rafters jointed and pegged at the apex. The rafters are coupled by lapped, nailed collars. The brick-built west wall has an embedded collar and queen struts with pegged joints.

This doorway leads into a further, single-storeyed, single-room block that was added to the west wall, probably in the 18th or 19th centuries. This is also of flint and brick construction

with a tile roof covering. It has an entrance in the south wall and 20th-century windows to the north and west. There are small, single-storeyed ranges adjoining the south wall, all of which are indicative of minor service use and were probably built in the 18th or 19th centuries. The north-west corner of the building is marked by extensive historical graffiti. This includes the date ‘1921’, initials ‘KD’, ‘AB’, ‘HH’, ‘RA’ and ‘A or M’. Dates written on the south-west corner are more difficult to decipher, but include ‘1861 or 1811 or 1877’, ‘JG 1864’, ‘G 1862’, ‘H 1946 or 1746’.

notes

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295 Greys Court library: plans of the custodian's house, dated March and May 1982, by Francis Pollen, architect.
296 Greys Court library

Figure 121.

The remains of the south end of the lodging range,

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