

THE WAKES, SELBORNE: AN ARCHITECTURAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The Wakes is chiefly known as the former home of the natural historian The Revd Gilbert White. This study of the house combines an archaeological and architectural examination of the structure with a study of the engravings and photographs used to illustrate the many editions of White's *Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne*. The original house appears to have been a three-unit structure consisting of hall and parlour with service rooms in a rear outshot under an over-sailing roof, and can safely be dated to c 1500 on the evidence of roof structure. The hall, probably originally open to the roof but provided also with a chimney, was sub-divided c 1600 by the insertion of a ceiling. At the end of the seventeenth century a solar wing was built necessitating a stair turret. This was the house occupied by the White family for nearly a century and a half. Gilbert White built the Great Parlour in 1777, and immediately after his death in 1793 his family modified the accommodation south of the hall and replaced it by a dining room wing with bedrooms above. In 1844 the Wakes became the home of Professor Thomas Bell FRS who added a single-storey library beyond the Great Parlour to the north. After Bell's death in 1880 the house had a rapid succession of owners who between them changed a very attractive multi-period vernacular building into a rambling country house. These extensive additions and changes culminated in 1910 with the completion of the northern and southern ends essentially as they appear today.

INTRODUCTION

The Wakes, Selborne, which became famous as the home of Gilbert White, stands in Selborne village street, across the Plestor from the church, its garden and park extending westwards to the Chalk hanger. White was born in the old Selborne vicarage, demolished during the nineteenth century, while his grandfather, also called Gilbert White, was vicar. At the time Gilbert's parents, John White, a barrister, and Anne White (née Holt), were also living at the vicarage. Shortly afterwards the young family seems to have left Selborne only to return in

1729, or soon afterwards, to live at the house then known as 'late Wakes' (Holt-White 1901, I, 18) which the elder Gilbert White had bequeathed to his wife Rebecca on his death on 13 February 1727–28. There the family was to remain. Both John and Anne White died in the Wakes, the former in 1758 at the age of seventy-one. Anne White, who died in 1739 at the age of forty-six had a family of seven sons and four daughters of whom Gilbert was the eldest. Although White lived in the house for much of his life, he was not to become its owner until the death of his uncle, the Revd Charles White, rector of Bradley, in 1763 (Scott 1950, 13–29, 42, 127; Bell 1877, I, xvii–lix).

The house appears to take its name from a Wake family, members of which seem to have occupied it during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Scott 1950, 28). At first sight it gives the impression of being a confusing jumble of buildings, but careful examination shows the house to be a fascinating structure with additions and alterations representing every century from the sixteenth to the twentieth. Both in plan and materials the earlier parts of the house are part of the traditional domestic architecture of the region (Meirion-Jones 1972).

SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The detailed study of the buildings and the problems arising from it are dealt with in context below and it is sufficient here simply to say that certain problems relating to the earlier history of the house have not yet been solved, and probably never will be, because the necessary evidence is either ambiguous, obscured, inconclusive, or non-existent. A measured plan of the house was made and is represented in Fig 1, along with measured drawings of the front and rear elevations. Roof structure was studied in some detail and cross-sections through those parts of the house considered to be significant

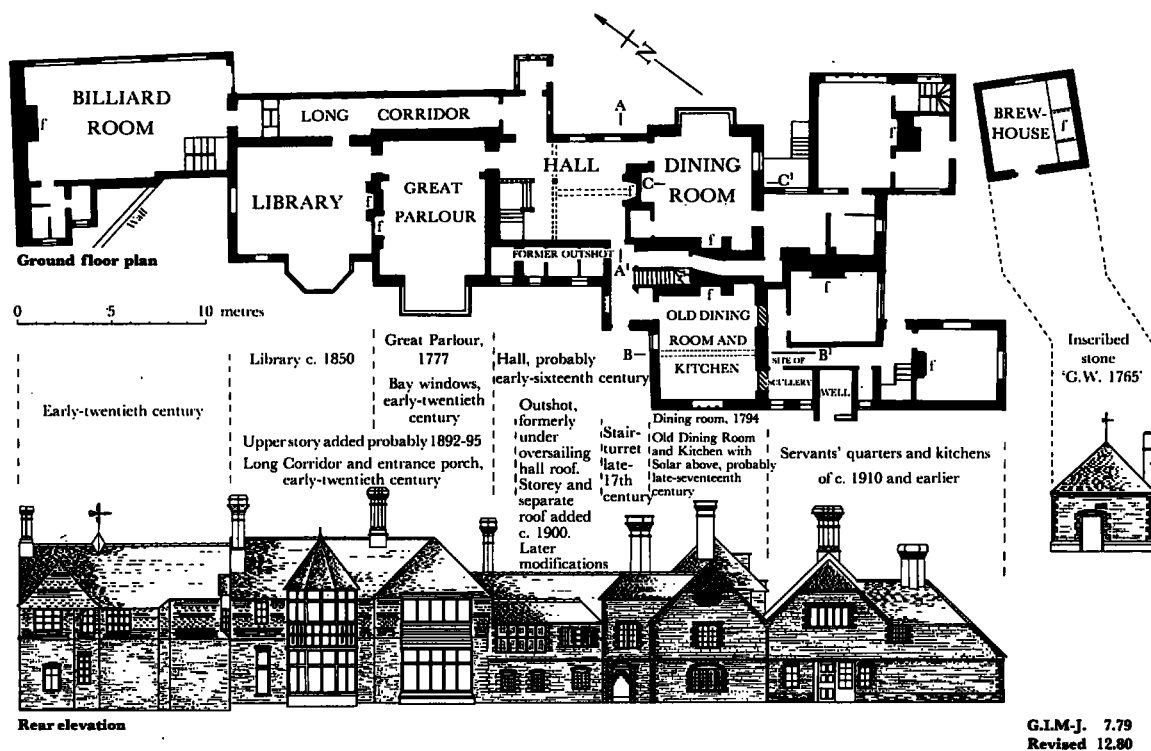


Fig 1a. The Wakes: ground-floor plan and rear, or garden, elevation.

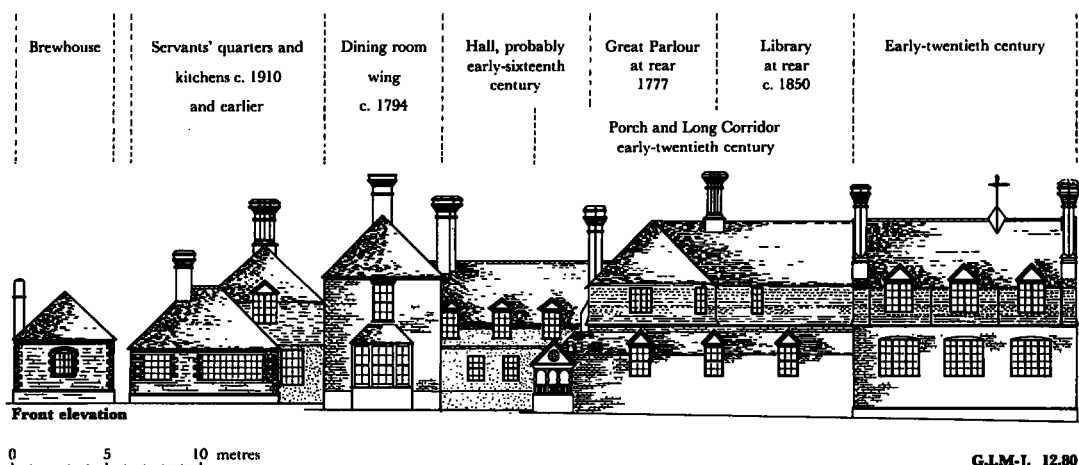


Fig 1b. The Wakes: front, or street, elevation.

are given in Fig 8.

Engravings prepared for the illustration of various editions of White's book prove extremely valuable for the purpose of reconstructing the stages of growth and change. Both Clay (1941, 37–41) and White (Holt-White 1901, I, 326), for example, are agreed on the accuracy of the drawings by Samuel Hieronymous Grimm. Where the late nineteenth-century drawings are concerned, there seems little evidence for the copying of one artist by another, for significant changes to the house are usually recorded. There is a problem, however, with those editions reprinted many times over a long period as in the case of the Jardine edition in which 'original' illustrations were used long after they had become outdated. Precise dating of the engravings is difficult, if not impossible, except where the date of a drawing is documented as in the case of the work of Grimm. No illustration can be later than the date of publication of the book, and it is reasonable to assume, except where stated otherwise, that the illustrations were made within a year or two of publication date. There is thus a reliable *terminus post quem* for each illustration, if not always a *terminus ante quem*.

All the details concerning change of ownership are derived from deeds relating to the property in the possession of the Trustees of the Oates Memorial Library and Museum and The Gilbert White Museum.

Multi-period houses are a characteristic of southern and south-eastern England. Such houses are veritable three-dimensional palimpsests in which the work of earlier periods may be partially or completely obscured by later changes. Investigation of such structures may be accomplished by the stripping-off of successive layers eventually to reveal the 'original' house. Such is the retrospective method applied to the architectural history of the lesser English house and in this paper the results of the investigation of the Wakes are presented retrospectively, beginning with the latest phase, and working backwards through time, taking the 'natural' periods of development, based on both architectural history and ownership both of which are often closely related, until the original sixteenth-century structure is reached.

THE PERIOD 1880–1980

The house as we now know it comprises several builds from a pre-1600 core to the most recent additions made in the early-twentieth century and has already been described briefly (Meirion-Jones 1979). It lies roughly parallel to the village street and is somewhat irregular in its articulation. The maximum length of continuous building is c 52.50 metres, but, in addition, a brew-house and a stable block increase the spread of buildings to over 70 metres. Maximum width of the structure is c 18.40 metres, and minimum width no more than 6.50 metres (Fig 1). At the front there is virtually no garden, the house being separated from the street by a narrow strip of lawn, bounded by a low ornamental wall of Malmstone, brick, and tile. From the rear, or garden, front of the house, which faces approximately south-west, lawns fall gradually in a westerly direction to the ha-ha constructed by White during the years 1759–61 close to his sundial of the same date (Scott 1950, 137; White 1975, 79, 111). To the west rises the low eminence of Baker's Hill, and beyond the ha-ha the Park reaches as far as the hanger.

The core of the present house is the hall, that term being used in a twofold sense, for the room not only serves as the present entrance hall, but is also the original hall, or common living room, of the house. Access is from the entrance porch at the lower end. About 6.80 metres long and 5.20 metres wide, the hall has a low ceiling, a flight of stairs leading to the first floor, a hearth at the upper end, and is lighted by two twelve-light sash windows. On the garden side of the hall lies the much-altered former outshot, now serving as a gentlemen's lavatory for the Museum, and two passages. The first passage lies between the dining room, now a museum exhibition room (c 5.20 metres by c 5.40 metres, excluding the bay window), and the room now called the 'study' (c 5.50 metres by c 5.10 metres), but in reality the kitchen and old dining room of White's time, and leads to the twentieth-century kitchen block at the southern end. The other passage provides access to the kitchen and leads to the garden door. To the north of the hall lie the Great Parlour (c 7.20

metres by *c* 5.50 metres) and the library (*c* 7.20 metres by *c* 5.80 metres), the latter having a doorway communicating with the long corridor (*c* 14.00 metres by *c* 1.75 metres at the upper end, *c* 2.10 metres at the lower end) which leads from the hall to the billiard room (*c* 10.60 metres by *c* 6.20 metres). Extending from the latter at right angles, and into the garden, is a bathroom wing, the ground-floor of which is now the ladies' lavatory for the museum.

The first floor is not of uniform elevation and comprises a miscellany of rooms including the very fine late eighteenth-century room over the dining room, at the front, and the panelled solar over the old kitchen at the back. At the northern end lies a series of former bedrooms and dressing rooms, over the billiard room, now used as museum galleries. There has not always been full internal communication at first-floor level and the main staircase, rising from the hall below, will be shown presently to be a relatively recent innovation.

Building materials used in the house include the local Malmstone, brick of various periods and tile. In addition, it is probable, but not yet proven, that the hall is basically timber-framed, and, if so, the framing must be hidden between the internal plaster and a later outer casing of brick. Along the street frontage of the house brick predominates and includes the late eighteenth-century wall of the dining room block in Flemish bond, the probable eighteenth-century casing of the timber-framed hall, now rendered, and the early twentieth-century brick, in stretcher bond, of the long corridor and the billiard room. A conspicuous feature of the eighteenth-century brickwork is the use of raised and dentil courses which appear under the eaves of the dining room block and the hall. The pattern is copied in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century extensions, at first-floor level, above which the walls are tile-hung with a mixture of rectangular and scalloped tiles in alternating rows of three or four. Both gables of the billiard room block are so hung. The house has a markedly different appearance when viewed from the garden. At the rear of the house, eighteenth-century brickwork is in evidence in the ground-floor of the Great Parlour,

nineteenth-century work in the library façade and, of course, twentieth-century brick in the billiard room front although the structure south of the Great Parlour is essentially of white Malmstone. It is interesting to note that the most recent addition to the Wakes, dated 1974, the Field Centre classroom and laboratory, sited in the old stable yard, is built of brick from the Selborne brickworks located on the Gault, as required by current planning regulations.

Whilst the first-floor walls of the Great Parlour, library and billiard room are tile hung (Fig 1), the remainder of the garden front walling is largely of Malmstone but always with long and short brick quoins, three courses to a quoin, and a raised course of brick at first-floor level, for the Malmstone is a friable stone ill-suited to cornering. Windows are also framed with brick. The eighteenth-century brew-house and the stable block are also constructed of squared Malmstone rubble with brick quoins and raised courses. Chimneys were originally of plain brick, that of the hall having brick if not of sixteenth-century date, certainly then belonging to the seventeenth century. The stacks, however, were considerably modified during the twentieth century construction and renovation so that ornamented and diagonal stacks with corbelled brickwork at the head of the flues, now dominate the building. Roofing is everywhere of red tile.

The most recent owners of the Wakes are the Trustees of the Oates Memorial Library and Museum and the Gilbert White Museum who acquired the house in 1955. It had been occupied as a private house until 1953 when the last owner died. In 1954 an appeal was launched in *The Times* for funds to enable the house and grounds to be purchased and endowed as a perpetual memorial to Gilbert White. When the appeal raised only a small proportion of the sum required, Mr Robert Washington Oates made available substantial funds at the disposal of a trust he had previously created in memory of his family, and with these the property was bought and the Museum endowed. It was first opened on 6 September 1955 and rooms open to the public include the hall, 'study' and Great Parlour, the dining room and billiard room and rooms immediately above which are used for

museum displays.

Apart from certain changes made in recent years in order better to accommodate the museum, and the adaptation of the solar and the rooms over the hall to make a flat, the house has not changed since the Edwardian era. A photograph taken shortly after World War I (Kearton 1924, 22) shows the house as it is today. Shortly after the turn of the century, however, the house is shown to be less complete for an earlier photograph, also by Kearton (1902, ix), shows the northern end of the house only partly developed (Fig 2). The outshot, although it has two storeys by that date, has not been laterally extended and still possesses a roof hipped at both ends. This evidence is identical to that shown by Grant Allen (1902, 17). Here the outshot is shown with a second storey, a hipped unitary roof and three casement windows at first-floor level and the doorway to the garden, with a window above, identical to that now to be seen (compare Figs 1 and 2). A complete view of the rear (Allen 1902, 112) admirably illustrates the development by that date. In addition to the outshot as described above, a window to the hall

can be seen just below the eaves line and to the south of the kitchen there is visible a long sloping roof where the new kitchen wing of 1910 was to be built also visible in Kearton's photograph (Fig 2). At the northern end, the Great Parlour has the square bay window with which we are familiar today, but the second storey has no such feature. Thus the extension of the bay window to first-floor level post-dates 1902. The library is shown with all the present features including the polygonal bay window extending upwards through the first floor and capped by a pyramidal roof. Here the only difference is that a french window in the central segment of the ground-floor bay has been removed. The chimneys illustrated by Grant Allen and Kearton correspond closely to those now to be seen and there is no reason to suspect any subsequent modification. A conservatory or garden house is shown at an angle to the main building at the north-west corner. A view of the front of the house of the same date (Allen 1902, 57) is of little assistance in establishing details, except for the boundary wall to the street which is identical to that now in existence. The second storeys



Fig 2. The garden front of The Wakes *c* 1902 (from Kearton, R (ed) 1902, p. ix).

over the library and parlour thus pre-date 1902, though the extension of the Great Parlour bay window to the first floor and the changes to the outshot required before the great staircase could be built, clearly post-date 1902. These may thus safely be ascribed to the period 1902–1910, as will be demonstrated.

The modern, or post-1880, changes to the building must now be related to the changing ownership. Professor Thomas Bell, who had owned the Wakes since 1844, died in 1880 and the property was then sold to Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Bradford by J H Hill, Bell's executor. Bradford seems to have owned the house until 1892 when he, by then Colonel Sir Edward Ridley Colborne Bradford, KCB, KCIE, sold it to F W Cuthbert Read, Esq. It was Bradford's absence in India, where he served in the Madras Staff Corps, which presumably led to the property being let to General Parr during that period (Martin 1934, 60). In 1893, four cottages were additionally sold by Sir Edward R C Bradford to Mr F W C Read, but the latter owned the property only for three years, selling in 1895 to P W Parkin, Esq, who in turn sold to H T Shaw, Esq, in 1901. The latter was to reside there for only two years and in 1903 Andrew Pears acquired the house and its dependences. It was during his occupancy that the billiard room and long corridor were constructed and the modifications to the front entrance and porch made. These alterations were done in a Tudor revival style, are rather severe and contrast markedly with the rest of the house, although the chimney stacks are attractive. This information is from Mr Robert Pears, the son of Andrew Pears, in a letter dated 14 April 1981 to Dr June Chatfield, Curator of the Gilbert White Museum. The final changes to the hall and outshot date from this period. The present staircase was constructed from the hall and required considerable changes to the outshot, which was extended northwards as far as the wall of the Great Parlour to accommodate it. Fenestration was also changed, a large window being inserted to lighten the staircase, and the roof-line modified to assume its present form (compare Figs 1 and 2). The room above the Great Parlour received its bay window and

weather boarding, an upward extension of that already in existence below. However, the second storey over both the Great Parlour and the library, and that over the outshot, are all illustrated by Buckland (1895, frontispiece) and therefore must date from the period between the death of Thomas Bell in 1880 and 1895 (compare Figs 3 and 4). Both the fact that Bradford was an absentee owner and the style of the additions suggest that they were almost certainly constructed by Cuthbert Read during the years 1892–95. In addition, the square bay window that post-dates 1895 (Figs 1 and 2) replaces the pair of twelve-light sash windows that formed part of Gilbert White's Great Parlour (Fig 3).

In 1910, Mrs M P Pears sold the property to Colonel Alfred Bibby and it was the latter who completed the kitchen and servants' wing at the southern end, with its date-stone '19-H.F.M.B.-10', in the vernacular style of the solar wing. That these domestic offices were not entirely new is suggested by Figs 2 and 3 in which the long sloping roof to the south of the old kitchen indicates that some extensions had already been made here to the house left by Thomas Bell. The bake-house, below, which projected from the old kitchen also disappears at this stage, or, more likely, is absorbed into the new building as is shown by the plan where the thickness of the kitchen wall is continued into the well-house (Fig 1). As the new kitchen wing, not surprisingly, fails to feature in any of the illustrations, it is difficult to date these changes. Maps accompanying the deeds of sale do however give some clue, although they cannot be relied upon for great accuracy. That of 11 July 1895 relating to the sale from Read to Parkin shows no trace of extension at the southern end, but these are already shown, by comparison, on the map of 23 April 1910 when Mrs Pears sold to Colonel Bibby. The earliest kitchen wing may thus be dated to the period 1895–1910 and it seems most probable that they formed part of the extensive changes made by the Pears family during their ownership 1903–10, to be modified and completed by Colonel Bibby during the first few months of his ownership in 1910, and thus explaining the date-stone.



Fig. 3 The garden front of The Wakes c 1895 (from Buckland, F (ed) 1895, vol 1 frontispiece).

THE PERIOD 1844–1880

After Gilbert White's death in 1793 the Wakes remained in his family for over half a century, passing first to his brother Benjamin and then tenanted by their sister (Martin 1934, 59). His niece lived in it until her death in 1839 (Holt-White 1901, II, 282) after which the house remained vacant until purchased in 1844 by Professor Thomas Bell, FRS, Professor of Zoology at King's College, London, from the Revd Glyd White, the last of the White family to be associated with it. Bell owned the property until his death in 1880 and the house as he knew it is well illustrated in four separate editions of *The natural history of Selborne*, of which two date from the early 1850s, only a few years after Bell took up residence, and two from the 1870s. In his own edition of White's work, Bell (1877, vol. I, frontispiece; vol. II, frontispiece) illustrates

both the front and rear of the house with engravings based on photographs taken by himself (Figs 4 and 5). At that date the building appears as a splendid example of the local vernacular, formed by additions of different periods made to an original core, of which the common hall is the most obvious element, conspicuous not only by its position in relation to the other rooms, but also by its low elevation. The hall is clearly visible externally both in the present house (Fig 1) and in that illustrated by Bell in 1877.

The front elevation of 1877 (Fig 5) shows a house consisting of a hall with a centrally-placed doorway balanced by a pair of symmetrically-placed sash windows above which lie two asymmetrical dormers with pedimented gables. Traces of this earlier doorway may be seen in the irregularities of the rendering of the present façade. To the south stands the dining room wing with its south-east facing windows at both

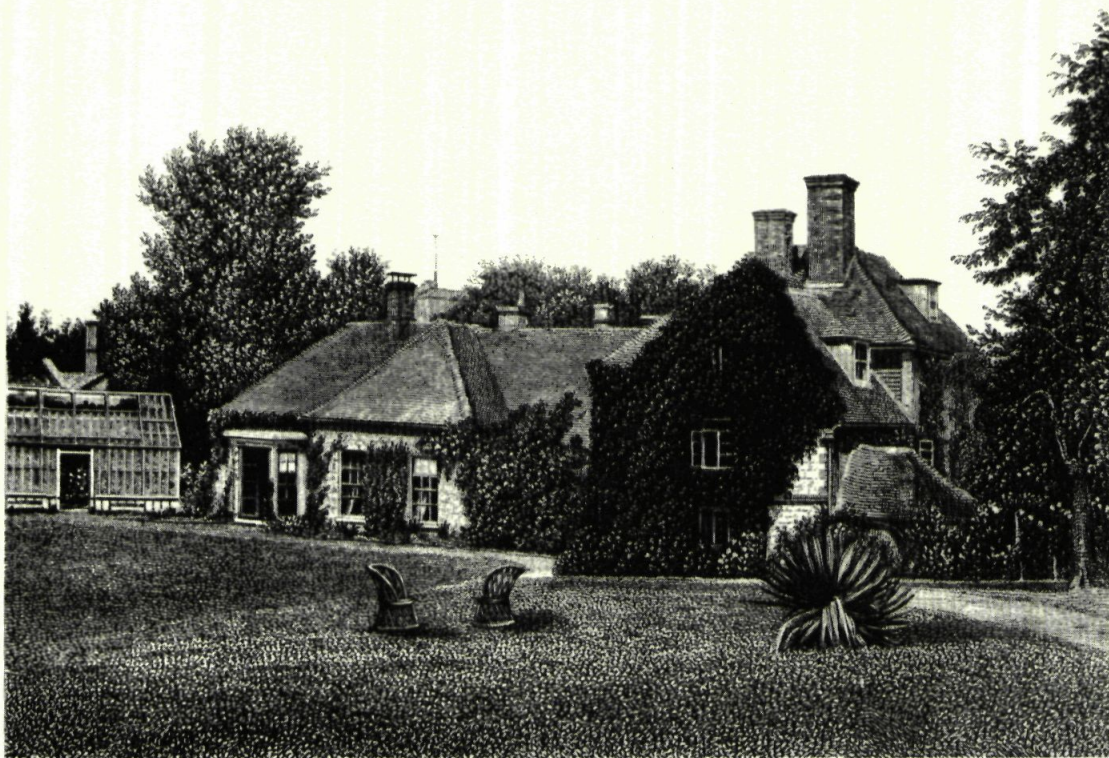


Fig 4 The Wakes from the south-west c 1877 (from Bell, T (ed) 1877, vol 1 frontispiece).

ground- and first-floor levels and a dormer in the roof. The side of this wing, facing the road, is not fenestrated, although there is a 'blind' window in the upper storey which was opened up when the kitchen and servants' quarters were built in the twentieth century, and the present square bay window added on the ground floor (compare Figs 1 and 5). A small window in the south-east facing side of this wing, between the two floors may be that to White's old study (Bell 1877, vol. II, caption to frontispiece; see also below). To the south-west the solar wing may be glimpsed, whilst beyond the hall, to the north-west, is the Great Parlour, at this date a single-storey building with a hipped roof, projecting slightly to the street. Beyond lies the single-storey library. Two other features are worthy of notice. The plain boundary wall appears to be of Malmstone blocks surmounted by a wooden

paling fence, pre-dating the present ornamental wall constructed some time between 1877 and 1902 (Allen 1902, 57). The façade of the hall has the raised string-course at first-floor level showing that it was already brick fronted in 1877.

The view of the garden front of the house in 1877 also illustrates many of these features and gives an excellent idea of the fully-developed vernacular house before the late nineteenth-century and twentieth-century additions (Fig 4). Only the hall is obscured, by vegetation, but it is nevertheless clear that the outshot here still lies under the oversailing hall roof and has not yet received the second storey with its own hipped roof, evident in Fig 3, which was constructed sometime after Bell's death in 1880 and provisionally ascribed, above, to the period 1892–95. The Great Parlour appears with its hipped

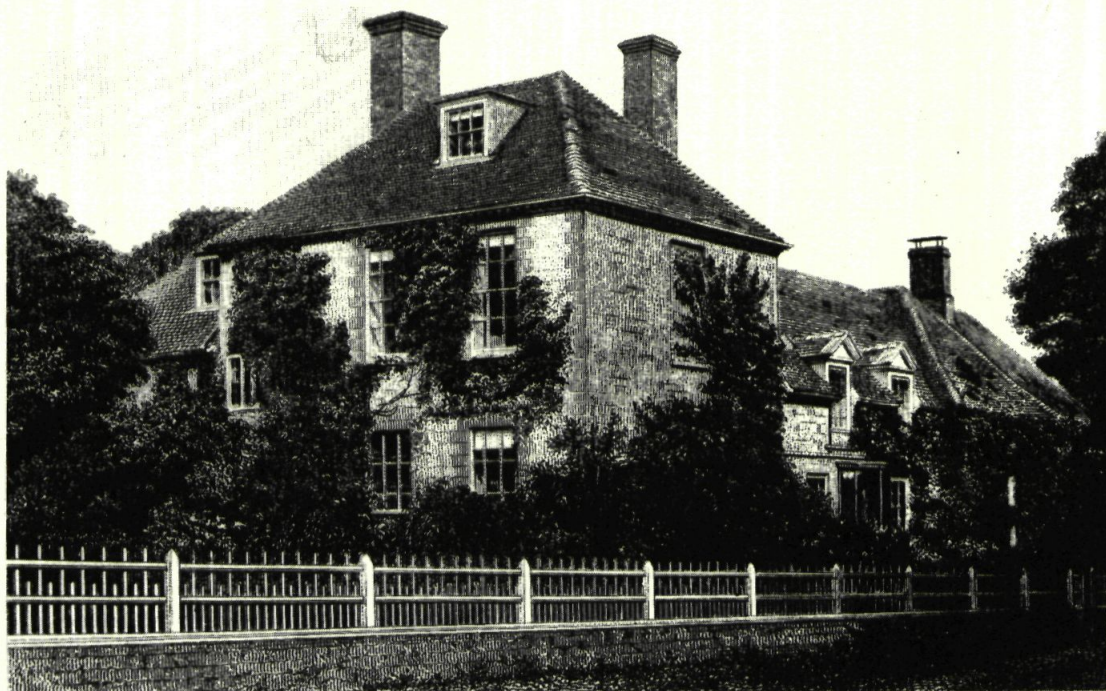


Fig 5 The Wakes from the south-east c 1877 (from Bell, T (ed) 1877, vol 2 frontispiece).

roof and pair of sash windows, presumably unaltered since White's time. Beyond is the library, its roof hipped at the northern end, with a bay window that incorporates a french window. The conservatory or garden house stands close to, but detached from, the northern end of the house. At the souther end, in addition to the dining room wing whose features have already been described, is the ivy covered wing with its kitchen on the ground floor, solar at first-floor level and an attic storey in the half-hipped roof. Attached to the south wall of the kitchen is a single-storey structure with a hipped roof and provided with a chimney. What appears to be a round arch in the wall facing the garden is difficult to explain. The structure would appear to be the bake-house, or scullery, with access by the now blocked doorway from the kitchen (Fig 1). A blocked window in the

kitchen is clear evidence that the 'bake-house', if that is what it was, was quite small and did not take up the whole length of the kitchen wall. Thus as late as 1877, or shortly before, and almost certainly until after Bell's death in 1880, there were no buildings to the south of the dining room and the kitchen until the brew-house is reached, except for this bake-house, and another small addition to which we shall return later.

The plan of the sale of the property in 1910 clearly shows a solid block of building south of the dining room wing and kitchen, the kitchen and servants' quarters of the first decade of the twentieth century. Plans of 1880, 1892 and 1895 all show the bake-house still to be present, and there is also a small extension about midway along that side of the house which may well be related to the passage that separates the dining

room and old kitchen and which presumably led outside at that date to the stable yard. Unfortunately there seems to be no surviving photograph of this south-east facing end of the house which would solve this problem. The most probable explanation is that the small structure was some kind of porch or entrance room.

In 1876 Buckland published an edition of White's book illustrated by three very good engravings of the house. The first of these confirms the details shown by Bell: the single-storey Great Parlour, fully-hipped, the centrally-placed front doorway and porch, the sash windows, and the two asymmetrical dormers (Buckland 1876, vol. I, 9). A second view of the Wakes taken from the south-west shows the 'bake-house', solar wing, dining room block, Great Parlour and the library roof. A fully-hipped roof shown over the solar would seem to be an error on the part of the artist

(Buckland 1876, vol. I, 59). The third illustration shows the sash windows of the Great Parlour with large Victorian lights, perhaps an error, and the outshot in its original form under the oversailing hall roof. The flat-headed rear doorway, presumably an error in recording the shallow brick arch, is likely to be an original feature. The window in the side of the 'study' should be noted (Buckland 1876, vol. 2, 154).

Jardine's edition of 1835 contains two views of the house. That from the north-west is important for being the only good illustration from this direction to have been published, showing the Great Parlour and the library extension at this date (Fig 6a) (Jardine 1853, v). The second view (Fig 6b) of the rear, is important for illustrating the fully-hipped Great Parlour with its two sash windows and the library with its three-sided bay window (Jardine 1853, xiii).



Fig 6a. Selborne: the village street and The Wakes from the north-west c 1853 (from Jardine, W (ed) 1853, p. v).



Fig 6b. The garden front of The Wakes *c* 1853 (from Jardine, W (ed) 1853, p. xiii).

Jesse's edition of 1851 has an illustration of the street frontage in which the hall appears with its doorway and symmetrical ground-floor sash windows. Two dormers are symmetrically placed, between the doorway and the lower windows. The Great Parlour projects slightly to the street, beyond which the library may just be glimpsed (Jesse 1881, frontispiece).

This period sees the house at what was probably its finest, for the vernacular style had not then been overshadowed by later additions. Moreover, the building displayed considerable variety with its solar wing at the rear, unique in this district. The most significant addition was the library known to have been built by Thomas Bell and since it is present by *c* 1851, may safely be ascribed to the period 1844–51, probably closer to 1844 as Bell's profession would necessitate such a provision from the outset.

The interior of the house and the functions of its rooms may be reconstructed from the Catalogue of Sale by Auction (1880) following Bell's death. Although this catalogue does not specifically state whether the rooms listed are upstairs or downstairs, some are named and their functions thus made clear. The ground-floor rooms may consequently safely be listed as the drawing room (the Great Parlour of White's time), the library (built by Bell), the entrance hall (the common hall of an earlier period), the dining room (of *c* 1794), larder and pantry (almost certainly in the then unaltered outshot), kitchen and scullery (the former identified with the old dining room, and, as will be shown later, also used in White's time as the kitchen, and lying under the solar) (see Figs 1, 4 and 5). The scullery was presumably in the single-storey projection with chimney-stack shown in Figure 4. This disposes of all the known ground-floor accommodation of Bell's house. It follows that the remaining rooms must have been upstairs, and 'Mr Bell's bedroom' must be either that over the dining room of *c* 1794, or the solar itself, but probably the former as there is also mention of a dressing room which was presumably adjacent, or, at least, close by. The 'Principal Bedroom' might have then been the solar with its view over the Park, and 'Bedrooms 1 and 2' were probably located in the roof space over the

hall, with the 'Servant's bedroom' either that over the solar, or that over the *c* 1794 wing.

Room functions in Professor Bell's house are thus beyond question and it is interesting to note both the use of the solar purely as a bedroom, and the degeneration of the hall into something akin to an 'entrance hall'. At the same time the outshot functioned as 'service rooms', unchanged from what was almost certainly its original function, whilst the use of the nearby room under the solar as a kitchen was furthered by the proximity of a scullery in the adjacent single-storey projection (Fig 4), access between the two being via a now blocked-up doorway (Fig 1). White's Great Parlour had become a genteel mid-Victorian 'drawing room' with more comfortable furniture than White would have known. Apart from the solar having assumed the wholly specialized role of a bedroom, as distinct from its original function as a sort of medieval 'bed-sitter', a role which it still played in White's time, for the naturalist died in this room (Bell 1877, II, 135), the other upstairs rooms had probably changed little in their function since White's time.

Inevitable changes in room function has led over the years to a changing nomenclature which can lead to considerable confusion in any attempt to describe the present building. Exceptions are the Great Parlour, solar and service rooms, which, in this paper, are used in the original senses of these terms. The term 'hall' is also reserved for the original common hall. The dining room of *c* 1794 will be referred to as such and the so-called 'study' will be termed the 'kitchen' in accordance with its demonstrable function during Bell's time and, as will be shown, in White's period also. Additionally, White used it as his dining room for the building of *c* 1794 obviously post-dated his death. These terms are those used in Fig 1. During the 1960s, in order better to display certain White relics, including his desk and chair, and also to accommodate a gift of bookcases, the floor of White's kitchen was lowered 0.53 metres and the hearth reconstructed at this lower level, a short flight of steps being constructed to permit access from the passage into this former kitchen. This renovation on the part of the Trustees was well-

intentioned but, in this writer's view, nevertheless unfortunate and misguided. Headroom is now much greater than originally, and, worse, the room has become known as the 'study', a function for which there is not a shred of evidence.

THE PERIOD 1800-1844

That there was little change to the Wakes during this period is shown by illustrations in three editions of *The natural history of Selborne*. A view from the west, possibly based on earlier illustrations, serves to show the house as it was between the death of White and its purchase by Bell (Bennett 1837, vii). At the north-western end the building is terminated by the Great Parlour with its prominent lateral and offset chimney-stack. The outshot with a solitary tiny window lies under the oversailing hall roof and the structure in the angle between the hall and solar wing has a small window downstairs and two upstairs of which that overlooking the outshot roof was blocked-up when a second storey was added to the outshot. Its outline has long been visible in the plasterwork inside the house, however, and its presence recently revealed during conservation work on the fabric. Two windows are shown on the north wall of the kitchen where only one now exists, clearly an error as further evidence, *infra*, will show. The chimney and roof of the dining room block are just visible.

In an almost contemporary edition, Blyth (1836, xi) illustrates the façade and shows but a tiny loft opening or dormer to the roof space over the hall, whereas in later illustrations two dormer windows appear. This not only predates the dormers shown in 1851 and 1853 (Fig 6a) but suggests, as the most likely explanation, that these may have been a modification introduced by Bell. In turn they were replaced, presumably after Bell's time, by the three dormers visible today (Fig 1), although it should be noted that Jardine (1853) appears to show three dormers. The possibility that the absence of a third dormer in those illustrations showing only two dormers is to be explained by the

obliqueness of the view, must not be overlooked. At ground-floor level, the outline of the Great Parlour, illustrated by Blyth, suggests that it was continuous with the hall, which was clearly not so, for not only do later illustrations show it to be offset, but the measured plan (Fig 1) confirms that it projects c 0.40 metre. In addition, the windows illustrated by Blyth in the Great Parlour are not on the same level as those of the hall. These are considerable inaccuracies which cast doubt on the accurate representation of the single dormer. That such an obvious feature should be incorrect seems unlikely, but must remain a possibility. Sadly there is no known earlier illustration of the front of the house.

The 1813 edition of *The natural history and antiquities of Selborne* has a series of illustrations by J Harris of which that of the Wakes from the rear is of excellent quality (White 1813, ix). It shows hall, outshot, solar wing, dining room wing and chimneys, the Great Parlour and the stair turret. The evidence confirms that the outshot had but one window in the rear, a window in the end wall, facing the Great Parlour, and a small light above. The Great Parlour has two sash windows, is of one storey, fully-hipped and has raised and dentil courses below the eaves. This then is the appearance of the Great Parlour known to have been added by White in 1777 (Holt-White 1901, II, 9).

The solar wing is shown as at present, with one casement window on the ground-floor side wall and two on the first. In the gable facing the park there is one window to each floor and an extra light in the loft just below the gablet. The two iron casement windows in the lateral wall are certainly not later than 1800 and probably pre-1700. The stair turret has a round-headed doorway, perhaps an exaggeration of the arched brick lintel, opening to the garden, and one casement window above. The roof of the stair turret extends to merge with the adjacent hall and solar roofs (Fig 7).

We thus have a very accurate impression of the front and rear elevations, and the ground plan, of the early nineteenth-century house. The chief uncertainty is the nature of the second projection from the dining room block to the

south-east. That this was some kind of porch or entrance is the most plausible explanation.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Gilbert White's life, and his occupation of the Wakes, falls entirely within the eighteenth century and it is chiefly to his journals and to the *Garden Kalendar* that we must turn for evidence of

the house as he knew it. White became absolute owner of the Wakes only in March 1763 when his uncle Charles, rector of Bradley, died, and the deed is endorsed in Gilbert's handwriting 'Copy for the Wakes my dwelling house' (Holt-White 1901, I, 125–6; Bell 1877, xxxvii). White bequeathed his (copyhold) 'dwelling-house and appurtenances known formerly by the name of Wakes' to his brother Benjamin (Holt-White

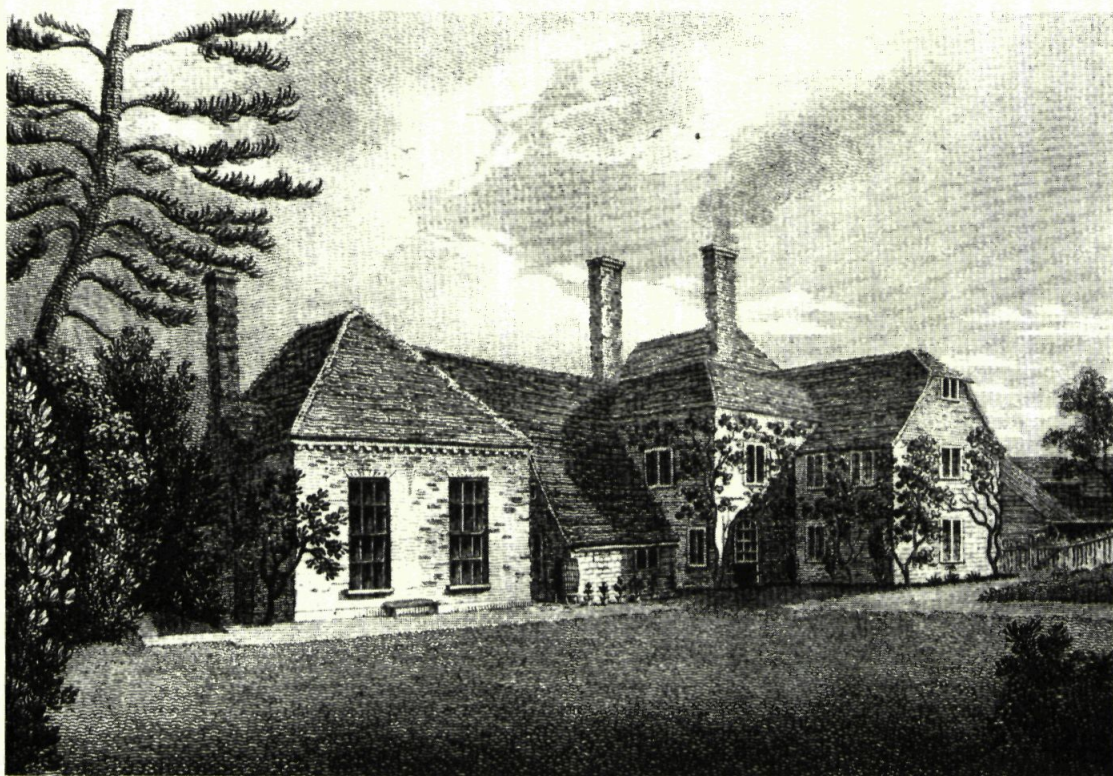


Fig 7. The Wakes from the west c 1813 (from White, G 1813, vol 1 p. ix).

1901, II, 273). It was to continue in the White family, his niece Mary White, only daughter of Benjamin White senior, living there until her death in 1839 (Johnson 1931, xlv; Holt-White 1901, II, 282), until the Revd Glyd White disposed of 'all that messuage or tenement and dwelling house coachhouse stables and offices thereto belonging garden orchard and the pleasure ground and meadow land . . .' to Thomas Bell on 15 June 1844.

White died in 1793 and the only illustration of the house made during his lifetime is that by Grimm, from the meadow (or Park) and dated 1776, now in Harvard College Library, reproduced in Clay (1941, 74) and in the 1975 facsimile edition of the *Garden Kalendar* (White 1975, frontispiece). Both Clay (1941, 37–41) and White (Holt-White 1901, I, 326) were satisfied with the accuracy of Grimm's work, and comparison of his illustrations with those parts

of the buildings that have survived unchanged from the latter part of the eighteenth century, shows that Grimm was extremely observant of architectural detail and accurate in its recording. It is thus probably safe to accept the detail, important in this case as the artist shows only part of the house, the south-western end with the solar wing, the single-storey projection and the 'stair-turret', the only illustration showing this latter feature with a pyramidal roof. The joining of the pyramidal roof to that of the solar took place later. Whether Bell was responsible for the insertion of the present staircase at this point, between the dining room and the kitchen, remains uncertain, but is a possibility. Grimm shows the solar wing with a window to the attic room, lighted also by a dormer in the north-west, and, of course, the solar itself and the ground-floor room both with windows. Other details worthy of mention are the garden doorway with its shallow arched lintel and a large window lighting the upper storey of the stair turret.

For a full view of the rear of the house it is necessary to turn to the illustration made for the Third Edition of White's book in 1813 by Harris, described above, and reproduced in Fig 7. Harris' illustration may thus be taken as representing the rear of the building as White knew it for there is no evidence that the family made any changes to the rear after Gilbert's death. The essential features are worth recalling: the solar wing with casements suggesting a date before c 1700, the stair turret, whose roof line joins adjacent roofs, perhaps a modification made between 1776 and 1813, the Great Parlour with its two large sash windows and the hall with its roof oversailing the outshot. Beyond the hall can be seen the dining room wing of c 1794 with its chimneys. From this Harris engraving it is quite clear that there never was any building, extension or wing, north of the Great Parlour.

There are two significant changes to the house during the eighteenth century. The second, and larger, modification involved the destruction of that part of the house south of the hall and the construction of a new dining room wing. Unfortunately no details of the building works survive but the date of the structure is generally con-

firmed by the architectural style. It is a matter of speculation as to why the work was carried out immediately after Gilbert's death, for there is no evident increase in the size of the family at this point, except, of course, that the property had been inherited by his brother Benjamin whose family it would have had to accommodate from time to time. The house had often been very full before, however, as White himself testified. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that this modernization had long been persistently opposed by Gilbert White, who preferred to live out his days in the house as he had known it. He was of a generally conservative disposition and took long enough to make a decision to proceed with the erection of the Great Parlour. Another factor may have been the economic one. White was careful by nature and may neither have wished, nor been able to afford, such a large addition; his brother Benjamin on inheriting the property may have been both better able to finance the construction and motivated to do it. Unfortunately we are unlikely ever to know the details.

The second great change during this century was the addition of the Great Parlour which White chronicled in some detail. Notwithstanding his long periods of residence in Selborne, Gilbert White, moving as he did in the social circles of the minor gentry, and familiar as he would have been with the architectural fashions of his day, if only from his visits to Oxford and London, may well have long wished for the comforts and spaciousness of a Great Parlour. A letter to his brother, the Revd John White, tells of his desire, as early as 1773, and for a second time in 1774, but later in 1774 he still had not made up his mind (Holt-White 1901, I, 216, 242, 251). In a subsequent letter to John, dated 9 March 1775, he wrote that 'Building is very infectious and catching; I am so pleased with Harry's new parlour, that I want to go home and build one' (Holt-White 1901, I, 281). About the middle of 1777 these desires took a practical form. On 2 June White records 'some alterations previous to the building of my parlor' and then on 6 June, 'began to build the walls of my parlor, which is 23 feet & half by 18 feet; & 12 feet high & 3 inch' and became 'a man plunged

into mortar' (Johnson 1931, 138; Holt-White 1901, II, 14). The season was an unusually wet one, 'winter-like: we are obliged to keep fires' and building was frequently interrupted and, in addition, that the 'brick-burner has received great damage among his ware that was drying by the continual rains' (Johnson 1931, 138, 139). Further interruption is reported on 21 July, but on 1 August White 'Reared the roof' of his new building and on 7 August recorded that he had 'Finished the chimney of my parlor: it measures 30 feet from the hearth to the top' (Johnson 1931, 140-141). Tiling was complete on 30 August 'just before the rains came', sashes were put in on 7 November and the following day the first coat of plaster was put on 'the battin work & ceiling' (Johnson 1931, 142, 145). Flooring began on 27 November when 'Began planing the floor-battins for my new parlor: they are very fine, & without knots; 500 feet'. On 11 December, the plasterer began the cornice of my new parlor' and on Christmas Eve 'the plasterers put a finishing hand to the ceiling, cornice, and side-plaster-work of my great parlor. The latter is done on battin-work standing-out 3 inches from the walls' (Johnson 1931, 146). The drying process of the new room was apparently long drawn-out, for White writes on New Year's Day 1778 that 'Fires are made every day in my new parlour: the walls sweat much' And again the following day that 'There is reason to fear that the plasterer has done a mischief to the last coat of my battin-plaster that should carry the paper of my room by improvidently mixing *wood ashes* with the mortar; because the *alkaline salts* of the wood will be very long before they will be dry at all, & will be apt to relax & turn moist again when foggy damp weather returns. If any ashes at all he should have used *sea-coal*, & not *vegetable ashes*; but a mixture of loam and horses dung would have been best'. By 19 February he was able to write that 'The dry air crisps my plaster in the new parlor'. On 13 June he 'finished laying the floor of my great parlor' and on 30 June that he had 'Finished-off my great parlor, & hung the door. The ceiling & sides are perfectly dry' (Johnson 1931, 148, 149, 152, 153). On 13 April 1778 he recorded in a letter to his sister that his

'great parlor grate and fender are arrived and seem proper for the place' (Holt-White 1901, II, 25) and then on 17 April that the 'new parlor now dries at a great rate; and will be fit for use at Midsumr, but I shall not be able to compleat it this summer. I must not put on my upper paper 'til another year' (Holt-White 1901, II, 26). Yet on 3 July 1778 he 'began to inhabit my new parlor' (Holt-White 1901, II, 27). It was not until 11 July 1780 that White finished his Great Parlor 'by hanging curtains, & fixing the looking-glass'. The wall-papering had been completed on 2 June (Johnson 1931, 173, 174).

The bills giving accounts of the building are recorded in some detail by Holt-White (1901, II, 50-51). The foreman bricklayer was George Kemp, the 'rubbing bricks from Harting comb' costing 16s 10½d a thousand. Most of the timber came from Winchester. A chimney-piece '23 foot 7 ins of superfishal white and vained Italian marble' was set up in July 1778 and a 'large fine bath stove grate' added a little later. Finally the room was papered with 'a flock sattin paper' costing £9 15s 0d, and the looking-glass bought in London for £9 19s 0d. The Great Parlour was later partitioned, probably not by Bell, when the library was built, but by a later occupant towards the end of the nineteenth century, to make a corridor from the hall to the library. This passage was re-incorporated into the Great Parlour which thus re-assumed its original shape, by Andrew Pears (Scott 1950, 182).

For evidence of other rooms in the house of White's time, it is necessary to rely on occasional references in the *Journals*, the *Garden Kalendar*, Holt-White's biography, and the published letters. Writing to his sister, Mrs Barker, on 2 September 1778, White comments that his 'great parlor is now of singular service; but while it is so empty the echo is very troublesome. I have a new bed in my little red room, and have put my old white bed up in my late drawing-room, where I lie as you ordered me' (Bell 1877, II, 135; Holt-White 1901, II, 28). Bell comments that this 'late drawing-room' was the room in which White died, and Holt-White that it was on the first floor over the kitchen. White's description of it as his 'late drawing-

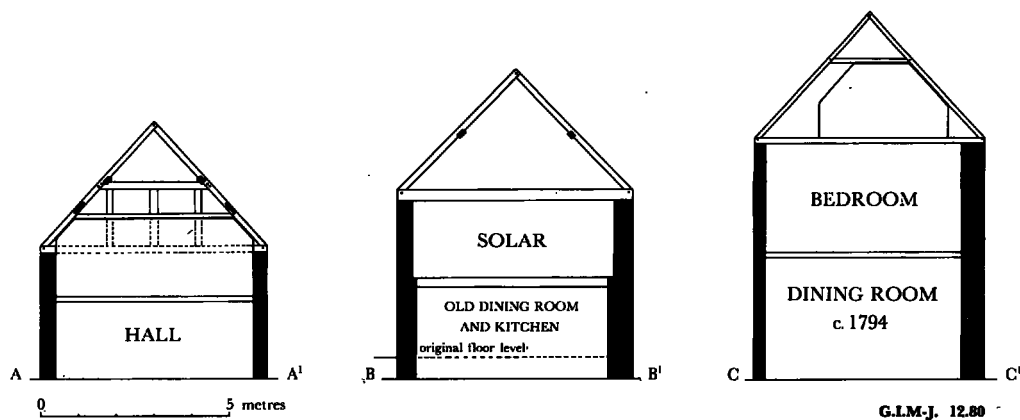


Fig 8. The Wakes: sections (see Fig 1a for positions).

room' is sufficient to identify it as the solar, the upper room of the solar wing with its view over the Park to the hanger. Holt-White later refers to the solar as the 'old family parlour'. This evidence is important also for identifying the location of the kitchen, the ground-floor room of the same wing. It is consequently virtually certain that the small single-storey projection to this kitchen, illustrated by Bell (Fig 4), is the scullery and always performed that function until its demolition and incorporation into the extension at the southern end of the house. There is, however, some danger of confusion in terminology, for in July 1780 White was complaining that 'crickets swarm in my kitchen-chimney, and have bored thro' into the common parlor' (Johnson 1931, 175). Now the location of the kitchen chimney, which survives (Fig 1), is clear so we may conclude that the common parlour lay immediately next to it, and that it thus formed a room next to the hall at the southern end of the house. It also follows that the passage now separating the old kitchen and the dining room of c. 1794 was not then present, nor was the staircase which opens off that passage. These must date not earlier than the building of the dining room. Later in 1780 White observes that at 'two o'clock in the shortest days the shades of my kitchen and hall-chimnies fall just on the middle of the window of J. Carpenter's workshop; & the shade of the

chimney of my great parlor just in the midst of John Hall's side-front' (Johnson 1931, 181). These were his 'two old chimneys' (Johnson 1931, 183), the common parlour evidently sharing a chimney with the hall as would be expected. As the Great Parlour chimney was then new, it must follow that there were no other old chimneys of significance, the short chimney to the scullery presumably not counting. It is probably to the common parlour, rather than to the great parlour that White is referring when he writes of the need to light 'a fire in the parlor' during the summers of 1782 and 1783, a room normally unheated in summer (Johnson 1931, 210, 221, 241). It is probably also to this common parlour that White is referring when, having narrowed the flue of his Great Parlour chimney, it has a draught equal to that of the 'old parlor' (Johnson 1931, 302). At a later date White calls it the 'brown parlor' into which have come 'multitudes of flying ants, . . . from under the stairs' (Johnson 1931, 342). The staircase at this period must also then have lain adjacent to this common parlour, or room to the south of the hall. That the term 'parlour' continued to be used for both rooms is shown by a reference of 18 September 1789 when White 'began to light fires in the parlors' (Johnson 1931, 344).

Further attention must now be given to the kitchen. In a letter to his brother, the Revd John White, of 9 March 1775, Gilbert writes that he

has 'just dug away forty loads of earth from the end of my kitchen, and have now set my house above ground in all parts' (Holt-White 1901, I, 281). Notwithstanding this work, where the lower slopes of Baker's Hill reach the house, which is still evident, the kitchen remains low-lying in relation to the ground outside. Further evidence of the kitchen and its relationship to other parts of the house is forthcoming and insects continue to appear from time to time. 'Several little black ants appear about the kitchen-hearth. These must be the same that are seen annually in hot weather on the stairs, with which some how they have communication thro' a thick wall, or under the pavement, into the middle of the house' (Johnson 1931, 158). 'When the servants have been gone to bed some time, & the kitchen left dark, the hearth swarms with young crickets about the size of ants' (Johnson 1931, 205). That the kitchen was stone paved is evident from the above and this paving extended into the 'entry', for 'the stone pavement in some parts of the entry & kitchen sweated & stood in drops of water' during a storm on 18 June 1782 (Johnson 1931, 206). This entry must be that leading to the garden door in the stair turret.

If the staircase was 'in the middle of the house' and had a window (Johnson 1931, 153, 179), its location must have been in the stair turret during White's time, for a newel stair next to the chimney-stack between the hall and the common parlour cannot have had a window. The stair turret has two upper windows, one facing the garden, and one, now blocked, but still visible, in the interior plasterwork, which looked out across the outshot. That these stairs were in this turret is further suggested by the fact that a violent hail-storm of 20 March 1788 'filled the gutter, & came in & flooded the stair-case'. This would most likely have occurred where the turret joined the roofs on two sides.

That the common room of White's time was still the hall is shown by his continued use of the term 'hall' (Johnson 1931, 198), although it may already have been changing its function. It was entered by a doorway from the street, probably centrally-placed as shown in Bell's day (Fig 5)

and adorned on each side by 'two basons . . . for passion-flowers' (White 1975, 10). The kitchen was undoubtedly used by the servants as a 'common' room for White mentions that the hearth there swarms with minute crickets 'after the servants have gone to bed' (Johnson 1931, 350). That cupboards existed in some of these rooms is illustrated by the reference to chimney-closets. There was also a pantry in the house, and in October 1759 White was planting lettuces against the buttery wall (White 1975, 98). These two service rooms, buttery and pantry, can only have been in the outshot. Other references to room use include a cellar and a kitchen-closet, the latter presumably a cupboard (Johnson 1931, 254) and wine vault is referred to in 1780 (Johnson 1931, 176). The latter is probably that under the Great Parlour of 1777. The cellar under the dining room may predate the structure of c 1794 and may have lain under the previous wing here.

Numerous other references provide further clues. White slept upstairs for he refers to his 'chamber' in 1782 and 1786 (Johnson 1931, 202, 287). On 29 June 1758 the parlour and the study are spoken of as if they were two distinct places. His father was then still alive and the parlour referred to is almost certainly the old family parlour, alias drawing room, alias solar (White 1975, 54), but White gives no clue as to the whereabouts of the study. He refers also to his father's window, again presumably in the solar (White 1975, 49, 50). The dining room receives frequent mention, usually because White is planting flowers 'under the dining-room windows' (White 1975, 96, 108, 156) and when on 19 October 1759 he finished 'a broad brick-walk through ye new wicket at the end of the dining room' (White 1975, 97) and planted cos lettuces touching the wall along the vine border under the dining-room window (White 1975, 97), it is impossible to believe that this is other than the kitchen and that the two names dining room and kitchen were used synonymously. Planting under the dining room window continued, and there are several further references (White 1975, 98, 102). There were vines at the end of the dining room (White 1975, 103, 104, 106, 107) and again over the entry door from the

garden (White 1975, 103). That it was necessary to plant crocuses 'round the dining room' (White 1975, 109) confirms that it was this corner room, the kitchen, which in White's time had a window facing south as well as one facing the hanger, with a doorway in between leading to the scullery (Fig 1). If further confirmation were needed we have the evidence of January 1765 that the winter sun 'just before setting, shines plumb into the Dining room chimney'. This dining room, alias kitchen, is thus confirmed as the ground-floor room beneath the solar.

The study poses greater problems for although White occasionally refers to his study, it is not entirely clear where it lay. In November 1759 he refers to hanging up grapes 'in the study'. It may be that the study was synonymous with the common parlour, and lay in the wing which preceded the dining room block of c 1794. Such a wing may have been a structural cross-wing, or it may have been on the same axis as the hall. In the latter case, the wing may have been only one room deep. If, however, as is possible, this end of the house took the form of a structural cross-wing, then it could have been two rooms deep, allowing of a separate study as well as a common parlour. However, Bell (1877), in his caption to the frontispiece to Vol. II of his edition of White's book, offers the information that the *Natural history* . . . was written in the room to which the 'small lower window between the first and second rail-posts belongs' (Fig. 5). If correct, this statement is of twofold significance. Firstly, it implies that Gilbert White's study was on the first-floor, adjacent to the solar, its window looking out over the stable yard, and, secondly, that the dining room wing of c 1794 partially incorporates the pre-existing structure of which the study was a part. The alignment of the walls in relation to the cellar suggests this (Fig 9) and it seems likely that the 1794 wing consists of the rebuilding, on the same plan, of a wing which, like the adjacent solar wing, may have been of Malmstone, perhaps itself replacing an even earlier timber-frame wing. Walls were certainly raised in 1794 and the front re-faced in brick but the south-west wall of the dining room, however,

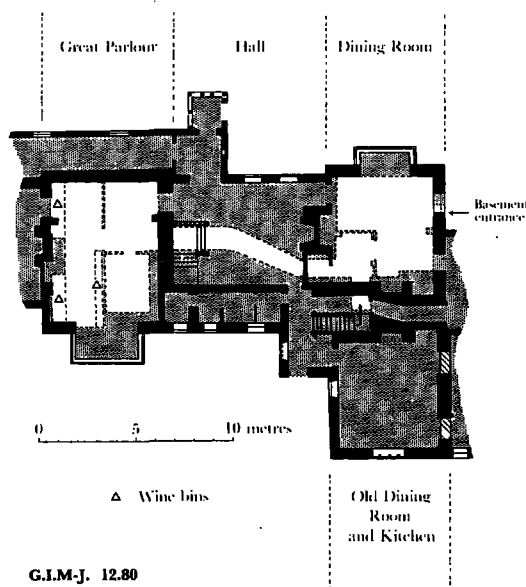


Fig 9. The Wakes: a plan of the cellars.

was probably newly aligned and built to incorporate a chimney. The construction, or possibly the re-alignment, of the through-passage to the stable yard dates from this period. It is over this passage, which almost certainly occupies the position of a former ground-floor room, that White's study seems to have lain. Unfortunately it was destroyed when later additions at the southern end of the house made it necessary to have a corridor at first-floor level also. It was from the room at the south-eastern corner, rather than from the hall, from which the view is too oblique, that White found the sight of the 'Blood, & filth from the Windows' too much for his sensibilities and 'planted four limes in the Butcher's yard' opposite as a screen. A structural cross-wing would also have provided a considerable amount of room upstairs, and possibly in the roof too as would have been necessary since his manservant Thomas had his own room and there were, at times, numerous members of the family, and others also, to be accommodated. That some of these rooms lay in the roof space is demonstrated by references to a lumber garret provided with a window (White

1775, 19, 37, 106, 108). In 1776 White also wrote to his brother Thomas that he had 'just ceiled and am fitting up a garret for any young person I may have with me that there may be more room for Molly and yourself when you come' (Holt-White 1901, II, 321). The plan of the late eighteenth-century house, including the new dining room built shortly after White's death, is shown in Fig 10.

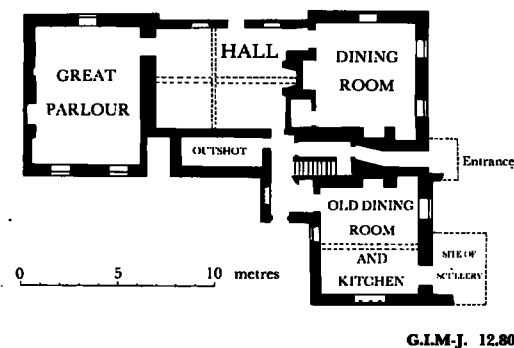


Fig 10. The Wakes: the ground floor plan of the late eighteenth-century house.

Sanitation in eighteenth-century England was still virtually non-existent in the countryside. Most English farmhouses and cottages would have had neither bathroom nor lavatory indoors before the nineteenth century and many would have had no organized provision outdoors either. The Whites, minor gentry for several generations, may have been accustomed to the provision of a garderobe in certain country houses and in the Oxford colleges. Be that as it may, at the Wakes they enjoyed the facility of a 'little-house', or 'necessary' which White disguised with ivy and, a few days later, with thirteen laurels (White 1975, 22). The space needed for such camouflage suggests that it was perhaps located to the south-west of the house, in the garden towards the stable yard. On 29 November 1762 he was planting tulips in the border 'by the necessary'. By the end of March 1765 he placed elms to screen 'Will: Carpenter's necessary house' and planted 'five large laurels in a curve to screen my own which I propose to move to the Corner next Parson's Yard to

conceal my own from the street' (White 1975, 180). Whether he moved it or not, he again found the need to plant 'two more fan-elms at the back of the necessary-house' in March 1766 (White 1975, 208).

Of the other outbuildings, we have references to the erection of a new stable in December 1764 (White 1975, 191), presumably that building which still survives, and a barn which White moved in April 1766 to the upper end of the orchard with the assistance of eight men: evidently a timber-frame structure (White 1975, 210), and there was of course his brew-house with its date-stone inscribed 'G.W. 1765' (Fig 1).

That White repaired his house from time to time is shown by an occasional reference as in August 1744 when we find him 'mending my tiling and pointing against winter' (Holt-White 1901, I, 261) and on 30 October 1789, he 'new coped the top of my kitchen chimney, mending the tiling, & toached the inside of the roofing to keep out the drifting snow' (Johnson 1931, 348). Toach (torch) means to point the inside with plaster, lime and hair, or, in former times, with cow dung.

THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

For the earlier history of the house it is necessary to turn to an examination of the fabric of the building itself and to the archaeological evidence of walling and roof structure. The plan of the house (Fig 1) in the early-eighteenth century is now clear. It consisted of a hall with an outshot at the rear containing buttery and pantry and, extending south-eastwards from the hall, a wing or extension containing one or more additional rooms, probably only one, serving as parlour. Both this wing and the hall had bedrooms, or chambers, above. Adjoining the parlour unit and extending south-westwards into the garden was the solar wing, with a dining-room-cum-kitchen on the ground floor, solar at first-floor level and a garret chamber in the roof above. In the angle between the hall and the solar wing lay the stair turret. The rear elevation of the house at this stage of its development is well-illustrated by Grimm who also

shows, of course, the Great Parlour of 1777 (Clay 1941, 74). There is no reason to believe that any change was made to this house between *c* 1700 and 1777 when White added the Great Parlour to the north western, or lower, end of the hall.

Careful examination of the fabric of the stair turret strongly indicates that it is the result of two distinct periods of construction. It is built of Malmstone rubble with red-brick quoins. The existing doorway and window surrounds have every indication of being original. In the north-western wall lies a blocked-up window whose outline has long been evident in the plasterwork at the head of the stairs and the whole lintel and outline were recently further revealed during the course of restoration work. This window was obviously blocked-up when the outshot was given a second storey. The top three quoins, of brickwork, are evidently later in date than the lower ones and the corresponding masonry is also different than that below, being formed of smaller blocks more closely laid. Recent removal of plaster from the interior wall surface has made it possible to confirm this change of stonework. The stair turret has evidently been heightened. The existence of brick quoins in the stair turret above both the line of the solar wall, and that of the outshot, also indicates that the turret was once free-standing as shown in the Grimm drawing, above, which illustrates a pyramidal roof. If this interpretation is correct, and there seems no reason to doubt it, there remains the question of when the turret was heightened and its roof extended and tied in to the roofs of the Hall and solar, as seen today. The most probable date is *c* 1794 when the dining room block was built, the floor levels of which are out of phase with those of solar wing, the rooms being loftier. An additional short flight of stairs was thus needed to gain access to the first floor of the dining room block. This is also the most likely date for the construction of the present staircase in this part of the house, between the solar wing and the dining room, opening off the passage which separates the two and which, as has been shown, was not present in White's time. Thus the present stairs must replace those of White's house which were presumably housed within the stair turret itself.

The solar wing is plain of detail but retains its original iron casement windows as does the stair turret. The form of both structures and their detail is strongly reminiscent of seventeenth century Hampshire vernacular architecture and it would seem reasonable to ascribe both to the second half of the seventeenth century, probably nearer to 1700 than to 1650. The roof of the solar wing is of the tie-beam truss type. Rafters are of uniform scantling, halved and pegged at the apex with the purlins halved into the rafters (Fig 8). This type of roof has a wide date span not inconsistent with a later seventeenth-century date for this part of the house. The building of the solar wing would necessitate a stairway and the provision of a stair turret of this kind is wholly consistent with the dignity of the solar, and not unknown in English houses of seventeenth-century date and of the social level of the prosperous yeoman farmer or minor gentry (see, for example, Old Road Farmhouse, Hastings, also with a stair turret in the angle between hall and cross-wing, illustrated by Mercer 1975, 211). A family such as the Whites would be familiar with the provisions of English country houses and also those at Oxford colleges. If not necessarily quick to adopt prevailing fashions, the Whites must at least have been aware of them. Whilst there is not a shred of evidence to suggest that a member of the family was responsible for the building of the solar wing and stair turret, indeed they may have been built before the Revd Gilbert White, the naturalist's grandfather, came to Selborne in 1681, they were constructed by someone of similar social status and pretensions. The house before *c* 1650, thus consisted of hall and parlour with an outshot at the rear of the hall under an oversailing roof. Of such a plan are many of the more substantial vernacular houses of the Hampshire-Sussex border: the classic three-unit plan in a particular form in which the service rooms, pantry and buttery, instead of being located at the lower end of the hall, are contained in a rear outshot. A number of similar examples survive still in Selborne parish. It is interesting to note here that the remains of the common rafters of the outshot roof survive the masonry of the outside wall, sawn-off and left in place when the storey

was added to the outshot at the end of the nineteenth century, recently to be revealed during restoration work. It remains now to demonstrate whether this was the 'original', or earliest, recognizable house.

Examination of the roof structure of the hall suggests that the carpentry is indeed 'original'. The hall is of low elevation and its upper rooms are largely contained in the roof space, up to collar level, with dormer windows to provide light, exactly the kind of arrangement one might expect from an open medieval hall subsequently modernized by the insertion of a ceiling to divide it into two storeys. The front wall of the hall is thin and almost certainly of timber-frame, although only a stripping of the interior plaster, or the external cement rendering and brick casing, would enable this fact to be proved. The rear wall is almost certainly of timber frame and the stub of one timber post survives under the main cross-beam of the present hall ceiling. The three hall roof trusses are of the queen-post type with the rafters of equal scantling halved and pegged at the apex (Fig 8). The lateral purlins are clasped between rafters and collar and longitudinal support is provided by straight wind braces. There is no evidence whatever of the tarring of the timbers associated with long exposure to wood smoke from an open fire although there has been an accidental fire in the roof as some heavily burnt rafters testify. Nevertheless, in both structure and form, the roof is representative of the last throes of medieval carpentry and an early-sixteenth date is likely, say, c 1500–1525. The hall chimney, however, lies, not within the second bay of the two-bay hall, but beyond the south-easternmost truss in a compartment 1.14 metres deep. That this stack once served both hall and parlour there can be little doubt, although it should be noted that it is of two builds, but it is uncertain whether the hall stack is contemporary with the early-sixteenth century hall or whether it is an addition. If the latter, the compartment could have been a smoke bay, but once again there is no trace of any staining. Perhaps the explanation is that the house was provided with a smoke bay into which a chimney was immediately, or almost immediately inserted. Alterna-

tively, any smoke-stained plaster might have been removed or destroyed at the time of insertion of the chimney. The parlour was probably unheated at first, a hearth and chimney being added some time after the hall chimney was built, as the above evidence suggests.

Another piece of evidence to which attention must be drawn is the existence of a box-scarf in each of the lateral purlins about 20 centimetres short of the truss next to the hall chimney. It is unlikely that the carpenter would have made these at this point unless he intended the purlin to pass considerably beyond the end of the hall, i.e., into the roof of the parlour whether that room were continued on the same axis, or whether it took the form of a cross-wing. The box-scarf thus provided further evidence of the former existence of a further unit at this end. It also suggests that such a unit was contemporary with the hall, and not built afterwards.

The provision of a ceiling to the hall may not have been of much later date. Probably the original hall had both an enclosed hearth and chimney and yet was at the same time open to the roof, at least for several decades. Such an arrangement would be entirely consistent with the early sixteenth-century period of transition from the medieval to the modern house. Part of the ceiling of the hall was cut away when the main staircase was constructed in the later-nineteenth century, but the main longitudinal beam carries a stepped run-off chamfer stop of the type known to students of vernacular architecture as a 'Wern-hir' stop. This feature would be entirely consistent with the insertion of a ceiling, c 1600.

The position of the entrance doorway at this early date is uncertain. It may have lain in the position it occupied during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, i.e., midway along the wall (Fig 5) but this seems unlikely. In medieval and early-modern houses, the doorway would almost certainly have been at the lower end, that is in the position it now occupies. It thus seems that in changing the position of the doorway in the early-twentieth century, Andrew Pears restored it to its original late-medieval position. The sash windows of the hall are, of course, an eighteenth-century feature and replace whatever

lights were previously there.

Two other features demand consideration, the staircase and cellars. The location of the original stairs to the upper rooms, needed for access to the rooms over the hall after *c* 1600 and probably before that for access to rooms over the parlour, is not proven, but a newel stair probably occupied the space next to the chimney-stack now occupied by a cupboard in the dining room and clearly visible on the south-western side of the hearth (Fig 1). At that period the parlour hearth would have lain back-to-back with that of the hall, the two flues sharing a common stack, which, as has been suggested, is clearly of two builds. When the dining room of *c* 1794 was constructed the former fireplace was turned into the display alcove which still survives, and a hearth and chimney built backing on to the new passage separating the dining room from the solar wing, and designed to provide direct access from the hall to the stable yard.

A wine cellar under the Great Parlour is the easiest to explain and must date from the construction of that room although White makes no mention of a cellar at the time of construction, he does later allude to one. The cellar fits closely the line of the Great Parlour walls and it is unthinkable that it was excavated to fit so closely after the building of the Great Parlour itself. It can thus safely be dated to 1777 since there was no building previously on that site. The cellar under the dining room end fits less closely (Fig 9) and almost certainly dates from before *c* 1794. The Great Parlour cellar has access from the latter by a tunnel under the hall. At what stage this tunnel was built, and the original stone paving of the hall removed and boards laid, we do not know, but it may have been in 1777. Such a tunnel is only likely to have been constructed if the other cellar previously existed. Other reasons for suspecting that the 'dining room' cellar was already in existence are that there is a well in its floor close to the street wall, possibly the 'original' well of the house, and because its outlines do not fit those of the dining room exactly, suggesting that they may reflect the lines of the earlier parlour. The closest fit is along the outside walls where it

would most be expected. It seems likely that the line of the walls of the dining room, along the street frontage, of *c* 1794, follows those of the earlier structure. There is also the possibility that an earlier cellar may have been enlarged in *c* 1794. The ground-floor plan of the late eighteenth-century house is illustrated in Fig 10.

CONCLUSIONS

Although some uncertainties remain, it is now possible to say with some confidence that the original house was a three-unit structure consisting of hall and parlour, with service rooms contained in a rear outshot under an oversailing roof. It is unlikely that there was ever a centrally-placed 'open' hearth in the middle of the hall, but there is a possibility of an original open hearth at the upper end of the hall with a smoke bay above to permit the evacuation of smoke, this to be quickly superseded by a chimney-stack. This house can safely be dated to *c* 1500 on the basis of a roof structure which represents the end of the medieval tradition. The hall of this original house was open to the roof but *c* 1600 a ceiling was inserted to create the two-storey unit we know today. The parlour end may have enjoyed two storeys from the start. At some stage during the sixteenth century a hearth and chimney were built in the parlour backing on to the pre-existing hall chimney-stack. Access to the upper rooms above the parlour, and later to those above the hall, was by a narrow staircase next to the chimney-stack.

The next addition to the house was the building, probably towards the end of the seventeenth century of the solar wing which necessitated an additional stair to provide access to the solar on the first floor. This stair was contained in a stair turret and for a time probably duplicated the original staircase. A kitchen and scullery occupied the ground floor of this new wing. It was this house that the White family purchased and occupied for nearly a century and a half. During Gilbert White's occupancy the Great Parlour was constructed in 1777 and the cellar under his common parlour, that is, the room beyond the hall, duplicated by the provision of another cellar under the new extension. The

linking tunnel may date from this period or it may represent a nineteenth-century modification. Immediately after White's death in 1793 his family demolished the accommodation south of the hall and replaced it with the dining room of c 1794 which we know today. This house in 1844 became the home of Professor Thomas Bell who almost immediately added a single-storey library beyond the Great Parlour to the north, the only change he appears to have made to the house during his lifetime. After Bell's death in 1880 the house had a rapid succession of owners who, between them, changed a very attractive multi-period vernacular building into a rambling country house. An upper storey was built over both the Great Parlour and the library, then a square bay window added to the former room, later to be extended to the bedroom above. These upper floors required access and a staircase was built into the hall, turning above the old outshot which then needed a second storey and new roof, thus doing away for ever with the great downward sweep of the oversailing hall roof. The outshot roof was modified in two stages. Additions were made to the southern end, presumably to provide accommodation for servants. These culminated in 1910 with the completion of this end of the house as it appears today. Meanwhile during the first decade of the twentieth century, the billiard

room was constructed at the northern end and the long corridor and porch added to the front of the house. A series of bedrooms and dressing rooms and bathrooms completed the upstairs. Thus was the building history of the Wakes completed, save for the recent internal changes by the Trustees, better to adapt the house as a museum to the memory of its most famous resident, the Revd Gilbert White.

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