

Lockner Holt

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Building in Focus

Chilworth

TQ0347

Lockner Holt, 1860

The Mathison clan originated in the western part of the County of Ross forming part of the ancient province of Err-a-Ghaël, or Argyll, the land being granted to the clan in about 1228. The family arms include the motto *Fac et Spera*, which translates as 'do and hope', and was included in some stained glass at Lockner Holt which was made by Hardman & Co in 1860. The motto had been adopted by a forebear John Matheson (sic) who fought on the side of Charles Stuart the Pretender to the British Throne, following the Earl of Cromarty, on the field of Culloden in April 1746. In 1838 a silver label which marked the small of the butt end of a musket was accidentally dug up by a labourer on the field of Culloden and this bore a crest with a hand dexter bearing a scimitar and the motto *Fac et Spera* and under it was inscribed 'John Matheson of Bennetsfield 10th April 1746'. The Highlander's mode of fighting was to fling away his musket after the first discharge and to rush on with his sword. In the normal way the firearm would be recovered after victory, identified by its label. John survived the battle, dying in 1768 at home at Bennetsfield House, and was buried in the family burial ground at Suddie, near Inverness.

It seems the young Archibald Mathison (b.1812) who was to grow up to be the owner of Lockner Holt spent his early years in Jamaica where his father owned a plantation at St Thomas in the East with 72 slaves. With the movement towards the abolition of slavery in the first quarter of the 19th century it became clear that there was no future for Europeans in the Caribbean, and Archibald's father Gilbert arranged for his son to be educated to fit him for a career as a Civil Servant in the East India Company. There was a huge demand for staff

as bureaucracy in India had dramatically increased as a result of commercial success, and of the Court of Directors' insistence that all details of commercial transactions be returned to London. The Civil Service was considered superior to the Army in both rank and reward and was a desirable and lucrative employment for sons of the British professional and commercial classes.



The fireplace in the entrance hall, with Gothic overmantel

In 1825 at the age of 13 years Archibald arrived at Charterhouse School and in 1829 was nominated a student of the East India College, Haileybury, the route through which recruits entered the Civil Service. After a successful year Archibald was appointed as a writer, the lowest echelon of the Company, for the Presidency of Fort St George in the East Indies. At this time, the early 1830's, there were roughly 40,000 Europeans, most of whom were British, living and prospering among what is estimated to have been about 150 million Indians. Of these Europeans 1,000 were East India Company Civil Servants, most of whom traded and speculated on the side. Probably the only Europeans not intending to fatten themselves on India's riches were the few

missionaries. The average civil servant was promoted according to a fairly routine pattern and reached a high position not necessarily through his best endeavours, but usually through the good fortune of possessing a strong constitution, which enabled him to resist the brutal climate, tropical diseases and to cope with the extraordinarily excessive dietary habits of the British at that time.

Working in the Madras Presidency Archibald followed the usual route of promotion, finally working his way up to the highly respected rank of Civil and Sessions Judge in Chittoor in 1852. Having acquired the Empire, economic greed turned to moral duty and the main concern of the British during this time was to regenerate India by the introduction of western technology and values, English education and social reform. As a British civil servant, standards of competency and respectability were high and Mr Mathison would have been burdened with enormous responsibilities and laboured under mountains of paperwork. By 1847, when he was the Collector and Magistrate in Vizagapatam, the area he would have been covering could have been as large as 3,000 square miles with a population of up to one million people.

His marriage to Caroline Cooke, whose ancestor was Sir George Cooke of Doncaster, led to the birth in India in 1848, of a daughter and, in 1851, of a son. In 1856 the family returned to England on leave; it was during the following year, while the family were still in England, that the ugly and catastrophic Indian Mutiny swept through Northern India. One result was that on 1 November 1858 the East India Company was abolished and the Crown and the British Government ruled India directly. Archibald's children were of an age when it was necessary to think about their education and the combination of these events was in all probability a deciding factor in Archibald resigning the service in February 1859 at the age of 47, with a civil annuity of £735 per annum. He promptly set about establishing himself in English

society and commissioned Henry Woodyer to design his mansion house, Lockner Holt, on land to the south-east of Guildford which he had purchased on a 99 year lease from the Duke of Northumberland on 8 September 1860.

In designing Lockner Holt in the Scottish Baronial style Woodyer incorporated an element of domestic Gothic, a highly moral style reflecting hard work and craftsmanship. After so many years in foreign lands the house would assert Archibald's national identity and would advertise his position of authority and dignity, and his solid Scottish morality. Religious piety was expressed in the addition of Gothic detail as for example in the trefoil-headed windows, stained glass roundels and in the crocketed and finialled Gothic overmantel on the massive marble fireplace in the entrance hall. Mathison's self confidence, a characteristic of the mid-Victorian country gentleman, is seen in the carved initials of the family members contained in quatrefoils of elaborately carved foliage on the stone dressed bay windows of the drawing room.

The marriage in 1537 of James V of Scotland and Madeleine de Valois, the daughter of the French King François 1, and, on her death a year later, his subsequent marriage to the French-born Mary of Guise, prompted an architectural style in Scotland

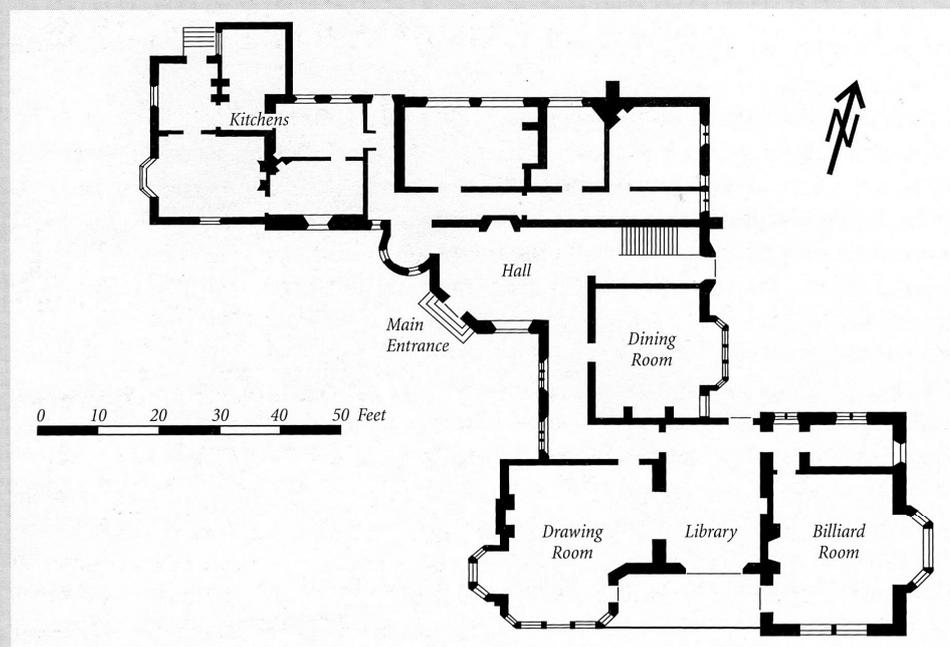
which adopted in modified form the French influences of the chateaux of the Loire Valley, combining these influences with the native round towers placed at the corners of the castles. Any ornamentation was concentrated at roof level where the buildings would blossom into conically roofed turrets and decorated dormers. Following the Romantic Movement of the early 19th century, the Scottish Baronial style was revived in a desire to find an expression of a national architecture, rejecting the former universal Italian style. The revived style included a mixture of Tudor and Jacobean influences resulting in a confection of castellated towers, bay windows, oriels, tall gables, circular turrets and tall chimneys. The defensive features of the original style were now pacified, corbelled upper stories recalled 'frowning cannon' and the hurling of burning oil and stones from battlemented parapets. Although it was a progressive age with new manufacturing processes and inventions, in architecture the trend was towards revival and imitation. The classic example of revived Scottish Baronial was Balmoral, acquired by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1848. It closely resembled Abbotsford owned by Sir Walter Scott whose novels had done so much to inspire the Romantic Movement, and particularly Scotland as an international tourist

attraction. Abbotsford became part of the tourist circuit and by the mid 1850s was receiving over 4,000 visitors a year.

Robert Kerr writing in 1864 refers to the effect of Scottish Baronial as being 'noble by association with ideas of power, albeit power of an obsolete order'. However, he concedes the 'uncivilised style' being acceptable where it is in harmony with the scenery of the 'beautiful heather-braes of Loch Lomond or the fir-woods or birch covered banks of the Dee', but laments the incongruity of such a style in an English village as 'a standing frown which no sunshine could brighten into beauty'.

Woodyer exploited an ideal position at the top of a hill, both from the point of view of the imposing effect of the house upon the landscape and for the occupants' view of the surrounding countryside. The hillside position was particularly suitable from the point of view of health, for the sandy soil would drain more efficiently. Surrey heathland was proving to be a popular and rich pasture for house building. An emphasis was placed on height and verticality, both considered important in giving dignity to a house, and the treatment of the roof gables and variation of shape endow the house with a dramatic and romantic skyline. Almost every gable has stepped sides, popular in Scotland and known as corbie-step. The lofty gable facing west, visible to an approaching visitor as he ascends the hill and turns into the carriage sweep, has four narrow slit windows conjuring an image of defence, which is further enhanced by the battlemented parapet on the entrance front, and the circular bell tower again with slit windows and a French style conical roof and corbelled eaves, these war-like features having been domesticated into purely decorative elements.

The 'Z'-shaped plan of Lockner Holt conformed to the established mode of five main rooms on the ground floor. The grand entrance hall would also have been used as a living room, freely available at all times of the day to guests and family members without any segregation of the sexes. The drawing room would have been used mainly



in the afternoon by the ladies of the house to receive their guests and to take tea. The library, which was not intended to be a reading room exclusively, but more of a communal sitting room, would have been a masculine contrast to the feminine drawing room. These two rooms would have been used freely by both sexes during the evenings or on the occasions when there were guests and were designed to interconnect.

The dining room, traditionally decorated in dark masculine colours, faces north-east to ensure the room never saw the sun. To the Victorians the chill of a sunless room was preferable to dining in the sun while dressed for dinner. The room was positioned a certain distance from the drawing room in order that the host and his guests could enjoy the formality of processing to dinner. The study and strong room would have been used exclusively by Mr Mathison and would have been his private sitting room, the garden door having been designed for him to receive business callers.

From the 1870s a billiard room became desirable for the entertainment of Victorian gentlemen, hence the addition in 1890 of a billiard room for the then owner of Lockner Holt, Mr J Bell, who was a retired asbestos manufacturer. The iron fireback in this room is dated 1890 and bears the initials JB. It is uncertain whether Woodyer was responsible for this addition.

On the first floor, approached by an oak staircase in the main hall, there were fifteen bed and dressing rooms, day and night nurseries, linen rooms and housemaids' closets. On the second floor there was a work room, two servants' bedrooms and attics. The large number of guest and staff bedrooms highlights the need to pander to the Victorian love of entertaining and the reliance on domestic staff. On the ground floor there were the usual domestic offices including a large kitchen, butler's pantry with strong room, housekeeper's room, scullery, servants' hall, larder, servants' WC and two manservants' bedrooms. Outside there were the coal store, store room, wood shed, dairy, knife room and boot lobby.

Although the mansion house was modest



Lockner Holt: the south-west front and main entrance

when compared with many built at the same period, it proved too large for private occupation but not large enough to convert for institutional purposes and in 1953 the house was divided vertically into three separate dwellings. The cottages and lodge which were part of the fifty acre estate were also sold at this time to separate owners.

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COUNTRY LIFE – MAY 13, 1954

THREE HOMES WITHIN A MANSION

by Katherine Ashworth



THE ENTRANCE FRONT OF THE AUTHOR'S SURREY HOUSE WHICH HAS BEEN SUBDIVIDED INTO THREE SEPARATE HOMES

UP and down the country are scores of large houses which, although not qualifying by any historic interest or architectural merit for a maintenance grant or tax concession, are yet, from long association, dear to the owners whose family background they have been often for generations, and who are now in increasing numbers being forced to part with them and seek other and generally less congenial accommodation.

After the usual long struggle to keep things going, in which the sale first of timber and then of land normally forms a part, the end finally comes, and owners reluctantly place their estates on the market. Even then their difficulties are by no means solved, as the number of such houses for sale greatly exceeds the demand, especially among mansions which, although too large for private occupation, are yet too small for institutional purposes. The owners, having

already depleted their estates of their most valuable assets, often find themselves in the position of having to accept what they consider a mere tithe of the value, or else holding out for the doubtful alternative of obtaining their price some day, while in the meantime the property deteriorates still further in condition and in value.

A typical example of such an estate is our own, which has a Victorian house of some 35 rooms, 5 cottages, 50 acres of land and a small farmery. By detailing a plan which we ourselves have carried out successfully, I hope to show that in the majority of similar cases estate owners may keep their homes and continue to enjoy their spacious rooms, pleasant surroundings and most of the old amenities, all on an economic basis which will make for far greater peace of mind than either the fruitless struggle to keep up the old way of life in its entirety, or the unhappy

necessity of starting a new one elsewhere.

Two years ago we had reached the stage when we no longer felt able to cope with the increasingly difficult staff problem, the upkeep of house, grounds, a long drive, the vast central-heating and hot-water systems, and the constant anxiety and expense of general maintenance on such a large scale. The estate was finally advertised for sale but we had no idea where we should live once it was sold. We knew only that we could never again hope to enjoy such a sense of space and beauty in both house and grounds. The best and final offer, still much below our stated figure, was made by a speculator whose intention it was to make a profit from the break-up of the house into flats and the estate itself into building plots and smallholdings, while he kept a portion of the house and grounds for his own use. After careful consideration we decided that what he could do we could ourselves undertake in a different and better way, and from his plan we evolved one of our own whereby we could keep the best part of our home without sacrificing our privacy, realise a capital sum by selling the more cumbersome and unwanted part of the building divided vertically into two good homes, and by this arrangement considerably reduce not only our staff requirements but also our running expenses, rates, repairs and general maintenance.



THE SOUTH FRONT OF THE HOUSE, WHICH THE AUTHOR AND HER HUSBAND HAVE RETAINED FOR THEIR OWN USE.

We decided to put our couple into one of the cottages, while we would let the other four cottages furnished, together with a bungalow to be constructed without much alteration from a well-built power-house no longer required since the installation of main electricity. The letting of the cottages would produce a useful rent roll and as they are all at a distance from the house with a separate exit from the estate we should be little disturbed by the coming and going of the

tenants.

With the co-operation of the firm of estate agents who had produced the speculator we drew up plans to place before the local council, and these showed that the house could be conveniently divided into three vertical portions.

Here it may be of benefit to others to mention, as the architect pointed out to us at the time, that large English houses were often designed in three sections: the central family house, the staff quarters and the entertaining and visitors block. It will generally be found that each portion makes one good house. Of course, further divisions can be made either vertically or horizontally, but to divide a house into too many portions destroys its atmosphere and the extra building work involved absorbs much of the extra profit.

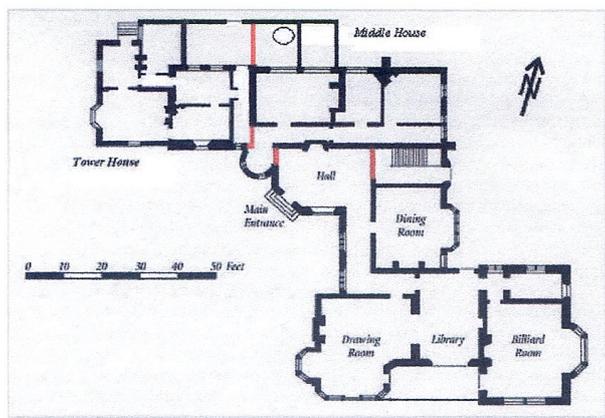
The three sections of the house—as shown on the accompanying plan—each had its own front door on a different side of the building. We ourselves would retain the main entrance together with the carriage sweep, and the whole of the front exterior of the house would be left untouched except that the two lower slit windows of the round tower would be slightly enlarged to let more south light into a north room in one of the other portions.

The entrance to the home converted from the staff quarters was through the former back door, which was replaced by a solid oak one set in an existing Gothic archway. Immediately inside was the old kitchen, which made a spacious entrance hall. The scullery became a garage, and the existing staff staircase, fortunately in the right position, was utilised with little alteration. The garden door on the east terrace made an excellent front door to the other home. But here a new staircase had to be built in, and a further difficulty arose in that, having sold with this portion the room over our own front entrance, we had, in accordance with the council's requirements, to lay down a fire-proof floor between that room and our own hall ceiling.

Our own portion, facing full south; and bounded on three sides by the lawn and woods, had the maximum amount of privacy, and was little overlooked, but as it was still too large for the two of us, we divided it again in a temporary manner for an elderly relative.

The two chief difficulties in our own home were to find a place for a new kitchen, and to move the main staircase from the hall, where, if left in

its existing position, it would have emerged into one of the portions to be sold. The staircase was taken down and re-assembled in our old dining-room (a not particularly attractive room and one we did not need) and from there it came out into our own upstairs corridor. The gap left in the main hall was then closed by a new wall and a sixteen-feet-long piece of furniture was placed in front of it, the whole effect being very pleasing and even an improvement. The only possible place for the new kitchen lay between the library and the billiard-room, a convenient position because we intended to use the latter, after the removal of the large billiard-table (long since redundant), as our new dining-room. But, unless we were to carve up, and to my mind spoil one of those rooms, the only kitchen space available was the tiny area covered by the strong-room and a small adjoining Cloakroom. In spite of all protests that a kitchen measuring 11ft by 7ft. would be much too small, I insisted that it was quite big enough in these days, and, indeed, much more labour-saving than a large one. And so it has proved to be, The walls were fitted with modern cupboards so that one has only to reach out for all one's needs, while the work is done on counter tops, which, except for the insertion of sink and cooker, form a continuous table line around the room with a solid block of drawers and cupboards underneath.



FLOOR PLAN OF THE DIVIDED HOUSE

With regard to central-heating and hot-water systems we replaced the enormous outside furnace with oil-fired central heating to serve our own part of the house, and this, if carefully used, we find quite adequate and no more costly than the old system with its heavy fuel consumption and labour maintenance. Immersion heaters inserted in existing water tanks provide us with constant hot water, thereby replacing the old fashioned coke boiler in the staff quarters, and this again is less expensive than the old system of combined fuel and labour. In the other two portions of the house the purchasers have

installed small modern coke stoves for both central-heating and hot water.

The drive is maintained as a private road, with each party in the contract agreeing to pay a certain sum annually towards its upkeep. Each purchaser agreed also not to make any alterations to the exterior of the house without our consent.

We realised that almost the entire success of our plan depended upon selling the other two sections of the house to people who would appreciate the amenities of the estate and preserve them as rigorously as ourselves, and with a meticulousness upon which we knew our peace of mind depended we went through a long list compiled from answers to advertisements, clients of the estate agent, and a number of our own friends.

We had no lack of applicants, and it says much for the old way of life that nearly all of them had turned down the opportunity of modern houses and flats, as they each wanted a home with atmosphere, large rooms, wide views, and, in fact, all that the English country house has to offer.

Finally, we chose two purchasers from among old and tried friends whose quiet interests and congenial tastes had long been known to us, and we have little doubt, unless they re-sell—a risk which must be taken—that it will continue to be the harmonious arrangement it already is.

The total price obtained for the portions sold, with party walls only erected by us, and each purchaser responsible otherwise for his own alterations and decorations, was only a few hundred pounds less than the sum offered by the speculator for the whole estate. In addition to this we have our own home, the rents of the cottages let to suitable tenants at rents which are quite satisfactory, as well as other useful items of income of an agricultural nature from the estate.

Undeniably it has been an arduous task with many unsuspected difficulties to overcome, but now that all is complete and on a sound financial basis we feel that it was more than worth while. In retaining our home under its new conditions we feel we have chosen wisely in accepting the middle and happier course between a way of life no longer possible and the necessity of making a new existence in strange surroundings.

COUNTRY LIFE – APRIL 25, 1957
MODERNISING AN ESTATE

by Katherine Ashworth



**THE MAIN HOUSE ON A PROPERTY IN SURREY THAT HAS BEEN DIVIDED INTO
A NUMBER OF SEPARATE HOLDINGS**

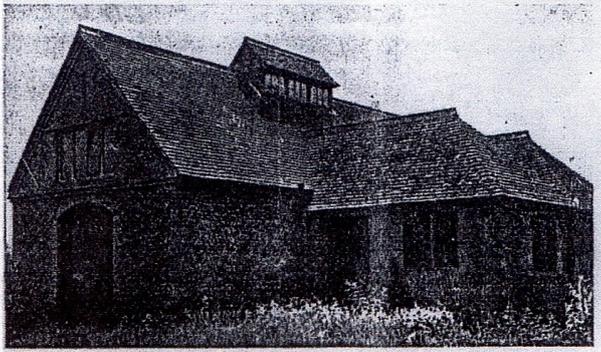
The house itself is now divided into three

I wrote in COUNTRY LIFE of May 13, 1954, of the way in which we modernised and divided our 35-roomed country house in Surrey into three separate portions, so that we might continue to live in part of it under present-day conditions of economy and comfort. The portion which we chose for ourselves, and the way in which we reconstructed and disposed of the two adjoining parts, ensured for us the maximum amount of privacy, for we retained the front door and garden front, and the other two entrances are respectively at the side and back of the house.

The experiment proved to be a success, and after a while we turned our attention to utilising or disposing of redundant buildings such as the water-tower and power-house, both superfluous

since the installation of the main water and electricity, five staff cottages, the large kitchen garden and greenhouses, a small paddock and a few acres of woodland which served no useful purpose at the far end of the estate.

The first building to be put up for sale was the power-house at the back of the farm buildings. It was erected about 1860 and housed the 35-h.p. engine, the dynamo and a large range of storage batteries which provided electricity for the mansion, cottages, garages, stables and cowsheds. After the main electricity had been installed and the generating plant disposed of, the power-house, which was well built of local ironstone with a tiled roof, and had five separate small rooms, degenerated into a storage place.



THE OLD POWER HOUSE BEFORE CONVERSION

One day we mentioned to an estate agent friend of ours that we had often thought the power-house might make a good cottage, and his enthusiastic agreement caused us to take action. An advertisement in a daily newspaper brought an immediate response and within a week it was sold, with half an acre of adjoining land. Although it had never been intended for use as a dwelling-house, the foundations had been very well laid, and an adequate damp-course had been provided, so no major complications were encountered. The roof has been raised, the upper storey has an outer planking of cedar wood, and the original ironstone walls remain untouched. Upstairs there are four good bedrooms and downstairs three comfortable living-rooms, hall and kitchen. The central heating is by hot air led along ducts under the floor, provided by a thermostatically controlled coke boiler.

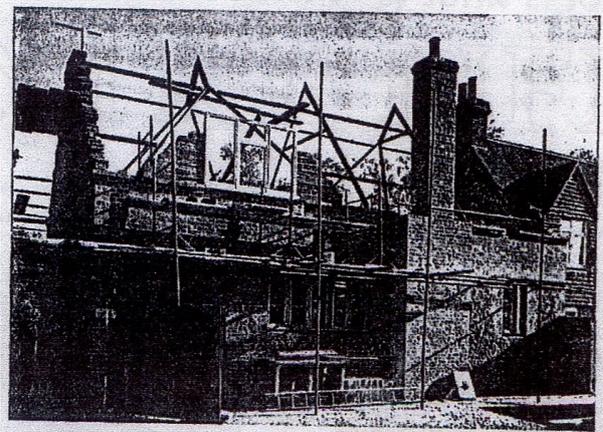
Thus a semi-derelict junk store has become a convenient modern dwelling, with its own garden and a pathway to adjoining National Trust woodland of pine trees and heather. For the work of reconstruction a Government grant was applied for, and, in view of the excellent state of the foundations and walls, this was given. Had the foundations been weak and had there been no damp-course the project would, no doubt, have been impossible.



A PAIR OF COTTAGES THAT WERE SOLD AND MODERNISED BY THEIR NEW OWNERS

A pair of picturesque cottages beyond the power-house were sold as they stood, and have since been modernised by the new owners, who have installed bathrooms, replaced the old-fashioned ranges in the sitting-rooms with open fireplaces, and in the scullery-cum-wash-houses contrived small but up-to-date kitchens. In the case of these cottages also a Government grant was applied for and given towards the work of reconstruction,

We then decided to put up for sale as one lot the head gardener's collage, the adjoining stables, a detached garage, the kitchen garden, henhouse, pigsties, potting-shed and four greenhouses. The cottage and stables had been exceptionally well built, and stand on rising ground commanding a view across the Tillingbourne Valley to St. Martha's Chapel and Newlands Corner.



A STABLE BUILDING AND ADJOINING COTTAGE PHOTOGRAPHED DURING THEIR CONVERSION INTO A SINGLE HOUSE

There was even keener competition for the purchase than we expected, and the buildings and ground were soon disposed of. The new owner has converted the stables into a beautiful sitting-room, with long windows overlooking the valley. The original Gothic doors and doorways have been retained and a marble fireplace has been set into the archway of the original main doorway into the stable. The fireplace surround, skirting-boards and sills are all of Sapele wood, which has also been used to case the beams, which were not suitable to be left in their original state. Above the sitting-room the roof was raised to allow the construction of two large bedrooms, and the whole building now comprises three bedrooms, two bathrooms, kitchen, hall, large sitting-room, study and usual offices.

In this block of buildings and ground are also an under-gardener's cottage and farm cottage, with the adjoining cowsheds built with ironstone and tiled roof, suitable for extension of the cottage or

a garage and a small paddock alongside. When this has been converted into another self-contained house we will be left only with the lodge, where a married couple can live. It could, however, if in the future we so decide, be sold with the adjoining fields as a smallholding, but for the time being we are retaining the fields, which are put down to corn, some poultry houses and a large poultry run near by, from which a substantial number of eggs is sent weekly to the egg-packing station. So the estate still has its own farmery.

When the mansion was built in 1860, it drew its water supply from a well in the yard. Each of the five cottages also had its own well and, in fact, most of the wells still exist, though they are no longer used. In 1890 a fine water tower, 90 ft. high, was built of brick and faced with stone. It held two storage tanks, the upper tank of 16,000 gallons capacity and the lower of 10,000 gallons, and these were fed by a spring and ram. The walls of the tower were 5 ft. thick at the base and one entered it by opening a massive oak door. The water tower and its contents was put up for sale with the stipulation that we should retain the bottom 12 ft.

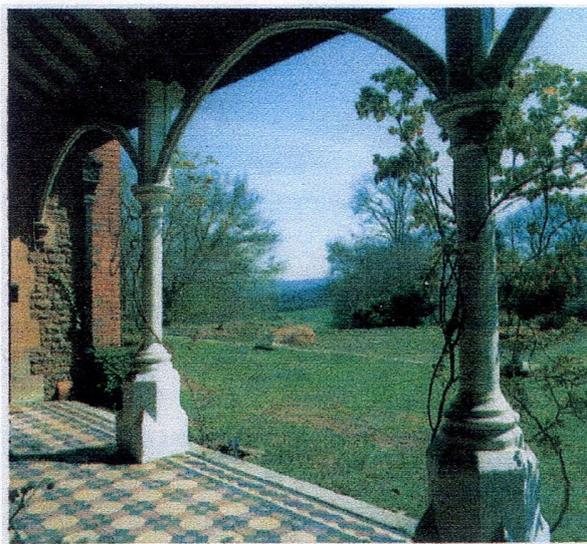
When the demolition had taken place down to this level, we roofed it in and used it as a game-larder and tool-shed. The tower itself, the chief value of which lay in its stone facing, was sold for building purposes and fireplaces. The water storage tanks, spiral staircase and iron ladders were sold to a scrap merchant and the whole transaction brought in a satisfactory sum.

At the far end of the property lay eight acres of scrub woodland, which served no useful purpose and offered little or no sport for shooting. This, with the permission of the local council, we sold for the purpose of building one house, and this when eventually completed was screened from the rest of the estate by an existing fringe of trees.

The main drive is maintained as a private road and the various house and cottage owners, in their contracts, agree to pay a certain sum annually towards its upkeep.

An estate road branches off the drive and runs along the south-west boundary, and it is this road, being remote from the mansion, which provides access to the cottages, kitchen garden and farm buildings. All these in their own secluded corner, cover an area of about five acres, and in the division it has been necessary to take great care to ensure that we were not left

with a small piece of isolated land. This has, perhaps, been our greatest problem, and much thought has been given to the matter and also to planning the division so that each cottage had with it sufficient land for development. In dividing a property of this kind it is essential that the land and buildings disposed of shall be compact, so that one can completely cut off one portion of the estate and retain the remainder intact and unspoilt. In the final stage, if we dispose of the lodge and farmery, there will be left only the house, garden and woodland, in part of which we can, if we wish, keep 300 or 400 head of poultry.



In dividing the house and estate as we have done, and disposing of all we no longer require, we have not only recovered more than the original sum paid for the whole property, but are left with an excellent house in perfect seclusion, a garden of lawn and flowering shrubs which requires little attention, bounded by our own woodland, and beautiful views on to National Trust land which can never be spoilt.

Subsequent Owners of LOCKNER HOLT

Parcels of land owned by Right Honorable Algernon George Percy Lord Lovaine M.P. were numbered 100 104 105 113. Approx 50 acres

- 8th Sept 1860 Land numbered 100 and 104 were leased to Archibald Stirling Mathison (of Postford House, Chilworth) with permit to build a residence. (99 years lease) Annual Land Rent £7.1.4. Residence £24.7.8.
- 22 Aug.1862 Residence built, two cottages being built. A.S.Mathison agreed mortgage lease to Reverend William Selwyn, Canon of Ely for £4004.7.6.
- 24th April 1875 Reverend William Selwyn dies - leaving all to his executors who are :- His wife Juliana Elizabeth Selwyn, his brother George Augustus Lord Bishop of Lichfield, and his nephew William Selwyn.
- 10th April 1878 George Augustus dies, now owned by Juliana Elizabeth and William Selwyn.
- 18th Ap.1882 A.S.Matheson dies - leaves lease in trust to Caroline Mathison, Archibald Mathison and George Thomas Scovell of Reigate.
- 24 July 1882 The most noble Algernon George now Duke of Northumberland leases land numbered 105 and 113 to Caroline Mathison for 21 years - £36.1.4 per annum. with permission to build the Lodge.
- 31 Dec 1889 Duke of Northumberland agree to supply John Bell with an additional supply of water by providing a ram, ramhouse, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of pipes, water tower in Bargate stone and injection tank for £350 to bring water from Lid Well. John Bell to pay £6% per annum.
- 27 May 1890 John Bell licensed to run water pipe over bridge of Reading, Guildford, Reigate Railway Co. To pay £1 p.a.

(extended to 1890)

- 31 Dec 1892 Water supply inadequate, increased by Duke to 1,500 gallons by adding a supply from Postford Mills
Total cost £56.
- 11 Jan 1893 John Bell raised mortgage of £6,000 on estate from William Hackwood (Solicitor) and Benjamin John Scott (Stockbroker) repayable at 5% per annum.
- 10 Sept 1896 Indenture of Mortgage between Lady Annie Mary Carew More Molyneux and the Reverend John Warrington Carew (Parish of Chatworthy, Somerset), Sir Robert More Molyneux (Admiral HM Navy K.C.B.) in consideration of £5450.
- 7 Dec 1898 Lady Annie Mary Carew More Molyneux died.
High Court granted Sir Robert administration of estate.
- 20 July 1899 South Eastern Railway Co. licenses Sir Robert to maintain water supply over bridge.
- 8 Sept 1899 Sir Robert More Molyneux sells Lockner Holt House and 20 acres to Madeline Sellar of Oaklands, Oxshott (widow) for £13,000.
Sir Robert pays £5,400 to John Warrington to clear outstanding loan to Lady Annie Mary Carew M M.
- 25 Oct 1899 South Eastern Railway Co. approve water pipe over bridge to ^{de}Maline Sellar.
- 20 July 1922 Duke of Northumberland sells the entire Albury Estate
Lockner Holt House was Lot 7 - Occupier Mrs. M. Sellars
- 25 May 1954 Madeline Sellar sells to Lockner Holt Estate Ltd.
~~being Mrs. Harris~~ Lady Harris buys top flat £3,000
- 1946 Norman Ashworth bought Lockner Holt House in 1946 according to statement made by Mrs. Ashworth in court
- 8 March 1968 Bought by Ralph & Norma Wansborough. *2 sold Oct 1985*

“Don’t Call Me Lady”

A biography of Alice Seeley Harris.

This biography tells the true story of one of history's forgotten women, a Englishwoman named Alice Seeley Harris who has also been called the Mother of Human Rights. She has been hidden by her husband's shadow since she started her African journey near the end of the Victorian era, but now her story is brought to light by author Judy Pollard Smith in *Don't Call Me Lady: The Journey of Lady Alice Seeley Harris*. Armed with her Bible, zeal, and a camera, Harris arrived in the steaming African jungle of Congo and documented the worst atrocities known to humanity. She captured enough evidence on her glass lantern slides to bring down the Belgian King Leopold, who ruled the colony of the Congo Free State. In this biography, Smith uses imagined conversations based on in-depth research to tell Harris's story of her work. She also provides questions that allow her book to be used in classes or discussion groups. The world gave credit to the men in this story, but Smith provides evidence that it was the young, English missionary and photographer whose bravery truly changed history.

John Hobbs Harris 1874 – 1940 Kt 1933

Secretary Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society

Lady Harris rented South Hill, Dorking

Daughter Katherine (widow) lived with her until marriage to Norman Ashworth, 1946, then came to live at Lockner Holt. Died 1970 in Mount Alvernia Hospital.

A house and its secrets

Lockner Holt — known as Monks Close in *Something in Disguise* — is currently enjoying a double life. Situated in lush countryside near Guildford, Surrey, it is the setting for many of the scenes in the drama serial, which continues tonight. It also happens to be the workplace of its owners, Mr and Mrs Ralph Wansborough, who hire out their home from time to time to film and TV companies.

'I've been making films for 35 years,' says Mr Wansborough, 'so we knew what to expect when the film crew arrived. But we have plenty of space here — 17 acres and wide drives — so there was lots of room for the crew and generators and so on.'

Mr Wansborough started making top secret films during the last war. 'We made things like *The Chariot*, which was about secret submarines — no longer secret, of course — for worldwide showing to the Allies. As it was so secret, we made the whole thing from beginning to end.'

Mr Wansborough is still making films about electronic missiles, some of which are on the secret list, working from studios at Lockner Holt. But while all this hush-hush stuff goes on in one part of the house, Lockner Holt shows a very public face in other parts. It's currently being investigated to see if it would be suitable for a horror comedy.

'It's like a Scottish castle,' explains Mr Wansborough. 'All stone and parapets, with 3ft thick walls. There are no ghosts — it's a very happy house.'

Built in 1860 for the Duke of Northumberland, Lockner Holt was pretty run down when the Wansboroughs moved in. They spent four years plastering, bricklaying, fixing the leaking roof and generally putting it to rights. 'We did it ourselves,' says Mr Wansborough. 'We loved it. We love quality, our thick oak doors, real brass fittings.'

And no doubt the 3ft thick walls help to keep Lockner Holt's secrets. . .

ROSALIND RUSSELL



LOCKNER HOLT

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HOUSE AND ITS OCCUPANTS

INTRODUCTION

My story begins nearly two hundred years ago in 1812 with the birth, in London, of Archibald Stirling Mathison. The Mathison Clan has a long history, going back to a land grant in the 13th Century in Argyll. The Clan motto, "Fac et Spera" meaning "Do and Hope" suggests a headstrong nature, not always choosing the wisest course. (They were on the losing side at Culloden.) Archibald's father, Gilbert, owned a plantation in Jamaica with 72 slaves, and this is where Archibald spent his first years. But slavery was on the losing side in the early 19th Century, so plans were made to educate young Archibald to fit him for a career as a Civil Servant in the East India Company. The demand for staff at this time was insatiable, as the bureaucracy grew ever larger.

At the age of 13, in 1825, he was sent to school at Charterhouse, and later, aged 17, transferred to Hailebury. At this time, Hailebury was known as the East India College, and was the route into the Civil Service. His career in India was successful by any standards, and at the age of 35, he was Collector and Magistrate in Vizagapatam, an area of some 3000 square miles, and a population of 1 million. At about this time, he also got married to Caroline Cooke, and had two children, a girl first, then a boy, also named Archibald. They were both born in India.

Like most East India Company Civil Servants, Archibald probably traded and speculated on the side, and although he was obviously well connected, and not poor, this would have helped him when the final crunch came, in 1857, in the form of the Indian Mutiny. The family were on leave in England at the time, and never returned to India. In November 1858, the East India Company was abolished, and in February 1859, Archibald resigned from the Civil Service, taking an annuity of £735. (It is useful to note that in 1848-50, the total cost of rebuilding St Martha-on-the-Hill had been £753.) At this time he was 46 years old.

PHASE ONE - CONSTRUCTION

- Somewhere to live
- High Church connections – friend of Tractarian (Oxford Movement) Selwyn family
- More-Molyneux family also supported Tractarians, in W H Pearson of St Nicholas, Guildford. [Robert M-M later gives his place of origin as St Nicholas, Guildford in 1891 Census.

- Living temporarily in Postford House (1861 Census)
- Introduction to Lord Lovaine, lease of land
- 1860, 30 acres leased for 99 years, permission to build residence
 Lord Lovaine insisted the railway, when it came, build a bridge, rather than a level crossing for access from Dorking Road.
- Choice of Woodyer as architect

- “Scottish Baronial” style chosen to reflect Scottish ancestry of ASM
Monograms of William Selwyn and Archibald Mathison
Crest of Mathison Clan **“Naked arm holding a drawn sabre, proper”**



Clan motto **“FAC ET SPERA”**

Arms of Mathison Clan on window and grand staircase

- Lavish interior appointments
- View from the butler’s bedroom
- Water supply for whole house was well in courtyard.
- Drainage into cesspool, still in use.
- 1862 construction of residence and two cottages complete
- Mortgaged to Revd William Selwyn, Canon of Ely, for £4004.7.6 **Parchment deed**
- Self sufficiency assured by small ‘farmery’ (cows, pigs, chickens) and large walled garden
- Staffing level indicated by 1871 Census
- Archibald Hamilton Mathison, son, aged 20 at university, later became Capt. 2nd Surrey Militia
- Edward Austen, son, of Chilworth Manor also aged 20, described as Capt. 2nd Surrey Militia
- 1881 house and estate in full swing – 1881 Census shows staffing level
- April 1882 death of ASM, age 70
- July 1882 lease for 21 years of further 20 acres with permission to build lodge granted to Mrs Mathison. Lodge not built until 1891

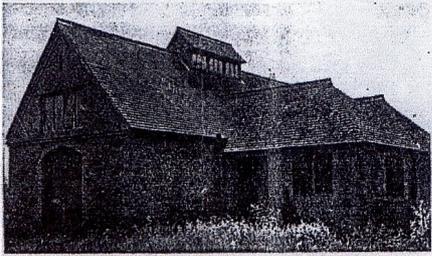


The fireplace in the entrance hall, with Gothic overmantel



PHASE TWO – EXPANSION

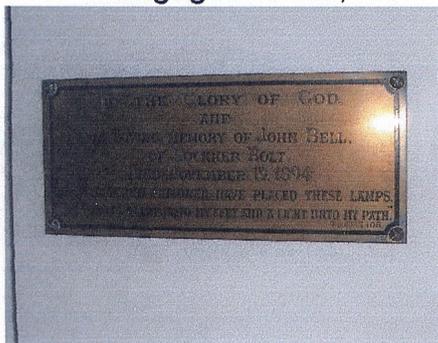
- 1889 bought “with planning permission” by John Bell retired Asbestos Manufacturer from Manchester. Age 57
- Extensive makeover and remodelling of house. Billiards room and more family, guest and staff accommodation.



- Power House established, supplying DC mains to House and other buildings. Resident engineer engaged to run this, and lives in “Bell’s Cottage”. Name subsequently falls into disuse. Motive power at first could be steam, but later it was a 35 h.p. motor, probably diesel.



- Need for much more water than well could supply, hence Water Tower, fed by ram pump from spring in Lidwell Copse, also fed Chilworth Manor. Cost £350 to build. John Bell leaves his mark on the water tower [JSCB – his and his wife’s initials embraced].
- 1890 Licence to run water pipe over railway bridge
- 1891 construction work complete
- 1892 additional water supplied from Postford Mill
- 1893 mortgaged for £6,000



- 1894 J Bell dies. Memorial plaque in Albury Church. Age 62. Death registered in Brighton.
All this achieved in just 5 years.

Next 5 years

- Vice Admiral Sir Robert More-Molyneux takes LH age 55. KCB, RN retired
- Almost immediately mortgaged for £5,450 to a relation of his wife
- 1898 Lady M-M dies at age of 45
- 1899 LH sold to Mrs Madeline Sellar for £13,000 widow, aged 41 daughter aged 8

PHASE THREE – CONSOLIDATION

- 1901 Census shows full staffing level
- Includes 2 teachers for young Marjorie
- 1922 sale of Albury Estate to pay death duties of 7th Duke, died in 1918. Land under LH bought by Mrs Sellar. Water tower and Power House still in use.
- No further modifications, except set aside of house keeper's apartment, with own front door. Servant problem was starting to get intense.

Anecdotes during Sellar occupancy of half a century

- LH was air raid shelter during Zeppelin raids in 14 -18 war
- Chauffeur, lived opposite Percy Arms knocked over young girl, and had to leave in disgrace
- Small boy often sent to listen to water pipe to detect 'thump thump' of ram pump
- Some big parties and balls were held in LH between the wars
- Newspaper boy afraid to go to front door because of tiger (or lion) skin, complete with head, on floor of entrance hall.

PHASE FOUR – DISINTEGRATION

- 1947 sale to Ashworths
- Couldn't make a go of it. Estate was not profitable.
- Houses like this were being demolished all over the country.
- Tried to sell, but in the end, decided to cherry pick, split up house and sell off cottages and land.
- 1952, broke up LH the house, into 3.
- 1954-57 sold off cottages.
- 1985 Grade II listed

LOCKNER HOLT AS STAR OF SMALL SCREEN AND OTHER PLACES

- 1979 used for "Something in Disguise"
- 1996 appears in cartoon of Chilworth at entry to Chilworth Ward in RSCH

SOME MYTHS AND FALSE LEADS

- Mrs Sellar's coachman in 1901 was Arthur Bicknell. No connection with Bicknell of Farncombe
- LH was NOT built for the Duke of Northumberland
- The walls are not 3 ft thick

- LH was not occupied by The Who pop group, though legend has it that Keith Moon, drummer of the group threw a pint of beer across the floor of the Percy Arms. It is thought that he was a tenant in one of the cottages.
- The childrens' song "Nellie the Elephant" is reputed to have been written in the drawing room of Tower House, but this cannot be verified.

LAST THOUGHTS

Difficult to get to and not on the way to anywhere
Great tranquillity
Wonderful place for children to grow up

Even after the 1987 hurricane, still plenty of trees.

William Folkes
Tower House, Lockner Holt
March 16, 2005.

Lockner Holt- The House and its occupants

By Bill Folkes

Tuesday 3 March 2015

Thirty five years ago, Bill and his wife Ann came to have a look at The Tower House at Lockner Holt. They were entranced by its beauty and eccentricity and purchased the property. Their children were 3 and 4 at the time and loved growing up in the property. Unfortunately, the house has become too much to cope with and they are 'down-sizing' and are very sad to leave.

If we rewind to 1812, when a boy called Archibald Stirling Mathison was born in London, we can start the history of Lockner Holt. The Mathison Clan goes back to the land grab in Scotland and the family were on the losing side at the Battle of Culloden. His father, Gilbert Mathison had a plantation in Jamaica with 72 slaves. However slavery was on the downturn and so they decided that their son should be trained up as a civil servant and work in the East India Company.

At 13, the young Archibald went to school at Charterhouse and at 17 he transferred to Haileybury School, a leading Public School at the time, which also was the staff college of the East India Company. He went on to have a very successful career in India and became a collector and district magistrate of an area covering 3000 square miles with a population of 1 million.

He married an English girl called Caroline Cook and they had two children, firstly a girl and then a boy, who were both born in India. It is likely that Archibald speculated, while in his elevated position and this was probably of some benefit to him when the Indian Mutiny occurred in 1857. The mutiny saw an end to the East India Company and the family, who were on leave in England when the mutiny occurred never returned to India.

In 1859 Archibald retired from the civil service, at the age of 46 and received an annuity of £735 per year. (To put this in perspective, when St Martha's Church was rebuilt around the same time it cost £753).

The family decided to settle in the local area and they had high Anglican church connections and had connections with the Tractarian movement, with which both the Selwyn and More-Molyneux families were involved. This movement was also connected with St Nicholas' Church in Guildford. So they decided to set up home on the hill opposite St Martha's church, whilst Lockner Holt was being built. Holt means wooded hill top.

The house has gone through 4 phases since its construction.

Phase 1 – Construction

The house took two years to build and the family rented Postford House from Albury Estate. This was not owned by the Duke of Northumberland, but by his heir, Lord Lovaine.

In 1860 Mathison acquired a 99 year lease for an area of land of 30 acres, which was the basic plot of Lockner Holt.

When the railway was built through the land Lord Lovaine stipulated that the entrance to Lockner Holt should have a bridge over the line and not a crossing.

He chose Henry Woodyer, who had a good reputation for building churches and monasteries and who had re-constructed St Martha's Church, as the architect. The house was built in the Scottish baronial style. Woodyer took his lead from that and espoused the Gothic style and the Scottish connection is seen in the stepped gables and the castle-like towers.

You can see the Monograms of Mathison and also of Selwyn, who financed a lot of the house, in the brickwork. You can also see the Mathison crest of a naked arm holding a drawn sabre in the walls and are featured in windows on the ground floor and staircase. The family's motto is 'Fac et Spera,' which means 'Do and Hope'.

The interior was very lavish and the marble fireplace has a gothic design.

Water was supplied to the house by a well, which worked adequately for a while but was insufficient when the house was extended. The house and 2 staff cottages were completed by 1862. The house was mortgaged to Selwyn for £404 7sh 6d.

The house was self sufficient and a small farm was established with pigs, cows, chickens and a walled garden. To start with the house was fairly modest.

In 1871 the census showed that the house had a butler, a page, 2 ladies maids, a kitchen maid, a coachman and a gardener.

Mathison's son, Archibald Hamilton Mathison also went to Charterhouse and at the age of 20 was a Captain in the 2nd Surrey Militia.

The Census of 1881 shows that the staff consisted of a butler, footman, lady's maid, housemaid, kitchen maid, cook and a coachman, who lived in his own cottage on the estate.

In 1882 Archibald Mathison (senior) died at the age of 70 and his wife took on the lease for a further 20 years, with a view to extending the house, but apart from the Lodge which was built in 1891, she didn't do much.

Phase 2 – Expansion

Mathison's widow lived at the house until 1889, when it was sold to John Bell, a 37 year old retired Asbestos manufacturer from Manchester. He gave the house an extensive makeover. In those days he felt that every house of that size should have a billiards room and so the house was extended to incorporate a billiards room and servant's quarters. This gave the house a lot more space. However certain aspects were still fairly crude. The original building's metal windows set in stone mullions don't match the new wooden ones. Lighting was probably by oil lamps. Mr Bell wanted to install electricity and he had a power house built. The electricity, which was powered by a 35 horse power motor, operated on direct current and when the dynamo slowed down there was still current in the batteries. Mr Bell employed a resident engineer, who lived in a cottage known as Bell's Cottage. There was a larger population in the house so they built a water tower, the base of which remains today. The water tower was fed from a spring located on the other side of the valley at Lidwell

Copse, halfway up St Martha's Hill. The force of the water was enough to drive the pump and worked very well. It required very little maintenance and operated until the mains water was connected to the house in 1932. The water pipe was allowed to run over the bridge. They received an additional water supply from Postford House.

The house was then remortgaged for £6000.

In 1890 John Bell and his wife had their initials entwined in stone in the brickwork.

By 1891 the Census shows that the employed staff were made up of a cook, sewing woman, parlour maid, housemaid and kitchen maid.

Mr Bell died on 19 November 1894 and a plaque was erected to his memory in Albury Church to commemorate the installation of lamps in the choir stalls.

After this the house passed to Vice Admirals Sir Robert More-Molyneux, who was in direct line to the Loseley Estate, but never succeeded to it. In 1898, his wife died at a young age and in 1899 Lockner Holt was sold to Mrs Madeleine Sellars for £13000. She was a 41 year old widow and moved in with her 8 year old daughter. She was related to the authors of '1066 and All That' written by W C Sellar and R J Yeatman and she is descended from the Charrington brewing family.

Phase 3 – Consolidation

By 1901 as the Census of that year shows, Lockner Holt was a big estate with a butler, a footman, a cook, a kitchen maid, 2 housemaids, a schoolroom master, all living in the main house. In a cottage on the estate, there was a head gardener, assistant gardener, coachman, groom, cowman, electrical engineer and 2 elementary teachers for her daughter. She was interested in the education of the children in the village.

In 1922 the Estate was sold for death duties and a Grand Sale took place when the Duke of Northumberland died. Mrs Sellar bought the freehold which consolidated the estate.

During the 1914-1918 war, Lockner Holt was used as an air aid shelter from the Zeppelins.

The coachman at Lockner Holt was a Mr Bicknell and when Mrs Sellar got rid of the coach and coachman, he was dismissed and had to move out very quickly. The family moved to Essex and he became a bus driver. (The family were not connected to Bicknell Coaches).

Mrs Sellar then had a chauffeur but unfortunately he knocked over a young girl in her car and he left in disgrace.

Between the wars, big parties were held at the house in the 1930's and the balls had quite a reputation. There is one story of a newspaper boy who was scared to go to the front door because of the lion skin laid out in the entrance hall.

The Power House was converted into a splendid family house.