

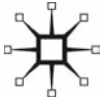
The Gentleman's House in the British Atlantic World 1680–1780

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The Gentleman's House in the British Atlantic World 1680–1780

Stephen Hague
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Preface

Research related to this book began when I became the director of Stenton, a historic house museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This double-pile, hipped-roof, brick house was built between 1723 and 1730 by James Logan, a colonial administrator and merchant. Arriving with academic training in British history, I was struck by Stenton's similarity to small elite houses in other parts of the British world. Immersing myself in the history and objects at the site, it seemed to me that there were several scholarly holes to fill. First, early American historiography had rarely situated Stenton in the broader context of the British empire or the Atlantic world even though it was the house of a leading colonial official. Second, the extraordinary eighteenth-century collections provided an unsurpassed opportunity to connect a number of themes linking history and material culture. Third, as a remarkably early (for Americans) and well-preserved building, Stenton's architecture and furnishings had been studied in detail. When compared with British domestic architecture, however, it had invariably been related to larger English country houses. Finally, it was clear that various historiographies that drew these topics together – British and American, as well as architectural, political, economic, social, and cultural history – overlapped but did not necessarily communicate.

In the United Kingdom, it was a joy to undertake research in Oxford to place houses like Stenton into a larger British framework. My initial investigations suggested that little work had been done on this sort of house in Britain, offering substantial room for the development of that aspect of my interests. Having now circled back around to my starting point in America, this book represents the results of over a decade of transatlantic labour. It examines a group of small classical houses and their owners in the eighteenth-century British world in order to explore architecture, material culture and social status.

Such an undertaking would not have been possible without the assistance of large numbers of people. In Oxford, I am grateful to many friends and colleagues for discussing my work and for generously sharing their own. Dr Perry Gauci in particular offered extensive comments and read numerous versions of this book, and Geoffrey Tyack weighed in on the architectural aspects of the project. Special thanks are due also to Julie Farguson, Erica Charters, Huw David, Oliver Cox, and Benjamin Heller, who offered much good advice and many helpful suggestions along the way. Paul Slack, Joanna Innes, Ben Heller, and Harry Smith kindly read drafts of several chapters. Mike Weaver and Annie Hammond introduced me to the world of Paul Strand – a far cry from gentleman's houses – whilst offering always convivial encouragement and support. Anne Keene has been a great friend throughout.

Outside of Oxford I have been equally fortunate. Nicholas Kingsley was tremendously helpful in offering advice at the start of this project. James and Annabel Ayres kindly offered accommodation, suggested many good insights, and asked

penetrating questions. Professor Roger Leech shared generously of his own work. Other who have contributed to my thinking include Judy Anderson, Zara Anishanslin, Michele Anstine, Toby Barnard, George Boudreau, Adam Bowett, Guy Chet, Andy Foyle, Johanna Gurland, Bob Harris, Karen Harvey, Dallett Hemphill, Bernie Herman, Julian Holder, Olivia Horsfall Turner, Helen Jacobsen, Seth Koven, Lynn Lees, Karen Lipsedge, Elizabeth McKellar, Catherine Molineux, Dennis and Debbie Miller Pickeral, Kay Ross, Jay Robert Stiefel, Sheena Stoddard, Patrick Tierney, Susie West, Lisa White, William Whyte, Richard Wilson, and David Young. Daniel K. Richter helped to inspire this endeavour. I am grateful to Philip Zimmerman for his aphorism, which became a mantra. Members of the Delaware Valley British Studies seminar helped to improve the work, as did the anonymous reviewers for Palgrave Macmillan. Jen McCall and Jade Moulds at Palgrave Macmillan have guided this book adroitly to completion. Colleagues in the Rowan University History Department welcomed me warmly to their ranks as I was finishing this book. Mary Agnes Leonard, who helped with a number of image issues, is a gem amongst designers.

The many generous owners who kindly gave me access, showed me their properties, shared their collections, and answered my many questions have been at the core of this project's success. With nearly two hundred houses in the study, they are too numerous to list, but my gratitude is profuse. I reserve a special word of thanks for the owners at four houses central to my study. Ron Collins, David Ryder, the Society of Merchant Venturers and residents at Cote welcomed me on a number of occasions. At Frampton Court, Mr and Mrs Rollo Clifford have allowed me extraordinary access to their house and collections. I am most grateful to them and to their staff. In particular, I thoroughly enjoyed spending time with Rose Hewlett and Jean Speed, whose shared passion for research and history has been an inspiration. Michael and Robert Little have also been extraordinarily generous. Finally, The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, who have lovingly cared for Stenton, the remarkable house that inspired this project and appears frequently in these pages, have been hugely supportive.

Archivists, librarians and museum curators are a blessing to every scholar, and I thank the staff at all the institutions I visited, most particularly the Gloucestershire Archives, especially Vicky Thorpe, the Bristol Record Office, Hannah Lowery at the University of Bristol Special Collections, and Paul Driscoll at South Gloucestershire Council. David Mullin was especially helpful at the Museum in the Park, Stroud. In America, Jim Green and Connie King stand out for making the Library Company of Philadelphia a welcome research space, and Nicole Joniec helped with images. Bruce Laverty at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia was a great resource, particularly with images. I am also grateful to staff at the Lewis Walpole Library, especially Maggie Powell, Susan Odell Walker, and Ellen Cordes, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Winterthur Museum and Library, and the Yale Center for British Art.

Several organizations have generously helped to fund this study. The Ernest Cook Trust Research Bursary awarded by the Society of Architectural Historians

of Great Britain enabled my doctoral research. I also benefitted from a McLean Contributionship Fellowship at the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, a grant from the Miss Irene Bridgeman Research Fund of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, a fellowship from the Winterthur Museum and Library, the Charles E. Peterson Fellowship at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, and the Roger W. Eddy Fellowship at the Lewis Walpole Library. The NSCDA/PA has generously provided funds for the images.

My final thanks are reserved for my family. Thomas L. Evans offered helpful comments on an early but important piece of writing. Cheryl and Wayne Hague always provided encouragement, as well as a lovely respite for thinking and relaxing. Cathy and the late Brian Keim were supportive beyond any parental duty. Maglet and Will have endured endless dinner table conversations about houses and collections, and Kasia, Sofie and Sarah were wonderful additions to our household during the writing process.

Finally and most especially, all historians should be blessed with a muse. I am eternally grateful that Laura Keim, my lovely and darling Turtle, has been mine.

List of Abbreviations

Atkyns	Sir Robert Atkyns, <i>The Ancient and Present State of Glostershire</i> (London, 1712)
BCGAM	Bristol City Gallery and Museum
BCL	Bristol Central Library
Bigland	<i>Historical, Monumental and Genealogical Collections toward a History of Gloucestershire</i> , 3 vols (London, 1789–1887, reprint Gloucester, 1989–1995)
Bodl.	The Bodleian Library, Oxford
BoE: C	<i>The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire I: The Cotswolds</i> (London, 2002)
BoE: VF	<i>The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire II: The Vale and the Forest of Dean</i> (London, 2002)
BRO	Bristol Record Office
BRS	Bristol Record Society
CHG I	N. Kingsley, <i>The Country Houses of Gloucestershire: Volume One 1500–1660</i> (Cheltenham, 1989)
CHG II	N. Kingsley, <i>The Country Houses of Gloucestershire: Volume Two 1660–1830</i> (Chichester, 1992)
Colvin	H. M. Colvin, <i>A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840</i> , 4th edition (New Haven and London, 2008)
GA	Gloucestershire Archives
HSP	Historical Society of Pennsylvania
LCP	The Library Company of Philadelphia
LWL	The Lewis Walpole Library
NMR	National Monuments Record
NSCDA/PA	The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
PAGB	Andrew Foyle, <i>Pevsner Architectural Guide: Bristol</i> (New Haven and London, 2004)
PHG	W. R. Williams, <i>The Parliamentary History of the County of Gloucester</i> (Hereford, 1898)
Rudder	Samuel Rudder, <i>A New History of Gloucestershire</i> (Cirencester, 1779)
Stenton, NSCDA/PA	Stenton, The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
TBGAS	<i>Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society</i>

- VCH: G *Victoria Country History: A History of the County of Gloucester*, 9 volumes
to date (1907–2010)
- Winterthur The Winterthur Museum and Library