

# Woodhall House

## Edinburgh

**Stephanie Gilezan**

502-817-6484  
stephanie@gilezanteam.com

**GILEZAN**  
— GLOBAL —

**exp** REALTY | LUXURY

**Stephen Cohen**

917-710-2375  
stephen@gilezanteam.com



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## Edinburgh

Welcome to the illustrious Woodhall House, an embodiment of architectural grandeur nestled in the heart of Edinburgh, Scotland. The castle's rich history dating back to the 1600's, is a testament to the timeless appeal of Scots Baronial style. The stunning renovation, and award-winning design, make it one of the most impressive properties in Edinburgh. Celebrated as a country family seat, this sandstone masterpiece has been meticulously refurbished over the past fourteen years to seamlessly blend the charm of yesteryears with the conveniences of a contemporary lifestyle.

As you step into this esteemed property, you'll be greeted by the echoes of the past reverberating through its original design, tastefully preserved to celebrate its rich history. Woodhall House features the original plaster ceiling dating from 1630, as well as the original flagstones and parquet flooring.









# Accommodations

The accommodations are nothing short of spectacular, boasting a plethora of living spaces within its expansive 10,164 square feet. The residence is teeming with a variety of spaces, each carefully designed to provide the ultimate in comfort, entertainment, and luxury.

The property offers six working fireplaces, eight generously proportioned bedrooms, six of which are ensuite, providing ample space for rest and relaxation. Three further bedrooms/WCs ensure convenience and privacy for all occupants.

The heart of the home is an expansive open-plan kitchen-dining-living space, perfect for casual family gatherings or entertaining guests. A formal dining room adds a touch of elegance for more sophisticated occasions, while the drawing room provides a tranquil space for quiet contemplation or intimate conversations.

For the musically inclined, a dedicated music room awaits, and a snug offers a cozy retreat. Two well-appointed studies provide the perfect environment for focused work or study. A playroom ensures the younger residents have a space all their own, while a bar sets the stage for evening relaxation or social gatherings.



# Gardens & Grounds

The current owners have undertaken an extensive redesign of the gardens, introducing an illuminated ornamental rockery and a split-level courtyard. This private tranquil space, adorned with wisteria and climbing roses on an oak pergola, offers a secluded haven for outdoor lounging and dining.

Nestled at the terminus of a private driveway, this majestic home is enveloped by 7.8 acres of meticulously landscaped gardens and lush woodland. The serene Water of Leith meanders through the verdant grounds, enriched by vibrant borders, wildflower meadows, and a diverse collection of mature and specimen trees.

The property's outdoor features extend beyond mere aesthetics. The grounds boast a floodlit astro-turf tennis court for sports enthusiasts, and a hot tub for indulgent relaxation. A whimsical children's adventure playground, complete with a treehouse and zip-line, promises endless fun, while a summer house provides a quiet retreat.

A practical potting shed, heated greenhouse, and a variety of fruit trees cater to green thumbs. Pet owners will appreciate the kennel with run. Finally, a triple garage equipped with an EV supercharger and a floored attic, adds convenience and functionality to this remarkable property.





Settled in the serene foothills of the Pentlands with a wealth of walking and hiking trails, as well as several reservoirs, Woodhall House offers an idyllic rural setting and is enveloped by over 100 acres of private land. Despite its tranquility, Edinburgh's city centre is just 6 miles away, and Edinburgh International Airport is within a 20-minute drive, with regular bus services available from the quaint village of Juniper Green. Juniper Green is just a leisurely five-minute stroll from the woodland path at the rear of the house, across the Water of Leith, revealing the charm of the village with a range of shops and services.





The property's excellence has not gone unnoticed. It has been honored with the British Institute of Interior Design Awards – Highly Commended Prize 2022, bestowed by Ampersand Interiors, a testament to its exceptional interior design. The Edinburgh Architectural Association recognised the property with the Regeneration & Conservation Award 2016, a nod to the exquisite work of Lorn MacNeal Architects. The same firm was also celebrated with the Scottish Home Awards – Renovation of the Year 2015, highlighting the transformative work that has elevated the property to new heights. Not to be outdone, the Scottish Decorators Federation awarded Project of the Year 2015 to George Nicolson Decorators Ltd for their outstanding contribution to the property's refurbishment.



# Local Amenities

Golf enthusiasts will appreciate the proximity to several courses, including Swanston and Baberton, which is within walking distance. The Dalmahoy Country Club and Golf Course is a mere 15-minute drive away. For additional recreational activities, the Craiglockhart Leisure and Tennis Centre, offers indoor courts, and the Hillend Ski Centre, featuring dry ski slopes, are both reachable within a 10-minute drive.

The property falls within the school catchment area for Bonaly Primary School and Firhill School. Moreover, it's conveniently located close to several of Edinburgh's prestigious private schools. Institutions such as Cargilfield Prep School, Merchiston Castle School, George Heriot's School, George Watson's College, St. Georges, Edinburgh Academy, and Fettes College are all easily accessible from the property.

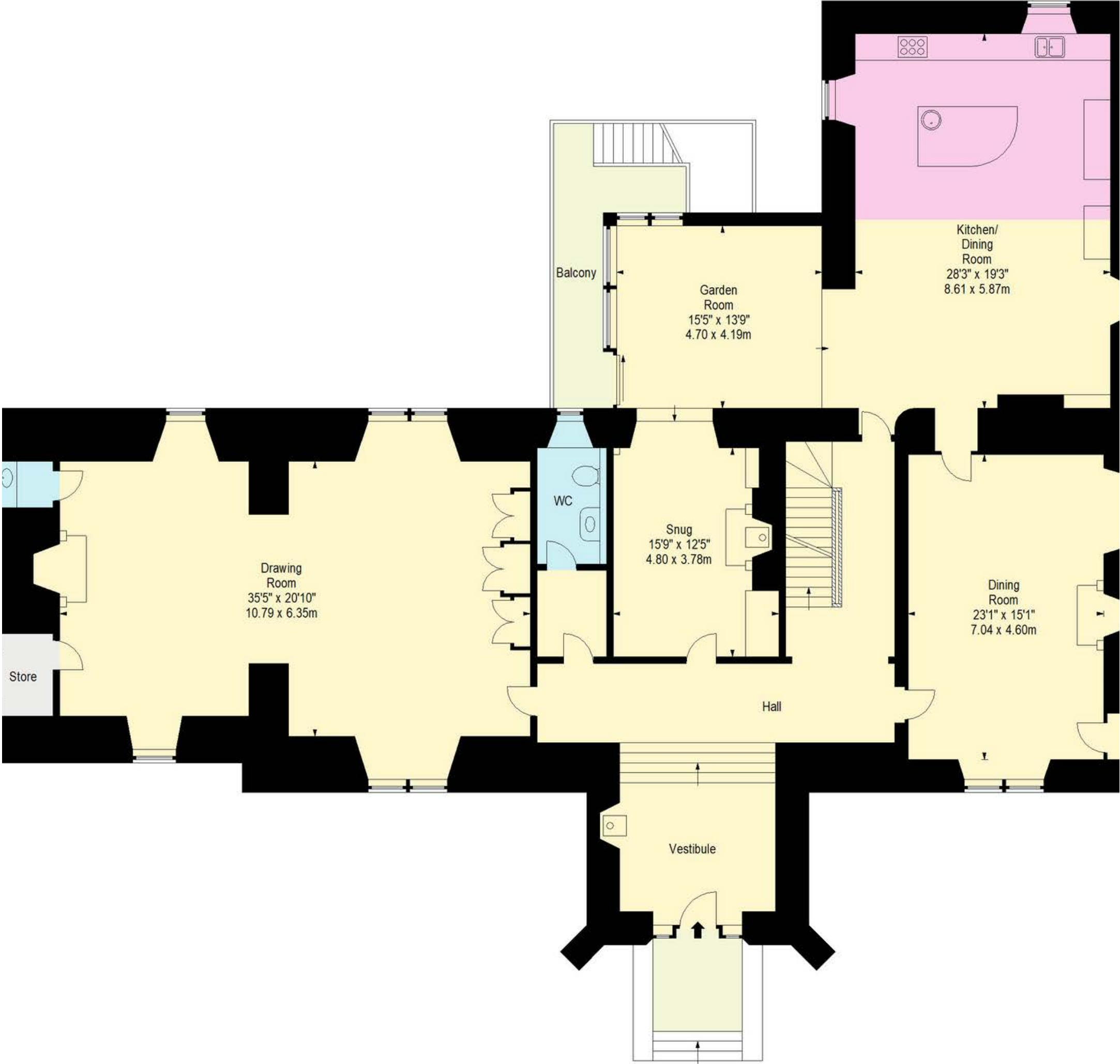
# Features

- 10,164 square feet
- 7.8 acres
- 8 double bedrooms, 6 of which are ensuite
- 3 further bedrooms/WCs
- Open-plan kitchen-dining-living space
- Formal dining room
- Drawing room
- Music Room
- Snug
- 2 studies
- Playroom
- Bar
- Games room
- Cinema
- Gym
- Steam room
- Craft/hobby room
- Laundry
- Pantry
- Bootroom
- Cloakroom
- Original plasterwork ceiling, dating from 1630
- Bespoke kitchen designed and handmade by Michael Hart fitted with large central island and high specification appliances
- Ceiling in the entrance hall handpainted by Rachel and Cornelius Bell
- Bespoke cabinetry and wallpaper
- Original flagstones and parquet flooring
- Sash and case windows with working shutters
- 6 working fireplaces
- High quality fixtures and fittings
- Superfast broadband
- CCTV and alarm system for the house and garage
- Floodlit, astro-turf tennis court.
- Hot tub.
- Magical children's adventure playground with treehouse and zip-line.
- Summer house.
- Potting shed.
- Heated greenhouse.
- Fruit trees.
- Kennel with run.
- Triple garage with EV super-charger and floored attic.



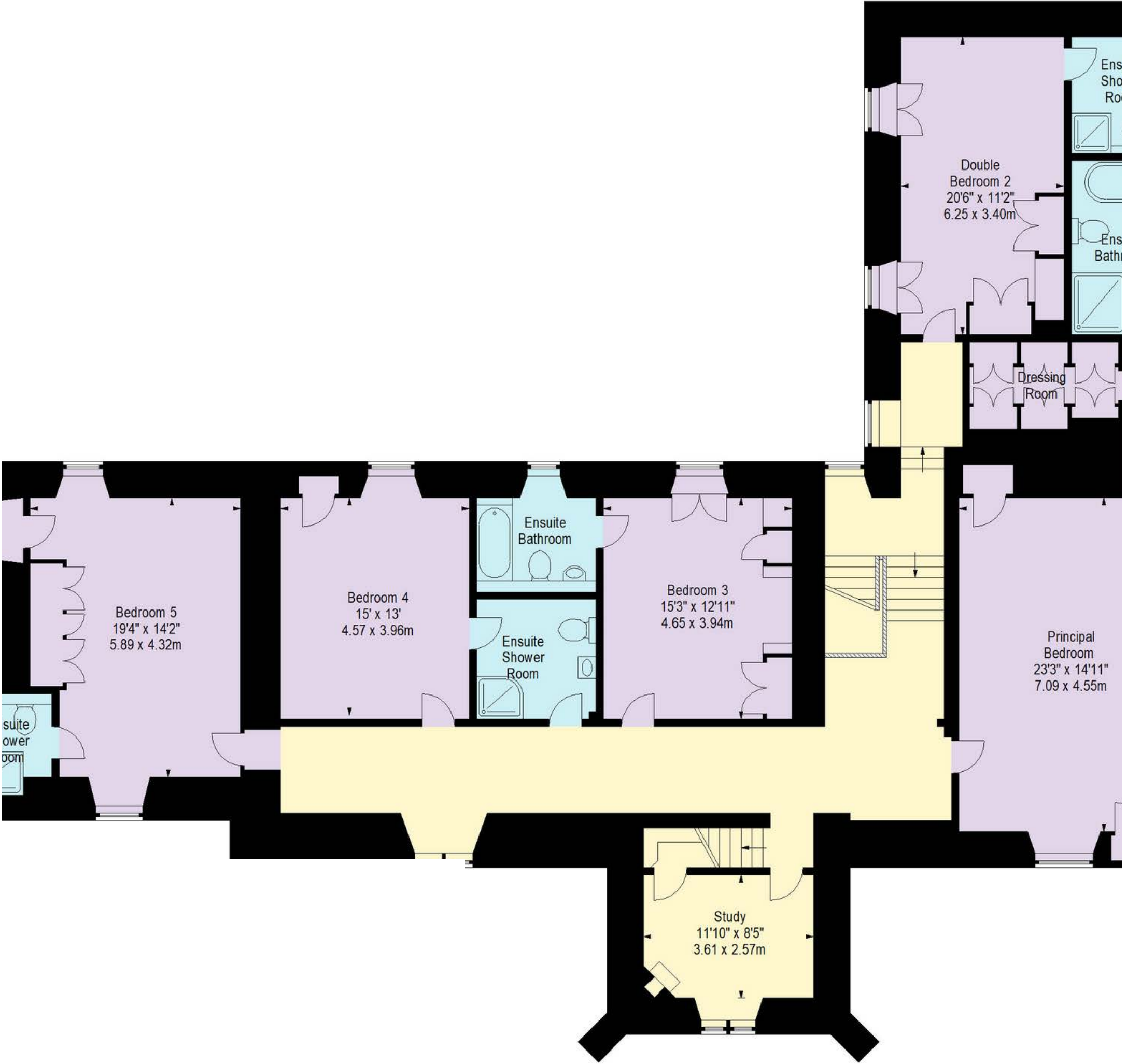
# Floorplan

# Ground Level



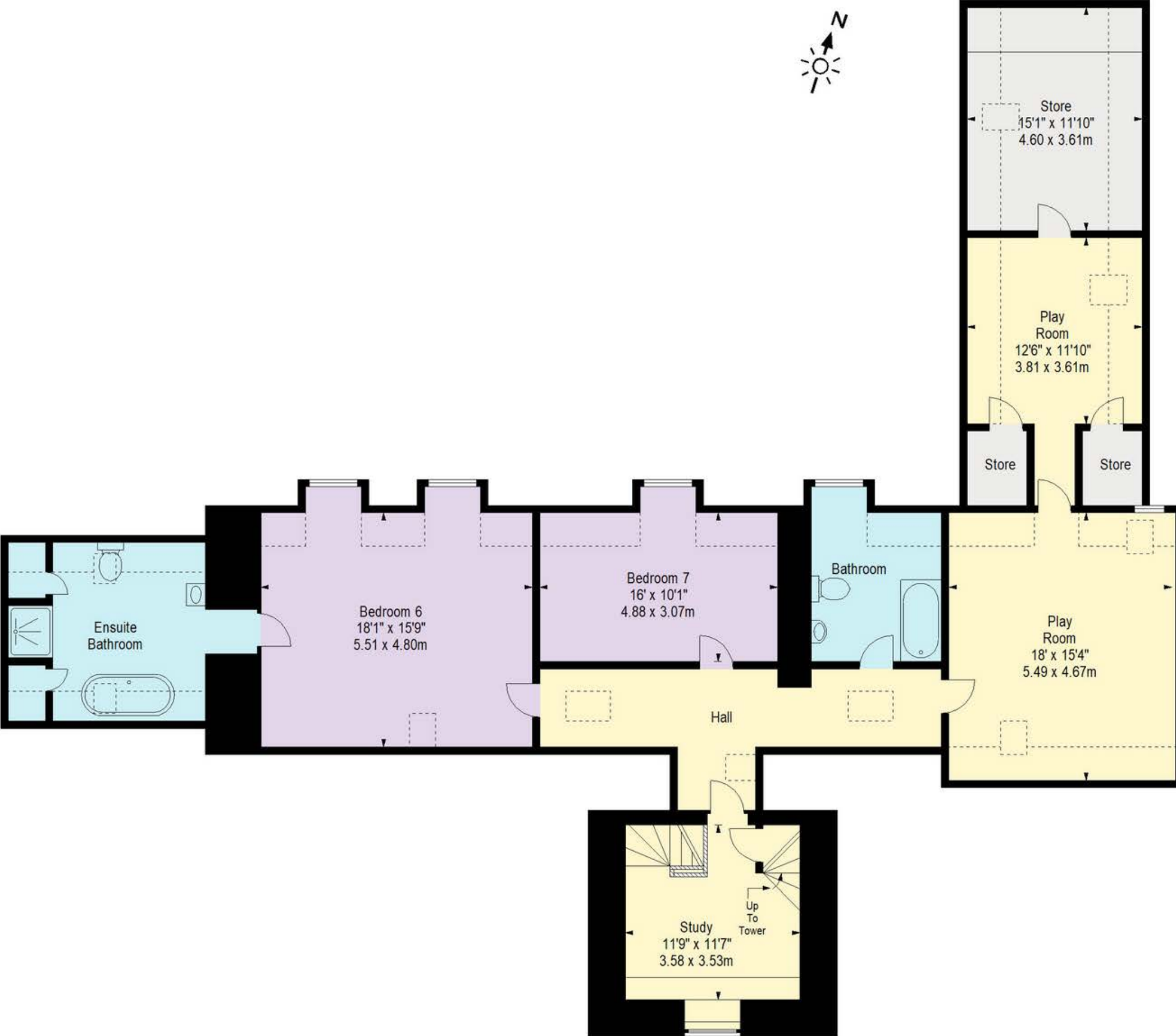
# Floorplan

## First Floor



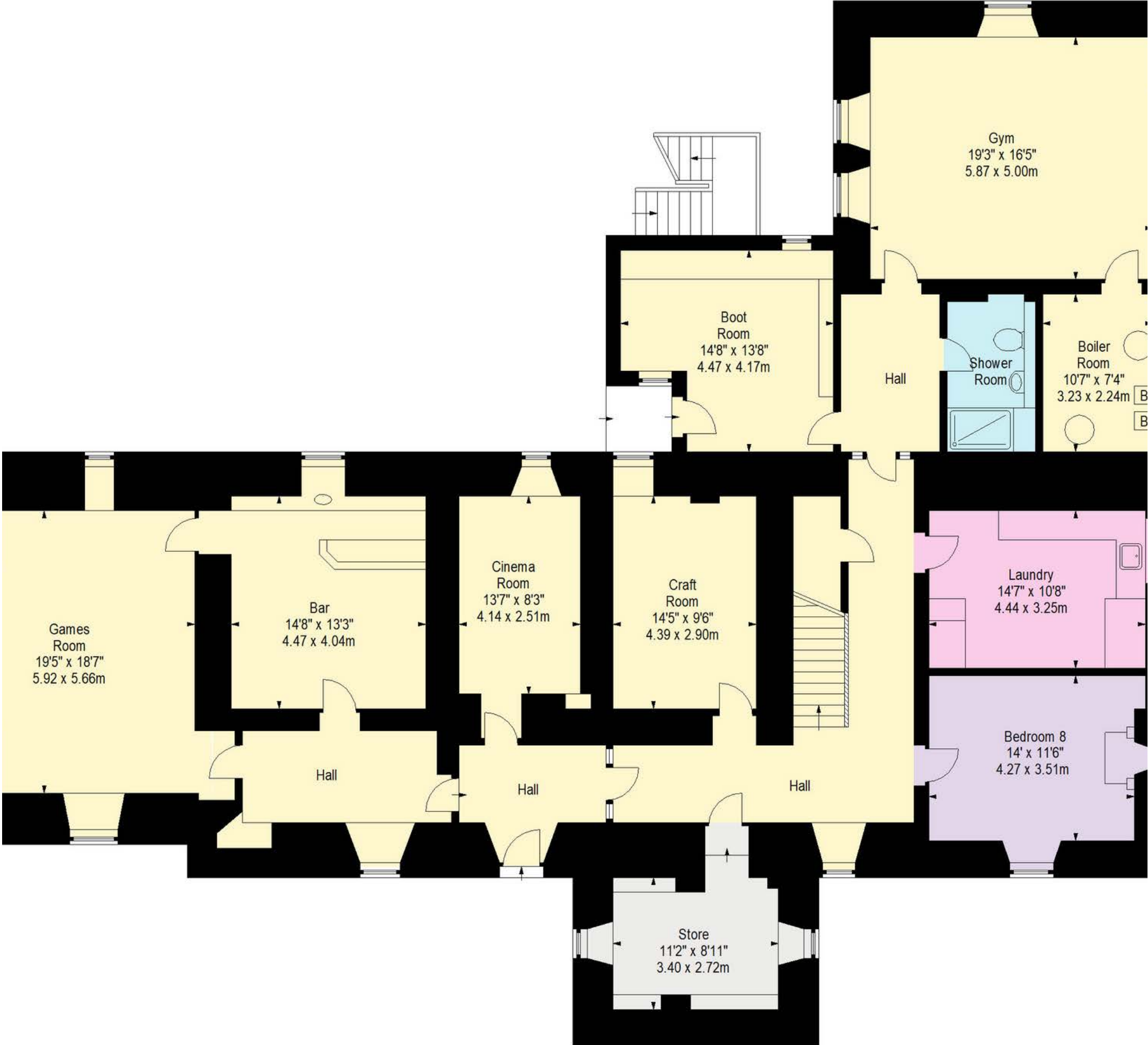
# Floorplan

## Second Floor



# Floorplan

## Lower Ground



the history of woodhall house

by

FAY PATERSON CUMMING

Illustrations by Alison McLeay

James VI knighted George, who was made Master of the King's Mint in Scotland. In Greyfnars churchyard on the west side is the tomb of George and Janet Foulis, adorned with their portraits in stone. George, who was a Bailie of Edinburgh and served as a counsellor to the king for sixteen years, died on 28th May 1633.

### **George Foulis of Ravelston b1606 - ?**

He was born in 1606 and succeeded in 1633. He too was married twice: to Christian Wardlaw of Pitreavie and to Jean Sinclair, daughter of Sir John Sinclair of Stevenston, a wealthy Edinburgh merchant. In all he had twelve children. His cousin, Alexander Foulis of Colinton and Dreghorn, was made a baronet of Nova Scotia by Charles I in 1634.

### **Sir John Foulis of Ravelston b1638-1707**

Rarely does a character come down to us with as much clarity and charm as does Sir John Foulis of Ravelston. He kept a careful tally of all his expenses in his account book of 1671-1707 and not only does he paint a clear picture of his time, but also shows himself to be a happy man, a kindly husband and father, a considerate master, a convivial host and a good friend. He enjoyed life and he saw that those around him did so too.

He was born in 1638, the second child of George and Jean Foulis, and must have seen the deprivations caused by Monck's troops during the Civil War.

He was made a baronet by Charles II in 1661.

He married four times and had fifteen children. His first wife was Margaret Primrose, who presented him with fourteen children between August 1662 and March 1680. But Margaret caused a problem. She was the sole heiress of Sir Archibald Primrose of Dunipace, whose estate was settled on her eldest son, but only if he took the name of Primrose.

Sir John was aggrieved that his name should be passed over and so, to perpetuate the name of Foulis, he purchased Woodhall from the Cunninghams for his second surviving son, William, in 1700.

Margaret died in April 1690 and four months later Sir John married Ann, or Agnes, eldest daughter of Walter Dundas of that Ilk. She had

one child, Barbara, who died when she was only two, causing her father great grief. "She was a well favoured wittie child," he wrote sadly. In 1696 her mother also died in the Foulis' Edinburgh house at Foster's Wyndhead.

Sir John was well acquainted with the Cunninghams. Sir William, Hugh and Adam Cunningham were his great drinking and sporting companions. The Account Book is full of references to them.

On Wednesday June 1st 1681 he dined at Coffee George's with Cunningham of Enterkin, and in 1694 he records paying for "a mutchkin of new seck" to share with Hugh Cunningham and others. On the 17th September 1694 he attended the burial of Sir William Cunningham's sister, travelling from Ravelston to Woodhall and Edinburgh, and on the 10th March he writes that he spent the day with Lord Polmaise, Sir William and John Cunningham "anent my son, his wife and my marriage". They had a chopin of wine with dinner and a link-boy to see them home. On March 20th a reader was employed to proclaim the banns of marriage, both in Colinton and Corstorphine, for himself and Lady Enterkin "twice tomorrow and once next Sunday".

Wife number three was Mary Murray, daughter of John Murray of Polmaise and widow of John Cunningham of Enterkin. She had several Cunningham children and he made an excellent stepfather. He was especially fond of her daughter, Jane, who married his son, William.

There are many mentions of Woodhall, his wife's old home, and in 1700 he bought the estate for 9000 merks, moving into the house with his wife, son and daughter-in-law on October 8th 1701. From then on he made it his family seat and spent much time and money improving the house and garden.

On 15th March 1702 John Aitkine, the mason, repaired a chimney and was paid "for his paines to come heir to looke the chimney and to go to the ferrie to choise concave cleiks and lintell hewn for ye chamber chimney".

In August 1702 Jamie Gray was sent "to buy old hats for the trees at Woodhall"!

In November a great storm blew down many of the trees on the estate. In December Lady Foulis was ill and John Robie was paid to go to Woodhall about the "parot". On the 19th December John Aitkine received

payment for "hewing the checks of the two chess windows at Woodhall". Unhappily Dame Mary Murray Foulis died in his Edinburgh house on 27th December 1702. Sir John wrote that she made a "most sweet and peaceful end" and described her as virtuous, obliging and a kind and loving wife.

In 1703 Sir John went in for a massive redecoration of Woodhall. John Scot of Edinburgh was paid for "measuring ye lyming of ye wester rume of the hall at Woodhall, being 52 ells and 1/3 pt besydes the chimney and 3 door pieces and ye lyming within the press and folding bed". Two locks to a chamber at Woodhall with brass "knops" were installed.

On 21st May he wrote "I have agreed with Laurie Hendersone for painting the rume of the hall whyt japand pannells, black borders, with pictures of flowers, men, etc and gilded, the cornish marble and surbase marble, the picture frames japand with flowers of all sorts etc for £10 sterling." Eventually Laurie received £82 for his work on the house.

He mentioned the servants and workmen by name. We know that Jean Wood span and washed at Woodhall, that Jonie Millar swept the lums as well as mending the roof and Davie and Wattie did lots of odd jobs like buying "3 stane 9 pund and 1/2 of iron to the kitchen chimney at Woodhall".

All this activity was probably caused by the fact that old Sir John was courting again. This time it was Dame Agnes Scott, the sixty-five year old widow of Baillie Andrew Bruce. She eventually succumbed to his persistence and married him in September 1705.

He continued to lavish money and attention on his beloved Woodhall, building dykes for the Easter and Wester orchards, planting clover and buying beechmast and acorns for planting. Three women were employed for two days to weed the garden at 4 shillings per day each, and the garden was well stocked with vegetables and flowers: potatoes, artichokes, asparagus, lettuce, tulips, lilies and anemones. The finishing touch was striped and variegated holly bushes throughout the Woodhall estate.

With Woodhall Sir John also bought the papermills of Spylaw and some walkmills. He was especially interested in the new inventions in stocking weaving and held shares in the British Linen Company, the African Company and also in the disastrous Darien Scheme.

Lord Colinton. Sir James, as he was known, was concerned in all public transactions of his time and in 1543 was one of the commissioners appointed to negotiate the proposed marriage between the infant Mary Queen of Scots and Prince Edward of England. The failure of these negotiations led the vindictive Henry VIII to unleash upon the Scottish people a series of destructive invasions called the Rough Wooing, a courtship which cost Scotland dear in lives and property. Sir James died in 1549 and was succeeded by his son, Henry.

Henry was a Deputy Marshall. He married Margaret Haldane of Gleneagles, and fathered five sons and five daughters. One of Henry's sons was James, who married Agnes Heriot of Lumphoy, a family high in the favour of James VI. They had six children. Their tombstone is in Colinton church with the inscription: A HERIOT SPOUS TO J FOULIS OF COLLINGTON VAS QUHA DEID 8th AUGUST 1593. He died in 1609. He was succeeded by his eldest son, James, father of the first Baronet of Colinton. George, his second son, became the ancestor of the Ravelston and Woodhall branches of the family.

### **Sir George Foulis of Ravelston b1569-1633**

George Foulis was married firstly to Sibella Gilbert who had two daughters, and secondly to Janet Bannatyne, who bore him sixteen children between 1604 and 1620. Janet was the daughter of George Bannatyne of Newtyle, who was a wealthy Edinburgh merchant. In 1568, during a terrible plague, George Bannatyne passed the time by transcribing a rich collection of Scottish poetry and this was preserved at Woodhall till 1712 when it was given by William Foulis to the Honourable William Carmichael of Wester Hailes. In 1770 it was presented to the Advocates' Library by the third Earl of Hyndford.

George was a goldsmith and with his own and his wife's fortune he purchased most of Colinton and Ravelston in 1624. His uncle, Thomas, was also a goldsmith. Thomas had supplied James VI with gold chains to present to the Danish admirals at the homecoming of the king and his new bride, Anne of Denmark. George was a great friend of his mother's kinsman, George Heriot, goldsmith and benefactor to the king and to the City of Edinburgh. "Jinglin Georgie" was godfather to one of the numerous Foulis children.



## the foulises 1700-1931

The name Foulis is reckoned by some to be of Norman origin, after incomers who settled in Scotland in the reign of Malcolm III (1056-93). Their heraldic emblem was three bay leaves - feuilles. Others believe it comes from the Gaelic 'foghlais' - meaning rivulet.

The Foulis family were found in high places at the court of the Scottish kings and held lands in Perthshire, Angus and Ross and Cromarty. They also claim Royal descent, including in their family tree such illustrious names as Robert the Bruce, Edward I of England, Philip IV of France, Edward the Black Prince and James I of Scotland.

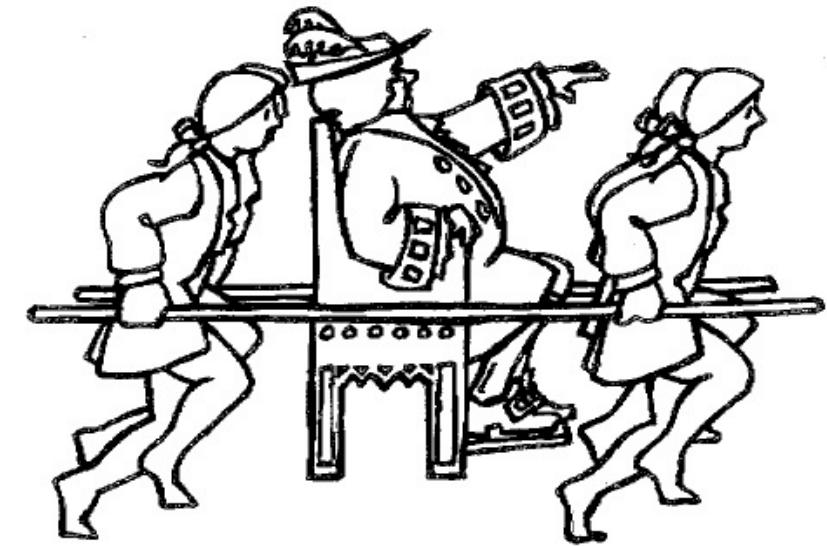
Reginald de Foulis witnessed a charter in the time of Alexander II (1231-49) while, during the reign of James I, William de Foulis was a lecturer in logic and philosophy at St. Andrews (1410), secretary to the Earl of Douglas (1422), secretary to the King (1424), Provost of Bothwell (1429) and Keeper of the Privy Seal. He, or someone of the same name, married the daughter of Sir William Ogilvie and had two sons, William and James. James was a skinner in Edinburgh and married Margaret Henderson of Fordel, daughter of an Edinburgh burghess.

The son and heir of James and Margaret was another James. He became a lawyer and reached the top of his profession. He was an advocate to James IV and his son, James V. In 1526 he was Member of Parliament for Edinburgh; in 1529 he was private secretary to James V; in 1531 he was Clerk Register and in 1532 he was one of the original judges of the Court of Session.

He married Katherine Brown of Hartree, a cousin of his fellow advocate, Sir Adam Otterburn. He acquired the estate of Colinton and is regarded as the founder of the Colinton family. He took as his title

Sir John led a rich, full happy life. He was proud of his name and heritage, he enjoyed his food and his wine and loved the company of his many friends, young and old. He spoilt his grandchildren shamelessly by showering them with all sorts of presents, sweetmeats, toys, pets and golf clubs. He himself loved games and sports, golf, horse-racing, hawking, bowling and cards. He kept greyhounds.

He did however have his fair share of sorrow. He lost three wives, three sons (one of whom was mentally retarded), one daughter, one daughter-in-law and, at least, one grandchild.



By April 1707 he himself was ill. To avoid the bumpy carriage ride on the terrible road from Edinburgh to Woodhall, he employed four men to carry him in a sedan chair. He died shortly afterwards at Woodhall and was buried in Greyfriars churchyard. Dame Agnes survived him by thirteen years. She too was buried in Greyfriars, on 26th June 1720. "She lyes under the Southmost stone of the Foulis tomb." She was eighty.

## William Foulis of Woodhall 1707-1737

William was the fifth son of Sir John Foulis. In 1701 he married his step-mother's daughter, Janet Cunningham. Both Janet and her son died and in 1704 William married Helen Hepburn of Humbie, by whom he had four children. William and his family lived at Woodhall with Sir John Foulis. It was this William who gave away the Bannatyne Collection. He succeeded his father in 1707.

In 1717 John Justice of Crichton, the son of William's sister, Jean, presented Woodhall with a sundial bearing the inscription "Made by John Justice and gifted to Woodhall anno 1717".

William's heir, John, married Margaret Carnegie in 1731 and died the following year. William died in 1737 and was succeeded by John's small son, another William.

### **William Foulis of Woodhall s1737-1796**

William was born in 1732 and succeeded his grandfather when only five. He married Jean Campbell and they had four sons and two daughters. His three eldest sons died during his lifetime, and when he died in 1796, he was succeeded by his youngest son, James. By this time the Foulis family was in financial trouble and was borrowing heavily on the estate.

Lack of fortune, however, did not prevent William's daughter, Barbara, making an interesting and advantageous marriage. Barbara married Alexander Nasmyth, the father of Scottish landscape painting.

### **Alexander Nasmyth b1758-1840**

Alexander was born in the Grassmarket in 1758. He was educated at the Royal High School and later studied under Allan Ramsay and other outstanding artists in England and Rome. Probably his most famous painting is the full-length study of his friend, Robert Burns reckoned to be the only authentic portrait of the poet. When Burns visited Edinburgh in 1786 Nasmyth showed him the city, dragging him up Arthur's Seat to see the dawn. A long ramble on the Pentlands ended at the Old Rosslyn Inn where, after a hearty meal, Burns scratched his signature on the window and wrote two verses on a pewter plate. It is possible that the poet visited Woodhall, for Nasmyth was courting Barbara Foulis whom he married in 1786.

Barbara and Alexander had eleven children, but three died in infancy. Alexander ran an art school in his house at 47 York Place where he was helped by his children, all of whom inherited their father's talent. His liberal views alienated his aristocratic clientele and he turned his attention to landscape painting.

The minister of Colinton, James Thomson, was removed to Elgin and replaced by Thomas Paterson in 1696. Three years later Paterson was elected to the Parish of St Cuthbert's and the Kirk Session nominated John Cunningham of Woodhall and David Pitcairn of Dreghorn to oppose his removal before the presbytery.

Servants and tenants of Woodhall at this time were James Mossman, Thomas Smith and James Brown and John Brown, all with wives and large families.

In 1666 the Covenanters under Wallace of Learmonth passed through the area, closely followed by General Tam Dalyell, 'the Bludie Muscovite', who slaughtered fifty of the rebels.

It is recorded that John Cunningham of Woodhall had a daughter, Magdillan, baptised in that year.

Sir Adam Cunningham was Commissioner of Supply till 1690. He died in 1692, predeceased by his son. He left two daughters and the estate passed to John Cunningham of Enterkine.

### **John Cunningham of Enterkine 1692-1694**

In 1671 the Barony of Woodhall was resigned to John Cunningham of Enterkine who belonged to the Cunninghams of Caprington in Ayrshire. They were descended from Thomas, the third son of Sir William Cunningham of Kilmaurs. He was an advocate and Keeper of the Great Seal. A Royalist, he was granted £50 sterling in 1661 after the Restoration of Charles II for expenses processing summonses for treason.

He was married twice; firstly in 1637 to Elizabeth Paton who died in 1676, and secondly in 1677 to Mary Murry of Polmaise. After he died she married Sir John Foulis.

His daughter, Elizabeth, made what he considered to be an unsuitable marriage to John Middleton of Aberdeen, a doctor's son. Her dowry was withheld and this led to a court case.

He died in 1694.

### **John Cunningham of Enterkine II 1694-1700**

John was the son of John Cunningham and Margaret Murray. He got the charter for the Barony of Woodhall in 1700. He married Elizabeth Lauder of Idington and in 1699 they had a son, John, followed by a daughter the next year. In 1700 he sold the estate to Sir John Foulis of Ravelston, who had married his mother, Mary Murray Cunningham.

The name Enterkin is remembered because of Enterkin's Yett on the Lanark Road. This was the road to Woodhall Mill till 1874.

There were many Cunninghams recorded as living in the house: John the Elder, John the Younger, Lawrence, Adam, James.

His other talent was engineering. He designed the Dean Bridge and the Temple of Hygeia at St. Bernard's Well in Edinburgh. He submitted a design for the Nelson Monument on Calton Hill and laid out private parks and ornamental gardens, his most notable being Blair Castle. In 1794 he invented the Bow and String Bridge which is used for spanning wide spaces like the stations of Charing Cross and Birmingham. In old age Nasmyth became an honorary member of the new Scottish Academy. He died in 1840.

Of his six surviving daughters and two sons, Peter became well-known as a painter, and Elizabeth married Daniel Terry, the actor, around 1821 and later Charles Richardson, author of the famous dictionary.

His most famous child was James, born in 1808. He was an engineer, scientist, astronomer and inventor of the steam hammer. He was extremely fond of his mother. He believed that marrying Barbara was the best thing his father ever did. "She had no fortune, but was sweet of disposition and commonsense." James died in 1890.

### **Sir James Foulis of Woodhall and Colinton 1796-1842**

Sir James is described as having a fine taste for the arts, as indeed befitted the brother-in-law of Alexander Nasmyth. He was a painter and sculptor. He painted a portrait of his philanthropic neighbour, James Gillespie, which hangs in the Council Room of Gillespie's Hospital.

In 1802 he allowed Sir William Forbes of Sligo to carry water through the Woodhall estate by pipes and aqueducts to the new mansion house being built by Forbes at Colinton.

James married Agnes Grieve in 1810 and had four children. He castellated Woodhall in 1820. In 1825 he succeeded to the baronetcy of Colinton. He died in 1842 and was succeeded by his son, William.

### **Sir William Liston Foulis 1842-1858**

Sir William was born in 1812. He was married firstly to Henrietta, the daughter of Captain Ramage Liston RN and grand niece and heiress of the Right Honourable Sir Robert Liston GCB, Ambassador to Turkey. Her name was incorporated into the family name which became Liston Foulis (pronounced Liston Fouls). This marriage produced two sons and a daughter. His second wife was Mary, the eldest daughter of Robert

Cadell of Ratho. Although still the owner of Woodhall, Sir William let out the house to a series of tenants. He died in 1858.

**Sir James Liston Foulis s1858-95**

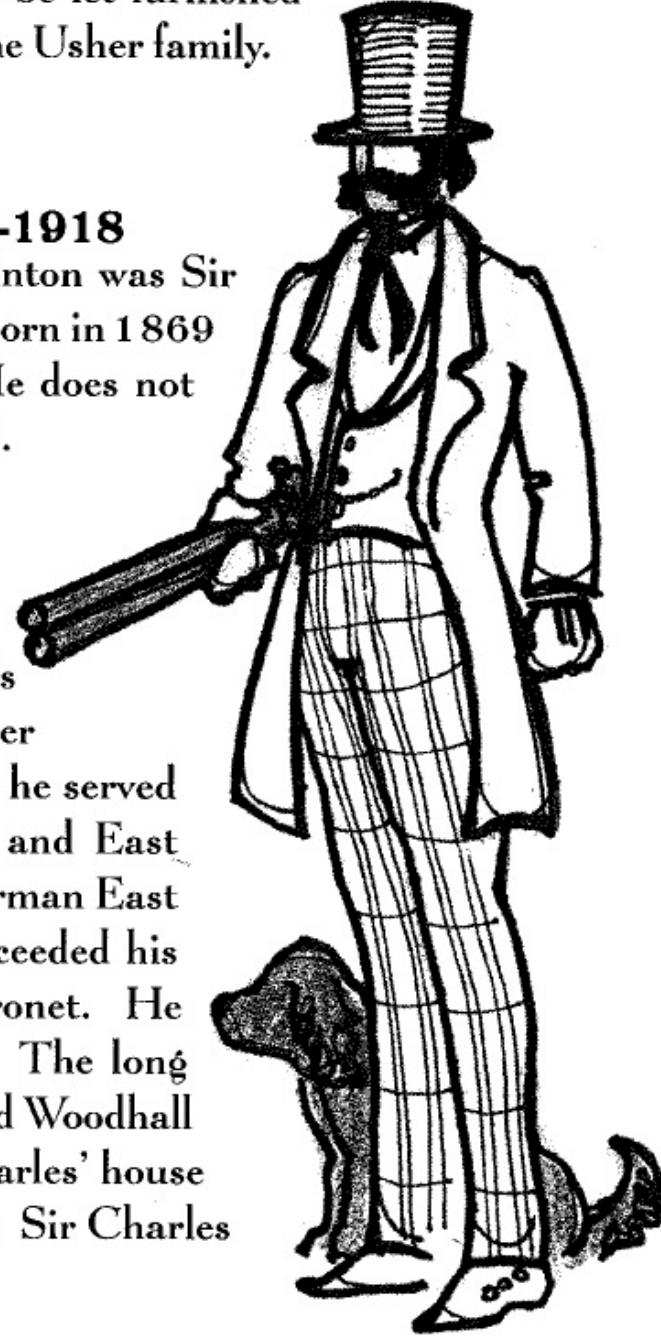
Sir James, the ninth baronet, was born in 1847 and married Sarah Helen Auchterlony in 1868. They had seven children. Woodhall continued to be let furnished to a series of tenants, including the Usher family. Sir James died in 1895.

**Sir William Liston Foulis s1895-1918**

The tenth baronet of Colinton was Sir William Liston Foulis, who was born in 1869 and died unmarried in 1918. He does not appear to have lived at Woodhall.

**Sir Charles Liston Foulis  
s1918-1931**

Sir Charles spent most of his life in Africa. He fought in the Boer War and in the First World War he served in the African Army, in South and East Africa. He was paymaster in German East Africa from 1916 - 18. He succeeded his brother in 1918 as eleventh baronet. He sold Woodhall House in 1931. The long association of the Foulis family and Woodhall was at an end. Not quite, Sir Charles' house in Kenya was called "Woodhall". Sir Charles died at Kisumu, Kenya in 1936.



An old woman was being tried for witchcraft. Her crime? She cured bad eyesight by hanging a ball of yarn around the patient's neck. She denied black magic. The thread had been given to her thirty years before. It had cured her daughter and she saw no harm in sharing her good fortune with others free of charge.

It was no good. The jury were set on a burning.

Lord Woodhall, however, pressed the woman for more details. Had she kept an alehouse in a nearby village? Yes, she had. Then Lord Woodhall addressed the jury. Thirty years before, a poor scholar had stayed at the woman's alehouse. Unable to pay his reckoning, he offered to cure her daughter's bad eyesight. He wrote out a rhyme ridiculing her credulity and placed it inside the ball of thread, telling her to hang it around the girl's neck. "I was that student", said the learned judge, "and you have been on the point of committing a great injustice." To prove his statement he opened the ball and read out the rhyme.

*"The Devil scratch out both  
your eyes,  
and spit into the holes likewise."*

### **Sir Adam Cunningham of Woodhall s 1639 - 1692**

Since 1632 with his father he was Commissary of Dumfries. He acquired Woodhall and Bonally in 1639 and by 1647, he also owned Dreghorn, Auchingane, Little Fordel, Kirkslore and Comiston. He was a Justice of the Peace, served on the Committee of War for Edinburgh in 1646.

This was the time of the Civil War. The area suffered dreadfully from the depredations of General Monck's troops in 1650. Woodhall would have suffered like the rest. The Foulises of Colinton never fully recovered from their treatment at the hands of the Commonwealth soldiers.

Not all Cunninghams were Royalist. John Cunningham, Lord Woodhall, was one of the seven circuit judges administering public justice during the Protectorate. This story about him is recorded by Sir Walter Scott in his "Tales of a Grandfather".



### **GEORGE ERIC GLENDINING 1931 - 38**

Mr Glendining bought Woodhall House in 1931. He was a farmer from Ross-shire who had sheep farms at Kirkhouse, Traquair and the Pentlands. He bought Woodhall in 1931 and sold it to Sir Stanley Davidson in 1938. He retired to Nethybridge and subsequently to Aberfeldy and Dunning where he died in 1972 aged 88.

young Mary Queen of Scots to demand liberty of conscience and he and his son were charged with not going on the Raid of Jedburgh, an expedition planned by Queen Mary to pacify the Borders. His opposition to Mary led to him almost being denounced as a rebel and outlawed in 1565. His son, William, however, supported the Queen, but he died between 1562 and 1565. He himself died in 1577.

### **John Cunningham 4th of Cunninghamhead s1577 - d 1589**

A family quarrel is obvious because William resigned the land of Woodhall and Bonally away from William to another son, John, and his wife Margaret Boyd. John was of the same mind as his father, even to the extent of being involved in the murder of David Rizzio, the Queen's Italian secretary in 1566, but Rizzio's killers were never brought to book. By 1582 he had married again, to Barbara Lauder. He seems to have died about 1589, because in that year Sir John Maitland of Thirlestane and William Cunningham of Turlands came to blows over the rents of Cunninghamhead and Polkelly. They "schoit and dichargeit their gunis and pistolletes".

### **John Cunningham 5th of Cunninghamhead s 1589 - d 1609**

He was a minor when his father died. He was served heir to his father in 1603 in 32 oxgangs of land of older extent of Woodhall and Bonally. In 1598, because he had not yet reached his majority, he had to get the consent of his curators for the settlement of his marriage to Maria Ednestoun of Duntreath. His curators were John Cokburne of Ormestoun, Alexander Lawder of Haltoun, James Foulis of Colinton and George Hamilton of Preston.

During John's minority Woodhall must have been occupied by James Foulis, heir to Colinton, who had married Barbara Lauder, John's mother or stepmother. It was at this time that Woodhall was the scene of a kidnapping. James VI appointed Hamilton of Preston as tutor to young Thomas Ingles of Murdingstoun, but there were others who wished to control the child's fortune. Hamilton hid young Thomas at Woodhall with the Foulises, but Robert Hamilton of Stanehouse and his men sneaked

to avoid the Scottish winter. For three years he spent the winter months in New Zealand, sailing out as ship's surgeon on a Blue Funnel cargo boat, camping and deep-sea fishing and then returning via either Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope. The resulting improvement in his health ensured that his one kidney gave him no trouble for another fifty-six years.

In 1921 he became a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, and in 1926 he was awarded a gold medal for his thesis on immunisation and antibody reactions. In the same year he graduated B.A. from Cambridge and he became a F.R.C.P. of Edinburgh. In 1927 he married Isabel Margaret Anderson, daughter of Lord Anderson, Judge of the Court of Session.

He was co-author of a book on pernicious anaemia which was published in 1930, the same year that he was appointed Regius Professor of Medicine at Aberdeen, the first full-time professor of medicine in Scotland. He was also Senior Physician at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. While in Aberdeen his work in haematology showed him the miserable state of the health of many of the local women. This led him to an interest in nutrition and when the Second World War broke out he became a member of the Ministry of Food's food rationing (special diets) advisory committee. He also was an adviser to the Department of Health on the organisation of hospitals in wartime.

In 1938 he returned to Edinburgh as Professor of Medicine and Honorary Physician in charge at the Royal Infirmary. It was then that he bought Woodhall House in which he stayed until his retirement in 1959. After the war he increased his interest in turning the Western, Northern and Eastern Hospitals in Edinburgh into teaching medical centres and he set about staffing them with the best young physicians the country had to offer. His progressive ideas made him a stimulating leader who attracted and encouraged a brilliant and loyal team of young men to give of their best. The Davidsons had no children, but Woodhall House, during their time, must have sheltered some of the most distinguished young minds in the medical world.

In 1952 Professor Davidson and his team produced the classic "The Principle and Practice of Medicine" which became an instant best-seller and a kind of medical bible. He was also the co-author of "A Text

## **SIR STANLEY DAVIDSON 1938-1959**

Leybourne Stanley Patrick Davidson was born in Ceylon on 3rd March 1894, the second son of Sir Leybourne Francis Watson Davidson. His early years were spent in the family home at Huntly Lodge, Aberdeenshire. The estate included five miles of the River Deveron, one of the best fishing rivers in the country. Young Stanley caught his first trout at the age of seven and his great love for fishing never left him. In 1976 at the age of 82 he wrote a small book about his fishing experiences in Scotland, Canada and New Zealand. Only old age and failing eyesight latterly robbed him of his favourite pastime.

A great sportsman, he was also fond of hockey, tennis and shooting and as a teenager, indulged his love of speed by testing motor bikes for the Triumph Motor Company. He was educated at Cheltenham and Trinity College, Cambridge, but his studies were interrupted by the outbreak of the First World War. As a second year medical student, he, and his friends, believed that the war would be over by January 1915. "We joined up to teach the Germans a lesson," he recalled. "Little did we know the discipline, courage and toughness of the German fighting man."

Despite having only one kidney, he enlisted and by November 1914 was a captain in charge of A Company, 6th Battalion Gordon Highlanders, fighting in the trenches in Flanders. He was wounded twice. The second time at Festubert, where his batman died at his side, and he was left for dead, lying twenty-four hours in the open before being rescued. His huge wound was infected by gas-gangrene and he spent one year at the Boulogne Base Hospital. He was in fact the only survivor of the gas-gangrene ward and spent another year at a convalescent camp in Ireland. After his discharge in 1917 he found that only a handful of his old student friends had lived through the war.

His experiences made him resolve to do something with his life and to improve the lot of those who had survived. He returned to college, this time to Edinburgh, where he graduated M.B. Ch.B with First Class Honours in 1919. He assisted the professor of bacteriology and for two years was house physician at Leith Hospital and the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, on duty twenty-four hours a day without pay. Not surprisingly his health deteriorated to such an extent that he was advised to go abroad

in and abducted the boy. The law ordered them to return him to his tutor for education. There is no record of whether this was done.

John was involved in the long-standing feud between the Earls of Glencairn and Eglinton and in 1608 he was ordered, along with other supporters, to appear before the Council in Edinburgh wearing no armour and carrying only a sword, in an attempted reconciliation.

He died in 1609, possibly about 27 years old.

## **Sir James Cunningham 6th of Cunninghamhead Baronet**

**s 1609-1629**

A child when his father died, he came by various transactions, to hold his land direct from the Crown by 1625. He was created a baronet in 1627. He was twice married. In 1627 he married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Thomas Nicolson, Commissary of Aberdeen and later he wed Lady Margaret Campbell of Loudon.

In 1629 he sold Woodhall to Adam Cunningham of Arkletoun. He died in 1641.

## **Sir Adam Cunningham of Woodhall 1629 - 1639**

In 1629 Adam Cunningham of Arkletoun, advocate, Commissary of Dumfries, bought 32 oxengates of land of Woodhall and Bonally with the tower, manor place and walk and grain mills for £23,000.

The original part of the house is said to have been built in the 16th century, but Adam built substantial additions in 1630. He is most likely responsible for the ornate plaster ceiling which is an outstanding feature of the house.

A Royalist, he was appointed by Charles I as one of the Supreme Commission for punishing "receivers of Jesuits, hearers of masses, excommunicated papists and those who spoke openly against the Church or the Acts of the General Assembly". This is rather ironic considering the inhabitants of the house between 1659 & 76. In 1637 he was appointed Lord of Session. He died in 1639.

Book of Medical Treatment" and "Human Nutrition and Dietetics".

Professor Davidson's lists of honours were great. In 1940 he was elected F. R.C.P. London; in 1946 he was given an Honorary M.D. from Oslo. In 1945 the President of the Polish Republic conferred on him the Order of Polonia Restituta in recognition of his contribution to the establishment of the Polish School of Medicine in Edinburgh.

From 1945 to 1952 he was Honorary Physician to H.M. George VI in Scotland and from 1952 to 1961 he held the same position to Queen Elizabeth, afterwards being Extra Physician to the Queen in Scotland. He was knighted in 1955.

He was President of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh from 1953 to 1957 and President of the Association of Physicians of Great Britain and Ireland in 1953. In 1963 he received an Honorary LL.D. from Edinburgh and the same honour from Aberdeen in 1971.

As a man Sir Stanley was described as several times larger than life. He was forceful, outspoken and enthusiastic, a compassionate doctor and a lucid teacher with a hatred of pretension and humbug.

Like many Scots Sir Stanley was notorious for watching his pennies. He once requested the return of the raspberry punnets after providing the fruit for a garden party, but, also like many Scots, he did not mind spending money where it was necessary and the medical facilities have good reason to be grateful for his generosity. He and Lady Davidson gave the Faculty of Medicine in Edinburgh £80,000 to endow a biennial lecture and help to provide teaching, travel and research facilities, and when Sir Stanley died the University of Edinburgh received £270,000 for research purposes.

Sir Stanley retired in 1959 and Woodhall House was sold. He planned to continue his active life in sport and travel but a series of illnesses darkened his later years and the death in 1979 of his wife, Peggy, was a great blow.

He died on September 22nd 1981, aged 87, in an Edinburgh nursing home. He is still remembered with affection, pride and respect by all who ever knew him.

## **the cunninghams 1374-1700**

Woodhall was originally crown land, part of the barony of Redhall. The estate is first mentioned in a list of charters of David II in 1329 and was leased to Alexander Meyaners (Menzies) of Woodhall. Menzies was one of Robert the Bruce's most stalwart supporters.

### **Sir William Cunningham of Kilmaurs 1374-1418**

In 1374 Woodhall and Bonally was settled on Sir William Cunynghame of Kilmaurs by Murdoch Stewart, Earl of Fife and in 1400 the charter was confirmed by Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany and Governor of Scotland.

Sir William Cunningham married the eldest of the co-heiresses of Sir Robert Denniston of that ilk and received the baronies of Redhall and Colinton. This made him a very powerful landowner. The Cunninghams were connected to the Colinton area for over 300 years.

### **William Cunningham, 1st of Cunninghamhead s 1418-1495**

He was the second son of Cunningham of Kilmaurs. He acquired the lands of Cunninghamhead in Ayrshire and from these the family took its title. He also had Woodhall and Bonally. He married Elizabeth Ross.

### **Robert Cunningham 2nd of Cunninghamhead s1495 - 1524**

He had the lands in 1495 but in 1508 he was convicted of oppressing Elizabeth Ross, Lady Cunningham by occupying and manuring her lands at Bonally. This is obviously some family quarrel. Elizabeth was his mother or perhaps, stepmother. He married Margaret Mure of Polkelly.

### **William Cunningham 3rd of Cunninghamhead s1524-1577**

William married firstly Marion Chalmers of Gadgirth, whose mother was a niece of Lord Yester, and secondly to Elizabeth, described in 1580 as his relict or widow.

William was a Reformer. He attended the Parliament of 1550 and pledged his support to John Knox's reformed religion. He was sent to the

## WOODHALL BRIDGE

A brig that aye stood ready  
For to tak oer the Laird and Lady,  
An porter chields wha cam wi cairds  
An siclike errands to the Laird's



## the society of JESUS 1959-1976

In October 1959 Woodhall House was bought by the Society of Jesus for £8,000. It was intended to establish a Scottish vice-province, to extend works in Scotland and to entrust a specific foreign missionary enterprise to Scottish Jesuits, particularly in British Guiana.

This was not the first time such a venture had been tried. In 1562 Hay of Megginch joined the recently-formed Society of Jesus and twenty-two years later the Scottish Mission was established. It continued for 200 years until merged with the English Jesuit Province.

Woodhall became an novitiate and was officially opened with the installation of its first Rector, Father James Christie, S.J., on September 5th 1963.

In 1959 it had been decided to enlarge the college, but Woodhall was in the Green Belt. No new building was allowed, so a substantial extension was erected. Built of old stone from a demolished Perthshire house, the annexe was finished in 1964. It had accommodation for fifty-six students, professors and staff, with lecture rooms, an oratory and two chapels.

The anticipated influx of Scottish students did not materialise and the novitiates of Harlaxton in England and Woodhall were brought together in September 1964.

Many of the old trees planted by Sir John Foulis were blown down in the great gale of January 1968. They were sawn into logs and delivered to the old people of the district by the novices. Also in that year the college was visited by the Apostolic Delegate and Archbishop.

In 1970 Father Arrupe, the then Father-General of the Society of Jesus visited the college in January, but on September 10th, the noviceship was transferred back to England, to Loyola House, Rainhill. The Scottish venture had failed.

Two Jesuits stayed on and the house put up for sale. It was leased in 1973 to an American Pentecostal charitable organisation called the Berean International Life Corps. All that can be remembered about them in the district is that "they gave out pamphlets". They left for financial reasons!

Edinburgh University applied to the Corporation Planning Committee in 1971 for permission to develop the property as a residence

for 1,250 students. The proposal was dismissed as being "wholly unacceptable" because of access difficulties, the Green Belt Policy and the intensity of the development.

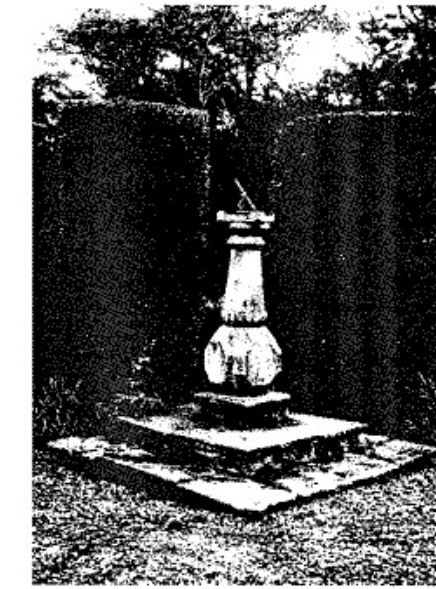
In December 1976 the Society of Jesus sold Woodhall College to William and Ann Forsyth of Edinburgh.

Gorrie, Stenhouse Mills and the Binns and was probably the work of Alexander White, a plasterer who was popular in Scotland around 1620 to 1630. Downstairs are the old pantry, wine cellar and kitchen, with the original huge fireplace and old hooks and rings still in place.

Woodhall, like most old houses, has its ghost. There is a ghostroom in which there once was an ancient lathe, but there are no details to be found. Whatever once visited Woodhall has vanished long ago.

On the outer wall of the house there is an inserted panel showing a rather primitive carving of a face. This has been described as a leper's squint from the old demolished Kirk of Hailes, but other sources suggest that it is the remains of a beggars' fountain.

Also, in the garden wall, now in Woodhall Court, is an old church window frame. Again it has been suggested that this is from the long-



vanished Kirk of Hailes, but the misalignment of the wall makes it more likely to be part of Woodhall's own ancient chapel. Near this wall is a right-of-way, which is actually the city boundary to the south. It leads to Kinleith Mill. Woodhall's gardens were famous for its yew hedge and old yew tree now in Woodhall Court. Once it had two sundials. One was presented to Woodhall by John Justice, the grandson of Sir John Foulis, in 1717. The polyhedron head has twenty-four faces of octagons, hexagons and squares and a flat face

on top. The octagonal copper dial plate that rested on top was placed on the sundial in front of the house in error.

Across the footbridge over the Water of Leith to Juniper Green stands Gowanlea, 547 Lanark Road, the old manse, the Dower House of Woodhall. It is said to be haunted, as is Woodhall itself, but no one seems to remember by whom or by what. Legend has it that there is a tunnel between the two houses, but all search for it has been unsuccessful.

## owners of woodhall

1374-1700	The Cunninghams
1700-1931	The Foulises
1931-1938	George E. Glendining
1938-1959	Professor Stanley Davidson
1959-1976	The Society of Jesus
1976-	Ann and William Forsyth

## the history of woodhall

Woodhall sits high on the south bank of the Water of Leith. A thick belt of ancient trees protects it from the bustle of the Edinburgh suburb of Juniper Green. A magnificent example of a Scottish country seat, it was built in the 16th century with additions in 1630. A wing was added in 1767 and castellations and hood-moulded windows and a buttressed



central tower transformed the facade in 1820, but these do not detract from the mellow beauty of the old house.

The interior of Woodhall has many interesting features, the most spectacular being the plaster ceiling. This dates from 1630 and features the St. Andrew's Cross, the thistle, fleur de lys, rose, crown and sceptre, lion rampant and the motto "NOBIS HAEC INVICTA MISERUNT 108 PROAVI" which roughly translated means "To us 108 ancestors have sent these unconquered things". The ceiling also has two medallions - a crowned head with "DAVID REX" and hands holding a harp - and another head wearing a feathered hat with ALEXANDER written within the circle. Both David and Alexander were 12th Century Scottish kings. The plasterwork is similar to that in Dalry House, Merchiston Castle,

## the forsyths

In 1976 the Society of Jesus sold Woodhall House, the College, the annexe, the former coach house, the lodge cottage and the Haugh Field - some 18 acres in all- to an Edinburgh business man, William Forsyth, and his wife, Ann. They



They moved into Woodhall in November 1976, along with their five children, Pamela, William, Stephanie, Denise and Alexander. The College was let out as accommodation to students from Moray House and Napier College .

Major changes were coming to Woodhall with the opening of the Colinton by-pass. In 1978-79 the winding single carriageway to Campbell Park was replaced by a wider road and access under the

flyover bridge improved pedestrian and vehicular traffic to Woodhall House.

In 1979 William and Ann ceased renting the College to students and William set about separating the new building from the old. Woodhall House reverted to its former use - a family home.

Permission was granted for the College to be converted into seventeen flats. This work started in June 1982. The enterprise was called Woodhall Court. It is now a completely separate building hidden from Woodhall House by a screen of fast-growing conifers. In its grounds are the famous old yew tree and the arched window of the old chapel/potting shed.

An innovative man like Sir John Foulis before him, William Forsyth has carefully nurtured Woodhall: thinned out overgrown shrubbery, planted new trees, landscaped the garden and refurbished Woodhall House itself.

The family motto of the Forsyths is "INSTAURATUR RUINAE" which means "I rebuild the ruins" and in this particular William Forsyth has certainly done just that.

One final story: William and his solicitor, Nial Smith, were walking in the grounds of Woodhall, prior to submitting an offer for the property. They stopped to admire the sundial and William, never thinking for an instant that he would own Woodhall, blythly promised Nial the sundial if his offer was accepted. The very day he moved to Woodhall William kept his word.

The Forsyths have spent twenty-one happy years in the peace and tranquillity of Woodhall House, tucked away in its woodland surroundings, practically unchanged since the days of the Foulises.

All five children have left home. Two of them, Stephanie and Denise are married with five children between them.

Bill and Ann love their historic house and are prepared to live out the rest of their lives, enjoying it and developing the garden and woodlands; which Ann reckons will take them at least another twenty years.



#### acknowledgements

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This book is dedicated to my dear friend, Alison McLeay, who wrote brilliant novels, but also spared some of her time to produce the illustrations for this publication. She died, far too young, during the preparation of this book.

Fay Paterson Cumming  
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**Stephanie Gilezan**

502-817-6484

[stephanie@gilezanteam.com](mailto:stephanie@gilezanteam.com)

**GILEZAN**  
— GLOBAL —

**exp**  
REALTY

LUXURY

**Stephen Cohen**

917-710-2375

[stephen@gilezanteam.com](mailto:stephen@gilezanteam.com)