

THE LUTYENS TRUST

To protect and promote the spirit and substance of the work of Sir Edwin Lutyens O.M.

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2023

EDWIN LUTYENS'S FIRST AND ONLY AEROPLANE FLIGHT – TO ADVISE ON ARCHITECTURAL ASPECTS OF GREATER LONDON'S NEW HIGHWAYS

By Richard Page

In 1935, Edwin Lutyens was appointed as consultant to Charles Bressey, Chief Engineer for Roads at the Ministry of Transport. Bressey had been tasked with producing a survey of highway developments required in the London Traffic Area for the next 30 years to keep pace with the expansion of traffic. This covered an area of 1,821sq miles, and Lutyens had been asked to advise on the architectural aspects of the proposals made.

The resulting Bressey-Lutyens Report on the Highway Development of Greater London was published in 1938. Notable suggestions included a tunnel under Hyde Park linking South Kensington to Paddington; numerous new roundabouts; a series of orbital roads; high-capacity motorways radiating out of London, and an “urgent” requirement to improve road access to aerodromes.

On the morning of 3 September, 1935, during the compilation of the report, Lutyens and Bressey travelled to Croydon, Britain's first major international airport, to take a flight over London. Although Lutyens proved a nervous passenger, he was fascinated by the aerial views of the capital's architecture.

Lutyens wrote to his wife, Emily: “I have TODAY been up in the air! I flew and have flown: fact. Gosh! How good to come home to earth. God seldom gave me greater pleasure to be *au terre*. Bressey called with a car and off we went to Croydon. We were weighed, with overcoat, pipes, tobacco, etc. I weigh 14 stone. Bressey short, thin, without pipes tobacco or overcoat weighed 12. So it was my spirits that were overweighting me. We went through ordinary official passages to emerge in a tar-covered space with one or two flying machines standing about, looking as though they knew nothing – saw nothing – the devils! We were given a two-winged puppet with only three engines, a cabin to hold four, like Four Queens in a pack the Deuce to play. It had a long window about 12in high, 3ft wide on each side. We had two officers, charming young men, apparently waiting for a spare daughter, but I had none to spare.”

Previously a First World War RAF airfield, Croydon Airport had become operational in 1920 as London's airport and had been greatly enlarged by 1928 with new buildings, including Britain's first airport terminal and air-traffic control tower. Various innovations in air-traffic control were developed here, including the international distress call, “Mayday”. The airport was a place of momentous historic events, record-breaking flights and the creation of Britain's first national airline, Imperial Airways (later British Airways), which offered Britain's first international flights. By 1935, the airport handled 49 per cent of all UK air passengers (120,390 in total).



*The plane Lutyens flew in –
a Westland Wessex IV. Courtesy of Historic
Croydon Airport Trust*

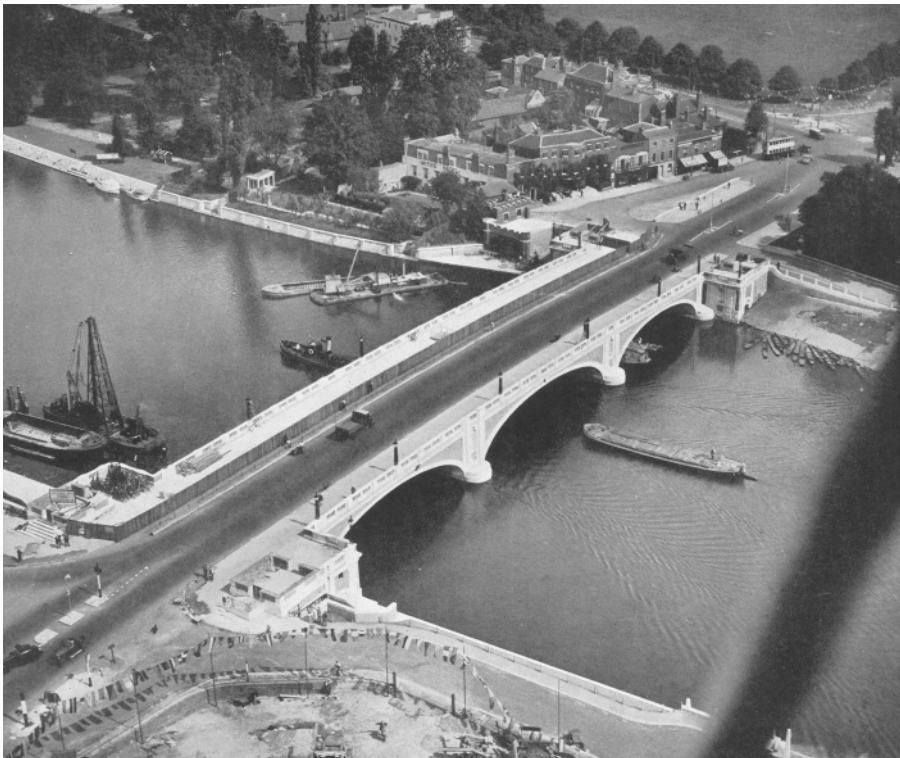


*Croydon Airport circa 1935 with the terminal
building and control tower to the right.
Courtesy of Historic Croydon Airport Trust*

Lutyens describes the flight in great detail: “We started off taxiing and then a roar began, with a bump or two and, the roar ever increasing, we left our – my own world and went up – up – up – I held on tight, and didn’t at all like the intermittent bumps, drops. The roar made conversation an uproar. We only had two wings, so as to get as big a viewscope down as was possible but the 2-side engines interrupted much.”

The aircraft was a Westland Wessex IV, a six-seat, tri-motor, high-wing, mainly wooden monoplane. Research from Historic Croydon Airport Trust suggests Bressey and Lutyens’s pilots would have worked for Olley Air Services. Gordon Olley, a First World War flying ace who had started his own airline in 1934, later became the world’s first pilot to log 1m miles. Lutyens continues to describe what he sees: “A river is very difficult (unless something moves on the river with foam) to distinguish from a road or a railroad.

“We did not go over 1,000ft. The first thing I really recognised, but could not believe it quite so small, was Hampton Court. My [Hampton Court] bridge from the air looks ever so much better than any other. Why?! I know but shan’t write it, but it was odd.” The bridge was a recent work, having been completed in 1933.



An aerial view of Hampton Court Bridge. Central Press

Hampton Court Palace was begun by Cardinal Wolsey in the early 16th century, but it is perhaps best known as the home of Henry VIII, who brought all six wives here. In 1689, when William and Mary took the throne, they commissioned Sir Christopher Wren to build an elegant new Baroque palace, which incorporated the old Tudor palace.

“The deliberate waywardness of all else was bewildering, the incoherent mass and undirected endeavour was the very last chapter of Revelations,” Lutyens noted. “We taxied down with a roundabout turn or two, when the world canted and all world on end one side and all sky the other brought one with a bump and a jolty run to safety, ie terra firma and I was very glad, but this is my first experience.”

According to Lutyens’s biographer Christopher Hussey, it was Lutyens’s first and only flight.

Richard Page, The Lutyens Trust’s property market specialist, is a former private pilot who has logged 100 hours.

A SAMPLE OF LETTERS BY EDWIN LUTYENS'S SON, ROBERT, TO HIS WIFE, EVA, DESCRIBING HIS EPIC JOURNEY BY AIR FROM BRITAIN TO INDIA

Edwin's vivid account of his first flight and witty quips shared with Emily were paralleled by Robert's detailed letters to Eva – the latter are a selection of these in abridged form. It seemed a perfect opportunity to publish them in tandem. A portrait of Eva is featured in the article on Glyn Philpot, page 13.

Aboard Imperial Airways' aeroplane IA Centurion

October 28, 1937. 10.30am

Three hours out. Sun and sea; sun and cloud; cloud over France, and climbing. Unbelievably comfortable, secure, serene.

It seemed so funny, the arrival at Southampton. So much preparation, such anxiety to get through the work, hesitation, departure. Then two hours in the train with a real railway dinner. Southampton station, and over the way the foyer of a very English hotel, complete with orchestra.

Slept soundly, the tea causing no interruptions. Breakfast at 7.15am.

A fresh, gusty morning. We were delayed half an hour by an adverse wind, which made it impossible to bring the launch up to the flying boat, which looked superb riding at anchor. The launch, doing about 10 knots, gave the only impression of speed we are likely to have.

So here I am in the after-cabin, where you can smoke. It got cold as we climbed; but now we are through the cloud and lower, although it is getting bumpy to write... It seems we have got an 80mph gale against us, which has meant turning off the course. We are likely to be late all round.

12.30

Quieter and sunny. The fine ribbons of moisture crossing the window pane are unbelievably lovely. I don't know where we are. There are mountains ahead. I believe we have got to come down somewhere to refuel. It seems rash crossing France without wheels!

All the passengers are gradually turning out to be human beings with separate identities. Everything is gaining in reality, except the purpose of this voyage. That isn't real at all: merely aimless and highly enjoyable.

River in sight: and I'm going deaf, so we must be coming down...

It's Chalon-sur-Saône, would you believe it! And we are not yet down. Round and round the town we go, trying to find a stretch of river that fits the wind. Much too exciting! Nearer, nearer – almost touching the bridge – smack! We are on the Saône – whew!

...I can't keep this newsreel up. I can't concentrate enough to write when all this is going on.

Marseille. 6pm

We couldn't make Rome, and are therefore here for the night. We left Chalon at about 2 after a pleasant trip with the captain up the river in a launch for a bit of air, while the ship was refuelling. A mild autumn day, breeze and sun.

Then up again, and a goodish lunch on board. Along the Rhône valley and slap into a head-wind storm. The captain gave up any hope of getting to Rome, as the night landing on the lake is dangerous. So will only stop there for fuel and then make for Athens, where I gather we will sleep tomorrow night.

We got to Marseille at 4pm and were hanging about at the customs for 70 minutes. That's the bore of air travel – an hour from the sea where we landed to the city, and up something before 5am tomorrow morning in order to get in air by 6am. I could almost have made this part of the trip as soon by train! But in the air is lovely.

We are at the Hôtel de Noailles. Now I must wire to you and post this now so that you get something soon.

Robert

Marseille. The same evening

I am afraid that if I do not write at every odd moment I shall never catch up. At 7pm I set out for a walk. How extraordinarily vital the French are. I can't judge what the town looks like; but it's thronged and animated.

I still cannot think of myself as going to India – not by air. Because the picture I have always had of India comes at the end of a sea journey. I imagine the sea journey as something between a Tissot painting and Edward Elgar's "Enigma Variations": I see an outbound steamer rolling to a gentle swell. A lady with veil and bonnet and a waistband is sitting in the leaside sun, her eyes following the wake of the ship, spreading out beyond the white awning of the afterdeck – thinking of the parsonage gardens of Victorian England. After that, India means for me Kipling, and I have never understood its point or purpose or destiny. But I am going there; and now I must go to bed, as we are called tomorrow at 3.45am.

29 October. In the air, making for Naples

We left Marseille punctually at 6am in a grey dawn. The wind had moderated but was still against us. By 7am the sun was out although it was rough in patches. We ran between Corsica and Elba while we ate a scrumptious breakfast; then with cloud. It was raining over Rome, but I could make out the dome of St Peter's Basilica – no bigger than a large knot on a patchwork quilt. Then a sharp descent on to a lake. We went ashore for a breather.

Owing to weather we are making for Naples. Very grey. We are up and down all the time – rising above cloud or dropping under it. The bumps, quite pleasant in themselves, make it difficult to write and impossible to play patience. But I hope you will be able to read.

Brindisi. 6pm (5pm GMT)

We never touched Naples after all, but went down the coast and crossed the narrow neck of Cetraro and over the Gulf of Taranto. Sitting down now I am only just beginning to feel the movement of the plane. The paper is going up and down and I am feeling a bit sick. But it will pass. I will go early to bed as we have to be up at 4am tomorrow. I hope we will make Alexandria in the day.

I won't write anymore now and ask of you to forgive these scrappy letters. To relieve the monotony of descriptions of altitudes and so on, I will try tomorrow to tell you more about the passengers, although they are not very interesting. From overheard scraps of conversation across the foyer of the hotel I gather that the blonde – going to Delhi – is German, which is rather odd. She has clicked with the sick airman whose seat is next to mine. And so Good Night.

Robert

30 October. In the air, approaching Athens, 7.30am

An easy start, light wind and sun. My first sight of the Isles of Greece. We crossed the Strait of Otranto and then dropped to 500ft over Corfu to report passage. Across the mainland of Greece, over Corinth and now the Gulf of Aegina.

I don't know why it should be so moving, this flight over an ancient land. A rugged coast, without much colour: sage and saffron and ochre, bounded by an azure sea.

1.30pm (11.30pm GMT)

We left Athens at 10.10 – or 11.10 as clocks went on an hour. We landed for half an hour, in heavenly sun since when it has been sunny all the way. We are flying at 9,000ft and should reach Alexandria in about 40 minutes.

It was marvellous passing over Crete. A red-brown barren island, so it seemed. We have just lunched. There are great cloud banks ahead.

This airship is amazingly comfortable. There are three saloon cabins, stepped one behind the other towards the tail. The lavatories and kitchen are amidships. The cockpit is reached from an upper deck where the mail is stowed. The individual seats are adjustable, and can be put out pretty well at full length. Each seat has its table, rug, light and air-inlet.

The captain is nice, typical, I should think under 40, ex-Air Force. A lot of them have a special look, as it were, of rather gallant, dissipated schoolboys.

Alexandria. 4.15pm

Just settled in at the Hotel Cecil. I must see the sights as we are off tomorrow at 4am in one of the old "Hannibal" class landplanes (I can't think why Imperial Airways insist on these early starts, and then land up for the night early in the afternoon). Howbeit, I affirm with the most positive conviction that I prefer to get up at 4 o'clock than go to bed at that hour. And so until tomorrow.

Robert

Aboard the plane Helene. 31 October, 1937

Just after Gaza. 9.45am

It will be hard to write in this old plane – so much vibration. Just had breakfast at Gaza. Fishcakes; eggs and bacon; Turkish coffee with Nestles! I have seen my first camel – ploughing: for that matter my first camel outside the zoo!

There it is! 7,000ft below. Jerusalem, the Dead Sea – there are the potash works! Jordan, Jericho – through openings in the clouds. How odd it seems! The whole country is the colour of pink alabaster... Our nice little pilot, the flying boat captain, broke his wrist falling through a hatchway over Corfu. A relief pilot had to take over.

Baghdad. 6pm

We are in the Tigris Palace Hotel – the second and worst of the two, the Maud Hotel being full. It is perfectly dreadful.

We were flying all day over the Arabian Desert, coming down for lunch at a filthy desert station. Flying mile after mile over uninterrupted wastes, the desert looked like the world's scorched skin. Baghdad is exactly as I imagined it, and I am positive India will be too. But at any rate there one can enjoy a privileged comfort – that is I can...

Robert

1 November. After breakfast at Basra. 9.55am

Crossing the Persian Gulf. Very hot. At 12.30 we are creeping down its west coast. It is very hot indeed: our height not more than 1,000ft. The plane's officers and knowledgeable passengers have changed into shorts and topees [hats]. I am positive the information given me about clothes will be wrong.

We came down for lunch at Koweït – a fortified desert station, like a cinema set! I suppose photography generally has destroyed any element of surprise in seeing these places for the first time: nobody in their senses would want to see 'em a second!

We stop for lunch at Bahrein, the big Standard Oil Co's centre. Our oil men got off there.

Later. 3.30

We have just left Bahrein, and have a long sea hop against a head wind to Sharjah. We won't get in till late as these planes are so slow – and bumpy. It is very hot. India, I imagine, will be a good deal cooler. Flying over the sea at a few hundred feet I have seen my first shark!

Sharjah, 10 pm.

Tomorrow we make the earliest start yet at 3.20am. But we lunch in British India, at Gwadar, are at Karachi by teatime, and, with luck, I will sleep tomorrow night in Jodhpur. All this afternoon we flew across the southern bay of the Gulf. This is a desert station on the eastern part of the bay. We are in huts – incomparably more comfortable than those in Baghdad.

Robert



*Robert Lutyens in his mid-30s,
around the time he travelled to India.
Courtesy of Candia Lutyens*

Karachi. 2 November, 1937

On board Atalanta. Last lap!

We ought to do the 300 miles by 7pm. Jodhpur. The distance must have been greater than I supposed as we didn't get in until 8.30pm.

I am at the State Hotel. I was met by somebody who arranges for me to go to Jaipur by car tomorrow. This place is comparatively luxurious.

I will write tomorrow night from Jaipur but it may be difficult to post regularly.

I feel as if I were in a sort of nightmare without any hope of waking up. I have never felt so lonely since my first night as a soldier – years ago.

Robert

Guest House, Jaipur. 3 November 1937

Now that I have seen India, can't I come home again? This northern part of the country – mostly scrub desert, particularly in Jodhpur, the roads lined with tamarisk and pampas and banian trees, and others that look like laburnum, until you discover they are dripping in golden beans. The villages are more pictorially beautiful and alien than anything I had ever imagined. The country people – I have been motoring for 200 miles – are of extraordinary personal beauty.

In Europe we have dominated nature, unless her vengeance is still to come. Here nature is completely dominant and ruthless. The beauty, charm, chatter, friendliness of the people are so many symbols of capitulation. In its human element it is wholly inconsequent – trivial, lovely, resigned, and cruel in an impersonal way.

Robert

THE BACKGROUND TO AND GENESIS OF THE LANDMARK EDWIN LUTYENS EXHIBITION AT THE HAYWARD GALLERY, LONDON, HELD BY THE ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN FROM 1981 TO 1982

By Janet Allen



A bust of Edwin Lutyens at the entrance to the Hayward Gallery exhibition.

Photo by Piers Gough. © CZWG Limited

Janet Holt Allen was an exhibition organiser at the Arts Council of Great Britain from 1970 to 1983, and one of the team who worked on the Lutyens exhibition from 1978 to 1981. She was a Trustee of The Lutyens Trust from 1992 until 2014.

Paul Waite reported in the last Newsletter on recent meetings held to commemorate the Lutyens exhibition, including a lecture I gave on the subject for Lutyens Trust members. The show gloriously rehabilitated the reputation of Edwin Lutyens that had been trashed in the years following the Second World War. The importance of this landmark show is also worth considering in the history of “exhibition-making” and the study of architectural history. Significantly, two giant figures, John Harris

(1931-2022) and Mark Girouard (1931-2022), both of whom died last summer, undoubtedly influenced the direction Colin Amery (1944-2018) and his team, who approached the Arts Council with the proposal for an exhibition on Lutyens at the Hayward Gallery, took.



The largest room, with bench and brick planters, celebrating Lutyens's early houses and gardens, including Deanery Garden, Varengeville, Little Thakeham and Marsh Court. Photo by Piers Gough. © CZWG Limited

Arts, presided over by Hugh Casson; it was struggling to establish its “Friends of the Royal Academy” organisation and attract financial support for revitalising its galleries.

The Arts Council’s art department had flourished after the war, striving to introduce the public to the visual arts by exhibiting modern and historical painting, sculpture and architecture and presenting new critical thinking. The department’s director was Joanna Drew, who had a long, illustrious career at the Arts Council and was one of the most influential figures in the postwar art world. After the department took over the administration of the Hayward in 1969, Drew directed an internationally renowned exhibition programme in the 1970s and 1980s.

Architecture was always included and began with a show on François Mansart, based on the research of Allan Braham (of 1970); Theo Crosby orchestrated “How to Play the Environment Game” (1973), a polemic against strident modernism, and Howard Burns, an architectural historian, led the team working on an exhibition on Andrea Palladio (1975), all of which reflected the change in approach to architectural history. Elsewhere an exhibition about Inigo Jones (1973) was shown at his famous building, The Banqueting House, in Whitehall, London.

There was a move away from considering buildings just in terms of formal stylistic vocabulary to the more Marxist approach of architecture seen in a socio-economic light. Girouard, a towering figure in the study of 19th and early 20th-century domestic architecture, led the way, and published a series of books setting housing in the social context of Victorian and Edwardian Britain. Harris, a major figure in the architectural history world, and Roy Strong – who had selected and catalogued the Inigo Jones show and was appointed Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum in 1973 – also played a very important role in drawing attention to the ruinous plight of many country houses in their show, “The Destruction of the Country House”, which was held at the V&A in 1974.



The castles section featuring Castle Drogo’s dome, kitchen table, chopping block and pestle and mortar. Other castles shown were Lindisfarne and Lambay. Photo by Piers Gough. © CZWG Limited

This exhibition highlighted the disastrous planning decisions and lack of conservation of Britain's architectural heritage. Harris had moved the RIBA Collections, the RIBA's collection of architectural objects, which encompasses everything from Lutyens's surviving drawings to models, to the Heinz Gallery at 21 Portman Square, which was sponsored by the Heinz family. This soon became a hive of activity after Harris attracted a band of young architectural historians to the gallery, among them Colin Amery, Margaret Richardson and Gavin Stamp (1948- 2017), who became the leaders of the group that put together the plan for a Lutyens exhibition. (Margaret had previously catalogued the Lutyens drawings at the RIBA.) Mary Lutyens (1908-1999), Edwin's daughter, enthusiastically supported them.

Amery chaired the exhibition committee, which also included eminent garden historian Jane Brown. Originally this team had proposed the exhibition to the RA, an obvious venue as Lutyens had served as its President. But the RA rejected the idea and it was then submitted to the Arts Council, which accepted it. Thus the Lutyens exhibition ended up taking place at the very unlikely venue of the Brutalist Hayward Gallery.

The major problem with architecture exhibitions is that you cannot exhibit the works of art – the actual buildings. The Inigo Jones show featured drawings from the RIBA and Chatsworth, besides other 17th-century works of art and models. The Mansart show was of drawings and small monochrome photographs; it was very academic, belonged to another age and was difficult for the visitor to understand. The Palladio exhibition was arranged around magnificent models from Vicenza, drawings from the RIBA and objets d'art. Burns set Palladio in the political and economic context of the Veneto region and Venice in the 16th century. Amery and his team took a similarly societal approach with the Lutyens exhibition, which the art department wholeheartedly embraced.

Lutyens's architecture and design were seen in the context of late 19th-century and 20th-century English society. Arranged chronologically, the survey included his early Arts and Crafts work in Surrey, the gardens of Gertrude Jekyll, the houses of the Edwardian Establishment, banks and offices, New Delhi, war memorials and Liverpool's Roman Catholic Cathedral. Architect Piers Gough was invited to design the exhibition and the Hayward, with its very flexible spaces, facilitated an extraordinarily imaginative and engaging presentation.



A recreation of the drawing room of Lutyens's own house at Mansfield Street, showing part of it. It reproduced its bold colour scheme and included furniture and paintings mostly lent by Edwin's daughter, Mary Lutyens. Photo by Piers Gough. © CZWG Limited



A room devoted to Lutyens's public projects, including the American Embassy in Washington DC, which also showed his Mercury Ball pendant lights. Photo by Piers Gough © CZWG Limited

Gough, who had the quirky imagination to capture the visitors' attention and develop their understanding of architecture, proved to be an inspirational choice of designer. It was a monograph exhibition, with biographical material interspersed. It was not a question of classifying his work by such stylistic categories as "Arts and

Crafts”, “Classical” or “Art Deco” in opposition to “Modernism” but of showing Lutyens’s brilliance as a designer and his grasp of spatial concepts. Gough worked closely with Brown on the early years and garden section, Amery and Richardson on the “great houses” and Stamp on New Delhi and the Liverpool cathedral.



*A room derived from New Delhi showing models of Liverpool Cathedral and Thiepval Memorial, made specially for the exhibition, in the final section.
Photo by Piers Gough. © CZWG Limited*

Few loan requests were refused. Generous support in the form of practical help was given by *Country Life*

magazine, the building industry, educational institutions and the architectural profession. The areas of greatest expenditure were the catalogue and installation. Terry Farrell, a rising star working in the postmodernist idiom, stepped up and organised financial support for the installation. This in many ways presaged the ending of public funding of innovative exhibitions; today sponsorship is a requirement for major exhibitions. The Hayward exhibition catalogue remains, after 40 years, one of the most authoritative publications on Lutyens and is now the basis of *The Lutyens Trust Gazetteer*. Piers’ manipulation of the Hayward spaces with a pastiche-built installation was visually stunning and had a momentous effect on the general appreciation of architecture.

The exhibition was a popular success, exceeding all expectations. It was very well received critically and the catalogue was reprinted. The show also caught the crest of a popular fashionable wave of interest in the Edwardian era – from Edith Holden’s book *The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady* to the Edwardian-inspired clothing and homeware of Laura Ashley.

Lutyens’s reputation was also restored and, importantly, the exhibition went a long way to breaking down the conflict between Modernism and historical styles; all were presented as equally valid, encouraged the public’s interest in architecture and set a new standard. Subsequent architecture and design exhibitions, held mainly at the V&A, where the RIBA Collections later found a home, fully developed this approach in subsequent exhibitions – on Augustus Pugin (in 1994), William Morris (1996), Art Deco (2003) and William Kent (2014), to name a few. The RA arranged a show in 1995 devoted to Lord Burlington and The Palladian Revival, selected and catalogued by Harris, which was followed by one about Soane with an installation by Gough. The revisionist outlook of Girouard and Harris, who had inspired the Lutyens exhibition team backed by Drew, transformed the presentation of architectural exhibitions.

Change was in the air in the 1980s and the post-war settlement was faltering. The advent of the Tory government in 1979 heralded the end of the Arts Council’s art department, and in 1987 it was sent south of the river to the Royal Festival Hall and was absorbed into the South Bank Trust. The Arts Council of Great Britain became Arts Council England in 1994 and Nicholas Serota, Lord Serota, a former exhibition organiser in the art department in the 1970s, is currently its Chair. A reduction in the public funding of art institutions has meant they’re less likely to take on a proposal that is of great artistic interest but not a sure-fire popular success. Some Lutyens enthusiasts enquire whether it is time for another exhibition but museum cultural policy and society mores have changed and attitudes to imperialism, race and class would very probably colour its approach and perception.

The lasting benefit of the Lutyens exhibition was the founding of The Lutyens Trust to safeguard his heritage. This has been a resounding success. Gough’s exhibition design truly caught the public imagination and introduced a new audience to architecture.

AN UNEXPECTED DISCOVERY OF PHOTOS OF JM BARRIE IN HIS LONDON FLAT, ALTERED BY EDWIN LUTYENS, PROVIDES INVALUABLE VISUAL EVIDENCE OF ITS INTERIOR

By Rebecca Lilley

According to the exhibition catalogue for the Lutyens exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, the architect made alterations in 1917 to playwright and novelist JM Barrie's flat at Adelphi Terrace House in Adelphi, a district in Westminster, London. Barrie and Lutyens first met circa 1899 at the Lutyens-designed Berrydown Court in Hampshire and became lifelong friends. Lutyens designed the sets for Barrie's plays *Quality Street*, which premiered in 1901, and *Peter Pan*, first performed in 1904. But the Trust held no further information nor images of Barrie's Adelphi Terrace flat.

Located behind The Strand beside the Thames, Adelphi Terrace was designed by brothers Robert and James Adam, who had in mind the "raising of a great 'palace' upon the mud banks of wasteland in the Durham Yard area of Westminster". The project was completed but in 1936 the main, Thames-facing part of the building was demolished and replaced in 1938 by a new Art Deco one designed by Stanley Hamp. On my commute to work along the Strand, I became intrigued by the original flat and was eager to find out more about it. It happened to be on the market as a rental office space then, and, with the kind permission of London estate agent Monmouth Dean, I was able to visit it in the spring of 2022.

I am grateful to Paul Waite who identified a 1907 drawing in the RIBA Collections of architectural drawings for a fourth-floor flat in Adelphi Terrace House at Nos 1-3 Robert Street, originally conceived as three townhouses. However, the completed Adam design saw Nos 1 and 2 subdivided into flats; No 3 was occupied by Robert Adam. The drawing's entry mentioned that Barrie's flat, which he acquired in 1917, had previously belonged to Joseph Pennell. Barrie definitely lived at No 3 but whether his home also spanned the fourth floors of Nos 1 and 2 is unknown. Rather puzzling though was a further drawing of 1918, noting that Barrie's flat was on the third (not fourth) floor.

When I visited Barrie's flat I was curious to find out if Lutyens's alterations remained intact. The building is Grade II*-listed and sits within the Adelphi Conservation Area. Rhys Evans of Monmouth Dean explained that renowned architects and heritage consultants Purcell began to modernise and refurbish Nos 2-3 Robert Street in 2016. Drawings held by Purcell confirmed that Barrie's flat was indeed on the fourth floor and included a large studio – his office – affording fabulous views of the Thames.

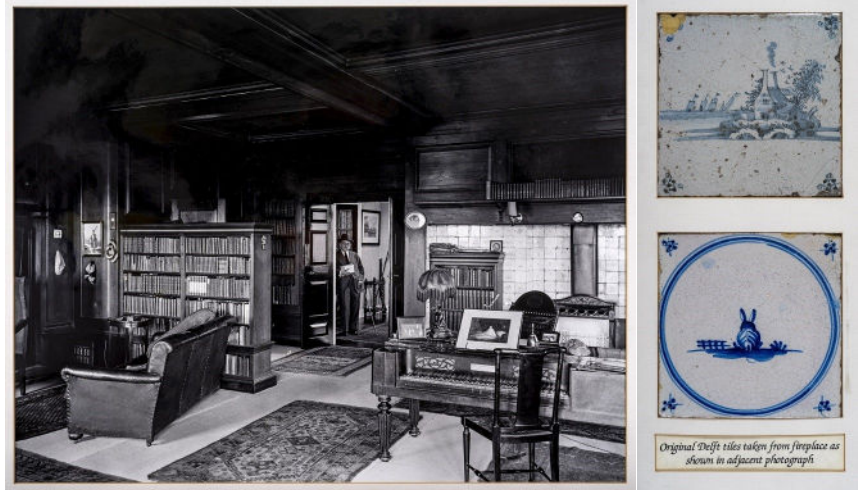
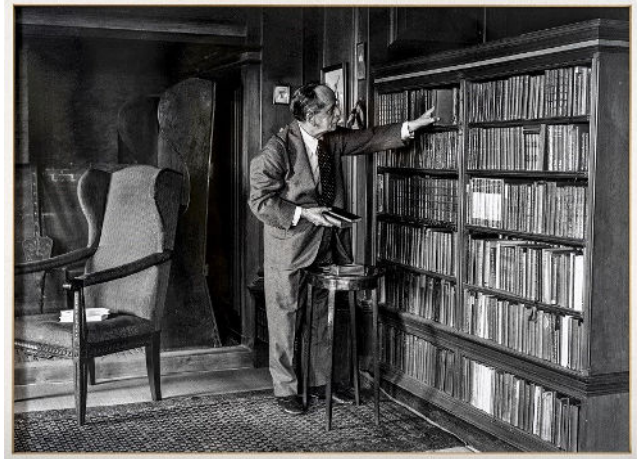
I discovered that the fabric and decorative scheme of Lutyens's alterations had been lost long ago. Fortunately, the plan form was largely intact, which made it easier to identify the location of Lutyens's infrastructure (as illustrated in red on the 1918 RIBA drawing). The layout of Barrie's studio – a design much used in other Lutyens works, such as at The Salutation in Kent – was zoned into three spaces furnished with freestanding bookshelves. A large inglenook fireplace had been inserted into the west wall. By craning our necks out of the large windows, we could see the chimney stacks, which appear to have been examples of Lutyens's tall Arts and Crafts chimneys seen, for



The exterior of Robert Street, Westminster, London. © Photo by Rebecca Lilley

example, at Goddards in Surrey. Unfortunately, the stacks have been mostly dismantled probably because there are another two unusually large fireplaces in the room. These would have made the inglenook and stacks, which take up so much space, redundant, especially with central heating in use. Barrie's flat has the best views at No 3, which is entirely fitted out as offices. The ground and first floors boast intact Adam brothers ceilings.

If the Lutyens interior seemed impossible to visualise beyond the plan-form – at first – an exciting discovery proved otherwise: on being shown into an unassuming room on the same visit, what should we spy but a pair of framed photographs showing Barrie in the flat. The people currently renting the space had chanced on the photos in the flat but knew nothing about their origins or what they recorded. There could be no doubt that the interior shown was the Adelphi Terrace House flat. The first image showed Barrie next to the inglenook, putting a book on one of the (clearly) Lutyens-designed bookcases.



Two views of JM Barrie in his flat with its Edwin Lutyens-designed bookshelves. Delft tiles, probably chosen by Lutyens, backed the fireplace there. All photos by kind permission of the building's owner

Later research done by Paul, who consulted *The Story of JMB – A Biography* by Denis Mackail, stated that the bookcase also served as a partition screening a “personal kitchen” in the corner of the room. Presumably servants brought food cooked in a large kitchen serving the building to Barrie's flat. The second image shows Barrie in the doorway of the studio; a fireplace backed by Delft tiles, perhaps chosen by Lutyens, and a piano are also visible. The chimneys and bookcases are easily identifiable as Lutyens's work, while some wood panelling could have been selected by him, too. Although the surprise discovery of the photos provides the best visual evidence of Lutyens's involvement with Adelphi Terrace House to date, the RIBA drawings give the exact location of the flat and reveal that it survived the regrettable demolition of the main part of the Adam brothers' building. The owners of No 3 have kindly given The Lutyens Trust digital copies of these.

Paul put me on to several biographies of Barrie, which shed more light on his flat. They also reveal that before 1917 Barrie had lived in the third-floor flat – the source of the mistaken description on the drawing that his flat was on the third floor. The books also stated that Barrie undertook the decoration himself, which explains the interior's Victorian feel with its dark wood walls and mishmash of antiques. Interestingly one book mentions another former occupant with theatrical connections – theatre director and costume designer Edith “Edy” Craig, daughter of actress Ellen Terry.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Rhys for enabling our visit and helping us to obtain copies of the photos of the flat.

Anyone interested in reading the extracts of these biographies pertaining to Barrie's flat can email Rebecca via rebecca.e.lilley@outlook.com and request a copy of her notes. The RIBA drawings can be viewed online at ribapix.com by searching for “Adelphi Terrace”.

GLYN PHILPOT – THE CULT 20TH-CENTURY ARTIST WHO COLLABORATED WITH EDWIN LUTYENS AND PAINTED HIS DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, EVA LUTYENS

By Dominic Lutyens



*Glyn Philpot and Henry Thomas in the studio at Philpot's home Baynards Manor, Surrey in front of his painting Garden in Nice, 1934.
Photo © WH Gove & Sons*

Glyn Philpot (1884-1937) was an accomplished British portrait painter who initially made a name for himself as a relatively conventional Edwardian society painter. His earlier, highly acclaimed portraits have a touch of John Singer Sargent-style bravura about them. But at the height of his success, circa 1930, following his heart, he took a major gamble and embraced a modernist style.

In his lifetime, he was appointed a Royal Academician and was feted, particularly at the start of his career. However, the risqué nature of some of this gay artist's work, which resulted in some of his paintings being withdrawn from Royal Academy exhibitions, saw his popularity dwindle and led to financial hardship. The last major exhibition of his work was held at the National Portrait Gallery in 1984. For decades, he seemed destined to be deemed a minor artist.

But last year, Pallant House Gallery in Chichester, West Sussex boldly mounted a comprehensive show of his multi-faceted work, entitled "Glyn Philpot: Flesh and Spirit", which I saw. It featured over 80 paintings, sculptures and mural designs.

Over the years, I'd seen a few of his paintings but was largely unfamiliar with his work. One of his most famous images is his portrait of poet Siegfried Sassoon that hangs in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The Pallant House show proved eye-opening, not least because I learnt that he and Edwin Lutyens worked together on several occasions. In 1923, Lutyens asked Philpot to contribute to Queen Mary's Doll's house: the artist, who painted a scene of putti frolicking among clouds on the ceiling of the Queen's bedroom, was in exalted company: the fully furnished miniature palace was crammed with work by other well-known painters, from William Nicholson to Paul Nash.



*The Queen's bedroom in Queen Mary's Doll's House, with a ceiling painting by Glyn Philpot, 1923-24,
Royal Collection Trust, Windsor Castle © Bridgeman Images*

That year, Lutyens also commissioned Philpot to paint an overmantel for a fireplace in the library of Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. Entitled *The Creation of Man*, it depicted Adam on a craggy summit, his creator's hands hovering above him amid a halo of flames. From October to December, 1930, Philpot created modern murals with Classical themes for Lord and Lady Melchett's home in Mulberry House in

Smith Square, London, a building designed by Lutyens. The murals included *Leda and the Swan* and *Oedipus Addressing the Sphinx*.

Also in 1930, along with Henri Matisse, Philpot was a judge at the Carnegie International Exhibition in Pittsburgh; the Gold Medal was awarded that year to Picasso, whose work Philpot hugely admired. In 1932 *The Scotsman* ran a headline highlighting this move – “Glyn Philpot ‘goes Picasso’”. Philpot wrote about this new direction as his pursuit of “the instincts and the spirit” rather than the creation of art as luxurious status symbols. Compared with the rich, tonally contrasting hues of his earlier work, his new approach saw him go for matt, powdery, cooler tones, his paint applied more sparingly.



The drawing room at Mulberry House, designed by Darcy Braddell and decorated by Philpot. Charles Sargeant Jagger's relief Scandal is above the fire-basket. Photographs in Country Life, 1931. Country Life © Future Publishing Ltd



Eva Lutyens (Mrs Robert Lutyens), 1935-1937, The Atkinson, Southport, Merseyside. Reproduced by kind permission of The Atkinson, Lord Street, Stockport, UK

Philpot attracted as much attention for his socially progressive subject matter – he painted many black subjects, including Paul Robeson, the bass-baritone concert artist, actor, footballer and activist and the tenor and composer, Roland Hayes. He also often painted Henry Thomas (pictured above), a young Jamaican man.

Philpot embarked, too, on a series of striking, elegant portraits of confident, modish women, including the Russian-born fashion designer Eva Lutyens (née Eva Lubrynska), who was married to Edwin's son, Robert. She was known for designing the dress that Wallis Simpson wore for her first meeting with the then King and Queen. In 1935, Philpot painted her in a high-collared, plum-coloured jacket, accessorised with twin jewelled cuffs. The painting was chosen to be exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1936.

While I was researching this article The Lutyens Trust's Trust Manager Cathryn Spence kindly put me in touch with her friend Charlotte Doherty, great-great niece of Philpot, who loaned the Philpot painting, *Sisters of the Artist* (that she owned at the time) to the recent exhibition. This depicts the artist's sisters – the figure in black is Charlotte's maternal great-grandmother, Gertrude Cross (née Philpot), the other is Daisy Philpot, Charlotte's great-great aunt.

Daisy, says Charlotte, had effectively been her brother's “right-hand woman”. She kept records of paintings and handled his accounts and, after his death, lent his paintings to exhibitions. “Daisy made sure his flame was kept alive; later my great-aunt, Gabrielle (Gertrude's elder daughter and so niece of Daisy and Glyn) picked up that baton,” Charlotte told



The Sisters of the Artist, 1922, private collection. Image courtesy of Bonhams

me. “She was very upset that he’d fallen out of favour and her quest was to get his name and work recognised again. She’d have been thrilled by the Pallant House show and how it had brought Glyn’s name and work to the attention of a wider following and the huge appreciation shown by a contemporary audience.

“Simon Martin, the gallery’s director, has been fascinated with Glyn’s work for years,” she continues. “Simon saw a painting by him when he was a student and wrote his thesis on him. While doing his research for it, he met my grandmother, Rosemary (Gertrude’s younger daughter), who was able to give him helpful background as Gabrielle had died a few years earlier. Simon was most certainly the driving force for this show. I myself became aware of Glyn’s work as a child – I’d been particularly impressed that he’d been involved with Queen Mary’s Doll’s House – his murals in the Queen’s bedroom – and by the fact the record player played “God Save The Queen”. I later grew to appreciate his wider significance and range of his talent. I love his portrait of Eva Lutyens. It’s so stylish. You could wear those clothes today.”

Simon Martin has written a monograph about Philpot to accompany the show, which is as rich in detail about the artist’s life and work as the exhibition is in terms of his artistic output. The book, *Glyn Philpot: Flesh and Spirit* (Pallant House Gallery, £35), can be ordered from the Pallant House Gallery’s bookshop (www.pallantbookshop.com).

TOUR OF BMA HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON

21 January, 2023

By Peter Payne

Lutyens Trust members were invited to a guided tour of the Grade II-listed BMA House, the HQ of the British Medical Association (BMA), which today houses its offices and events venues (also available for private hire). The building was originally designed by Edwin Lutyens in 1911 as the HQ of The Theosophical Society. In 1925, the BMA took it over.

We were shown round by Ian Beech, Senior Property Project Manager, who explained the connection between Lutyens and The Theosophical Society: Lutyens’s wife, Lady Emily, a Theosophist, introduced him to the society’s president, Annie Besant, who asked him to design its HQ in Bloomsbury, London.

It was intended to be a quadrangular building with a courtyard with an arched entrance surmounted by a large cupola on the western side. The entire building would have extended from Burton Street to the east and to Tavistock Square to the west. When construction was suspended due to the outbreak of the First World War, only three sides around the courtyard and The Great Hall, in the centre, had been built.

There were two smaller, double-height halls – comprising a basement and first floor – on opposite sides of the courtyard. The interiors of both these halls – called the Hastings Hall, which is no longer double height and now houses the Anderson-Barnes suite of meeting rooms on the north side of the courtyard, and the Council Chamber, still double height and occupied by a café – were painted pale yellow and white.

Unforeseen extra costs soured Lutyens’s relations with the Theosophists. His original estimate of building costs was £45,000 to £50,000, and Besant was angry when tenders came out at £111,000. But Lutyens argued his estimates had been made on half-finished sketches based on Theosophists wanting the building enlarged, flats added, halls enlarged and two new facades designed, meaning new plans had to be drawn up. Relations were strained further by the Theosophists insisting on employing only trade unionists and sacking Lutyens’s clerk of works without telling him.

Lutyens offered his resignation in 1914, although progress on construction of the building was halted due to the War after which the Theosophists could not afford to finish it, so it was sold. Lutyens’s original design for their HQ was more ambitious than the one that stands today since only half of it was built. The front section off Tavistock Square was designed by Cyril Wontner-Smith in a different, lightly Baroque manner but no less inspired by Lutyens’s style during the first phase of the project.

Lutyens's design was in the Neoclassical Palladian style, his term for which was "Wrenaissance", which he widely adopted after abandoning the romantic vernacular style of his earlier country houses. In 1903, Lutyens wrote to Herbert Baker: "In architecture, Palladio is the game. It is so big – few appreciate it now and it requires considerable training to value and realise it".

Lutyens was brought back by the BMA to "renovate" the building. He said that he thought the work overseen by the Theosophists' committee, when he was not supervising the project, was "very bad". He added a set of memorial gates, called "The Gate of Remembrance", that commemorated the 574 BMA members who died in the First World War.

The Great Hall has very large windows on the west elevation, each with 54 panes of glass as well as small, textured imperial-sized bricks. In addition to the Great Hall, which you see to the east as you enter the courtyard and which is three storeys high, there are two two-storey halls across the courtyard from each other to north and south. On the south side, a mezzanine walkway has been inserted, with the lower floor housing a café opening into the garden. On the north side, the two-storey room has had a new floor installed in it to accommodate two meeting rooms. A false ceiling has also been placed into the Great Hall, hiding its impressive coffered, barrel-vaulted roof. However, meeting rooms were inserted above the Great Hall's false ceiling, and the vaulted ceiling is visible here. Lutyens wanted the barrel vault to span the length of the Great Hall, but only the ends were constructed. The main, very low, double-pitched roof was painted internally "nocturnal green" and "dead black", while the steel frame was gilded. This is now concealed by suspended ceilings. The two lines of columns in the Great Hall were painted to resemble peacock-blue marble, an effect similar to the green verdite columns in his building for Midland Bank's headquarters at Poultry in the City of London (now hotel The Ned).



*The courtyard at BMA House, Tavistock Square, London.
Photo © Peter Payne*



*The coffered, barrel-vaulted ceiling in the Great Hall at BMA House.
Photo © Paul Waite*

When Lutyens designed the Tavistock Square building he created large rooms which have since been divided up by timber walling and suspended ceilings which hide elegant plaster ceilings and detailing, while fireplaces have been hidden behind partitions.

One notable room is the Prince's Room above the entrance arch, designed by Wontner-Smith, with its two tall windows looking over Tavistock Square to the west and courtyard of BMA House to the east. The room is square but with a circular dome supported by pillars. It has unusual acoustics where voices can be heard across the room from corner to corner but not at right-angles to the two corners. There is also an echo when you are under the central candelabra – it's not a room for quietly divulging secrets.

Some of Lutyens's interiors are still visible, with the original Members' Common Room now used as the Members' Dining Room. Ian stated that this was where doctors and others were on 7 July, 2005 when one of the four suicide bombers, who targeted London's transport system that day, blew himself up on a bus travelling through Tavistock Square, immediately outside BMA House. It became a casualty clearing station as doctors rushed out to help the wounded, taking tablecloths and other things to help the victims alongside the emergency services. Thirteen passengers on the bus died, and many more were given urgent treatment by BMA staff members ahead of the arrival of the paramedics and first responders.

Nobody in the building was injured and the building received only superficial damage, mainly through pushed-back window frames (the glass at the front was protected with shatterproof film). A plaque in memory of the 13 people killed placed on the BMA House railings in Tavistock Square and a sundial in the Council Garden mark the day and time of the bombing.

Originally there was a throughway from Tavistock Square through the courtyard and building to Burton Street. Currently the BMA have restricted public access through here. Ian pointed out "rubber bricks" originally laid on the ground of the now enclosed passageway to help deaden the noise of horses walking through it. These bricks are now largely covered with raised flooring.

Ian stated that that the plan is to remove the later infilling and covering up done by BMA to bring the building back to something like the original Lutyens design. A garden to the side of the building is to be redesigned to match the original Lutyens design, which still fortunately has the original curved steps around the central pond.

Ian has a programme – which he says could take until 2045 to complete – to reverse major architectural wrongs. This could include adding secondary glazing to all the sash single-glazed windows and removing the antiquated oil boilers and heating system to ensure the building complies with modern environmental efficiency requirements.

LUTYENS HOUSES ON THE MARKET

Richard Page's regular property column

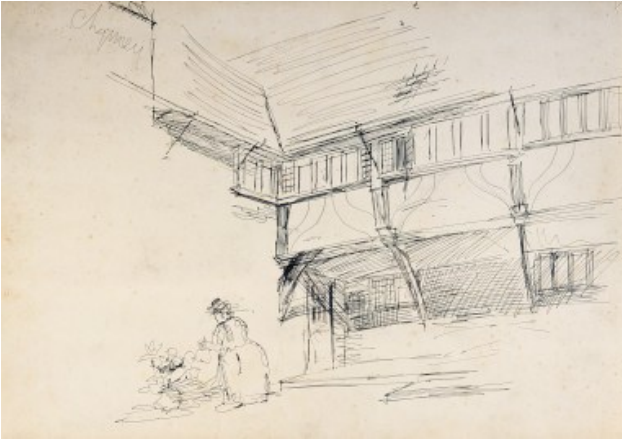
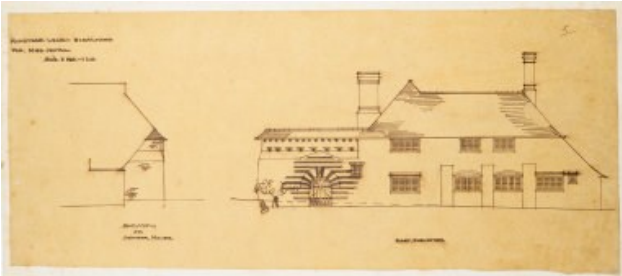
Munstead Wood, Busbridge, Surrey, acquired by The National Trust



A very satisfactory outcome has been achieved with the sale of Munstead Wood as news broke recently that The National Trust has acquired this gem. The house, designed by Edwin Lutyens for Gertrude Jekyll in 1896, was on the market through Knight Frank for £5.25m.

Hilary McGrady, Director-General of the National Trust, commented: "I'm delighted we have had the opportunity to acquire this special place, which has such strong connections to

garden and building design history. The survival of both house and garden offers an extraordinary chance to tell their story and that of Jekyll's enormous impact, which inspired a new generation of gardeners and nature lovers."



Andy Jasper, Head of Gardens and Parklands at the National Trust, added: “Munstead Wood is not only a rare surviving example of Jekyll’s work, it is the birthplace of her rich collaboration with Lutyens. It was the source of the planting experiments she described in her writing, the hub of her garden design and nursery business and had a huge influence on garden design and planting in Britain and internationally. There is no greater example of a classic English garden.”

In the coming months The National Trust will be developing its plans for Munstead Wood.

Two drawings by Lutyens of Munstead Wood; one includes a sketch of Gertrude Jekyll. Courtesy of RIBA Collections

39-40 Sussex Square, Brighton, East Sussex



In Brighton, the freehold interest in the 39-40 Sussex Square mansion, formerly home to Lady Sackville, who bought it in 1918, is for sale.

The Grade 1-listed building dates from the original development of Kemp Town in 1823. This estate of stucco-fronted houses was designed by Amon Wilds and Charles Busby for the developer, Thomas Read Kemp, after whom the area was named. Thomas Cubitt built a significant proportion of Sussex Square.

In 1916 Lutyens met Victoria, Lady Sackville – mother of Vita Sackville-West – and they struck up an instant friendship, nicknaming each other

MacSack and MacNed. Lutyens altered a number of houses for her, including White Lodge, The Cliff, Roedean and houses on Hill Street and Ebury Street in London.

Lady Sackville commissioned Lutyens to convert the two houses on Sussex Square into one home. Of these internal alterations, she enthused at the time: “MacNed remodelled (39&40) in half an hour in the most wonderful manner. I must admit his genius: it never struck me more forcibly than today, which was fairy-like as if he had touched the houses with a wand”.

This work, alas, didn’t survive entirely intact for long: in the 1930s, the property was converted into 23 flats. Yet they still exist and are now let on “assured shorthold tenancies”, producing an estimated income of £331,500pa. It is the freehold of this historic building of 18,759sq ft which is for sale, with a guide price of £7 to £8m through Kendrick Property Services.

Kiln Wood Cottage, Preston, near Hitchin, Hertfordshire



From 1908 to 1911, Lutyens worked on Temple Dinsley, an 18th-century manor which had been acquired by Herbert Fenwick (of the Northumberland banking family). Lutyens enlarged and remodelled it to make it more appropriate for entertaining on a grand scale. (The property later became The Princess Helena College, which closed as a result of Covid-19 and was sold last year.) Bertie was cousin to Mark Fenwick, who recommended Lutyens as architect. Mark owned Abbotswood in Gloucestershire to which Lutyens made additions in 1901.

Lutyens also added a home farm and many estate houses and cottages to Temple Dinsley. One of these, Kiln Wood Cottage, built for the estate carpenter in 1912, is for sale.

Located just outside Preston, this Grade II-listed house has been meticulously restored and maintained by its owners of 39 years. It has brick elevations and a steeply pitched tile roof with a distinctive central chimney stack. The 2,900-sq ft accommodation includes a drawing room, dining room, sunroom, sitting room, study, kitchen-cum-breakfast room, four bedrooms and two bathrooms. The garden extends to one-third of an acre, with views over open countryside.

Available through Norgans. Guide price: £1,600,000.

The Clockhouse, Crooksbury, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey



Crooksbury was Lutyens's first country house commission, which he designed aged only 20 while a pupil in Ernest George's office. The 1889 commission from Arthur Chapman, family friend and chairman of the Farnham Liberals, enabled him to set up his own practice in 6 Gray's Inn Square, London. The original house was in the vernacular style and Lutyens extended it for Chapman in 1898 in a bold neo-Georgian style. (New owners in 1914 asked Lutyens to part-remodel this extension into the timber-and-tile vernacular style that survives today.)

The Clockhouse is a striking Grade II-listed family home that was created by bringing together Lutyens's outbuildings, stables and cottages for Crooksbury House to the designs of local architect Ian Adam-Smith. Their centrepiece is the 1901 clockhouse with its remarkable "Wrenaissance"-style cupola surmounting an elliptically arched throughway.

The accommodation extends to over 7,200sq ft and includes an entrance hall, drawing room, dining room, sitting room, study, kitchen and breakfast room, utility room, boot room, two cloakrooms, seven bedrooms and five bath/shower rooms. The property also includes a tennis court, swimming pool, gymnasium, games room, garage, gardens and six acres of grounds.

Available through Hamptons. Guide price: £4,950,000.

Richard Page's 40-year estate-agency career has included senior roles at Savills, John D Wood & Co, UK Sotheby's International Realty and Dexters. He is now an independent marketing consultant and director of www.themarketingcafe.net, a video production company. Over the years, he has handled or advised on the sale of several Lutyens houses, including Deanery Garden, The Salutation and Marsh Court. If you have any Lutyens-related property news, please contact Richard at landseer75@hotmail.com.

Disclaimer: prices and availability correct at time of going to press.

The Places to Visit section can be seen on The Lutyens Trust America website (www.lutyenstrustamerica.com)

