Inigo Jones and The Architecture of Necessity

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There are some characters from history who you just wouldn't want to be. Guy Fawkes had an extremely gruesome ending, so did Thomas Beckett and it wouldn't have been great to have been Joan of Arc. But there is a whole cast of lesser figures who are forgotten and who you really wouldn't have wanted to be. Tonight, I'm thinking especially of the two cleaners on duty at Whitehall palace on January 12th, 1619. They had been ordered to sweep the basement of James I's new banqueting house. It was only 13 years old and although James thought it imperfect it was in regular use for masques, plays, diplomatic receptions and the ceremonials of the Jacobean court. That day the basement was full of scenery made of oil-painted sailcloth which the king had wanted kept for re-use at Shrovetide and, as it was windowless, the cleaners worked by the light of a candle. One of the men dropped his candle onto a pile of backcloths igniting them. At this point, instead of raising the alarm, the cleaners simply left the room, locked the door and went about their business as if nothing had happened.

Half an hour later a huge ball of flame erupted through the Banqueting House floor as if from nowhere. The hall was full of timber staging for the Christmas masques which ignited like match wood, soon the flames were spreading to adjoining buildings. At that very moment all the chief officers of the royal household were round the corner from where we are tonight, they were in the City Guildhall at a meeting of the king's commission for London discussing how the city might be improved. Rushing back to Whitehall they found a scene of chaos with looters already pilfering items from the smoke-filled royal lodgings. Seeing the Banqueting House was beyond rescue they concentrated on saving of the rest of the palace demolishing adjoining buildings to stop the spread. James I's reaction is nowhere recorded, and, for the record, nothing is ever heard of the cleaners, but what happened to them can't have been good.

James wanted the banqueting house to quickly be rebuilt and he assembled a commission of courtiers to take responsibility for determining the next steps. The men who served on the Commission were chosen with characteristic care: foremost had to be the two most important court officers, the Lord Chamberlain, William Herbert, earl of Pembroke and the Lord Steward, Ludovick Stuart, Duke of Lennox. They were responsible for the daily functioning of ceremonial and would have strong views about the functionality of a new building.

Given the Crown's parlous financial situation the chancellor of the exchequer, Sir Fulke Greville was to sit with the chamberlain and steward. Two other courtiers were chosen for their expertise: Sir John Digby was vice chamberlain of the household, but more importantly for the purpose was James's leading diplomat who knew more about foreign courts and diplomacy than anyone else. Then there was Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel who did not hold a major court post; his qualification for being on the Commission was as a connoisseur and leading member of the king's commission for building in London.

This galaxy of Jacobean talent was assembled because they understood the requirements of a building of state. The new Banqueting House, designed by Inigo Jones and completed in 1622, was in no sense a building for everyday life, it was designed for specifically regulated court ceremonial.

James was extremely proud of his new hall of state and before it was completed, he had already commissioned the Flemish artist Paul Van Somer to paint him standing in front of it. James is shown before a window in the guard chamber with the east elevation of the Banqueting House seen across the court through an open casement. Van Somer must have been furnished with a drawing of the building as intended

by Jones as it is not shown as finally completed. The king, however, is portrayed in all his majesty, in his coronation robes with orb and sceptre: his intention is clear, the Banqueting House was intended to be the principal theatre of his majesty.

In the early Stuart period, there were two types of royal building: buildings of state, like the Banqueting House, which fulfilled a formal role in national and court life, and buildings of necessity the private residences of the monarch. If you like the difference between Buckingham Palace, and Sandringham House.

This distinction is explained in a letter the King's Lord Treasurer wrote in 1605 to the Officers of the royal works setting out his requirements for a new hunting lodge at Ampthill in Bedfordshire he described the sort of residence he was thinking of. The king wanted to be 'lodged, though not in state, yet sufficient to serve for the enjoying of his pleasures of hunting and hawking by the attendance of all such necessary officers and no more as are requisite for his royal person to have'. There was also to be space for the Prince of Wales to stay and the queen, but the lodgings were 'not to be 'lodgings of state but lodgings of necessity'. Space was also required for the principal officers of the court such as the Lord Chamberlain, the king's secretary and Master of Horse but only attendants of 'necessity' not 'of pleasure'.

This distinction between lodgings of state and necessity existed under Henry VIII, who would visit smaller houses for hunting and pleasure with a tight-knit group of friends and attendants known as his riding household. Such an arrangement did not appeal to Elizabeth, but James I revived it both architecturally and institutionally. Already in Scotland people had observed that he liked to 'withdraw himself from places of most access and company to places of more solitude and repast with very small retinue'. In my Gresham lecture on James I and the court at Play I explained how the king built new houses of necessity at Royston, Newmarket and Thetford.

Tonight, I'm going the talk about Charles I and Henrietta Maria who, no less than James I, made a distinction between residences of state and residences of necessity. Unlike his father, Charles I liked Whitehall, he liked being in London, and over the four- or five-month long court season in the depths of winter would reside at Whitehall continually. Yet, even then, he still managed to retain the distinction between state and necessity by keeping St James's Palace, a few minutes' walk away from Whitehall across the park, as a family residence, a house of necessity, which allowed him to escape from the formality of court life.

Charles and Henrietta Maria's marriage had not started well but the assassination of the king's great favourite, the Duke of Buckingham in August 1628, seems to have cleared the way for a deep and passionate love affair between king and queen. Their sexual chemistry infused the court: for more than half the 1630s the fecund Henrietta Maria was pregnant giving birth to a succession of healthy children. Like Victoria and Albert the royal couple became a model of idealised love and family life. The king and queen were closely entwined in all they did. Under Anna of Denmark the queen's residences had been female preserves rarely visited by James, and then only briefly, but Charles, his children and courtiers were regular visitors in Henrietta Maria's houses, the king often staying the night at Denmark House, her London residence, despite the proximity of Whitehall.

By the end of 1630 short but expensive wars against both France and Spain had come to an end and ushered in a decade without war: the earl of Clarendon was able to write in the late 1640s that such 'peace and plenty and universal tranquillity for ten years was never enjoyed by any nation'.

It was a golden age. In the 1630s Henrietta Maria was in her 20s. It was her decade: she was energetic and vivacious, financially independent and possessed of taste refined in Europe's most fashionable court. She was adored by her husband, a man little concerned with the details of rule; unlike his father he was lazy and work-shy preferring hunting, plays, masques and art to the minutiae of state affairs. He thrived in the company of his wife and together they were devoted to pleasure and the arts.

In her first years in England the queen received money directly from the exchequer for her living expenses while a permanent jointure was worked out. It took some time to assemble and in fact was never formally granted; however, between 1626 and 1639 Henrietta Maria was in receipt of lands and houses which yielded an annual income of some £28,000 a year.

The king granted his wife seven houses. The first and most important, presented on St. Valentine's Day 1626, was her official London residence, Denmark House with all its contents. Then came her first country houses: Richmond in February 1627 and the following month Oatlands and Nonsuch. Exactly a year later the queen was formally granted the manor of Greenwich. In August 1629 the parks at Greenwich and Oatlands and another large country house, Holdenby in Northamptonshire; finally, in 1639, Charles I purchased Wimbledon Manor for her. In addition, of course, she had extensive lodgings in all the major royal houses such as Whitehall, Hampton Court and Theobalds.

When Henrietta Maria was given Greenwich Palace, she decided to recommence work on a park side pavilion begun by her predecessor. Anna of Denmark had commissioned Inigo Jones to build a lodge to view the hunting in Greenwich Park. Unusually it sat over a public highway joining the formal gardens of Greenwich palace with the hunting grounds. Soon after work restarted, Henrietta Maria seems to have commissioned Jan van Belcamp to paint the royal family and their friends enjoying a summer's walk in Greenwich Park. He added the figures onto a fine landscape done by another Dutchman, Adriaen van Stalbemt; in the background of which is the stumpy single-story hulk of the incomplete queen's house.

On the far left with his garter ribbon is probably the king's groom of the stool, James Hay, first earl of Carlisle, called camel-face by the kings daughter. Wearing an indoor cap, he is talking to the immediately recognisable Endymion Porter a fellow connoisseur and close friend of the king's. The man in blue labouring up the hill also with a garter ribbon may be the 4th earl of Pembroke Charles I's Lord Chamberlain. The darker of the ladies behind the queen could be Lucy Percy, countess of Carlisle and the man in black, also wearing his ribbon is Richard Weston, 1st Earl of Portland, Lord High Treasurer.

It is not known what was in Henrietta Maria's mind when she ordered Inigo Jones to take up where he had left off 11 years before, but it seems that the structure designed in 1616 was that which he brought to completion in 1638-9. Its decoration and use, however, were reinvented by its new owner.

Henrietta Maria was no less enthusiastic a huntress than Anna of Denmark, retaining her own pack of hounds, huntsmen and a personal cross bow maker. She and the king regularly shot deer in Greenwich Park but, as work re-started on what we now know as the Queen's House, it was not on the park side of the building. Anna of Denmark's house had addressed the park in function and form, but Henrietta Maria turned its aspect northwards to face the palace and river by building a terrace approached by sweeping semi-circular staircases. While the building rose as a single unit, only the northern interiors were advanced and, by 1636, the queen was laying out an extensive garden in front of them. When work stopped in 1640 the northern half of the house overlooking new pleasure gardens was largely complete and inhabitable: the project had cost at least £7,000.

Visiting the queen's house today gives no sense of what it was like on the eve of the civil war. Set austerely in manicured lawns it appears as an architectural jewel, a shrine to its architect and to the style that much later became known as Palladianism. But the upper portions of the garden front were originally painted with colourful grotesques and the windows of the queen's bedchamber and withdrawing room had iron balconies; roof terraces above provided more views over the gardens, palace, river, and distantly, City of London. It was, in fact, a garden pavilion described by one contemporary as a 'house of delight'.

Such buildings had a long pedigree and since the 15th century, Greenwich had been conceived in two parts, incorporating a secluded garden retreat known as a pleasaunce. Henrietta Maria was thus re-instating a traditional form of private royal residence put simply a 'house of necessity'. Decorating this house came to be the queen's principal interest in the mid-1630s and she was frequently to be found inspecting the progress of work. In close collaboration with Inigo Jones, who was handsomely rewarded for his efforts, the king's and queen's international network of connoisseurs were mobilised to create a series of bejewelled interiors.

In 1626 the Tuscan painter Orazio Gentileschi entered the service of Charles I. He had previously been working for Henrietta Maria's mother, Marie de Medici, in Paris and had come to England with her blessing. He was quickly assimilated into the group of connoisseurs and collectors round the king as both painter and advisor, but he was superseded in royal favour in the early 1630s by Van Dyck and was, instead, absorbed into the queen's circle. Gentileschi painted two large canvasses for the great hall at the queen's house and was commissioned to paint its ceiling. Like the banqueting house, the ceiling was divided up into compartments by great beams and, in these, Gentileschi painted his Allegory of Peace reigning over the arts.

While the ceiling survives, badly mutilated, at Marlborough House the composition is quite legible. While Rubens's Whitehall ceiling publicly trumpeted the triumph of the Stuart Dynasty – and was, if you like, a painting of 'state' the iconography of Gentileschi in the Queen's house was more intimate representing the national cultural rebirth over which the king and queen saw themselves presiding. All 26 figures in the complex allegory are female acknowledging the role their sex played in the arts. Indeed, the subjects in the wall canvasses were female too, the single male presence in the hall was the exquisite bust of the king commissioned by Henrietta Maria from Gianlorenzo Bernini.

No less attention was applied to the two first floor rooms. The connoisseur Sir Balthazar Gerbier was enlisted to secure the services of the leading Flemish painter Jacob Jordeans to paint 22 canvasses for the withdrawing room. The subject was to be Cupid and Psyche (thinly disguised as the king and queen); the gods surrounding them were to be easily recognisable and required 'ye faces of ye women as beautiful as may be'.

Unlike Jordeans' paintings, none of which survive, the queen's bedchamber remains largely intact and is the only early Stuart royal interior where one can get a sense of the king and queen's private existence. Through the papal agent at her court the queen secured the services of Guido Reni to paint the central canvas in a ceiling decorated by the English Office of Works. Guido's painting never reached England, but the coving is a unique survival of decorative painting in an early Stuart royal interior. Royal taste was strongly for Italian renaissance grotesque work, a form of decoration popular in England for a century or more but brought to a state of high sophistication by designers such as Francis Cleyn.

The Queens House tells us more about the early Stuart court than any other surviving building, except the banqueting house. Conceived as a private pleasure pavilion and dedicated to their love of each other and the love of the arts, Henrietta Maria and Charles I used their contacts across Europe to create a luxurious jewel casket set in a gorgeous landscape. It was only open to a tiny, privileged group of close friends epitomised by Belcamp's painting of them walking in the park.

The precise sequence of events that led, in 1639, to Henrietta Maria purchasing Wimbledon Manor is not known. Those of you who listened to my series of Gresham lectures last year on Great Tudor and Stuart houses may remember me introducing this house in my lecture about the Cecils.

It is hard today to imagine early seventeenth century Wimbledon. It was then one of three tiny hamlets that bordered, in a triangle, the great plateau of high ground now known as Wimbledon Common, but then much larger. The heath, as it was called, was bisected east to west by the main London to Southampton Road a major thoroughfare bypassing Wimbledon, Putney and Mortlake on its way to the coast

Wimbledon was six miles from London and from the high ground the City was perfectly visible, but it was extremely remote with a population of perhaps only 230 clustered together in cottages with a church a little set apart next to the Rectory. It was the rectory that was purchased by William Cecil, the future Lord Burghley in 1550. He was a rising star, only 30 years old, and needed a rural retreat from his urban house close to Whitehall Palace in Canon Row.

The Rectory is still there, a private residence recently sold for £26m, I haven't been inside but apparently some of the historic interiors remain. During Lord Burghley's ownership he added land to the rectory and extended it but, with several other fine houses in his possession including Burghley House and Theobalds, he granted his old family home to his eldest son, Thomas, in 1575. Thomas Cecil, in his turn expanded the family landholdings in Wimbledon including purchasing the neighbouring manor house on the other side of the parish church.

Thomas married an heiress in 1564 adding to the family's great wealth. Building seems to have been Thomas's chief interest and it is likely that he took the major hand in designing a new, spectacularly located and elegantly planned suburban home, in Wimbledon started in 1588. Positioned on the site of the old manor house and cut into the hillside it was approached by a series of terraces behind which, on gently rising ground were extensive pleasure gardens. The whole property now covered some 266 acres. But as we shall see nothing of this survives today.

James I was a regular visitor to Thomas Cecil in Wimbledon but after Cecil's death the house passed to his son, General Sir Edward Cecil, a soldier who spent much of his career abroad. He certainly used the house, taking his title, Viscount Wimbledon, from the manor, and building a chapel, that still remains, onto the side of the parish church. At one point there was an explosion in the kitchens when a maid opened a barrel of gunpowder thinking it was full of soap and dropped in a spark. Other than repairing whatever damage this caused it seems as if he made few, if any, architectural changes to the house, although he commissioned Francis Cleyn the decorative painter to adorn the outside with grotesque work, an improvement that was also being implemented at the Queen's House for Henrietta Maria. A foreign tourist who visited in 1629 raved about its beauty and especially the gardens the likes of which, he thought, were 'rarely found in England'. When Edward died without a male heir the estate was put up for sale.

There is no evidence that Charles and Henrietta Maria were visitors to the house during the 1630s, or that they were looking for another residence and, with Greenwich, Oatlands, Richmond and Nonsuch it must be wondered why the queen wanted another house. I shall answer that question in a few minutes, but first we must note that the king bought it for the colossal sum of £16,789 'at the desire of the queen'.

Inigo Jones, the queen's architect was instructed to draw up plans for altering the Elizabethan house to the queen's specification. None of these survive; we only have one drawing in his hand for Wimbledon which is inscribed 'for freeses at Winbledon'. The sketch probably shows some cornicing from one of the new rooms. But this wasn't just an interior redecoration job because we know that in December 1638 a brickfield was leased by the king and a brick making contractor fired 124,000 bricks for the enterprise.

This was a major project designed by Inigo Jones for the queen that, because it was demolished, has never gained prominence. However, we can reconstruct exactly what Henrietta Maria commissioned from Jones and, by analysing the house, can reveal what it was she was trying it do.

The starting point is a remarkably detailed survey of Thomas Cecil's House found in a book of drawings assembled by the royal surveyor John Thorpe. The circumstances or date of this plan cannot now be convincingly stated, but it is clear from the annotations that this was a survey of the existing building. The book is dated 1596 and the survey must have been taken before that.

The original manor that we see here was not large; only one room deep, its plan was U shaped with the east arm containing galleries, the central section a hall, great chamber and dining room and the western arm containing Cecil's apartments. The beauty and novelty of the place was the way it was cut into the hillside and looked out onto one of the largest and most ambitious gardens of the time in England.

We know about the gardens because the house was again surveyed in 1609, this time by the Elizabethan architect Robert Smythson who was on a fact-finding mission to London where he recorded buildings of particular interest to him. Smythson's survey shows not only the house, but the incredible landscaped and terraced gardens behind it on the hill.

As far as the layout of the rooms in the main house is concerned the two plans essentially agree, but Smythson includes the kitchen wing to the west that may have been omitted from Thorpe's plan as of lesser interest and spoiling its symmetry.

What these two Jacobean plans give us are the plan of the house during its occupation by Thomas Cecil, second baron Burghley and after 1605 the first earl of Exeter. And if we assume that his son Edward made no significant alterations to the house, and there is no evidence that he did, the plans show Wimbledon Manor in the state in which it was purchased by Henrietta Maria in 1639.

At this point I want to introduce you to a third plan of Wimbledon; this is in the hand of Nicholas Hawksmoor Wren's chief draftsman and an accomplished architect in his own right. Unfortunately, it is not dated but experts who have studied Hawksmoor's drawing style believe that it was done in the early 1690s. As you can see the plan of the old Elizabethan house is perfectly recognisable but, in addition, there is a new extension on the western side. Perhaps this is the addition built by Jones; but to be sure that it was not built later we need to quickly check what happened to the house between the execution of the king and the early 1690s.

During the Commonwealth and protectorate, it belonged to one of the most senior parliamentarian generals John Lambert; for eight years he and his family enjoyed living at Wimbledon and tended the gardens and furnished the house with pictures bought at the royal sales. When he bought the house in 1652 it was extremely fashionable and had very recently been renovated by Ingio Jones. There is no evidence to suggest that he needed to make any alterations to the former royal palace, though his interest in the gardens suggests that he may have made some improvements there.

At the Restoration Wimbledon was returned to Henrietta Maria who immediately sold it for £10,000 to George Digby the second earl of Bristol who took possession in 1661. He found it very run down and had to spend quite a lot of money repairing house and garden to make them habitable. His political career was disastrous, described by Professor Hutton, Gresham's new Professor of Divinity, as 'remorselessly self-destructive' and there is no suggestion that he could have ever made significant alterations to the house, and he stopped living there in 1675. On his death in 1677 it was sold to the earl of Danby.

Thomas Osborne, earl of Danby, and later first Duke of Leeds, was a Yorkshire man in need of a base close to London. He liked the house and particularly its gardens Where he started to entertain important guests. But like the political career of his predecessor the earl of Bristol, Danby ended up in deep water, impeached and in the Tower of London. But unlike Bristol he was rehabilitated and in 1690 became William III's chief minister and duke of Leeds. I would suggest that it was at this moment, with his star rapidly rising again that he commissioned Nicholas Hawksmoor, England's most fashionable country house architect to survey Wimbledon in preparation for a remodelling.

So, If I'm right, and neither Lambert, Digby or Osborne made any significant changes to Wimbledon between 1649 and 1690, Hawksmoor's plan shows the alterations made to Wimbledon manor by Inigo Jones. In fact, this can be confirmed by a detailed survey taken of the house in 1649 by the parliamentary surveyors who describe in detail the house as shown on Hawksmoor's plan.

If we put the drawings together we can consider this lost work of Inigo Jones. He oversaw remodelling the house, receiving both a fee of over £580 and a special 'bounty' from the queen for his efforts. The east wing had been designed in tandem with a sunken garden and, in the undercroft, Cecil had built a shell grotto. Jones remodelled the principal floor with a new chapel and a large marble parlour giving out onto the terrace overlooking the orange garden.

The great first-floor rooms remained much as they were but on the west side Cecil's rooms were remodelled. Here the king and queen had new bedchambers and a shared withdrawing room. Each bedchamber had its own bathroom with tiled floors, lead baths and hot and cold running water. Nearby was a linen room. Adjacent was also a highly ornamented study that had previously been Cecil's with a Dutch stove and various secure cupboards.

Although the gardens were already the fame of the place, the queen commissioned the French garden designer André Mollet to restructure them in contemporary fashion. The Tudor Garden had been an asymmetrical assemblage of walled compartments containing ponds, a banqueting house and monuments. Mollet imposed a new regularity and symmetry with a strong central axis aligned on the main door on the south front. The sunken garden on the east side became the orange garden laid out with four squares of parterre and an orangery for storing the 60 potted trees over winter.

The principal gardens were approached from the house by a bridge vaulting a sunken area containing lawns, a fountain and an aviary. Either side of the central walk were symmetrically placed square parterres that led to a great avenue that crossed the site, a feature from the Jacobean Garden. At either end of this circular banqueting houses were erected. Beyond was a maze and a more loosely planted area – a wilderness, and in the far south a terrace with two more banqueting houses.

Here is an engraving of Henrietta Maria and her three eldest children. Henrietta Maria, to the left, is depicted holding a prayer book and standing beside the figures of her three eldest children, Charles II, Mary, Princess of Orange, and James II, within an open courtyard, with a putti flying above, holding a depiction of Prince Charles, the first son of Henrietta Maria and Charles I who died in infancy. With a view of an ornamental garden in the background and with English verses below: 1633. While this is a celebration of the queen's fertility it shows her standing on a ballustraded terrace overlooking a pleasure garden. It was a view such as

this that one would have seen from the north side of the queen's house or the terrace at Wimbledon Manor in 1640.

Henrietta Maria's most remarkable addition to Wimbledon Manor was Inigo Jones's cruciform stone gallery. The southern arm, ten feet wide with 'many compendious sentences' painted on the walls, led to a bridge into the garden. The north arm opened out into an alcove in which there was a crimson velvet bed with cloth of silver and gold with three chairs, six stools and a carpet to match. The east-west arm ended in a balcony and at the crossing was a stove. How the crossing was handled is not known, but the Hawksmoor plan shows engaged columns and so it was most likely a quadripartite vault. It is a unique layout, and a unique conception: a royal bedchamber that opened directly onto a garden. At the garden door was 'the lord's chamber' presumably a room where someone could be stationed to control access.

The cross gallery contained what was almost certainly the first bed alcove in England. The alcove was a fashionable new feature from French aristocratic houses. At the start of the seventeenth century French bedchambers were large rooms containing a bed, often doubling up as a reception room, but in the late 1620s bedchambers began to be used for more private intercourse and an intimate space was created in the chamber called the ruelle. This was simply the area between the side of the bed and the wall, a place where the owner could receive specially favoured friends. The ruelle gradually became architecturally defined by a niche or alcove in which the bed could be set. The first recorded bed alcove in Paris was at the demolished Hôtel de Rambouillet in the 1630s and, by the 1640s, they were fairly common. For Henrietta Maria to build an alcove at Wimbledon in 1639–40 showed her in tune with the ultimate in contemporary Parisian fashion, an architectural feature associated with privacy and intimacy.

It was not only the extraordinary architecture of Wimbledon that suggests that this was a very particular house of necessity, but the evidence we have of how it was furnished. In 1649, after the execution of Charles I, a series of inventories were taken of the contents of the royal houses. Much had been taken from Wimbledon by the time the surveyors arrived there, but 24 paintings remained, and these tell us much about the house. Hanging on the walls were two pieces of needlework, four allegorical works, five still lives, a portrait and twelve religious paintings of which six had the Blessed Virgin as the main subject.

In comparison with the paintings listed in the Queen's House Greenwich, which were all allegorical paintings, this looks like a very personal collection with a strong focus on the queen's Catholic faith and a rich selection of Marian images. The single portrait was of the queen's father, King Henri IV of France. Moreover, amongst the paintings was one very recently commissioned, from Sir Anthony Van Dyke. This is Cupid and Psyche, one of Van Dyck's most beautiful paintings charged with erotic power. Psyche embodied beauty and cupid, desire, together they made up Plato's definition of love: 'Love is desire aroused by beauty'. Henrietta Maria was seized by the symbolism of the myth and commissioned various paintings of it. That this big Painting (it is six-foot square, the figures half life-size) should be taken to Wimbledon emphasises the queen's focus on the house being a place of erotic and platonic love.

And it was very private. Wimbledon itself was extremely remote. Quite unlike Greenwich that was in a busy village on the Thames and a main road, Wimbledon was a tiny backwater. The house contained an extremely limited number of household lodgings – there was a room for a maid, and a pallet chamber for ladies on duty but otherwise there were rooms for only the queen's two closest friends, her childhood nurse Françoise de Monbodiac and Susan Feilding, the Countess of Denbigh, the queen's first lady of the bedchamber, mistress of the robes and holder of her personal purse-strings. On the first floor there was also a nursery suggesting that the queen intended to bring her children to the house.

All this adds up to a unique royal residence without a single traditionally named room of state or any division between outer and inner lodgings. A place filled with private paintings, constricted of access and in a remote location. This was a private hideaway, indeed, a royal love nest; a house of necessity where the king and queen could reside in complete privacy and enjoy uninterrupted intimacy. The bathrooms, shared withdrawing room, an alcove bedroom, direct access to the gardens are all things impossible even at the newly constructed Queen's House. Wimbledon Manor was the ultimate expression of the king's and queen's love for each other.

Returning to our starting point I think understanding Wimbledon Manor helps us understand the Whitehall Banqueting House. Of course, the Stuart monarchs needed great rooms of state for set-piece pieces of court

ceremonial but the houses of necessity were where they liked to live and their architect Inigo Jones in fact spent much more time designing and supervising these private and intimate residences than the great buildings of state. This means that we can look at him in a fresh light installing the latest in luxury French bedrooms and bathrooms for Henrietta Maria and not just the proper and correct bringer of architectural classicism to England.

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