

THE ENGLISH GREAT HALL:

Recuperating Collective Dialog in the Private Realm

The travel initiative intends to document the legacy of the Great Medieval hall in Britain diachronically from the Middle Ages to the Arts and Craft movement. The typological transformation of the great hall reflects a changing social consensus of the British character, from a rich local community to one that privileges the extreme construction of individuality characterized by the “English Eccentric” phenomenon. From a communal living space to a mere vestibule, I wish to elucidate methods of preservation architects have employed to sustain a room charged with spatial tradition and identity to succeeding values and demands of domestic living. The research as well intends to understand how architecture that once inserted political discussion and social dynamics alongside routines of daily life can be an effective informal model to put disparate individuals into physical relation.

The spatial flexibility of the Great Hall once facilitated a condition of compulsive togetherness; a theatrical setting where local politics and social interaction shared the same space as essential activities of sleeping, and dining for all subjects including the king and queen. Under one roof lay a range of economical spatial gestures. Raised steps, partitions, flexible furniture, a central open hearth, induce routine and inform social roles; all aimed to propagate and reaffirm a cohesive identity of the household. The ingle-nook in the great hall for example is a small two-seat protruding fireplace with an externally prominent chimney, that later becomes a synonymous symbolic and functional icon of the house.

Travel will be based in London and Manchester with daily excursions to English manors and castles of neighboring regions. Typology, interior craftsmanship, exterior articulation and daily rituals will be documented through sketches, photographs, measured plans and elevations, and narrative text. Since these sites have been adapted from its original condition, visiting archives, conversing with historians, and reading appropriate historical literature will help construct a more holistic understanding of the great hall's role. Apart from the great hall, I wish to also visit the domestic setting of notable eccentric figures (Charles Darwin, J.Locke) and public halls (dining halls, and monasteries,) to get a cross section of the hall through time and type.

Public space are currently contrived sites for entertainment, leisure, bargaining, and Instagrammable art. Due to America's historical link to British housing styles, a well considered relocation and resizing of the public sphere in rigid market driven housing models is worth design consideration. As we grapple with urban densification and private spaces for a transient population focused on individual desires, could the great hall as it currently sits as a deterministic corridor or vestibule be recast as a robust communal space where political conversation, social experimentation can become as quotidian as eating and sleeping. The proposal does not wish to nostalgically advocate for the return of the medieval hall. but rather simply identify a local precise scale of architectural expression that allows for politics to operate with clarity and ramification, and therefore suggest equal growth and prosperity of both the individual and the community.

1) IDENTIFYING THE GREAT HALL

LONDON - 4 DAYS

Tower of London (1078) - Gothic
Westminster Hall (1097) - Gothic- Henry Yevelle
Queen's House (1635) - Palladian/Early Stuart - Inigo Jones
Kenwood House (1694) - Neo-Classical - Robert Adam
Marlborough House (1711) - Palladian - Christopher Wren

NEAR LONDON - 5 DAYS

The Great Hall (1222) - Gothic
Penshurst Place & Gardens (1341) - Late Gothic
Hampton Court Palace (1514) - Tudor/Baroque
Burghley House (1587) - Elizabethan - Robert Smythson
Norwich Castle (1075) - Gothic - Edward Boardman
The Red House (1859) - Arts and Crafts - William Morris
Clouds House (1886) - Arts and Crafts - Philip Webb

NEAR MANCHESTER - 8 DAYS

Haddon Hall (1087) - Late Gothic/Tudor
Little Moreton Hall (1508) - Late Gothic - William Moreton
Rufford Old Hall (1530) - Gothic + Jacobean
Astley Hall (1630) - Elizabethan
Hardwick Hall (1597) - Elizabethan - Robert Smythson
Seaton Delaval Hall (1728) - Palladian/Baroque - John Vanbrugh
Kedleston Hall (1758) - Palladian - Robert Adam
Adcote School (1881) - Queen Anne style - Norman Shaw

SCOTLAND - 2 DAYS

Claypotts Castle (1588) - Late Gothic - John Strachan
Drumlanrig Castle (1689) - Palladian - William Douglas

2) ECCENTRIC INDIVIDUAL'S HOUSES

LONDON - 2 DAYS

Mansion House - London
Freud Museum - London
William Morris Gallery - London
Dennis Severs' House - London
Soane's House - London

NEAR LONDON - 2 DAYS

Geffrye Museum of the Home - London
Leighton House Museum - London
Dulwich Picture Gallery - London

NEAR MANCHESTER - 1 DAY

Blackwell Arts & Crafts House

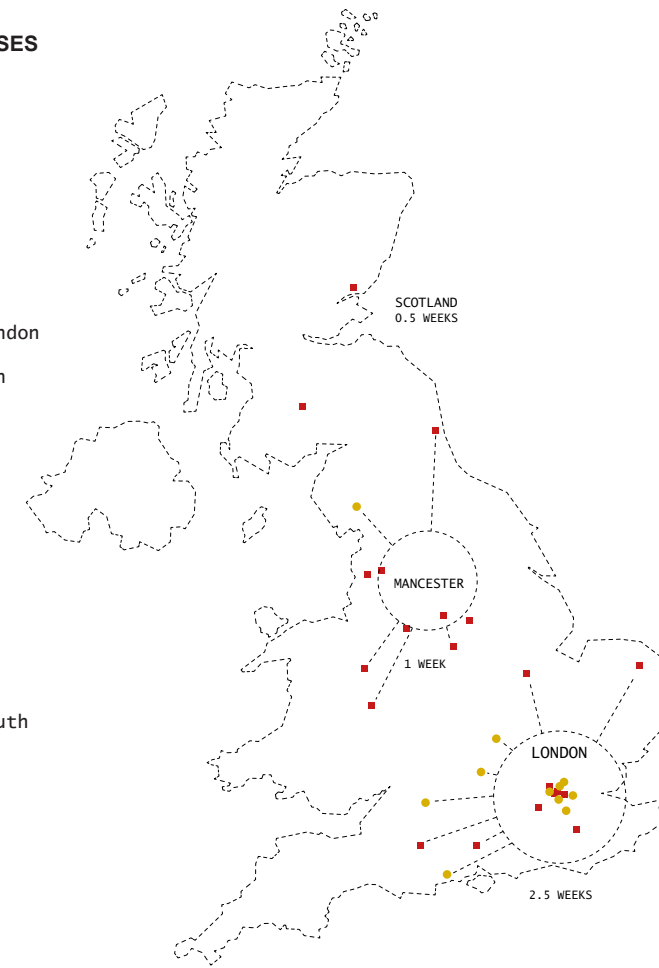
3) PUBLIC HALLS

NEAR LONDON - 4 DAYS

Oxford University - Oxford
Lacock Abbey - Chippenham
Stowe House - Buckingham
Christchurch Priory - Bournemouth

4) ARCHIVE LOCATIONS - 2 DAYS

V&A Museum + RIBA Partnership
National Archives
Historic England Archive
AA Archive



Budget =

30 DAYS

Airfare = \$800 round trip

Lodging (\$160/day) = \$4800

Food (\$30/day) = \$900

Transportation = \$1000

Guide Fee = \$650

Misc. + Contingencies = \$400

TOTAL = \$8550



12th Night Revels in The Great Hall



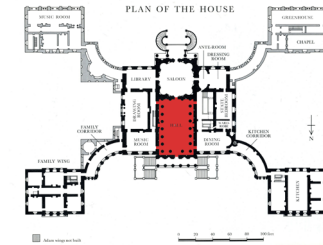
Cloud House - hall as corridor armature



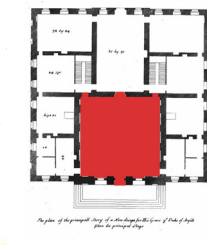
Cloud House - hall as living room



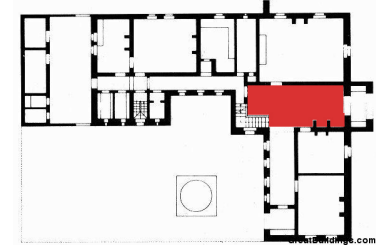
Penshurst Place - oldest existing hall



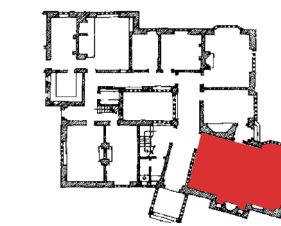
Kedleston Hall, 1758



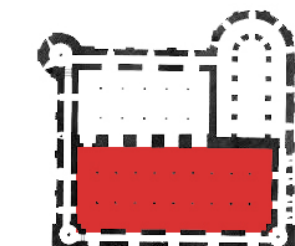
Queen's House, 1635



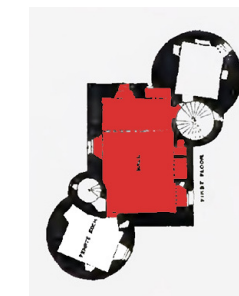
The Red House, 1859



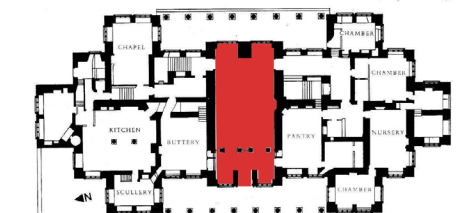
Merrist Wood House, 1875



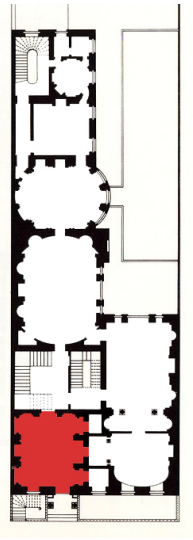
Tower of London, 1078



Claypotts Castle, 1588



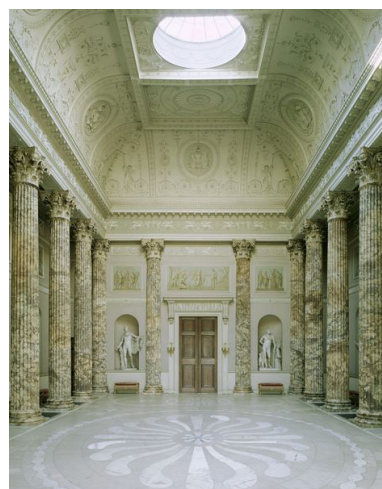
Hardwick Hall, 1597



Derby House, 1774



Stirling Castle - hammerbeam ceiling



Kedleston Hall - Renaissance Centered



Rufford Old Hall - merchant guild hall

Proportion and Role of the Hall of different architectural styles and types (in red)