

## Country House Bibliography

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## **Part One: Annotated Guide**

### **Annotated Guide to Country House Publications**

**Airs, Malcolm.** *The Making of the English Country House, 1500-1640.* London: The Architectural Press Ltd, 1975.

Using the building accounts of country houses and the correspondence of their builders, Malcolm Airs reveals that the period between 1500 and 1640 was one of transition for the English country house. In his book Airs examines country houses not in terms of architecture, but instead as buildings that were designed, financed and painstakingly constructed. He looks into the practical and everyday problems that building a country house entailed. While considering the builders of country houses he also explores the lives and experiences of those surveyors, craftsmen and labourers who built it. He finds that between 1500 and 1640 contemporary ideas about architecture were changing, with more significance being given to the intellectual and theoretical underpinnings of architectural practice. As a result the role of architect became more pronounced and in turn led to the increasing use of surveyors as onsite administrators of the building work. Although a perfect distinction between the two roles was not consolidated by 1640, the change had begun and affected how building took place. Airs' work, like Wilson and Mackley's for the later period, contends with the multiplicity of ways in which building country houses affected numerous people's lives.

**Arnold, Dana (ed.).** *The Georgian Country House: Architecture, Landscape, and Society.* Stroud: Sutton, 1998.

Chapter 1	The Country House: Form, Function and Meaning	Dana Arnold
Chapter 2	The Country House and its Publics	Dana Arnold
Chapter 3	Publishing Houses: Prints of Country Seats	Tim Clayton
Chapter 4	One Among the Many: Popular Aesthetics, Polite Culture and the Country House Landscape	Stephen Bending
Chapter 5	Defining Femininity: Women and the Country House	Dana Arnold
Chapter 6	The Illusion of Grandeur? Antiquity, Grand Tourism and the Country House	Dana Arnold
Chapter 7	Town House and Country House: their Interaction	M.H. Port
Chapter 8	Jane Austen and the Changing Face of England	Philippa Tristram
Chapter 9	Living off the Land: Innovations in Farming Practices and Farm Design	Dana Arnold
Chapter 10	Richard Payne Knight and the Picturesque Landscape	Andrew Ballantyne

In this volume Dana Arnold, along with contributions from Tim Clayton, Stephen Bending M.H. Port, Philippa Tristram and Andrew Ballantyne, explores 'the meaning of all kinds of architectural production'. Arnold and the other contributors use prints, literature and travelogues to examine what the country house meant in different social, political, economic and cultural contexts. How did its form and function affect what the country house was and what it could be? How was the country house represented in prints? Arnold and the other contributors explore how different publics have responded to country houses and the various meanings it has acquired as a result.

**Christie, Christopher.** *The British Country House in the Eighteenth Century*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.

Christopher Christie explores how the country house acted as an important player in the architectural, artistic, social and economic history of eighteenth-century Britain. Christie examines multiple aspects of the country house to provide a rounded view of its forms and functions. Alongside his description of how the lands and estates that surrounded country houses created wealth, Christie also highlights the different financial strategies by which country houses were built and embellished during this period. Through an exploration of the architecture constructed in the eighteenth century, Christie demonstrates the breadth of building that took place. He then populates his houses and their gardens with families, servants and furnishings, before describing the wide variety of activities and entertainments with which they were involved. Using financial accounts, plans, engravings, travel accounts and correspondence, Christie's book provides an important starting place for considering the eighteenth-century country house in all its different guises.

**Clemenson, Heather A.** *English Country Houses and Landed Estates*. London and Canberra: Croon Helm, 1982.

Heather Clemenson explores the English country house as a visual symbol of wealth, status and power and tracks how it changed in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Clemenson divides her analysis into two temporal sections, first the period from the eighteenth century to around 1880 and second, from 1880 until 1982. She uses parliamentary papers, estate papers and contemporary published sources to examine the experiences of five hundred landed families during this period. In doing so she includes over a third of the largest private landowners in England in the late nineteenth century. What makes Clemenson's analysis unique is her interest not only in country houses, their gardens and amenity lands as symbols of wealth and status, but that she also acknowledges the significance of agricultural and wood lands as symbols of power and prestige. Clemenson demonstrates the changing 'visual impact' of estates by plotting a trajectory of rise before 1880 and then eventual decline between that point and the post-war period. Clemenson completes the book by assessing the potential futures of the country house.

**Elton, Arthur, Brett Harrison and Keith Wark.** *Researching the Country House: A Guide for Local Historians*. London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1992.

Although slightly out of date due to the impact of the internet, Elton, Harrison and Wark's book provides a good starting point for those interested in learning about and researching the country house in England. *Researching the Country House* explains how country houses and their estates were owned, built, managed and improved, the role of the landowner in society and the work performed by servants. Alongside this they also include discussions of the effects of industrialisation on the country house in the nineteenth century and its decline and conservation in the twentieth. During their explanation of each of these topics Elton, Harrison and Wark include suggestions about important sources, where they can be found, how to access them and the possible frustrations and challenges researchers may encounter. For example they show readers various ways of using bills, newspaper advertisements, architectural plans and correspondence. In doing so Elton, Harrison and Wark illuminate the wide variety of sources that historians can use to construct the histories of the country house.

**Girouard, Mark.** *Life in the English Country House*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978.

Rather than focusing upon who built the house, when and how, Mark Girouard seeks to examine how English country houses were used and what they were intended to do. Girouard understands the house as a social, political and economic space in which people outwardly performed particular roles. Girouard uses a range of sources to explore these topics including inventories, family papers, plans, travelogues and images. In his analysis he focuses on two themes, which he sees as central to understanding the country house and its role – power and pleasure. Traditionally the country house owner derived power from the land that made up his estate. Land earned rents, peopled armies and until the nineteenth century, created votes. How this calculation changed over time was intrinsically important to the role and meaning of the country house. At the same time, however, the country house was also a site of pleasure; specifically designed to allow its owners to fill their leisure hours 'as agreeably as possible'. Girouard's work provides an overview of the role of the country house from the medieval period until the 1940s.

**Gomme, Andor and Alison Maguire.** *Design and Plan in the Country House: From Castle Donjons to Palladian Boxes*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008.

Andor Gomme and Alison Maguire examine the changing design of the country house. More particularly, they explore the different factors that prompted the development of the double pile layout, where houses were more than one room deep. Through an analysis of plans, architecture and architects they demonstrate the role of technology, materials, politics, money, social habits and daily life in creating these new designs. Gomme and

Maguire take a long view from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to the eighteenth. In doing so they pick out long threads of change towards 'compact' design and reassess what has previously been seen as a distinct shift in the seventeenth century. *Design and Plan* is particularly well illustrated and usefully includes ground plans alongside photos of specific houses. It provides the reader with a solid understanding of the processes from which the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English country house emerged.

**Holmes, Michael.** *The Country House Described: An Index to the Country Houses of Great Britain and Ireland.* Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1986.

*The Country House Described* is an important reference work for researching the country house and is available in most large libraries. It lists 4,000 country houses from different parts of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland and provides references to all the literature relating to those individual houses. The literature that Holmes lists is available in the National Art Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. *The Country House Described* is a particularly good guide to illustrations of houses, but also lists guides about individual houses, catalogues of collections, sales catalogues and Country Life articles. It offers a starting point for any research on particular country houses.

**Mandler, Peter.** *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home.* London: Yale University Press, 1997.

In *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home*, Peter Mandler critically examines the changing perceptions of the country house from c. 1815 until c. 1974. Mandler argues that it was not until the nineteenth century that people came to understand country houses as symbols of national heritage. In the early years of that century country houses opened their doors to an increasingly interested public. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, country houses were once again seen in an unflattering light. Finding themselves and their houses out of favour, the aristocracy withdrew from public view, a process which in some cases led to the dereliction of their homes. By the 1950s, as the aristocracy's power reduced, country houses could be understood in a more generous light – as pieces of national heritage in need of conservation. Mandler's research, which uses manuscript collections alongside newspapers and magazines, is important in encouraging us to question the changing status and meanings given to the country house by the general population. Far from a steady icon of English heritage, Mandler demonstrates that the image of the country house has been as vulnerable to the changing social, political and economic conditions as its owners.

**Wilson, Richard and Alan Mackley.** *Creating Paradise: The Building of the English Country House, 1660-1880.* London Hambledon and London, 2001.

In *Creating Paradise*, Richard Wilson and Alan Mackley reveal who built English country houses in the years between 1660 and 1880. They show why they built them, where they

built them and how they financed such building. Concentrating on houses in Cheshire, Gloucestershire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Suffolk and Yorkshire, they explore the different experiences that inspired country house builders to build. More specifically, they also question why country house builders decided to build in certain styles, using particular architects. Wilson and Mackley also demonstrate the magnitude of building operations by focusing in on the details of the building process itself. For instance, they examine procedures such as how the materials were sourced, how they reached the site and how much the labourers were paid. *Creating Paradise* provides the reader with a solid understanding of the many costs and frustrations that people bore in order to build their country houses.

## **Part Two: Full Bibliographies**

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**Country House: Specific Counties and Cities**

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