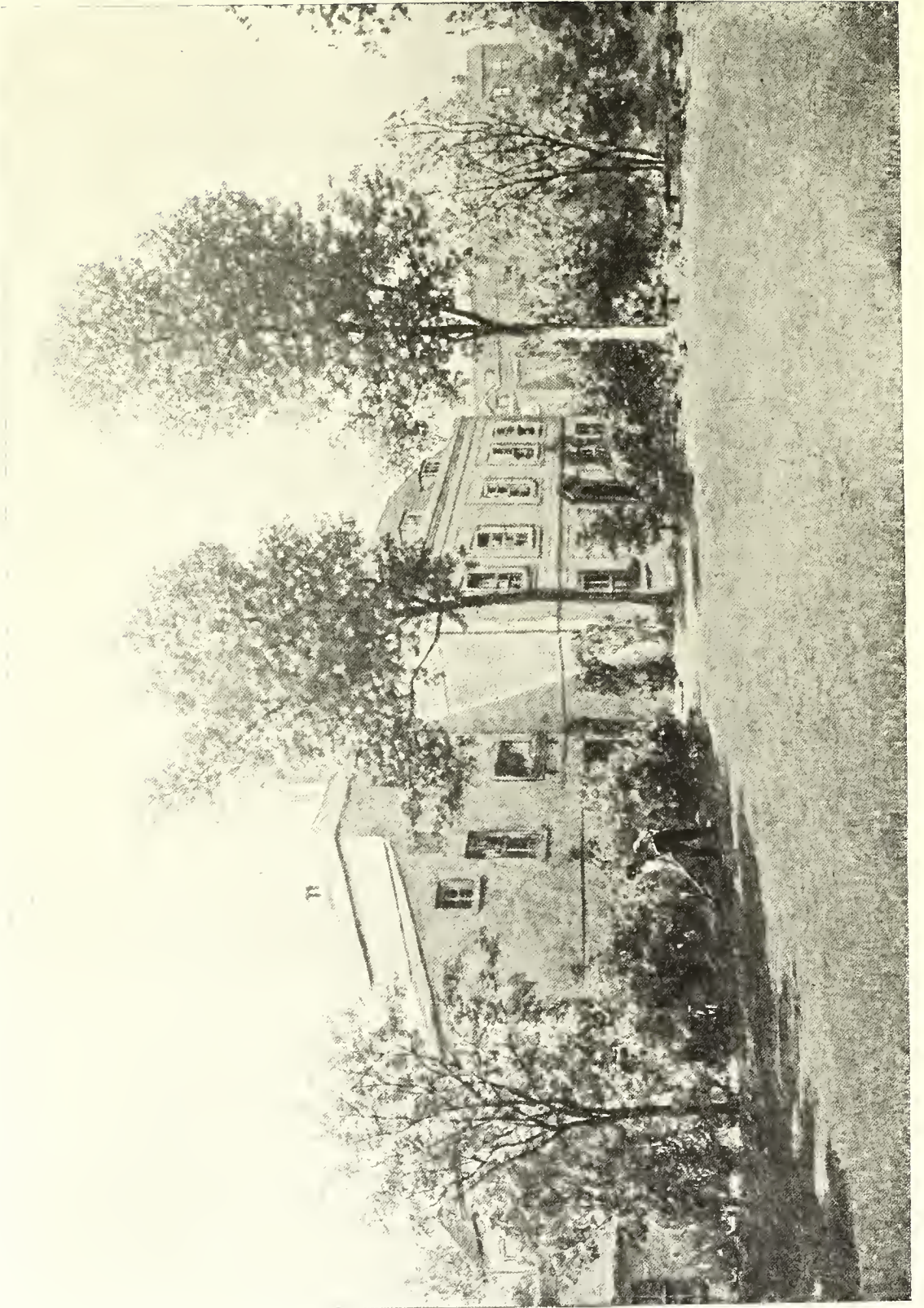






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SANDFORD MANOR, FULHAM. BY
W. ARTHUR WEBB, ARCHITECT.
BEING THE EIGHTH MONOGRAPH
OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE
SURVEY OF THE MEMORIALS OF
GREATER LONDON.

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PREFACE.

IT is a pleasure to record, in this, the eighth publication of the *London Survey*, so interesting a place as Sandford Manor, on the borders of Fulham and Chelsea, and thus appropriately to revive the Committee's work, dormant now for three years owing to the long illness and subsequent death of its secretary, Mr. Ernest Godman.

In Sandford Manor House we have, still spared to us, a quiet and well-proportioned building of the 17th century, which, both from its architectural merit, and the picturesque mingling of history and tradition connected with it, is well worthy of a monograph. With regard to it Mr. Webb has, we feel sure, examined all available sources of information. We can hardly say that he has been able to find new evidence relating to the supposed association of the house with two noteworthy personages otherwise as far as the poles asunder, namely, Nell Gwyn and Joseph Addison. On the other hand he has not disproved the statements connecting them with it that have passed almost unchallenged for several generations. In the neighbourhood of what was once the "village of palaces," which is so steeped in memories of the past, there is perhaps more justification than elsewhere for giving ear to the statements that have been locally handed down by oral tradition. Those of us who dwell in Chelsea or Fulham are strongly affected by tradition. Our regard for the *Spectator* and our affection for "pretty witty Nelly," tell as weightily on us as similar feelings told on our predecessors. In short, we will not give her up if we can possibly help it, and we insist on the fact that the poet and essayist, if never actually domiciled in the dwelling to which this paper is devoted, at least dwelt hard by and knew it intimately.

There is some satisfaction in being able to tell our readers that Sandford Manor House is apparently in no immediate danger of demolition, but we fear that it is only respited, and the rapid changes that are transforming all the district in which it stands, bring home to us the sad necessity of such a work as ours.

The last remains of Paradise Row, with its charming associations, have been destroyed during the present year, and in the quite recent past we have had to lament the transformation of Beaufort Street, the sites of its quiet houses and gardens covered now by rows of jerry-built structures. Box Farm is gone, the Vale (last relic of Chelsea Park) is now threatened. The Duke of York's School will shortly be removed. There is even a disquieting rumour about Chelsea Hospital, though we cannot but think that the public would vehemently resist an attack on this unique foundation. A few short years ago we saw haymaking in progress at the back of Peterborough House, Parson's Green, which had acres of rural ground attached to it, and is now totally obliterated. The buildings of minor im-

portance but none the less charming which have been "improved" away during the last decade are too many to enumerate.

If for every old landmark destroyed, and every open space built over, we could give in exchange something of architectural merit we should not feel, as we do now, that those who come after us are being robbed of their just inheritance. But alas! as the drawings and photographs of destroyed houses, by our Survey Committee, too plainly show, the modern closely-packed flats and other cheap buildings, with their poor design, poor colour and machine-like construction, will not for a moment compare with what they have replaced, which bore the marks of a more sincere and a simpler age.

The London Survey is to be congratulated on having secured the services of its new secretary. If sufficient financial aid be forthcoming there is every prospect of a series of records being issued which will supply much interesting and original information on various districts included in the area of greater London.

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“ *Watch an old building with an anxious care ; guard it as best you may, and at any cost, from every influence of dilapidation :*

Count its stones as you would jewels of a crown ; set watches about it as if at the gates of a besieged city ; bind it together with iron where it loosens ; stay it with timber where it declines ; do not care about the unsightliness of the aid : better a crutch than a lost limb ; and do this tenderly, and reverently, and continually, and many a generation will still be born and pass away beneath its shadow.”

RUSKIN—“ *Seven Lamps.*”

SANDFORD MANOR.

IN the earlier part of last century the wayfarer, passing over Stanley Bridge in the direction of Fulham, would have seen on his left an ancient brick wall extending for some distance towards the Hand and Flower Inn. At its top the coping was covered with moss and lichen and other plants which flourish on old buildings. This was the north-western boundary of the then extensive grounds of Sandford Manor House, which is still in existence though of late fallen on evil days. It is situated at Sands End between the King's Road and the river Thames, on a site now included in the premises of the Gas Light and Coke Company, and, standing as it does on rather low ground, more or less surrounded by trees, might easily escape notice.

The Manor House doubtless derives its name from the ancient "Sand" or "Sandy" ford, once in existence where Stamford (or Sandford) Bridge now spans the railway. It is on the Fulham side of Sandford Creek, formerly the mouth of a watercourse which rose somewhere in the neighbourhood of the present Kensal Green cemetery, and after dividing Fulham parish from Kensington, and south of Stamford Bridge from Chelsea, there flowed into the river. In 1827-1828 the lower portion of this watercourse was widened and formed into Kensington Canal, about two miles in length and giving passage to vessels of 100 tons burden. After some years of rather unprosperous existence, the canal was drained except for a short distance at its mouth, and turned into a railway line.

The house is approached through a short garden in front, while at the back there is a larger garden, with a few picturesque trees still remaining, which forms a delightful retreat from the noise and bustle of the King's Road hard by. The date of the present building is somewhat uncertain, but we may feel sure that, although of considerable age, it was preceded by an older mansion not necessarily on the same site.

That here was in ancient times a manor is agreed on all hands, and its early history can to some extent be traced. As we learn from a Patent Roll, in the reign of King Edward I. John de Saundeford held a tenement in Fulham, whether this one or not is an open question, and in documents of the latter part of the 14th century the name Sandford, variously spelt, occurs again and again in connection with the parish. Mr. C. J. Fèret, the accomplished author of "Fulham Old and New," points out that on 28th June 1383 Warenus de Insula, or Warren de Lisle, died in possession of a house at Fulham which he held of John Saundford, and this was in all probability Sandford Manor House. He was a man of mark, and in 1367 his daughter Margaret had married Thomas, fifth Earl of Berkeley, who succeeded to the estate at Sands End. It afterwards passed, also by marriage, to Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who at his death in 1439 owned land in half the counties of England, including in Fulham "The Lord Lyle's Place."

Shortly afterwards it seems to have come into the hands of the Collegiate Church of St. Martin ; indeed, according to a statement by Lysons, which does not agree with the account given above, Henry, Earl of Northumberland (the father of Harry Hotspur) presented it to that foundation as early as the year 1403. Be this as it may, it is an undoubted fact that Henry VIII. having granted that church with all its endowments to Westminster Abbey, at the Dissolution Sandford Manor passed into the hands of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, who, in 1549, handed it over to Edward VI. in exchange for land elsewhere. In 1558 it was sold by Queen Mary to William Maynard, citizen and mercer of London, when belonging to it were 11 acres of meadow and 43 acres of arable land. In 1630 Sir William Maynard, his son, died in Ireland, being then possessed of the property.

A halo of romance is gathered round Sandford Manor House because of Nell Gwyn's supposed connection with it. We have even been told that it was built for her by Charles II., although the style of the house is undoubtedly earlier, and we know that it continued to belong to the Maynards till the latter half of the 18th century. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for March of the present year there is a pleasant article in which will be found all that can be said in favour of this tradition. The writer seems convinced that the popular actress here found a home, that "the rooms rang with her merry peals of laughter," and that in the quiet garden "her good angel came to her and taught her to work out some practical scheme for the comfort of the poor and afflicted." For his belief he has the authority of Faulkner, the historian of Fulham and Chelsea, who, writing in 1812, says positively that "the fair Eleanor" resided at Sandford Manor House, his chief piece of evidence being that a medallion in plaster of her had some years previously been found on the estate, and was then in possession of the owner. Other relics were afterwards discovered, including a thimble with the initials N.G. engraved upon it, and, as Mr. Fèret tells us, "an alleged Freemason's badge or jewel supposed to have belonged to Charles II." found under the boards of a room on the first floor and presented by Mr. McMinn, the then occupant, to his Lodge." A secret recess also came to light, containing the remains of wooden platters. Four walnut trees formerly in the garden were locally supposed to have been planted by "royal hands," while, according to another legend, the "Merry Monarch" once rode his horse or pony up the by no means spacious staircase.

The *Domestic Intelligence* for August 5, 1679, contains the following information :—

"We hear that Madame Ellen Gwyn's mother, sitting lately by the water side at her house by the neat houses near Chelsey, fell accidentally into the water and was drowned."

Mr. Fèret suggests that this accident may have happened here, and not

on the low ground near the Thames side at Pimlico, as is generally supposed. A public-house near the spot recalls Nell Gwyn's name, and her memory is cherished in the neighbourhood. On the other hand the story of her connection with the house is supported by no early documentary evidence.

Another tradition connects Sandford Manor House with the famous Joseph Addison, and doubtless he lived occasionally at Sand's End, or "Sandy End," but there was a hamlet of that name by the Creek, and we are by no means sure that he occupied the Manor House. From Sandy End in 1708 he wrote several letters containing pleasant proof of the then rural character of the neighbourhood, to the young Earl of Warwick and Holland, whose mother he married some years afterwards. Here is a specimen:—

"May 27th, 1708.

My Dearest Lord,—I cannot forbear being troublesome to your Lordship while I am in your neighbourhood. The business of this is to invite you to a concert of music which I have found in a neighbouring wood. It begins precisely at six in the evening and consists of a blackbird, a thrush, a robin redbreast, and a bullfinch. There is a lark that by way of overture sings and mounts till she is almost out of hearing, and afterwards falling down leisurely, drops to the ground as soon as she has ended her song. The whole is concluded by a nightingale that has a much better voice than Mrs. Tofts and something of the Italian manner in her diversions. If your Lordship will honour me with your company, I will promise to entertain you with much better music and more agreeable scenes than you ever met with at the opera; and will conclude with a charming description of the nightingale out of our friend Virgil." Addison then gives the Latin, and Dryden's translation of it.

That same year Sir Richard Steele in a note to his wife written from Sand's End, says: "I have come hither to dinner with Mr. Addison and Mr. Clay."

A couple of years later we find Swift in his "Journal to Stella," telling her that "September 15th we dined at a country house near Chelsea where Mr. Addison often retires." Again, "On the 18th I dined with Mr. Stratford at Mr. Addison's retirement near Chelsea," and "On the 29th I dined with Mr. Addison and Jervas the painter at Mr. Addison's country place."

Sand's End, as we have seen, really belongs to Fulham, but being so close to the border it is sometimes spoken of as being in Chelsea. Thus Macaulay in his Essay on Addison when referring to his statue in Poet's Corner tells us that:—"It represents him as we can conceive him, clad in his dressing-gown, and freed from his wig, stepping down from his Parlour at Chelsea into his trim little garden, with the account of the Everlasting Club, or the Loves of Hilpa and Shalum, just finished for next day's

Spectator." Elsewhere he says that Addison enjoyed nothing so much as the quiet and seclusion of his villa at Chelsea (referring no doubt to Sand's End), which by the bye was within a walk of Holland House, the home of his beloved Countess. We should add that, in the Essay quoted above, Macaulay shows his belief in the popular tradition by a statement that "Addison had, during some years, occupied at Chelsea a small dwelling once the abode of Nell Gwyn." But another great writer, Thackeray, in "Esmond," speaks of his "cottage at Fulham," by which he could hardly have meant Sandford Manor House.

The last of the Maynard family was Robert Maynard, who died without issue in 1756. The property afterwards passed to his four aunts, one of whom, Anne Foulke, married the Hon. William Moore. In 1778 he bought up the shares of her relatives, but before this, in 1762, a factory for the making of saltpetre was here established, the managers of which apparently were Frenchmen. By 1785 this business had come to an end, the place being vacant, and three years later, Mr. William Howard purchased Sandford Manor House from the Hon. William Moore. In 1790 a pottery business was moved here from Little Cheyne Row, Chelsea, the articles produced being crucibles, gallipots, mugs, &c. It continued until 1798, when the factory and its effects were sold to Mr. Henry Mist, and shortly afterwards adapted to the requirements of making cloth by a Mr. Hart.

In 1811 it was purchased by Messrs. Brown & Co., and turned into a patent cask factory. For the campaign against Napoleon in 1815 the firm made large numbers of wooden canteens for the use of the soldiers when on the march. They ceased to carry on business shortly after the close of the war, and in 1821 the house was taken by Mr. Robert Lyon for the purposes of bleach and dye works.

In 1824 the Imperial, now the Gas Light and Coke Company, purchased the Sandford Manor estate, the gasworks, it is said, now covering no less than 28 acres. At or soon after the time of the purchase the house was separated into two distinct residences, as it remains at present, by a division wall, which is so placed that the panelling in the hall has not been disturbed. Most of the old building is included in the part towards the King's Road; the other portion is to some extent modern.

What remains of the original house is oblong in plan with a cellar at the back. It consists of a ground story, a first floor, and attics in the roof, the small outbuilding or wash-house at the north-west corner being, it would seem, a subsequent addition. This is marked on our plan, but not the modern addition to the south which forms the chief part of the southern residence.

The cellar is approached by a door leading from the hall in the panelling under the stairs; this also gives access to the present kitchen. There is a stone staircase at the north-west corner from the modern outbuilding to

the cellar, which latter is lit by two windows overlooking the back garden. The greenhouse on this side has quite recently been destroyed.

The main entrance is in the centre (see half-inch detail). The doorway consists of pilasters of wood having sunk panels, with caps and bases, and is surmounted by a moulded pediment.

The hall and staircase are certainly the features of the building, and are shown in the perspective view of it by Mr. E. C. Nisbet, the hall being panelled with a frieze and mitred cornice. The panelling is oblong in shape and moulded.

The old staircase remains, with richly moulded strings and handrail, ascending to the top floor, round a well hole. The newels are square on plan having moulded terminals and pendants. The balusters are turned to a delicate outline; a twisted iron rod has been introduced into one of the newels for strengthening purposes.

The drawing-room, which was formerly panelled, is approached from the first landing of the staircase, six steps up (the cellar being below). In the lobby is a cupboard adjoining the fireplace and another in the room. The walls are now papered; possibly the panelling or part of it still exists beneath. The steps are arranged in groups of six, there being seven of these groups in all.

The brick front of the house is now covered with rough cast. There are two blank windows on either side of the doorway. The windows, which have double glass, are externally surrounded by a flat architrave projection, and a plain string course divides the ground floor from that above. A small moulded cornice surmounts the façade, the dormer windows are of the ordinary type, and iron rods have been introduced to tie in the walls.

In 1844 the Manor House was modernized, when the front suffered considerably. It previously had three gables, one in the centre having a round pediment, and those on either side, central with the pair of windows below, being finished with a pointed pediment. Further details are given in the accompanying illustration, which is taken from the frontispiece of Faulkner's "Historical and Topographical Account of Fulham." In the alterations of 1844 a change was made in the front portion of the roof, which can best perhaps be understood by a comparison of Faulkner's view with the present elevation. It is now slated in front, but until then was doubtless tiled as the rest of the roof is at present. We would add that the portion of the roof overlooking the back garden has a break in it, and the brickwork below is comparatively modern. It seems probable that there were here originally shallow wings or a small courtyard.

The chimneys are of brick, the end flues of the two front stacks being diagonal, on a square base, also of brick and weathered to throw off the water. There is a considerable open space to the south-east, shewn in our frontispiece.

In the more interesting part of the Manor House dwelt the late Mr. McMinn, an official of the Gas Company, for more than fifty years. Shortly after his death the family went elsewhere, and the place was closed and began to fall into decay, now several years ago, the southern portion remaining still occupied. Efforts were also made to let the land for building purposes. The old Manor House therefore appeared to be doomed. Quite recently we visited the well-known site with fear and trembling to see if any vestige of it still remained. Our joy was great to find that after years of neglect, the dwelling has been renovated without any serious change to its general appearance except that which is entailed by the removal of the greenhouse. For some weeks it has again been occupied, and may therefore be considered safe for the present. An ominous board, however, still remains, apparently offering for sale the strip of land on which it stands, and we fear that the life of Sandford Manor House will not be very much prolonged.

W. ARTHUR WEBB, A.R.I.B.A.

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HERE ENDS THE EIGHTH MONOGRAPH OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE SURVEY OF THE MEMORIALS OF GREATER LONDON, ON SANDFORD MANOR, FULHAM, MIDDLESEX; WHICH WAS WRITTEN BY W. ARTHUR WEBB, A.R.I.B.A., AND PRINTED FOR THE COMMITTEE BY MESSRS. EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, EAST HARDING STREET, LONDON, E.C. MDCCCCVII.

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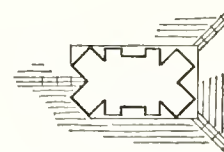
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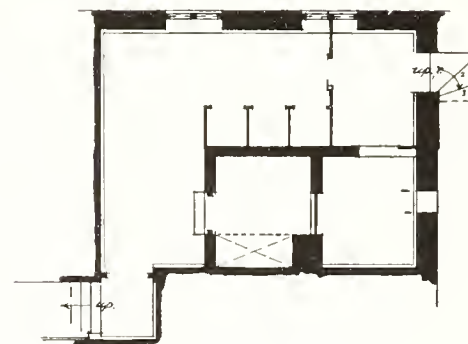
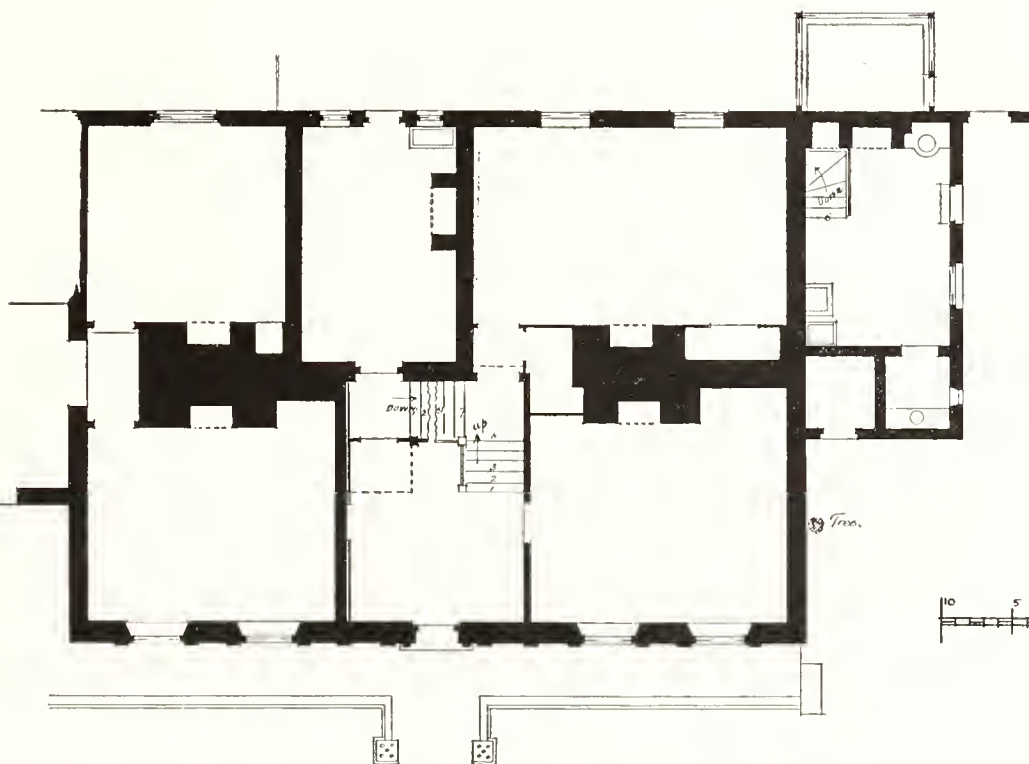


SANDFORD MANOR
FROM THE WEST.



Outline of Chimney.

Elevation :



Cellar plan :

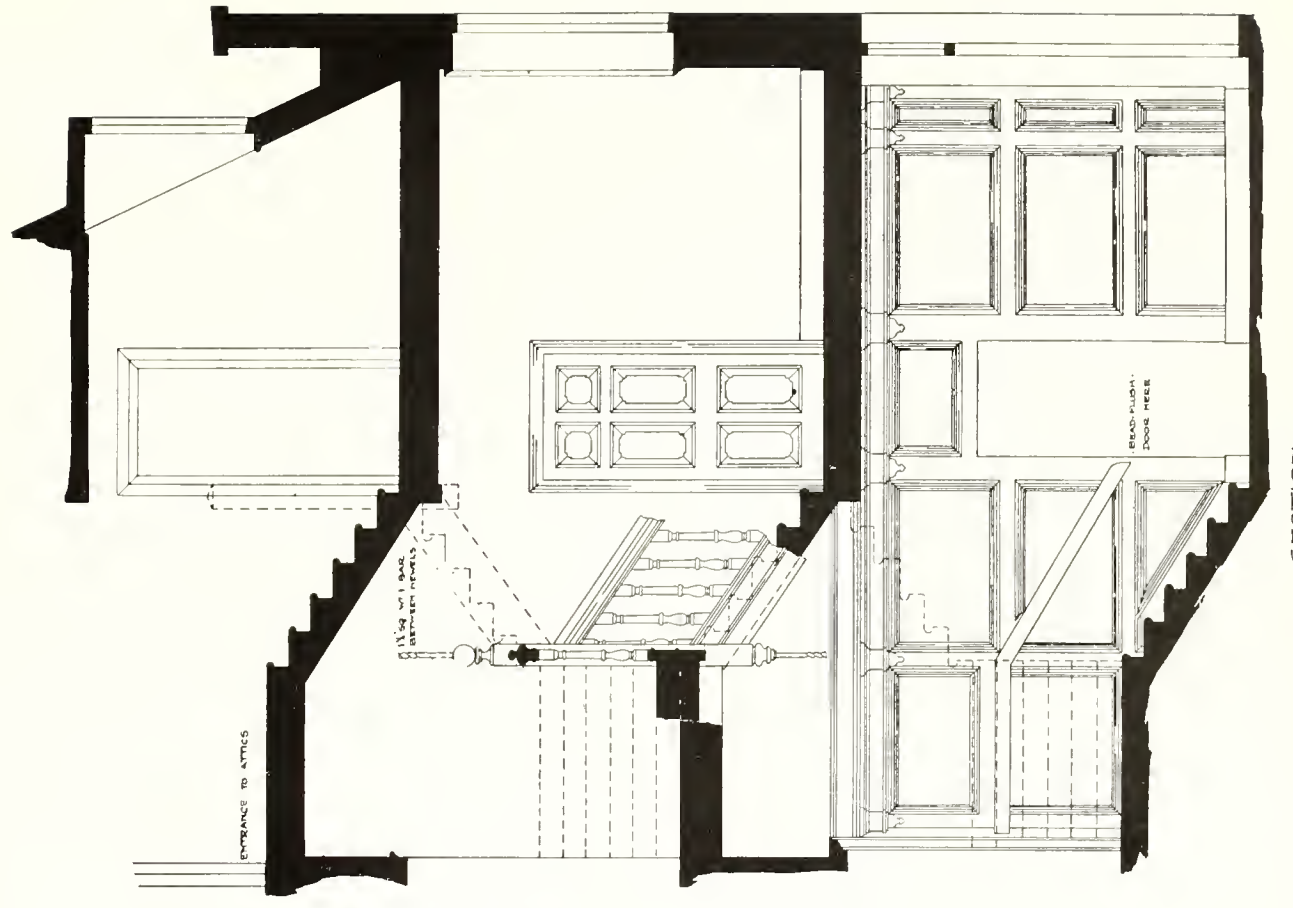
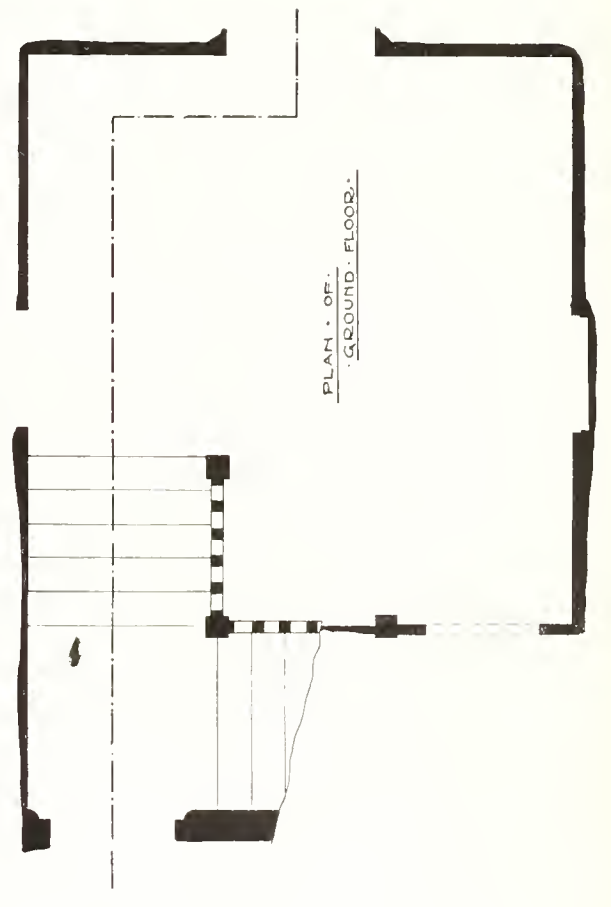
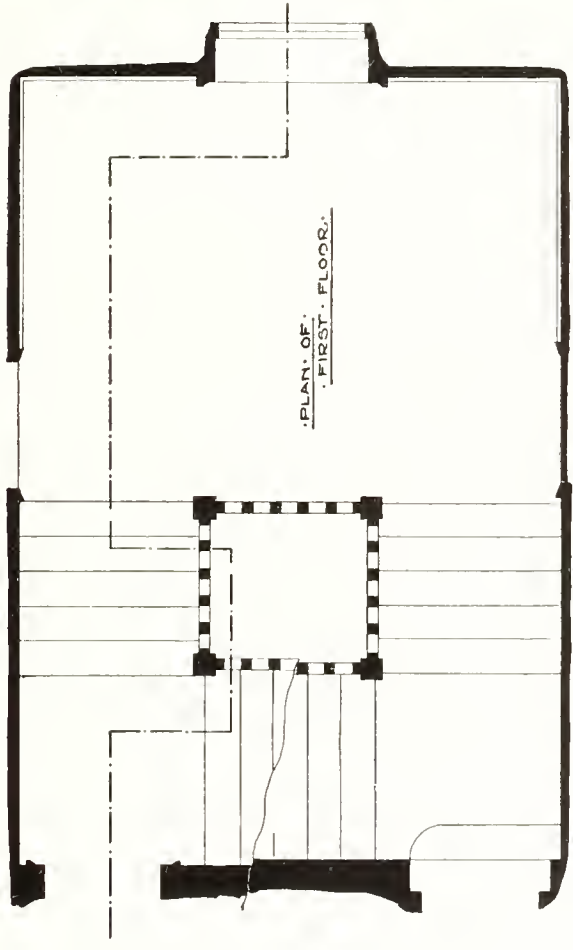
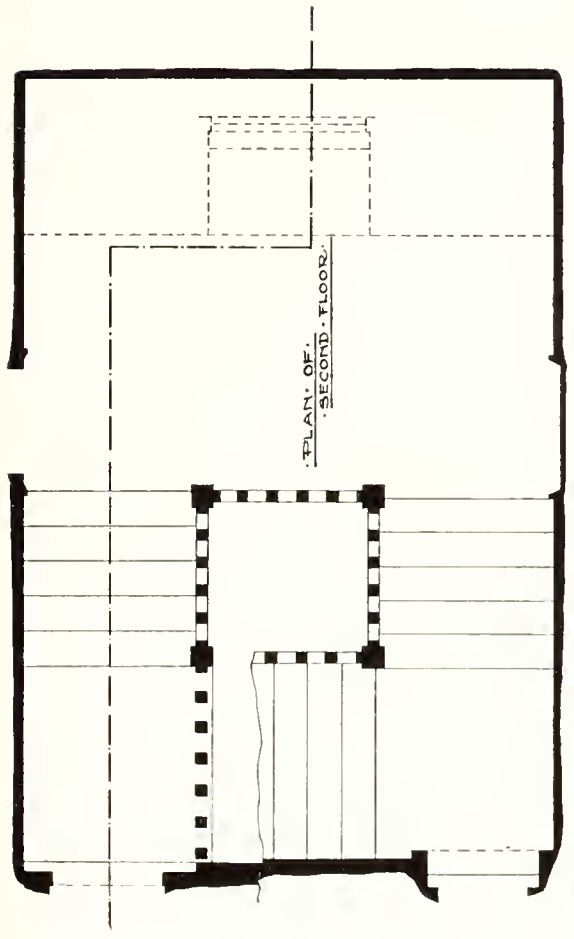
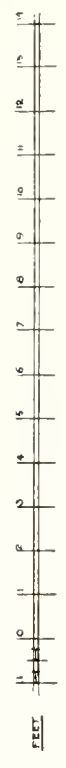


Ground Plan

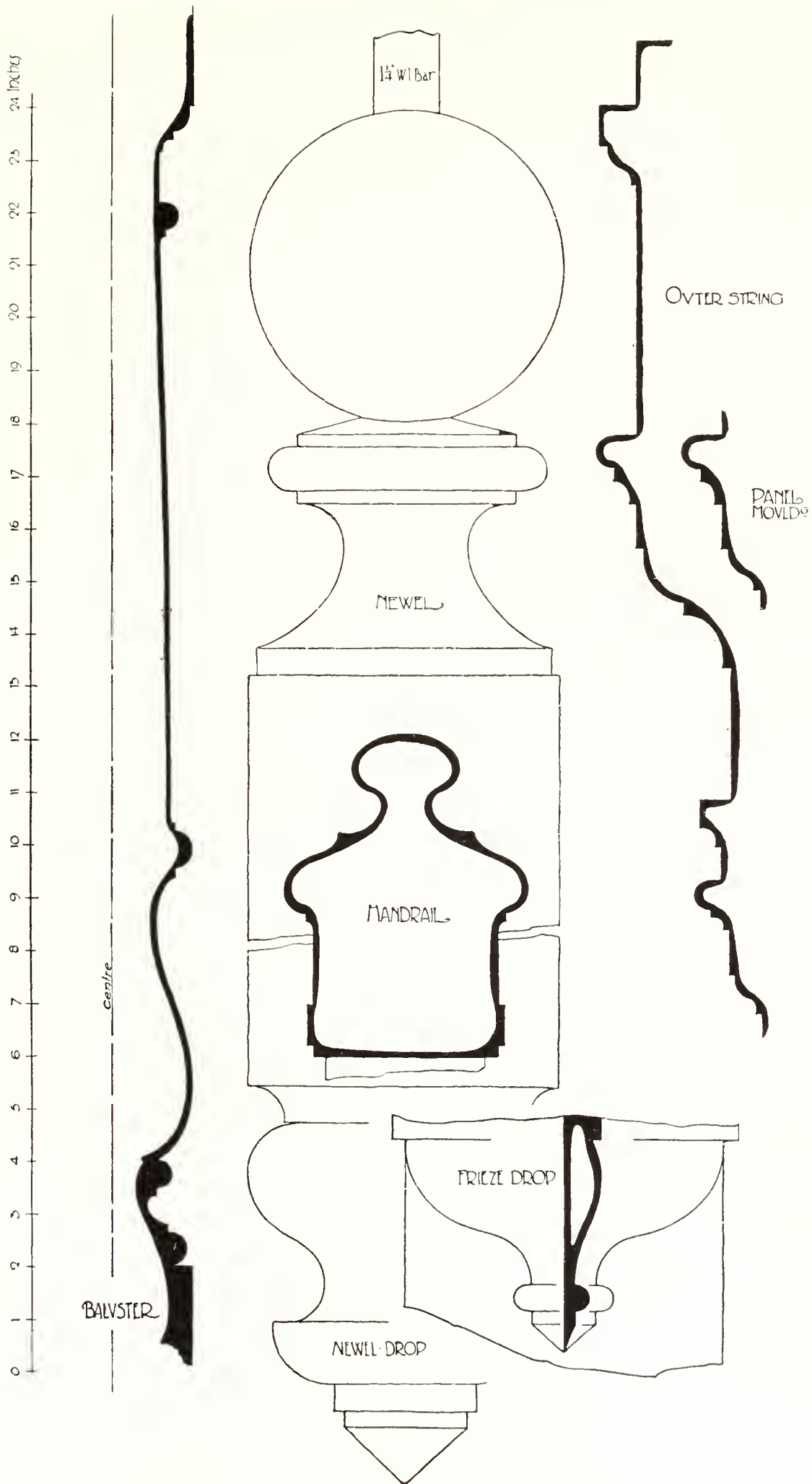
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PLANS AND SECTION OF
HALL AND STAIRCASE.

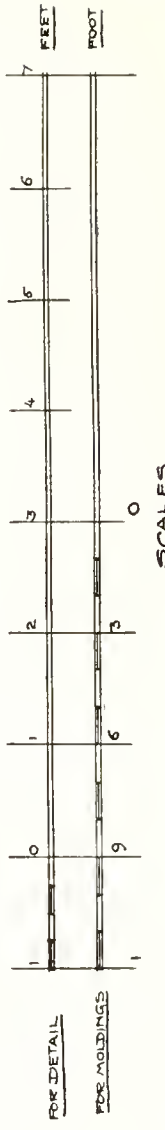
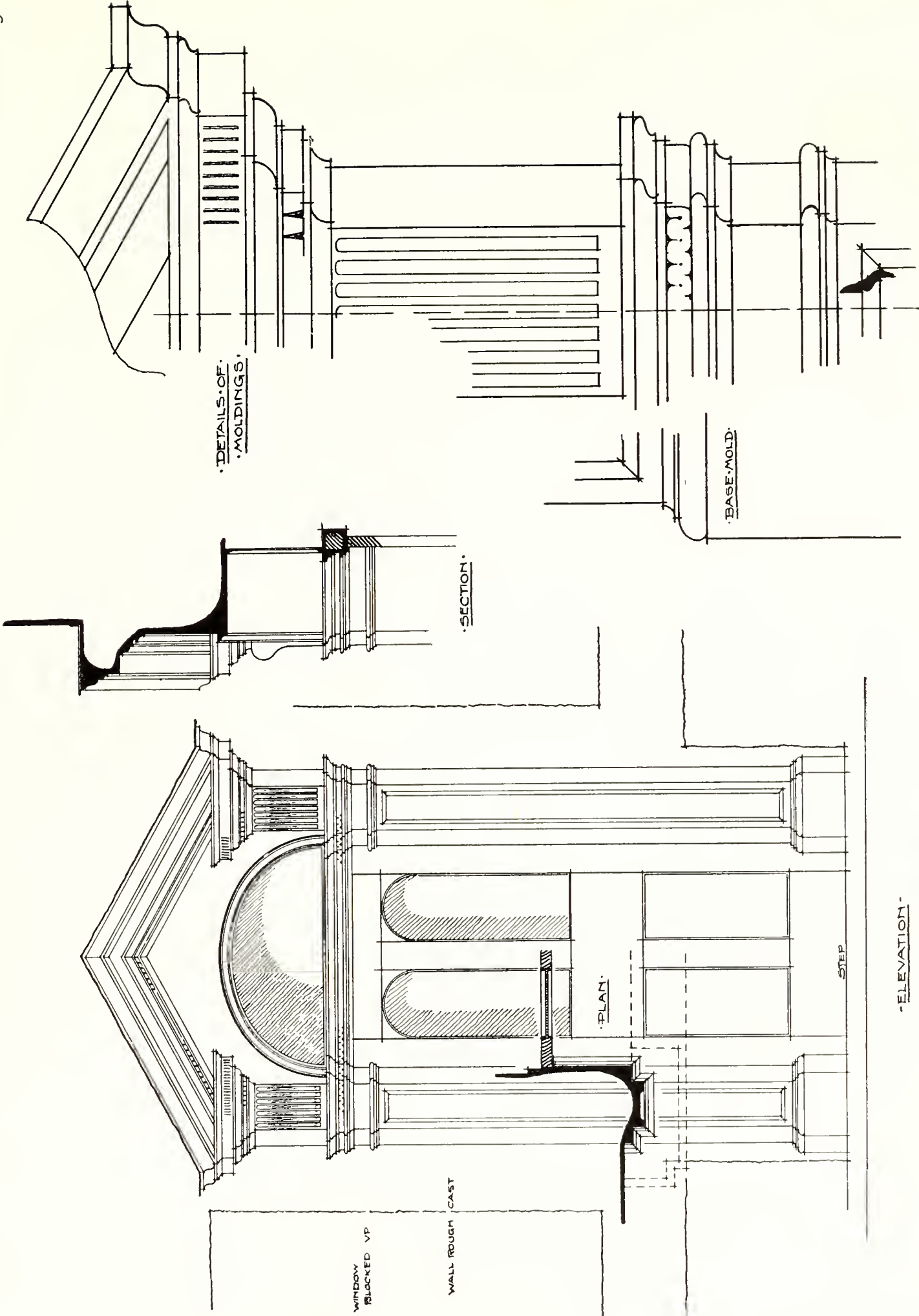
MEASURED AND DRAWN BY ERNEST A. MANN.



SECTION.

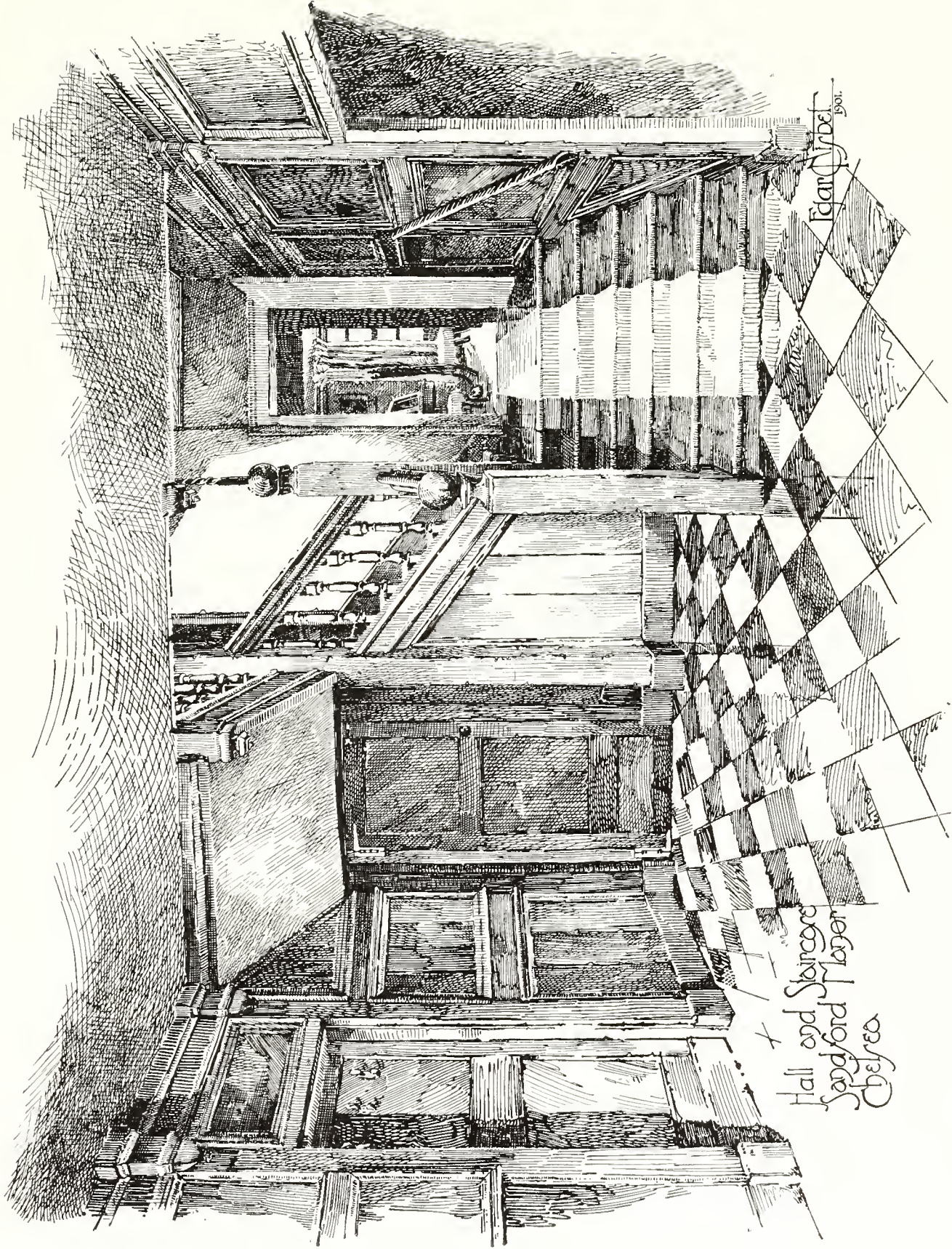


DETAILS OF STAIRCASE.



Reed W. Loomis
 July 1907

DETAIL OF ENTRANCE DOOR.



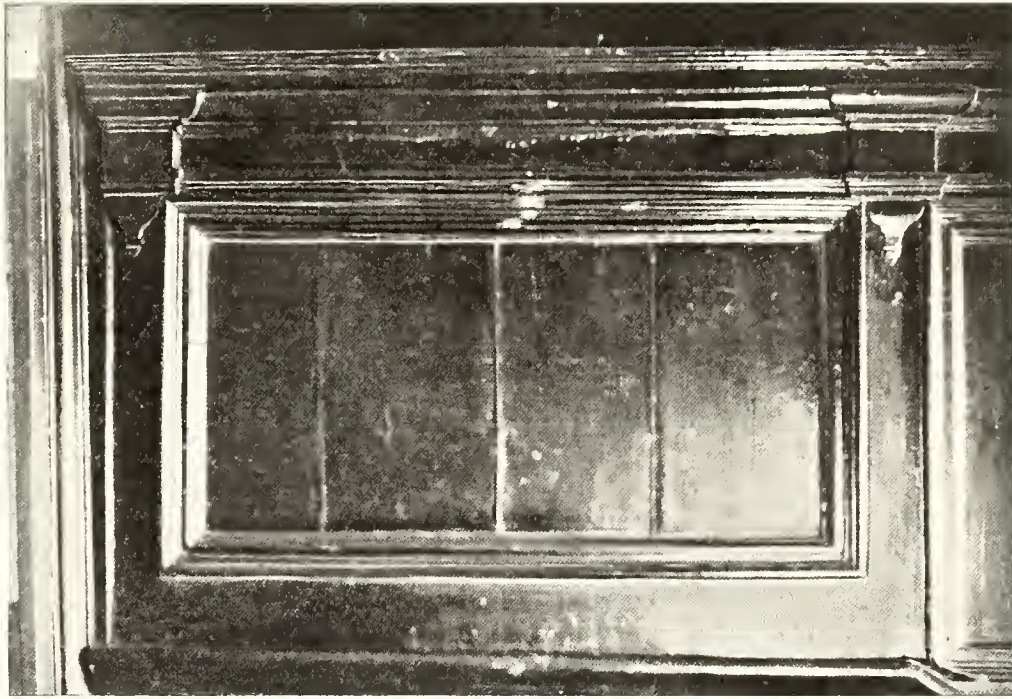
* Hall and Staircase
Sandford Manor
Chester



SANDFORD MANOR
FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



SANDFORD MANOR
FROM THE WEST.



SANDFORD MANOR,
PANELLING IN THE HALL.



SANDFORD MANOR,
THE STAIRCASE.

PLATE 9.



SANDFORD MANOR,
THE ENTRANCE DOOR.

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