



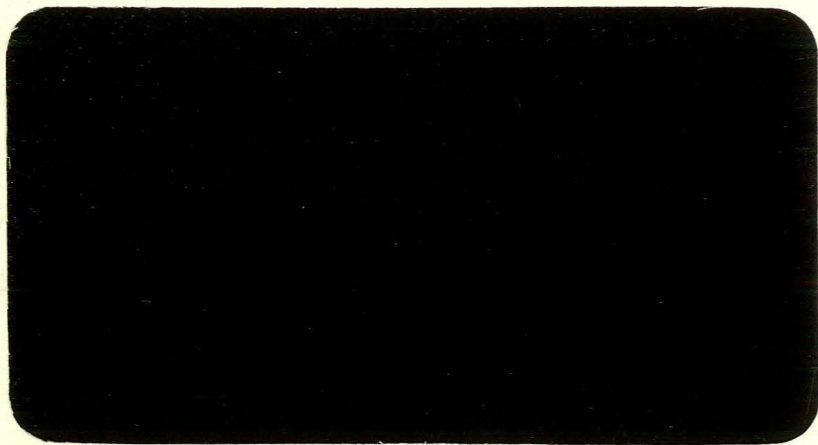
**ROYAL  
COMMISSION  
ON THE HISTORICAL  
MONUMENTS  
OF ENGLAND**

**SOMERSBY GRANGE**

**CHURCH LANE**

**SOMERSBY**

**LINCOLNSHIRE**



**HISTORIC BUILDING REPORT**

**SOMERSBY GRANGE**

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THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF ENGLAND

LINCOLNSHIRE

NGR TF 334 726

SOMERSBY

NBR 86649

SOMERSBY GRANGE, CHURCH LANE

Summary

This is a two-storeyed country house of brick construction built in 1722 for Robert Burton. It is likely that Robert Alfray was responsible for the design although the building has been ascribed to Sir John Vanbrugh. The house is rectangular in plan with four square corner towers. The principal entrance is in the centre of the north front, with a second entrance in the central, projecting, bay of the south front.

The ground-floor accommodation comprised an entrance hall, drawing room, dining room and kitchen, each with a small closet in a corner tower. A single heated room and service accommodation was provided in the basement, which was entered by a flight of stairs, on the east side of the main range, housed in a single-storey outbuilding (later extended and raised) on the centre of the east side of the house. The first floor provided four heated bedrooms, each served by a closet in its respective corner tower, and an unheated room. The house retains a large number of original doors, panelling and fixtures.

A drawing of the house as originally intended indicates that it was intended to provide the it with flanking single-storeyed pavilions to the east and west. There is no evidence that this work was carried out.

Later in the 18th century a single-storeyed brick porch was built onto the centre of the north front. During the mid to late 19th century a single-storey brick wing comprising one unheated room was built onto the centre of the west front. In the late 19th century two parallel hipped roofs of sawn rafter construction were built over the main range. These two roofs are orientated east-west and support the present Welsh slates.

In the early 20th century the single-storey outbuilding on the east side of the house was extended and raised to form a two-storey brick wing. This provides two service rooms on the ground floor and two bedrooms and a bathroom over. Access to the first floor of the wing was provided by a staircase inserted in the north-east corner tower at this time.

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## Report

### 1722 House

Somerby Grange is a country house built in 1722 for Richard Burton. It was built for Richard Burton and probably designed by Robert Alfray.<sup>1</sup> Stylistically the house has been ascribed to Sir John Vanbrugh but his association with the site appears unlikely.<sup>2</sup>

As completed in 1722 the building was two-storeyed with a basement, of brick construction in Flemish bond, and rectangular in plan with four corner towers. The parapet has crenellations and machicolations. The original accommodation comprised services in the basement, principal reception rooms and kitchen on the ground floor and bedrooms at first floor level.

### Exterior

The principal entrance is in the central bay of the ground floor on the north elevation. It has a round arched head with a keystone (now obscured by the later porch). This front has five window bays in the main block, all with round-arched heads. The central first floor window, above the door, is flanked by blind recesses, in imitation of a Venetian window. A string band is carried between the ground floor windows at springer height. The fenestration in the towers comprises circular windows on the ground floor and small rectangular sash windows on the first

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<sup>1</sup> H. Colvin, A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840, London, 1978, p 65. In the Nattes Drawing collection in Lincoln City Library there is (vol. 3, 309) a wash drawing of "SUMMERSBY HALL" in the County of Lincoln the seat of Robert Burton Esqr built 1722. Robt. Alfray ("inv et delin").

<sup>2</sup> ibid., p 854.

floor.

The south elevation has three window bays in the main block. The central bay projects forward of the wall face and has rusticated quoining at ground floor level. This bay houses a second entrance opening onto the garden front. The door has a semicircular fanlight with a small rectangular window on either side of the entrance. A string course is carried over the ground floor windows at lintel height, abutting the door surround at the springer height of the fanlight. The bay has a triangular pediment with a raised surround.

In the south front all the windows have segmental arched heads whilst the central, first floor, window has flanking recessed blind panels. The corner towers are provided with rectangular lights with round headed lintels on the ground floor and circular windows on the first floor. The building has an over-sailing parapet which has crenellations on the north front and to the towers of the south front, the towers also have false machicolations. Paired brick stacks with machicolations rise from the east and west elevations, but these are largely obscured by later alterations.

#### Interior

The principal entrance, as stated above, is in the centre of the north front. The door opens into an entrance hall in the north-west corner of the main range. This room has a corridor occupying the east side of the room which connects the northern

entrance with the stair hall to the south. The west side of the corridor comprises an original wide elliptical arch which allows uninterrupted access between the corridor and the entrance hall. At either end of the opening there is a short shallow pier supporting the archway. Both the columns and the archway have wooden fielded panels and there is a raised keyblock in the centre of the arch. This room is heated by a fireplace in the west wall and lit by two windows in the north wall. Both of these windows and each of the three wall recesses have a moulded surround with a slightly raised keyblock. An entablature is carried around the wall at springer height. The ceiling has groined cove. This room now provides access both to a closet in the north-west corner tower and to the 19th century single-storey wing through an inserted door.

The stair hall is entered by a door, with a semi-circular fanlight, at the inner end of the entrance hall. The stair hall has the second, garden, entrance at its south end. On the east side of this latter door, a small room below the staircase lit by a small rectangular window houses a water closet.

The stair hall provides access to the two principal reception rooms and the kitchen on the ground floor. The doors to each of these three rooms have wooden architraves with arched heads and six fielded panels. A wooden cornice is carried round the hall at the springing height of the door lintels. Below the cornice the walls have wooden panelling with long and short fielded panels. Above the cornice there are fielded spandrels on either side of

the arch headed doors. All the panelling is now painted white.

The drawing room is on the west side of the stair hall and is heated by a fireplace in the west wall and lit by two windows in the south wall - the eastern window, externally is the small rectangular light on the west side of the southern entrance. The drawing room has wooden wall panelling and moulded classical columns flank either side of the fireplace. Access to the closet in the south-west tower is from this room.

The dining room is on the east side of the stair hall. It was heated by a fireplace (now blocked) in the east wall and is lit by a window in the south wall. A serving hatch in the centre of the north wall connects with the kitchen. The closet in the south-east tower is entered from the dining room.

The kitchen occupies the north-east room. It is heated by a large fireplace, with its original surround, in the east wall and lit by two windows in the north wall. This room has a cornice and wooded dado panelling. The room in the north-east tower originally housed a closet. The position of this room, in relation to the kitchen, suggests that its original function may have been a pantry. A door at the south end of the east wall provides access to the stairs to the basement. These stairs were housed in a single-storey brick built outbuilding on the centre of the east wall.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> A late 19th or early 20th century photograph held by the present owners show this single-storey building with a mono-pitch roof.



The accommodation in the basement comprises one heated room, below the south-west corner of the main range. The fireplace in this room has a brick bread oven. There are six additional unheated rooms with a small room below each tower. All these rooms have brick vaults. The basement is lit by windows in the north and south walls. As there is no evidence for servants accommodation elsewhere in the building, it is likely that the basement provided both accommodation for them as well as storage.

The principal stairs rise from the southern hall to the first floor in three flights with intermediate landings. A dado with fielded panels is carried around the staircase. The staircase has square newels with moulded panels, a moulded close string and handrail and finely turned balusters that carry around the first floor landing. The landing is lit by a window in the south wall. An alcove flanks either side of the window. A cornice with modillion moulding is carried round the landing.

The accommodation on the first floor consists of four heated bedrooms. These rooms are located above the four principal ground floor rooms. Each corner tower provides a closet, with a small cupboard with shelves, for their adjoining bedroom. A fifth room occupies the centre of the north side of the main range, above the entrance corridor. This room is unheated and it is unclear if it functioned as an additional bedroom or as a closet.

Alfray's elevation drawing indicate that the original design

intended the central block to be provided with single-storeyed flanking pavilions to the east and west. These were to be connected to the central block by arcades. It is possible that the original outbuilding, on the east side of the building housing the stairs to the basement, may represent a fragment of the original design and incorporate part of the eastern arcade. The original plan shows that each pavilion was to be heated - a stack is illustrated rising from each pavilion. The gables of each pavilion were to have pediments. However, there is no surviving evidence that either the western arcade and pavilion or the eastern pavilion were built.

#### Later Alterations

In the mid to late 18th century a single-storey brick porch was built onto the front of the northern entrance. Its side walls are carried over the original plinth and both its quoins and door surround are rusticated.

During the early to mid 19th century the window recess in the ground floor of the south-west tower was provided with a folding writing table and shelves. It is possible that this room was used as a study at this time.

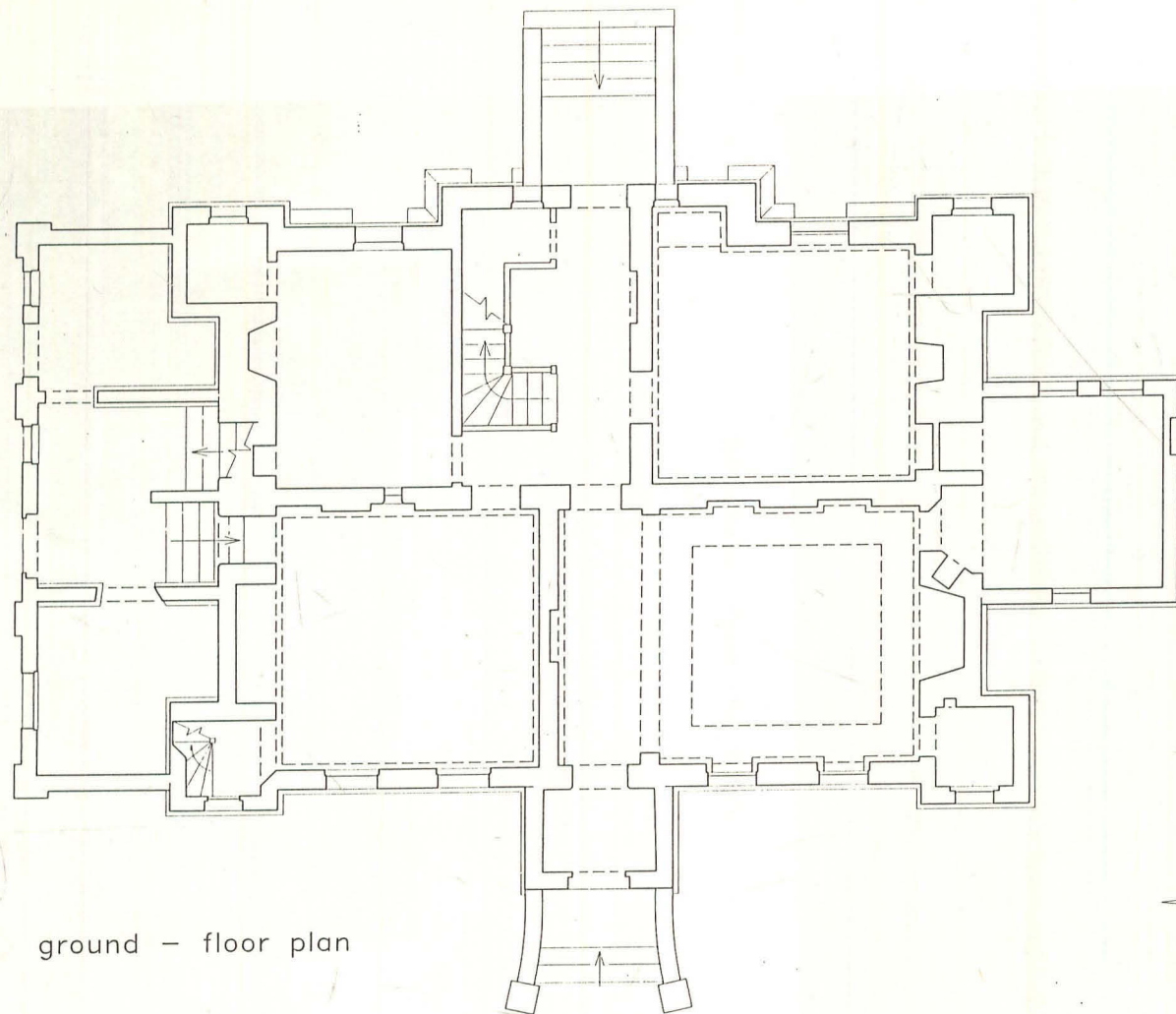
By the mid to late 19th century a single-storey wing of brick construction was built onto the centre of the west wall. Access was provided both from the entrance hall and from the drawing room (the latter's door is now blocked). The wing is heated by a fireplace in the north-east corner and is lit by two windows in

the south wall and one in the north.

In the late 19th century two parallel hipped roofs were built over the main range - there is no surviving visible evidence as to the form of the original roof structure. These roofs are orientated east-west and the Welsh slate roof is supported on sawn common rafters.

In the early 20th century the original single-storey service block on the east side of the building was raised and extended to form a two-storeyed wing of brick construction. This wing comprises two service rooms on the ground floor, to the north and south of the original out-building. At this time a spiral staircase was inserted into the north-east tower to provide access to the first floor of the out-building. The first floor consists of two bedrooms and a bathroom.

Report	Garry S Corbett	Visited May 1992
Plan	Bernard Thomason	Report November 1994
Large Format Photography	Bob Skingle	

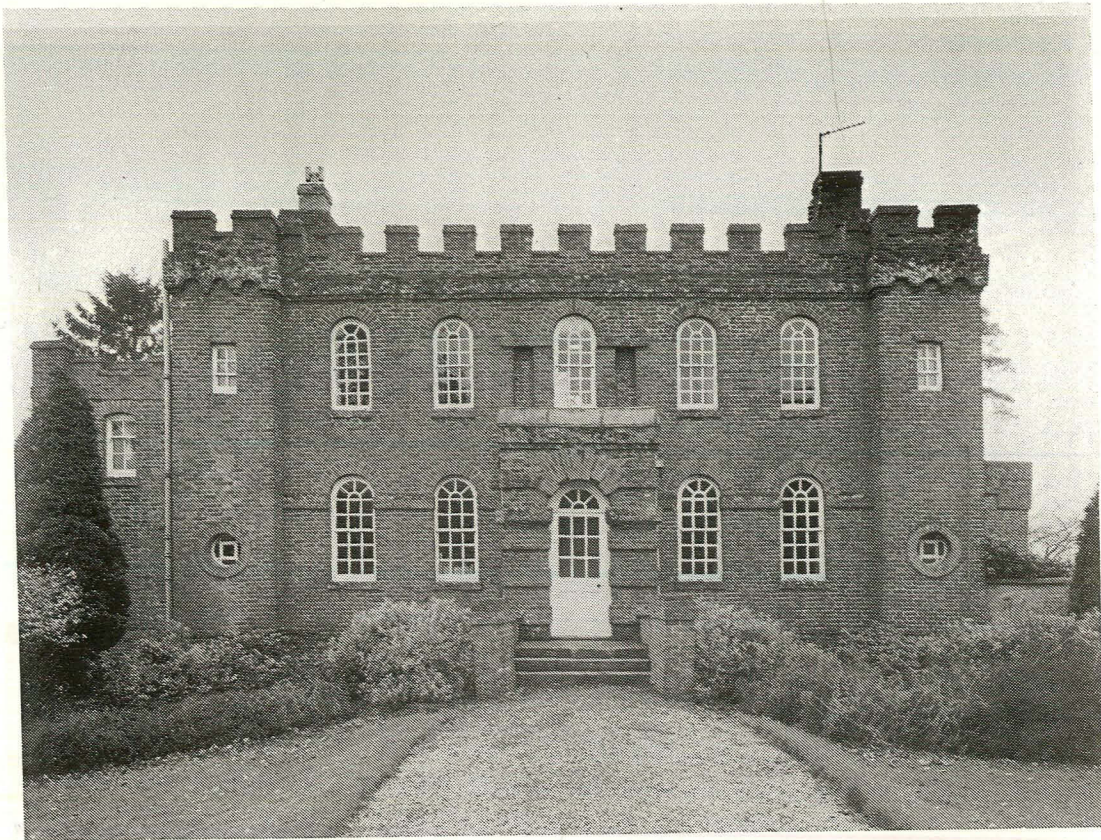


ground - floor plan



SOMERSBY GRANGE,  
Church Lane,  
Somersby,  
Lincolnshire.

Surveyed: 12/5/92  
Drawn scale: 1:50  
Drawing no: 1 of 1  
Grid ref: TF 343 726  
NBR no: 86649



THE GRANGE FROM THE NORTH



THE GRANGE FROM THE SOUTH



ENTRANCE HALL LOOKING EAST



ENTRANCE HALL LOOKING NORTH-WEST



ENTRANCE HALL LOOKING SOUTH-EAST TO STAIR HALL



DRAWING ROOM LOOKING WEST



STAIR HALL LOOKING NORTH





STAIR HALL LOOKING SOUTH-EAST



FIRST FLOOR LANDING LOOKING SOUTH-EAST

