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## Wolterton Hall in Norfolk by Thomas Ripley: On the Major Work of an Outcast of Architectural History

Introducing the architect Thomas Ripley (*fig 1*) and his major work happens to be a bit of a challenge. Although not unrecognised in the field of architectural history, Ripley's reputation has from the outset been reviled, first by his contemporaries, and then by architectural historians. Alexander Pope's various stinging rhymes on Ripley are too famous to be repeated in full length,

"Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool,  
and needs no rod, but Ripley with a rule."<sup>1</sup>



*fig 1 Thomas Ripley in 1746  
Painting by Joseph Highmore.*

and Sir John Vanbrugh's comment on his colleague in the Office of Works must be classified as 'unquoteable in public'. Numerous other remarks circulating in different publications of the first half of the eighteenth century are of similar contents. In a period when good and evil, and envy and resentment were potent factors, Thomas Ripley found himself slandered by the favourites of the bright star of society: Lord Burlington, 'the arbiter of taste' and the most important patron of the arts. Since Ripley arose from humble origins in Yorkshire and was trained as a carpenter only, he had particularly annoyed the Burlington circle when in 1726 through the influence of Sir Robert Walpole, England's first Prime Minister, he succeeded Sir John Vanbrugh in the post of Comptroller of the Royal Works. And, even worse, not only did he remain in that position until he died in 1758, but also was William Kent, the famous protégé of Lord Burlington, then obliged to serve under Ripley in the less lucrative and influential post of Master Carpenter. Ripley's rise through the protection and promotion of Sir Robert Walpole and his younger brother, Horatio, was more than a thorn in their flesh. For Burlington and his circle, Sir Robert was the epitome of addiction to power, splendour and affluence, and, worst of all, bad artistic taste. Even though it was Walpole's political influence that helped Ripley to climb up the social ladder in London and to obtain his important building contracts at Houghton in 1721 and Raynham and Wolterton Hall in Norfolk in 1724.



*fig 2 Wolterton Hall, Norfolk by  
Thomas Ripley; south front with  
19th-century east-wing today.*

Thomas Ripley seems to have made the acquaintance of Sir Robert by marrying one of his servants clearly before 1715 and thus became part of the successful Whig politician's society. Walpole obtained various commissions for his protégé before he employed him as executant architect at his seat in Houghton in the spring of 1721,<sup>2</sup> and thus the 1720s were to become the most important years in Ripley's career. During this decade Ripley became Comptroller of the Works, surveyor of the works at Greenwich Hospital and he obtained several building commissions, e.g. for Admiralty House in Whitehall in 1723, which turned out to become a conflicting field of responsibility. It was probably due to both its unproportioned portico facing Whitehall - contemporaries associated it with pipes of an organ as well as with candles<sup>3</sup> - and the building's prominent location that Ripley never completely faded into oblivion. Admiralty House has lasted for centuries like a rock breaking the waves of William Kent's surrounding Horse Guards, the Royal Mews and Treasury Building. That Ripley was not only an invaluable committee-person in the office of Works, but also an inventive planner and indispensable surveyor of day-to-day work at Horatio Walpole's Wolterton Hall in Norfolk, shall be demonstrated accordingly. There, he seemed to have found his vocation in the planning and

construction of Walpole's new house. It seems reasonable to suspect that Horatio Walpole may have chosen Ripley on seeing his convincing work at his brother's seat at Houghton. And thus began a long acquaintanceship if not even a friendship.

When Wolterton Hall (*fig 2*) was completed in 1741, the initial reception of Ripley's only solely executed house in Norfolk was promising. Horace Walpole, 'Strawberry Hill Horace', Sir Robert's son and nephew of Wolterton's founder Horatio, had very much complimented its architect:

"Lord Orford's at Houghton, of which Campbell gave the original designs, but which was much improved by Ripley, and Lord Walpole's at Wolterton, one of the best houses of the size in England, will, as long as they remain, acquit this artist of the charge of ignorance."<sup>4</sup>

What had impressed critical Horace on his visit at his uncle's seat so deeply that this dreaded cynical writer positively remarked on it? The following considerations are aiming to unveil Horace's enthusiasm for Wolterton.

Wolterton is situated 16 miles north west of Norwich and about three miles from the village of Aylsham. The house is embedded in extended parkland and thus its austere appearance is all the more emphasized. Horatio Walpole began his political career as a Member of Parliament for the Castle Rising constituency in 1702. As a young man he was interested in foreign affairs and went on to become a leading statesman and diplomat, especially during his brother's administration, spending much of his time abroad on diplomatic missions at The Hague and as Britain's ambassador in Paris. It was probably Mary Lombard's dowry, whom Horatio had married in 1720, that enabled him to buy his country estate at Wolterton in 1722 from the widow Penelope Gray for the sum of £4,300. With great love for his native soil, Norfolk was a natural choice. The Estate consisted of the old mansion house, its adjacent buildings, gardens and orchards. Little is known of old Wolterton, which stood southeast of the present hall. However, it received extensive repairs and Walpole set upon a renovation programme including both house and park. But in November 1724 a devastating fire destroyed the entire mansion leaving only the outbuildings standing. Within weeks Walpole had commissioned Ripley to visit the poor remains of his house. The oldest preserved letter, written only one month after the fire, portrays Ripley as an architect having a precise vision and the urge to see it realised in stone.

"... I think You should put an Entire Stop to all Your Works at Woolterton; Because I believe You will find a More Convenient Place to set Your House in then were it now is, and to answer Your present Gardens, ... if You intend to make Woolterton your seat, to Order Earth to be thrown up for as many bricks, as possibly can be made next Season; and to buy any oak that is going down near You; that is fitt for Building; ..."<sup>5</sup>

This was a pragmatist speaking with the intention to secure the commission for designing a replacement for the house. Although his client had not yet finally decided whether to have his house rebuilt, Ripley's mind was already taking first steps not to delay the start of the construction in the following spring caused by lack of material. He envisioned an isolated block in some distance to the service buildings to have the visitor's attention focussed on the main building. Wing constructions would have taken away from the imposing appearance of the isolated building. Since Ripley was involved in the work on a complete plan for Wolterton which included the park and gardens, as Tom Williamson<sup>6</sup> has cogently shown recently, he was aware of the importance of the best possible location for the house. Extensive work on the park continued from when the estate was purchased and Ripley, to whom in fact many of the proposals for work in the park and gardens are directly accountable, organised and directed the bulk of these activities. His orders for work to be carried out in the park and gardens reflect his detailed knowledge of the latest fashion in gardening, which he owed both to his employment at Houghton, where some parts of the gardens were already deformalised between



fig 3 Lord Mar's design for  
Wolterton Hall, dated April 1725

1722 and 1724, and to his work in the Office of the King's works, where he worked in close collaboration with Charles Bridgeman, the Royal Gardener.

However detailed Ripley's first plans for Wolterton were, Walpole apparently also turned for architectural advice about his house to the 'amateur architect' John Erskine, 11th Earl of Mar<sup>7</sup>, (1675-1732), in April 1725. Walpole's move must be considered as rather unconventional, if not even thoughtless, since the two men's political allegiances were extremely opposite. Lord Mar had held the leadership of the Jacobites in Scotland, where, on September 6th 1715, he proclaimed James VIII. King of Scotland, England, France and Ireland. A few weeks later, 'Bobbing John', as Mar was called for his frequent tergiversations, was defeated at Sherriffmuir, and the insurrection was practically at an end. Mar fled into exile, and although wandering across Europe until his death in Aix-la-Chapelle in 1732, he constantly maintained contact with Britain, sometimes through his architectural teacher and favourite, James Gibbs.<sup>8</sup>

It must have been in Paris, where Walpole, the then English Ambassador to France, met Lord Mar and asked him to prepare a design for his new house at Wolterton. (fig 3) It goes without saying that no written evidence of this meeting survived, but we do have Lord Mar's designs for Wolterton, now in the Scottish Record office among the Mar and Kelly deposit. Lord Mar's elevation proposal for Wolterton is fairly retarded in style for the mid-seventeen twenties in England: The short windowed mezzanine between the first and second storeys and the slightly projecting, three bay frontispiece entrance crowned by a semi-circular pediment and separated by broad quoining as well as the quoins on the sides and the Belvedere, enclosed by iron railings on top, are French in origin. According to the accompanying description, the ground plan is full of interesting features: the Hall and Saloon, in the centre of the ground-floor, are separated by a 'balconie for music betwixt them over a corridore'. Bedchambers and closets are confined to the mezzanine whilst the third floor is for 'strangers' also containing bedrooms and a 'Gallary for a Library in the middle' lit by a cupola which rises above the garret storey - used 'for all kind of Lumber'. The service facilities, like the kitchen, laundry, dairy, brew-, bake-, and wash-houses are in the two corridors and wings flanking the house, of which only the left-hand unit is shown in the drawing.

Even though Horatio Walpole had a great love for the Gallic world - his wife was French by birth - these designs were by far too old-fashioned. Clearly not for political reasons only did Horatio choose Ripley's designs to be built since he required clarity and simple glamour to place himself in the vanguard of architectural fashion. That's why the decision for Ripley's plans was a natural choice.

#### Thomas Ripley's elevations and ground plans for Wolterton Hall

It took 16 years for Wolterton Hall to be built until it was completed in 1741. Preparatory work for its construction began in spring 1725. Besides local labourers, Ripley employed several London craftsmen he had known for a long period. They all worked for the Office of Works and had also been employed by Ripley at Houghton and Raynham. However, there is evidence that Ripley had to mediate between the labourers and the outside craftsmen at several occasions, for there were differences in payments to craftsmen from London and the rest of the country.<sup>9</sup> But Ripley arbitrated successfully between the workmen and thus the building-process continued rapidly.

Ripley surveyed the site, approved building materials, checked estimates and bills, advised on matters of construction and generally supervised the daily progress of work. By 1728 Wolterton's basic three-storey structure was up and the execution of the internal and external features in progress. At this early stage the present day house must have been already recognisable. In 1729 the Great Staircase and the backstairs were surmounted by skylights and the garrets finished, providing lodging rooms for Ripley and others while they were staying in Wolterton. At the same



fig 4 Ripley's design for  
Wolterton's north-front, 1725



fig 5 Wolterton's south-west  
facades in an engraving by  
William Watts, 1779

time, foundations for new stables and the kitchen block were laid in 1729. Connected with the house by a passage way beneath the ground, the service buildings were almost finished in 1731. Evidently, the main block was completed before the service blocks were begun.

(fig 4) Wolterton's outward appearance embodies the purity of Neo-Palladian modesty with its clear, balanced and wide-spaced alternation between plain wall and openings and the adaption of the Italian 'Piano nobile' with a rusticated base and a small attic storey. Wolterton is thus very plain if not simple in order to keep the greatest possible simplicity and programmatic grace.<sup>10</sup> According to the spirit of Palladio each side has its own character and particularities. Arising on a rectangular ground plan, the edifice contains of three storeys. Through its warm red bricks, which are contrasted by white thinly framed and prominent windows, roof cornice and parapet, it appears from afar to be very balanced.

The northern front with seven bays is the reception side. The central three bays are slightly protruding, dividing the front into three different parts with a profiled beam and a simple triangular pediment above, where the coat of arms of the Walpole family is embedded. Originally, the 'Great Marble Hall' in the centre of the North front on the first floor was reached by a wide and lofty flight of steps which admitted to the great portal on ceremonious occasions. This central staircase was removed in the nineteenth century due to dry-rot. The entrance is now reduced to a modest door at ground level, framed and dignified by two Doric three-quarter columns.

The north-side corresponds to the well structured arrangement of the south-side that faces the park and lake (fig 5). Here, the rustic simplicity appropriately evokes the landscaped garden in that area of the park. Three axis form a central protruding bay which is also surmounted by a triangular pediment. But this facade bay differs from its opposite because of the rustic design of the socle area, which today is concealed by a later built arcade, breaking up the regularity or even sternness of the facade and giving the whole a rather lively look. It is not at all surprising that Ripley's elevations for Wolterton renounce the use of a fashionable and bombastic pediment on either of the main fronts, which was - in aesthetical terms - a fairly bold and most unusual move for the time. Such a display would have contradicted the architect's and his clients' intentions because Wolterton's very significance as a medium-sized, compact block lies in its unobtrusiveness. But the actual reason for this decision is to be found in the interior. Wolterton's noble dining-hall on the North-west side took on the function the salon with its central position following the portico previously had in other houses like Houghton. This detail reveals a pace away from the traditional and formal use of the 'Piano nobile' and thus points at a contemporary understanding of 'party-entertainment' Ripley knew that a fundamental reason for the central position of a heavy portico with columns and entablature, namely to direct attention to the most important place of entertainment, had become superfluous.

Wolterton's plain west front with its Serliana and some of the more important state rooms behind, appears rather sophisticated. Lord Coleraine, a visitor in 1739, was "...great in Love with ye Venetian window & sed it was ye Best that ever he saw done in England."<sup>11</sup> Wolterton's east front houses the family entrance, leading into the small 'East Hall', to which some family rooms as well as the smaller of the two sky-lit staircases are connected. When Philip Yorke visited in 1750, he remarked there were "four good plain rooms, the dining parlour, the drawingroom, the study (which has an arcade before it) and the breakfastroom. The rest are for servants."<sup>12</sup> Apart from the entrance hall, all family-rooms are facing south or west. Since all storeys are based on the same internal structure - Ripley employed the so-called 'Triple-Pile-Plan', where, on the principal floor, three by three rooms with structural walls between are grouped around two staircases - one finds a well thought out system to connect the building vertically as well as horizontally. This was not in itself new, but Ripley continued this scheme through the full three storeys to a lantern in the top storey as one of the first architects of his time (fig 6).<sup>13</sup> A short study of some aspects of the floor-plan shall illustrate Ripley's idea of

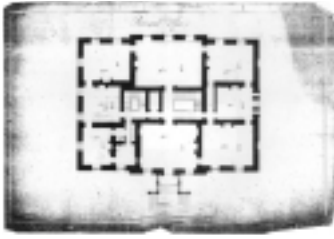


fig 6 Ripley's design for  
Wolterton's 'Piano nobile'

'modest clarity,' a principle that at this period imported a new element in the harmonising blending of internal and external unity. While Sir Robert demanded splendour and affluence at Houghton, Ripley was determined to build the extreme opposite some twenty miles away for Walpole's younger brother. The representative 'principal floor' appears generous and clear rather than over-scaled and pretentious because of the moderate sized rooms. The eight rooms group around two staircases, of which the open central stairs connect the state rooms on the 'Piano nobile' as well as the three floors. The Marble Hall on the north and the Saloon on the south occupy the centre of the house. The Marble Hall, though it has now lost its proper function as the reception room, is still the main link in the chain of lofty intercommunicating state rooms (fig 7). On its north-front one finds a characteristic example of Ripley's interior decoration, containing almost all elements of Neo-Palladian vocabulary of ornamentation: Dentil pattern and egg and dart play the most prominent part, followed by horizontal foliage with cords and ribbons, horizontal fillets and astragals, a ceiling divided into compartements by ribs with a guilloche pattern, robust carving on the overdoors and on the highly enriched cornice with its modillions and pulvinated frieze. There is a well planned scheme between chimney-surrounds and door-frames, plaster-panels and ceiling. Although richly ornamented, there are still large plain wall surfaces for the exhibition of pictures and tapestries. The decoration is robust but not overpowering, dignified, but not as graceful as, for example, William Kent's interior designs for nearby Raynham Hall. The combination is a complete and successful decorative unit that can also be found in all other rooms of the 'Piano nobile' as well as on the top floor and in the central staircase.

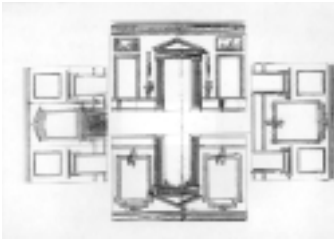


fig 7 Ripley's interior design for  
Wolterton's Entrance Hall

West of the Marble Hall is the state dining room. This gives way into the Venetian room facing west, which is called this way because of its large Venetian window marking the centre of the west-front. Adjacent is the 'Best Bedchamber' in the south-west corner of the house. As the saloon - a nobly conceived and proportioned room - occupies the centre of the south front, the circuit is completed by three more rooms: a drawing room and two bedrooms on the east front. The 'small' eastern staircase connects these two bedrooms in the 'Piano nobile' with the family rooms below, and thus serves as a perfect link between the floor-levels providing privacy for the family as well as easily available service. Due to the simple arrangement of rooms this level served all of the demands for Wolterton's occasional entertainment and social (or musical) events. Compared with previous houses, where 'chains of rooms' were usually employed, all utilised areas are quickly and easily accessible. Thus even large groups of guests are able to experience all features of sophisticated amusement.

Although Wolterton's top floor was intended to be private, we find the same decoration as on the 'Piano nobile' and the same arrangement of eight large rooms. The mingling of private sphere in the upper floor with the connecting 'public' staircase of the 'Piano nobile' must be regarded as one of Wolterton's qualities. Yet it is difficult to give the exact number of rooms on this floor because in most of them smaller areas are separated from a larger room without forming an independent area. This subdivision corresponds to their use as the children's, bed- and living-rooms.<sup>14</sup> The private area of the Walpoles is therefore not regarded as a necessary appendage but rather looked upon as integral part of the whole outline.

Walpole demanded pleasant proportions and especially living space to be comfortable and easily usable, as Wolterton not only served as the centre of his estates, but also as a retreat for the diplomat and politician when he was not living in Whitehall. After Walpole's political decline in 1742, Wolterton became the chosen spot in which Horatio spent much of the evening of his life, while still coming to London for Parliamentary sessions. Walpole loved his house and such was his satisfaction that Ripley was even mentioned in his will. The architect was given 100 pounds "as a token of my Friendship and Acknowledgment for his kind Advice in finishing my Buildings at Woolterton."<sup>15</sup>

Walpole knew that Wolterton's famous reputation among its contemporaries was

based on its size. Otherwise there would hardly have been a discussion about the text for the plaque of the completion. A friend of Walpole, Reverend Addison, was called for the inscription's final version. In 1755 Addison wrote to Walpole that he thought it to be more appropriate to speak rather of 'Villa' than of 'Aedes'<sup>16</sup> in referring to a country-seat. This document refers directly to the debate on architecture at a time when Ripley's innovative design experienced its first renaissance. His plans for Wolterton were already used as a model for Copped Hall in Essex (*fig 8*) by architect John Sanderson since 1750.<sup>17</sup>

Wolterton Hall represents a movement away from the rich and ostentatious Palladianism of Houghton Hall and towards the mid-eighteenth century fashion for simplified exteriors which reflected the intimate and accessible interior. Behind the chaste facades of Wolterton Ripley's internal plans anticipate those of Isaac Ware and Sir Robert Taylor, of John Wood II., John Carr, Roger Morris and William Chambers whose names are synonyms for the manifestations of the 'villa revival' of the 1750s.

Ripley's plans for Wolterton can be regarded as a manifestation of trends in size, design and usage of country houses which had yet to develop. The encountering of these elements of formal design is a result of Ripley not having been a specialist. He was no genius, but one of the new breed of highly professional, craft-trained architects. His models were not amateurs such as Burlington but professional architects such as Nicholas Hawksmoor, who were as comfortable with directions for making bricks, sawing floor timbers or slaking lime as they were with the massing of villa blocks. He trusted in what is possible and workable which resulted from his confidence as a master-craftsman. Ripley judged problems based on categories of utility. Not only does this name a basic feature of his artistic language but it also informs about the social significance of architecture in Georgian England.

The analysis of Ripley's work at Wolterton is a decisive plea against an art history of grand names and a rejection of handed down prejudice. However, it was left to Horace Walpole of Strawberry Hill to classify Ripley's work at Wolterton: "*Yet Ripley, in the mechanic part, and in the disposition of apartments and conveniences, was unluckily superior to the earl himself.*"<sup>18</sup> The Earl was Lord Burlington and apparently Horace was not willing to forget that Ripley's condemnation was mainly the result of "*politics and partiality.*"



*fig 8 Copped Hall, Essex by  
John Sanderson, 1752  
-now demolished*

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- Figures**
- 1 Thomas Ripley in 1746. A Portrait by Joseph Highmore.  
The National Portrait Gallery, London, Inv.- No. 5743
  - 2 Wolterton Hall, Norfolk by Thomas Ripley. South front with 19th-century East-wing today.  
Lord Walpole, Wolterton Hall, Norfolk
  - 3 Lord Mar's design for Wolterton Hall, dated April 1725.  
P.R.O. Edinburgh, Scottish Record Office
  - 4 Ripley's design for Wolterton's north-front. Spring 1725.  
Lord Walpole, Wolterton Hall, Norfolk
  - 5 Wolterton's south-west facades in an engraving by William Watts (1779).  
Lord Walpole, Wolterton Hall, Norfolk.
  - 6 Ripley's design for Wolterton's Piano nobile  
Lord Walpole, Wolterton Hall, Norfolk
  - 7 Ripley's interior design for Wolterton's Entrance Hall  
Lord Walpole, Wolterton Hall, Norfolk
  - 8 Copped Hall, Essex by John Sanderson, 1752. demolished.  
Author

- Notes:**
- <sup>1</sup> Pope, A., 'An Epistle to Lord Burlington' 1731, ll.17-18
  - <sup>2</sup> Walpole made him 'Labourer in Trust' in the Savoy in the Strand in 1715, and only one year later, Ripley was appointed 'Clerk of the Works' and in charge of maintaining the Royal Mews at Charing Cross. See: P.R.O. Kew, Work 4.1. Minutes and Proceedings May 1715 - Nov. 1720. Vol. 1., July 12 1715. In 1721 Ripley was appointed 'Master Carpenter to the Crown' and thus became a member of the Board of Works committee. His major works of that period are the reconstruction of the burned down Custom House in London in 1718 and the erection of the Custom House in Liverpool in 1719. For a more detailed analysis of Ripley's life and work see Klausmeier, Axel. *Thomas Ripley, Architekt. Fallstudie einer Karriere im Royal Office of the King's Works im Zeitalter des Neopalladianismus*. PhDissertation Ruhr-Universität Bochum (1999) Frankfurt am Main 2000. A short biographical introduction is given in Howard Colvin's *A Bibliographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840*, London, 1995
  - <sup>3</sup> Hawkins, J., *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, London 1787, p. 375
  - <sup>4</sup> Walpole, H., *Anecdotes of Painting in England; With some Account of the Principal Artists; and Incidental Notes on other Arts. Also, A Catalogue of Engravers who Have been Born or Resided In England. Collected by the Late George Vertue; Digested and Published from his original Mss. By Horace Walpole (with additions by the Rev. James Dallaway a new edition, revised, with additional notes by Ralph N. Wornum)*, Volume III, 1862, p. 769-70
  - <sup>5</sup> Wolterton Hall Archives Box 29L Doc. 8/21. Letter from Th. Ripley to Horatio Walpole dated Dec. 17 1724
  - <sup>6</sup> Williamson, T., *The Archaeology of the Landscape park, Garden design in Norfolk, England, c1680 - 1840*, 1998, pp. 72-80 and 286-291. See also Klausmeier, A., 2000, pp.265-287
  - <sup>7</sup> Mar was an extraordinary ambitious man who once acknowledged he was "infected with the disease of building and gardening." See Friedman, T. *James Gibbs*, New Haven and London 1984, p. 267

- <sup>8</sup> Friedman, 1984, p. 267. During the years following the Jakobite rising, Gibbs had taken all of Mar's plans and designs into custody, while the Earl busied himself with architectural designing, sometimes probably with Gibbs's assistance. In the course of time he became thoroughly distrusted by the Jacobites. In 1721 he accepted a pension of £ 3500 p.a. from George I., and in 1724 he left the Pretender's service. His later years were spent in Paris and Aix-la-Chapelle, where he died in May 1732.
- <sup>9</sup> The carver Richard Fisher from Ripon in Yorkshire complained about rivalries among the workmen caused by differences in payments. See Wolterton Hall Archives Box 29L Doc. 8/21. Letter from Fisher to Walpole dated October 20, 1738.
- <sup>10</sup> Only Ripley's design work is in the focus of this paper. Later changes and annexes like the Repton-Wing (erected in the 19th. century) on Wolterton Hall's east front remain unconsidered. Ripley's cubic block of moderate size measures 98 feet on the north and south and 74 feet on the east and west.
- <sup>11</sup> Wolterton Hall Archives, Box 29L Doc. 8/21, Letter from J. Bradshaw, the then Estate gardener, to Walpole, September 8 1739
- <sup>12</sup> Yorke, Ph., *The Travel Journal of Philip Yorke 1744-1763. An Account of a Journey through Norfolk 1750*, The Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society. Volume XLVII., 1965, p. 142
- <sup>13</sup> As Marc Girouard in his *Life in the English Country House*, 1978, p. 194. pointed out, it was in the eighteenth century that one discovered that the most attractive and convenient way to structure the new room arrangement „was in a circle, around a top-lit central staircase. ... but it was not until well into the eighteenth century that (its) convenience began to be appreciated.“
- <sup>14</sup> Wolterton Hall Archives Box 32L Doc. 8/63a. The unusual existence of children's rooms in the top storey is already documented in 1757, when Walpole's eldest son informed the administrator Richard Ness he had „some thoughts of being at Woolterton I must again repeat to you to take care to have the beds thoroughly aired in the Attick, East Front & likewise a Bed or two in the Nursery Apartment and Garrets.“
- <sup>15</sup> Wolterton Hall Archives Doc. 15/13., Horatio Walpole's Will dated May, 10 1748
- <sup>16</sup> Wolterton Hall Archives Box 3LX Doc. 8/12. „... I should choose *Villam* rather than *AEDES* for a Country seat. As for *Euripo* & *Lacuvivo*, the first you will recollect was a term in use for such pieces of water as were made to embellish gardens, as appears from *Cic. de. Leg.L. 2.1.* & from *Pliny*:- the other is from *Virgil's Speluncae, viviq Lacus.* & *frigida Tempe. Geo 2.* where the epithet *vivus* seems to belong peculiarly to such Lakes as are supplied by springs of their own...“ Walpole's decision for 'Aedes' indicates that he understood very well Wolterton's mediating function between the two concepts.
- <sup>17</sup> At the same time, the Reverend seemed to suspect the distinction between the 'greater house' and the 'villa' made by John Summerson 200 years later. Summerson pointed out that the word 'villa' in the eighteenth century "was never used with any architectural precision," but he insisted that "it is Palladian or nothing," and gives the following account of its essential features: "The English type is square or nearly square in plan, with a symmetrical arrangement of rooms on both axes. The front and back facades are divided into three, the central part having a portico (pilasterwise or in the round), the side parts one window each. The window-rhythm one-three-one is essential of the type. A house of this type has all the formality of a greater house but the window-rhythm renders it totally opposed to the idea of long ranges of intercommunicating rooms. Its accomodation is necessarily modest and its character therefore more in the nature of a retreat than an advertisement of its owner's standing or ability to entertain." Summerson, J., 'The Classical Country House' *Journal of the Society of Arts*, July 1959. p. 551-2.
- <sup>18</sup> Walpole, H., *Anecdotes of Painting With some Account of the principal Artists; and additional notes on other arts; collected by the late Mr. George Vertue; and now digested and published from his original MSS. by Mr. Horace Walpole, to which is added 'The History of the modern Taste in Gardening'* Strawberry Hill. 1771. p.458

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