



## **GRADE I LISTED PALAIDIAN HOUSE WITH PRICELESS LANSEROON MURALS**

A substantial portion of this Historic Burley-on-the-Hill Estate Featuring England's Rarest Decorative Art

£6M Rutland, Substantial Portion of a Country House | Great Staircase & Library | Exclusive to Movehut

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Location: Burley-on-the-Hill, Rutland, England

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

One of England's most architecturally significant properties has been exclusively listed through Movehut.co.uk for £6 million. Burley-on-the-Hill's Great Staircase and Library represent the only surviving domestic murals by Gerard Lanscroon - the celebrated Flemish master who decorated Windsor Castle and Hampton Court Palace.

A Grade I listed Palladian House, is set within 67 acres overlooking Rutland Water. This portion of the House for sale offers over 12,000 square feet of distinguished accommodation, including the miraculous survival of Lanscroon's Perseus and Andromeda ceiling paintings, executed between 1705-1708. Art historians consider these among England's finest examples of baroque decorative art.

The property survived a devastating 1908 fire that destroyed most of the house - remarkably preserving its most precious elements while hosting Sir Winston Churchill as a guest on the very night of the blaze.

## **PROPERTY OVERVIEW**

Location: Burley-on-the-Hill, Rutland (England's smallest county)

Asking Price: £6,000,000

Property Type: Grade I Listed Palladian Country House

Built: 694-1708 by Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham

Size: Over 12,000 square feet across four floors

Bedrooms: Seven bedrooms, six bathrooms

Reception Rooms: Including Green Drawing Room and Formal Red Dining Room

Privately Jointly Managed Land: 67 acres of historic parkland with uninterrupted views across Rutland Water

Transport: Oakham station - 90 minutes direct to London St Pancras

## **THE LANSCROON MIRACLE: ENGLAND'S RAREST DOMESTIC ART**

Gerard Lanscroon (1654-1737), court painter to William III, created elaborate decorative schemes throughout England's finest houses. His domestic work is extraordinarily rare - making Burley-on-the-Hill's survival nothing short of miraculous.

The Perseus and Andromeda Masterpiece:

- The Great Staircase Ceiling: Lanscroon's magnificent mythological narrative (1705-1708)
- Political Allegory: Perseus rescuing Andromeda interpreted as William III delivering England from tyranny
- Artistic Technique: Continental baroque artistry adapted to English domestic architecture
- Conservation Status: Recently restored to reveal original colour brilliance
- Historical Significance: Among fewer than five surviving Lanscroon mythological paintings in England

**Survival Against All Odds:**

The 1908 fire that consumed most of the house miraculously spared the Great Staircase and Library due to their fireproof stone construction and vaulted ceilings. Sir Winston Churchill, then President of the Board of Trade, was a guest on the night of the fire and helped form human chains to rescue precious objects.

## **ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE: FROM DOMESDAY TO BAROQUE INTERIOR GLORY**

### **Medieval Foundations and Early History**

The site of Burley-on-the-Hill has been continuously inhabited since before the Norman Conquest, with its earliest recorded mention appearing in the Domesday Book of 1086. The estate's strategic position in Rutland, England's smallest county, placed it at the heart of medieval political and social networks that would shape its destiny for centuries to come.

During the medieval period, the estate belonged to the powerful Despencer family, who established the foundations of what would become one of England's most architecturally significant houses. The medieval manor house served as the seat of local administration and reflected the feudal structures that dominated English society during this era.

### **The Buckingham Connection**

The estate's transformation from medieval manor to Renaissance palace began during the Tudor period when it came into the possession of the powerful Villiers family. George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, the favourite of King James I and subsequently King Charles I, acquired the property and began substantial rebuilding works that would establish Burley's reputation as one of England's premier country houses.

The Duke of Buckingham's association with Burley-on-the-Hill proved particularly significant during the early 17th century. King James VI of Scotland made his celebrated progression through England following his accession to the English throne as James I in 1603, and Burley-on-the-Hill served as one of his principal stopping points. This royal visit established the house's credentials as a venue suitable for the highest levels of society and political discourse.

### **Civil War and Commonwealth Period**

The English Civil War dramatically altered Burley's fortunes when parliamentary forces seized the estate from its Royalist owners. Oliver Cromwell's Roundheads converted the house into a

military garrison, using its commanding position and substantial buildings to control the surrounding countryside. This period saw significant damage to the house's interior decorations and furnishings, though the basic structure survived intact.

The Commonwealth period represented a hiatus in Burley's role as a great country house, with its transformation into a military installation reflecting the broader social and political upheavals of the mid-17th century. Archaeological evidence suggests that defensive earthworks were constructed around the house during this period, some traces of which remain visible in the surrounding parkland.

### The Finch Era and Baroque Transformation

The restoration of the monarchy in 1660 initiated a new chapter in Burley's history with the eventual acquisition of the estate by Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham, in 1694. Lord Nottingham, one of the most prominent politicians of his generation, served as Secretary of State under both William III and Queen Anne, making Burley-on-the-Hill a centre of political power during a crucial period in British history.

The Earl of Nottingham's political prominence and vast wealth enabled him to undertake the most ambitious rebuilding campaign in Burley's history. Working with leading architects of the day, he created a baroque masterpiece that rivalled the grandest royal palaces. The new house, completed between 1694 and 1708, represented the pinnacle of English country house architecture.

## **LOCATION: ENGLAND'S BEST-KEPT SECRET**

Rutland, England's smallest county, offers the perfect balance of rural tranquility and urban connectivity:

### Immediate Area:

- Rutland Water: England's largest man-made lake directly south with sailing, fishing, cycling
- Oakham: Charming market town 2 miles away with comprehensive amenities
- Views: Uninterrupted panoramas across magnificent countryside

### Transport Excellence:

- Rail: Oakham station - 90 minutes direct to London St Pancras

- Road: Easy access to A1 and M1 for national connectivity
- Aviation: Accessibility for private aircraft

#### Education & Culture:

- Schools: Oakham School and Uppingham School (prestigious independents)
- Universities: Leicester (30 minutes), Nottingham (1 hour)
- Recreation: Multiple golf courses, racing at Market Rasen, Cottesmore Hunt country

## **GARDENS AND LANDSCAPE HERITAGE**

### Historical Development

The gardens and parkland surrounding Burley-on-the-Hill reflect successive phases of English landscape design, from formal baroque layouts through to 18th-century landscape park improvements. The original formal gardens, created during Lord Nottingham's rebuilding campaign, followed contemporary continental models with geometric parterres, terraced walks, and ornamental water features.

Archaeological investigation has revealed the substantial earthworks required to create these formal gardens, including the construction of elaborate terracing on the south front to accommodate the baroque garden design. These earthworks remain visible today, providing evidence of the scale and sophistication of early 18th-century garden making.

### The Capability Brown Era

During the mid-18th century, the formal gardens were transformed according to the naturalistic principles popularised by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and his followers. This transformation involved the removal of geometric parterres and their replacement with flowing lawns, strategically placed tree clumps, and serpentine water features designed to create an idealised pastoral landscape.

The relationship between the house and its surrounding landscape exemplifies the English genius for combining architecture and nature in harmonious compositions. The views from the principal rooms encompass carefully orchestrated prospects across Rutland Water, creating visual narratives that connect the domestic interior with the broader countryside.

## Contemporary Parkland

Today's parkland retains many features from successive design campaigns, creating a palimpsest landscape that reflects changing tastes and requirements over three centuries. The deer park, established during the medieval period and enhanced during subsequent centuries, maintains populations of fallow and red deer that contribute to the landscape's historic authenticity.

## MARKET SIGNIFICANCE & INVESTMENT PERSPECTIVE

Properties of Burley-on-the-Hill's caliber represent the pinnacle of the heritage market. The combination of Grade I listing, Lanscroon artwork, and historical provenance creates exceptional investment fundamentals.

### Comparable Analysis:

- Similar houses with significant artwork: £8-15 million
- Properties with documented royal connections command 40-60% premiums
- The Lanscroon decorations represent immeasurable cultural value due to their extreme rarity
- Heritage properties with museum-quality elements appreciate 15-20% annually

### Rarity Factors:

- Only surviving domestic Lanscroon murals available for private ownership
- Grade I listing ensures architectural protection and prestige
- Continuous historical documentation from 1086 to present
- 67-acre estate in England's most exclusive small county

## THE CHURCHILL FIRE: A NIGHT THAT CHANGED HISTORY

February 1908: Burley-on-the-Hill hosted one of its most distinguished house parties with Sir Winston Churchill among the guests. The devastating fire that erupted that evening destroyed most of the interior but created one of history's most remarkable preservation stories.

Contemporary accounts describe Churchill and other guests forming human chains to save precious objects. The Great Staircase and Library's survival - due to their stone construction - preserved England's most significant Lanscroom domestic work and irreplaceable 18th-century library collections.

This dramatic night transformed Burley from a complete baroque palace into a unique architectural treasure - making the surviving elements even more precious and historically significant.

## **CULTURAL IMPORTANCE & SCHOLARLY RECOGNITION**

### **Academic Interest**

Oxford University and Courtauld Institute scholars actively study the Lanscroom works, with the library collections including first editions and political documents from the Finch family. Archaeological evidence reveals successive garden designs from baroque to Capability Brown era.

### **Historical Significance**

Burley-on-the-Hill served as a political centre during the War of Spanish Succession and Act of Union with Scotland. Lord Nottingham's cabinet meetings shaped 18th-century British policy, while the house functioned as an intellectual gathering place during the Augustan age.

### **Conservation Leadership**

Recent expert conservation of Lanscroom's decorations employs cutting-edge techniques, ensuring these masterpieces remain pristine for future generations. Climate change presents new challenges for preservation of historic interiors, with sophisticated monitoring systems now employed to address emerging threats.

## **SOCIAL HISTORY AND COMMUNITY SIGNIFICANCE**

The domestic arrangements preserved at Burley-on-the-Hill provide exceptional insights into the daily life of the English aristocracy during the Georgian period. The survival of detailed household accounts, staff records, and inventories enables historians to reconstruct the complex social hierarchies and economic structures that sustained great country houses.

The house's role in local community life extended far beyond its function as a private residence, with the estate providing employment for hundreds of local people and serving as a focus for agricultural improvement and innovation. This broader social significance establishes Burley's importance within the history of rural England.

## **BUYER PROFILE & INTERNATIONAL APPEAL**

This exceptional property attracts:

Cultural Connoisseurs: Collectors seeking properties with museum-quality artwork

International Buyers: Particularly from North America where Lanscroon's rarity is highly valued

Heritage Institutions: Organizations focused on preserving British cultural treasures

Investment Specialists: Experts in cultural asset appreciation and heritage property investment

## **EXPERT COMMENTARY**

"Burley-on-the-Hill represents the Holy Grail of heritage property," states Movehut.co.uk.

"Gerard Lanscroon's domestic work is so rare that most people will never see examples outside royal palaces. To find his masterpiece in a private house, perfectly preserved and available for ownership, is extraordinary."

"The 1908 fire, while devastating, created a unique situation where the most precious elements survived while the house was rebuilt to contemporary standards. Buyers acquire both priceless baroque art and comfortable modern living - an almost impossible combination in the heritage market."

"Properties like this transcend real estate investment. They represent cultural stewardship opportunities where private ownership preserves national treasures for future generations."

## **CONTEMPORARY STATUS AND CONSERVATION**

### **Current Condition**

Following the 1908 fire, Burley-on-the-Hill was partially restored to serve as a family residence, with the surviving baroque elements carefully preserved and the damaged areas rebuilt to compatible standards. The house today represents a fascinating case study in historic building conservation, demonstrating how damaged historic structures can be successfully adapted for



contemporary use whilst preserving their essential character.

### Modern Usage

Today, Burley-on-the-Hill functions as a private residence.

The property's conversion into luxury residential accommodation has been carefully managed to respect the historic fabric whilst providing modern amenities appropriate to 21st-century living. This sensitive approach to adaptation demonstrates how historic houses can remain viable whilst preserving their architectural and historical integrity.

### **VIEWING ARRANGEMENTS**

Private viewings available by appointment with 48-hour notice.

Public Benefit: The property regularly opens for educational tours, maintaining its role as a cultural resource while serving as a private residence.

### **ABOUT MOVEHUT.CO.UK**

Established in 2010, Movehut.co.uk has become Britain's premier platform for heritage and luxury property marketing. Each of the principals have over 35 years expertise in culturally significant estates Movehut.co.uk connects discerning buyers with England's finest historic houses.

The company's expertise in properties with royal connections, architectural significance, and cultural importance has now established it as the preferred choice for sellers of Britain's most exceptional heritage properties.

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High-resolution images of Lanscroon ceiling, floor plans, historical documentation, and Churchill fire accounts available upon request.\*\*

[BURLEY ON THE HILL](#) | [BOOK VIEWING](#) | [MEDIA ENQUIRIES](#)

This press release contains forward-looking statements regarding property values and market conditions. Historical performance and cultural significance do not guarantee future investment results.

