

Daneshill House



Daneshill House 1903 and 2013

This house's fortune and its survival are owed to the fact that it was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944), one of the foremost Arts and Crafts architects of the turn of the 20th century for his client Walter Robertson Hoare (1867-1941). Hoare was a brewer and member of the banking family which also owned the Red Lion Brewery, East Smithfield, London.¹

Lutyens and Hoare visited the ruins of Basing House, destroyed during the Civil War, where Lutyens admired the colour and quality of the Elizabethan bricks from which the ruined house had been constructed and whose slighting had provided bricks to rebuild the village of Old Basing. Lutyens said that he would build Hoare a house if clay could be found of the same quality. They found a local source and a brickworks was set up employing 12 workman who produced particularly beautiful narrow bricks about 10" x 5" x 1½".² Lutyens then encouraged Hoare to set up a company and The Daneshill Brick and Tile Company was formed. As well as for the immediate need it also supplied bricks for many of Lutyens' projects including the twisted chimneys at Marsh Court, Stockbridge in Hampshire.³

Jane Brown's detailed book *'Lutyens and The Edwardians'* published in 1996 describes how Hoare came to meet Lutyens:

'Walter Hoare had bought 300 acres just north of the market town and , exploring, found out that the ridge was associated with a battle between Danes and Saxons, so they name it Daneshill. Hoare took Lutyens to the most notable ruin in the district, that of Basing House it was the bricks which fascinated Lutyens; they are a peculiarly rich orangey-red, from the local pockets of clay so they went to The Vyne With its twisted brick chimneys,

¹ Hampshire Record Office (HRO) 47A12/A1/16 Hampshire Gardens Trust Research

² Daneshill Brickwork in Hampshire. Visit by Friends of the Lutyens Trust Notes by Airy, James ARIBA 25 June 2000

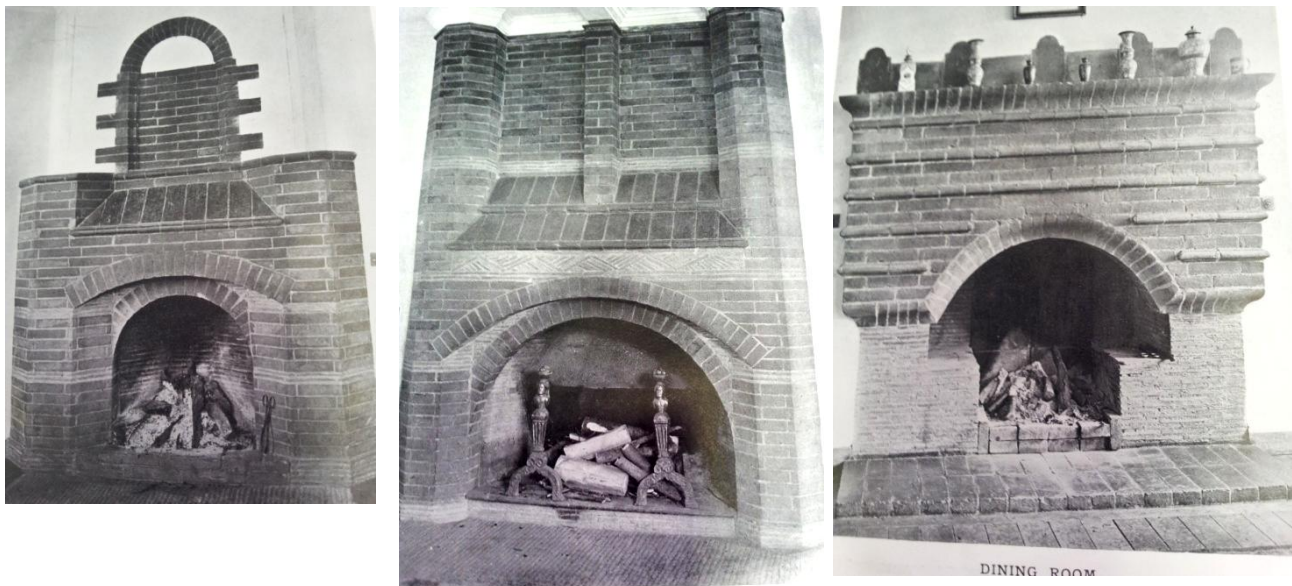
³ Hoare, W Beautiful Bricks nd. Basingstoke Discovery Centre, Local Studies.

Webb portico and delicious brick garden house, The Vyne must join the list of Lutyens's inspirational places'.⁴

Lutyens himself said:

'I have found the Daneshill bricks satisfying all these requirements [texture, colour, form]. The clay of which they are made is exceptionally good. I have used them in many of my buildings and have no hesitation in recommending them'.⁵

Prior to the construction of Daneshill House in 1903, Lutyens built the cottage (roomy by today's standards) for the Hoare family which survived well until September 2007 when a fire devastated the vacant building, already vandalised. The house took advantage of the south facing site and remained in the Hoare family until 1946 when it was marketed as a country estate with 12 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 cottages and a farmhouse.⁶ Daneshill School – a girls' preparatory - opened in the house which was then run by John Vallance from 1954 until 1973. It was purchased by Hampshire County Council for educational use until about 1981 and in 2013 is leased as offices. In 1980 some work was done to restore the gardens to their original design. The house has character fireplaces at which Lutyens excelled and some of these are included in a small book by Walter Hoare and shown below.⁷ For reasons unknown the name was changed to The Manor House in about 1990.



Fireplaces in Daneshill House⁸

Daneshill House – architectural description from the Grade II Statutory Listing

⁴ Brown, Jane Lutyens and the Edwardians. An English Architect and his Clients. Viking, 1996

⁵ Hoare, W Beautiful Bricks nd. Basingstoke Discovery Centre, Local Studies.

⁶ HRO 159M88/411

⁷ Hoare, W Beautiful Bricks nd. Basingstoke Discovery Centre, Local Studies.

⁸ Ibid.

'1903, by Edwin Lutyens, in severe Arts and Crafts style on the north and east, but Edwardian Baroque on south and west. H-plan house of 2 storeys, with red tile roofing, walling of thin red bricks laid to Flemish bond, tile heads and cills to smaller openings. The plain north front has gabled wings (double at the east side), 2:3:1:3:1 windows, a gabled 2-storeyed porch. Most of the windows are diminutive coupled casements (with brick mullions) but there are 4, 5 and 7 unit lights in the gables. The boarded door is within an open porch formed by an arch within a moulded rectangular framework. The south elevation has flanking gables, 3 large dormers, the middle section eaves being brought low with opening on either side of the centre, the recessed ceilings being supported on square columns built up of tiles. The dormers are tile-hung, 2 with gabled and one with hipped roofing, large mullioned and transom windows; the gabled wings are tile-hung above first-floor level. The west elevation is elaborately arranged, with a large dormer and 2 smaller 1/2 dormers, eaves at 3 levels above set back walling, the divisions separated by massive chimneys, one having 2 diagonal flues. Within, there is one Tudor style fireplace in brick and tile, with octagonal sides, stepped cambered opening and tile-on edge decoration'.

The Brickworks and the Brickworks' Office Building

All of the Lutyens' Daneshill buildings are built of bricks produced by the brickworks. Another significant building is Brickworks' office. The Daneshill Brick and Tile Company opened in 1903 and the office functioned as that, amidst the clay pits and kilns of the brickyard. The office dates from 1905 and a compressed version was used at the Building Trades Exhibition at Olympia in 1909 as an exemplar of what the bricks were capable of producing in the hands of an architect like Lutyens.⁹



Brickworks' Office Building

The Brickworks' building makes use of moulded brick (wonderful fire places) and 'two splendid chimneys'.¹⁰

⁹ Daneshill Brickwork in Hampshire. Visit by Friends of the Lutyens Trust Notes by Airy, James ARIBA 25 June 2000

¹⁰ The buildings of England. Hampshire: Winchester and the North. Bullen, Michael., Crook, John., Hubbuck, Rodney and Pevsner, Nikolaus. Yale U.P. 2010. p169



It also has the 'catslide' roof so typical of Lutyens' work (see left). This little building is now almost lost among the commercial buildings of the Bilton Industrial Estate in Bilton Road, Basingstoke.

In 1911 the registered owners of the brickworks were W Hoare and C Chute (of The Vyne at Sherborne St John). A railway siding off the Basingstoke to Reading line was laid into the brickworks which was producing about 700,000 bricks a year.

The business closed in 1957.¹¹ In 1975 the building was listed Grade II but it fell into a sorry condition and in 1991, London based architects, RMJM were appointed to do renovation with the Lutyens Trust 'ensuring that enough space was left around it to provide a satisfactory setting for it.'¹²

At the time that the Basingstoke Heritage Society put up a plaque on the building in June 2000, there was still an identifiable claypit nearby but buildings have encroached on all sides of this little building now.¹³

¹¹ Daneshill Brickwork in Hampshire. Visit by Friends of the Lutyens Trust Notes by Airy, James ARIBA 25 June 2000

¹² Ibid.

¹³ The Basingstoke Heritage Society put a plaque onto the Brickworks Building 25th June 2000. It was unveiled by the then chairman of the Lutyens Trust, Margaret Richardson, who later became Director of the Sir John Soane Museum.