

= Capesthorne Hall =

Capesthorne Hall is a country house near the village of Siddington , Cheshire , England . The house and its private chapel were built in the early 18th century , replacing an earlier hall and chapel nearby . They were built to Neoclassical designs by William Smith and ( probably ) his son Francis . Later in the 18th century , the house was extended by the addition of an orangery and a drawing room . In the 1830s the house was remodelled by Edward Blore ; the work included the addition of an extension and a frontage in Jacobean style , and joining the central block to the service wings . In about 1837 the orangery was replaced by a large conservatory designed by Joseph Paxton . In 1861 the main part of the house was virtually destroyed by fire . It was rebuilt by Anthony Salvin , who generally followed Blore 's designs but made modifications to the front , rebuilt the back of the house in Jacobean style , and altered the interior . There were further alterations later in the 19th century , including remodelling of the Saloon . During the Second World War the hall was used by the Red Cross , but subsequent deterioration prompted a restoration .

The hall is built in brick with ashlar dressings and slate roofs , and is a Grade II \* listed building . It has a long entrance front consisting of a three @-@ storey central block with lateral wings , each of which has two four @-@ storey turrets . Outside this on each side are two @-@ storey service blocks that project forward , forming a three @-@ sided entrance forecourt . The ground @-@ floor public rooms include a drawing room , a dining room , and a sculpture gallery . The bedrooms , dressing rooms and another gallery are on the first floor . The hall stands in grounds containing gardens and parkland that includes a lake . A particularly notable listed structure in the grounds is the Grade II \* listed private chapel , also designed by William Smith , that is contemporaneous with the hall , together with its elaborate Grade II listed gates and gate piers . The bridge over the lake , an icehouse and a lodge are also listed . The earthworks of the previous hall and chapel and a deserted medieval village in the grounds are together designated as a scheduled ancient monument .

Today the hall , chapel and grounds are privately owned by the Bromley @-@ Davenport family . They are open to the public at advertised times , and are used for special events . They are also available to be hired for purposes such as weddings and corporate events .

= = History = =

The manor of Capesthorne was held by the Capesthorne family until 1386 , when it passed to the Ward family . The house previously on the site was 290 metres ( 317 yd ) to the west , with a chapel 25 metres ( 27 yd ) to its north , its site being marked by a brick column in the grounds . In 1719 John Ward engaged William Smith to design a new house and chapel on a different site . The first parts of the new house to be built were two lateral detached wings , one for domestic offices , and the other for stables and a coach house . The main block of the house followed later . William Smith died in 1724 and it is thought that the main block was designed by his younger brother , Francis Smith . The house was in Neoclassical style , with a front of seven bays , the middle three bays breaking forward under a pediment , and was built in brick with stone dressings . The house was two rooms deep , with a central entrance hall , and a corridor leading from each side .

John Ward died in 1748 and as he had no male heir the manor passed to the Davenport family by the marriage of his daughter Penelope to Davies Davenport . Davies Davenport 's grandson ( also called Davies Davenport ) improved and extended the house , with the addition of a single @-@ storey orangery to the southwest , and a drawing room to the northwest . When he died , his son , Edward Davies Davenport commissioned Edward Blore to remodel the house . Between 1837 and 1839 Blore joined the lateral wings to the main part of the house by adding new rooms at the sides . He also widened the wings , and built new stables and service courts to the north and south , creating a symmetrical structure . The main part of the house was recessed and , together with the wings , a large forecourt was created . The front of the house itself was refronted in Jacobean style . Mullioned windows replaced sash windows , and a ground floor loggia , and turrets with ogee caps and shaped gables were added . In the centre of the house was a raised attic with a clock and a

bellcote . The rest of the building retained its Neoclassical features . The orangery was replaced with a large conservatory designed by Joseph Paxton , and this led directly to the family pew in the chapel . Blore also designed entrance lodges .

In 1861 , when the house was owned by Edward 's son Arthur Henry Davenport , most of the central part of the house was destroyed by fire , leaving only the wings , the loggia , and part of the front wall . Blore had by then retired and Anthony Salvin was commissioned to rebuild the house . He kept generally to Blore 's plans , but gave the entrance front three shaped gables rather than the central attic . At the rear of the house the garden front was rebuilt in Jacobean rather than Neoclassical style . Internally , Salvin changed the proportions of the storeys , making the ground floor ceilings higher . Arthur Henry Davenport died in 1867 before the rebuilding had been completed , and the house passed to William Bromley @-@ Davenport . During his ownership the saloon was remodelled in 1879 as was the chapel in 1884 . In the Second World War the house was used by the Red Cross . By this time the fabric of the house had deteriorated , but it has since been restored . The house continues to be owned by the Bromley @-@ Davenport family .

= = Architecture = =

= = = Exterior = = =

Capesthorpe Hall is constructed in red brick with ashlar dressings and has a slate roof . Its plan is symmetrical and consists of a central block in three storeys with cellars , and two @-@ storey lateral blocks protruding forward to form three sides of a forecourt . The middle part of the central block is in seven bays , with a colonnade consisting of segmental arches . These are carried on Tuscan columns with circular panels in the spandrels , and keystones decorated with diamond rustication . Behind this are seven mullioned and transomed windows , and there are similar windows in the middle storey . Above these is a cornice and three shaped gables containing mullioned windows . The gables have stone copings and finials , and contain heraldic panels . Flanking the middle part of the central block are three @-@ storey slightly projecting wings . They have one central bay and lateral four @-@ storey turrets . The central bays contain two @-@ storey canted bay windows , above which are pierced stone parapets , three @-@ light mullioned windows , and shaped gables with pierced ogee finials . The turrets have bands between the stages , single @-@ light windows and ogee caps with finials .

Projecting forward on each side of the central block are two @-@ storey service blocks . The façades facing the forecourt are similar , with semicircular arches in front of them , that on the left side being blocked , and the arch on the right side forming a porte @-@ cochère . Behind the arches are seven @-@ bay fronts , the central bay projecting slightly and containing a door with a fanlight . Above this is an oriel window on consoles over which is a shaped gable . The other windows in both storeys are sashes . The outward facing fronts are similar to the forecourt fronts , except that the end and centre bays protrude and are gabled . Between the gables are balustraded parapets .

= = = Interior = = =

In rebuilding the interior of the house after the fire of 1861 , Salvin followed Blore 's design in some of the rooms , and in others he used his own designs . The Entrance Hall very much follows Blore 's design . It has a panelled ceiling with pendants , and the windows contain 19th @-@ century stained glass arranged by Willement , featuring the arms of the Davenport and Ward families . The chimney piece was added by Salvin , and contains the figures of a caryatid and an Atlas that were formerly part of the reading desk of the two @-@ decker pulpit in the chapel . The Sculpture Gallery , also by Blore , also has a panelled ceiling , and consists of a corridor along the sides of which are arched niches . Most of the sculptures in the gallery were collected by Edward Davies Davenport , and consist of ancient copies of famous Greek sculptures . There is also the face of Charles James Fox

by Joseph Nollekens , and a pair of Dancing Girls by Antonio Canova . The Saloon is by Salvin , and again has a panelled ceiling . The room features a large fireplace with an overmantel in the early Renaissance style , numerous family portraits , and vases collected on the overseas trips . The Drawing Room , designed by Salvin , is on the garden front , and features a panelled ceiling with pendants , and a floral frieze . In the room are twin fireplaces made from Coade stone , dated to 1789 , which originally belonged to the family 's house in Belgravia , London . Both are carved , one depicting Faith , Hope and Charity , and the other the Aldobrandini Marriage .

The State Dining Room is very much as Blore designed it , and has a panelled ceiling with pendants , and wooden panelling up to the line of the dado . The room contains a large fireplace in early Renaissance style , made from white and variegated marble , and containing the family arms . Also in the room are sculptures by Joseph Wilton . The Staircase Hall is by Salvin , and is divided from the Sculpture Gallery by three semicircular archways . On the walls are portraits of the Bromley family . The staircase has a wrought iron balustrade decorated with acanthus and roundels with the crests of the Bromleys and the Davenports . The Davenport crest consists of a felon with a rope around his neck ; in these roundels the felon has the face of William Gladstone , a political opponent of the Davenports . There are four further ground floor rooms , all by Salvin .

The Library has a panelled ceiling with diamond motifs . It contains imitation Jacobean panelling and a Jacobean fireplace from the now @-@ demolished Marton Hall . The Study also has a panelled ceiling , and in this case includes a circular central motif . The Private Dining Room contains a 19th @-@ century marble fireplace , and the Ground Floor Bedroom has a coffered ceiling and a Victorian @-@ baroque fireplace .

The first floor landing has archways similar to those on the ground floor . Leading from this is the Upper Gallery , which contains documents relating to the genealogy of the Bromley @-@ Davenports . Beyond this is the Dorothy Davenport Room and its dressing room . The room gets its name from Dorothy Davenport ( 1562 ? 1639 ) . She spent 26 years in creating the needlework that is mounted on the Jacobean bed in the room . The work includes the dates of its progress , and depicts , among other subjects , the Garden of Eden and Man 's Fall from Paradise . The other rooms on the first floor include the State Bedroom , which contains valuable items of furniture , such as a commode by Boulle , and a pair of encoignures , the State Dressing Room , the American Room , which is decorated with items from Philadelphia , and the Yellow Room , which was the bedroom of Sir William Bromley @-@ Davenport who died in 1949 . In the passage outside the American Room is a portrait of the philosopher Jean @-@ Jacques Rousseau by Allan Ramsay .

= = Grounds = =

The hall is surrounded by a landscaped park that includes woodland , parkland , lawns , lakes with a boat house , and an arboretum containing 18th @-@ century maple trees . In the grounds are a number of structures of notability and interest .

= = Chapel and chapel gates = =

The chapel was designed by William Smith , and was remodelled in 1887 . It is dedicated to the Holy Trinity . The chapel is built in brick on a stone plinth with stone dressings and a slate roof , and consists of a three @-@ bay nave and an apsidal chancel , with a bell turret . The doorway and the windows are round @-@ headed , and around the top of the chapel is a cornice and a balustrade with square piers capped by swagged ball finials . Inside the chapel the original box pews were replaced by facing pews in college style . At the west end is a raised family pew . On the walls are terracotta panels by George Tinworth . The reredos is in mosaic with an alabaster surround , it was made by Salviati and is loosely based on Giotto 's Dormition . To the southwest of the chapel are gates and gate piers . The gate piers date from the 20th century , and the gates from about 1750 . The piers are in brick on stone plinths and have stepped stone caps with ball finials . The gates are in wrought iron and were made in Milan . They are wide with arched centres and contain Rococo panels depicting Saint Andrew with his cross .

== Other structures ==

The bridge crossing the lake dates from about 1843 , and is constructed in brick with stone dressings . It consists of five segmental arches , with abutments running down to the banks . The arches have rusticated voussoirs and keystones , and above the voussoirs are hood moulds . Between the arches are brick pilasters . Along the top of the bridge is a stone balustrade with square piers . Also in the grounds is an icehouse dating from the 18th or early 19th century . It is built in brick and consists of a circular domed chamber . From the arched entrance a barrel vaulted passage leads through a rectangular opening into the chamber . Also in the grounds is a summer house that was formerly the bell turret of the chapel . It carries a gold flag with the date 1722 . The lodge at the north entrance to the grounds was designed by Blore and dates from about 1843 . It is built in brick with ashlar dressings and has a felt roof . The lodge consists of a three @-@ storey square tower containing two @-@ light mullioned windows . At the top of the tower is an entablature with a panelled parapet and pierced ogee finials on the corners . The roof is ogee @-@ shaped with a ball finial and a flagpole .

== Earthworks ==

Although the earlier hall and chapel have long been demolished , earthworks remaining from them are still present , as are those of a nearby deserted medieval village . The platform for the chapel , which measures about 20 metres ( 65 @.@ 6 ft ) by 6 metres ( 19 @.@ 7 ft ) , is still present . There are extensive earthworks on the site of the hall . To the east of these are the platforms and enclosures of about seven medieval houses , and associated with these is evidence of a medieval field system . All these earthworks are designated together as a scheduled ancient monument .

== Appraisal ==

The hall , together with the wall surrounding the entrance court , and the chapel are recorded in the National Heritage List for England as designated Grade II \* listed buildings . Grade II \* is the middle of the three grades of listed buildings and is applied to " particularly important buildings of more than special interest " . The gate and gate piers associated with the chapel are listed at Grade II , as are the bridge crossing the lake , the ice house , and the north lodge . Grade II is applied to " buildings of national importance and special interest " .

De Figueiredo and Treuherz note that when Salvin restored the two wings that each contain two turrets on the front of the hall , he left their tops open on two sides , so that they appear solid from the front but not from the back . Hartwell et al in the Buildings of England series , commenting on the appearance of the hall , say " but it is all front " . They note " the thinness of the end parts and the hollowness of the sham towers " and state that the " back is without drama " , and conclude that " it is a grand concept executed lamely " .

== Present day ==

Capesthorpe Hall is a member of the Historic Houses Association , and the hall , chapel and gardens are open to the general public on advertised times between March and October , for which there is an admission charge , and refreshments are available for visitors . The hall and gardens are available to hire for weddings and for corporate events . A programme of events is organised in the hall and in the grounds , where there is a caravan park .