

rooms of the house retained their general form, but he added a small withdrawing room at the north-east corner and a service stair to enable servants to reach the entertaining rooms from the basement without having to use the best staircase. This small stair survives, and retains its original door cases at landings and balusters on the upper floor. The principal stair was entirely renewed and (except for the finials on the newels, added in the nineteenth century in a bizarre attempt to make it look older than it is) remains intact from the 1680s.³¹ Door-cases and wainscot in the lobby between the stair and the principal drawing room on the first floor also survive from Francis North's time. The space between projecting window bays on the north side was filled in to provide closets on each floor. However, the southern of the new ranges shown in North's plan remained unbuilt. This proposed a chapel in its eastern end, arranged (in a manner long established for private chapels) on two levels: the lower level with altar, reading desks and seating for servants, and an upper gallery for the family.

The principal rooms were themselves redecorated, and so that the rooms should no longer look like 'bird cages' by virtue of their huge expanse of Elizabethan glazing, the window openings were greatly reduced in size although made to conform still to the general style of the sixteenth century building.³² The original decoration of what the Norths called the 'parade rooms', the principal rooms of the Popes' house, was replaced with modern wainscot and cornices. The best bed chamber, the dining room (the present Regency Room) and a chamber called the green chamber were newly fitted up by John Bernard, a furnisher, perhaps a London man. For the Dining Room Bernard provided sixteen 'back stools' [i.e. chairs without arms], two 'great chairs', and 223 yards of bullrush matting for the floor. For the best bed chamber, he provided a bed and other furniture, with 71 yards of blue and white brocade for bed hangings, lined with 47 yards of sky colour Persian taffeta, and tenterhooks for hanging tapestry on the walls. Painting was done by a James Radcliffe, for whom Francis North paid £4.18s.2d. for his materials.³³

³¹ Equally bizarre is its present name 'The Regency Stair.'

³² *Of Building*, 56n. 'make all of a piece, as much as possible. This course I took in perfecting so much as was done of the Lord Keeper's house at Wroxton, where in the new I proposed the same sort of windows as in the old, tho' not the mode, and his lordship like't it well, and persued it.' Elsewhere Roger North writes that he reduced the windows of the principal rooms by two thirds: Appendix I, below.

³³ Oxford, Bodleian Library MS North b.8 f.183; f.112r.