



THE GRIFFIN

The Griffin Inn, built in the early nineteenth century by Lord Yarborough, is in a mock Tudor style with ornate chimneys and mullioned windows. The heraldic beast carved above the door and on the pub sign is actually a wyvern, a mythical beast with the upper body of a dragon and the lower body curving into the tail of a serpent, which is barbed and knotted at the end. It is usually depicted resting on legs and tail or just the curve of the tail, and is supposed to have a keen sense of sight for guarding treasure. A griffin has the head, breast and claws of an eagle, with the hindquarters and tail of a lion. The wyvern formed the family crest, and the coat of arms for Worsley of Appuldurcombe was three black falcons and chevron on a silver field (background) with the falcons' beaks, legs and bells in gold. The family motto is "I swoop to rise again".



GODSHILL CHURCH

Godshill means "the hill associated with a heathen or Christian god", from the Old English "god" and "hyll". All Saints with its twin naves, transepts and embattled pinnacled tower, soars over the village.

An old legend tells the story of a pagan shrine originally being at the top of the little wooded hill on which the church now stands. As the first

from Fremantel (1285), Fremaneshulle (1361), Fremantelle (1457) and Fremantelles (1548). It is a Norman French name (not unusual considering William the Conqueror was one of its owners). The word literally means "the cold cloak", possibly applied figuratively to a shady wood or perhaps simply transferred from a French place. It is interesting to note that William's great grandson Henry II had the nickname of "Curtmantle" which means short cloak, because of his preference for short hunting style jackets instead of long robes.

The outer park of the house comprising eleven acres, was designed by Lancelot "Capability" Brown, and is the only example of his work on the Island. Born in 1716 in Northumberland the son of a farm labourer, Lancelot Brown acquired his nickname because he said he could "see the capabilities of an area for landscaping". His use of serpentine drives to create an illusion of size and construction of "eye catchers" on the tops of downs, enabled him to transform the surroundings of the house from ordered formal gardens, to a meticulously planned whole which continually delighted the eye.

Cooks Castle, of which nothing remains, was built on St Martin's Down, and opposite the house a granite obelisk was placed in 1774 on the summit of Stenbury Down. This monument was erected by Sir Richard Worsley to the memory of his grandfather, Sir Robert, and when the 70ft high obelisk was struck by lightning in 1831, local boys used the fallen stones as sledges.



The outer area, known as Godshill Park, was used for the breeding of hares. These were driven through the holes in the wall of the enclosed deer park, which were then closed to prevent escape, and hunting would take place within the confines of the park.

On Appuldurcombe Down, you can still see the archaeological features of ridge and furrow when the land was ploughed many centuries ago, and signs of quarrying when local stone was taken to Carisbrooke Castle in the 13th century. The steep cliff at the eastern end of the down is called Gatcliff, meaning the steep slope or banks where goats are kept, from the Old English “gat” and “clif”.

Walk Leader/Compiler of information leaflet - Carrie McDowell, AONB Assistant

For further information about the work of the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership, please contact the AONB Unit, Seaclose Offices, Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 2QS. Telephone 01983 823855; e-mail aonb@iow.gov.uk; Website www.wightaonb.org.uk



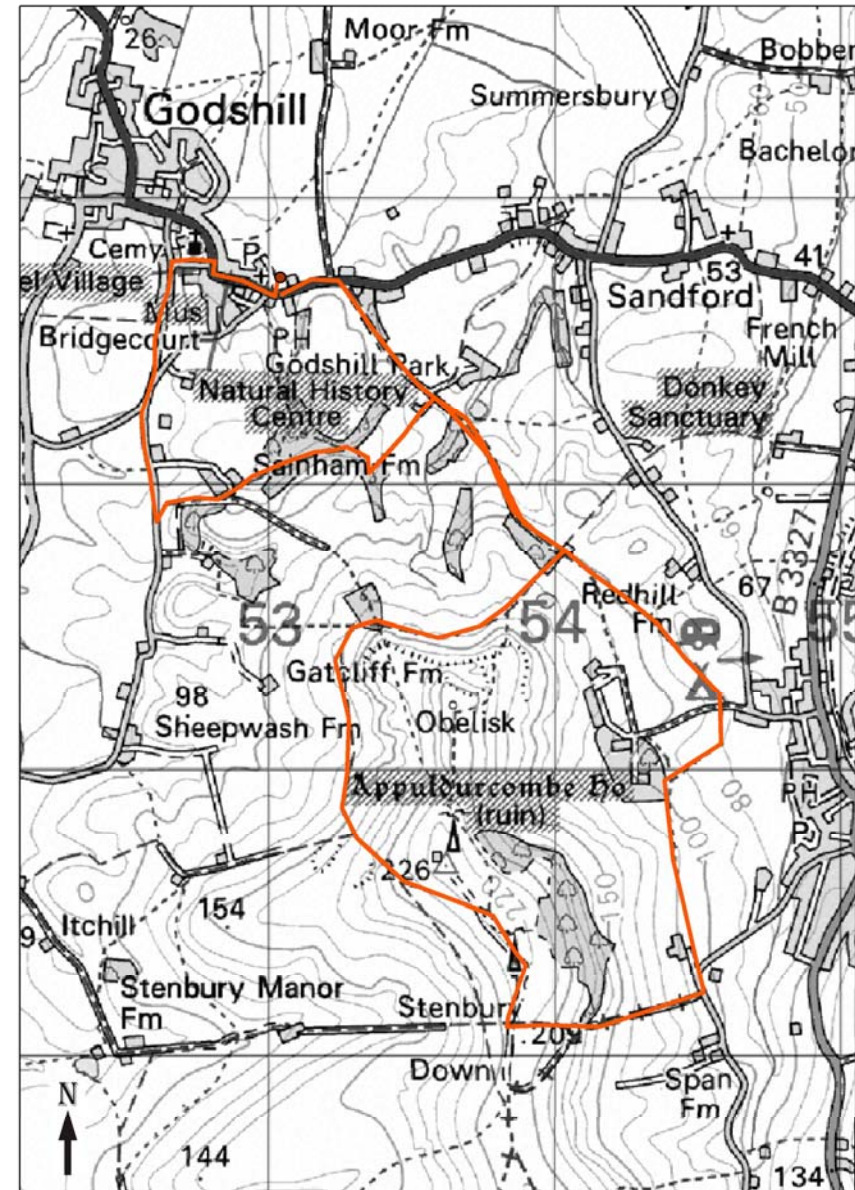
The Isle of Wight Partnership is jointly supported by Natural England and the Isle of Wight Council



WORSLEYS, WYVERNS AND APPULDURCOMBE



Isle of Wight
area of outstanding
natural beauty



This map is for illustrative purposes only. © Crown Copyright (Isle of Wight Council) Licence No (076694) 2006

baronet, commencing construction of the existing house in 1701. The last Worsley to live at Appuldurcombe was Sir Richard, the seventh baronet, who became a Privy Councillor, Comptroller of George III's household and Governor of the Isle of Wight. His fabulous collection of Greek marbles, gems, paintings and Chippendale furniture from his extensive travels, were catalogued in a two volume document called the Museum Worsleianum. His passion for treasure also extended to his choice of wife, Lady Seymour Worsley, who was much admired for her extraordinary good looks, and notorious for her extra-marital affairs. Sir Richard sued a former friend and lover of his unfaithful wife for £20,000 when the scandal became common knowledge. The Court found in his favour, but as he was judged to have known about his wife's sexual adventures - admitted during evidence to 23 lovers - and even provided encouragement, the Court only awarded him one shilling! Interest in the case was so great, that seven re-prints were made of the trial transcripts selling for sixpence each. He gave up his Court position to travel to the Mediterranean, Near East, Levant and Russia, publishing an account of his travels during 1794-1803 and a history of the Isle of Wight.

Sir Richard's niece was the last in the direct line of the Worsley family, who married the First Earl of Yarborough. His dubious claim to fame was to have a bridge hand named after him known as "a Yarborough", which contains no aces and no card higher than a nine.

APPULDURCOMBE

The estate is not mentioned in Domesday Book, probably because after Earl Godwin's death, ownership passed to William the Conqueror. It has had many different spellings since the 12th century, and means "the valley where apple-trees grow" from Old English "appuldor" and "comb."

Its origins date from 1102, when Richard de Redvers gave the manor to a Benedictine abbey he founded in Normandy. The priory was often sacked by French and Spanish invaders in Richard II's reign, and during the French wars of Edward I and Edward III was more than once forcibly removed to the mainland, and its affairs controlled by the king. Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries the estate passed into the hands of the Worsleys, and became their family seat for over 300 years.

The original Tudor mansion inherited by Sir Robert Worsley was demolished, and construction of the Baroque style house commenced in 1701, with completion 70 years later by his great nephew Sir Richard.



Work began on the north end, the central block and the pavilions, but was left incomplete for financial reasons. It was built largely from local stone re-used from the previous house and from the Undercliff, where the upper greensand beds provided good building material. Further works continued at the end of the 17th century, including the north west pavilion, additional rooms, offices and a re-modelled hall to blend with current fashion. The Earl of Yarborough, who was also Baron Worsley of Appuldurcombe, reconstructed three rooms and added the Roman Doric colonnade. He also built the porte-cochere at the west entrance, and a stone basin in front of each door.

The house displays many French architectural influences, and was considered a sophisticated project for its time. Unusually the central section of house was not emphasized, but instead had prominent pavilions or wings projecting at either end of the building. Elaborate mouldings around doors and windows were typical of the English baroque style, although its overall appearance was more Italian with great columns and Corinthian capitals.

Every last detail was carefully considered, from the pairs of chimneys above the pavilions creating a triumphant arch, to the contrast of finishing textures used to distinguish between different parts of the design. The Hall was a particularly splendid room with scagliola (imitation marble) columns topped by Ionic capitals and a frieze, together with a fabulous marble floor. There would also have been a grand staircase, a drawing room, and a library to house part of the family art collection.

Appuldurcombe passed to Sir Richard's niece Anne, the last Worsley to own the great house, and the family connection ceased when the estate was sold off by the 2nd Earl of Yarborough. When an unsuccessful business venture to run the house as a hotel failed, it was leased for use as a college for young gentlemen. The school closed in 1884 and during the first few years of the 20th century, the house took on the role of a monastery for a small group of Benedictine monks, who were forced to leave their abbey in France. When the monks built a new abbey at Quarr, the house was subsequently used to billet soldiers in both world wars. Preservation of this beautiful building was uncertain for many years, and further aggravated when on 07 February 1943, a Dornier 217 on a mine laying mission turned inland to drop its final mine before crashing into St Martins Down, and the house was left a roofless ruin.

Although the original "stately home" has long since been lost, a decision in 1952 to save it from demolition has meant that a long programme of restoration has resulted in the peaceful site seen today. It is still an important example of English Baroque architecture in the ownership of English Heritage, and visitors can view an exhibition of photographs and prints depicting the house and its history. No old mansion would be complete without the ubiquitous phantom carriage and Appuldurcombe is no exception, it is also said to be haunted by phantom monks and the sound of a crying baby.

LANDSCAPE PARK/GODSHILL PARK

Fremantle is the principal gateway to the northern boundary of the 18th century landscaped park, reputedly designed by the architect James Wyatt. The great arched gateway bears the signs of faded magnificence, although the wrought iron gates have been restored in recent years. The origins of the name are unclear, and there have been various spellings

church was being built nearby on the water-meadows of Sheepwash, the stones from the new building mysteriously moved to the top of the hill during the night. After this happened on several consecutive nights it was taken as a sign, and the church was finally built on top of the hill. The present church, the fourth to be built on this site, is the largest and most colourful of the medieval churches on the Island and its interior, reflecting the gleaming white walls of the nave and chancels, is full of light and air.

Its most impressive feature is the 15th century wall painting of Christ crucified on a triple branched flowering lily, known as "The Lily Cross of Godshill". The church is also rich in monuments, notably those of the ancient Worsley family including Sir James, (Master of the Robes who stage managed the Field of the Cloth of Gold) and his lady Anne, who kneel beneath a delicate frieze and pediment surmounted by a tilting helmet; Sir Richard, whose 30 ton sarcophagus with lion's feet is obscured by the organ pipes, and Lady Anne's parents, Sir John and Lady Agnes, who recline under Caen stone between the chancels. Every evening the church is floodlit, and makes a beautiful sight when viewed from the village below.

WORSLEY FAMILY

The Worsley family originated from Lancashire, and became associated with Appuldurcombe in the 16th century. This was as a result of the marriage of James Worsley, who was Henry VIII's Keeper of the Wardrobe, to Anne Leigh heiress of Appuldurcombe. James was knighted by Henry VIII and appointed to several offices on the Island including Sheriff, Coroner, Constable of Carisbrooke Castle and, most important from a military standpoint, Captain of the Island. He suffered great tragedy when servants were drying gunpowder by a fire, and his two sons were killed in the subsequent explosion.

The family continued to rise in importance, making several marriage alliances with leading aristocratic families including the Nevilles, Herberts and Thynnes. There was also a distant royal connection with the House of Tudor, through Lady Margaret Beaufort mother of Henry VII.

James I created Richard Worsley a baronet in 1611, and the title was passed down through the family, with Sir Robert Worsley, the fourth