



RECTORY NEWS

FOR THE SUPPORTERS OF CARSHALTON OLD RECTORY

Editor: Sue Horne

July 2026 - Issue 76



Situation so far

Listed Building Consent has been granted by Historic England for the changes proposed in the recent planning application. As our photo shows, some work has begun and we were pleased to see that care has been taken to protect the front step railings from accidental damage while work is in progress.

The Heritage Statement that accompanied the planning application was written by Sarah Sullivan, who specialises in researching and writing heritage statements, conservation reports, and structural

analyses for planning applications and building adaptation. She also provides guidance on the retrofitting of historic and traditional structures.

In her summary, she mentions us: 'This building is the subject of much local interest and the Carshalton Old Rectory Association (CORA) has championed its cause to open the building to the public. They have produced a book, 'A Respectable Parsonage House', to try and persuade the Council to recognise the importance of the building and concern for its future'.

As an appraisal of the historic and architectural importance of the Old Rectory, the whole Heritage Statement is worth reading - but for our newsletter, here's a bit more of her summary.

She suggests that the appeal of the Old Rectory lies in the simple beauty of a Queen Anne house 'a style sometimes referred to as sweetness and light.' In her view 'The Old Rectory is a place of high aesthetic and historic value as an example of a classical Queen Anne house built originally as a rectory. It is a house that has been adapted over three centuries to alternative uses, although it has retained its architectural and artistic significance both internally and externally.'

She notes that the mark of wealth and social standing can be seen by the 'grace and elegance' of the newly fashionable Flemish Bond red brickwork, laid in lime mortar, to the tall sash windows with their rubbed headers. 'Built on a large cellar, this striking residence shows the improvement in the quality of brickwork production, resulting in more uniform dimensions and allowing for thinner mortar joints, rubbed brickwork and glazed decorative headers.'

Like us, Ms. Sullivan appreciates the setting of the house, emphasising that it 'contributes to the artistic and historic interest in illustrating a house and grounds laid out and developed over the centuries. Just outside the boundary stands a London plane tree over 200 years old and thought to be one of the tallest plane trees in Britain. Beside the tree and along Festival Walk is a canal of water linking to the Carshalton Ponds. The area is currently laid out as a local nature reserve and wildlife habitat'.

Finally, she says that the Old Rectory cannot be viewed in isolation 'but it is part of a far wider setting and conservation area'. With Honeywood Museum and proximity to Carshalton Ponds, 'these heritage assets form a visitor attraction.'

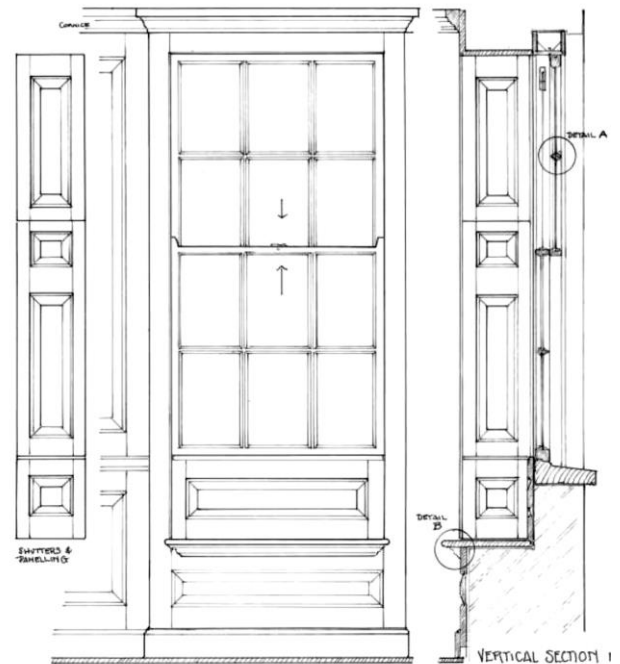
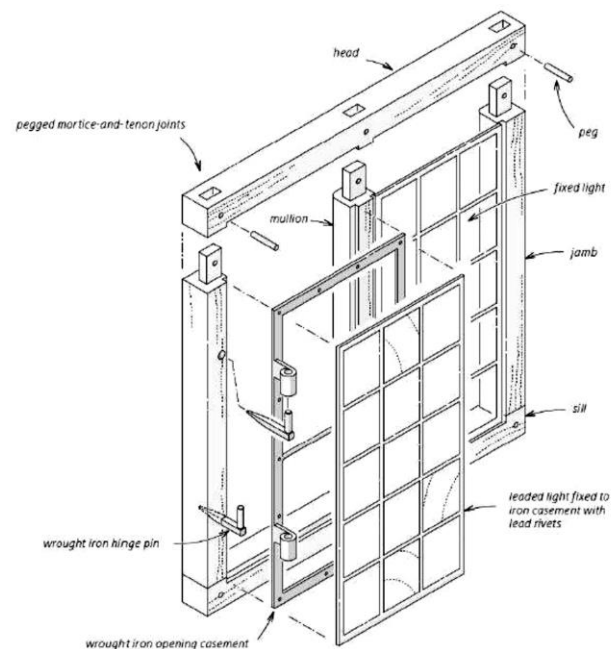


Diagram showing the internal raised and fielded panelling, box sash window with shutters as at present seen in the 18th century part of the Old Rectory



Window diagram showing the pintle hinges and leaded light casement window construction such as the window on the landing near the top of the stairs

Just as we always said!

Source: D2025_01563 Heritage Statement 6054055



**Westminster Hall
with the Courts of
Chancery and Kings
Bench in Session by
Wenceslaus Hollar**

The tricky business of Inheritance

It is surprising how litigious people were in the Medieval and Early Modern Period. Yet this tendency to go to law at the drop of a hat can provide us with some fascinating information about the more ordinary people who populated the country. An interesting example, as we saw in the February newsletter, was John Fromond. His irascible personality leaps out from the pages of the Carshalton Manor Court Rolls. Without such documents, we would have no knowledge of his character.

Wills, of course, provide all sorts of useful information and Fromond's will of 1580 describes the extent of his wealth, from land in Surrey and Kent, to various properties and substantial funds - most of which went to his first born son, Nicholas, who was also his executor with Benedicta 'my trustie and well beloved wife'. Unfortunately, Nicholas died without issue in 1587 and the estate passed to Fromond's

second son, John. John died intestate so his three sisters, known as 'the heiresses', Dorothy, Sanctia and Elizabeth inherited. This was rather unusual. Gossip and speculation must have been rife in Carshalton at the time. Some years later, in March 1621, a Bill of Complaint was presented before the Lord High Chancellor of England, Sir Francis Bacon.

The plaintiff was yet another John Fromond, son of William Fromond, the cousin of the three sisters and their late brother, John. The essence of the case was that, as the surviving Fromond and godson of the deceased, the Fromond estates should have passed to the complainant but that Sanctia, Dorothy and their husbands had conspired to destroy a will by which he should have inherited. Instead, all the Fromond lands had passed out of the family, leaving him landless and relying on his income as a lowly milliner. The written statement by the plaintiff and two submissions by the defendants 'James Bynde and

Saynte Bynde his wife' vigorously denying the charges can be found in the National Archives.

The plaintiff was a young child when his godfather died and he claimed that, as John had no issue, he intended to leave his estate to him. He accused the sisters and their husbands of destroying the will:

'being, in the howse where the sayd John Fromonde dyed, where the last Will and Testament was remayninge and beinge, did deceytfullie and by some indyrecte and [] meanes gett into their hands and possession [] and suppressed the before mentioned laste Will and Testament of him the sayd John Fromonde.'

A critical part of James Byne's defence was that, as he lay ill, John was advised that he should consider making a will but refused to do so. He died a few days later in the presence of his cousin, William Fromond (the plaintiff's father). Efforts were made, in particular by cousin William, to search for any sign of an existing will, but none was found. We know from the documents that, before he died, John gave the key to his desk to William. He was the first to open it after the death, removing a gold chain and papers, but there was no will.

The plaintiff lost his case.

Sue Horne

Sources:

National Archives Ref: C2/Jasl/F4/14 - Bill of Complaint, March 1621 to the Right Honourable Francis, Lord Verulam, Viscount St Alban, Lord Chancellor of England

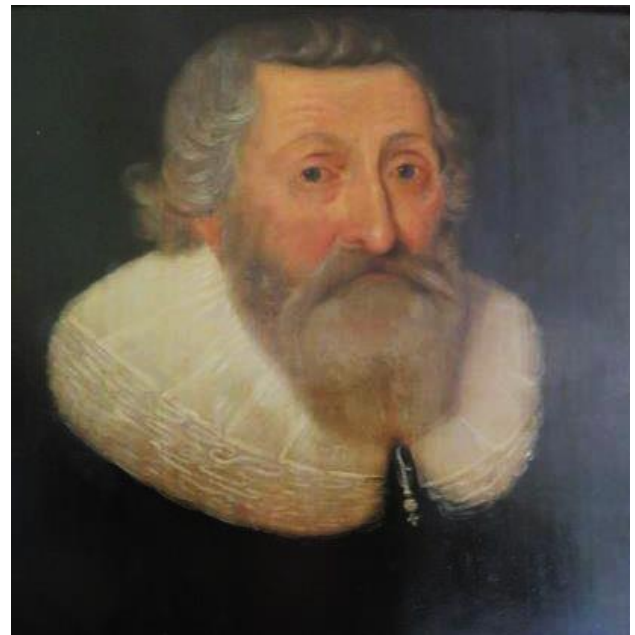
National Archives Catalogue Ref: prob/11/62 – Image

Ref: 428 - The will of Johanus ffromondes

Note: [] denotes illegible text



The elderly Sanctia & James Byne



For Your Diary

**This year's CORA AGM will be on the
10th October 2.30pm at
Carshalton Water Tower**