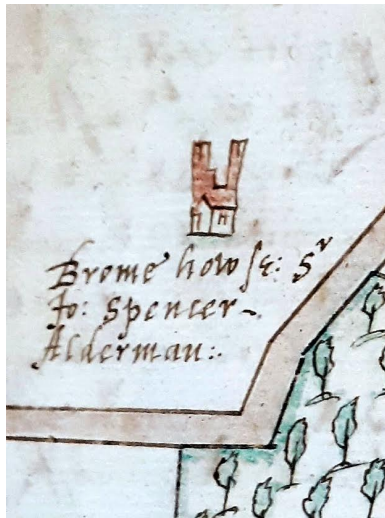


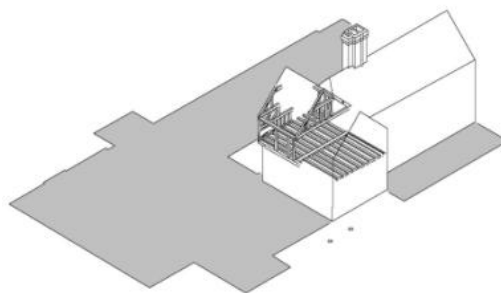
## BROOMFIELD HOUSE

### The Evolution of Broomfield House

Broomfield House dates from around 1550 and was built and owned by a succession of land owners and merchants. The first map which shows it dates to the early 1570s, and indicates a “gentleman’s house” named “Brumfeyld”. A map of 1599 has an image of “Brome House” identified as being owned by “Sir J Spencer, Alderman”. This was how properties were illustrated on maps at the time.



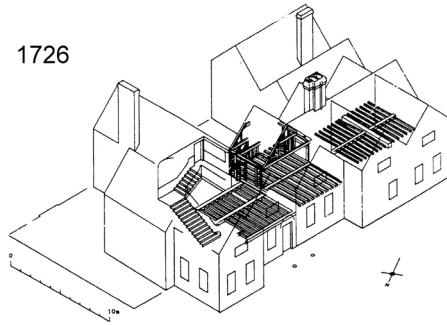
The house was laid out as below, set on the footprint of the final structure.



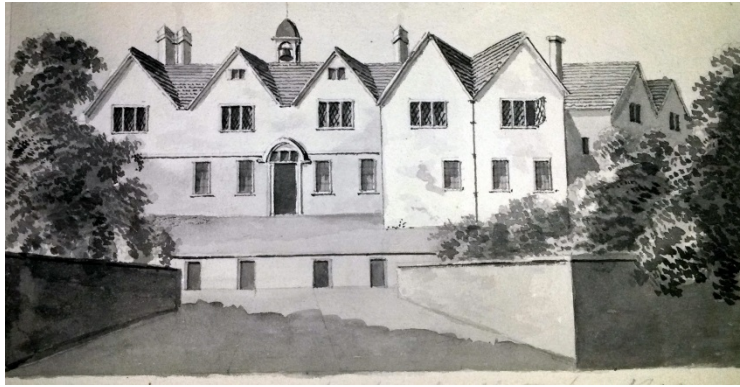
The House continued to grow as prosperous city merchants added to it.

In 1726 Gerard Lanscroon, who had recently been working on the murals at Arnos on Cannon Hill (now Southgate Beaumont) was brought in by Mrs Judith Jackson to paint the murals around the new staircase and hall at Broomfield shown below.

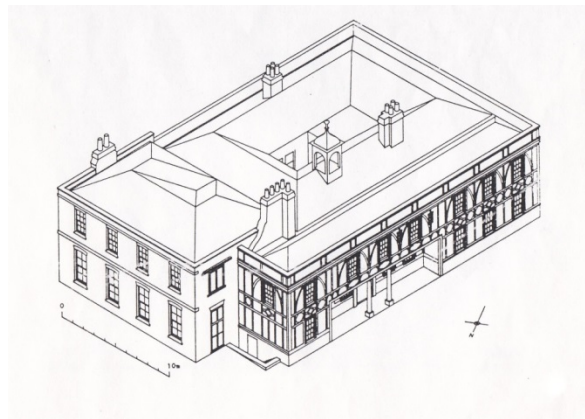
1726



This 1880 copy of a water colour is the earliest we have of a recognisable house, though interpreting it is tricky!



By 1820 this gabled structure was hidden under a new, more fashionable, classical facade. It remained much like this until 1932 when the more familiar black and white cladding was added by Southgate Urban District Council



After this, Broomfield House was used for a variety of different aspects of community life. For example, Southgate County School was based there then later a baby's clinic, a nursery, a dental clinic, Enfield's first museum, a café, then, during the Second World War, it was commandeered by the Royal Army Medical Corps.



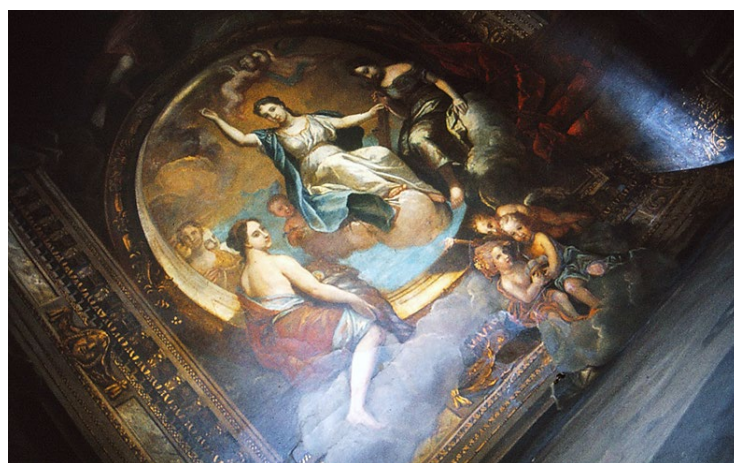


## Lanscroon Murals

Born in Mechelen, the Netherlands, in 1655, Gerard Lanscroon migrated to England in 1677 with his father Valentin (a sculptor who worked at Chatsworth House). We first hear of Lanscroon at Windsor Castle in 1678 where he trained under the Italian Baroque painter Antonio Verrio

From about 1690, Lanscroon worked on independent commissions for large-scale decoration, including the magnificent complete murals in Arncliffe Grove (now Southgate Beaumont), in 1723.

The staircase mural at Broomfield House was painted in 1726, commissioned by the widowed Mrs Jackson and appears to be intriguingly unique in its focus on the goddesses Venus, Minerva, Flora and Fortuna in contrast to the male-dominated stories, such as "Vulcan forging the Arms of Achilles" or "The Apotheosis of Caesar" of previous schemes.



The murals had long been attributed to Sir John Thornhill, famous for the murals in the Painted Hall at the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich. In 1983 restoration work on the murals was paid for by the Friends of Broomfield Museums, during which the signature of Gerard Lanscroon, hidden by years of soot and smoke from candles and open fires was revealed. After the 1984 fire the murals were marked as shown below, cut out and placed in storage. Unfortunately the ceiling (above) was broken up during the fire and its restoration is almost certainly impossible.



In 2014 Enfield Council commissioned Stephen Paine to carry out a condition survey to examine the stored murals. They had been untouched since at least 1987, and there were questions about how well the murals stored in 67 boxes had survived preservation and storage.

He found that the majority of the ceiling and coving had either been lost or only a few fragments remain. However, the large fragments from three of the staircase walls which were deliberately detached after the fire remained in apparently good condition. The possibility therefore arose of re-assembling those large fragments relating to the staircase walls. The exact nature and condition of the paint layer was not known as the wall fragments were covered in multiple layers of tissue and

muslin used to protect the paint layers during transfer. Further testing would therefore need to be taken to assess how much original paint layer still existed by removing sections of the facing.

The overall conclusion was however that reinstatement was a distinct possibility.

Encouraged by Enfield council and Historic England, in 2017 the Broomfield House Trust proposed an examination of a sample of the facing material. The next stage would be to select more substantial sections of the murals for reassembly and restoration this. This would test the practicality and costs of larger scale restoration. Should full scale restoration and reinstallation prove impossible or be delayed in to the future, it would at the least provide a lasting example of the original mural.

After an exhaustive competitive tender process which involved a number of leading expert restoration companies the Trust chose Arte Conservation to carry out these tasks. Funding for this has been found from voluntary donations and a substantial grant from the Enfield Society

The completed Minerva panel is now on display in the Museum of Enfield in the Dugdale Centre.



### **The Stables and stableyard**

The buildings and walls have been built and rebuilt and are 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>c and are listed Grade II\*. There are two main structures of historical interest, the free standing stables themselves which would have housed horses and carriages, and a row of small cottages built in to the original walls along Broomfield Lane. Later, the stableyard housed extensive glass houses and cold frames and was a main provider of flowers for this and other parks. Unfortunately the cottages along Broomfield Lane were seriously damaged by fire in 2017. In the 1960, a modern terrace for park workers was built in the yard to replace the old cottages in the north west of the park, now marked by a small mound overplanted with a birch copse.

## **Baroque Water Garden**

The three lakes in front of the House date from the 16th Century or earlier and were probably originally fish ponds, although it has been suggested that they were dug out for clay to make bricks used to build the walls to the east of the gardens to ensure the security of Sir John Spencer. In the early 18th century the lakes became the centre of a Baroque water garden. A key feature of the water garden was the Long Water which ran from what became the Coronation Gates almost to the House and may have cascaded in to the northern lake. In 1914 it was filled in. Excavations of the lawn to the east of the house in 1996 suggested a considerable effort had gone into terracing and pathways probably connected with the baroque garden.