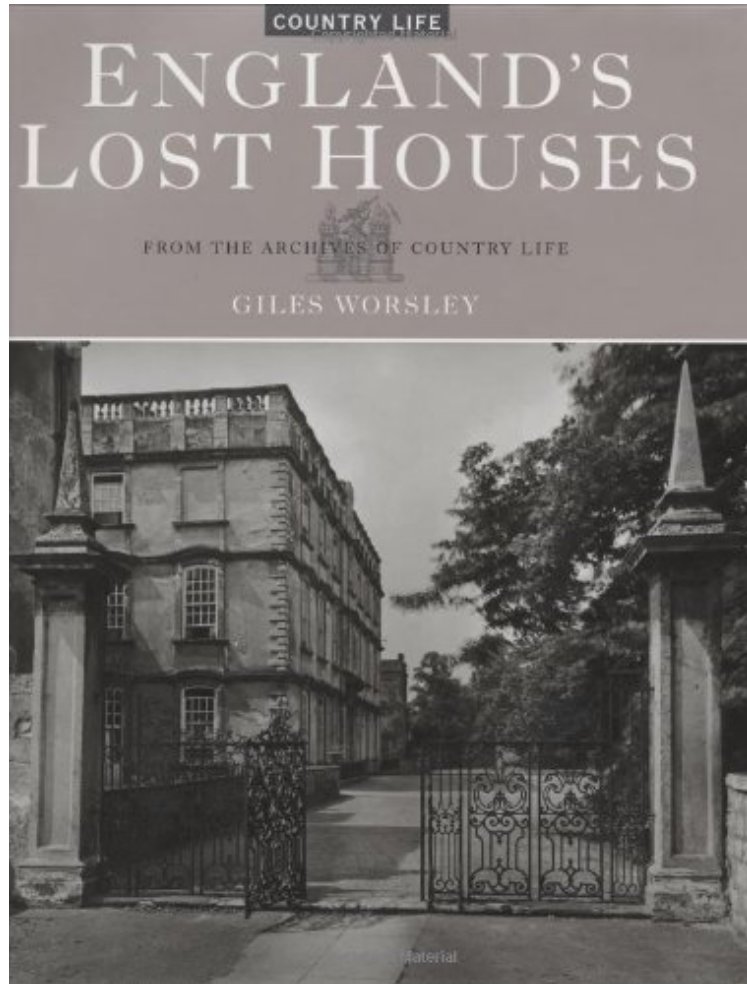


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England's Lost Houses: From the Archives of Country Life

Giles Worsley

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Giles Worsley : England's Lost Houses: From the Archives of Country Life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised England's Lost Houses: From the Archives of Country Life:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Downton-ish stories from real lifeBy SusanHAHI would recommend this book particularly to fans of Downton Abbey for the glimpses it provides of the real life losses suffered by the great families who lived in all these wonderful houses. Lives, fortunes, and properties are lost or threatened with loss at every stage in the histories of these surprisingly vulnerable structures, which were usually built to last forever. Some of these houses survived for only a single generation, one at least survived for 27 generations in the same family only to be ultimately sold and then demolished. Fires and enemy bombs took a huge toll. A number of houses were damaged then abandoned as a result of wartime requisitioning. Punishing estate taxes had to be paid sometimes several times over in a single generation, until all the money was gone. Lives were lost in war, with entire generations of heirs wiped out, and quite a few also died in traffic accidents and other mishaps. Reading this book

makes one realize to what extent the Downton story is a struggle for survival, with no certain future at all. The black and white archival photographs are perfect, since they are large, many full page, and very clear, depicting the best features of these houses as they appeared in their heydays. There are no pictures of ruins, even picturesque ones (well, maybe just one), or of ruinous interiors. Only one house is shown unfurnished, and this was a special case where the magazine was trying to help save an important threatened house. The author emphasizes that the magazine's editorial policy was to publish only furnished and thriving houses, though as it turned out this state was sometimes only very temporary. Most of the houses, of course, were incredibly beautiful, though a very few, the Victorian McMansions of their day, reflect their own era but are of less interest than their Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Georgian predecessors. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. he's shown me many pictures and discussed them with me and I've had a couple of good flip throughs. By Betsy E Bought this gorgeous book for my husband as part of his birthday gift. He's been devouring it for hours, but I've not had a chance to review it fully yet. However, he's shown me many pictures and discussed them with me and I've had a couple of good flip throughs. Old architecture is one of his great interests and he knows a lot about stone, wood, and brick construction, as well as building lovely paneling. He's amazed at the man-made beauty forever gone from the British Isles! The pictures in this book are detailed and he had never seen them before. What a shame the world has lost hundreds of gorgeous ancestral homes! But the writing which accompanies these black and white photographs explains in great detail the reasons for the losses. Understanding sometimes softens the sadness. Informative, interesting, lovely and well worth the small investment to see and learn of the past. This book is destined to become a classic and one we're proud to own and enjoy and share. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. England's Lost Houses By marjorie This is a great book. It is well written and beautifully photographed. Giles Worsley goes into much detail about all the beautiful houses/manor houses/castles, etc. that were demolished, left to ruin, or destroyed by fire. He gives the family history of each house and what in particular brought about its downfall. It gives the reader a good look at mansions that no longer exist, and an idea of the past historical value of the houses that were not preserved for posterity. It is a terrible shame that such beautiful English architecture has not survived, and that in quite a few cases not much was done to preserve them. In other instances, preservation was tried but failed due to lack of finances, public apathy, and in some cases families that had too many estates and lacked the funds to keep them all in shape. As a lover of antiques and antique architecture I found some of the photographs quite shocking and sad - especially to see something that was so very beautiful in a ruined condition. This book has good historical value for someone interested in the English estates of the past and English history. I would highly recommend it.

Of all the photographs in Country Life magazine's extensive archive, none are more poignant or intriguing than the images of houses that have been lost. In many cases, these pictures are also the only surviving records of important houses and interiors that were destroyed. For the first time, these images have been collected in one volume, providing a powerful impression of the richness and variety of the English country house and of the treasures that were lost through demolition or fire during the 20th century. The range of buildings is surprisingly wide from the Rococo Nuthall Temple, Nottinghamshire, and the Classical serenity of Stoke Edith, Herefordshire to the richly furnished interiors of Highcliff Castle, Hampshire, and one of the great masterpieces of 17th-century architecture: Coleshill, Berkshire. Giles Worsley's illuminating text places the demolition of country houses in its historical context, revealing why so many were destroyed in the last century.

From Library Journal Former Country Life magazine editor Worsley (*Classical Architecture in England*) has set out to examine why certain country houses that were photographed by the magazine were destroyed or demolished during the last century. He explains how government policies and punitive taxation accounted for the disappearance of some, but the decline in agricultural prices, the diminution of the political power of the landowning classes, and World War II further contributed to the destruction of these houses. Approximately 1700 houses were lost since 1900, and this book documents 100 of them. Following the clear and concise introduction are six chronologically arranged chapters. Within each chapter are sections devoted to specific houses, with excellent interior and exterior photographs. Each house is described in a short history and with the story of its loss. This volume documents an important piece of English social and architectural history, providing the only visual record of these lost structures. Recommended for large public and university art libraries. Martin Chasin, *Adult Inst.*, Bridgeport, CT Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *The New Yorker* When the magazine *Country Life* started, in 1897, featuring a British country house in each issue, the way of life such houses represented was at its height. In the following decades, however, as social change convulsed the country, more than a thousand stately homes were destroyed, and these photographs are in some cases the only pictorial record. Worsley's account avoids *Brideshead*-style sentimentality as it details both the various economic factors that caused the decline and the often surprisingly pragmatic attitudes of aristocratic owners. Yet the pictures leave a more forlorn impression. The magazine's custom of photographing houses empty of people makes them seem like ghosts already a kaleidoscope of opulent drawing rooms, abandoned terraces, and silent

staircases. Copyright 2005 The New Yorker Both sad and fascinating