

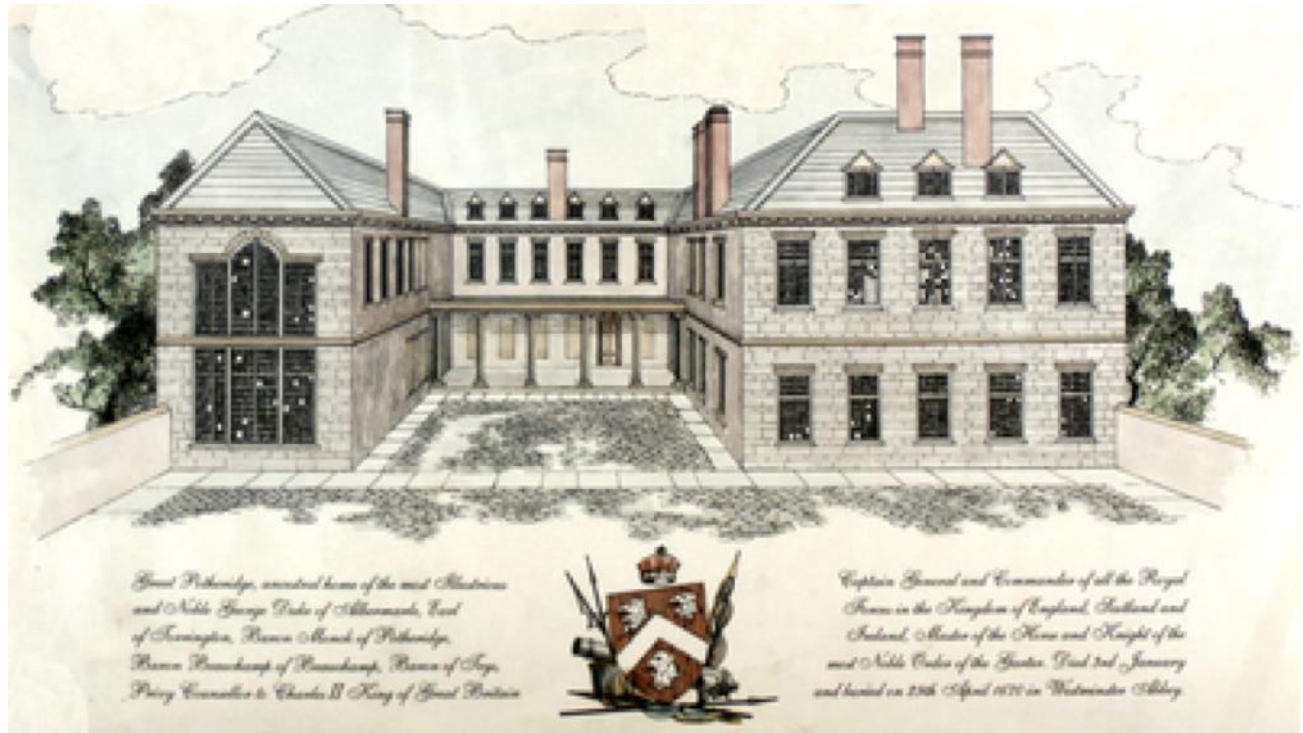
Great Potheridge House - Today (2020 AD)



George Henry Monck was born at the Manor House of Great Potheridge near Torrington in Devon on 6th. December 1608. He was the fourth child and second son of **Sir Thomas Monck**, an impoverished landowner, and his wife **Elizabeth**, daughter of **Sir George Smyth**, a wealthy merchant of Madford, near Exeter.

George became a successful Soldier who rose to the rank of **Royalist General** for **King Charles I** and later fought under **Cromwell** in 1642 as a **Parliamentarian General** and was also appointed as **Commander of the English Navy** in 1652. His success in bringing about the peaceful return of Charles II was duly rewarded by the grateful King with a huge pension of **£ 7,000 per annum** (approx. **£ 700,000 in today's terms**), large tracts of land in North America, and a peerage; being raised **1st. Duke of Albemarle, Earl of Torrington and Baron of Potheridge, Beauchamp and Teyes.**

THE ORIGINAL PALACE at POTHERIDGE



In the 1730s the PALACE at POTHERIDGE was badly damaged by fire.

The part of the PALACE that wasn't damaged became a **three-storey farmhouse**, which contains several notable features from the original building such as the **staircase, over-mantels** (rediscovered in the early 1990s) and the **paneled dining room** with its impressive **fireplace** and **carved coat of arms**.

The Great Barn and the front garden also demonstrate some of the former grandeur of the house. The extent of the original Palace and much of its history remain undiscovered.

The Duke now returned to Devon and set about building a house fit for his new status and wealth. The Duke spent ten years, from 1660 until his death in 1670, building his dream house, and yet it was still unfinished when he died. Built in the local brown freestone, the Duke and his unknown architect planned an H-shaped house on the grandest scale, building more a Palace than mere house.

Though the Duke only enjoyed his Palace for a few years, his wife lived there until her death in 1734. The Dukedom had by this time already died out with the death of the Duke's only son in 1688. The question as to what would happen to this grand house was largely solved when a fire seriously damaged most of the house shortly after the Duchesses death. With no direct heir, no income and no-one to take on the task of rebuilding most of the house was demolished.

Externally little remains, though perhaps enough to show what imposing house Great Potheridge had become. Walls, stables, outhouses and a beautifully coped garden wall all hint at a greater past. The fragment of the Palace which wasn't demolished became a **three-storey farmhouse** which contains two notable features from the house; **a staircase and an over-mantel**.



The staircase was probably a secondary one within the house, but it is grand, nonetheless. The ceiling over it is divided into sections by heavy plastered ribs, decorated with fruit and flowers, which frame paintings allegorical of the Peace and Plenty following the Restoration.

The over-mantel is in a panelled room downstairs which also has massive door-cases topped with curved pediments. The over-mantel itself is of great size and carved in the highest relief. The whole surround is a mass of military trophies, pieces of armour, cannon, pikes, drums, trumpets and banners with the Monk family arms in one corner. In the centre is a medallion containing putti wreathed in garlands and carrying a royal crown. The work is of the highest quality with little to better it from the period in the whole of Devon. Though it's not known definitively who carved it, it is possible that it is by the same craftsman who also may have worked on the Drawing Room at the nearby [Dunsland House](#); one Michael Chuke, who apprenticed to Grinling Gibbons.



Great Potheridge is another lost house about which so much is unknown. As yet there are currently no known images of the house, possibly because it was never finished and with the untimely death

of the Duke and, subsequently, his son, it never gained sufficient fame or standing to become part of the social scene of the area, and so was never recorded.

GREAT POTHERIDGE HOUSE in 2020 AD

Today, Great Potheridge House is the base of ENCOMPASS TRAINING, an outdoor education residential facility for children of all ages that offers full-board accommodation and qualified and experienced instructors.

ENCOMPASS TRAINING is an Approved Activity provider (AAP) for the Duke of Edinburgh Award, the world's leading youth achievement award. As Great Potheridge is located in Devon near Dartmoor, Exmoor & Bodmin Moor and with several national long-distance trails nearby, it is ideally located for all levels of "expedition".

The instructors are able to deliver all elements of training and assessment for **Bronze, Silver and Gold levels for the Expedition section of a Duke of Edinburgh Award**. This includes offering support and guidance in the completion of paperwork, provision of training, practice and qualifying expeditions and assessors, facilitation of the presentation and completion of reports and feedback.

The courses operated by Encompass Training are designed to provide adventurous experiences which require a mixture of physical, mental and social skills. Opportunities will arise to work not only as an individual, but also as a team, on tasks and activities which are challenging, stimulating and enjoyable. But remember, the time spent at Great Potheridge is neither an activity holiday nor an endurance test, but a life skills course, a *real* learning experience, combining decision making, communication skills and responsibility with excitement, adventure and fun!

Programmes can be designed to meet participants' individual needs and requirements. A typical course would run for **five days** but can be extended or reduced to suit you.

We provide: Full boarding accommodation; Bedding; Activity equipment; Qualified and experienced Instructors; A full activity course; All transport to off-site activities during the programme.



Outward Bound...?