Half-timbered houses of the Tudor and Elizabethan periods in Britain

Olga Shkolna ^{1*}, Olha Sosik ¹, Yuliia Shemenova ¹, Viktoriia Oliinyk ², Olha Konovalova ¹ Department of Fine Art, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University ² Department of Arts, Kyiv University of Culture

ABSTRACT

Now half-timbered English houses, upholstered on facades with slanting boards that exhibit architectonics of the framework, and laconically painted in black (brown)-white, are gradually becoming a sign of good taste in the construction of other European countries. However, there are almost no scholars who studied the half-timbered buildings of Britain in Ukraine; however, progressively the fashion for such buildings extends to our country. The article is devoted to the monuments of half-timbered architecture of the late Gothic period (1500-1560s – during the Tudor era (1485-1603) and the Renaissance, the epoch of the Elizabethan style (1558-1603) – the time of the highest prosperity of England. In the specified century, the foundations of folk architecture of Britain were laid, based on the legacy of German Gothic building techniques. Now the traditional half-timbered houses of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales are not only preserved and protected by law in the UK but also undergo a time of quality renovation and a new fashion boom. In this regard, it is relevant to study their unique artistic-figurative and technological features, as well as the specifics of arranging interiors in such buildings, gradually starting to capture not only the inhabitants of Northern Europe, but also its East.

Keywords: Tudor era, Elizabethan epoch, Interior, The 20th – the beginning of the 21st century, Architecture

Corresponding Author:

Olga Shkolna Department of Fine Art Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University 04053, 18/2 Bulvarno-Kudriavska Str., Kyiv, Ukraine E-mail: shkolna6456-1@murdoch.in

1. Introduction

The half-timbered architecture of Britain has its extraordinary medieval charm and flair, which attracts with its simplicity on the one hand, and completeness on the other. The cleanliness of the stylistics of buildings made with the use of this technique pleases the eye with its consummate similarity to the life of the people of the Middle Ages, which is reflected in the special ancientry and "ceremoniousness" of the country where architecture retains its indigenous artistic landmarks and does not change them for many centuries [1-7]. Today's cottage development in England returns to the tastes of previous eras as to well-forgotten old, but time-tested for quality, traditions. In this regard, it is crucial to note that the love of residents to two-story country houses with several acres of land without extra fields (the land remains extremely expensive there) also dictates the particular aesthetics of urban development in this country, which also charms other Europeans who come to the country [8-11].

Now half-timbered English houses, upholstered on facades with slanting boards that exhibit architectonics of the framework, and laconically painted in black (brown)-white, are gradually becoming a sign of good taste in the construction of other European countries. Indeed, in the sense of comfort, such a building can only be compared with the traditional harem-palace architecture of Iran or Moroccan Dars or riads with an open-air



patio. However, there are almost no scholars who studied the half-timbered buildings of Britain in Ukraine; however, progressively the fashion for such buildings extends to our country [12-16]. The half-timbered houses of Britain of the Renaissance are considered mainly in English publications on the history of English architecture, as well as on sites about the list of objects belonging to the national cultural heritage of Albion [17-22].

Among other works, it is worth to highlight two editions, which provide valuable information on the architecture of the late 15th – the early 17th centuries. These are works of Thomas F. Hunt "Exemplars of Tudor architecture: Adapted to modern habitations: with illustrative details, selected from ancient edifices; and observations on the furniture of the Tudor period" [23-27], as well as the book of J. Alfred Gotch "Early Renaissance Architecture in England: A Historical and Descriptive Account of the Tudor, Elizabethan, and Jacobean Periods, 1500-1625" [28; 29]. Unfortunately, these authors did not generalize the list of monuments of architecture of the half-timbered building of the country for the particular regions within a specified period, and their comprehensive analysis is not given. Later primary sources mainly contain only background information within individual monuments. Such is the work of Eric Mercer "English Vernacular Houses. A Study of Traditional Farmhouses and Cottages" [30-37]. The author wrote about circles and rhombuses in the square frames of decorative coffered panels of the Renaissance era and mixed decorative cladding of structures when the outer and inner walls had their wooden frames. He indicated the distribution of the curly ornaments of the facade frame at the end of the 16th century, in particular, curved brackets and circles, as well as the quatrefoils, more common in the north-west of England [38-42].

2. Historical and sociocultural factors of the appearance of the half-timbered architecture in England

From the Middle Ages, the half-timbered development (Fachwerk) (from German Fach – panel, section and Werk – construction) spread throughout almost all of Europe, especially in its northern part, from Poland to Great Britain [43-47]. It originated in Germany in the 16th century (the earliest example is the construction of 1347 in Quedlinburg), spread in the form of a chalet in the Alps. In German, such architecture is called Fachwerkhaus, in French – Colombage, in English – Timber-framed, Half-timber work or Frame-work. In the twentieth century, a new demand for it appeared, since such an architecture is made entirely of eco-materials and doesn't pose environmental threats. At the same time, the buildings are cosy and warm, do not have extraneous odours and completely fit into the framework of traditional architecture, and not in conflict with the environment [48-53].

Half-timbered houses (otherwise – the Prussian wall) in England were first raised by the invited Germans, and it is reflected in the name; then the local builders adopted this technique. It is based on a framework wooden loadbearing structure, the gaps of which are filled with adobe brick (a mixture of clay with straw and reeds), brick with clay (puddle clay), rubble and earth, and sometimes they are filled with complete timber. The most prosperous citizens could afford to fill the spaces between frame parts with carved panels (after all, the timber in Britain of the indicated period was extremely expensive, this fact led to its generally cost-effective use, only as a framework of the facade). In England, in small cities on the central streets, such houses often had additionally carved verandas, balconies and bay windows, that brightened up the facades and reminded of their use as villatic, suburban houses [54-60].

It would appear that the first builders of half-timbered buildings in the UK were invited Germans-Masons. They laid the foundations for a new understanding of a utilitarian comfortable post-Roman building that found its embodiment in the period of the local so-called perpendicular Gothic, which in other countries bore the signs of the Flamboyant style. In the Tudor period (1500-1560s, when monarchs Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI and Queen Mary ruled) [61-66], masters from the Netherlands began to appear here, with whom the early Renaissance waves of architectural influences from Europe were perceived precisely through the prism of the Northern Renaissance, and later of Mannerism.

The development of a new type of architecture in this period was partially associated with the invention of gunpowder, after which the defensive function of the building was no longer relevant. At the same time, the Anglican (Protestant) church was singled out as an independent branch of the Christian religion. During the indicated period of the Reformation, Catholic monasteries were mostly dissolute or destroyed, and their lands were freed up for the small gentry. That is why, in the sixteenth century, the final transition to secular development of territories was carried out [67-72]. And the vast majority of the existing cathedrals and abbeys remained executed in the Gothic and, in particular, the perpendicular style. Indeed, it was after the reformation of the church, that a flood of Protestants from the Netherlands poured into Britain, and they implemented the know-how. The complete cultural revolution in the architecture of England of the 16th – the early 17th

centuries was associated with the era of the Elizabethan style (1558-1603) when after the processes of the so-called "Dissolution of the Monasteries" [73] during 1536-1541 as a part of the reforms of the Catholic Church of England, the need arose to redistribute land and redevelop some territories. At this time, the invited architects began to perform orders principally for private ensembles, in which they tried to embody elements of the late Cinquecento in Italy, the Renaissance architecture of France, the Plateresque style in Spain and Northern Mannerism, appealing to the heritage of medieval castles.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 gave rise to the development of prosperity of Great Britain, to the improvement of its financial position that stimulated raising the well-being of the broader circles of people and the introduction of manufacturing in different branches [74-78]. The development of feudal relations within the framework of the manorial right between the lands of the lord and subordinate peasants (such as contemporary farms), laid the foundation for new relationships of the capitalist type. Against this background, the agricultural sector was strengthening. A special place was given to the private lands of gardens, squares, parks, which are still in private hands in the UK (even in central London there are still locked in landscaping areas); as well as the livestock breeding.

Foreigners were often invited to establish the mentioned spheres of life. England from the late Middle Ages became a rich country where the first banking relations and an early high-quality European education were formed (Oxford was founded as early as 1096-1170, Cambridge was open already in 1209/1210 year; in the 13th-14th centuries students here already received a scholarship; in the 14th century – several educational institutions in Scotland were founded.) Besides the local students, training for foreigners was also prestigious here, some of which tried only to visit these lands for self-education. Thus, gradually, in the same building with new tastes and wishes of customers, versions of the Dutch gable, Flemish strapwork and geometric structures in the spirit of perpendicular Gothic could be combined. In the Elizabethan period, English freemasons began to creatively rethink the architecture heritage of other European countries based on the materials from early printed sources, which have become available since that time. The proportions of the internal space also slightly changed. From the second half of the century, in the composition of buildings, it was customary to introduce long walking galleries, which complemented the interiors with a large central hall and additional small rooms (including for the servants) [79; 80].

Often, it was the German masters who had somewhat rough tastes who were invited to decorate the interiors. In connection with their presence in the half-timbered buildings, starting from the Elizabethan time – the period of the highest rise of English architecture, ensemble features began to appear. So, in a single style, thick constructive timber attic frames were made out, and window openings were enlarged, inside of which there were window-lintels or supports on which the glass was held. At the same time, under the influence of the Early Renaissance, the often-pointed gables of the top of the buildings took the form of a Dutch gable – a horseshoe-shaped gable [81], a kind of doubled top that loosened down, as if creating a mannered letter "M". The first glass for them was imported from abroad, it cost a huge amount of money, and for the more prosperous customers, it was brought even the Venetian and Murano glass. It gave a special "rural" character to the images of buildings with a series of multi-lintel windows. Gradually, the production of local glass was improved with the help of foreign experts from Normandy and Lotharingia, who helped to establish production technologies at the plants in Staffordshire, Hampshire and London. They also produced pottery and glassware for the interiors of such buildings [82-85].

The brick chimneys, often patterned, were a decoration of the image of a half-timbered mansion or country house. Inside, they were connected with huge Italian-style fireplaces (large enough to roast an ox), because most of the invited specialists in the interior decorating were Italians at that time. They were engaged in wall and ceiling decorations with carved panels and composite painted ornaments. Given the common historical past as a part of the Roman Empire and the kinship understanding of the sustained exquisite Renaissance style at the indicated time, such experiments were often quite successful.

3. Types of English half-timbered houses

Examples of Tudor architecture include the development of Oxford, Stoke-on-Trent, Stratford-upon-Avon, and the like. Some manor buildings of an earlier time for warming could be supplemented with half-timbered structures. For example, like Gainsborough Old Hall in the ceremonial county of Lincolnshire, built in the second half of the 15th century, and supplemented with additions of Elizabethan time in the latter half of the 16th century. It has preserved a late medieval kitchen with a fireplace and a magnificent Great Hall. The external half-timbered walls had a pattern of straight parallel rows of beams [86-91] (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Gainsborough Old Hall in the ceremonial county of Lincolnshire the construction of the latter half of the fifteenth century) [11]

One of the earliest is the half-timbered cottage Edlington Hall at Edlington in the ceremonial county of Cheshire. It is reliably known that the oldest part of the house here was erected between 1480 and 1505 years (the Tudor period), and the east wing was completed in 1581 (the Elizabethan period) (Figs. 2-3).



Figure 2. Edlington Hall Cottage at Edlington, Cheshire (the construction of 1480-1505, 1581) [12]



Figure 3. Cheshire cottages of the Tudor era; in the foreground is the facade of the building with sculptural elements that appeal to the traditions of Gothic carvings [13]

Among the earliest half-timbered buildings of England in the ceremonial county of Cheshire, one should also mention Gawsworth Old Hall, located in the countryside near Macclesfield. It was reduced during the years 1480-1600 and is an example of early Tudor-Elizabethan architecture [92-95]. In it, in addition to decorative elements of the facade with figured bay windows and stained-glass windows, the structural and ornamental decoration of which consists of motifs of "trees", parallel stripes, "bowling pins" (a la silhouette of a human figure) and the elements of the "spade" type, there are preserved lateral chimney pipes and furnishings – a

watch and a compass of a later time. Now in the building, as a monument of architecture, there is a museum (similar museums were created in numerous half-timbered buildings of that period, say [96], like Blakesley Hall in Birmingham in the ceremonial county of Worcestershire, 1590, where various wall panels have been preserved (Figs. 4-5).



Figure 4. Gawsworth Old Hall, Church Lane, Gawsworth, ceremonial county of Cheshire [14]



Figure 5. The interior of the half-timbered house of the layman in Blakesley Hall in Yardley, Birmingham, in the ceremonial county of Worcestershire, 1590 building, where carved wall panels and elements of furniture and decoration of the 17th century are preserved [15]

A well-known example of the early Renaissance British half-timbered architecture is the Feathers Hotel, the Bullring, Ludlow, (the ceremonial county of Shropshire, not far from the border with Wales), with Renaissance twin arches and carved ornaments on the peak of gabbles, cruciform elements and bas-relief sculptural heads on the facades of the walls [97-103], bay windows of the second or third floors, the honeycomb-like (diamond) patterns of stained-glass windows (the modern look – the restructuring of the early seventeenth century based on the facade of the previous period) and tiles. It looks quite "urban" compared to the "village" house under the thatched roof of Shakespeare's family in Stratford-upon-Avon (Figs. 6-7).



Figure 6. The house under the thatched roof of the family of W. Shakespeare's wife near Stratford [16]



Figure 7. The living room of Shakespeare's family house with an ensemble of the coffered wall panels and sideboard doors [17]

Sometimes, facades, like Dutch, German or Swiss, were equipped with built-in "mechanisms" that attracted attention to a particular house and showed resourcefulness of the owner, who was ready to please and entertain guests and onlookers [104-107]. At the same time, the elements of decorative wooden frames and an attic flooring as a kind of console often appeared outside the facade, sometimes a landscape with a geometrically verified layout and a small garden echoed these details, sometimes even small fountains have spread. One of the most "decorative" half-timbered buildings (or rather additions such as several two-storied wings) of the Tudors period is the Hall I' th' Wood building on Green Way and a part of Crompton Way Avenue in Bolton, ceremonial county of Greater Manchester [108] (Figs. 8-9).



Figure 8. Tudor Time Building Hall i' th' Wood in Bolton [18]





Figure 9. Interiors of the Hall i' th' Wood building in Bolton [19]

The wooden frame of this building, in addition to the usual "Christmas trees" and a lattice with right angles, and "cubes" inside the intersections; it is set out by the curved shapes of double "waves", double circles with crosses in the middle, and wing-like elements resembling clubs; and cross-type patterns, such as a dark-brown snowflake with 4 foils in the center of a white square. It is noteworthy that on the roof of the building the silhouettes of four chimneys placed in a row, laid out of brick with decorative masonry, are emphasized. This cottage has preserved some interiors; you can see a fireplace, carvings of ceilings and stairs, wood panels, and wooden furniture with wooden canopy [109-111].

4. Features of Bramall Hall, Vernacular Houses, Little Moreton Hall

The largest half-timbered building, made in the style of late Gothic – early Renaissance, is a Tudor manor house called "Bramall Hall", which is located in Bramhall, within the Metropolitan Borough of Stockport, ceremonial county of Greater Manchester. The construction began in the late Gothic period of the 16th century, but the main stage in the formation of the image of the building fell precisely on the reign of the Tudor dynasty within 1450-1505. However, the completion and improvement of individual elements of the structure, located on 28 hectares of land and currently works as a museum, was carried out later – during the 16th-19th centuries.

A variety of solutions to the pattern of the half-timbered facades of this architectural complex consists in the use of quatrefoil ornaments with rounded petals, quatrefoil ornaments with truncated and pointed foils at the ends of the upper and lower petals of the clubs (the so-called "Moroccan quatrefoil"), Christmas tree motifs, where the lines of branches are oriented downward, as well as parallel straight lines, which also form a certain rhythm and give the image of the ensemble a specific dynamics [112-118]. The decoration of this manor complex is a group of plastically modelled chimneys laid out with redbrick, shaped like a bolt with two nuts at the ends, which form a decorative thickening of the kind of base and capitals in the column. At the same time, the core of the central part of the pipe itself, in each case, is decided differently, from afar resembles an element of Moorish architecture, where special attention has always been paid to the decorative component Thus, individual elements from the outside are decorated with a pattern similar to a lancet ornament in the glass. Other chimneys should have decorations of the kind of skew lattice, appealing to patterns of Moroccan stucco in arches (mugarnas or honeycomb vaulting), or diamond-cut or convex bubbles like "warts" – decor, also on that day were common in glass-making. Separate groups of chimneys that demonstrated updated building ventilation technologies (the technical know-how of that time, which significantly improved the quality of life, tried to put on display) were located in four at the corners of the square base with a "beam", others were arranged in a row of five. The pattern in them was not repeated (Figs. 10-11).



Figure 10. Tudor Manor Bramall Hall (the construction of 1450-1505, improving the image of the building – the 16th-17th centuries; Bramhall Village, ceremonial county of Greater Manchester, Stockport area) [20]

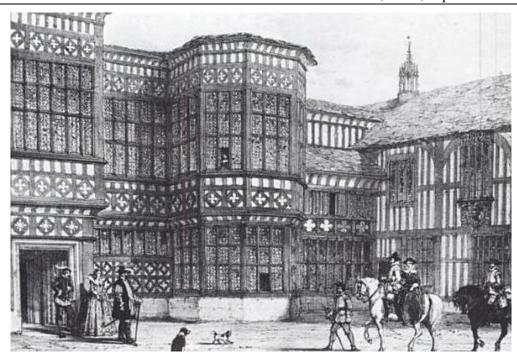


Figure 11. The Bramall Hall courtyard of the development of the early 17th century with large bay windows of the Great Hall and the Excerpts Room, recorded in the 19th century [21]

The combination of individual parts of the building with brickwork with the main facade, made as a halftimbered structure with the corresponding aesthetic prerogatives is another interesting aspect of the figurative component of this ensemble. The gabled roofs with single or double crease here correspond to rectangular lattice windows with stained-glass. At the same time, there are no extensions of the superstructure of the first and second floors to the ground floor, which in the future will become characteristic features of construction in the specified style, with the bay windows accents. The completion of the gallery, as well as the updating of the interiors here, took place in the post-Elizabethan time, at the very beginning of the 17th century [119]. In rural areas, the houses of the inhabitants according to old habits were installed on the base in the form of the letter "H". Such structures sometimes looked like the "birdhouses" of the same size (of the second and third (attic) floors) were connected on a narrower foundation, between which the expressive verticals of curly chimneys protruded between the patterns repeat. Typical examples are Tudor buildings in Stoke-on-Trent in the ceremonial county of Staffordshire near London [120]. Sometimes, externally and internally, they were supplemented with gilding. The buildings, as a rule, were crowned with roofs of shingle, Dutch tile or slate tiles, as well as thatched roofs, which became obsolete after the ban of the 1660s. Until now, in England, the work of specialists who updates the traditional shingles or tiles of old designs, are extremely highly paid, and the order of the same craftsmen is sometimes mostly scheduled for 4-5 years in advance since traditionally there is a demand for these types of services. The floors in such houses, obviously, taking into consideration the fire stability, were made of earth or tiles. The walls were painted white. Moreover, in the entire ensemble of buildings, along with household (sheds and outhouses). Places for conveniences were arranged outside the house, in the backyard. Usually, they washed inside the house, for which each bedroom had individual hygienic devices – jugs with basins for bathing, night pots, sometimes enclosed in a "transformer throne" and others [121-126].

The chambers of such ordinary inhabitants were furnished with carved, often heavy furniture, sometimes with imported exotic wood: boxwood, ebony, sycamore, and holly berry. Furniture for seating was decorated with high backs, in the manner of a throne, which was upholstered in durable cow leather. The walls were decorated with tapestries such as French and Dutch arras, heavy Italian materials, which served as wallpaper, as well as in wealthier houses with oriental carpets. Since Elizabethan time, carving in furniture became more active. New types of furniture have spread – like small cabinets into three open shelves of the sort of cupboards. At the same time, the edges and brackets were decorated with carved details. In more prosperous families, at this time, large beds received their roof, made as if a wooden canopy. Separately, these structures could hold a fairly high headboard and racks, not necessarily connected to the bed. One of these beds was preserved at Speke Hall in Liverpool, whose half-timbered design was constructed during 1530-1598. The

ornamental decision of the facade of this house is interesting with it's made of oak rhombic constructive motifs with crucial circles inside (Figure 12).

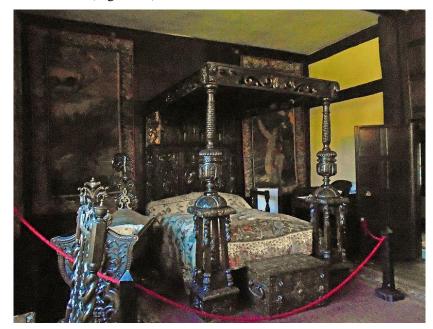


Figure 12. An example of the English manneristic bed with a wooden canopy that has similarity with elements of Spanish-Portuguese motifs, and arras around in the interior, the image of which was mainly formed by the sixteenth century [22]

The forms of arm-chairs were also more diverse. In addition to square ones, triangular ones appeared among them. Various structural details of such items were processed at that time on a lathe, so that things looked perfect, had very bizarre and difficult to manufacture elements that are examples of new furniture art. The principal kind of timber at that time was oak, although ash, cherry, walnut, and yew were also used. Large composite massive chairs were also used, they were vaguely reminiscent of curule chairs, which were called in England "Glastonbury chair", the back of which was often decorated with carvings from two arches. Also, at this time, the fashion for "Flemish" and "upside-down chairs" prevailed. Often the latter were inlaid with ivory in the "Italian manner" and decorated with a pillow (for women). It was customary to read sitting on them [125]. In common houses, wooden panels often were patterned into the manner of Manneristic Palladianism — with bizarre entrelacs-like ornamental motifs (which were performed by Dutch masters), appealing to mannerism, and echoed the ceiling ornaments. Signs of the influence of Italians in this direction are noticeable in many half-timbered buildings of that time. In addition to wooden panels, doors, fireplaces, there could be furniture upholstery and tablecloths with embroidered a la Turker ornament. However, the general tones of the interior mainly appealed to the natural colors of trees and greenery, stone and plaster. Thus, the colors of the parts in red-ocher and green colors were accepted.

An early example of a Tudor-Elizabethan-style half-timbered house, half made of wood, is Little Moreton Hall, also known as Old Moreton Hall in Cheshire during the years 1504-1508, mid-16th century (about 1559) and the first years of the 17th century. Here, for large streams of light, the windows of long galleries-verandas and some rooms were no longer filled with oak membranes, or chessboards made of twigs, leaving them free, smooth and transparent. However, the rhombic, cruciform patterns and decor in the form of an equal-armed-cross within a circle on the walls of the facade gives the impression of a fabulous gingerbread house, predicting some further searches within Naryshkin baroque in Russia. At the same time, dazzling white ceilings that shaded the color of wood were decorated with fantastic patterns of the type of grotesque and stucco moulding, tinted by painting or gilding. However, there was no particular tradition to have the ceremonial galleries of portraits of ancestors even in gentlemen's houses, but in more prosperous families there was a fashion to hang out paintings made in the Venetian traditions [127; 128].

Now Little Moreton Hall is recorded in the National Heritage List for England. In this building, the authentic bay windows are valuable in terms of the artistic-figurative component, as well as structural and planning elements associated with halls, galleries, a gatehouse, a brewery, a kitchen, a dressing room, and a bedroom. One of the halls of the middle of the 16th century is decorated with a sculpted stucco image of the chest. The chapel of the late 16th century contains tempera Renaissance painting. Plasterwork in the Great Hall has the

remains of gilding and color staining. The roof of the building was covered with tiles. In the interior chimneys (some of which had blue bricks in the masonry, like the one in the Great Hall, viewed through the fireplace, decorated from the room with the caryatids and the coat of arms of Catherine I) were connected to the Elizabethan fireplaces. The redbrick masonry of the buttresses stood out against the background of the image of the structure in color, like chimneys that had a diapering in blue brick. The half-timbered framework was made of oak; the partitions were filled with ordinary and Flemish bricks (of the freehand moulding). The floors of one of the stories are made as plasterwork with the use of plaster and ash.

In Little Moreton Hall, the outer plan was resembling a rectangle; it looked like a square with a cloister. Two of the three floors in some parts looked like "birdhouses" connected angle-wise on the arms of the cross. In the house, there is a wardrobe, a large refectory table, and also in one of the bay windows — an octagonal table. The interiors of the mansion, which had large territories, expanded during the Dissolution of the Monasteries, and stood on an island, were described in Inventory 1599, in which the presence of a round table was noted. The author of the magnificent bay windows of this building was Richard Dale [76]. The furniture was echoed by the rhythm of the oak panels with which the walls and the attic of the galleries were covered. The patterns of these decorations appealed to the mystical signs of the fraternity of Freemasonry and were compatible with the plastic decor in separate rooms. The leaded windows of the building are formed by leaded panes, set in patterns of squares, rectangles, lozenges, circles and triangles, reflected in shades of green, yellow and lilac colors due to the admixture of metals and decorations on a timber frame. Some rooms have stained glass windows, the pattern of which resembles four faceted emerald-shaped stones with diamonds in between (Figs. 13-15).



Figure 13. One of the parts of Little Moreton Hall, also known as Old Moreton Hall, in Cheshire, England. It was constructed in the mid-16th century [23; 24]

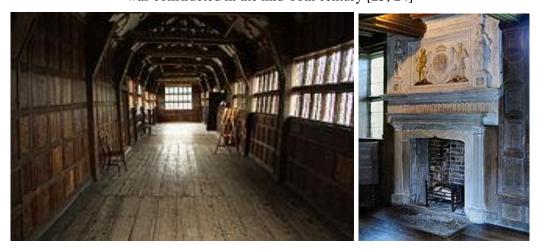


Figure 14. Little Moreton Hall, the interior of the Long Gallery. Photo by Richard Croft; Fireplace in the Parlour with plasterwork overmantel displaying the royal arms of Queen Elizabeth I, circa 1559 with Caryatids on either side [25]



Figure 15. Little Moreton Hall. Another facade of the Tudor days with a long gallery under the roof and decorative masonry chimneybreasts with blue brick [13]

Some superstructures of the glazed galleries of the upper floor of Little Moreton Hall, by their weight, caused the curvature of the walls and made the lower floors to bow and warp. The decoration of the attic gables, with winglike cross-linked images, complements the building's image system and corresponds to several mannerist-like Northern Renaissance walls with a golden "coffered" decor and somewhat rude paintings on dry plaster in the style of plot miniatures of handwritten books on the theme of the apocryphal legend of Susannah (Protestant themes) in the Great Hall (a living room) [32].



Figure 16. Little Moreton Hall: the wall with golden "coffered" decor of panels and paintings on dry plaster in the style of plot miniatures of handwritten books in the Great Hall (a living room) [26]

5. The development of half-timbered architecture in the Elizabethan Era

The half-timbered buildings of the Haslington farmland (built during the 16th – 19th centuries), the facade of which is decorated with Christmas tree decorations, quatrefoils and pointed concave rhombs, are similar to this; as well as the Gawsworth Old Hall (built during the 15th-16th centuries), with a decor in the form of "trees with branches" and quatrefoils, and "bottle" motifs of the facade of the second floor. Both of these monuments are nearby Cheshire – former Chester [12]. In those houses where there were not enough savings for valuable arrases, based on the descriptions of a contemporary eyewitness Harrison, the walls were sheathed with panels that were exported from eastern countries (possibly meaning the Baltic states), or made from local oak, and also covered with painted fabrics (possibly painted silk), which depicted plot stories, zoomorphic, ornithomorphic, phytomorphic and skeuomorphic motifs. Over time, elements of weapons and heraldic emblem of the family could be hung in the interiors of noblemen.

Since the time of Elizabeth I, a new type of English architecture, which has already acquired the character of sustainable (with high roofs, several, often figured type, chimneys, large windows and bay windows and balconies on the first floor) has not succumbed to the influence of the order system of the Italians, dictated the European fashion in the then world. Some structural and planning features of the buildings at that time were somewhat rethought as a reflection of Dutch and German mannerism. First of all, under the influence of early Palladianism, the number of floors could increase, the exhaust system with pipes was improved, due to which the need for large ceremonial halls with a huge fireplace fell away.

During this period, half-timbered buildings were erected in the south and north-west of the Kingdom. Given that in rural areas, due to the high probability of fires, the law did not allow the building to be erected closely, a necessary condition was to leave spaces between them, which led to the formation of a type of manor house – a cottage for one family [23-26]. As in contemporary suburban buildings on the ground floor, there were mainly storage and utility rooms, a hall, a kitchen and a lobby. The first floor, to which the staircase led, was for bedrooms. Subsequently, this kind of building became popular in cities. At the same time, the conservatism and restraint of the British were more manifested inside such premises. If we speak about balance and proportion in general, then in the post-Tudor periods and the first time of the Elizabethan era, in architecture some particular, refined and sometimes asymmetric forms, reigned. Later, architects and interior decorators already adhered to clear symmetry and equilibrium [129; 130].

The "Golden" style of the Elizabethan period is confidently evidenced by the building of the Globus Theater, erected in London in 1599, where W. Shakespeare's plays were staged during his lifetime (restored for the second time from descriptions found and excavated remains of foundations in 1997). It is designed as a round amphitheatre with several outbuildings and entrances, in which the stall, according to a long tradition, remained open-air, however, surrounded by galleries with comfortable places for wealthy visitors. The roof with reliance on the ancient Roman tradition is only over the stage. At the same time, the rather ascetic structure was executed as a half-timbered building both in design and in external plank division and decorative solution of the facade.

6. Conclusion

So, the conservatism, as a specific mental trait of the British, which was rooted in the Gothic tastes of residents, showed itself very well in local half-timbered houses, which were common from the Tudor and Elizabeth I eras and were in demand until the eighteenth century inclusively, and the fashion for which returned in the twentieth century. The formation of the "faces" of cities, towns and rural centers in Britain due to the proliferation of the half-timbered houses of inhabitants, cottages and estates during the late fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when the ordering of the territories was not due to ecclesiastic but to secular development, acquired the feudal pre-capitalist character. The mannerism, that is, the orientation towards established, somewhat old-fashioned traditions, in British architecture of the Tudor-Elizabethan era was emphasized as a local tribute to aesthetic ambition. The development of feudal estates in medieval England and Scotland with dependent and free peasants within the framework of manorial law at the same time contributed to the strengthening of the capitalist type of agricultural enterprises. In such a system, even parks and squares became private, which is still observed today in the way of life in England, including London. In general, it is worth noting, that from the half-timbered construction of the Tudor and Elizabethan periods, there are about 20 highly artistic monuments protected as part of the national cultural heritage in the UK. If in the first period mainly rural and urban houses developed, the second is indicated by manor and palace buildings. Among the morphological solutions of half-timbered buildings at this time, which refers to the socalled Early English Renaissance, there was compositional freedom and decorative approach in the decisions of facades. There were the influences of Italian Renaissance in solving of fireplaces; German impact was in structures and construction equipment; the Dutch and Flemish style dominated in the interior decoration of the rooms with wooden panels, paintings, plastic decor and arras and decorative fabrics. The medieval studies influenced the Moorish search for individual solutions of chimneys and decorative elements of the halftimbered pattern. Massiveness and orientation towards Portuguese-Spanish patterns with elements of Moresque style were appreciated in the furniture of houses of Elizabethan times.

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