



Kent Academic Repository

Brittain-Catlin, Timothy (2015) *Picturesque, Modern, Tudor-Style : Edgar Ranger in Thanet*. Twentieth Century Architecture: Houses: Regional Practice and Local Character (12). pp. 34-47. ISSN 9780955668746.

Downloaded from

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/50418/> The University of Kent's Academic Repository KAR

The version of record is available from

<http://www.c20society.org.uk/publications/>

This document version

Publisher pdf

DOI for this version

Licence for this version

UNSPECIFIED

Additional information

Versions of research works

Versions of Record

If this version is the version of record, it is the same as the published version available on the publisher's web site. Cite as the published version.

Author Accepted Manuscripts

If this document is identified as the Author Accepted Manuscript it is the version after peer review but before type setting, copy editing or publisher branding. Cite as Surname, Initial. (Year) 'Title of article'. To be published in *Title of Journal*, Volume and issue numbers [peer-reviewed accepted version]. Available at: DOI or URL (Accessed: date).

Enquiries

If you have questions about this document contact ResearchSupport@kent.ac.uk. Please include the URL of the record in KAR. If you believe that your, or a third party's rights have been compromised through this document please see our [Take Down policy](https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies) (available from <https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies>).



2 Picturesque, Modern, Tudor-Style: Edgar Ranger in Thanet

ig Barn,
airs house
Ranger for
his family
nd office,
ed in 1925.
bay towards
the main
en front
1932-3

In this case it is the estate agents who have got it right. Advertisements for houses in Thanet at the easternmost tip of Kent designed by the interwar neo-Tudor architect Edgar Ranger proudly display his name – even describing him, in one recent case, as ‘the nationally and internationally known architect’.¹ As early as the 1930s, when they were only a few years old, sales particulars recognised that these were well designed and detailed houses by an ‘artistic’ architect. But English Heritage, on the other hand, has rejected several applications for listing, and until the new edition of 2013, the Pevsner, John Newman’s *North East and East Kent*, had failed to mention any of them.²

Yet these are fine buildings: even when glimpsed from the street they are notably superior to the large number of neo-Tudor villas in which Thanet excels. The high quality of their brickwork and detailing continues all the way around to the back, in contrast to the many where the best facing bricks stop just beyond the edges of the front elevation, and render and inferior ironmongery take over at the rear. Ranger’s houses have a number of identifiable characteristics, and for those who enjoy inter-war neo-Tudor they provide plenty of reasons to defend the style against those critics who find it unimaginative and repetitive. Most significantly, perhaps, they show what happened to the legacy of mid-late nineteenth-century architects – the ones who might be called ‘architects’ architects’ – when prolific provincial ones were inspired by them. A new story about how things worked out over the early decades of the last century starts to emerge. And yet as is so often the case, the range and the professional environment of localised architects such as Ranger – who chose an aesthetic ignored by mid-century critics and failed to present a useful set of ordered documentation – have conspired to ensure that their work has been all but forgotten.

Ranger built some forty houses in Broadstairs and Cliftonville, excluding various extensions and minor works, and about the same number of houses elsewhere. Some are large villas; many are middle-sized or small suburban houses. Nearly all of the Thanet buildings survive, but there has been at least one prominent casualty and several have been badly mutilated. Only Long Barn is listed. His largest work was the atypically Italianate Thanet Place, for Sir Edmund Vestey, designed in collaboration with Sir Charles Allom and which appears briefly in Clive Aslet’s *The Last Country Houses*.³ Thanet District Council has not retained records of any inter-war building applications, and nor has the Thanet contractor W. W. Martin, which built many of the houses, retained their copies of plans; those who know most about the houses are the residents themselves who, even if they are not descendants of Ranger’s original clients, stay in touch with each other intermittently and exchange information and experiences.

One important single source of information, however, may yet prove to be the salvation of Ranger’s reputation. In 1996 his son Anthony collated lists of his father’s projects with dates, costs, and clients’ names. He also compiled a separate list for the Thanet houses, giving street addresses for most of them. The main list is bound together with a collection of photocopies of the many articles published during his father’s lifetime on his work: he was a particular favourite of *Ideal Home*, a monthly produced by the *Daily Mail* and linked to the annual Ideal Home Exhibition in London, and, apparently, of *Homes and Gardens*, but his houses also appeared in the German magazine *Innen-Dekoration*; some of his ideas for remodelling dilapidated London terraced houses, probably the result of his war work, appeared in *The Builder*. Ranger junior, who died in 2009, distributed the compilation amongst the present-day residents of his father’s houses. He also gave one to the architectural historian Nick Dermott, who had recently joined the district council’s planning department, and it is from that copy that much of this description of Ranger’s life and career is based.

Ranger was not a Man of Kent. He was born on 8 September 1888 in East Peckham near Tonbridge on the far side of the county, and started his career in Gerrards Cross in Buckinghamshire, where he was articled from 1906–09 to Kerkham, Burgess & Myers. The practice, of two architects and a surveyor, was a new one, established following the

Figure 2. Poynings, on the North Foreland Estate to the north of Broadstairs, designed for William Morris in 1924. The half-timbered first-floor bathroom, left, was added four years later (Timothy Brittain-Catlin)



Figure 3. The porch bay on the north-west side of Poynings: the front door is hidden within the recess. Ranger occasionally designed half-timbered sections of wall that looked as if they reused old materials (Timothy Brittain-Catlin)

opening of the railway connection with London; Julian Gulson Burgess (1876-1933) was the nephew of the Leicester and London architect Edward Burgess.⁴ Another young architect to join the practice that year was Walter Holden (1882-1953); in time Holden became a partner, changing the name of the practice to Burgess, Holden and Watson, although he soon achieved a reputation as the principal designer of branches of the National Provincial Bank.⁵ The office that Ranger joined was kept busy designing neo-Tudor houses, mainly half-timbered and rendered, for the fast-growing estates that make up the Edwardian town; it also designed the prominent row of shops with oriel windows and rendered gables over jettied upper storeys close to the railway station on Packhorse Way.⁶

Ranger's own houses were neo-Tudor from the start; there are very few exceptions. He reused favourite ideas for new clients in different places with variations only in detailing. The first house in Anthony Ranger's compilation is Old Basing, of 1913, built by Edgar for himself in time for his marriage, followed by Cottered of 1919. The two houses are located in neighbouring plots, in Austenwood Lane, Gerrards Cross: both are vernacular late Tudor, with tile-hung upper storeys and tall chimneys; the small porch at the inner corner of Old Basing, at 45 degrees between the wings, was developed into a more significant bridging feature at Cottered, suggesting (not quite accurately) a butterfly plan. Ranger almost copied the Cottered plan and elevation for his Poynings of 1924, one of his first houses in Broadstairs. It is a plan that makes sense for villas set in relatively small square suburban plots, because the wings can enfold a private garden whilst keeping it quite separate from the entrance arrangements nearby. An article illustrating Old Basing in the *Studio Year Book of Decorative Art* for 1913 shows an 'old English' panelled dining room which was also repeated in style and character in countless houses to come. The design of the motor house – by the 1920s already called a 'garage' on Ranger's plans – was generally incorporated into that of the house, or otherwise formed part of the overall composition of the scheme.

But if Ranger used a relatively small range of architectural devices, and even reused house names including Old Basing, he compensated with originality of detail, particularly in its frank archaism. At Poynings an irregular timber frame, which looks (as does some of the interior carpentry) as if it might have been reused from an old building, as possibly it was, encases equally irregular herringbone brickwork nogging.



South Jet, the
in Ranger's
airs cluster,
ark Road.
ed in 1927
Martin,
r of the
tors who
his houses
tain-

A jettied, hipped and orielled bathroom extension of 1928 to the same house is frankly quaint.⁷ Ranger's wrought-iron ironmongery and fine leadwork are more substantial than they are in run-of-the-mill houses, with the decorative ornamentation of the lead rainwater hopper and downpipe different for each house. Ranger also liked stylish gimmicks such as a telephone niche or an en-suite cocktail cabinet big enough to stand in. Unlike the Gerrards Cross ones, the first Thanet buildings have corner windows. In several houses, including his own, there is a 'charming' studio (as described by a contemporary estate agent) over the garage, reached in at least three cases, again including his own, by a picturesque timber ladder.

Although Ranger's work at first glance may suggest Osbert Lancaster's 'Stockbrokers Tudor', his high quality archaisms pay tribute to George Devey, that architect's architect.⁸ Some of Devey's best houses – constructionally, meatily 'real', gratifying, and aesthetically winsome – are located in both east and west Kent. Ranger spent the years 1909-11 sketching in Kent and Sussex, according to his son, and Devey's Leicester Square of 1848-51, at Penshurst, is but a young man's short bike ride from Ranger's Tonbridge.⁹ Ranger's quaint timber ladder stairs surely owe their origins to Devey's home farm range at South Park nearby, built in 1850, and like Leicester Square easily visible from the public road. If nothing else buildings like these, whether Devey's or Ranger's, demonstrate John Ruskin's contrast between roughness and delicacy, and much else, changefulness included; it is odd how most interpretations of neo-Tudor fail to recognise that. One of Ranger's largest, but oddest, early schemes was for the remodelling of Stanmore Manor in Middlesex, which in 1926 he turned from a shapeless

but inoffensive late-Victorian tile-hung ‘Wimbledon Transitional’ building called The Croft, vaguely Arts and Crafts, into something that looks a bit like a set design for a creepy, irregular, sprawling half-timbered olde-Englishe mansion.¹⁰

Anthony Ranger did not explain what brought his father to Broadstairs, the middle and most genteel of the three Thanet towns, but according to Anthony’s son Simon he had regularly holidayed there before the First World War, in a flat above a shop facing onto the tiny square on Harbour Street which leads down to the jetty and the beach.¹¹ According to his nomination papers to join the RIBA as a Licentiate, he ran his own office in Gerrards Cross from 1911-15, and, after enlisting, ended the Great War as a lieutenant with the 7th Queen’s Regiment in France.

The client of the first recorded executed house was a Mr Chapple, who commissioned Old Tolmers in 1923. Ranger houses seem to have been built in clusters, one happy customer perhaps recommending his architect to the purchasers of neighbouring plots, and Old Tolmers now sits at the centre of an impressive Ranger group. It is located at what was then the end of the built-up part of Stone Road, which leads north from the centre of Broadstairs towards the North Foreland lighthouse and the strange collection of mid-eighteenth-century follies at Lord Holland’s estate at Kingsgate. In 1923 he designed Chaileys, next door to Old Tolmers, for Archibald Martin, the second-generation proprietor of W.W. Martin who erected most of Ranger’s houses; then came Noran Cottage behind them to the west at No.42 Castle Avenue, one of a recent estate of streets named after chess pieces and which provides ample opportunity to compare Ranger with contemporary Rangeresque.¹² A fourth house dated by Anthony Ranger to 1923 is Little Campden at No.2 Park Road almost directly opposite Chaileys; the client was a Rev. W. Ranger, and Simon Ranger says that this was probably Edgar’s uncle William, a vicar in Kensington. The finest house of this group is the slightly later Barn Jet (1927) at No.3 Park Road, the second house built for Martin. According to one Ranger family connection, the architect himself lived here briefly at some point, suggesting that he was managing to circumvent the prohibition on RIBA members acting as property developers.¹³ It was also the only one of this cluster to have been published, and deservedly so. Although rendered on the upper floor, unusually for Ranger, it was picturesquely and stoutly framed of oak. It has a sleeping balcony on the easternmost corner, and is set in a dell behind what is still a pretty although much reduced garden on the road side.¹⁴

These clusters of Ranger houses are mostly built in the estates which had been first laid out in the early years of the century around the pleasant beaches outside Broadstairs town centre: on or by the North Foreland estate just beyond Stone Road to the north; and Dumpton Gap, to the south west, off the new Ramsgate Road. During the inter-war years empty sites there filled up fast. The most delightful of all of the clusters is, however, the one which sits around Callis Court Road, the old route from St Peter’s, the inland medieval core of modern Broadstairs, out to Joss Bay at the easternmost tip of Thanet. It was the extension northwards of a stretch of road nestling below the railway track called Beards Hill, now Bairds Hill, which is noted for the fact that the architect M. H. Baillie Scott was born in one of its five houses in 1865. It is not known which of these, nearly all nineteenth-century, Scott emerged from – but it is tempting to imagine that it was the fine sixteenth-century half-timbered one that has survived in the shadow of what was then the new railway line, making him the product of an agreeable melding between the ancient and modern.

Ranger’s own first Broadstairs house, Long Barn, was completed in 1925 about 450 yards north of this poignant location. Did he know who had been born there? Anthony Ranger mentions Scott as the first of his father’s two declared influences, alongside Edwin Lutyens, so very possibly he did. As Alan Crawford has put it, Baillie Scott’s houses ‘say “Home sweet home” so sweetly’, and so do Ranger’s; as *Ideal Home* put it, his work showed ‘a fine geniality of atmosphere’.¹⁵ It is fair to surmise that Ranger was



Figure 5. Ranger's own house, Long Barn, was originally completed on a small scale in 1925 but he continued to extend it in a similar style as late as the 1950s (John East)

Figure 6. Long Barn's staff cottages and garage on Callis Court Road (1932), opposite the main house (John East)

positioning himself in the same field as his hero. Long Barn has a long south elevation divided into three gabled bays, but the ground floor originally contained only a single large reception room and a separate dining room in addition to the kitchen and offices. The living room was dividable by curtains, an economical homage to Baillie Scott's ideas about versatile planning. In the entrance forecourt and attached to the dining room Ranger built a garage, with a timber ladder leading to his picturesque studio above; this was heated by a characteristic archaism, a Tudor-Gothic corner fireplace in rough brick. Here he worked alone but for a typist and, at busy times, a copyist for drawings; he also maintained an office at No.9 Gray's Inn Square in London. The architectural editor of what appears to be *Homes and Gardens* – it is not possible to identify the publication title and its date from Anthony Ranger's compilation – managed to fill two pages of text with a description of the house – stretched out somewhat to include glib poetic references to Thanet's sands and breezes – and this no doubt served as a useful advertisement. The house, now listed, also appeared in *Architecture*, in January 1926, and in *Country Life*.¹⁶

The cluster around Long Barn came a little while afterwards: in 1932-33, as he was leaving Broadstairs, Ranger enlarged the house for Joshua Levitt by building out the central bay on the garden side and extending the house to the west; he also built a large staff house with garages on the other side of Callis Court Road.¹⁷ Just beforehand he designed Oak Cottage for another Levitt, perhaps a brother, immediately to the south of the staff house. Oak Cottage has a prominent decorative, pargetted gable to the roadside, by then another Ranger feature, and a fine fireplace. In 1932 he designed a small master's house for St Peter's Court boys' preparatory school at what is now No.29 Sowell Street, just a hundred yards to the south of Baillie Scott's birthplace.¹⁸

The two other clusters are less concentrated but contain between them many houses of interest. One is to the north of the Stone Road / Park Road cluster and includes several houses on the North Foreland Estate, and the other is to the south of Broadstairs inland from Dumpton Gap. The worst loss to Ranger's work in Thanet was the demolition in 2007 of Edgecliff, later Sheridans, on the southernmost edge of the North Foreland group. This was a long narrow house like Long Barn, although larger, and was designed in the same year; as before, the lower storey was brick, and the upper one tile hung, with a single half-timbered bay at one end, the structure of which projected slightly outwards from base to eaves. Built for Arnold Leiner, Edgecliff was published in 1928, together with a short article by Ranger and views of two other of his houses, in the German journal *Innen-Dekoration*, a considerable tribute to the architect considering that only four other non-German-speaking architects were illustrated in the magazine that year, all world famous: Barry Parker, Henry van der Velde, Jin Watanabe from Japan, and Frank Lloyd Wright.¹⁹

Poynings, mentioned above, was just to the north of Edgecliff, and a cottage called The Little House, now subsumed into a much larger building, was close to the end of its drive. To the west of Edgecliff a large house on Stone Road itself originally named Pines Hurst, now North Foreland Manor, appears more or less intact from a distance but was partly altered and rebuilt following bomb damage. It was built for W. H. Thompson, the Ramsgate brewer, who required balconies with sea breezes for his disabled son.²⁰ A fine survivor with something of the quality and character, if not the scale, of these two is Windy Ridge, at the northern end of the estate just below the North Foreland lighthouse.²¹ It was built in 1926 for A. P. Cork and has survived unchanged, complete with a 'charming study or boudoir' with an eyebrow window above the garage at the narrow north end as admired by the estate agents. In their sale particulars, printed for its only subsequent resale in 1936, they described the house as a 'Picturesque Modern Tudor-Style Residence' and drew attention not only to its 'grand sea views' but also to the fact that it had been designed by 'the artistic architect, Mr Edgar Ranger'.

Much the most unusual building of this cluster, however, is the large Italianate

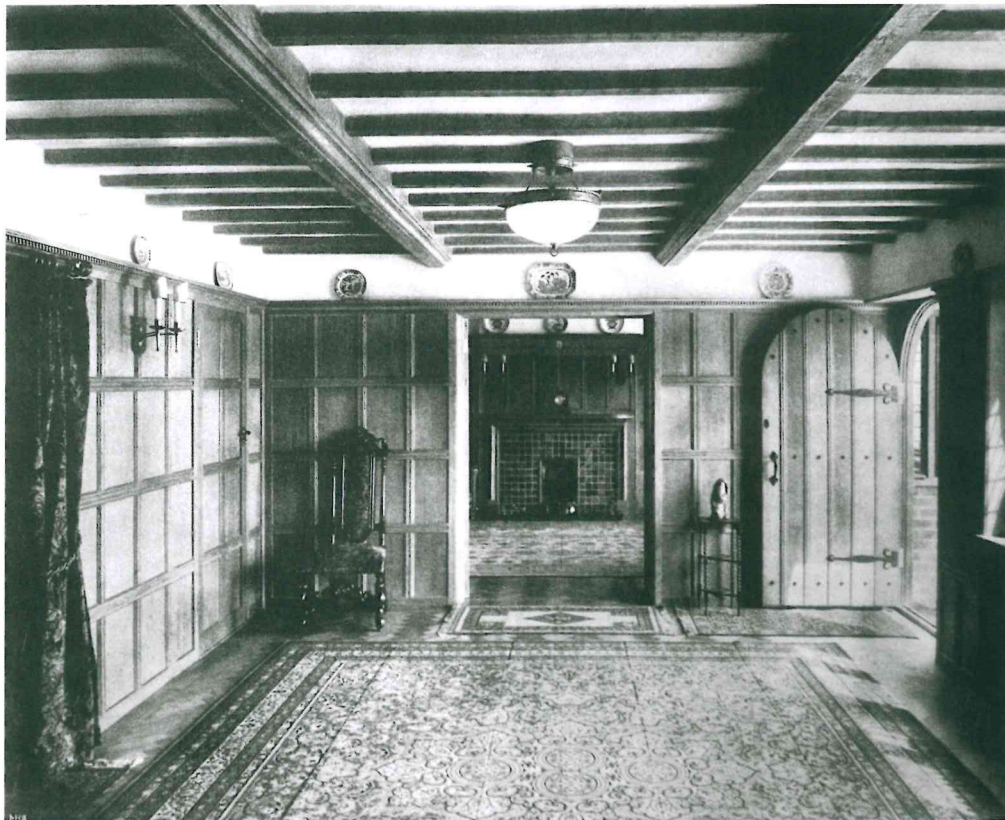


Cottage, Percy and located south of road, prominent asterwork, just left, extension

mansion called Thanet Place designed and built by Ranger in 1926-28 in collaboration with Sir Charles Allom for Sir Edmund Vestey, the beef magnate. Vestey had returned to Britain in 1919 from business operations in Argentina, where he and the family firm had based themselves to avoid the high rates of British taxation; according to a biographer, he failed to convince a royal commission to change the law in his favour, but in 1921 he both acquired a baronetcy and devised a complex scheme that reduced his tax bill to his satisfaction.²² He also remarried, and decided to build a house on a site that would allow him to watch his ships passing through the English Channel. This is the only building designed by Ranger in an Italianate style, and it seems likely that the idea for it came from Allom, grandson of the architect of many of the houses on the Ladbroke Estate in Notting Hill and himself a high-class decorator: his firm, White Allom, had worked at Buckingham Palace and St James's Palace for Edward VII, at the Frick mansion in Manhattan during the First World War and for Queen Mary.²³ A reasonable assumption is that Allom, having sketched out his idea, referred Vestey to a local architect who could complete the design and supervise the project.

Thanet Place is a curiously unsatisfactory building. Its site was always relatively small, about seven acres, so it feels as if it is crammed onto it, especially since the house faces south-west rather than east towards the sea. There is something spindly about the colonnade that runs around it, and the detailing seems crude: it is tempting to condemn it as the product of a tax avoider who preferred a decorator to an architect. Yet Anthony Ranger's list includes building costs and this one is given as £100,000 – a colossal sum. It is hard to see what it was spent on: surely even the interior decorating, carried out by Allom's own firm and which included an Aeolian organ and an innovative window detail that drew the attention of *The Builder*, did not soak up so huge an amount?²⁴ Was the house expensively equipped with up-to-date technology within? Did the evasive Vestey build large, secret, underground chambers, as many in Thanet have historically done? For the chalk beneath is soft and as, for example, a Victorian view of the West Cliff in

Figure 8. The entrance hall of Edgecliff, as seen by readers of the German journal *Innen-Dekoration* (1928). The house was demolished a few years ago (Architectural Association Library)



nearby Ramsgate will demonstrate, it was once fashionable to build rooms with impressive sea views into the cliffs. *The Builder* published a photograph of Thanet Place's only large room, the oak-panelled but sparse central lounge hall and staircase; as these have recently been subdivided out of existence it is difficult to assess what merit they might have had as spaces.²⁵

Allom's interest does not seem to have extended as far as the lodge, or the coach house, modestly called the 'garage building'. These are clearly Ranger's work, designed in his usual style: Anthony Ranger's compilation includes a cutting from the *Daily Express* of 1927 pointing out that these, being in the 'Queen Anne style', will provide 'a contrast' to the main house. Ranger may at least have charmed Hannah Vestey, his client's daughter, because he completed a large residence for her in Dixwell Road, at the western end of The Leas, in Folkestone, in 1930. This is more akin to his usual style, a sort of regularised Tudor – inter-war Jacobean, perhaps.²⁶ In the Thanet Place cluster Ranger also designed a small master's house for Stone House School, one of the many 'high-class' boys schools in the area referred to by the vendors of Windy Ridge, and located opposite Pines Hurst.

The new estate around Dumpton Gap at the other, southern, end of Broadstairs was more modest than North Foreland, with smaller plots. Ranger designed three houses in Waldron Road, one street back from the sea front: one large one of 1926, Corner House, at the junction with Leyborne Road at the northern end, and two smaller ones, Three Gables (No.32, 1924) and Clanna (No.18, 1934).²⁷ On Park Avenue, to the west beyond the Ramsgate Road, the plots were bigger: he designed Ladram at No.38 with picturesque, irregular half-timbering and brick nogging in 1924 and, five years later, Walcheren, at No.52. This latter house attracted the attention of a writer of an article for another unidentified magazine – perhaps *Homes and Gardens* again – included in Anthony Ranger's compilation. This article too has an overstated feel to it – the house, in reality a small suburban villa recessed slightly from the building line, is described here

dy Ridge
> smaller
Edgecliff
re,
t tip of
reland
seen here
h east.
s not
since it
26
tain-



as a 'delightful country house stand[ing] well back from the road' – but the three pages of text and illustrations show a pleasant home with 'silvery toned oak' features in the stair hall and an ornamental fireplace wall. A close look at the house today reveals some very pretty ornamental plasterwork – this is, unusually for Ranger, a mostly rendered building – including pargeting around the front door and a fine band of foliage above the upper-storey windows. A little later, in 1934, Ranger added the small Dove Cottage at No.40.²⁸

Ranger's pre-war work in Broadstairs also included two fine pairs of semi-detached houses on Crow Hill and King's Avenue: they form a mini-cluster with Bradstow Lodge, a cottage on the former. There is also a charming, tiny flower shop of 1925 near the railway station with a Deveyesque combination of stone and brick on its street front, which has survived (with rear additions) as a Quaker meeting house, and there are various other cottages, garages, extensions, alterations and outbuildings.²⁹ The great advantage of the Tudor style is that additions can be added subtly and graciously: even a practised eye would be unlikely to be able to distinguish, at Ranger's own Long Barn for example, the parts of the house that were added later, and whether they date from the 1930s or even the 1950s. In Cliftonville, the easternmost part of Margate to the north-west of Broadstairs, Ranger built houses either side of Rutland Avenue: the picturesque, oak-lined Five Ways of 1924 at No.44 Devonshire Gardens; and Bretaye at No.36 Princes Gardens the following year, with a large budget the size of that of Edgecliff. He also designed a much smaller house at No.6 Avenue Gardens nearby.³⁰

During this period Ranger occasionally built elsewhere: the remodelling of Stanmore Manor has been mentioned, and this project included a large gatehouse. Anthony Ranger's compilation includes a substantial house in Wimbledon of 1926 based around an uncharacteristic large staircase hall – 'Aldwych Farcical' in style, if one may return to Osbert Lancaster for a moment – called Old Court, with a canted bay like that at Edgecliff, pointed timber windows and more brick nogging. He designed another house called Long Barn, also with a den reached by a timber ladder, this time at



Figure 10. Thanet Place, a large house on a relatively small site designed in collaboration with Sir Charles Allom. This view from the west shows part of the garden front just before the recent conversion of the building into flats (John East)

Portsdown Hill in Hampshire, in 1931. The following year he built a somewhat functionalist restaurant not far away at the Clarence Pier at Southsea: ‘a dream café come true’ according to the local paper, but if so it was one which was short lived.³¹ He also designed an exhibition pavilion for display at the London Olympia in 1934 for Thomas Lawrence and Sons, the well known Bracknell brickworks.³² In fact from the late 1920s onwards he was carrying out plenty of work in Hampshire and the Home Counties.

In 1934 Ranger moved from Broadstairs to Marlow in Buckinghamshire, where two years beforehand he had built himself a house: again, Anthony Ranger did not explain why. Broadstairs is at the far end of a peninsular, and possibly his father had felt that it was too inconvenient to spend so much time travelling to visit sites, especially if the estates where he had done his most rewarding work were now almost fully developed. In 1936 he designed Spinfield, a large house in Marlow that at £8,500 was bigger than any of his projects beyond those for the Vestey family; possibly this was the commission that caused him to leave the town. He came back to Broadstairs after the war mainly for old clients, it seems. He added a further building at St Peter’s Court boys’ preparatory school, designed a small cottage adjacent to one of his earlier houses in Luton Avenue, and made further additions – a flat over the garage – to Long Barn for its new owner. Ranger also built three pairs of semi-detached houses for W.W. Martin on the corner of Bromstone Road and Ramsgate Road, and in 1962-63 designed a final house for Archibald Martin: Woodside, behind Long Barn, thus augmenting his Callis Court Road cluster.³³ The style of these late houses is still neo-Tudor, if it is anything, although now they are simply designed in brick alone. But for the most part, the productive Thanet chapter of his career was over.

From Anthony Ranger’s compilation one can see examples of the many houses that Ranger went on to build. Some are large and impressive, such as Arran Court in Purley, Surrey, with its decorative pargetted gable reminiscent of that at Oak Cottage

in Broadstairs; several reuse or readapt a few major features such as the timber steps to up the den. The houses are spread all around villages on the outskirts of London: the cluster phenomenon of a small town at a time of rapid development was a thing of the past, and Ranger's work now joined that of many others building at the time. Thus the Thanet period of his life is a story in its own right.

There are other reasons, too, why this is the case. Look at the photographs of his houses in Marlow, Bray, Purley, Arkley, and the others, and you will see them sitting in lush gardens or well-tended suburban settings. Those at the easternmost point of Thanet are, on the other hand, for the most part located on sites that were then – and still are – unremittingly bleak, the best efforts at gardening scarcely coaxing recalcitrant shrubs to rise more than a metre or so. *Country Life's* correspondent when reviewing Long Barn in 1925 observed that the house's site had 'no trees and not a single feature of natural beauty', and furthermore thought that Ranger's tall narrow chimneys made the scene look even bleaker.³⁴ It seems part of the overlooked history of neo-Tudor building in the 1920s and 1930s that these were houses that tried to create not only pleasant, reassuring elevations and interiors, but also a kind of broad ambience that extended from building to building, and across the gardens between them: Joan Hunter Dunn might be found at tennis there. Ranger's clusters of houses are almost big enough to have that effect, but the harshness of the local landscape has largely defeated them. They want to be optimistic, ambitious buildings trying to bestow, retrospectively, a sunny attitude onto the most humble Elizabethan domestic architecture that no doubt the original only very rarely possessed. They are trying then, like much architecture, to 'recreate' a non-existent romantic past. It was a guess that Baillie Scott was born in the pretty half-timbered house by the railway bridge; perhaps, in fact, he was born in one of the plain Victorian villas and longed for the whole of his life to recreate the dream world of the Tudor one next door.

1. This is from the recent sales particulars for Five Ways, Cliftonville (1924): <http://www.zoopla.co.uk/for-sale/details/15913662>, accessed 1 December 2013.

2. An application to list Pines Hurst, by Ranger (see below), was rejected on 10 August 2004 because of post-Ranger alterations to the house, some of them following bomb damage, but some recent: case note 156822. But of course houses are altered when they are not listed, and they are not listed because they are altered. The most recent *Buckinghamshire Pevsner* (1994) is a little better, including two houses out of the many that Ranger designed in the county.

3. Clive Aslet, *The Last Country Houses*, New Haven and London, Yale, 1982, p.329.

4. Obituary: *RIBA Journal*, vol.40, no.17, 22 July 1933, p. 743.

5. According to his obituary, *RIBA Journal*, vol.60, no.7, May 1953, p. 297, Holden joined the National Provincial Bank as the assistant to the bank's architect F. C. R. Palmer in 1920: this was only a year after the Burgess practice had been relaunched under its new name. It is unclear whether he maintained any practical connection with Burgess, Holden and Watson thereafter; Ranger's nomination papers to become a Licentiate of the RIBA in 1930 mentioned that Holden 'was with this firm'.

6. Some research into Kerkham, Burgess, and Myers was published on the internet at the time of the Gerrards Cross Centenary Exhibition in 1906: <http://www.gx2006.co.uk/pages/burgess.html>, accessed 2 December 2013. The estates where the practice built a large number of houses were designated a conservation area in 2009.

7. Poynings is now Dean Park, and is located at the junction of North Foreland Avenue and Cliff Road. It is largely unchanged but for a recent rear extension and some alterations to the garage and kitchen.

8. Ranger's mentors Kerkham, Burgess and Myers worked in Osbert Lancaster's 'Wimbledon Transitional' – that is, their houses displayed a 'plentiful use of pebbledash... [a] giddy treatment of gables and [a] general air of self-conscious cosiness'; and Burgess's uncle Edward had designed simultaneously in various historical styles, for example a neo-mid-Georgian reference library in Bishop Street, Leicester (1904-05) and a Free Gothic St Edward's House in Great College Street, London (1903-05). Thus the story of Ranger and the context he sprang from elegantly demonstrates the unfolding styles of the period between the 1900s and the 1930s and the generational distinctions between them. For more on Wimbledon Transitional and Stockbrokers Tudor, see Osbert Lancaster, *Pillar to Post*, London, John Murray, 1963 edition, pp.74, 76.

9. Biographical information, unless noted otherwise, is from the introduction preceding p.1 of Anthony Ranger's, 'A Selection of Houses designed by Edgar Ranger, R.I.B.A.', unpublished typescript, 1996.

10. With Burgess, Holden and Watson: see *ibid.*, pp.13-19. The house survives with a fine gatehouse by Ranger and is mentioned in Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, London North West*, London, Penguin, 1991, p.292, but without an architect's name.
11. Author's telephone conversation with Simon Ranger, 14 April 2013.
12. Old Tolmers, at No.101 Stone Road, and Noran Cottage survive apparently intact from the outside; Chaileys, No.99 Stone Road, soon became Stepping Stone Cottage, and has been recently very much enlarged.
13. Message from Chris Meredith, Anthony Ranger's nephew, to Elaine Harwood, 11 October 2011. According to Anthony Ranger's list, his father built four houses for himself in Gerrards Cross, as well as several others, which reinforces this impression.
14. Barn Jet, now Middlemarch, seems largely intact, although the sleeping balcony has been enclosed. See *Ideal Home*, April 1929, p.350.
15. "Home sweet home": *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 'Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott', online; 'Fine geniality': *Ideal Home*, *ibid.*
16. *Architecture* (published by *The Builder*), vol.4, no.9, June 1926, p.299; *Country Life*, vol.58, no.1488, 11 July 1925, pp.77-78. The house was listed grade II on 7 February 2007.
17. He made a further extension to Long Barn in 1955 when he added a flat over the easternmost garage (Ranger 1996, *op.cit.*, p.94).
18. Extant. The rest of St Peter's Court, the prep school attended in 1910 by the future Duke of Gloucester, has been demolished, including (presumably) its choir house, a late Ranger building of 1960, leaving behind merely Ranger's cottage and a poignant pair of gothic gate posts.
19. 'Englische Landhäuser von Architekt Edgar Ranger', *Innen-Dekoration*, 1928, pp.214-28. The other two houses illustrated are Ranger's own Long Barn, and a 'Landhaus in Cliftonville' that appears to be Bretaye (see below).
20. See note 2 above. The brewery is in fact called Tomson and Wooton: 'Thompson' is from the local *Kelly's* directory for 1929 and Anthony Ranger's list.
21. Edgecliff, Ranger's most expensive neo-Tudor building in Broadstairs, cost £6,500, and Pines Hurst £6,000; Windy Ridge was a modest £3,300.
22. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 'Sir Edmund Hoyle Vestey', online (entry by Richard Perren).
23. My thanks to Ross Finocchio of New York University for information regarding the Frick house.
24. *The Builder*, vol.136, no.4484, 11 January 1929, p.107. There is also a plan of the house on p.105, and a view of the garage building on p.98.
25. The house is accessible from Stone Road just south of the turning into Cliff Road. After a long period in use as an old people's home, the house was converted into flats in 2012-13. Ranger 1996 includes photocopies of a series of views, including the entry hall, which appear to have come from *The Builder* but if so they are unindexed and untraced.
26. Hannah was a recurring name in the Vestey family, but daughter seems the most likely.
27. All extant.
28. All these houses in the Dumpton Park cluster have survived, apparently intact at least from the outside. Almost directly opposite the junction of Park Avenue with the Ramsgate Road are located yet more of Thanet's many architectural surprises: two pairs of semi-detached houses by Ernő Goldfinger at Nos.167-73 (odd), of 1952-53.
29. No.42 Crow Hill/ Nos.2-6 (even) King's Avenue and No.19 Crow Hill. The former flower shop is on the corner of Fordoun Road and St Peter Park Road. At St Alban's Court, Nonnington, in east Kent (1875), Devey designed a large mansion in red brick set over irregular courses of stone to give the impression that the house was built over the remains of a much older building.
30. All three houses are extant; Bretaye has been subdivided.
31. Long Barn survives, on Portsdown Hill Road north of Cosham. The 'dream café' at Southsea is referred to in an undated, untitled local newspaper cutting in Ranger, 1996, and was also illustrated and described in *The Builder*, vol.141, no.4638, 25 December 1931, pp.1036 (text), 1039 (view).
32. *The Builder*, vol.147, no.4779, 7 September 1934, pp.376-7.
33. Nos.116-20 Ramsgate Road/ Nos.3-7 Bromstone Road; No.4 Fig Tree Road: all extant.
34. *Country Life*, vol.58, no.1488, 11 July 1925, p.77.