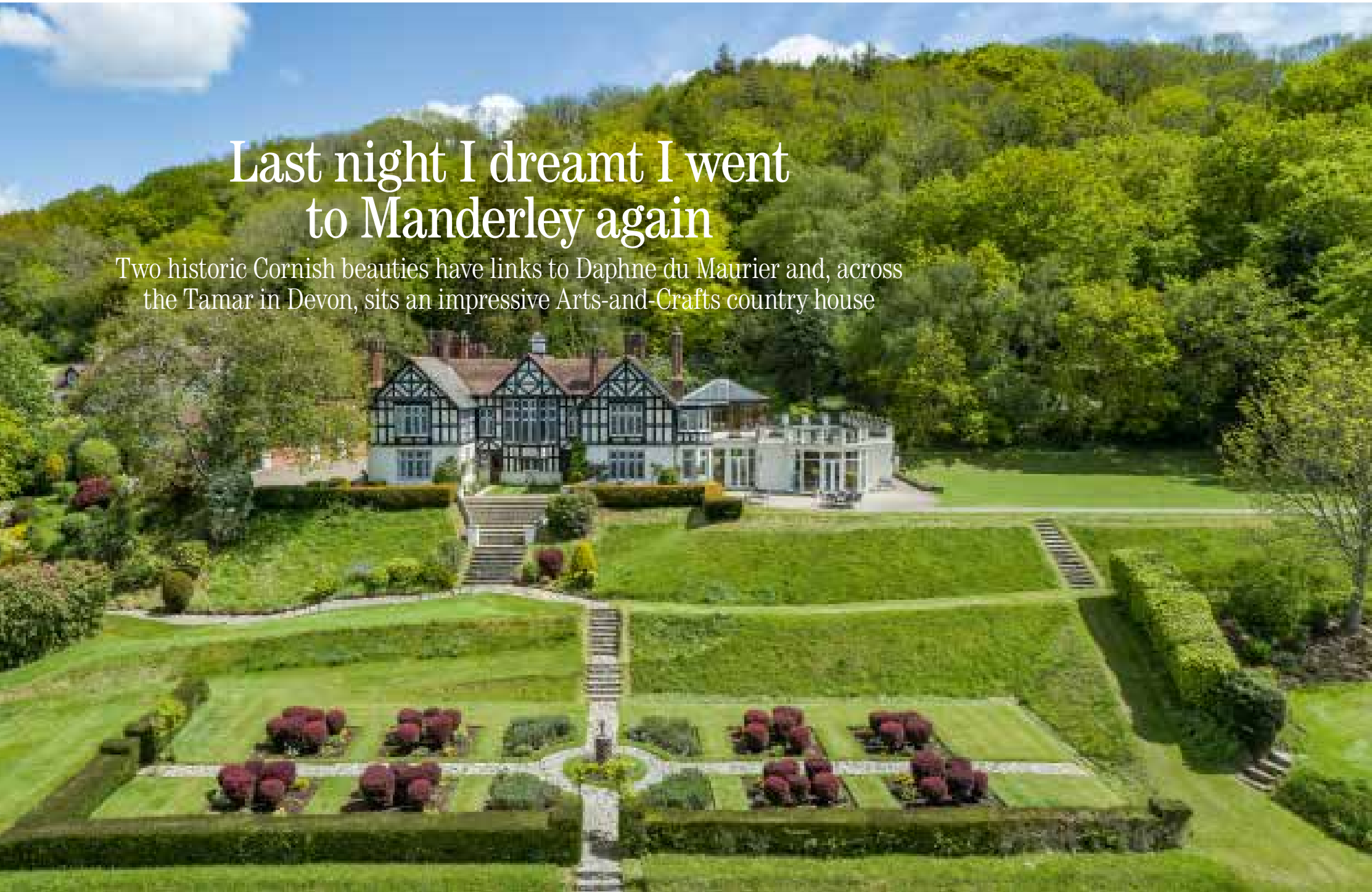


Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again

Two historic Cornish beauties have links to Daphne du Maurier and, across the Tamar in Devon, sits an impressive Arts-and-Crafts country house



Arts-and-Crafts Trow Hall offers some 10,000sq ft of living space and 33 acres of grounds near Devon's Jurassic Coast. £3.3m

THE Jurassic Coast resort of Sidmouth lies at the mouth of the River Sid in a picturesque valley between Peak Hill to the west and Salcombe Hill to the east, surrounded by the East Devon AONB. Although its origins predate recorded history, Sidmouth remained a village until the expansion of coastal resorts in the 18th and 19th centuries saw it established as a fashionable seaside retreat of international renown.

Wealthy patrons built grand Georgian and Victorian houses in and around the town. However, in the early 20th century, a triumvirate led by Col J. E. H. Balfour of Balfour Manor, with his solicitor W. H. Hastings and the architect R. W. Sampson, changed the face of Sidmouth. Thanks to a number of early commissions initiated by Col Balfour, who as lord of the manor was extremely influential in local affairs, Sampson quickly established his architectural practice in the town.

For a period of more than 40 years following his arrival in 1891, Sampson was responsible for almost the entire architectural layout of early-20th-century Sidmouth. A prodigious design portfolio included residential and commercial projects, great and small, among them the town's flagship Victoria Hotel. Over the years, he designed hundreds of houses in and around Sidmouth, at least six of which were built for his own occupation.

Many of Sampson's grandest country houses were built in his favourite Arts-and-Crafts style, among them the classic Edwardian Trow Hall, 2½ miles inland from Sidmouth, and 16 miles south-east of Exeter. Built in 1902, it is now on the market through Knight Frank (020-7861 1717) at a guide price of £3.3 million.

Although unlisted, the imposing 10,243sq ft house, which stands on high ground overlooking the Sid Valley, has retained its Edwardian splendour, thanks to a sympathetic programme of modernisation executed



The 'captivating' Bellschat estate and farmhouse in Cornwall overlooks the River Fowey. The estate also comes with a small barn which offers two further bedrooms. £2.25m

by its current owners and the privacy and protection provided by its 33 acres of established formal gardens, parkland and woodland. Approached up a long drive through banks of mature woods, the hall enjoys far-reaching westerly views and an abundance of natural light. It comes with garaging for five vehicles, outbuildings, a stable and some disused farm buildings.

The impressive reception hall sets the tone for the rest of the house, its centrepiece the grand Edwardian staircase with its double-height ceiling and dramatic, leaded-light window rising to the galleried first-floor landing. The ground-floor accommodation includes three large reception rooms, a kitchen/breakfast room and snooker room that leads through to a palatial indoor swimming pool and seating area. There are six bedrooms, five bathrooms and a large home office on the first floor, which also boasts a conservatory and roof terrace, plus two self-contained apartments, one on each floor, each having its own separate entrance.

Across the River Tamar, the town of Fowey is one of Cornwall's most charming and historic seaports, which evolved over the centuries from a fisherman's village to a medieval port and a busy base for pirates. This is Daphne du Maurier country par excellence and two exceptional coastal properties currently on the market both have links to the author.

Truro-based agents Lillicrap Chilcott (01872 273473) are handling the sale, for the first time in almost half a century, of

Grade II-listed Bellschat Farmhouse and its two-bedroom barn set in some 37 acres of undulating grounds and woodland, half a mile inland from pretty creekside Golant on the River Fowey, the first village upstream from the bustling harbour town.

Offers around £2.25m are sought for the captivating small estate, the main house of which is thought to have originally been two cottages, built in about 1840. The farm itself may once have been part of the Menabilly estate owned by the Rashleigh baronets, descendants of John Rashleigh of Penquite House, Bellschat's nearest neighbour, which can be seen some miles away across the cliffs. Said to be the inspiration for Manderley in *Rebecca*, Menabilly was leased in 1943 in a dilapidated state by du Maurier, who restored it and made it her home before returning it to the Rashleighs in 1969.

Bellschat, with its farmhouse and barn, represents an exceedingly rare opportunity to create a magnificent and totally private waterfront estate in a truly spectacular setting, the agents suggest. Approached off a discreet private lane, its nearly 1,000ft driveway overlooks grounds that include woodland to one side, with tantalising glimpses of the creek through gently descending pasture and paddocks. At the bottom of the valley is the railway line linking Par with Lostwithiel and, on the other side of the line, a precious sliver of waterside land owned by Bellschat Farm fronts the River Fowey.

The farmhouse comprises a kitchen/diner and three reception rooms, with four ►

Property market



Above and below: **Grade II*-listed Great Treverran in Cornwall sits in 5½ acres and offers four bedrooms and other outbuildings. £1.65m**

bedrooms of modest size and two bathrooms on the first floor. The barn, previously used for holiday lets, has a kitchen, a large reception room, two bedrooms and a bathroom. Both houses now need renovation and refurbishment.

‘If there’s a prettier house in Cornwall than Great Treverran, we aren’t aware of it,’ says Truro-based agent Jonathan Cunliffe (01326 617447) of the exquisite, Grade II*-listed gem of a country house set amid rolling countryside in the parish of Tywardreath, to the west of the Fowey estuary and south of the riverside town of Lostwithiel. The town of Fowey itself is four miles south. Tywardreath means ‘The House on the Strand’—the title of one of du Maurier’s more obscure novels, inspired by Kilmarth, the house where she lived after leaving Menabilly. The book includes several references to Great Treverran.

Mr Cunliffe quotes a guide price of \$1.65m for the classic Queen Anne house—a rarity in these parts—the first reference to which was in the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1327, when ‘Treveryan’ was the seat of a branch of the Courtenay family. In 1700, they sold it to John Thomas, who built the present house in about 1704. Thomas’s grandson, Henry, inherited the property in 1817, but died childless, after which it was sold to Richard Foster of nearby Lanlivery.

Described in its listing as ‘a fine early-18th-century house [built of] Pentewan stone masonry with granite dressings’, Great Treverran benefits from its construction using local materials and skilled craftsmen. Distinctive features of the south front are the four full-height, granite Ionic columns, which extend through the eaves with a continuous granite cornice.

Not large, but perfectly formed and unspoilt, Great Treverran faces south over its 5½ acres

of well-kept gardens and grounds towards undulating farmland beyond. It offers 3,250sq ft of comfortable and well-proportioned accommodation, including two main reception rooms either side of the wide central hallway, with a kitchen and spacious breakfast room at the rear. There are three bedrooms, a bathroom and shower room on the first floor, with a further bedroom and nursery on the second floor. It comes with a studio/workshop and other useful outbuildings. 🐾

