

NATIONAL TRUST Como Historic House & Garden Primary Teachers' Notes



Primary Education programs at Como

Como Historic House & Garden is one of the last surviving 19th Century grand houses of Melbourne.

Students can compare the life of 19th Century children and families to their own experiences on a tour of the house where the lives of the 19th Century children are brought to life.

They can learn about the hardships of working life in the servants quarters as well as handling and examining old domestic utensils and objects to work out their original purpose.

Como provides a unique record of an upper class family's lifestyle in early Melbourne. The original kitchens and servants' quarters offer an insight into the daily lives of their serving staff.

Activities for students:

Take a tour of the house and learn about the Armytage family

Try your hand as a servant and visit an original kitchen and laundry. You might have to do some clothes washing.

Solve a Mystery Trail in the 3 acre grounds
Play Old Fashioned Games like croquet.

We can tailor this program to match your curriculum requirements.

Sessions & numbers:

4 hour Day 10.00am - 2.30pm

For groups up to 60 in number. Groups should be split into 4 equal groups prior to arrival.

We require one accompanying adult for every ten students.

Bookings & Program Information:

Phone 8663 7263 or email:
bookings@natrtrust.com.au

Cost:

\$10.80 per student.

Teachers & Parents/ Carers are free.

How to get there:

Cnr. Williams Rd & Lechlade Ave, South Yarra.
Bus parking available on Williams Rd.

Public Transport:

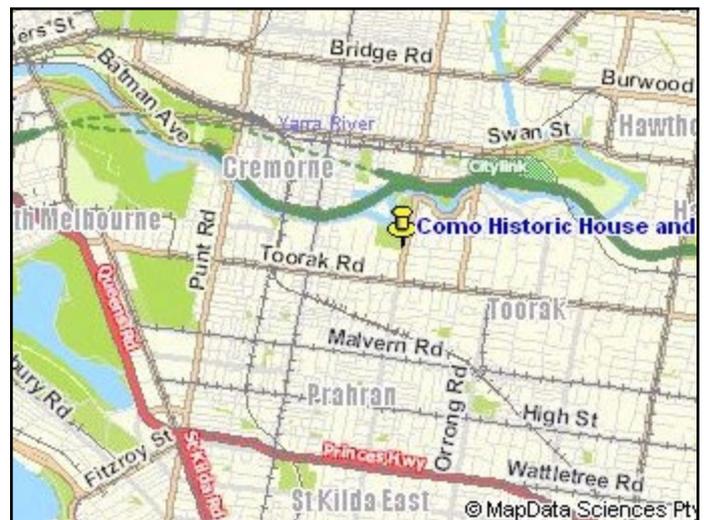
Como is fifteen minute walk from South Yarra station or 3 minute walk from the tram Stop 34 Route: 8 tram.

What to bring

Bags & lunches & drinks. A bag for rubbish.

Dress for an outdoors day:

coat, jumper, practical shoes



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The Estate

Charles and Caroline Armytage took residence in Como in 1864 and used Como as a townhouse for social activities and visits to Melbourne when not running their extensive grazing properties and raising their ten children.

Melbourne grew to become a grand and wealthy boomtown and fostered a squattocracy that mimicked the aristocratic culture and fashions of Europe.

The Armytages mixed with other squatter families such as the Chirnsides and entertained during the Season from Easter to the Melbourne Cup. Entertainments included morning calls and receptions and balls.

The house includes a large ballroom and billiard room, dining room and drawing room decorated in the fashion of the times. Many guests including royalty came and stayed at Como or attended a social gathering.

Charles died in middle age leaving Caroline to raise their children and manage the house and a pastoral empire. Two of Caroline's daughters were to occupy the house for the rest of their lives before assisting its bestowal to the National Trust in 1959.

Program:

Primary School visits to Como Historic House and Garden are made up of the following four activities:

- a house tour guides students room by room through the main house revealing different aspects of the Armytage family story and period family life. Artefacts are arranged in rooms for student use and handling eg. framed photos of family members and articles of clothing and an old school slate. Students learn about individual family members, social life and family relationships, try on clothes and handle items.

- A session about the house as a workplace introduces students to the general life experiences of servants. Students undertake simple activities like a Room Bell identification activity, a waiter race, laundry washing and object identification as they explore the original kitchen and laundry areas attached to the house.

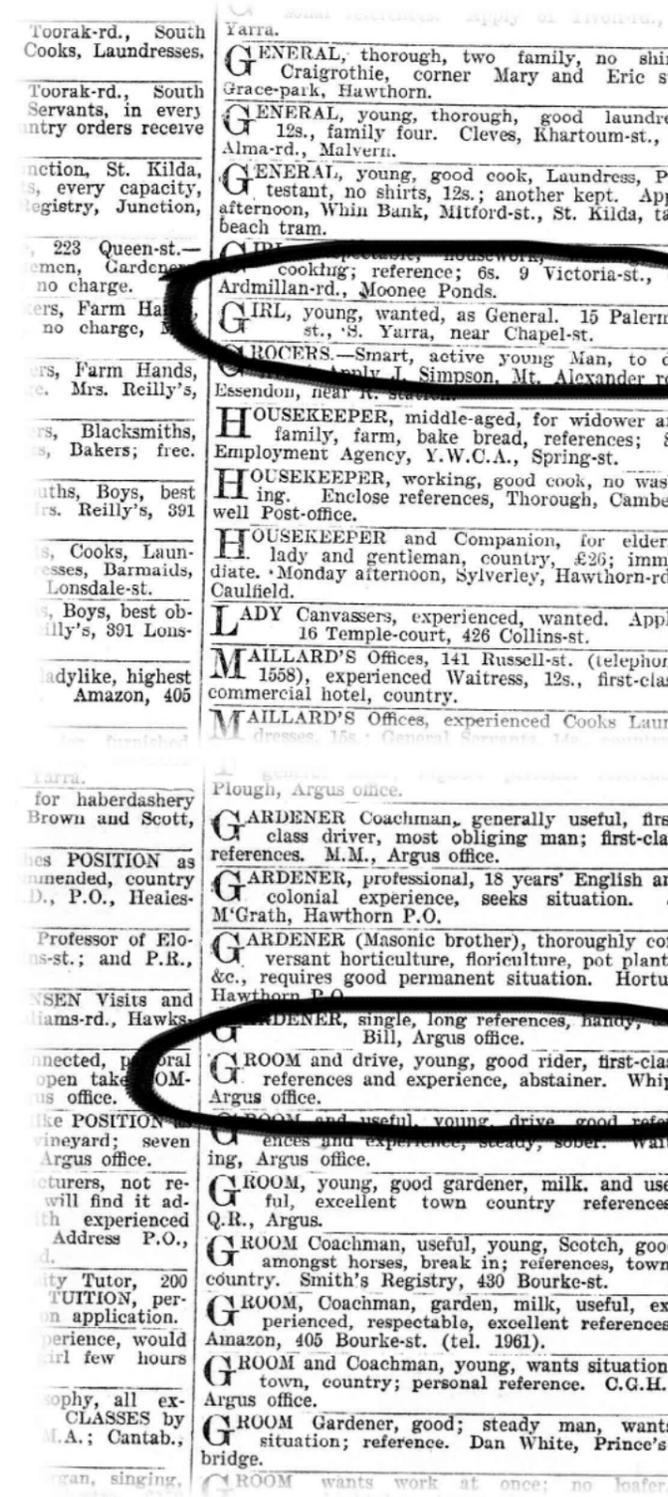
- Old fashioned games including tug-of-war, skipping ropes, skittles and group games like Oranges and Lemons and Hot Potato as well as Croquet on the Croquet lawn introduce students to the experience of children in the past from all classes of society.

- A group trail activity encourages students to explore the gardens for clues based on a logic game. Based on a historical mystery, students are asked to pretend that they have returned to the past and must determine which party guest has broken a birthday porcelain doll. By reading the clues and matching them to a trail sheet, students can isolate a single clue based on creating matrices of matched items. Eg. Clue 1: Eliminate the party guests who have glasses.

Come in Character!

Prior to the visit, some classes like to 'apply' for one the two attached positions as a Groom or servant girl. Some of our visiting school groups like to dress up for their visit. This can be as simple as shorts and braces for the boys and long skirts and pinafore for the girls.

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Come in Character:

The following positions have been advertised in *The Argus*.

Please present yourself suitably attired and prepared for your first day in-service.

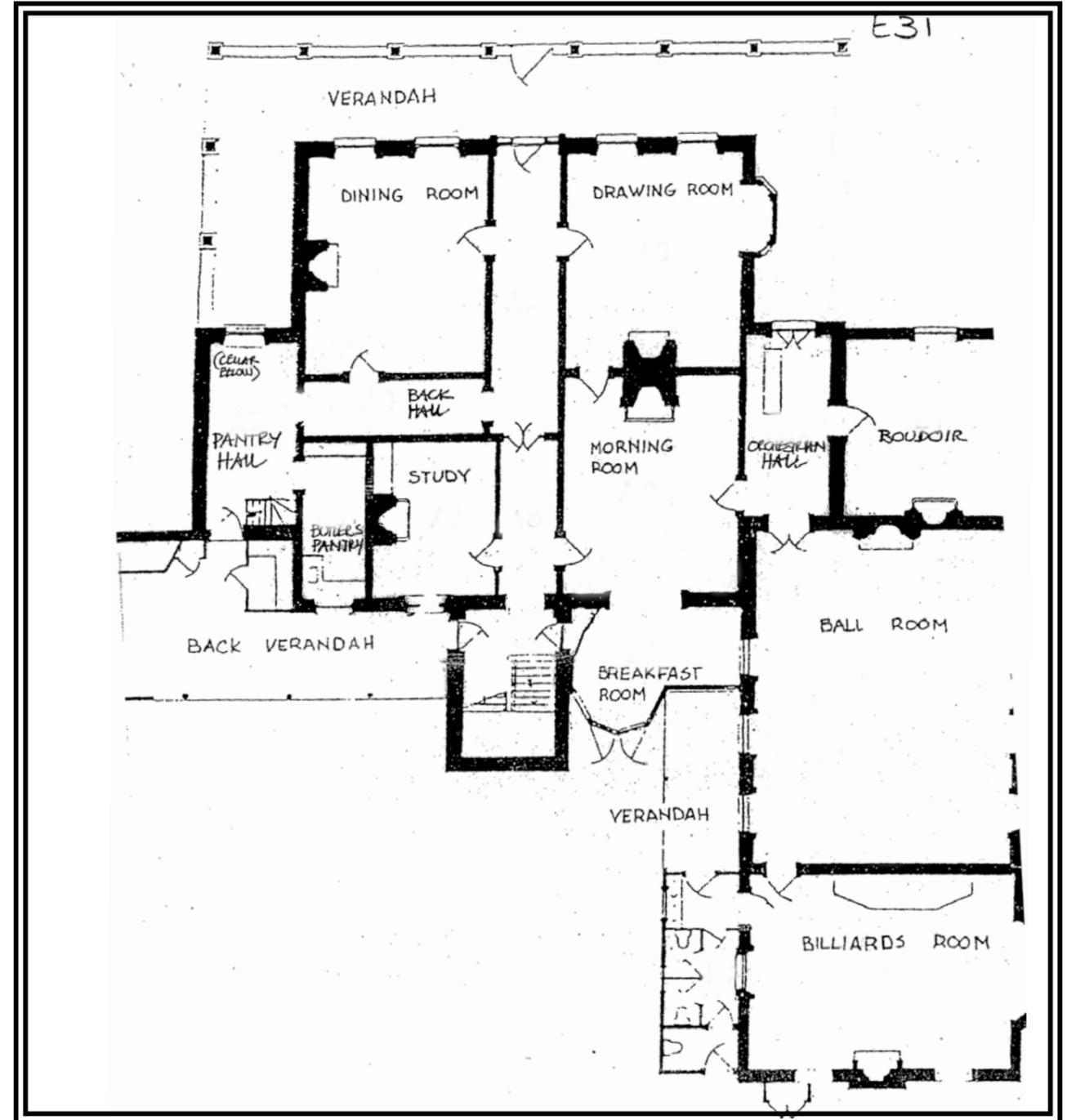


Map of Como Historic House & Gardens



The Plans of the House

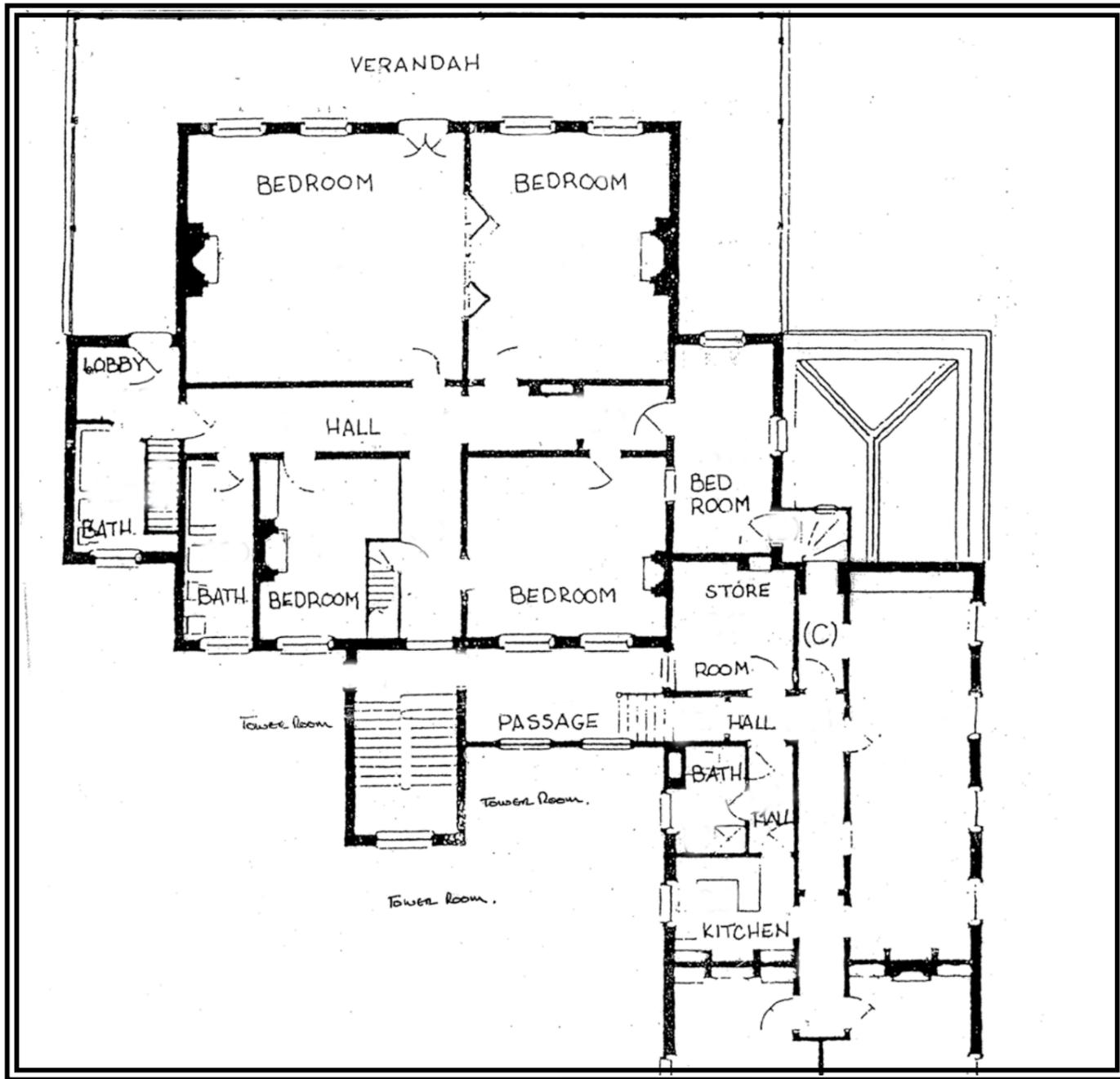
This is a plan of the Ground Floor at Como.
It includes a Drawing room, Ball room, Boudoir and Morning Room.
What did they do here? Does your house have rooms like these?





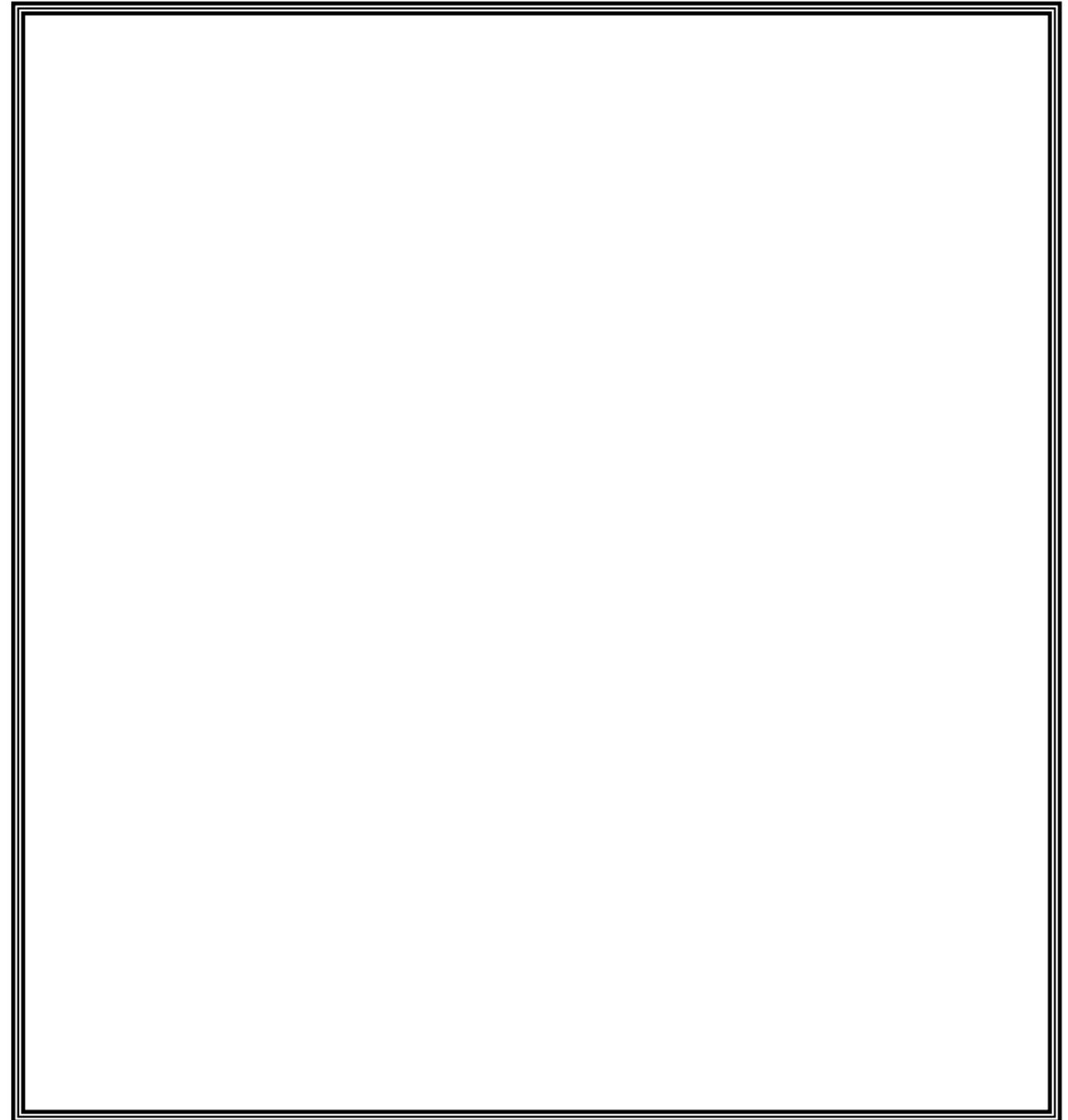
The Plans of the House

This is the first floor of the house.
Most of the rooms on the first floor are bedrooms.
Can you see where the doors and windows are?
See if you can work out all the ways to find your way through the house from room to room.



The Plans of the House

Draw a plan of your own house. Show all the windows & doors. You could draw the furniture as well.



Mystery Object! (Part 1)

Can you guess as to what these things are?
What did people use them for?



Mystery Object! (Part 2)



Mystery Object! - Notes

1. Butter Churn

This wooden box has handle that turns a special wooden stirrer which turns cream into butter. Fresh cream was poured into the box and after turning the handle for a long time out came a big lump of yellow butter.

2. Ink well

Students used pens to write at school. They dipped the end of the pen into a small bottle like this and the ink would fill a special nib.

3. Carpet Beater

You couldn't clean a carpet with a vacuum cleaner in the 19th Century because few homes had electricity until much later. But you could beat your rugs with this cane rug beater!

4. Cobblers shoemaker

In the 19th Century people spent more effort and time repairing things, Shoes and clothes were very expensive. This device let you put new nails into your shoes and boots.

5. Hot Water Bottle

Rubber hot water bottles were not invented 100 years ago. So people warmed their bed-sheets by filling these bottles with hot water and putting them in their beds.

6. Pumice Stone

Dish washing liquid and laundry detergent are new inventions. People in the past came up with clever ways of washing their clothes and dishes and pots and pans. This stone can be rubbed on clothes to remove stains and on pots to clean grease.

7. Jelly Mould

Made of china this jelly mould leaves a pretty picture of a corn cob in jelly. People in the past often had to prepare foods in special ways because they did not have refrigerators.

8. Muffin Tin

Not everything is so different in the past. These muffin tins look like the tin you might have at home in your kitchen. But it is made of iron and is very heavy. In the past they had to make things from different materials.

9. Charcoal Iron

What a job doing the iron one hundred years ago. You had to fill the iron with hot coals from a fire to heat the iron up. The chimney let the smoke out.

And you really hoped that none of the soot from the iron landed on your clean clothes.

10. Butter pats

After you churned the butter you removed it from the butter churn using these special wooden paddles. By hitting the butter with the paddles you could make the butter into blocks.

11. Coal

This is a lump of coal. It looks pretty ordinary but coal was very important. People used it to make fires, to power steam engines, to heat their homes and even to do the ironing.

12. Blue

This is a small block of blue. People used this in their clothes washing water to make their clothes bright and white.

Rules for School Children 1847

OF BEHAVIOUR AT SCHOOL

1. Behave to your teachers with humility and to your schoolfellows with respect.
2. Do not run into the school, but advance decently to the door.
3. When you enter, take off your hat, make your bow or curtsy, and walk straight to your seat.
4. Never talk in the school – for it interrupts yourself and others.
5. If you have anything to say to the master, wait till he is at leisure and then speak with modesty and plainness.
6. Observe nothing at school but your book – and never neglect that.
7. Never quarrel in school – for it shows idleness and a bad temper.
8. When the Master speaks to you, rise up to hear him and look him in the face when he speaks with modesty and attention.
9. Begin not to answer before he has done speaking, then now respectfully and answer him with humility.
10. When the school hours are over, go out as you came in : quietly, softly and decently.
11. When you are out of school, go home without noise or delay; do not run or loiter, but do this as all things else, with discretion.
12. Do not speak at home or abroad of what has been done at school, but make yourself perfect in your task.

(Yyse's Young Gentleman & Ladies Guide, 1846)



Rules for School Teachers 1850s.

RULES FOR TEACHERS

- 1. TEACHERS EACH DAY WILL FILL LAMPS, CLEAN CHIMNEYS.**
- 2. EACH TEACHER WILL BRING A BUCKET OF WATER AND A SCUTTLE OF COAL FOR THE DAY'S SESSION.**
- 3. MAKE YOU PENS CAREFULLY. YOU MAY WHITTLE NIBS TO THE INDIVIDUAL TASTE OF THE PUPILS.**
- 4. MEN TEACHERS MAY TAKE ONE EVENING EACH WEEK FOR COURTING PURPOSES, OR TWO EVENINGS A WEEK IF THEY GO TO CHURCH REGULARLY.**
- 5. AFTER TEN HOURS IN SCHOOL, THE TEACHERS MAY SPEND THE REMAINING TIME READING THE BIBLE OR OTHER GOOD BOOKS.**
- 6. WOMEN TEACHERS WHO MARRY OR ENGAGE IN UNSEEMLY CONDUCT WILL BE DISMISSED.**
- 7. EVERY TEACHER SHOULD LAY ASIDE FROM EACH PAY A GOODLY SUM OF HIS EARNINGS FOR HIS BENEFIT DURING HIS DECLINING YEARS SO THAT HE WILL NOT BECOME A BURDEN ON SOCIETY.**
- 8. ANY TEACHER WHO SMOKES, USES LIQUOR IN ANY FORM, FREQUENTS POOL OR PUBLIC HALLS, OR GETS SHAVED IN A BARBER SHOP WILL GIVE GOOD REASON TO SUSPECT HIS WORTH, INTENTION, INTEGRITY AND HONESTY.**
- 9. THE TEACHER WHO PERFORMS HIS LABOUR FAITHFULLY AND WITHOUT FAULT FOR FIVE YEARS WILL BE GIVEN AN INCREASE OF TWO SHILLINGS AND FIVE PENCE PER WEEK IN HIS PAY, PROVIDING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVES.**