

# *An Explosion of Beauty*

## An Online Course on the Art, Architecture & Collections of British Country Houses



### **Session 6: February 21, 2023**

Medieval Revival (1780—1830)

Chinese & Indian (1800—30)

Other Revivals (1850s—1980s)



Art & Architecture  
with Curt DiCamillo

# Curt DiCamillo

*Curator of Special Collections*



# PROGRAM

- **Presentation (60 mins.)**
  - Overview houses
  - Study houses
- **Q&A (30 mins.)**

# *Study Houses*

## ***Medieval Revival***

- Arbury Hall, Warwickshire, 1748—89**
- Strawberry Hill House, London, 1748—90**
- Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire, 1796—1812**
- Penrhyn Castle, Caernarvonshire, 1820—37**
- Mount Stuart House, Isle of Bute, 1878—1900**
- Gothick Villa, London, 1989—91**

## ***Chinese & Indian***

- Sezincote House, Gloucestershire, 1805—27**
- The Royal Pavilion, Brighton, 1815—23**

## ***Other Revivals***

- Haddo House, Aberdeenshire, 1880s (Adam Revival)**
- Henbury Hall, Cheshire, 1984—87 (Classical Revival)**

# MEDIEVAL REVIVAL

The Medieval Revival was inspired by the Gothic art and architecture of the Middle Ages, a movement that harkened back to a nostalgia for Britain's past.

The style first developed in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century; by the 1790s Medieval Revival had become an important alternative to classical styles.

The most recognizable architectural elements of the movement were the pointed arch, tracery (ornamental openwork patterns), clustered columns, and the quatrefoil, a flower-like ornamentation with four lobes.



A.W.N. Pugin  
**Sovereign's Throne, House of Lords**  
London  
1847



Various Architects  
**Arbury Hall**  
Warwickshire  
Primarily 1748—89



Arthur Devis  
*Sir Roger Newdigate  
in the Library  
at Arbury Hall*  
1756—58

A noted expert on classical antiquities, Sir Roger presented two antique candelabra restored by Piranesi to the University of Oxford, where he also endowed the Newdigate Prize for poetry.

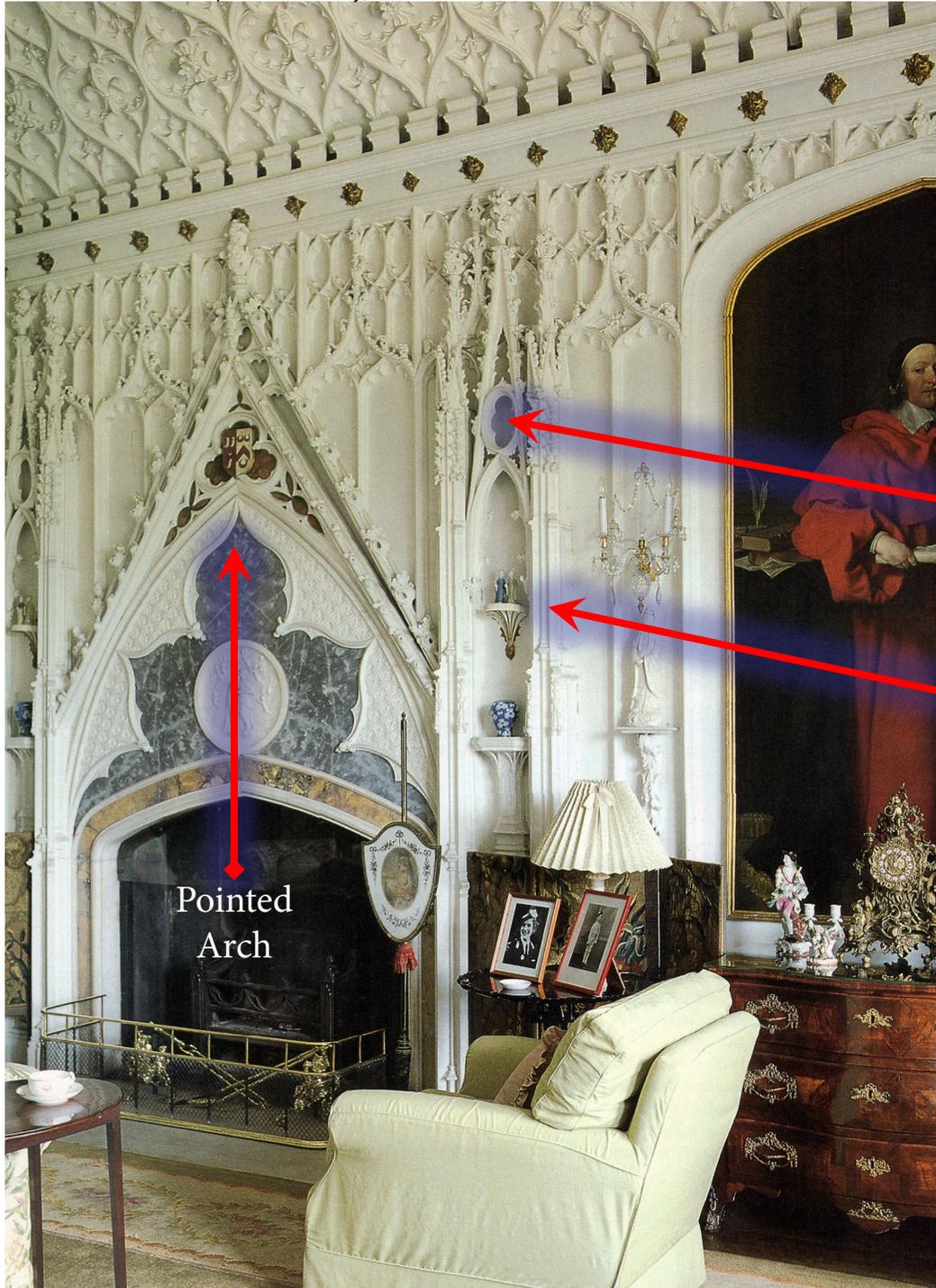
He is shown here leaning against his Chippendale library desk (still in the house) and holding a plan for the Gothick alterations to Arbury Hall.

This painting is considered one of the quintessential portraits of 18<sup>th</sup> century taste.

# Arbury Hall The Dining Room

Tracery





# Arbury Hall The Drawing Room

Quatrefoil

Clustered Columns

Pointed  
Arch



Arbury Hall  
**The Saloon**



## Arbury Hall The Saloon

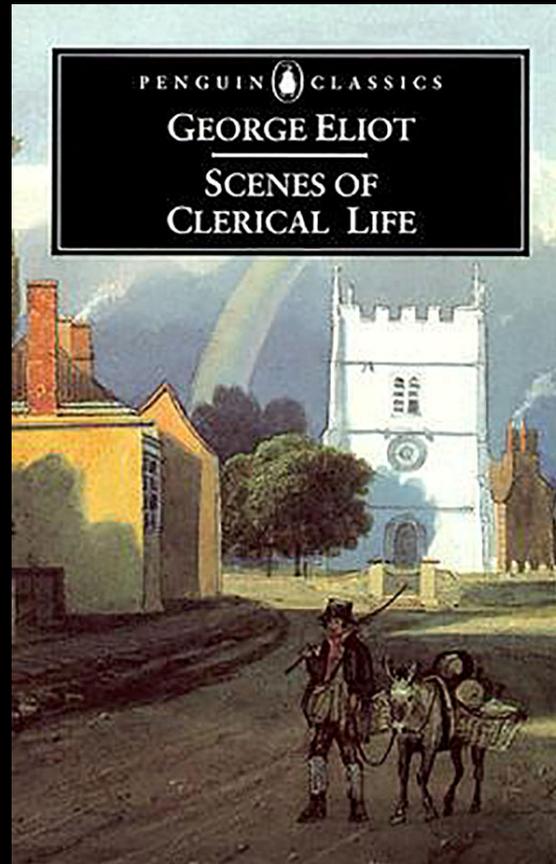
*orbis miraculum* (the wonder of the world)



**The Henry VII Lady Chapel  
Westminster Abbey  
1503—16**



François D'Albert Durade  
**Mary Ann Evans Cross**  
Circa 1855  
*National Portrait Gallery, London*

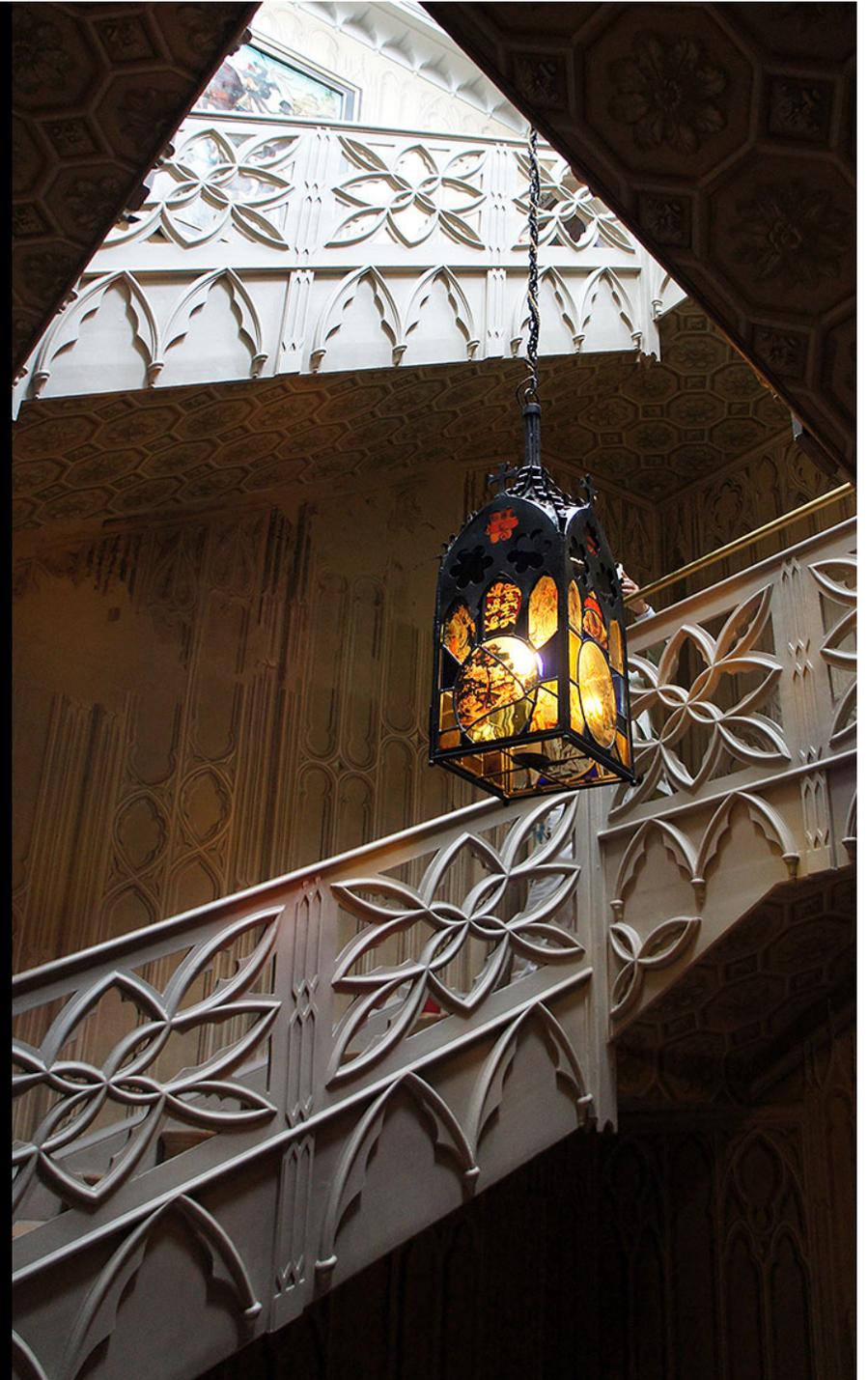


1857



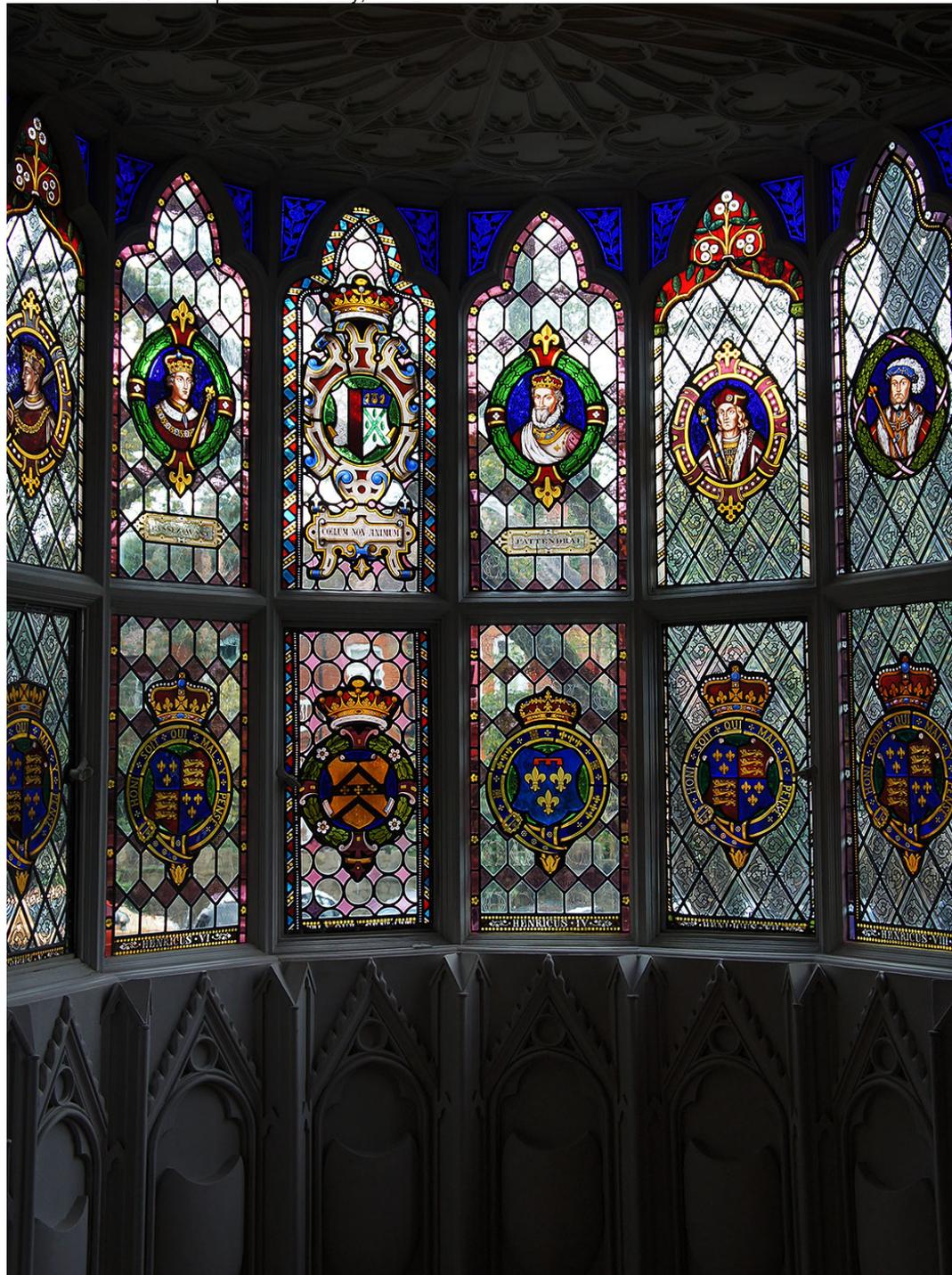
Mostly Horace Walpole  
**Strawberry Hill House**  
London  
Primarily 1748—90

Strawberry Hill House  
**The  
Staircase**





Strawberry Hill House  
**The Gallery**



## Strawberry Hill House The Round Drawing Room



Strawberry Hill House  
Robert Adam  
**The Round Drawing Room Fireplace**  
1766—67



Strawberry Hill House  
**The Library**



Strawberry Hill House  
**The Library**

## Horace Walpole's Eagle

Roman, 1<sup>st</sup> century AD

*Gosford House*

The eagle was excavated in 1742 in the Boccapaduli family's garden, within the precincts of the Baths of Caracalla, in Rome. Cardinal Alessandro Albani brought the discovery of the ancient eagle to the attention of the antiquarian and collector John Chute, who convinced his friend Horace Walpole to purchase it in 1745.

Walpole was so taken with the large bird that it appears in his 1756–57 portrait by Joshua Reynolds.



# Strawberry Hill House The Tribune





## The Darnley Jewel

Circa 1574—78

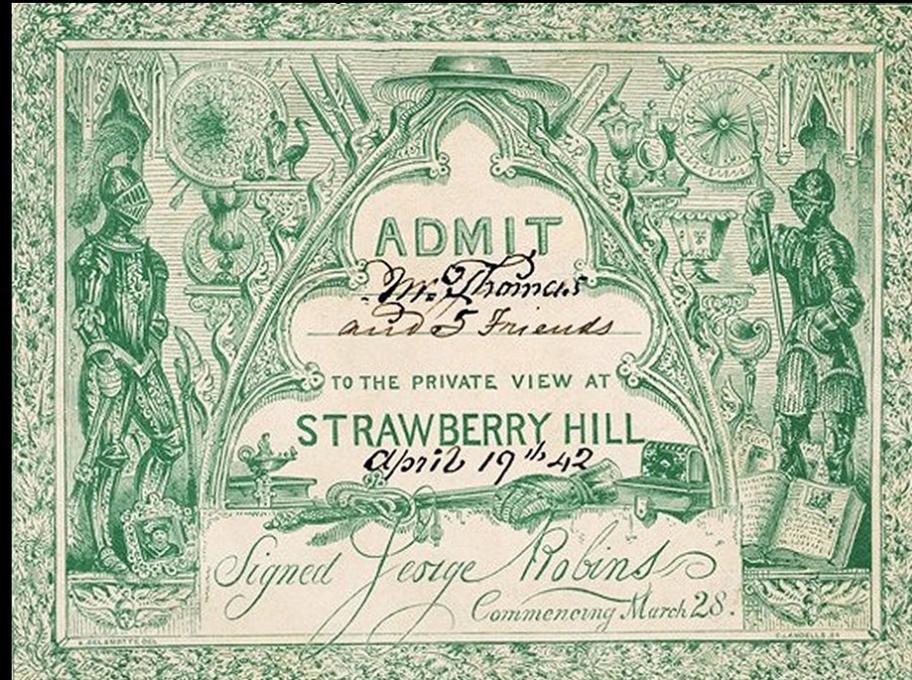
Gold, enamel, rubies,  
and false sapphire

*The Royal Collection*

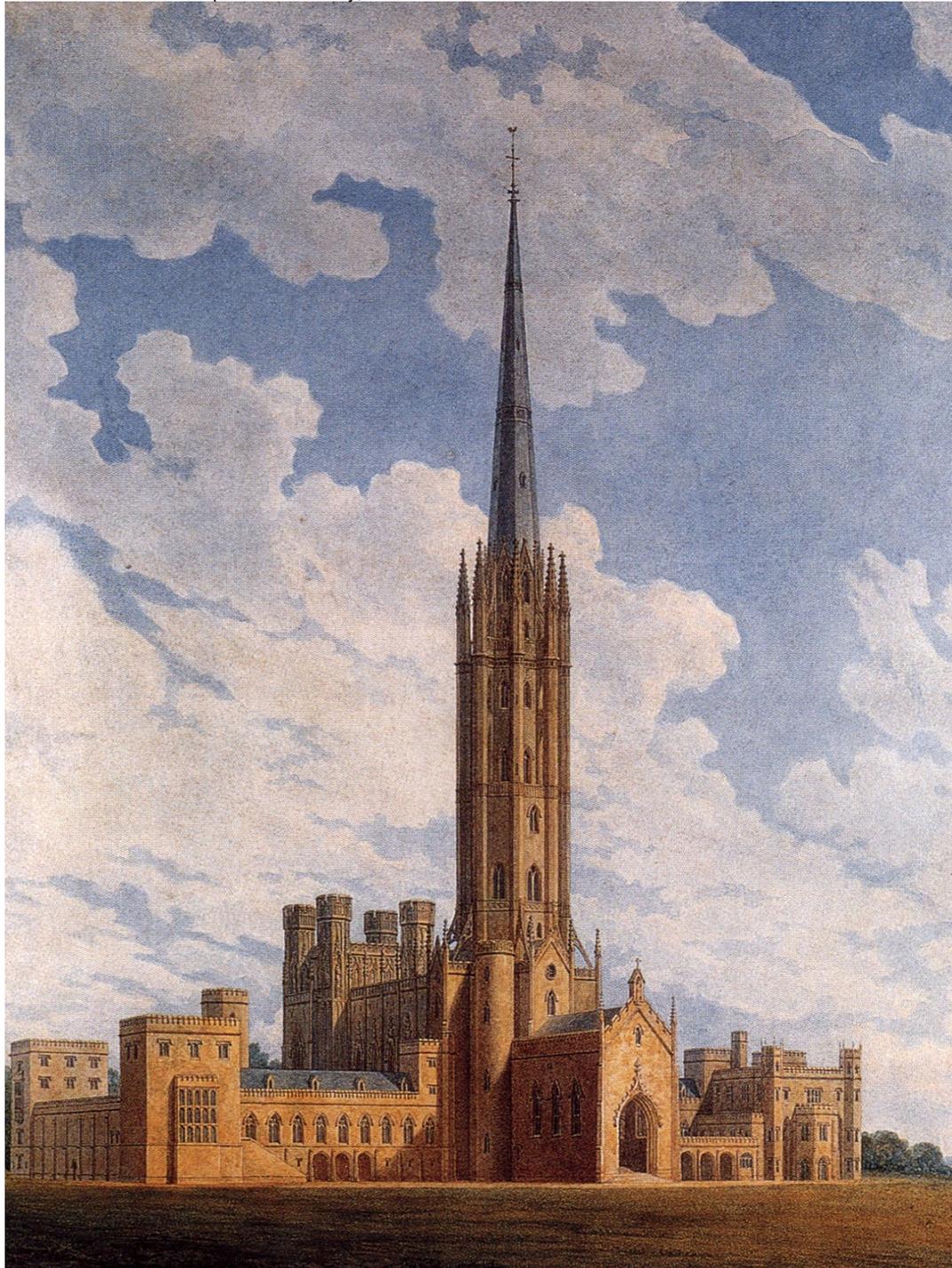
This was probably made for Lady Margaret Douglas, granddaughter of Henry VII of England, first cousin of Elizabeth I of England, and half-sister of James V of Scotland.

The jewel is named after Lady Margaret's son, Lord Darnley, who married her niece, Mary, Queen of Scots.

This piece was one of Horace Walpole's most prized possessions; so much so that he literally never left it out of his sight. It was acquired by Queen Victoria at the 1842 sale.



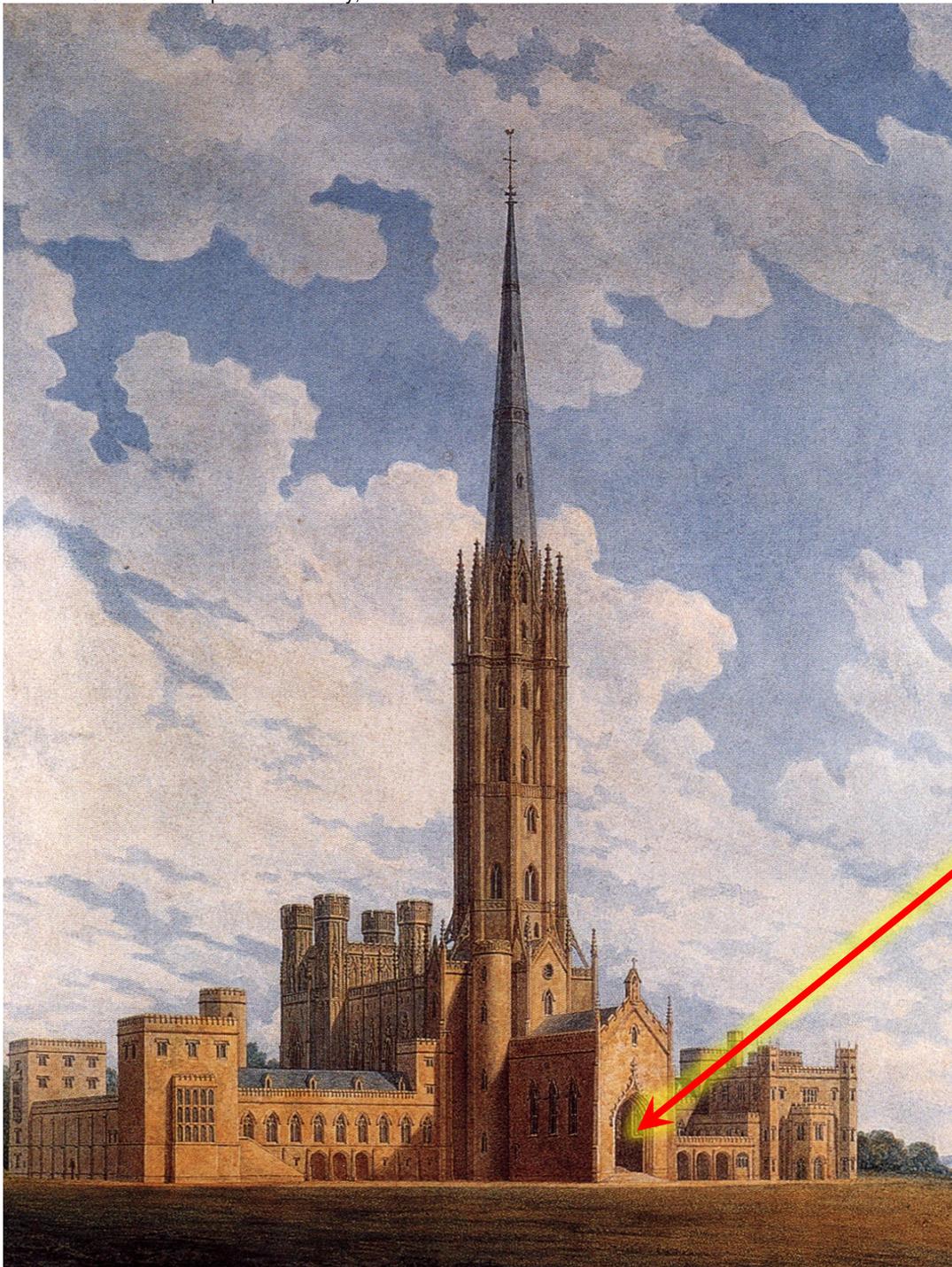
**Ticket for the Sale of the  
Contents of Strawberry Hill House  
1842**



James Wyatt  
**Fonthill Abbey**  
Wiltshire  
1796—1812



Intended to be taller than the tower of  
**Salisbury Cathedral**,  
which, at 404 feet, is the tallest in Britain.

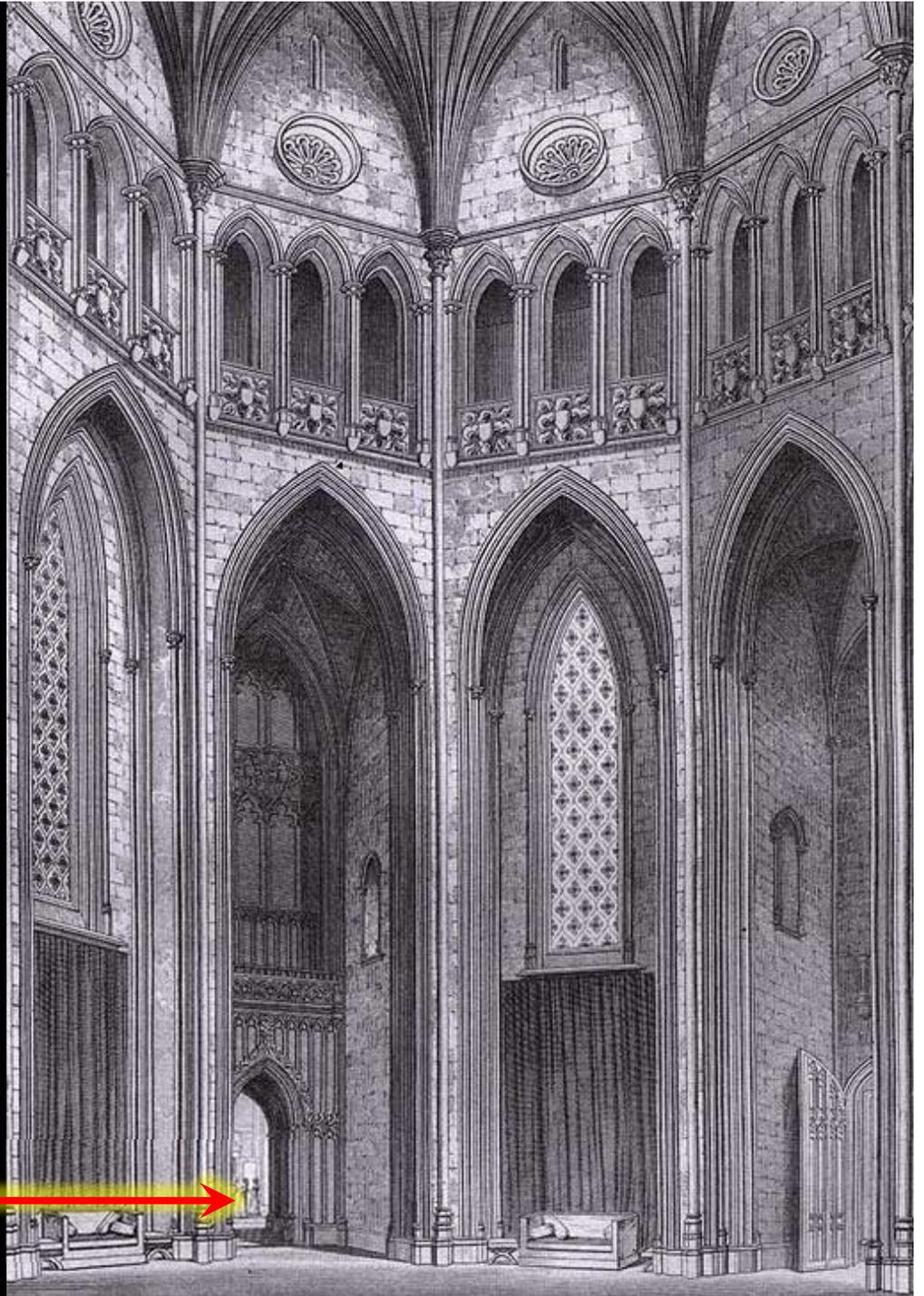


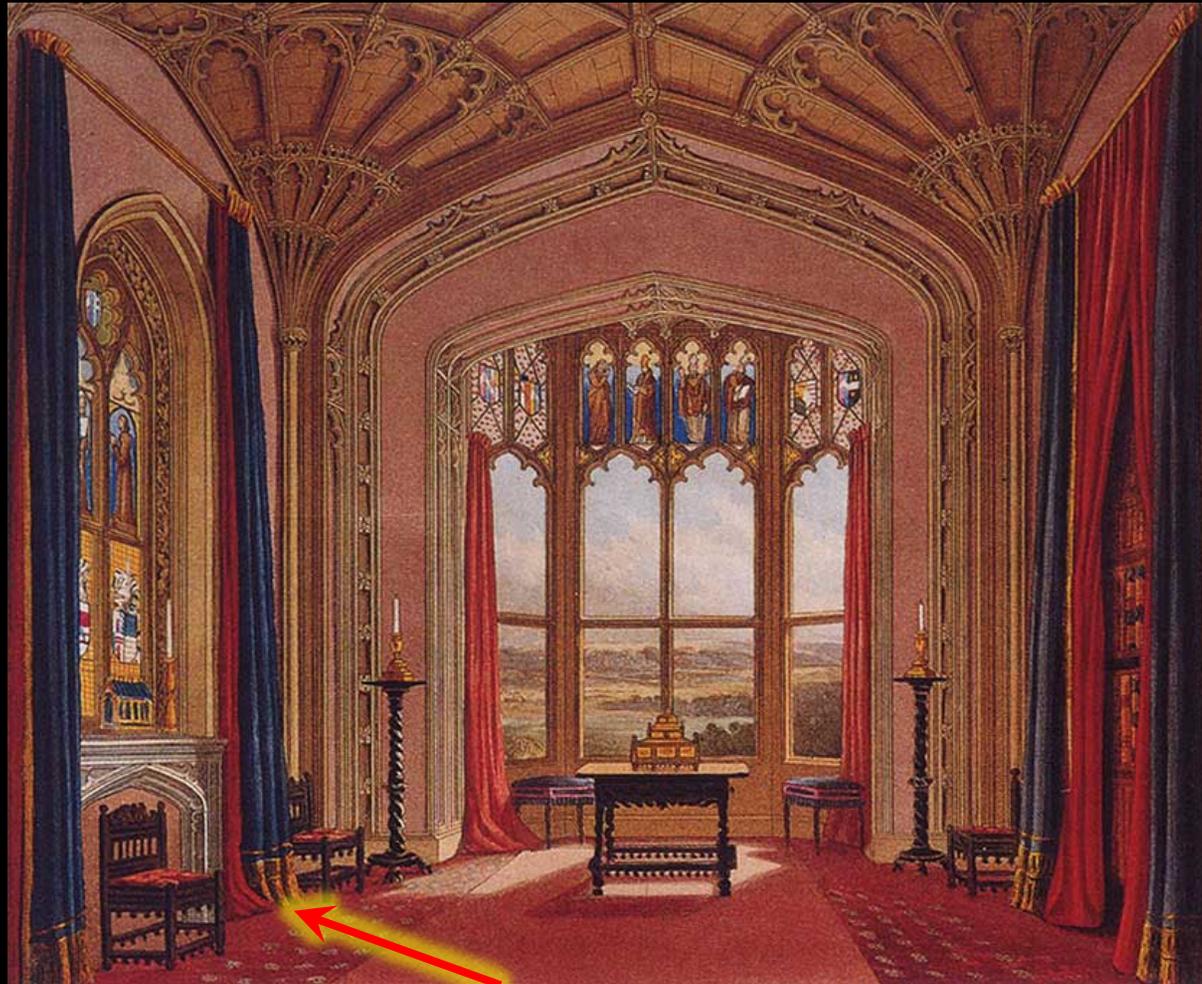
Benjamin West  
**Beckford's Dwarf**  
*Swarthmore College*



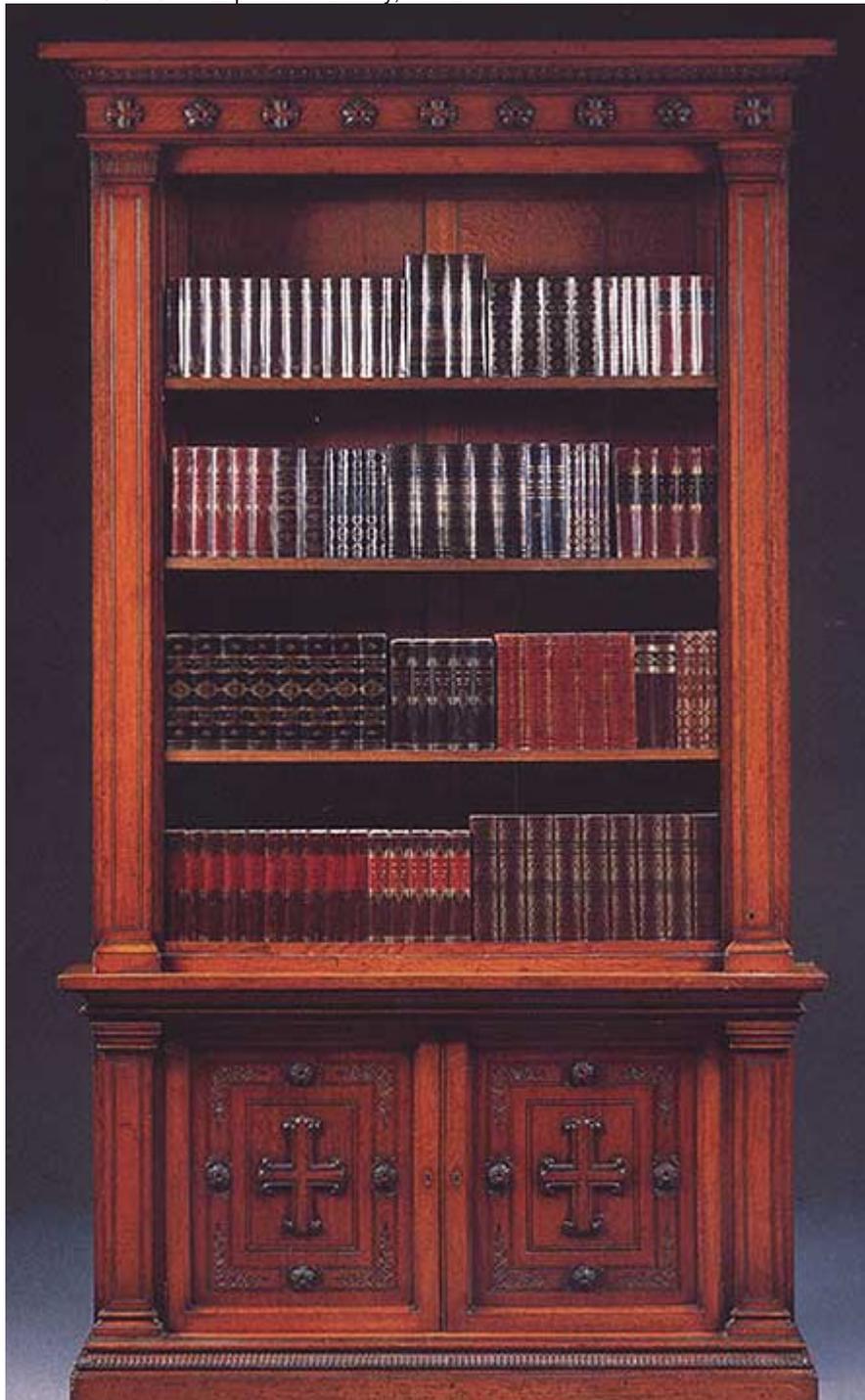
Fonthill Abbey  
**The Great  
Western Hall**  
From an 1823 engraving

Fonthill Abbey  
**The  
Octagon**  
From an 1823 engraving





Fonthill Abbey  
**St. Michael's Gallery**  
From an 1823 illustration



William Beckford  
**Bookcase**  
(one of a pair)  
Circa 1825  
*Private Collection*

Raphael  
***St. Catherine  
of Alexandria***  
1507—08  
*The National Gallery  
London*





Robert Sharp & Daniel Smith  
**Solid Gold Teapot and Stand**

1785—86

*The Barber Institute of Fine Arts  
Birmingham, England*



Carved in high relief from a single piece of agate, this extraordinary vase was most likely created in an imperial workshop for a Byzantine emperor. It made its way to France (probably carried off as treasure after the sack of Constantinople in 1204 during the Fourth Crusade), where it passed through the hands of some of the most renowned collectors of western Europe, including the dukes of Anjou and King Charles V of France. In 1619, the vase was purchased by the great Flemish painter Peter Paul Rubens; by the 1620s it was owned by the Mughal emperor Jahangir of India. In 1818 William Beckford purchased the vase for Fonthill Abbey.

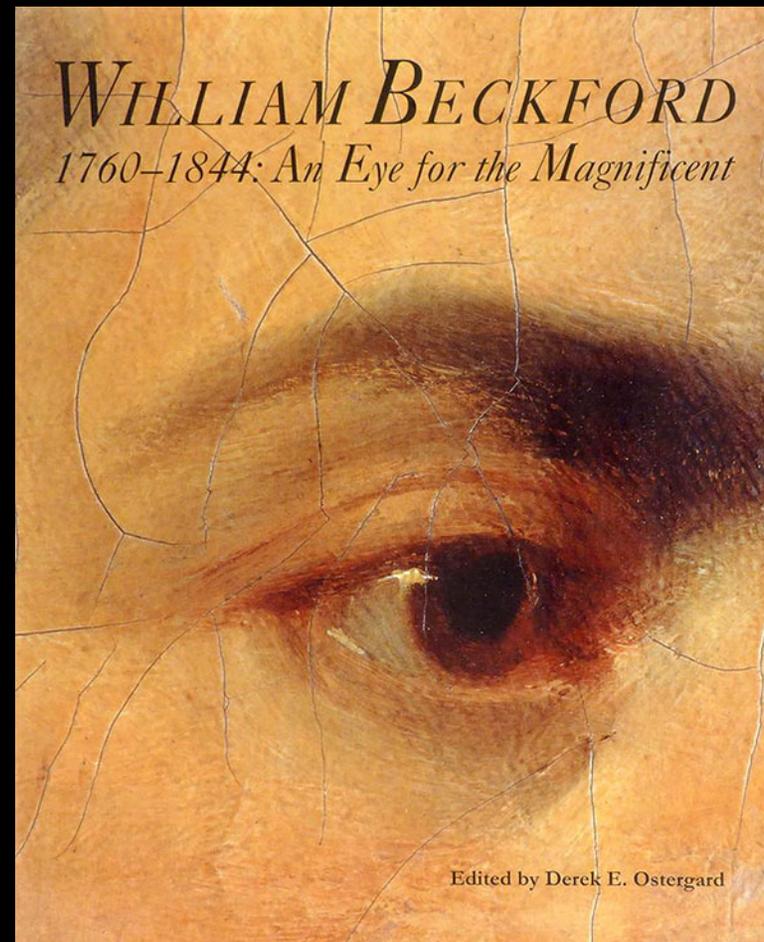
### **The Rubens Vase**

4<sup>th</sup> century AD

*The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore*



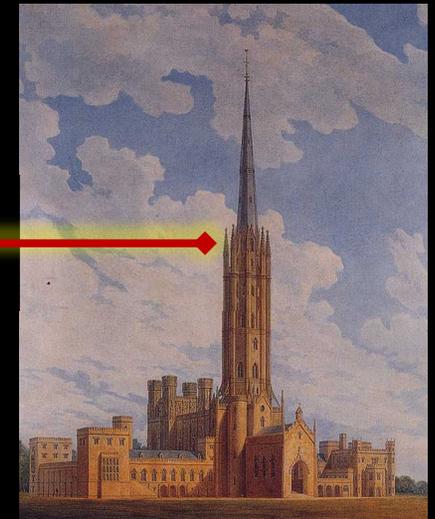
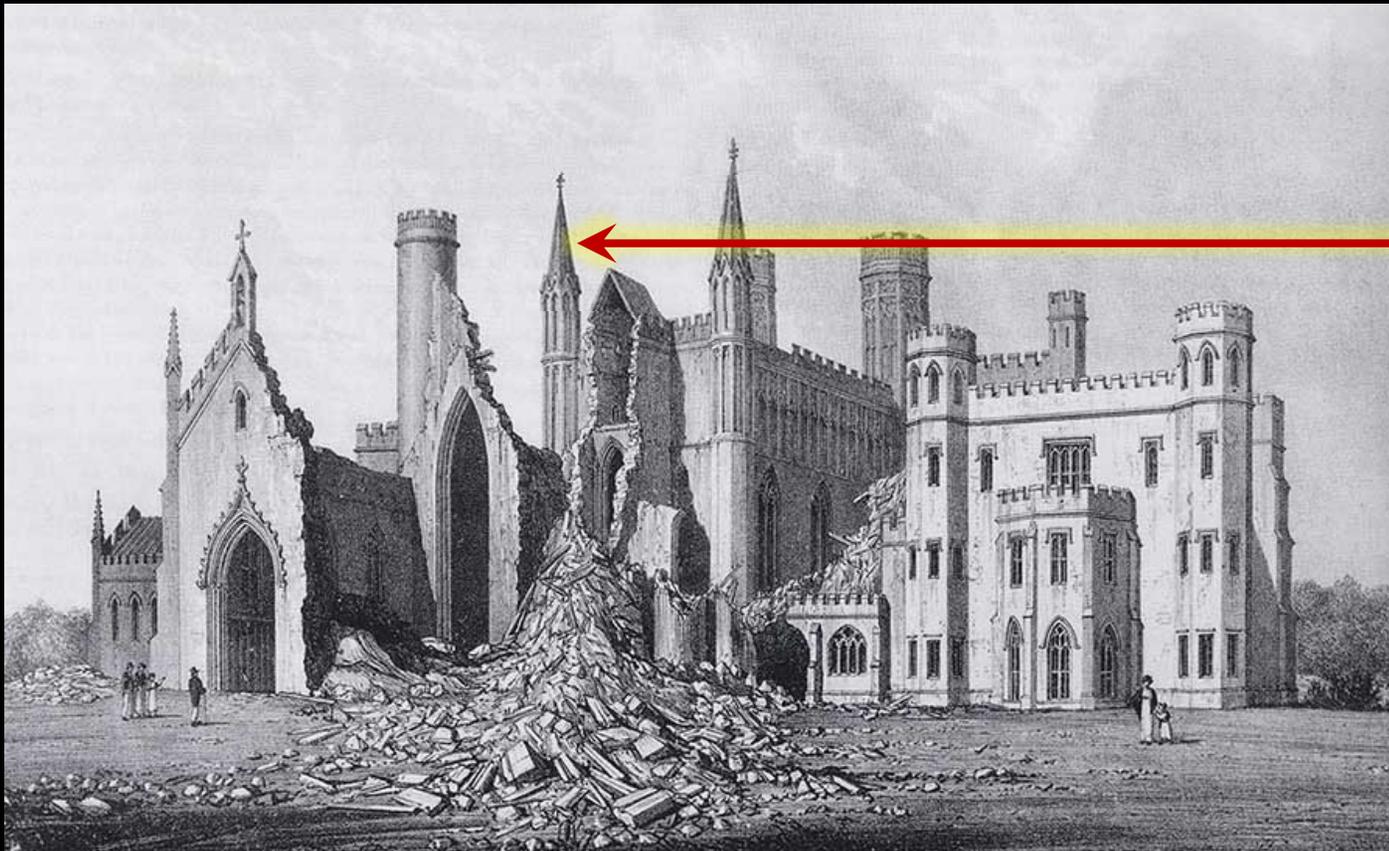
Peter Paul Rubens  
*Daniel in the Lions' Den*  
Circa 1614—16  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington*



**2002**

**Bard Graduate Center, New York City  
Dulwich Picture Gallery, London**

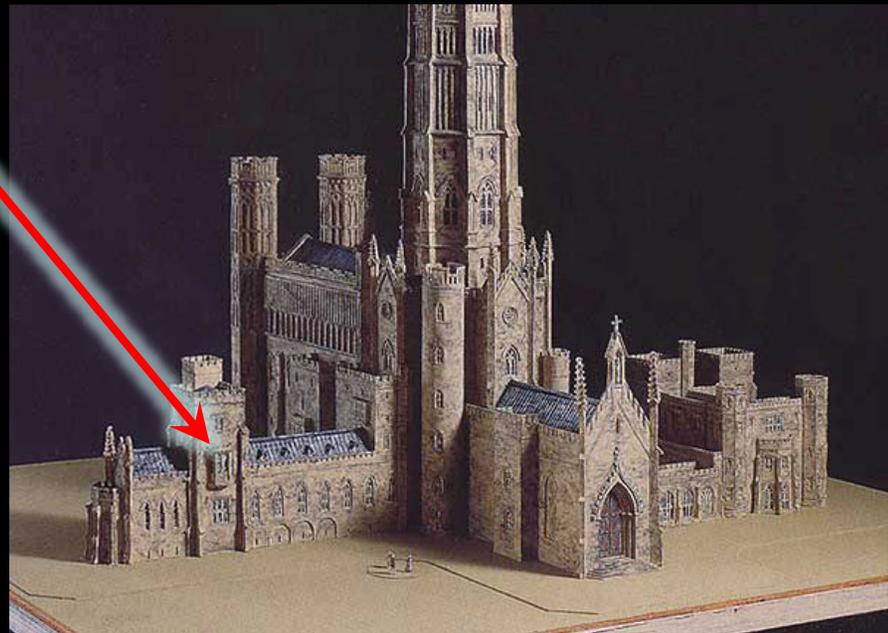
Beckford's creditors forced him to sell the abbey in 1822 for the vast sum of £330,000 (approximately \$370 million). It was purchased by the eccentric gunpowder millionaire John Farquhar, who lived in the abbey until the collapse of the tower. The famous incident took place on the night of December 21, 1825, taking most of the abbey with it. Some elements were salvaged and converted into a smaller house.



John Buckler  
**The Ruins of Fonthill Abbey**  
1825



**Remaining Fragment of Fonthill Abbey**



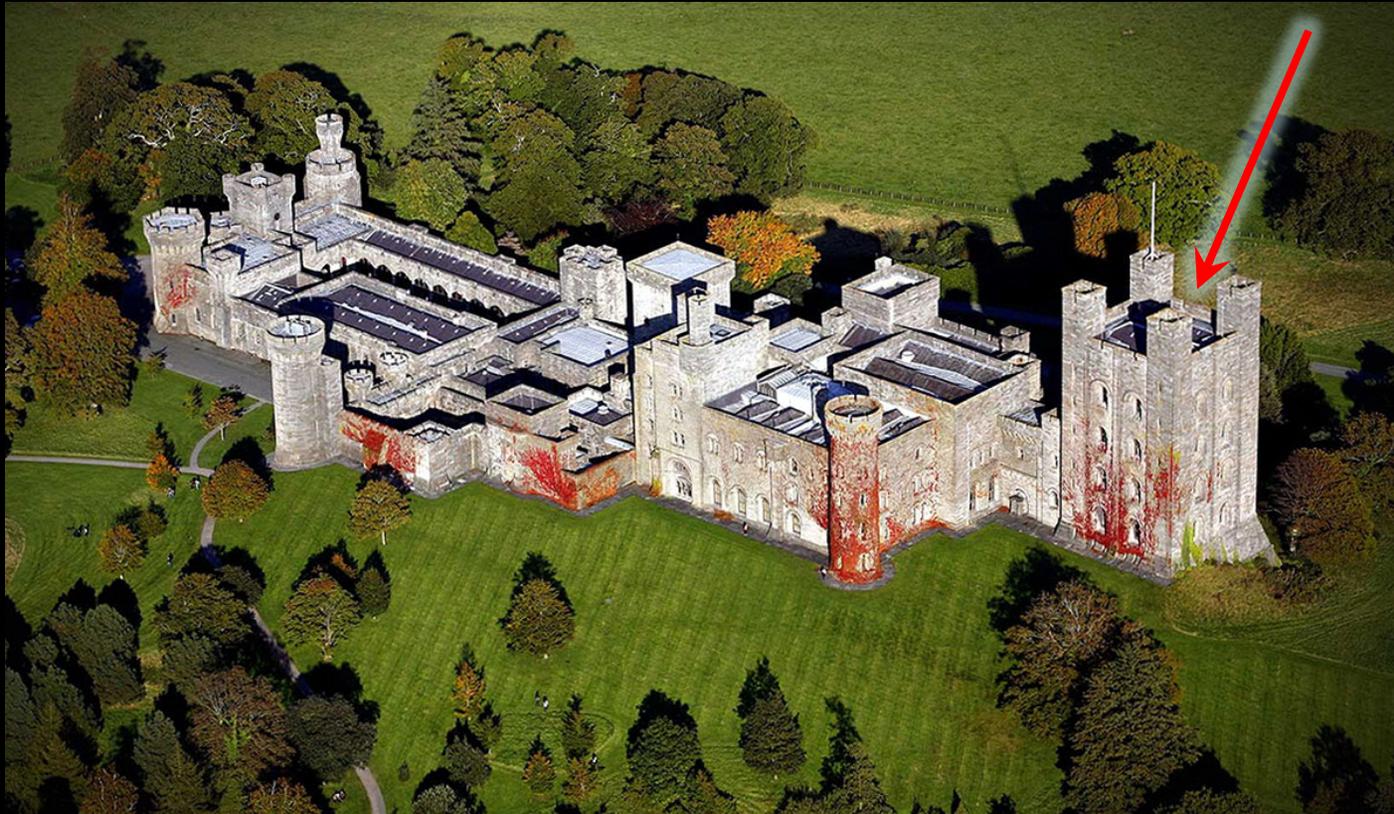
**Model of Fonthill Abbey**

QgA





Thomas Hopper  
**Penrhyn Castle**  
Caernarvonshire  
1820—37



**Penrhyn Castle from the Air**



## Penrhyn Castle The Great Hall

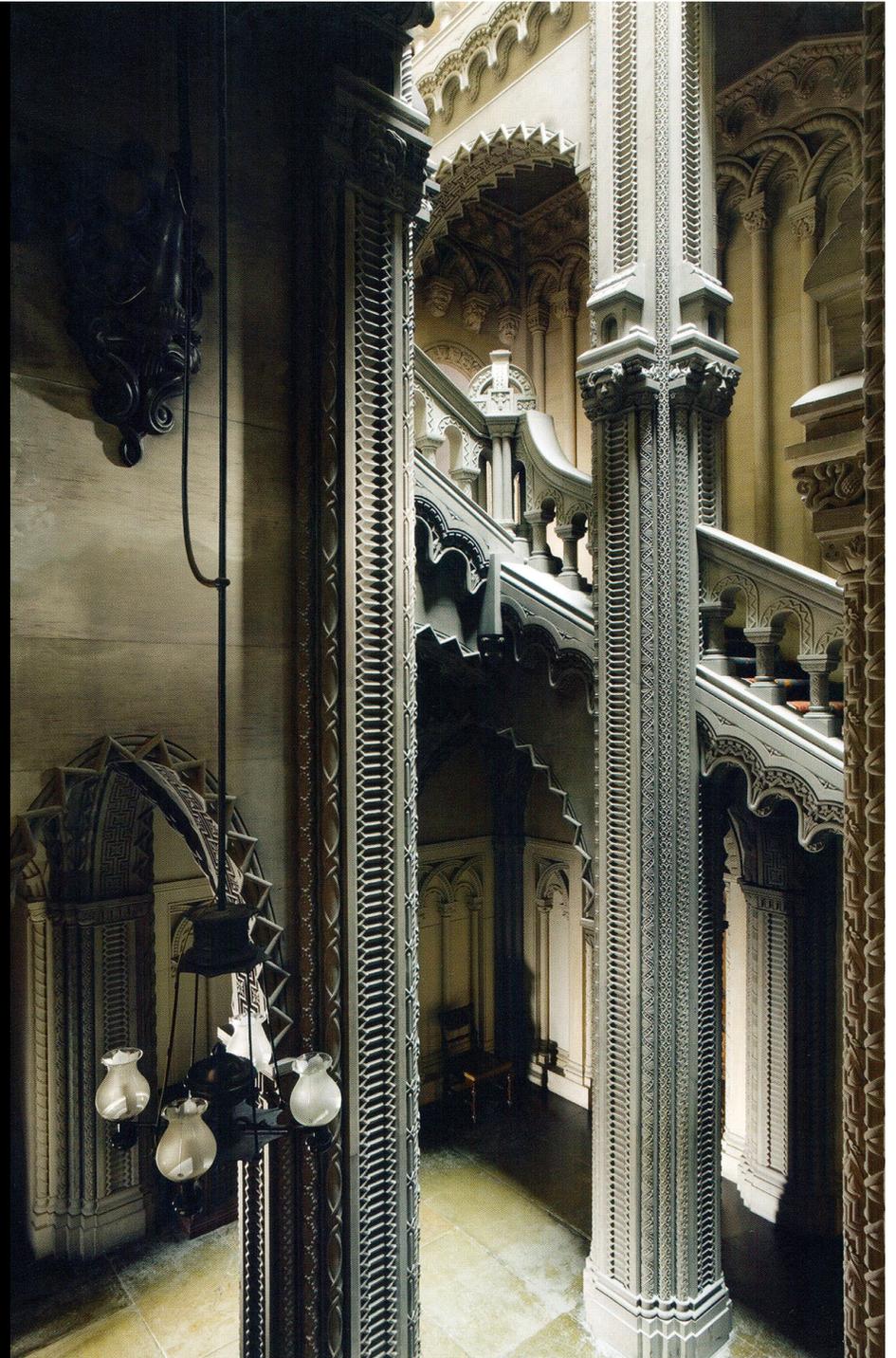


Penrhyn Castle  
**The Drawing Room**



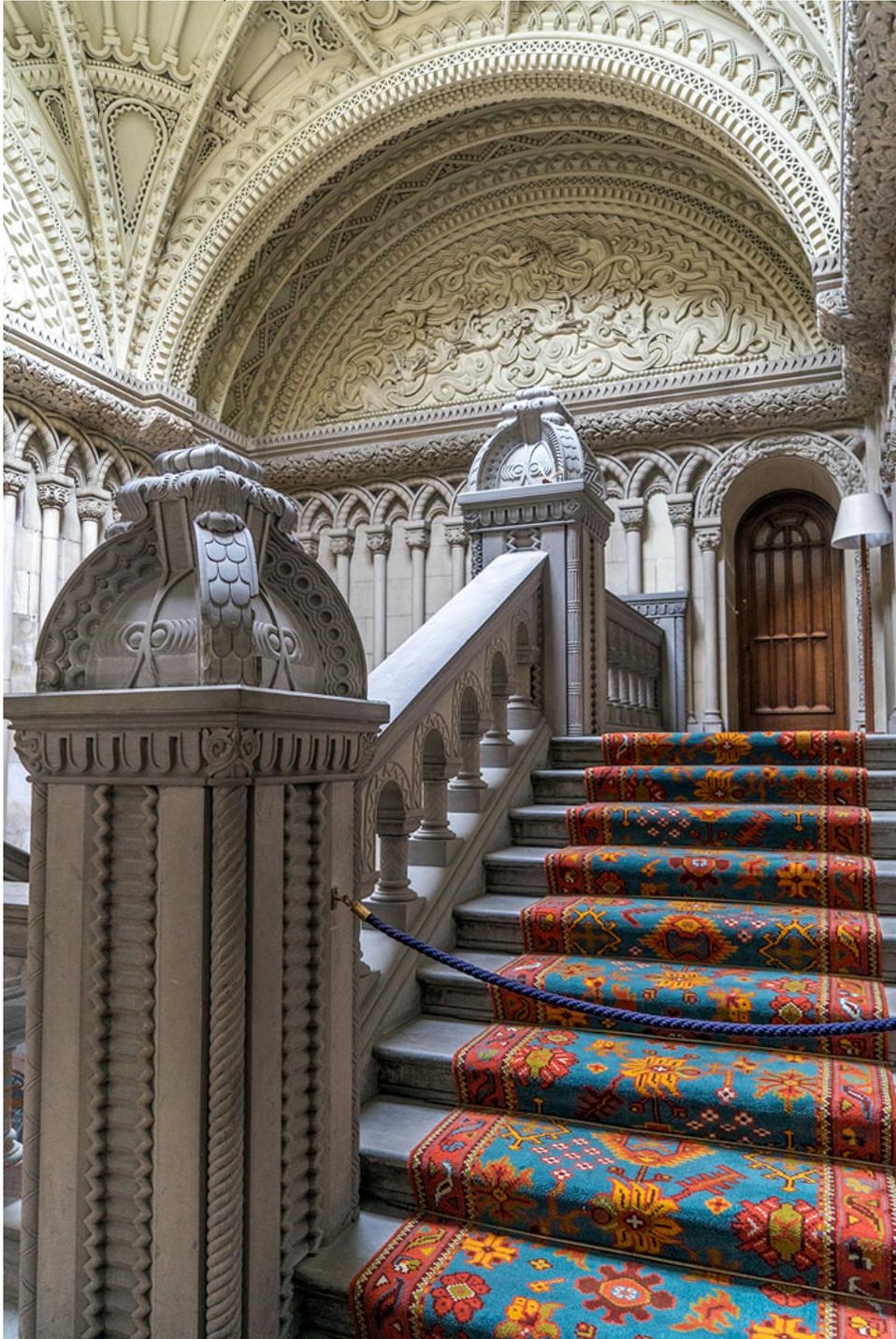
Penrhyn Castle  
**The Staircase**

Penrhyn Castle  
**The  
Staircase**



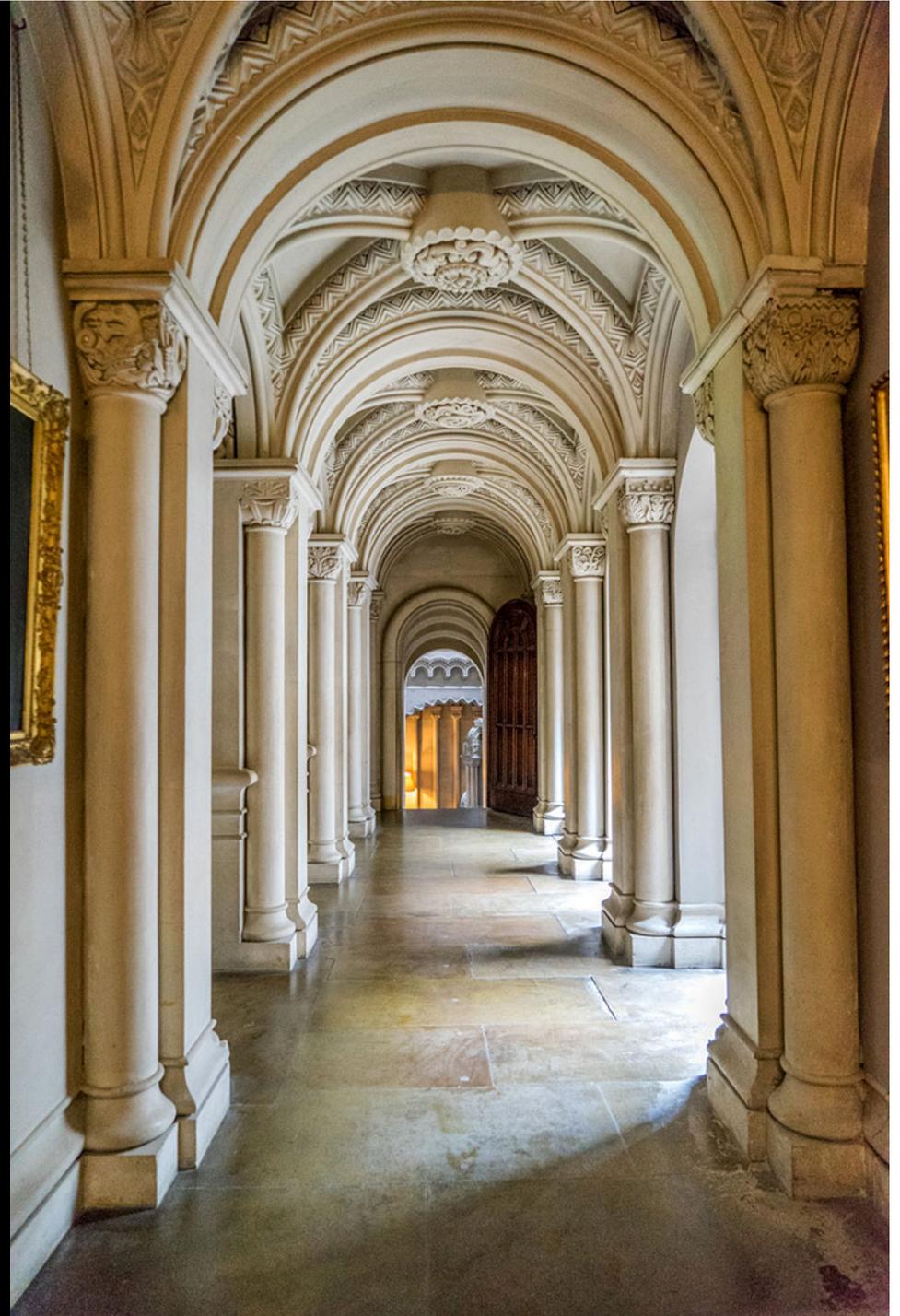


**Durham Cathedral**  
County Durham, England  
1093—1133



## Penrhyn Castle Staircase

Penrhyn Castle  
**Hallway**





## Penrhyn Castle Queen Victoria's Bedroom

Mount Stuart was equipped with the very latest conveniences. It was the first house in Scotland to be lit by electricity, it had a complicated system of hot water pipes that provided central heating, and it sported the first-ever heated swimming pool inside a house.



Robert Rowand Anderson  
**Mount Stuart House**  
Isle of Bute  
1878—1900

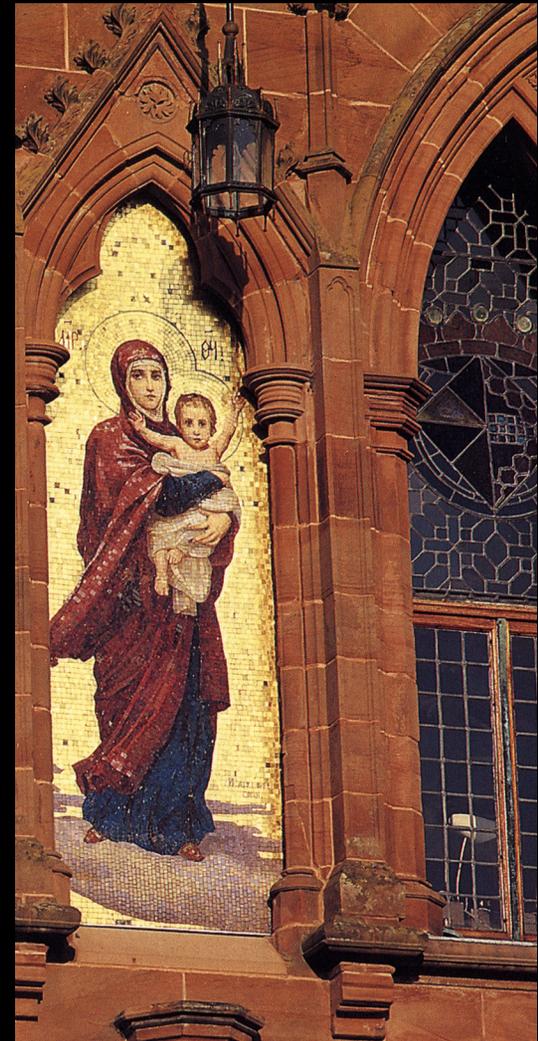


**3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Bute**

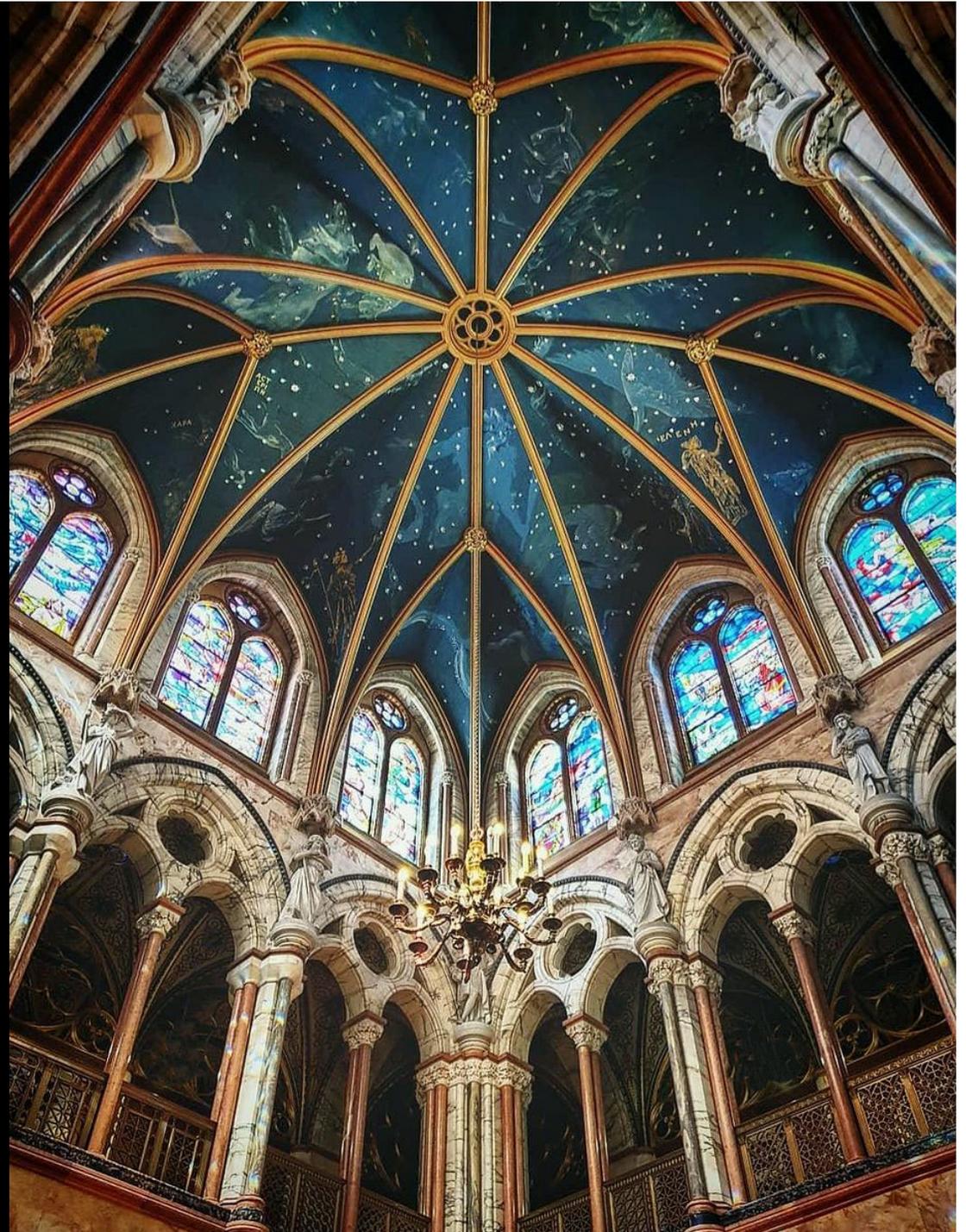
A palace in all but name, Mount Stuart's unbelievable richness is enhanced by the astrological and religious symbols found throughout the house.

This reflects the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess's mystical religiosity; in a controversial move for a high-ranking peer, he was received into the Catholic Church on December 8, 1868.

Over his lifetime the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess sponsored the construction of approximately 60 Gothic style buildings.



Mount Stuart House  
**The  
Marble Hall**





Mount Stuart House  
**The Grand Staircase**



Mount Stuart  
**Lord Bute's  
Bedroom**



Mount Stuart  
**Lord Bute's  
Bedroom Ceiling**



## Sainte-Chapelle

Paris

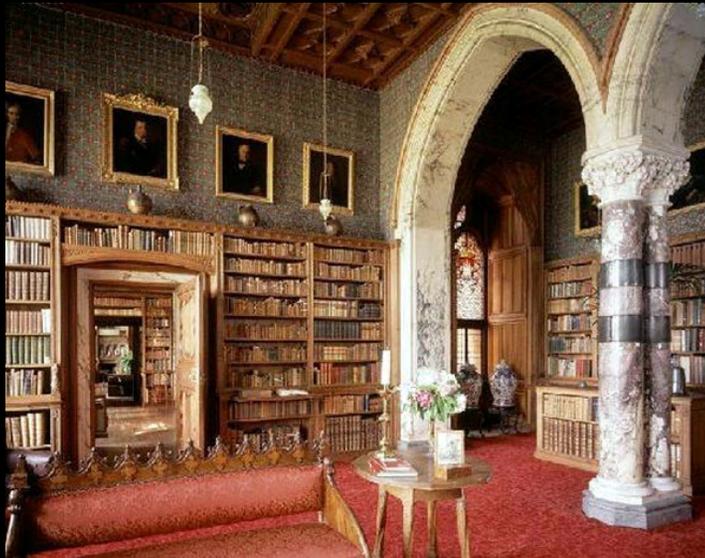
1242—48



Mount Stuart House  
**The Chapel**  
1896

An unknown three-volume copy of Shakespeare's First Folio was discovered at Mount Stuart in April of 2016.

It was a rare and significant find; only 230 copies of the First Folio are known to exist. A copy owned by the University of Oxford sold for £3.5 million in 2003.



Mount Stuart  
**The Library**



**The Mount Stuart First Folio**  
1623



Mount Stuart House  
**The Swimming Pool**

In 1920 the 4<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Bute offered Mount Stuart for sale with the condition that the purchaser had to demolish and remove the house; there were no takers, such was the revulsion of Victorian architecture at the time.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Marquess, together with his second wife, Jennifer, performed a full-scale restoration of the exterior and interiors of Mount Stuart House in the 1980s and 90s.



Quinlan Terry  
**Gothick Villa**  
Regent's Park, London  
1989—91



**Gothick Villa**



Andrea Palladio  
**Villa Saraceno**  
Vicenza  
1540s



Architects Unknown  
**Combermere Abbey**  
Shropshire  
Primarily 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries



Gothic Villa  
**The Entrance Hall**



Gothick Villa  
**Entrance Hall  
Column**

# Gothick Villa The Staircase Hall



In the 19<sup>th</sup> century newly-published, affordable books on India and China built upon the earlier aristocracy-focused Chinoiserie style. The scenes illustrated in these volumes provided British designers and manufacturers with fresh sources of inspiration to market to the masses.

Chinese blue and white ceramics had always been much admired and emulated in the West. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century British potters were producing large quantities of inexpensive transfer-printed earthenware to satisfy the growing market for blue and white ceramics. Many of the Indian scenes that decorated the ceramics were taken from popular topographical prints of the country.

Chinese scenes of landscapes, people, and pavilions were also very popular subjects for ceramics and other objects. One of the most famous British ceramic designs is the Willow Pattern. The scene of a temple with a bridge, a boat, and a willow tree was inspired by images found on Chinese ceramics, but it was the creation of British manufacturers. The love story it was said to depict was invented later as a clever marketing tool.

## CHINESE & INDIAN



**The Chinese Dining Room  
Buckingham Palace**

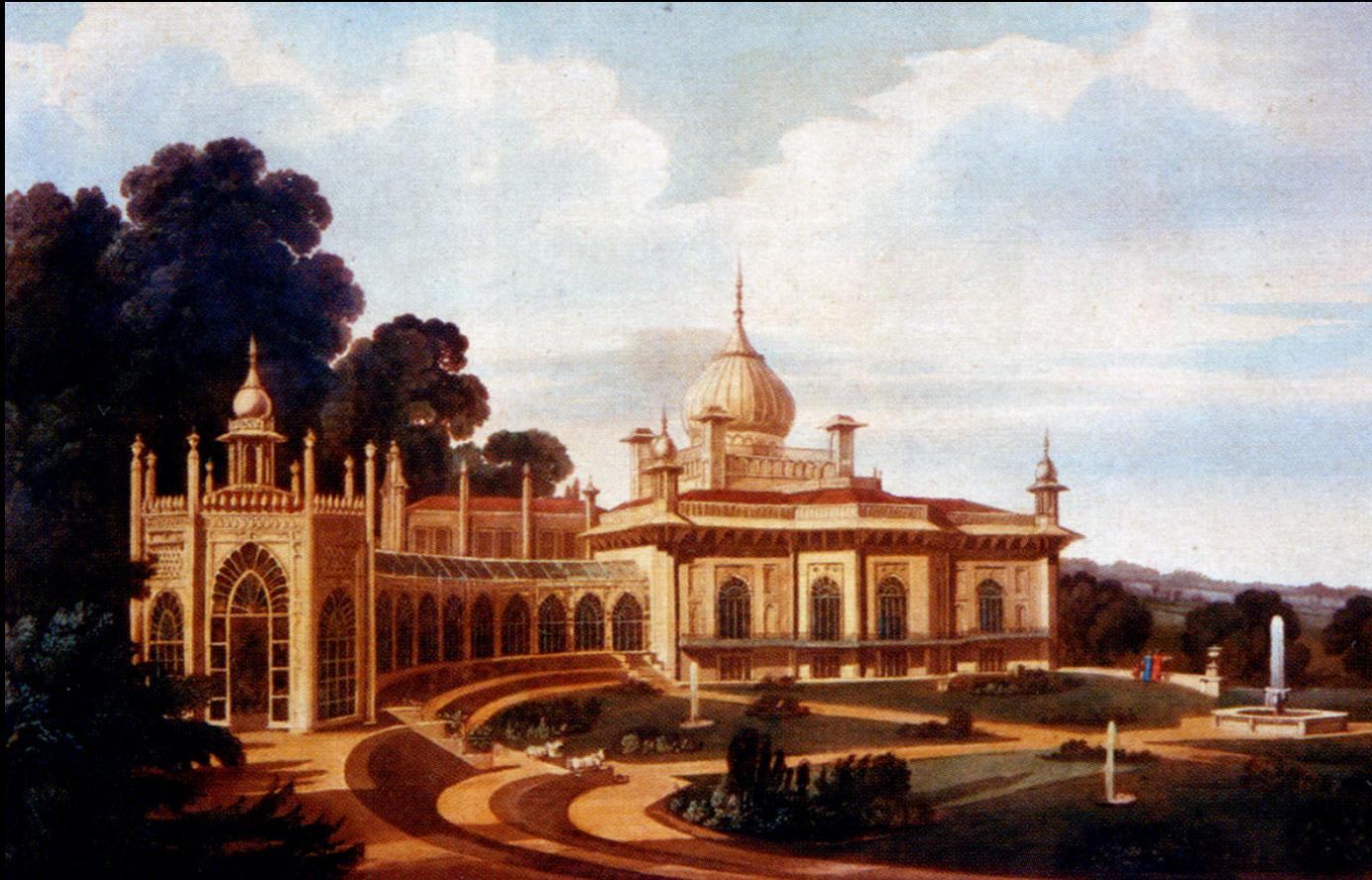
## *Calcutta in the Cotswolds*

“Sezincote stands in one of the most intensely English parts of England, on the northern slopes of the Cotswold Hills, but it is the most exotically un-English building imaginable.”

—*Jan Morris*



The only Mogul style building surviving in Western Europe, Sezincote is actually a mixture of Muslim and Hindu styles. Stone for the house was mined nearby and may have been artificially stained to provide it with a rich, orange color.



**Sezincote House**  
From an early 19<sup>th</sup> century watercolor



Samuel Pepys Cockerell  
**Sezincote House**  
Gloucestershire  
1805—27



Sezincote House  
**The Octagonal Pavilion**



## Sezincote House The Staircase



Sezincote House  
**The Drawing Room**

## Sezincote House Bedroom





Sezincote House  
**Sir Charles  
Cockerell's Bed**



Sezincote House  
George Oakes  
**Trompe l'oeil of  
the Regency House**  
1982



Sezincote House  
Thomas Daniell  
**Design for the Indian Bridge**  
Circa 1805  
*Royal Institute of British Architects*



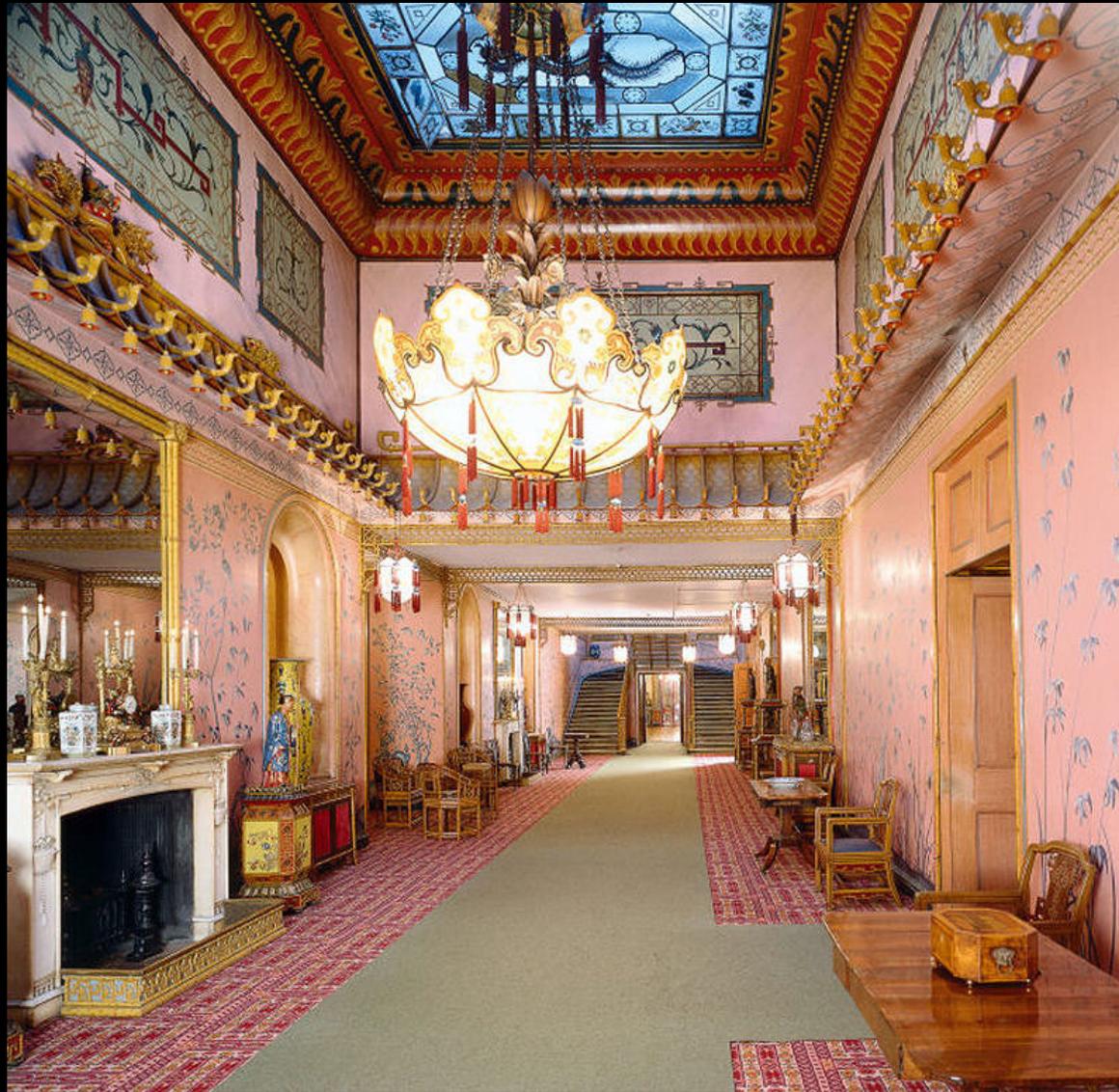
Sezincote House  
**The Indian Bridge**

*QgA*





John Nash  
**The Royal Pavilion**  
Brighton  
1815—23



The Royal Pavilion  
**The Long Gallery**



The Royal Pavilion  
**The North Drawing Room**

# The Royal Pavilion The Saloon





The Royal Pavilion  
**The Music Room**



## The Royal Pavilion The Banqueting Room

With a 45-foot-high ceiling that represents the eastern sky, the centerpiece of this grandiose room is a crystal chandelier held aloft by a dramatic silver-plated dragon with a fierce face, complete with a dramatically protruding red tongue.

The chandelier, which weighs one ton and is 30 feet high, was originally fitted with a belt of diamonds, rubies, garnets, and pearls encircling its base.



Benjamin Lewis Vulliamy  
**Mantel Clock**  
Early 19<sup>th</sup> century  
*The Royal Collection*

# Buckingham Palace The Chinese Dining Room





## The Royal Pavilion The Great Kitchen

The Great Kitchen's iron palm trees are one of the first uses of cast iron in domestic architecture.



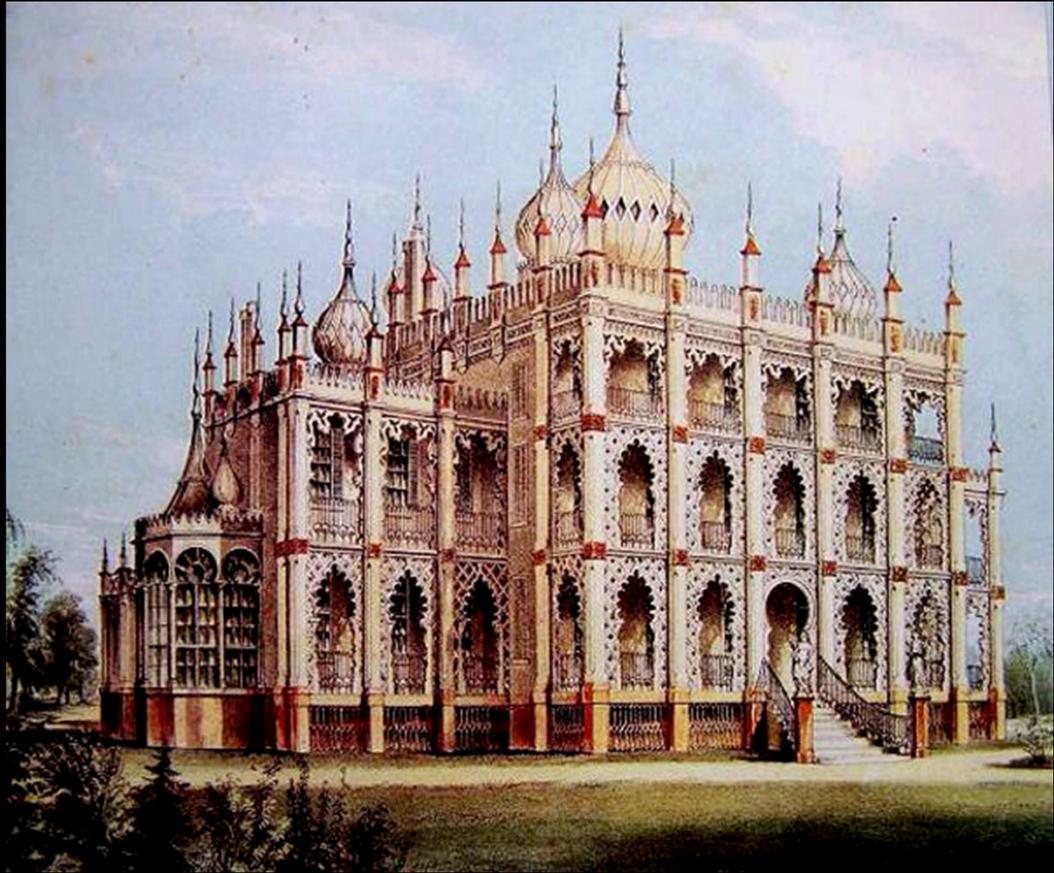
The Royal Pavilion  
**The Royal Stables**





Matthew Brady  
**P.T. Barnum**  
Circa 1860

Barnum dictated that the grand house he was building in Connecticut be modeled after the Royal Pavilion, which he had visited in 1844 with Tom Thumb.

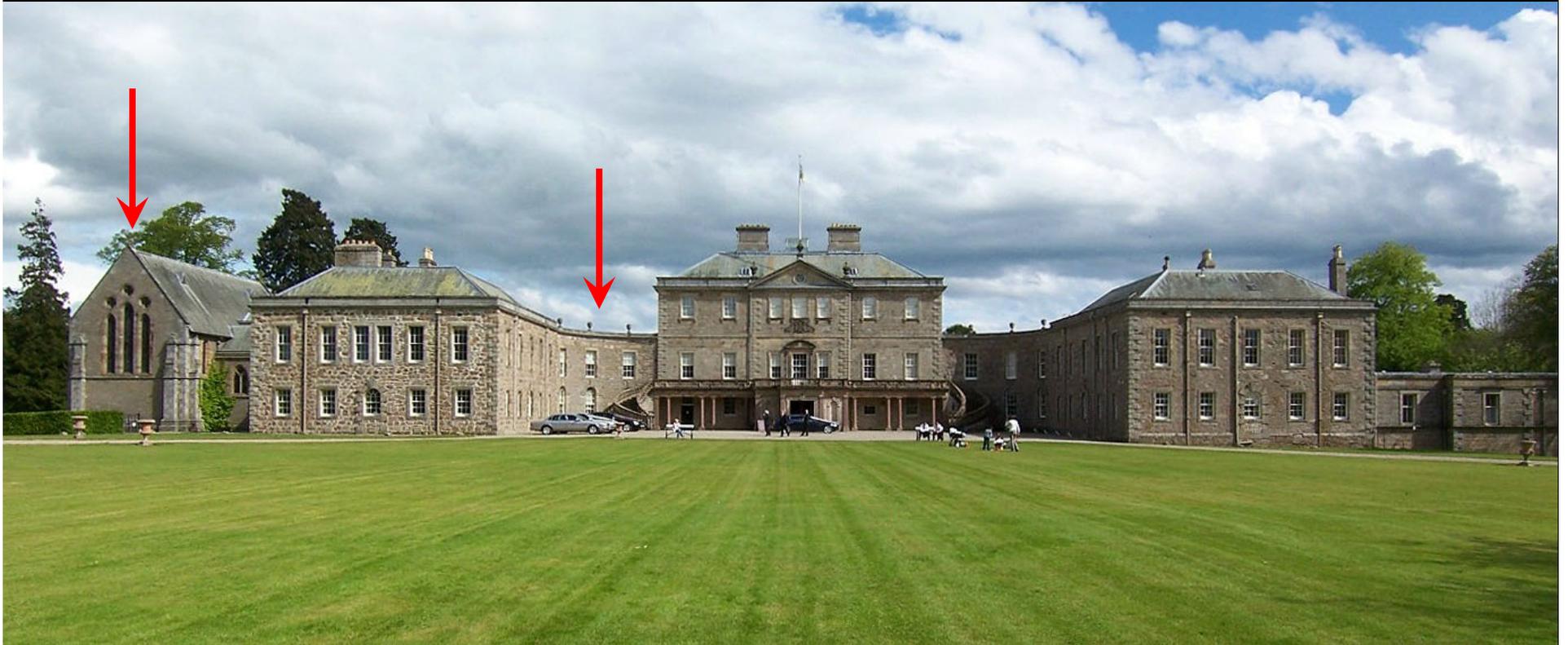


**Iranistan**  
Bridgeport, Connecticut  
Completed 1848  
Burned 1857

# OTHER REVIVALS



Quinlan Terry  
**The Maitland Robinson Library**  
Downing College, Cambridge  
1993



Wright & Mansfield  
**Haddo House**  
Aberdeenshire  
1880s interiors



Haddo House  
**Wing Corridor**



Haddo House  
George Edmund Street  
**The Chapel**  
1881

The upper window's stained glass was designed by Edward Burne-Jones, a pupil of Street's.



Haddo House  
**The Dining Room**



Alfred Edward Emslie  
*Dinner at Haddo House*  
1884  
*National Portrait Gallery, London*

Prime Minister  
William Gladstone



Haddo House  
**The Drawing Room**



Haddo House  
**The Morning Room**



Haddo House  
**The Morning Room**



# Haddo House The Library



Wright & Mansfield  
Library Desk  
1880s

The *Haddo Madonna* was acquired by George Gordon, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Aberdeen, who was prime minister of Great Britain from 1852 until 1855.

For years the canvas was attributed as “in the style of Raphael,” or “after Raphael.” In 2016 art historian Dr. Bendor Grosvenor featured the painting on the BBC program *Britain’s Lost Masterpieces*, where he firmly attributed the painting to Raphael.





Julian Bicknell  
**Henbury Hall**  
Cheshire  
1984—87



**Villa Rotonda**

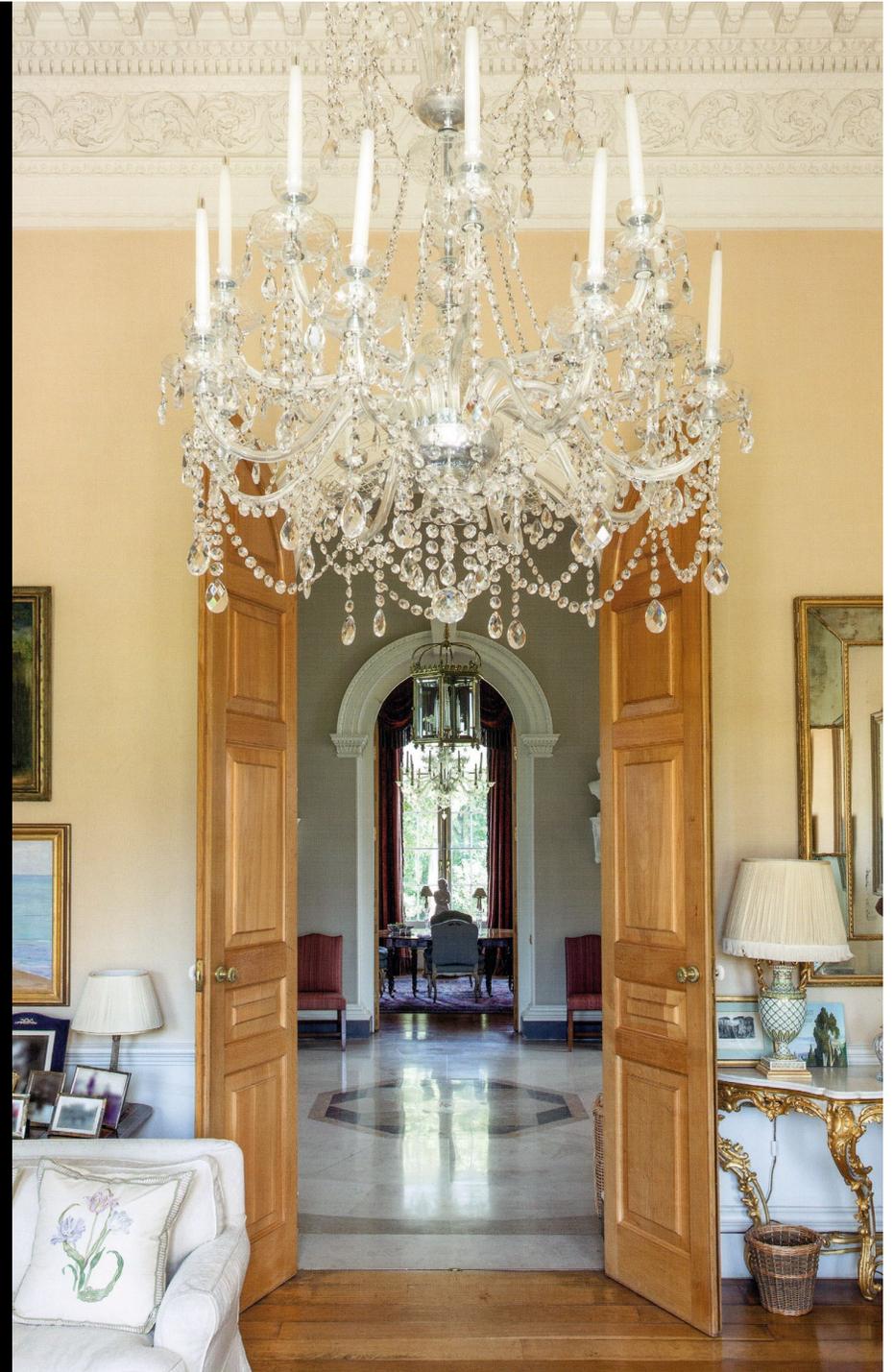


Henbury Hall  
**The Entrance Hall**



# Henbury Hall The Central Hall

Henbury Hall  
**Looking from the  
Drawing Room  
into the Central Hall**





# Henbury Hall Looking from the Study into the Central Hall

Henbury Hall  
**Dining Room**  
**Chimneypiece**





Henbury Hall  
**The Elevator**



**The Wedding Cake House**  
Kennebunkport, Maine  
Circa 1800 house w/circa 1850 Gothic makeover



Art & Architecture  
with Curt DiCamillo

A Virtual DiCamillo Companion Rendezvous  
*The British Crown Jewels: Triumph & Tragedy*

**March 10**

4:00 - 5:30 PM Eastern Time



[www.AmericanAncestors.org/events](http://www.AmericanAncestors.org/events)

More information about the houses discussed today can be found on Curt's website:

[www.TheDiCamillo.com](http://www.TheDiCamillo.com)

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# An Explosion of Beauty, Part II, 2023

Thank you for registering for the online course, **An Explosion of Beauty: The Art, Architecture, and Collections of British Country Houses, Part II!**

*Nowhere in the world are there so many country houses as in England, matchless for the astonishing variety of their styles and the richness of their collections and furniture.*

This quote from the English architectural historian John Harris sums up what many scholars believe is Britain's greatest and most lasting contribution to world culture: the country house. For centuries the country house held a unique position in English life. Before World War I, the families in these power houses ruled Britain. Not only were their houses the center of productive agricultural estates, their breathtaking interiors were the repositories of jaw-dropping collections of art.

In this three-session online course, Curator of Special Collections and celebrated architectural historian Curt DiCamillo, FRSA will guide you through these stately homes, their interiors, and their world-class art collections. This seminar will span nearly two and a half centuries worth of British decorative arts and style, discussing **Palladian, Rococo, Chinoiserie, Neoclassical, Medieval Revival, Chinese and Indian**, and more.

This course includes three 90-minute classes, access to the slides, and a bibliography. You do not need to attend the live sessions to participate in the course. Each class will be recorded and made available to participants until the end of May 2023.

## INSTRUCTIONS ON JOINING

To join the live sessions, click here: <https://zoom.us/j/94841070212>

# AmericanAncestors.org/explosion-beauty-part-ii-2023



Art & Architecture  
with Curt DiCamillo

*Thank you!*





NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC  
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