



To accompany our exhibition in the Pantry devoted to Lady Frances Waldegrave & the Stern Family, follow along with our House Trail...

As you explore the house, look closely — you'll find fascinating traces of its Victorian & Edwardian past hidden in plain sight!

## 1 THE ENTRANCE HALL

In the 1850s, Lady Waldegrave refashioned the Entrance Hall to make a powerful first impression, announcing Strawberry Hill's role as a centre of political influence. She replaced Walpole's plain red tiles with richly patterned encaustic tiles by Minton & Co., based on designs by Gothic Revival architect Augustus Pugin — using some of the same patterns as those found in the Houses of Parliament.

Beyond this space once stood a glass-roofed Vestibule, constructed by Lady Waldegrave to lead visitors from the carriage drive into the Hall. Demolished due to dry-rot in the 1950s, it once housed *Virgilia bewailing the absence of Coriolanus* by Thomas Woolner, a dramatic marble relief acquired for the Sterns by the Duveen Brothers in 1904.

Both the Stern's sculpture and Lady Waldegrave's tiles are now on display in the Pantry as part of *Strawberry Hill After Walpole*—don't miss them!

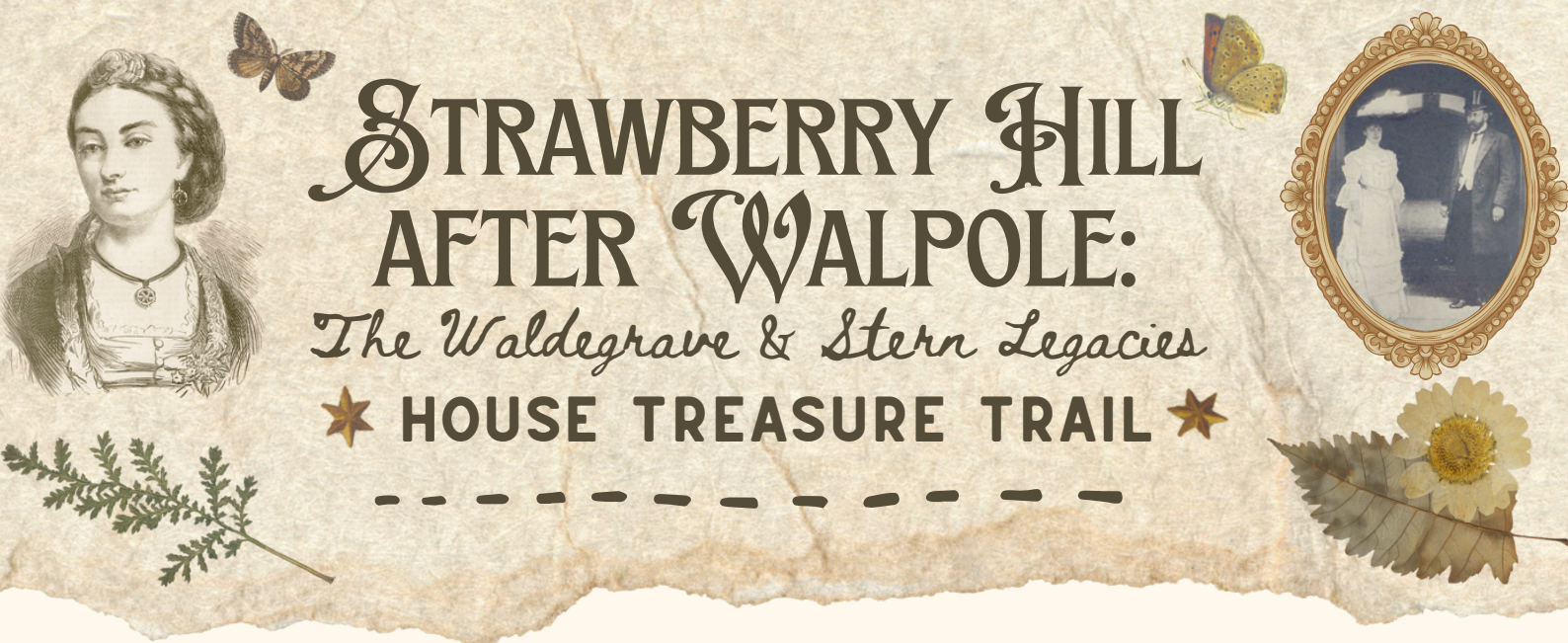


Tiles (1858), designed by Augustus Pugin.



The glass-ceilinged entrance, c.1920s, featuring the tiles and sculpture.





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## THE BLUE BREAKFAST ROOM

Lady Waldegrave decorated this space with French furniture, Sèvres and Dresden porcelain, and silk curtains lined with pale blue. Her fireplace tiles, featuring quatrefoils and trefoil motifs, survive in the room today.

The Stern family reimagined the space as an opulent 'Turkish Boudoir'. Rich teal walls were framed with intricate mahogany dado fretwork, and the ceiling was draped in silk velvet panels to create a dramatic tented canopy.

Tented interiors like this became popular among wealthy Victorians, blending influences from Ottoman pavilions, world's fairs, and the Aesthetic Movement's pursuit of beauty and escape. The design also reflected a broader German-Jewish interest in Orientalist interiors, as seen in both synagogues and domestic settings. Such rooms evoked faraway lands, offering a luxurious retreat from the industrial world.

The Blue Breakfast Room would have been used for smoking, conversation, and relaxation after dinner — an atmosphere that shocked some visitors. George Bernard Shaw, visiting in the 1920s, famously declared it "an immoral room."



The Blue Breakfast Room styled as a 'Turkish Boudoir', *Country Life*, 1995.



Originally a brilliant turquoise, the tented ceiling's fabric has faded to soft greens and yellows. The panels are embroidered with intricate arbesque and scrolling foliage patterns.





# STRAWBERRY HILL AFTER WALPOLE:

*The Waldegrave & Stern Legacies*

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## 3 THE STAIRWAY

In 1856, Lady Waldegrave painted the vaulted ceiling a deep cerulean blue and scattered it with a constellation of gold stars — a Gothic Revival motif inspired by medieval and Italian ‘fondi oro’ paintings. The stars were supplied by the London-based firm Nosotti & Co., founded by Milanese craftsman Charles Nosotti.

She complemented this celestial scene with stained-glass quatrefoil skylights, each bearing a national emblem: the rose of England, thistle of Scotland, shamrock of Ireland, and fleur-de-lys of France.

On the landing, known as the Armoury, she introduced golden fleur-de-lys mouldings to the ceiling and enlisted Thomas Baillie & Co. to make fresh settings for Walpole’s surviving stained glass. Baillie’s team reframed Walpole’s Netherlandish roundels with Victorian additions—deep green crescents adorned with oak leaves, fleur-de-lys, and monograms with Lady Waldegrave’s initials. Her repeated use of fleur-de-lys likely served as a homage to her neighbour, the Duc d’Aumale.

Today, Walpole’s Netherlandish roundels have been restored to their original locations, while the Waldegrave additions have been preserved and catalogued by the Collections team.

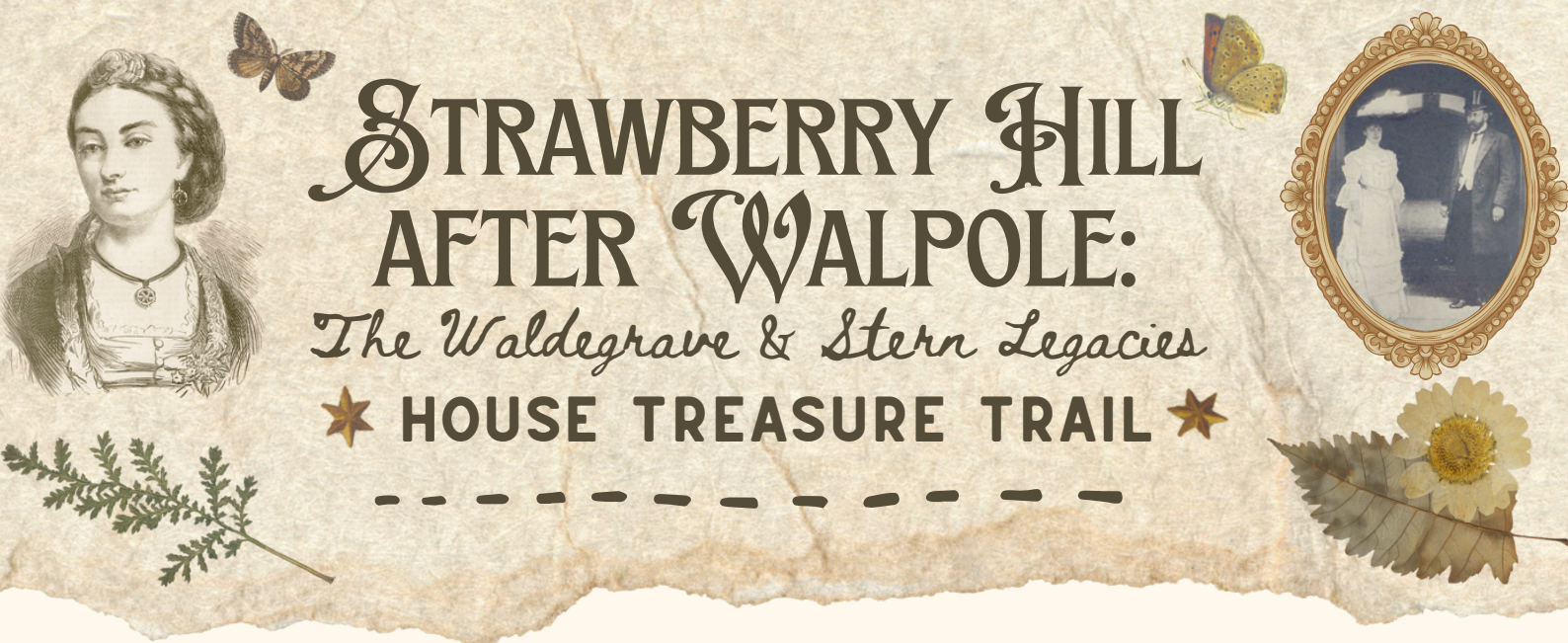


One of the quatrefoil windows installed by Lady Waldegrave in the Hall ceiling.



The Armoury window photographed in the 90s © English Heritage Archive.





## 4 WALPOLE'S BEDCHAMBER

In 1856, Lady Waldegrave redecorated Walpole's former bedchamber, bringing a softer, romantic character to the room. She chose a floral wallpaper first used by her in 1855 at her London residence, Carlton Gardens, and ordered again for "Lady Waldegrave's Bedroom" at Strawberry Hill. A note in Cowtan & Sons' order book describes it as "French," and it may have been produced by Joseph Dufour of Paris. The paper features a pale green ground with large sprays of pink and white flowers — likely cabbage roses.

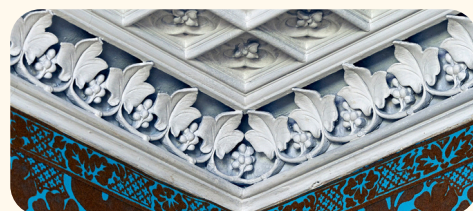
In the Victorian era, the "language of flowers" was a popular way to convey emotions through botanical symbolism. Pink roses were associated with love, grace, and sweetness, while ivy, which appears in the scrolling vine cornice, symbolised fidelity, marriage, and enduring affection. By the time of these renovations, Lady Waldegrave had already entered her third marriage, so surrounding herself with such symbols may have offered a form of private reassurance amid public scrutiny.

Today, traces of her Victorian wallpaper remain alongside Walpole's original flocked design, preserving the layered stories of Strawberry Hill's past.



Williams	Captain	110.
Wodehouse	Mrs	111.
Wodehouse	Lord	120. 271.
Ward	Lord	135. 136. 294.
Wodgwood	HA Esq.	147.
Wilson	Sir Ralph	157.
Waldegrave	Countess	178. 332.
Warner	Mrs	185.
Ward	Dean of	189.
Widdrington	Captain	192.
Wodehouse	Mr. Wodehouse	206.

Pages from the 1856 Cowtan & Son's order book © Victoria & Albert Museum.



Cornicing featuring a vine design, added by Lady Waldegrave c. 1856.

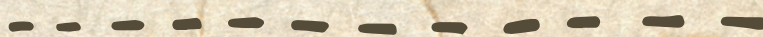




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## THE GALLERY

In Lady Waldegrave's time, the Gallery became the glittering heart of Strawberry Hill's social and political life. Masked balls, musical evenings, and exclusive "Saturday to Monday" gatherings brought together prime ministers, royalty, and political allies beneath its soaring ceiling.



'Lady Waldegrave's Ball', *The Graphic*, 29th July 1871.

In 1856, she commissioned a new parquet floor from Charles Hindley & Sons, featuring a striking diamond pattern and large brass and pewter inlays at each corner. One design features Horace Walpole's Saracen's head crest and the date 1747 — the year he took possession of Strawberry Hill. The other showcases Lady Waldegrave's monogram and a countess's coronet, along with the date 1856, marking the beginning of her ambitious renovations. Heating grills were also discreetly installed in the floor, ensuring that the grandeur of the space did not come at the expense of comfort.



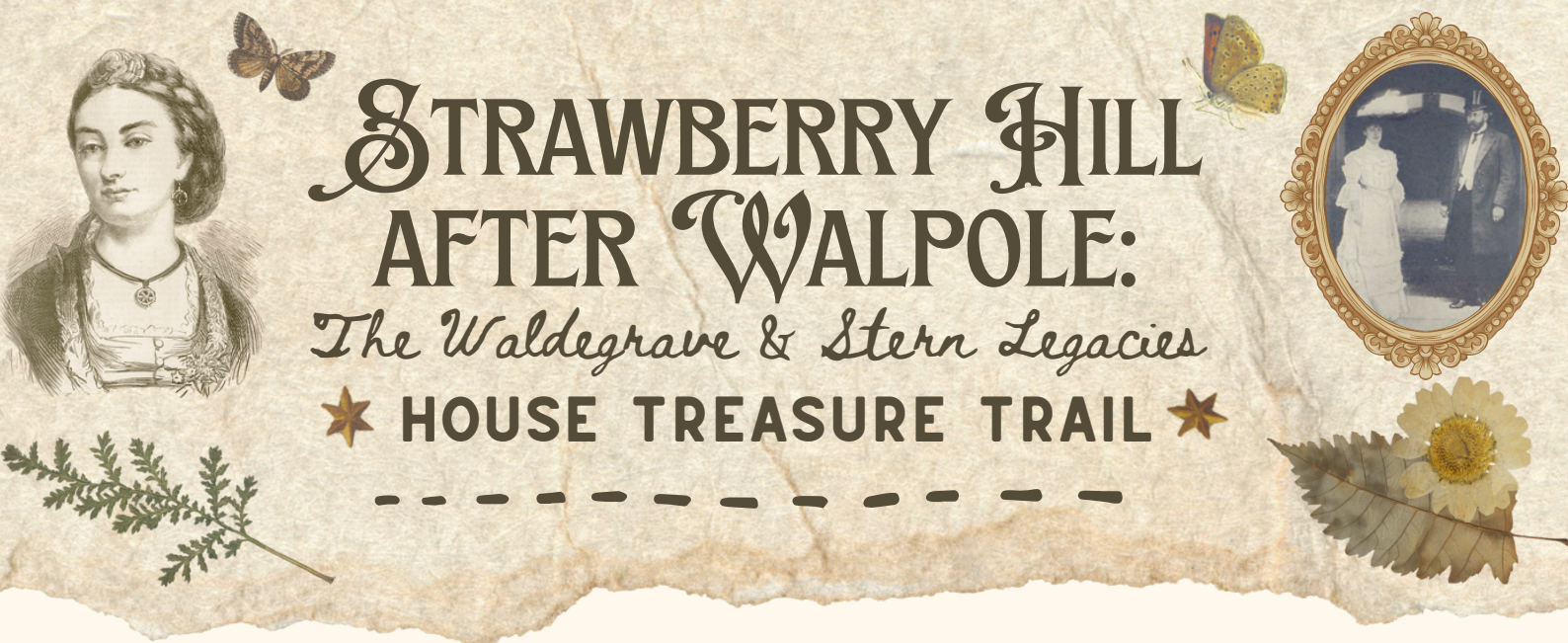
Detail of Lady Waldegrave's monogram and a Countess's coronet in the parquet floor.

The fireplace was fitted with Gothic Revival tiles featuring richly coloured foliate designs, and adapted to burn Radstock coal from mines Lady Waldegrave owned in Somerset. Her ownership of these mines provided both the fuel for her home and the financial means to support her ambitious renovations.



Fireplace tiles added by Lady Waldegrave, 1856.





## 6 THE ROUND ROOM

In 1857, Lady Waldegrave commissioned Thomas Baillie & Co. to install new stained glass in the Round Drawing Room, replacing the varied medieval panels sold in the 1842 auction. Continuing Walpole's tradition, Lady Waldegrave filled the Round Room with stained glass that blended heraldry, history, and personal symbolism.

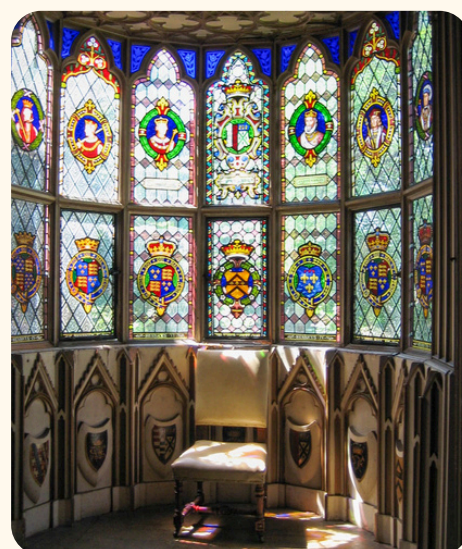
On the top row, portraits of Tudor monarchs flank a shield combining Frances' Braham heritage with the Waldegrave arms. Below, royal arms and Walpole's crest complete the heraldic display. Between the roundels, subtle inscriptions of "HO" for Horace of Orford and "FW" for Frances Waldegrave bind their names together. At the centre shines the Waldegrave motto, *Coelum non Animum* — "You may change where you are, but not what you are".

The arches beneath the bay window once displayed a series of painted armorial shields featuring symbols drawn from Lady Waldegrave's marriages, family heritage, and Walpole's own crest. You can find out more about them in our exhibition.

By layering her story into the fabric of the house, Lady Waldegrave ensured her name would remain intertwined with Walpole's Gothic creation.



'FW' (for Frances Waldegrave) etched between the roundels.



Lady Waldegrave's armorial shields photographed during the restoration.





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## THE GREAT NORTH BEDCHAMBER

Originally conceived by Horace Walpole as a symbolic chamber in the country house tradition, the Great North Bedchamber was never intended for sleep. Though one article from *The Sketch* in 1905 refers to it as a bedroom, the 1883 sale catalogue records no bed — only a ‘gilt frame drawing room suite, richly upholstered in crimson satin damask’, alongside a selection of card tables and small side tables. Lady Waldegrave adapted the space as a richly furnished reception room, adding a second doorway to improve access and circulation.

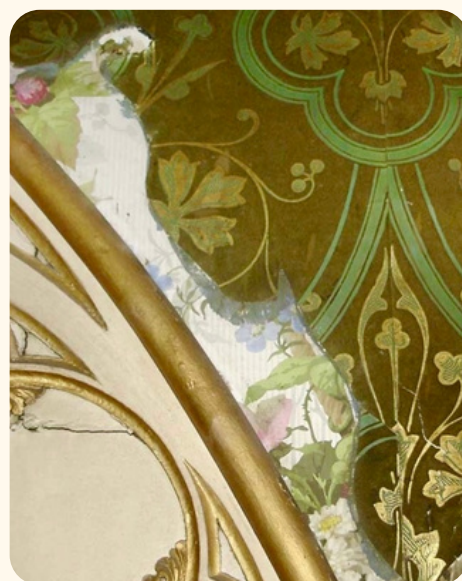
In the early twentieth century, the Stern family redecorated with flock wallpaper in a Gothic Revival style — combining stylised gold foliage, with blue-green quatrefoils. A floral wallpaper fragment discovered beneath the architrave is likely part of Lady Waldegrave’s original scheme. Elsewhere in the room, a “shadow pattern” of the same design remained imprinted on the hessian scrim between this layer and the Sterns’ later paper.

The fireplace tiles, featuring white Moorish stars and green trefoils on a soft pink ground, were likely selected by Lady Waldegrave.



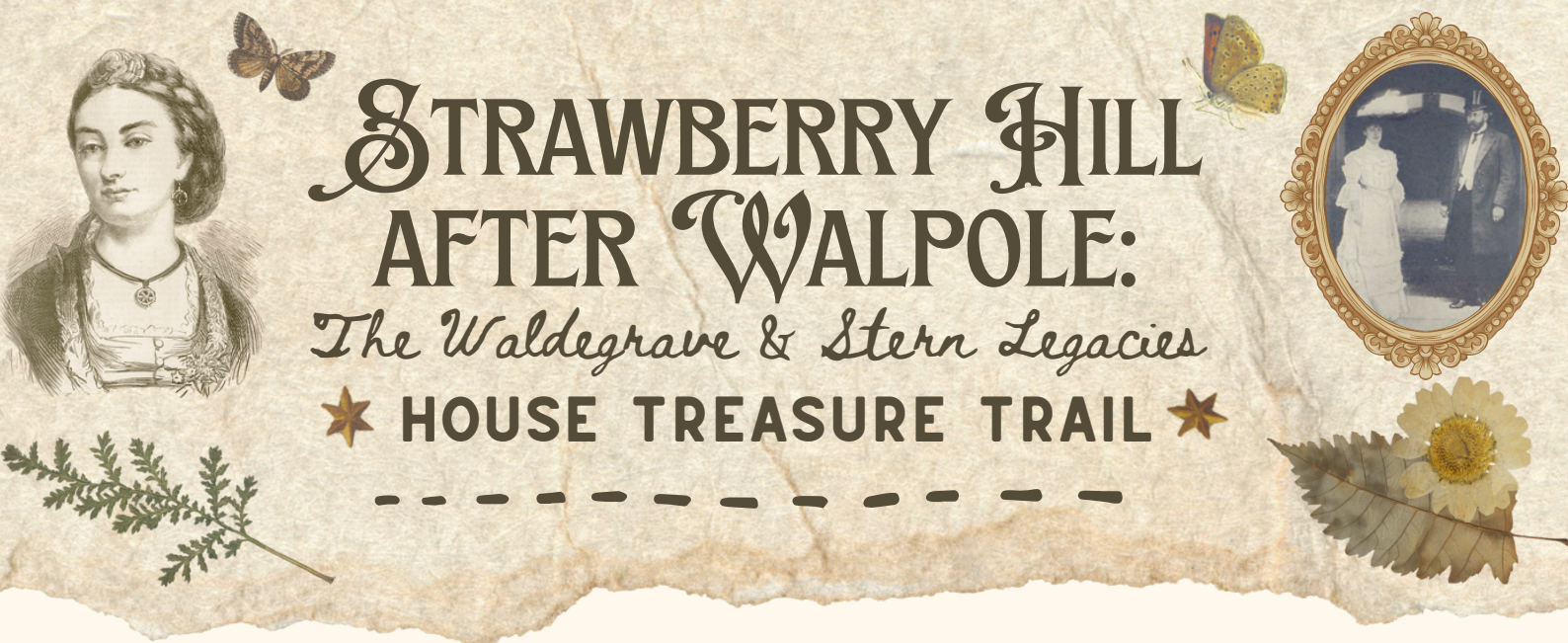
A COLLECTION OF FANS AND CURIOS IN A RECESS IN THE WALL OF "LADY WALDEGRAVE'S BEDROOM," AND STAINED GLASS BEARING A PORTRAIT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER CYPHER.

The glazed closet in the Great North Bedchamber, *The Sketch* 29<sup>th</sup> July 1905.



Floral wallpaper beneath a blue-green and gold flocked design, found under the architrave on the west wall in 2005.





## 8

## THE GARDEN

Lady Waldegrave transformed the garden into a more formal Victorian landscape. She replaced Walpole's goldfish pond with a flower garden, planted a rosary framed by iron trellises, and added a maze at the garden's northeastern tip. New pathways connected the house to a boathouse on the Thames and to the newly built Strawberry Hill Station.



The garden featuring Lady Waldegrave's fountain photographed by Philip Henry Delamotte, 1863.

A wrought-iron staircase of swirling strawberry leaves linked the new Waldegrave Wing directly to the lawns, guiding guests into the garden for evening entertainments, where coloured lights would have illuminated the shrubbery.

In the nearby Chapel in the Woods, a marble statue of Lady Waldegrave by leading Victorian sculptor Matthew Noble once stood on a rotating pedestal, allowing her likeness to be admired from every angle. Today, a carved stone relief of her profile still overlooks the gardens from above the Waldegrave Wing doorway.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Stern family revived the gardens for a new era. Following Herbert Stern's elevation to Baron Michelham of Hellingly, Strawberry Hill became the setting for extravagant garden parties. Prime ministers, foreign princes, and aristocrats mingled on the lawns, entertained by performers such as Anna Pavlova, Malcolm Scott, and even a baby elephant. In 1908, Strawberry Hill hosted competitors and officials from the London Olympic Games, and in 1914, a grand Fancy Dress Ball marked the estate's last great celebration before the First World War.

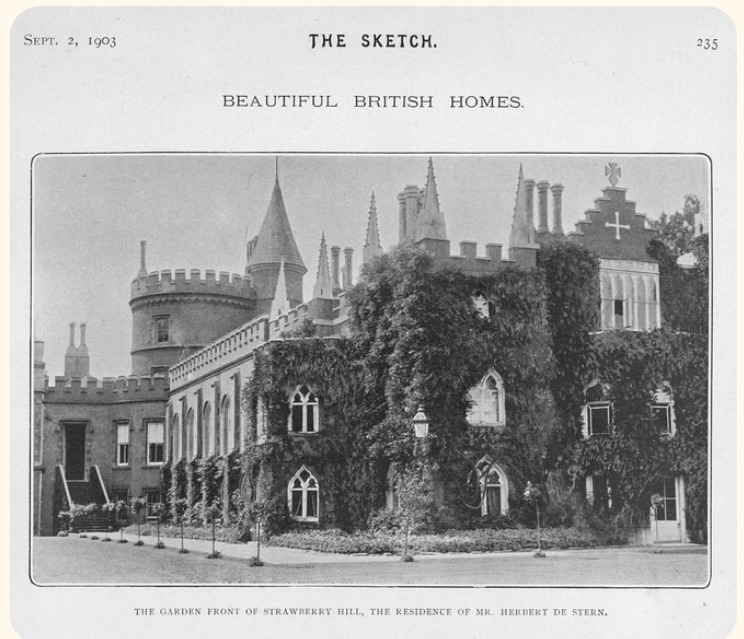




Weather vane, with strawberry leaf design, installed by Lady Waldegrave c. 1860.



Chimney pots, installed by Lady Waldegrave c. 1860, inspired by those at Hampton Court Palace.



'Beautiful British Homes - The Residence of Mr Herbert De Stern' *The Sketch*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1903.



'Lady Michelham and some of her guests', A garden party held by the Stern family, reported in *The Tatler*, 24th July 1912.





# STRAWBERRY HILL

## House & Garden

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**“Strawberry Hill After Walpole: The Waldegrave and Stern Legacies”**  
was curated by the Collections Team at Strawberry Hill, which  
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