12 · 'A Gothic Vatican of Greece and Rome': Horace Walpole, Strawberry Hill, and the Narratives of Gothic

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Horace Walpole's villa or 'castle' at Strawberry Hill in Twickenham is deservedly considered an eccentric monument in the history of architecture (Fig. 1).[1] As son of Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole, patron of the grand neo-Palladian mansion at Houghton Hall, Norfolk, it is not surprising that Horace's construction of a 'plaything' house in the Gothic mode was understood to vigorously oppose his father's conservative, classicizing tastes at Houghton.[2] In a famous and exceptionally camp bit of architectural one-upmanship, Walpole compared his house to another *cause célèbre* of eighteenth-century building, Lord Burlington's Palladian villa at Chiswick: 'As my castle is so diminutive, I give myself a Burlington air and say that as Chiswick is a model of Grecian architecture, Strawberry Hill is to be so of Gothic' (Fig. 2).[3] Promoted by its owner as a major stop on the tour of London houses in the eighteenth century, the subject of the first illustrated guidebook to an English house (Walpole's *A*

Description of the Villa of Mr Horace Walpole of 1774, expanded 1784), and the subject of countless topographical images and satires, Strawberry Hill was the focus of an intensive campaign of mythologization during the eighteenth century.

It has been estimated that some 10,000 people toured the house in the second half of the century, a tourist trade that introduced the Gothic as a style of domestic architecture to many visitors.[4] Strawberry Hill was not of course the first house built in the style. Sufficient houses and garden buildings were erected by the 1750s to allow one skeptical classicist without the benefit of foresight (or our own modernist teleologies of style) to consider the Gothic a capricious freak of taste that had already become passé.[5] Strawberry Hill was, however, the first use of the Gothic style to create an overall *environment* that was based in a dense, carefully articulated and theorized construction of the Gothic. As such, Walpole's Gothic at Strawberry Hill was far more than simply an edifice built in bricks and mortar, or papier-mâché and plaster, as

1. I am grateful to Crystal Lake, a fellow Fellow at the British Art Centre at Yale in 2011–12, with whom I had useful discussions about *The Castle of Otranto*. I am also grateful to William Diebold and his seminar class at Reed College, where I presented these ideas and received much useful commentary. Finally, I thank the staff of the Lewis Walpole Library at Yale University for permission to reproduce their images and for their characteristic kindness and support.

2. For example, the unpublished poem added to Horace Walpole's own 'extra illustrated' copy of the *Description* of Strawberry Hill which develops an elaborate comparison between Houghton and Strawberry Hill: 'Houghton's Grandeur strikes the wand'ring sight / but Strawberry Hill is seen with pure delight.' Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, MS 49 3582 (pasted to the inside cover).

3. *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. by Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1937–83), XX, pp. 361-62 (4 March 1753).

4. Timothy Mowl, *Horace Walpole: The Great Outsider* (London: John Murray, 1998), p. 233. Some of the accounts of visitors to Strawberry Hill have been collected in Stephen Clarke, '"Lord God! Jesus! What a House!" Describing and Visiting Strawberry Hill', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 33:3 (2010), 357-80.

5. *The World*, 12 (22 March 1753). For useful overviews of these monuments, see Michael McCarthy, *The Origins of the Gothic Revival* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1987); Timothy Mowl and Brian Earnshaw, *An Insular Rococo: Architecture, Politics and Society in Ireland and England, 1710–1770* (London: Reaktion books, 1993), pp. 89-108; Morriss R. Brownell, *Alexander Pope and the Arts of Georgian England* (Oxford: Clarendon 1978), esp. pp. 249-328. See recently Matthew M. Reeve, 'Of Druids, the Gothic, and the Origins of Architecture: the Garden Designs of William Stukeley', *British Art Journal*, XIII:3 (2013), 9-18.

the case may be. Rather, it was the formation of an entirely new vision for the style.

A paper on the forms and meanings of the Gothic in the eighteenth century appearing in a volume devoted to classicism and its replications, and dedicated to an arch-classicist, colleague, and friend, Pierre du Prey, might seem unfitting. I would therefore like to offer three justifications. First, despite his life-long fascination with classicism, Pierre was enormously interested in Strawberry Hill and the men who created it, and I learned much about it from him over conversations at his Kingston home. Second, Strawberry Hill fits neatly into Pierre's fascination with that particular building type – the villa – the subject of his much-praised *The Villas of Pliny*, which is discussed elsewhere in this volume.[6] Third, and most significant, since its theorizations by Raphael and Giorgio Vasari in the sixteenth century, the Gothic was positioned as an aesthetic other to the classical.[7] Its revival in eighteenth-century England was possible and desirable because neoclassicism, and particularly the formal, ascetic, and perhaps typically English version of Palladian classicism, was considered inappropriate or unsatisfying to the new palettes of the second and third quarters of the eighteenth century.

In the historiography of English architecture, this change of styles has been seen as the result of 'a conflict between the classical doctrine with the new sensibility […] of contradictory approaches embodied in such antithetical terms as reason and feeling, rule and freedom, objectivity and subjectivity'.[8] In the terms of Michel Foucault's influential archaeology of the human sciences, we might characterize this change as a shift from a classical to a modern episteme.[9] Elsewhere I have argued that one component of this picture was the emerging sexuality known as the third sex (which anticipates what is now termed 'homosexuality') to which Walpole and his fellow designers of Strawberry Hill (the so-called 'Committee of Taste' or 'Strawberry Committee') belonged.[10] For the moment it is significant that Walpole's Gothic was conceived as a conscious alternative to classicism, a relationship that can be charted in terms of the aesthetics, gender, and narrativity of the two modes. As such, the Gothic offered a remarkably perceptive critique of classicism, to which it became not so much an opposite but rather an evil twin in theory and practice.

Gothic versus classic: patterns of space, patterns of experience

To understand this we might begin by taking Walpole's comparison between Strawberry Hill and Lord Burlington's villa at Chiswick seriously (Figs. 1 and 2). Contemporaries clearly did: in a doggerel poem first printed in the *Craftsman* and reprinted in Walpole's 1784 *Description*, Strawberry Hill is compared favorably to Chiswick

6. Pierre du Prey, *The Villas of Pliny from Antiquity to Posterity* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1995). See Guy Métraux's contribution to this volume.

7. Paul Frankl, *The Gothic: Literary Sources and Interpretations through Eight Centuries* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960. And see recently Anne-Marie Sankovitch, 'The myth of "the myth of the medieval": Gothic architecture in Vasari's *rinascita* and Panofsky's Renaissance', *Res*, 20 (2002), 29-50.

8. Rudolph Wittkower, 'Classical Theory and Eighteenth-Century Sensibility', in *idem*, *Palladio and English Palladianism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983), pp. 193-204 (esp. 195); Joseph Rykwert, *The First Moderns: Architects of the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983); and most recently David Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) and Neil Levine,

'Castle Howard and the Emergence of the Modern Architectural Subject', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 62:3 (2003), 326-51.

9. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1994).

10. Matthew M. Reeve, 'Gothic Architecture, Sexuality and License at Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill', *Art Bulletin*, XCV (2013), 411-39 and *idem*, 'Dickie Bateman and the Gothicization of Old Windsor: Architecture and Sexuality in the Circle of Horace Walpole', *Architectural History*, 56 (2013), 99-133. See also George Haggerty, 'Queering Horace Walpole', *Studies in English Literature*, 46:3 (2006), 543-62; *idem*, *Horace Walpole's Letters: Masculinity and Friendship in the Eighteenth Century* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2011).

and other Palladian houses.[11] Typical of the ink that flowed from Walpole's pen, his commentary is flippant and deliciously stylish, while also being remarkably astute. Of course, the comparison is apposite because both villas are small in size and were built by gentlemen architects. Also, Chiswick and Strawberry Hill were intended to be toured as monuments in the tour of houses around London, and both were, as Walpole suggests, influential disseminators of their respective historicist modes of design. Chiswick has been called 'a deeply considered design, utterly controlled by relentless reference to [antique] authority'.[12] It was the first English country house whose plan was a recreation of Roman models, even if Burlington's sources were mediated by the work of Andrea Palladio (particularly the Villa Rotunda) and Vincenzo Scamozzi. In Pierre's pithy description of the villa he states:

> From an eighteenth-century perspective Chiswick Villa's solid geometry bespoke an attitude of restraint, rather than showy opulence. It overtly hinted that good taste among Lord Burlington's ruling class would reside in the Platonic pure forms embodied in the triangular pediment, hemispherical dome, and polygonal drum: simple; understated; and by extension natural – the same crystalline shapes that had inspired Plato's Timaeus dialogue, had infused Palladio's buildings and reemerged in those of his near-contemporary Vincenzo Scamozzi (1552–1616). Burlington intended visitors to appreciate the house like a

multi-faceted and faintly emerald-green jewel by circling around its four sides; each a different lesson in architectural composition.[13]

A recreation of an antique villa on British soil, Chiswick's planning, geometry, and ornamentation suggested a projection or spatialization of the neoclassical imaginations of Lord Burlington and his peers, a kind of praxis of the perceived values of the antique world as an archetype for British aristocratic life (Fig. 3).

The rigidly symmetrical plans of the Palladian house and the rationalized physical framework of its interior spaces have been recently described as a 'static' plan that came to be expected in great eighteenth-century country houses: 'the English gentry […] were not characteristically on the look out for originality or "invention" in their houses, and as they visited one another [they] no doubt found it convenient to be able to recognize quickly whereabouts they were in their neighbor's rooms.'[14] Contentious as this statement might be to the student of English Palladianism, there is a ring of truth to it. The plan of the Palladian or 'formal' house – defined by symmetrical arrangements of rooms with a hall at the center leading to adjoining saloons and chambers – established a spatial archetype for the English house that substantially choreographed and formalized human interaction within its enclosure. As Mark Girouard and others have shown, this plan articulated a range of social hierarchies that separated and classified its inhabitants along the lines of class, gender, and social status.[15]

11. 'Some cry up Gunnersbury,
   For Sion some declare;
   And some say that with Chiswick-house
   No villa can compare:
   But ask the beaux of Middlesex,
   Who know the country well,
   If Strawb'ry-hill, from Strawb'ry-hill
   Don't bear away the bell.'
   Horace Walpole, *A Description of the Villa of Mr Horace Walpole* (Twickenham 1784, repr. Charleston, SC: BiblioBazaar, 2010), p. 514.

12. John Harris, *The Palladian Revival: Lord Burlington, His Villa and Garden at Chiswick* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 107.

13. Pierre du Prey, 'Tripartite Planning', in *Architecture and the Classical Tradition* http://act.art.queensu.ca/segment.php?t=21&p=2&i=35 [accessed 1 November 2011].

14. Andor Gomme and Alison Maguire, *Design and Plan in the Country House: From Castle Donjons to Palladian Boxes* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press 2008), pp. 289-92.

15. Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1978), esp. pp. 110-62. For a subsequent overview, see Nicholas Cooper, 'Rank, Manners and Display: The Gentlemanly House, 1500–1700', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), 291-310.

At Chiswick, as at Strawberry Hill, plan is intimately connected to style. As the former was the first studied recreation of an antique house in England, the latter was the first studied recreation of late medieval seigneurial and collegiate buildings (Fig. 4). It should be remembered that the earliest essays in Gothic design in eighteenth-century England – particularly William Kent's house at Esher built for Henry Pelham (which Horace Walpole knew well) and Kent's designs for Aske Hall Temple in Yorkshire – were designed upon symmetrical, classically-inspired plans and elevations, a disjunction of plan and ornamentation that has earned his designs the label 'Palladian Gothic'.[16] Returning to the plan of Strawberry Hill, the rambling, irregular, and pointedly asymmetrical nature of the layout reflects not simply the forms and volumes of late medieval architecture (or at least a particular conception of them) but the organic patterns of its construction, characterized by frequent rebuildings, additions, and renovations.[17] The complex historicity of the house – being a modern house built in a medieval style with a fictive, ancient architectural history – was acknowledged by Walpole often enough in his writings. In an unpublished passage pasted into his own copy of the *Description*, Walpole recounts, 'The year before the gallery was built, a stranger passed and asked an old farmer belonging to Mr Walpole, if Strawberry Hill was not an old house! He replied, "yes, but my master designs to build one much

older next year!"'.[18] What is significant for us is that Walpole's Gothic villa was not only a challenge to the neoclassical villa in terms of style but also in terms of the formal arrangement of its spaces and thus of its spatial narratives for the viewer.

Despite the attempt by some historians to construct it as such, for Walpole the Gothic was not simply or even principally defined in formal terms by its ornament – pointed arches, tracery windows, battlements, etc. – as it would be by the Victorian ecclesiologists. In Walpole's voluminous writings, we can trace the contours of a developed conception of the Gothic as an historiographical idiom that located the modish forms of late medieval architecture within a broader history of nostalgia for a lost erotic, Catholic, and sensory past that stood in contrast to the perceived strictures of the 'enlightened', neoclassical present.[19] These features inform his adaptation of Alexander Pope's 'Gothic Vatican of Greece and Rome' to describe his own house, and his moniker 'Abbot of Strawberry Hill'.[20] In this paper I shall suggest that intrinsic to what 'Gothic' was for Walpole was a particular conception of space and spatial or kinaesthetic experience. Positioned as a model of the Gothic and an anti-model of the 'Grecian', Strawberry Hill's planning suggests a conscious dismantling of the narrative structures of the neoclassical villa and the perceived formalized human relationships that took place within them.[21] In arguing along these lines, I am indebted to recent

16. John Harris, 'William Kent and Esher Place', in *The Fashioning and Functioning of the British Country House*, ed. by Gervase Jackson-Stops et al., Studies in the History of Art, 25 (Hanover, NH and London: University Press of New England, 1989), pp. 13-26; Timothy Mowl, *William Kent: Architect, Designer, Opportunist* (London: Random House, 2006), esp. pp. 193-55; Roger White, 'Kent and the Gothic Revival', in *William Kent: Designing Georgian Britain*, ed. by Susan Weber (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press 2013), 247-70. For 'Palladian Gothic', see McCarthy, *The Origins of the Gothic Revival*, pp. 31-36.

17. For useful discussions of Strawberry Hill's 'irregularity' in the context of eighteenth-century architecture, see Nikolaus Pevsner, 'Richard Payne Knight', *Art Bulletin*, 31 (1949), reprinted in *idem*, *Studies in Art, Architecture and Design* (New York: Walker and Co., 1968), pp. 109-25 (esp. 110-13), and Andrew Ballantyne, *Architecture, Landscape and Liberty: Richard Payne Knight and the Picturesque* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997),

pp. 260-68; Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*, esp. pp. 22-44.

18. Yale University, Lewis Walpole Library MS 49-2522. This insertion is unpaginated.

19. Reeve, 'Gothic Architecture, Sexuality and License'.

20. *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, X, p. 127 (18 June 1764). Walpole, *Description*, p. 397, punning on Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad*, Book I: l. 145.

21. Robert Harbison similarly suggested, 'Walpole's house has no unimportant spaces, no subordinations, and we find nooks, alcoves and vestibules lingered over and imagined as lavishly as the main public spaces. Palladio's dictum that "rooms for baser uses should be hidden away as the baser organs of the body are discretely placed" does not apply.' Robert Harbison, *Eccentric Spaces: A Voyage Through Real and Imaginary Worlds* (New York: 1977, 1994, repr. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2000), p. 30.

'experiential approaches' to the eighteenth-century house and to the spatial imagination in general, which 'superintend […] the myriad ways through which individuals experience, comprehend, communicate, and act upon their understanding of the material worlds they inhabit'.[22]

Gothic doubling: Strawberry Hill and The Castle of Otranto

Unlike Chiswick, the spatial imagination of the visitor to Strawberry Hill toward the end of the eighteenth century was informed in part by their awareness of another Gothic house, the fictive setting of Walpole's famous 1764/5 novel *The Castle of Otranto: a Gothic Story* (Fig. 5). Recounting her experience of Strawberry Hill, for example, Frances Burney was surprised by 'the unusually shaped apartments' in which 'striking recollections were brought to the minds of his Gothic Story of the Castle of Otranto'.[23] Walpole claims to have envisaged the story – and thus the literary castle itself – during a feverish dream while sleeping at Strawberry Hill, and his letters leave no doubt that he had his own house in mind as a template for the setting of the story.[24] In all likelihood the dream origin of *Otranto* is a literary conceit; the story and its setting can be more readily understood as a conscious associationist fantasy inspired by his own Gothic house, or even a 'psychoanalysis' of it (according to one recent critic).[25]

The relationship between Strawberry Hill and *The Castle of Otranto* was an important aspect of the house's mythologization during the eighteenth century and beyond, and it was one that Walpole personally promoted, calling his house 'my own little Otranto'.[26] The dual identity of the house and of Walpole as owner, 'Lord', or 'Master' of Otranto was an in-joke within his circle of close friends: a printed notice now in Eton College Library records an elaborate apology from Walpole (in medievalist guise as 'The Master of *Otranto*') to Lady Blandford ('Fairy Blandina') for being unable to greet 'Her Hautesse' while suffering with gout, but asking that his 'Seneschal' nonetheless grant her access to the 'Castle'.[27] Walpole's fabrication of a literary double identity for his house was to be influential for later building projects during the Gothic Revival. For example, Thomas Penrose's poem, 'The Helmets', was 'laid in the Neighborhood of Donington Castle [*sic*], in a House built after the Gothic Taste'. It is not a coincidence that the 1775 poem was inspired directly by *Otranto* or that its setting – Donnington Grove (built for the antiquarian James Pettit Andrews) – was inspired by Strawberry Hill and was built by Walpole's friend and architect John Chute.[28]

Walpole's novel was originally published as

22. Bernard L. Herman, 'Movement, Experience, Perspective: Architectural Space and Domestic Practice in the Eighteenth-Century House', in *The Baroque Villa: Suburban and Country Residences c. 1600–1800*, ed. by Barbara Arciszewska (Wilanów: Wilanów Palace Museum, 2009), pp. 261-70; in general Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (New York: Orion Press, 1964); Harbison, *Eccentric Spaces*; David Summers, *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism* (London: Phaidon, 2003); and most recently, *Architectural Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Constructing Identities and Interiors*, ed. by Denise A Baxter and Meredith Martin (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010).

23. Charlotte Barrett, *Diary and Letters of Madam D'Arblay*, 7 vols (New York: MacMillan & Co., 1904), 2, p. 483.

24. Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis, *Rescuing Horace Walpole* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1978), pp. 181-89.

25. Anne Williams, 'Reading Walpole reading Shakespeare', *Shakespearean Gothic*, ed. by Christy Desmet and Anne Williams (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), pp. 13-36 (esp. 17).

26. For example, William Henry Ireland, *Scribbleomania: or, The*

printer's devil's polichronicon. A sublime poem (London: Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1815), pp. 137-38: 'In mazes monastic of *Strawberry Hill*, Sir Horace first issu'd the marvelous pill; His brain teeming hot with chivalrous rant, O Engendere'd the *Giant*, and *Castle of Otranto* […].'

27. Eton College MS C.C.1.1.4, unpaginated.

28. For the poem, see Reverend Thomas Penrose, *Flights of Fancy* (London: J. Walter, 1775), pp. 4-9. On Donnington, see McCarthy, *Origins of the Gothic Revival*, esp. pp. 92-97. For relationships between Penrose and Andrews, see Christopher Hussey, 'A Georgian Scrapbook', *Country Life*, 31 December (1959), 1292-93. My thinking here is indebted in part to Stephen Bann, *The Clothing of Clio: A Study of the representation of history in nineteenth-century Britain and France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), esp. chs 4 and 5. As a site, Donnington had a significant literary pedigree since its medieval castle was believed to have been owned by Geoffrey Chaucer in the period. Walpole displayed an image of Donnington at Strawberry Hill and noted its literary pedigree on his inscription. The print is now Yale University, Lewis Walpole Library LF Bin 36.

a translation of a medieval original found 'in the library of an ancient catholic family in the north of England'. The great success of the novel allowed Walpole to reveal himself as author in the subsequent 1765 edition and to claim the novel as a new mode of 'Gothic' or medievalizing literature that aimed to remedy the strictures of the present, since for Walpole the imagination had been 'dammed up by a strict adherence to common life'.[29] *Otranto*, and the Gothic genre which it invigorated, has been understood as a correction of sorts to polite literary narratives of the eighteenth century. As Frederick Frank suggests, it was 'written in defiance of neoclassic forms and norms'; it was intended to 'break down rational order', as 'a dissolution of all norms – ontological, epistemological, and aesthetic'.[30] The story begins after an ancient regicide, after which Manfred is the unofficial Prince of Otranto, and he attempts to marry off his son Conrad to continue his family's hold on the principality. The plot unravels with the return of the rightful heir, Theodore, but not before, in what must be one of literature's great narrative non-sequiturs, Conrad is crushed to death by a gigantic helmet that suddenly falls from the sky into the courtyard. Initiating a central trope of Gothic fiction, the central protagonist in the novel was the Gothic castle itself.

Strawberry Hill thus enjoyed a double identity during the later eighteenth century as the house of a famous man and as a model for, or even simulation of, the famous literary castle from *The Castle of Otranto*. The connections between the literary castle in *Otranto* and Strawberry Hill have been often explored, although never more cogently than by Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis in an important paper of 1953.[31] Lewis showed that a number of the spaces of the castle were clearly based upon Strawberry Hill: the long gallery at Strawberry is the gallery in *Otranto* (Fig. 6); the 'chamber on the right hand' described in the novel is the tribune; the armory and 'principal staircase' is common to both 'buildings' (Fig. 7); Matilda's apartment in *Otranto* is the Holbein Chamber at Strawberry Hill (Fig. 11-12), etc. This association between the two buildings was reinforced in a number of carefully positioned objects throughout the house. In his *Description*, for example, Walpole connects Marcus Geeraerts the Younger's *Portrait of Henry Carey* of 1603, which hung in the gallery with 'the idea of the picture walking out of its frame in the Castle of Otranto'.[32] Also associating the two buildings was John Carter's drawing of *The Entry of Frederick into the Castle of Otranto* (1784) (Fig. 5), and a 'graceful and expressive drawing' of a 'young lady reading the Castle of Otranto to her companion' by Lavinia Bingham that hung in the house. These images and objects provided for the viewer what could be called 'intertextual glosses' between his real and fictive houses. Within the contexts of contemporary 'associationist' aesthetics, they were intended to function as mnemonic cues to unfold a range of associations from *The Castle of Otranto*, thereby allowing the viewer to 'be' within their own associationist fantasy based upon the novel.[33]

Reading *The Castle of Otranto* thus primed

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29. From Walpole's *Preface to the First Edition* of *The Castle of Otranto*.

30. Frederick S. Frank, 'Proto-Gothicism: The Infernal Iconography of Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*', *Orbis Litterarum*, 41 (1986), 199-212 (pp. 200, 203, 205), and a critique in Carol Margaret Davidson, 'Gothic Architectonics: The Poetics and Politics of Gothic Space', *Papers on Language and Literature*, 46 (2010), 136-63.

31. 'The Genesis of Strawberry Hill', *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, 6:1 (1934), esp. 89-90. As well as studies cited elsewhere in the notes of this essay, see Susan Bernstein, *Housing Problems: Writing and Architecture in Goethe, Walpole, Freud and Heidigger* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), pp. 41-59. Lee Morrissey, *From Temple to Castle: An Architectural History of British Literature 1660–1760* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1999), pp. 108-30.

32. Walpole, *Description*, 466. See also, Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, 'Singular Objects and Multiple Meanings', in *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, ed. by Michael Snodin (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 87-105 (esp. 89-90).

33. See for example, Caroline van Eck, '"The splendid effects of architecture, and its power to affect the mind": the workings of Picturesque association', in *Landscapes of Memory and Experience*, ed. by Jan Birkstead (London: Spon Press, 2000), pp. 245-56; John Archer, 'The Beginnings of Association in British Architectural Aesthetics', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 16:3 (1983), 241-64. On Strawberry Hill in particular, see most recently Marion Harney, 'Strawberry Hill', *Architectural Review,* 224 (November 2008), 72-77.

the viewer for visiting Strawberry Hill and, reciprocally, the house and its objects were designed to generate associations with the literary castle. But what was the castle in *Otranto* like as an architectural space and how did Walpole describe it? Walpole's descriptions of ornament and architectural space in *Otranto* are economical at best, and they stand in stark contrast to the rather more loquacious descriptions of interiors and objects in his *Tour of Country Seats* and in his letters.[34] But this aspect of his architectural *ekphrasis* was neither juvenile nor clumsy. Rather, it was a deliberate device that allowed readers of the novel to subjectively 'fill in' the spaces left blank or unarticulated by the text with what Walpole called 'Gothic fantasy'. *Otranto* is defined by its spatial and temporal instability, features that are heightened by, but not dependent upon, Walpole's minimal architectural *ekphrasis*. Like the spaces, bodies and objects of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, the spaces (and bodies) of the castle appear to expand and contract, and shift their forms in the narrative; so too do the relationships between the rooms and spaces of the castle which are ambiguous and seemingly inconsistent, as the reader returns to (un)familiar spaces throughout the narrative. Robert Harbison characterized this aspect of the Gothic castle as a 'spatial riddle',[35] a metaphor that usefully positions the house in an antagonistic relationship with the viewer. It is, in other words, a series of spaces that demand to be physically explored and 'worked out' before their arrangement can be understood and rationalized. The ambiguity of the spaces surely explains why the castle has consistently defied realization (and thus stabilization) in accurate ground plans or elevations from the eighteenth century to the

present.[36] The spatial and temporal slipperiness of the house was appreciated by the French Surrealists who compared Conrad's sudden death under the gigantic helmet to 'the chance encounter on a dissecting table of a sewing machine and an umbrella', an image from Lautréamont's *Chants de Maldoror*.[37]

Otranto thus provided a remarkably malleable mnemonic architecture for visitors to Strawberry Hill. The viewer of Strawberry Hill with awareness of *Otranto* synthesized and compared two related, if conceptually unique, architectural spaces: the first, fixed in time and space and perceivable as an object of the phenomenological world, and the second a highly subjective and highly unstable mental architecture. Burney's commentary on the '*striking recollections* [that] were brought to the minds of the Castle of Otranto' seems to suggest a reciprocal process of interpretation. We may surmise that the mental construction of *Otranto* was altered to adapt to aspects of Strawberry Hill in the viewer's mind, thereby stabilizing an unstable mnemonic architecture. In turn, Strawberry Hill assumed many of the associations of *The Castle of Otranto*: its historicism, its connection to a chivalrous past, and most significantly its status as an alternate space that, like the novel, stood outside the decorum of contemporary aristocratic culture.

Walpole's Gothic narratives

Walpole's Gothic novel may offer us another insight into the design and experience of Strawberry Hill. I have suggested above that both Gothic 'texts' were positioned in an antagonistic relationship with architectural and literary forms popular in the

34. Paget Toynbee, 'Horace Walpole's Journals of Visits to Country Seats', *The Walpole Society*, 16 (1928). The economical nature of Walpole's description has recently been discussed by Cynthia Wall: 'the story provides its Gothic landmarks of hide-and-seek in staircases and gates, subterranean passages, and mouths of caves […] but those architectural details appear and vanish with [a] kind of narrative economy […]. The things themselves tend to command textual and narrative space.' *The Prose of Things: transformations of description in the eighteenth century* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 117.

35. Harbison, *Eccentric Spaces*, p. 74.

36. This has been a regular exercise for my graduate students who are set the task of reading *The Castle of Otranto* and trying to transform the descriptions into a stable ground plan. Having attempted this with over fifty students, I have never had a plan that was the same as another.

37. Emma J. Clery, 'Introduction', to Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, ed. by Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982, repr. of 1998), p. viii.

prevailingly classical tastes of Augustan England. I now want to suggest that an analogous narrative structure informed them: literally how the viewer was drawn through the rooms of the house, and how the reader was guided through the events of the novel and through the architectural spaces of its setting. In arguing along these lines, I return to a point made above: the narratives of the two texts – and thus their experiential character – would seem to be central to what Walpole deemed to be 'Gothic'. I do not mean to suggest that our modern sense of 'the Gothic' as a fully formed, stable theory was at play in Walpole's house and his literature;[38] what makes his Gothic texts so compelling is the fact that the aesthetic terms in which they were created were themselves not fixed. By extension, I take it as read that there exist inherent formal differences between the experiences of reading literature and reading architecture as narrative constructs: while Walpole often called Strawberry Hill 'a paper house', it bears restating 'ceci ne pas un texte'.[39]

It is nevertheless significant that Walpole spilt much ink explaining the narrativity of his two Gothic products. He famously addressed the narrative structure of his novel in the 1765 *Second Prologue*, where he claimed that it was an attempt to 'blend two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern', by which he means medieval romance (which for him included Shakespeare) and contemporary fiction. 'In the former all was imagination and improbability: in the latter nature is intended to be, and sometimes has been, copied with success.' Fusing the mysticism of medieval literature with the 'naturalistic' structures of contemporary fiction resulted in a narrative structure that confounds expectation through fragmentation and disorientation. Elizabeth Napier usefully describes the 'atmosphere of unease that is directly conducive to the "Gothic mood"' as the result of alternating moralizing passages with scenes of hectic and frequently violent action which 'seem to demand an activity of consolidating on the part of the readership that its own design subverts [...]. The result is a form that is fundamentally unstable, both in theory and in practice.'[40] Transposing this reading onto the narrative of the novel and therefore onto the spaces of the castle itself, Robert Kiely characterized *Otranto*'s narrative as 'part obstacle course, part free-for-all, and part relay race in which the participants run through a cluttered labyrinth passing the baton to whomever they happen to meet'.[41]

To the architectural historian, these descriptions of literary narrative could well be describing the ground plan and interior spaces of Strawberry Hill; indeed, Walpole's house has often enough been called a 'labyrinth'.[42] Above I suggested that Strawberry Hill reflected a conscious dismantling of the formal arrangement of space within the Palladian villa, a critique that we may extend to Walpole's literature, which we have seen was 'written in defiance of neoclassic forms and norms'.[43] If the plans of Palladian houses were useful in orienting visitors to places of significance by their habituation to a standard spatial formula, Walpole's Gothic house did the opposite. The viewer entered into a space that defied expectation, and therefore demanded interrogation and investigation: viewing Strawberry Hill was a non-linear and non-systematic process of discovery, as the labyrinth metaphor suggests.

38. For a recent discussion, with which I am partially sympathetic, see James Watt, *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict, 1764–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 12-41.

39. My thinking here is indebted to recent studies of 'the narrative imagination', for example Richard Walsh, 'The Narrative Imagination across Media', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 52:4 (2006), 855-68, and classically Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Press, 1973).

40. Elizabeth R. Napier, *The Failure of Gothic* (Clarendon: Oxford 1987), p. 44.

41. Robert Kiely, *The Romantic Novel in England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 35.

42. For example, Charles Saumarez-Smith, *Eighteenth-Century Decoration: Design and the Domestic Interior in England* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), p. 237.

43. Frank, 'Proto-Gothicism', p. 200.

It is thus not a surprise that Walpole also composed a series of texts to narrativize the random spaces of the house for contemporary visitors, including the 1774 *Description*, a unique copy of the same text now at Eton (perhaps intended as a guide for servants to give visitors an abbreviated tour), and Walpole's expanded 1784 version, which describes the fullest, ideal route through the house.[44] New evidence for Walpole's conception of the spatial experience of the house is provided by a document only recently (and partially) published (see Appendix).[45] Dated to 1772, it is an apologia of sorts for the design of Strawberry Hill: Walpole discusses how the passage through the house was designed as a staged journey punctuated by alterations in lighting, color, volume, and ornamentation. These changes were used to provoke particular emotional and associative reactions on the part of the viewer that vacillated between darkness and light, solemnity and gaiety, religious devotion and a purely secular ocular pleasure. It is beyond the bounds of the present paper to fully 'walk' the reader through the entire house but I do want to pick up on a few spatial transitions to illustrate my point. In doing so, I shall, not unlike Walpole, often indulge in the language of the interior designer or estate agent; as he states in the text that guides this discussion, 'I have practised all these rules in my house at Strawberry Hill and have observed the impressions made on spectators by these arts'.

Narrative and experience at Strawberry Hill

Entry to Strawberry Hill was gained through the great north gate, which led into the main entrance: located within a recessed courtyard, the entrance to the house must have appeared both unassuming and surprising to the visitor accustomed to the pedimental entrances of Palladian mansions (Figs. 8, 2) that so clearly articulated a point of entry. Here, as elsewhere at Strawberry Hill, a fictive architectural history is encoded in the fabric of the building: framed by three awkwardly joined volumes, each referencing a different medieval period style and demarcated by broken stringcourses to interrupt their visual continuity, the entrance appears an accident of an ancient architectural history rather than a grand point of entry into an aristocratic villa. The allusions of the entry were predominantly sacral: to the right was the Abbot's Garden with a screen by John Carter (based upon the choir screen at Canterbury Cathedral), and facing the viewer was a chapel or 'oratory' with a piscina and a late fifteenth-century acolyte angel.[46] These mock religious features terminated in the partial cloister that framed the viewer's passage to the main door. Above the door was a five-light window, which is most readily paralleled in the analogous position of the thirteenth-century bishop's chapel at Wells. These features prepared the viewer to enter a house that was positioned temporally and thematically in the Catholic, medieval past. The miniaturization of monumental forms (the tiny 'oratory' and the partial cloister) was common to the aesthetics of Strawberry Hill,[47] and it suggests their functions as associative props designed to produce medieval associations rather than functional, full-scale works of architecture.

The question posed by the entrance – i.e. what was the interior space like? – is answered in the entrance hall or 'Paraclete' (Fig. 9). Based on the romantic and overtly monastic setting

44. Eton College, Eton College Library, ECL Cc114. Anna Chalcraft and Judith Visconti, *Visiting Strawberry Hill: An Analysis of the Eton Copy of 'The Description of the Villa'* (Wimbledon: Aquatint bsc, 2006). For a recent overview, see Stephen Clarke, '"Lord God! Jesus! What a House!"'. Walpole's letters also provide a range of 'tours' through the house. See, for example, *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, XX, pp. 379-81.

45. In Michael Snodin, 'Going to Strawberry Hill' in *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, ed. by Snodin, pp. 15-17, 20-37, 40-55.

46. Illustrated in *ibid*, p. 31.

47. Jill Campbell, '"I am no giant": Horace Walpole, heterosexual incest, and love among men', *The Eighteenth Century*, 39:3 (1998), 238-60; and discussed at length in Reeve, 'Gothic Architecture, Sexuality and License', 423-28.

of Alexander Pope's 1717 *Eloisa to Abelard*, the entrance hall is not strictly from 'the white walls and silver springs' – the heavenly setting of the future union of the two lovers – but the dark, moody, monastic settings in which they yearn:

> In these lone walls (their days eternal bound)
> These moss-grown domes with spiky turrents crown'd.
> Where awful arches make a noonday night,
> And the dim windows shed a solemn light
> (l. 141-4).[48]

The visitor entered into a low, dark space, illuminated by narrow lancet windows filled with stained glass. Then, as now, passage from outside into the hall demanded readjustment of the viewer's eyes to an unexpectedly dark and claustrophobic space with a low ceiling. The entrance hall and stairs are decorated in wallpaper of trompe l'oeil Gothic fretwork designed by Richard Bentley and based on the chantry chapel of Prince Arthur at Worcester Cathedral. This was surely what Walpole had in mind when he mentioned the 'satisfaction of *imprinting* the gloomth of abbeys and cathedrals on one's house', cleverly merging 'gloom' and 'depth' (or perhaps 'warmth').[49] Walpole fittingly describes the passage through this space as 'strid[ing] by the *gloom*'.

Although he speaks modestly of the grand staircase adjoining the hall in his text ('the staircase opens upwards to greater light'), there is no doubt that it was a set-piece of the house for Walpole (Fig. 7). Probably reflecting a range of models, such as the Jacobean houses at Hatfield or Knole,[50] and

possibly even ironically echoing the great stair at Houghton,[51] the stair gave access to rooms on three levels. During the day, the staircase was illuminated by glazed quatrefoils in the ceiling, which flooded light onto the stairs. During the evening, it was illuminated by the Gothic 'lanthorn' of spoliated stained glass designed by Bentley. But the stairway did far more than bring the visitor from the gloom of the hallway into the luminosity of the upper apartments. As Sean Silver has recently argued, 'the stairway stages and personalizes the central trope of Enlightenment historiography; the visitor stands at a moment between (as Walpole puts it in [his] *Historic Doubts*) "barbarity" and "polish", or (as Walpole puts it in his *Description*) "gloom" and "illumination".[52] The passage from darkness to light was not only a common trope of Enlightenment historiography in general but of Walpole's historiography in particular. It appeared nowhere more obviously that in the *Castle of Otranto*, where it defined the serendipitous (a word Walpole coined) 'turning up' of objects and events from the past that illuminate or alter present realities, and it becomes a premonition of what would later be called the 'uncanny' in psychoanalytic critiques of the Gothic novel.[53]

Although Walpole's description does not discuss the armory on the stair landing (it seems to be grouped into the general tenor of 'conventual gloom'), it was one of the most obvious places where the duality of Strawberry Hill and the castle in *Otranto* was explored (Fig. 10). Discussing the armor on the stairs in 1771, Walpole suggested that, 'a very little stretch of the imagination will give it

48. Reference to Abelard and Eloisa was made elsewhere in the house: the tribune contained 'A drawing by Mr. Bentley, representing two lovers in a church looking at the tombs of Abelard and Eloisa, from these lines of Pope, *If ever chance two wand'ring lovers brings / To Paraclete's white walls and silver springs &c.*' Walpole, *A Description*, p. 488.

49. *Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, XX, p. 372. Barrett Kalter, 'DIY Gothic: Thomas Gray and the Medieval Revival', *English Literary History*, 70 (2003), 989-1019 (p. 990).

50. Snodin, 'Going to Strawberry Hill', p. 31.

51. David D. McKinney, 'History and Revivalism: Horace Walpole's promotion of the Gothic style of architecture' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Virginia, 1992), p. 100.

52. Sean Silver, 'Visiting Strawberry Hill: Horace Walpole's Gothic Historiography', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 21:4 (2009), 535-64 (p. 557).

53. For example, John Fletcher, 'The Sins of the Fathers: the Persistence of Gothic', in *Romanticism and Postmodernism*, ed. by Edward Larrissy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 113-40; Ed Cameron, *The Psychopathology of Gothic Romance: Perversion, Neuroses and Psychosis in the Early Works of the Genre* (New York: McFarland and Co., 2010); Dale Townsend, *The Orders of Gothic: Foucault, Lacan and the Subject of Gothic Writing 1764–1820* (New York: AMS Press, 2007); Betsy P. Harfst, *Horace Walpole and the Unconscious: An Experiment in Freudian Analysis* (New York: Ayer Co. Publishing, 1980).

all the visionary dignity of the gigantic hand in armor that I dreamt of seeing on the balustrade of the staircase at Otranto. If this is not realizing one's dreams, I don't know what is.'[54] Walpole often enough suggested that aspects of the armory, and the suit of armor of Francois I in particular, was based on the novel, so much so that he deliberately slips in a letter to Horace Mann stating that the armor will 'make a great figure here at Otranto'.[55] The very experience of reading the novel was referenced in the Red Bedchamber adjacent to the staircase, where hung the aforementioned 'young lady reading *The Castle of Otranto* to her companion'.[56] This image was unique among the references to *Otranto* in Strawberry Hill, since it not only referenced the literary castle but also provided a tangible reminder of the experience of reading the novel and the subsequent experience of the house as a performance of its literary spaces.

Walpole's text leads us next to a perambulation through the small rooms built around the stair on the second floor. These rooms stage a related series of kinaesthetic experiences: 'The blue room *relieves* the eye from the convential retirement of the Entrance by discovering a most beautiful landscape from the windows set off by the overarching trees', and 'the green closet is all light and cheerfulness within and without'. The claustrophobia experienced by the low, dark, monastic entrance to Strawberry Hill is 'relieved' by an opposite experience of spatial permeability, as the viewer's eye is drawn to the luminescence of the natural world in a deliberately constructed, picturesque landscape. This revelation of space and light preceded the visitor's submersion into darkness and confinement: 'The Star Chamber and dusky passage again prepare you for solemnity: the Holbein Chamber softens that idea yet still

maintains a grave tone; for the whole colouring is a kind of chiaroscuro.' The 'dusky passage' here is what Walpole called elsewhere the 'Trunk-Ceiled' Chamber (Fig. 11): a dark, low cell that joins the gallery to the Holbein and Star chambers. Covered with repetitious blind Gothic fretwork in wood, it is – and undoubtedly was – one of the most bizarre and disorienting spaces in Strawberry Hill. The appellations ('grave', 'Trunk-Ceiled') given to it by Walpole appositely describe the oppressive coffin- or trunk-like nature of the space.

The monochromatic effects, or 'grave tone', of the Trunk-Ceiled Chamber were, for Walpole, continued but softened in the Holbein Chamber (Fig. 12). This space is of interest as one of the earliest 'period rooms' in English architecture, and the only obvious attempt at Strawberry Hill to group architectural ornament and objects from a common time period. At the center of the room were thirty-three tracings of Holbein portraits by George Vertue, which Walpole acquired in 1757; these stood aside a range of other artifacts that largely celebrated the heyday of the Gothic during the first half of the sixteenth century before the Dissolution, including the hat of Cardinal Wolsey (1473–1530).[57] Consideration of the room in the light of the Holbein drawings and the Trunk-Ceiled passage suggests that, for Walpole, the absence of the primary colors that dominated other spaces, and the emphasis on a monochromatic palette (something that Walpole surely understood to extend to Vertue's black and red chalk drawings) endowed these spaces with a tonal sobriety, 'a kind of chiaroscuro'.

Walpole was clear that the Trunk-Ceiled and Holbein chambers were designed as spatial, tonal, and ornamental antitheses to the luminosity of the long gallery (Fig. 6) and the State Apartment,

54. *Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, XXXII, p. 66 (4 December 1771). For other dream fantasies influencing the design of Strawberry Hill, see McKinney, 'History and Revivalism', pp. 133-36.

55. *Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, I, p. 243 and XXXV, pp. 420-21. In a famous letter describing his inspiration of *The Castle of Otranto*, Walpole claimed that he dreamt of being

in an 'ancient castle' and 'on the uppermost banister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armor', a reference that can only reflect Strawberry Hill. *Ibid*, I, p. 88 (9 March 1765).

56. Walpole, *Description*, p. 438.

57. For the objects of the Holbein room, see *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, ed. by Snodin, pp. 301-05.

built from 1760. The viewer suddenly and unexpectedly entered from the low chamber into the luminous gallery, with windows along the left wall looking onto the garden and paintings set within fictive, richly-gilded fourteenth-century Gothic canopies on the right, all of which are set under a remarkable fan-vaulted ceiling in papier-mâché based upon that in Henry VII's chapel at Westminster abbey. Walpole and his 'Committee' exploited the longitudinal thrust of the gallery to draw the eye to the axially-set bay window of the Round Room, an effect exaggerated by the short passage that adjoins the two spaces. As Walpole suggests, 'The round room with its great bow windows of painted glass terminates the Gallery to great advantage by the perspective and colours and has more effect than the same windows would have if in the Gallery, by leaving some room for expectation.'

Walpole next directs us to the chapel (or 'Tribune'), which was also accessed through a short passage, but in this case barred by an imitation bronze Gothic grille made in wood (Fig. 13). As Walpole suggests, the passage between rooms was also a thematic passage from a 'public' to a 'sacred' space: 'The chapel has the true air of a place of Devotion, and that impression makes it please, though seen after so much larger spaces.' Although the Gothic forms of the tracery in the vault were inspired by the tracery of York Minster and Beverly, the Tribune or chapel is best understood as a brilliant synthesis of Italian Baroque architecture – particularly the complex spatiality of Borromini's designs at S. Ivo and elsewhere – with English Gothic ornament. Walpole was not the only figure who spoke of the unconsecrated chapel as a sacred space: the quasi-religious nature of the structure was brilliantly satirized by Thomas Rowlandson.[58]

Walpole is clear that the arrangement of art and objects was integral to the chapel's religious aesthetic. The sparse arrangement of pictures in the Round Room gave 'an air of repose and grandeur which many pictures destroy', an effect he deliberately contrasted with the adjoining chapel, 'the completion of the collection', and the most densely ornamented room in the house. The density of the objects in the chapel endowed it with the effect of a bejeweled cabinet turned inside out, a dazzling panorama of objects that literally overwhelmed the viewer; Walpole was clear that this aesthetic was an approximation of the 'gaudiness' of medieval Catholic art as he understood it, with 'all the glory of Popery'.[59]

Even the adumbrated tour of Strawberry Hill provided here is enough to illustrate the deliberate manipulation of architecture and ornament to produce a range of effects for the viewer. Set within a modern building with an ancient (albeit fictive) architectural history, the effect was one of constant surprise and disorientation as the viewer moved through contrasting spaces of bright and muted color, miniature and expansive volumes, secular and sacred themes, and dark and luminous spaces. Walpole's text indicates that the use of color was integral to the perception of the Gothic at Strawberry Hill, and it too stood in stark contrast to the muted tonality of Palladian architecture of the generation preceding.[60]

The disjointed and frequently jarring effects of the architecture paralleled in a very real way the fragmented passage through the novel. In her introduction to the Oxford edition of *Otranto*, E. J. Clery opined, 'Walpole's airy proposal to combine ancient and modern romance is not only monstrous, but transgressive […]. *Otranto* […] implied that there must be something awry

58. Hope Saska, 'Strawberry Hill: The Laughing View', in *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, ed. by Snodin, pp. 248-59 (at 251).

59. *Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, X, p. 168.

60. Walpole's text reminds us that color it is an overlooked aspect of Strawberry Hill's aesthetic, and one that is intimately connected to its experience and narrative. Here, as elsewhere in Walpole's writing, he wears his learning lightly, and his notes do not allow

us to easily locate his ideas within broader theories of color in the period. Walpole's use of color and color harmony in particular nevertheless anticipate theorizations of the subject in the nineteenth century: see Ian C. Bristow, *Architectural Colour in British Interiors 1615–1840* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1996), esp. pp. 188-220, and John Gage, *Colour and Meaning: Art, Science and Symbolism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), esp. pp. 134-52.

in the contemporary social order itself. A Gothic revival in literature disturbed the comfortable vision of historical progress.'[61] A related critique of Walpole's collection at Strawberry Hill has been advanced, which describes Walpole's 'distrust of systematized undertakings, [of] histories arranged under a single vision of historical progress'.[62] It will now be clear that I favor an analogy with the architectural spaces of Walpole's Gothic villa. Walpole's home not only offered an alternate associative historicism oriented around the medieval past, but through the arrangement of its spaces and its ornamentation it likewise disrupted the formal plan of the neoclassical villa and the social and aesthetic values that it normalized.

Conclusion

This paper has covered considerable ground, from formal comparisons between the Palladian and Gothic villa, to the associative reactions of Strawberry Hill to the fictive, literary architecture of *The Castle of Otranto*, and to the kinaesthetic or narrative experiences that the building was designed to unfold for the viewer. It is offered in part as a contribution to a growing literature on the experience of Strawberry Hill in the eighteenth century. In particular, it builds on recent studies of the relationships between Walpole's strategies for the display of historical artifacts at Strawberry Hill and his own historiographical writings. Concluding that Strawberry Hill and its artifacts put 'Walpole's narrative and historiographic convictions on display', these studies explore broader, trans-disciplinary accounts of the 'Gothic' at a critical moment in its formation.[63] But much work remains to be done by architectural historians to more fully understand the complex

spatiality of Strawberry Hill. Recent studies of the proportional systems in classical architecture in light of psychoanalytic theory have shown how the body comfortably 'inhabits' spaces with proportional systems based upon them; enveloping the body in a womb-like setting (made by and for it), classicism is informed by a mimetic impulse – the desire to inscribe humanity on its inanimate surroundings.[64] Walpole's innovative Gothic house could be understood as a challenge to this physical connection to the built environment offered by the classical system, something hinted at in Charles Saumarez Smith's conception of Strawberry Hill's design as being driven by 'a desire to irritate other people's expectations'.[65] While Walpole's Gothic products already enjoy an established place in psychoanalytic criticism, critiques of the spaces of his house could lay the grounds for a Gothic that is even more combative and transgressive than we realized.

Appendix

Horace Walpole, 'Great Effects May be Produced by the disposition of a house […]', 31 August 1772. Cambridge University, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 13-1947, f. 1-4.

> Great effects may be produced by the disposition of a House, and by studying lights and shades, and by attending to a harmony of colours. I have practised all these rules in my house at Strawberry Hill and have observed the impressions made on spectators by these arts.
> With regard to lights and shades. The first Entrance strides by the gloom: the staircase opens upwards to greater light. The blue

61. Clery, 'Introduction', p. xxv.

62. Silver, 'Visiting Strawberry Hill', p. 543.

63. *Ibid*, p. 554.

64. Neil Leach, '*Vitruvius Crucifixus*: Architecture, Mimesis, and the Death Instinct', in *Bodies and Buildings: Essays on the Changing Relation of Body and Architecture*, ed. by George Dodds and

Robert Tavenor (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002), pp. 210-25.

65. Charles Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-Century Decoration: Design and the Domestic Interior in England* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), p. 237.

room relieves the eye from the conventual retirement of the Entrance by discovering a most beautiful landscape from the windows set off by the overarching trees. The green closet is all light and cheerfulness within and without. The Star Chamber and dusky passage again prepare you for solemnity: the Holbein Chamber softens that idea yet still maintains a grave tone; for the whole colouring is a kind of chiaroscuro. It is hung with purple and has a purple bed. Almost all the pictures are drawings faintly coloured and the ebony chairs give the darkest shade, while the white fretted ceiling and a sprinkling of gold on the frames afford the lights; as the painted glass darkens part of the windows, and heightens the landscapes to which they look.

The dusky passage makes the richness and largeness of the Gallery appear much more considerable, tho it is much // (page 2) ornamented to compensate for its having less prospect than the other rooms. The round room with its great bow windows of painted glass terminates the Gallery to great advantage by the perspective and colours and has more effect than the same windows would have if in the Gallery, by leaving some room for expectation. The pictures in it are few and in large spaces, but fine and give an air of repose and grandeur which many pictures destroy. The Gallery is for the pictures, but the pictures in the round room serve as furniture. The chapel has the true air of a place of Devotion, and that impression makes it please, though seen after so much larger spaces. The number of curiosities in it take up the attention and seem to be the completion of the collection. The sobriety of the chapel and the idea of having seen all the house, make the opening of the great bedchamber the more surprising, from its not being expected and from the striking contrast of the awe impressed by the chapel and the gush of light, gaudiness and grandeur of the bedchamber in the midst of which stands the Tapestry bed glowing with natural flowers in wreaths on a white ground. I have seen a much finer bed of tapestry at Versailles, the whole effect of which is lost, by the hangings being of the same colours. Here the room is hung with a deep rose colour which sets off all the others. In the three large // (page 3) rooms a harmony is presented, tho there are differences in all according to circumstances. In the gallery, as there is a higher surface of white and gold, the chairs and settees, tho crimson like the hangings, have frames of black and gold, as have the tables. In the round room crimson likewise, as the damask goes to the skirting board, the chairs are tapestry with green and gold frames that correspond with the pillars of the Chimney. In the State Bedchamber there are half the chairs of tapestry to suit the bed, with white and gold frames against the damask, while the other half are ebony with deep-rose-coloured cushions to take off from the great gaudiness of the bed and chairs and to bring back the room to the Gothic tone of the house. The tops of the windows tho adorned with painted glass to suit the rest, have only single shields in each upper pane and a border, while the great site of the rest of the window, which is of plate glass and the common cheerfulness of the views, make the outside as beautiful as the inside.

I do not mention my own house, which is a small one, but by comparison and as a sample of what might be done on a magnificent scale, if perspective, the effects of light and shade, Harmony in the colouring of the furniture and a picturesque taste were observed in the whole. I need not say how much the result of my house is improved by the // (page 4) humility of the Entrance and the simplicity of the first rooms, so little promising the expense of the great apartment.

Fig. 1. Strawberry Hill exterior (Author).
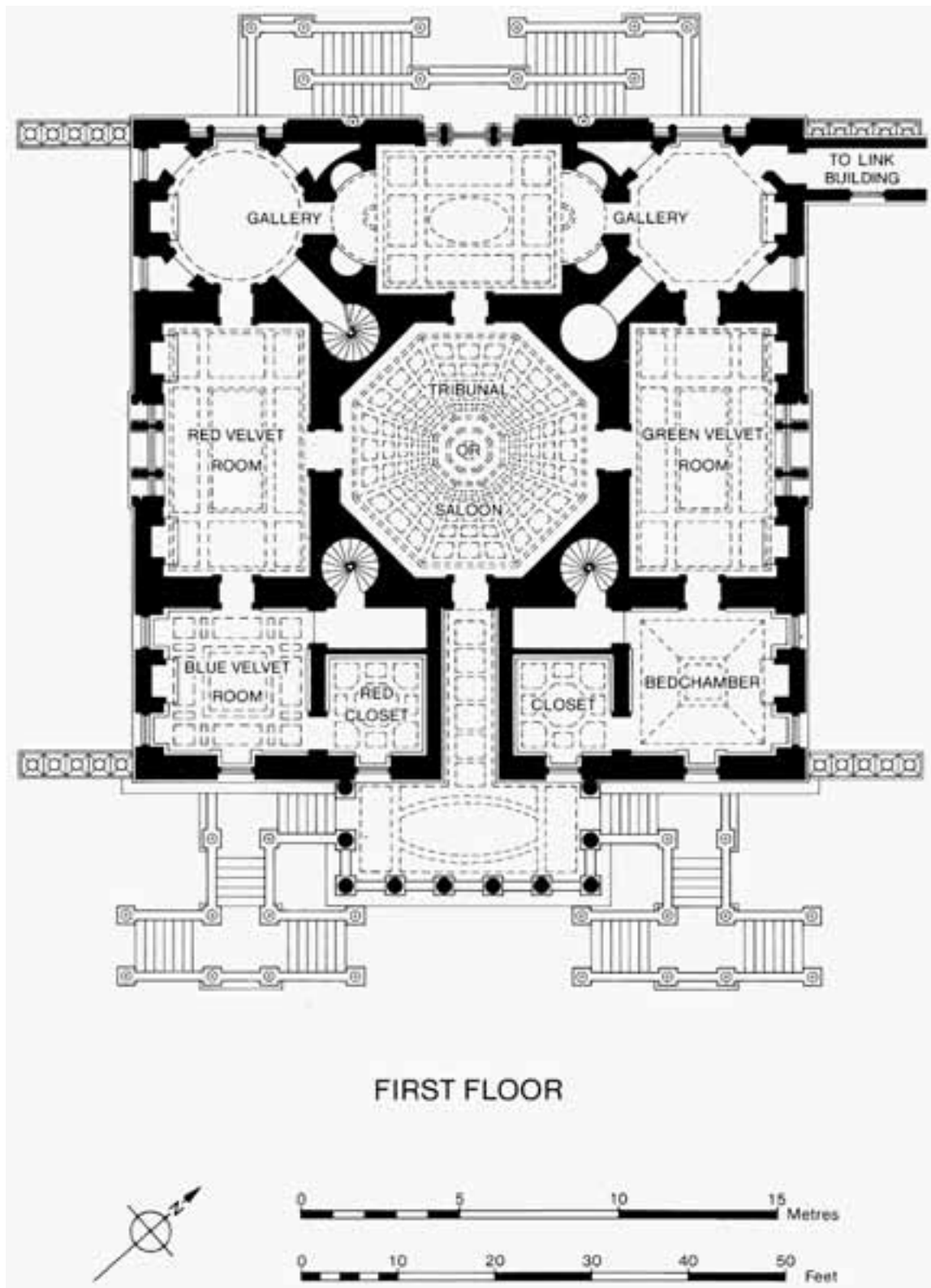

Fig. 2. Chiswick Villa exterior (Pierre du Prey).

Fig. 3. First floor plan, Chiswick Villa, from John Harris, *The Palladian Revival: Lord Burlington, His Villa and Garden at Chiswick* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1994), fig. 98.
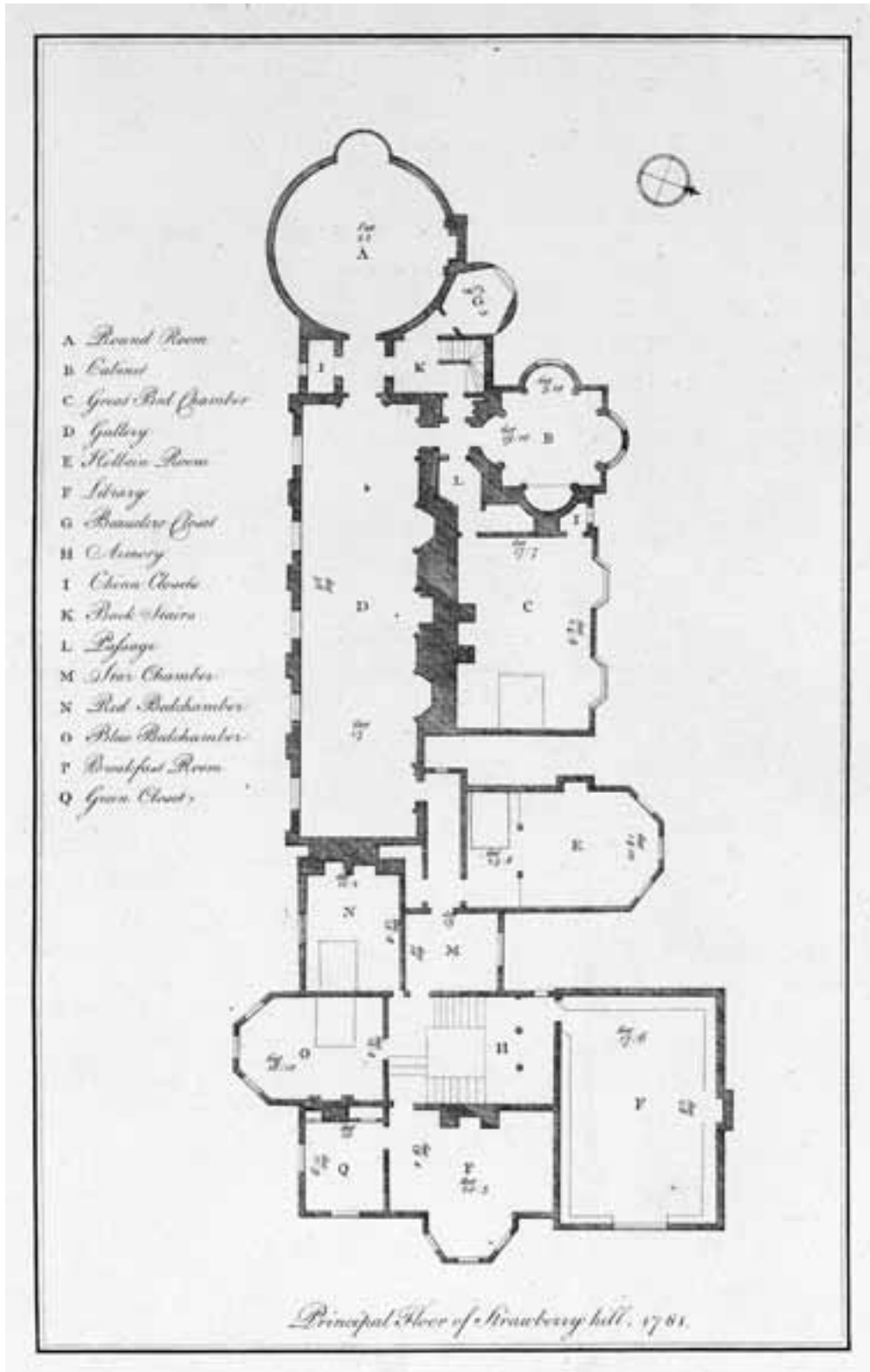
Fig. 4. *Principal Floor of Strawberry hill. 1781*, from Horace Walpole, *A Description of the Villa of Mr Horace Walpole* (1784).

Fig. 5. John Carter, *The Entry of Frederick into the Castle of Otranto*, pen and black ink with watercolor (The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 30 30 copy 11 Folio).

Fig. 6. Edward Edwards, *Gallery at Strawberry Hill,* (1781), pen, ink, and watercolour (The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 49 3582 Folio).
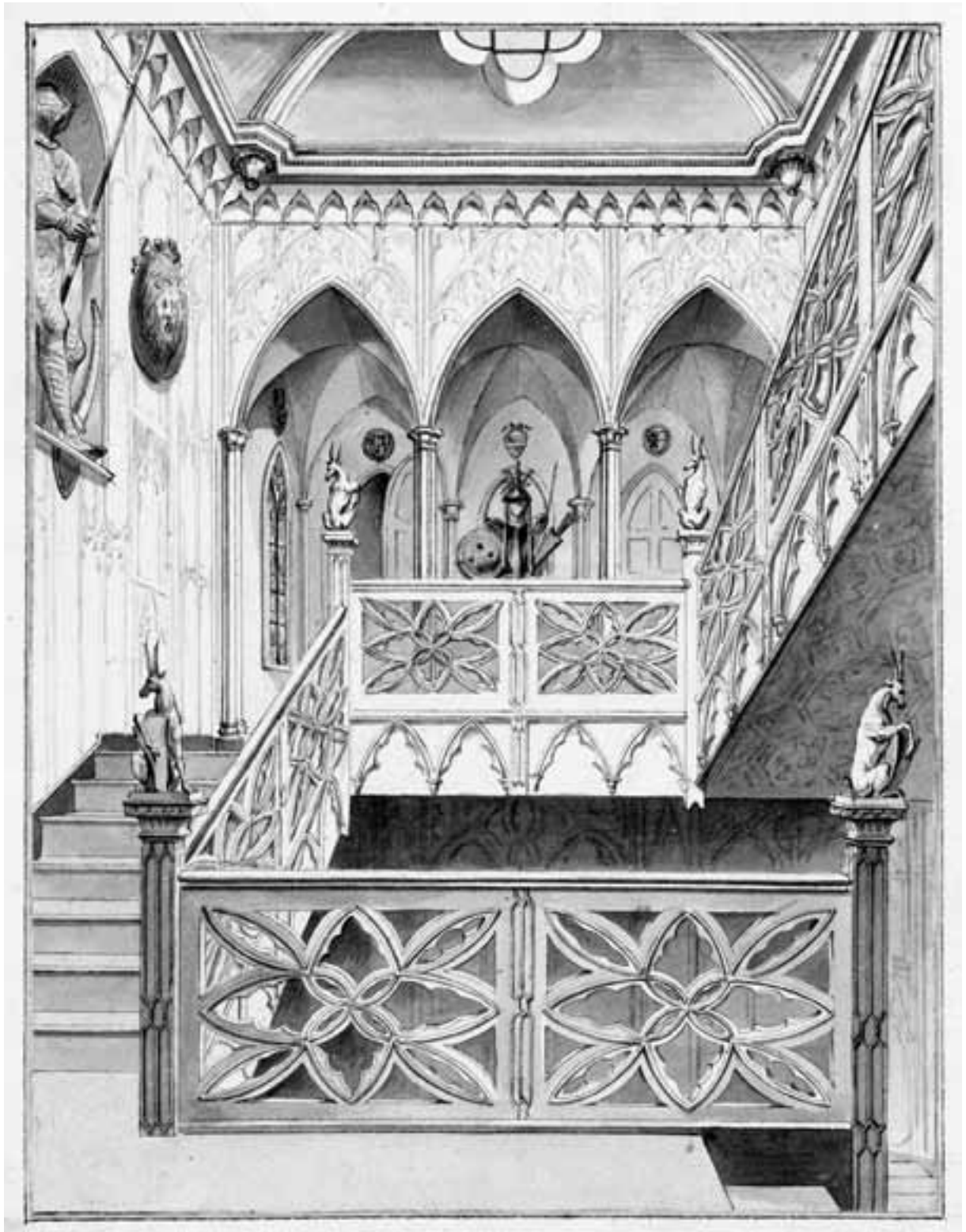
Fig. 7. Edward Edwards, *Staircase at Strawberry Hill*, from Horace Walpole, *A Description of the Villa of Mr Horace Walpole* (1784).

Fig. 8. Edward Edwards, *Entrance of Strawberry Hill,* (1781), (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, SH Views Ed25 no. 6 Impression 1 Box 105, engraved 1784).
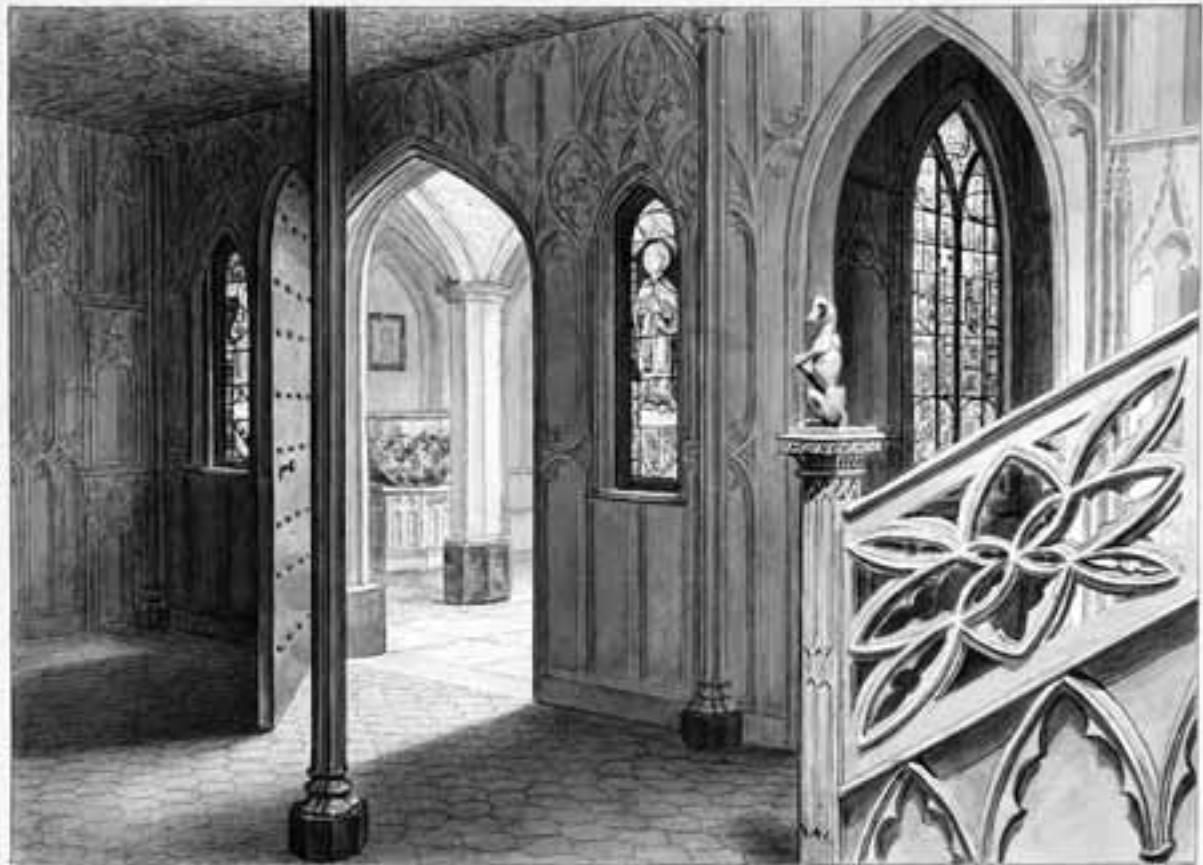
Fig. 9. John Carter, *View from the Hall at Strawberry Hill* (1788), pen and ink and watercolor (The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, Folio 49 3582, f. 24).
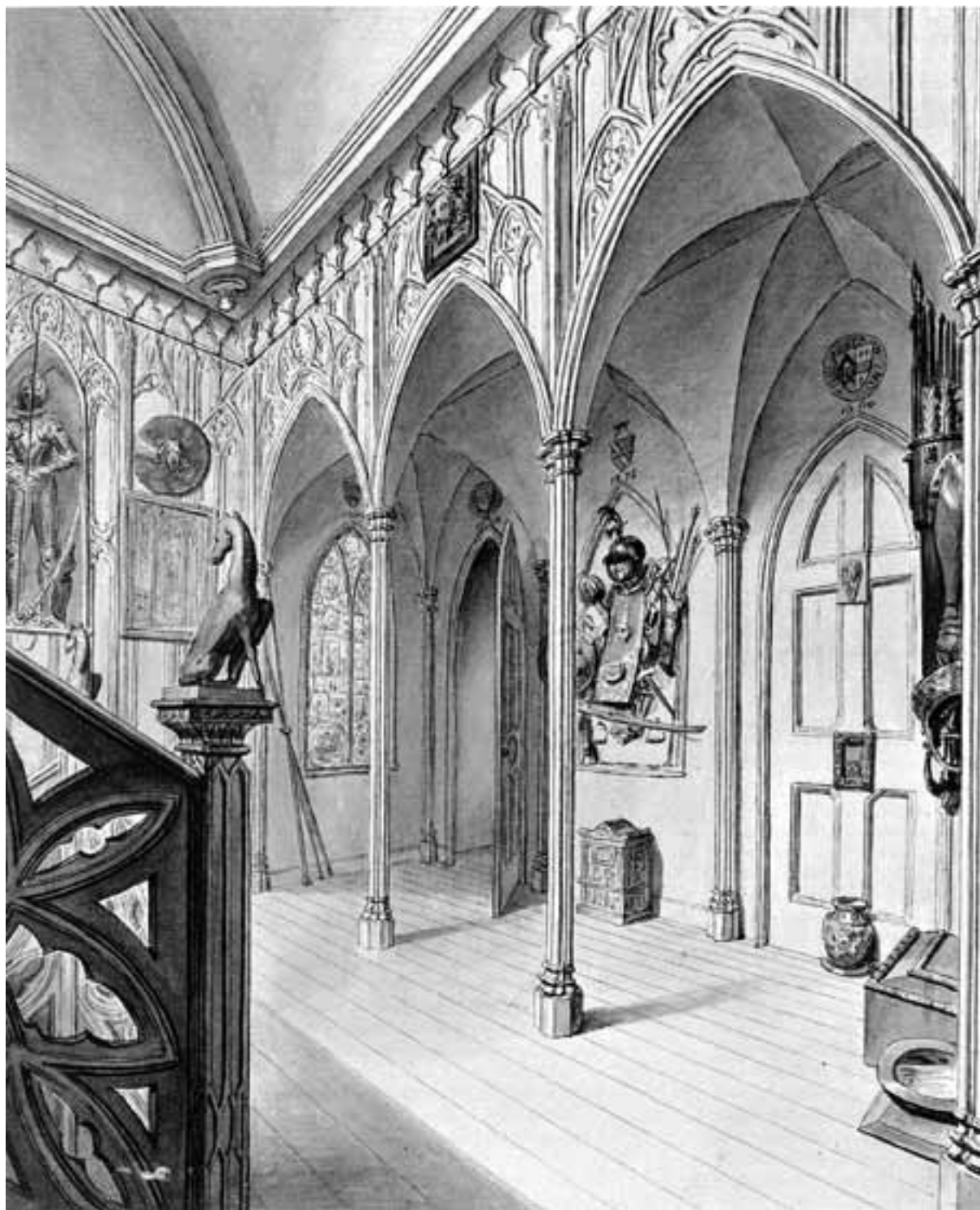
Fig. 10. John Carter, *The armoury at Strawberry Hill* (*c.* 1788), pen and ink and watercolor (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 30 30 copy 11 Folio).
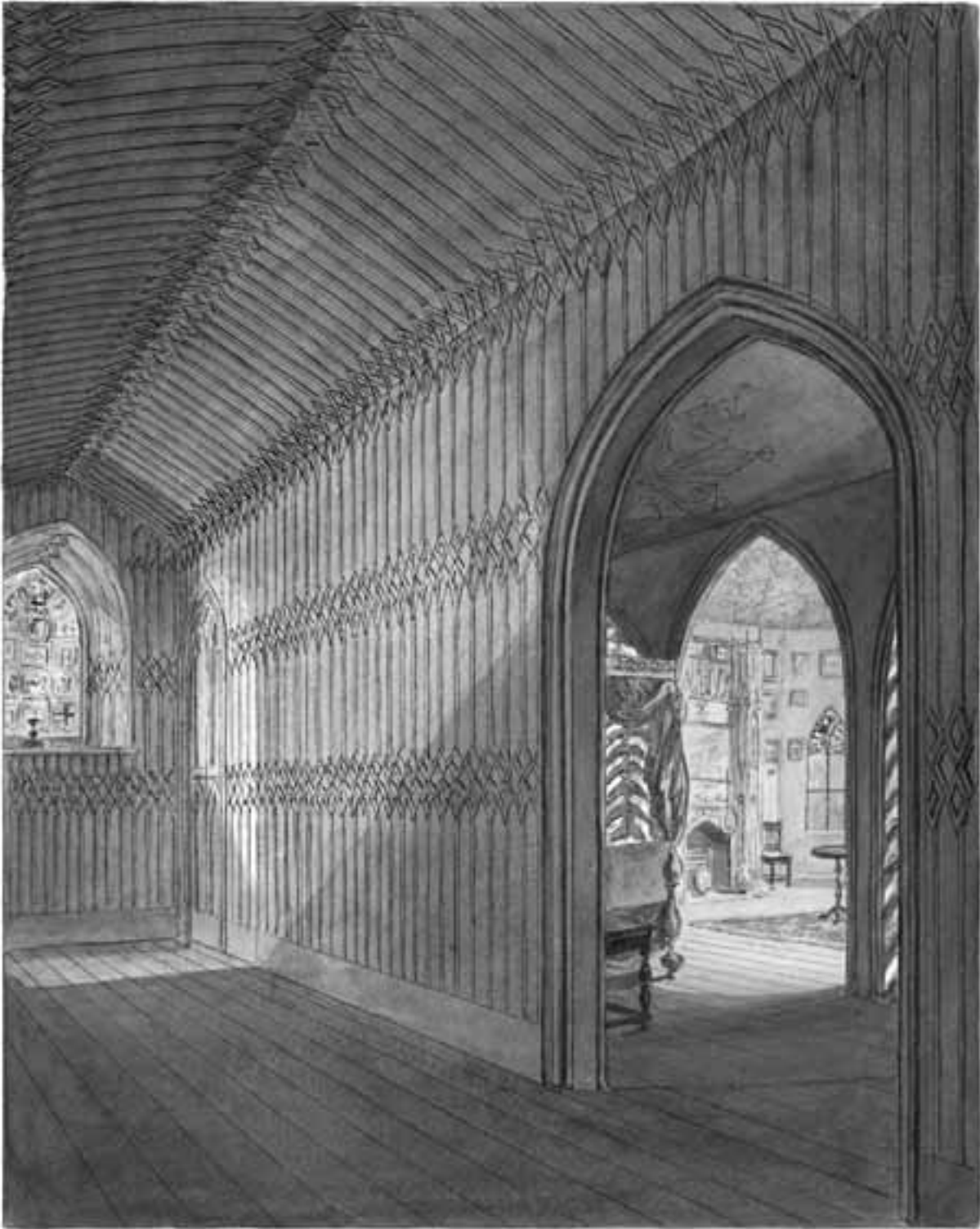
Fig. 11. John Carter, *Passage to the Gallery, and Interior of the Holbein Room at Strawberry Hill* (showing the '*Trunk-ceiled chamber*'), (*c.* 1790), (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 49 3678.1).
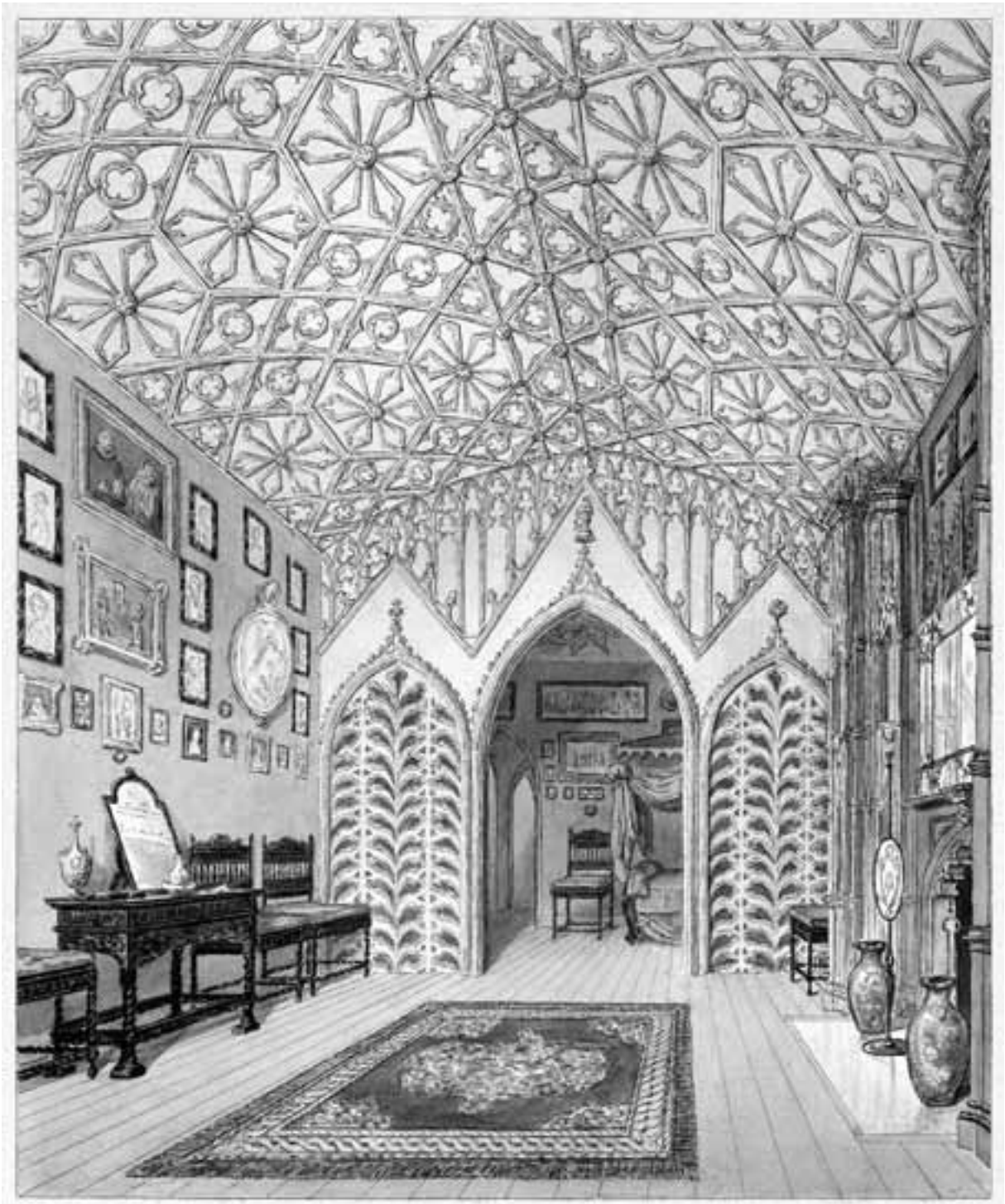
Fig. 12. John Carter, *Holbein Chamber* (*c.* 1788), watercolor (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 30 30 copy 11, f. 117).

Fig. 13. John Carter, *The Tribune at Strawberry Hill* (*c.* 1789), watercolor (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 789.00.00.73dr++).