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STRAWBERRY HILL CATALOGUES

*&c.*

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Horace Walpole  
Earl of Orford

To Lord Sheffield from Mr. L. A. Bony

AN  
A C C O U N T  
OF  
*Descriptive Catalogues of  
Strawberry Hill*  
AND OF  
*Strawberry Hill Sale Catalogues*  
TOGETHER WITH  
A BIBLIOGRAPHY

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By PERCIVAL MERRITT

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BOSTON

PRIVATELY PRINTED BY BRUCE ROGERS

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# T W I O O X A





## P R E F A C E

**W**ALPOLE said in regard to his *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, 'My view in publishing the *Anecdotes* was, to assist gentlemen in discovering the hands of pictures they possess; and I am sufficiently rewarded when that purpose is answered.'

The object of this present slight contribution to the general fund of bibliographical information is somewhat similar; particularly with regard to the bibliography of *Strawberry Hill* sale catalogues.

In

*In library catalogues and in booksellers' lists a Strawberry Hill sale catalogue is commonly a Strawberry Hill sale catalogue and nothing more. This is conspicuously so as to that portion of the sale which actually occurred at Strawberry Hill. But to any collector who may wish to have an accurate idea of what was offered for sale and what prices were realized there is a considerable choice in the catalogues.*

*The following pages will serve either as an identification of what such a collector already possesses, or as a guide to what he may wish to possess. Instead of buttressing each page with reference foot-notes, it seems simpler to make here a general acknowledgement of authorities.*

*Quotations*



*Quotations from Walpole's Letters are from the Toynbee edition in sixteen volumes, Oxford, 1903-1905. The account of the sale at Strawberry Hill in 1842, and of the sale catalogues, is based on advertisements, correspondence and reports of the sale in the London Times; on extracts from the Gentleman's Magazine, Evening Mail, x and other contemporaneous periodical publications.*

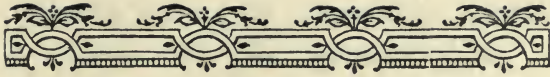
*Any one who may be curious enough to refer to the Times advertisements will speedily discover that in many instances portions of the advertisements have simply been paraphrased. This suggestion is offered with the view of anticipating any possible charge of plagiarism, and also of accounting for what  
may*

*may occasionally appear to be a peculiar use of the English language. The writer of the advertisements, probably the auctioneer Robins himself, had an extraordinary flow of still more extraordinary verbiage. Actual quotations, of course, are indicated in the customary manner.*

*The bibliography is based on a personal examination of the books and the pamphlets themselves.*

BOSTON

*December, 1914.*



## ILLUSTRATIONS

HORACE WALPOLE, *Fourth Earl of Orford* . . . . FRONTISPIECE

Tho<sup>s</sup> Lawrence R.A. del<sup>t</sup> ad viv. 1796.

W<sup>m</sup> Evans sculp<sup>t</sup> 1797.

After a print presented to Lord Sheffield  
by Mary and Agnes Berry.

*Ticket of admission to Strawberry Hill*  
in 1774 . . . . . PAGE X

*Copy of Rules for admission to Strawberry Hill* . . . . . 2  
Probably first printed in 1784.

THOMAS KIRGATE, *Printer at Strawberry-Hill. With a View of the Printing House.* . . . . 10  
S. Harding ad vivum delin. 1794.  
A. Birrell sculp.

*Card of admission to the private view  
at Strawberry Hill, March 28,  
1842 . . . . .* 28

From a copy in the collection of John  
Woodbury, Esq.

GEORGE ROBINS, *the Auctioneer.* . . . 36

From an account of the Strawberry Hill  
sale in the *Illustrated London News* May 21,  
1842.

After a wood cut in the collection of John  
Woodbury, Esq.

*The Sale at Strawberry Hill on May 7,  
1842 . . . . .* 46

After an original pen and ink drawing by  
F. W. Fairholt.

May 7, 1842 was the twelfth day of the sale,  
as originally advertised, which comprised  
'Specimens of rare and curious China, of  
almost every age and country; ancient Venetian  
Glass &c. &c.'

This Ticket, on being delivered to the  
Housekeeper, will admit Four Persons,  
and no more, on *Sunday or Monday* 1774, *Aug. 22<sup>d</sup>*  
*or 23<sup>d</sup>*, between Twelve and Three, to see Straw-  
berry-Hill, and will only serve for the  
Day specified.

N. B. The House and Garden are  
never shown in an Evening; and Per-  
sons are desired not to bring Children  
with them.

*Lord Walpole*







*DESCRIPTIVE  
CATALOGUES*

IN the year 1747 Horace Walpole informs several of his friends and correspondents that he has taken ‘a little new farm—just out of Twickenham.’ ‘It is a little plaything-house that I have got out of Mrs. Chenevix’s shop, and is the prettiest bauble you ever saw.’ He soon discovers that in old leases the place is described as Strawberry-Hill-Shot, and henceforth the name Twickenham disappears and Strawberry Hill takes its place.

place. In 1749 he becomes its proprietor after some annoyance and trouble, for it was the property of minors and an Act of Parliament was necessary to permit its purchase.

Now he proposes 'to build a little Gothic castle at Strawberry Hill.' More land is acquired and gardens and terraces laid out. New rooms, towers, and battlements are added to the house from time to time. These additions come about gradually, as the money 'is always to be saved out of my income, subject, too, to twenty other whims and expenses.' At the same time his collection of pictures and curios is constantly growing, until the house becomes a veritable museum. Friends, strangers, and foreigners



*Mr. Walpole is very ready to oblige any curious Persons with the Sight of his House and Collection; but as it is situated so near to London and in so populous a Neighbourhood, and as he refuses a Ticket to nobody that sends for one, it is but reasonable that such Persons as send, should comply with the Rules he has been obliged to lay down for showing it.*

*Any Person, sending a Day or two before, may have a Ticket for Four Persons for a Day certain.*

*No Ticket will serve but on the Day for which it is given. If more than Four Persons come with a Ticket, the Housekeeper has positive Orders to admit none of them.*

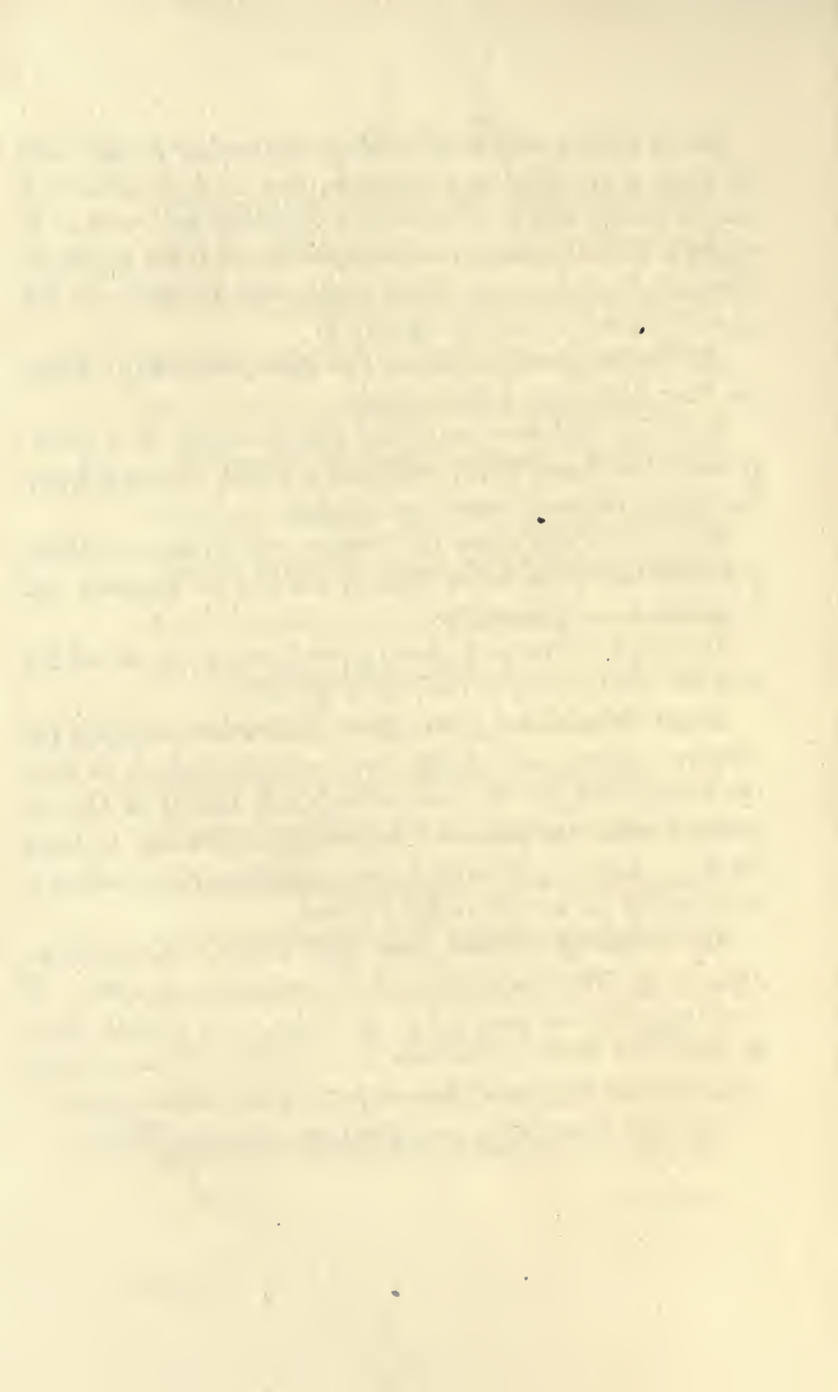
*Every Ticket will admit the Company only between the Hours of Twelve and Three before Dinner, and only one Company will be admitted on the same Day.*

*The House will never be shown after Dinner; nor at all but from the First of May to the First of October.*

*As Mr. Walpole has given Offence by sometimes enlarging the Number of Four, and refusing that Latitude to others, he flatters himself that for the future nobody will take it ill that he strictly confines the Number; as whoever desires him to break his Rule, does in effect expect him to disoblige others, which is what nobody has a right to desire of him.*

*Persons desiring a Ticket, may apply either to Strawberry-Hill, or to Mr. Walpole's in Berkeley-Square, London. If any Person does not make use of the Ticket, Mr. Walpole hopes he shall have Notice; otherwise he is prevented from obliging others on that Day, and thence is put to great Inconvenience.*

*They who have Tickets are desired not to bring Children.*



eigners of distinction flock to Strawberry Hill to see the house and its contents. It becomes necessary to issue cards of admission, limited to four persons, and a quaint set of rules is formulated prescribing the terms of admission.

In 1757 Walpole's private printing press had been established; first in the house itself, but later under a roof of its own. The natural result of the conjunction of a printing house and a museum of curiosities was a descriptive catalogue, or rather, a series of catalogues. Now cataloguing was by no means a new occupation for Walpole. In 1747, ten years before the establishment of his own press, he had prepared and issued an  
account

account of the celebrated collection of pictures at Houghton Hall, together with plates of the house itself. This publication, the *Ædes Walpoleanæ*, in course of time ran through three editions. He had likewise had a share in the preparation of catalogues of the collections of pictures of Charles the First, James the Second, and the Duke of Buckingham.

His first attempt at a catalogue of Strawberry Hill appeared in 1760, in the form of a small octavo pamphlet of eight pages, under the title, *Catalogue of Pictures and Drawings in the Holbein-Chamber, at Strawberry-Hill*. The Holbein chamber had been completed in the preceding year. During the next ten years various  
 additions

additions were made to the house, and there were continual accessions to the collections as well.

In the fall of 1771 Walpole wrote, 'after next summer, by which time my castle and collection will be complete (for if I buy more I must build another castle for another collection), I propose to form the catalogue and description.' However it was nearly two years later when he announced that he was printing his catalogue. A year later still, in July 1774, he stated that he had finished printing it.

But in the mean time two sets of advance sheets had made their appearance. One was a small quarto pamphlet of eighteen pages, *Pictures, Curiosities,*



*Curiosities, &c. in The Cabinet of Enamels and Miniatures, and in The Glass Cases on each Side of it.* The other, a similar small quarto of four pages only, *Curiosities in the Glass Closet in the Great Bedchamber.*

Both are stitched into the familiar bluish-gray wrappers, with the title printed on the front cover. Both are without date, but from internal evidence they can probably be safely assigned either to the last half of the year 1773 or to the first half of 1774. Each pamphlet has its own separate pagination beginning with page 1. Neither of them is cited in any of the regular bibliographies of Strawberry Hill publications. It seems proper however to include them in the bibliography

liography of Descriptive Catalogues, both by reason of the form in which they were issued, and because they are not unobtainable, although rare.

And now as to an item which does appear in various bibliographies of the Press, but which is touched on here only incidentally, it being intended to confine the bibliography to such items as are actually known to exist at the present time and have been personally examined.

Mr. Austin Dobson, in his excellent bibliography of the Strawberry Hill Press, refers to, and Lowndes and John Martin include, a *Description of the Villa of Horace Walpole*, small quarto, sixty-five pages, with a note that 'this edition is stated by

Kirgate

Kirgate as having been printed only for the use of the servants in shewing the house.' It seems doubtful whether any bibliographer has seen it. Lowndes assigns a conjectural date of 1772 and then proceeds to describe the 1784 *Description* as the third edition instead of the second. Martin gives no date, which means either that he did not see it, since in all other cases he records the dates, or else if he did see it, that it was not dated.

In the sale catalogue of J. Walter K. Eyton, London 1848, this item appears with the customary statement attributed to Kirgate but with the addition of a date of 1774. Mr. Eyton possessed an unusually large and complete

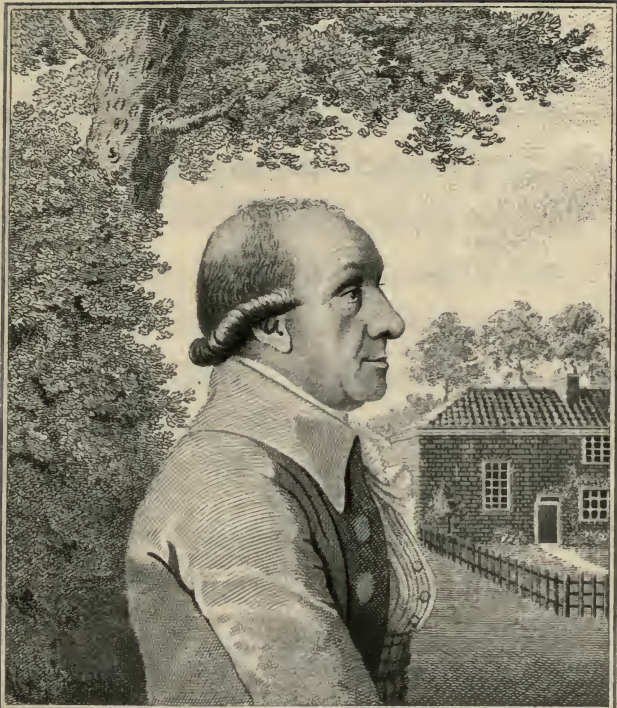


complete collection of Strawberry Hill Press publications obtained, according to his catalogue, mainly by the purchase of the 'entire collection of the late Mr. R. P. Cruden of Gravesend.' Cruden had been one of the principal buyers of Strawberry Hill issues at the sale of George Baker in 1825; and Mr. Baker in his turn had obtained most of his items from the collection of Walpole's printer, Thomas Kirgate, which was dispersed in 1810.

This *Description* of sixty-five pages appears, without date, in Kirgate's sale catalogue, in Baker's privately printed List which was printed in December 1810 in an edition of twenty copies only, and in his sale catalogue

catalogue in 1825. With the Eyton sale the actual copy itself apparently disappears into space. Mr. Dobson states that he has never seen it. It does not appear in the British Museum Catalogue, nor in the South Kensington Museum or Princeton University Library collections. A recent request through *Notes and Queries* for information as to this or any similar copy elicited no response, further than that the Eyton copy was bought by Lilly the bookseller.

It seems probable, in view of Kirgate's statement, that it was merely a set of sheets taken from the press while the 1774 *Description* was printing, and was descriptive only of that part of the collection not covered by  
the



*J. Harding del. sculp. 1798.*

*A. Smith sculp.*

**THOMAS KIRGATE,**  
**Printer at Strawberry-Hill.**

*With a View of the Printing House.*

*Published in 1798.*



the two pamphlets, of eighteen and four pages respectively, which are cited above. This supposition is borne out by the fact that deducting from the one hundred and twelve pages of the 1774 *Description*, (which cover the account of the contents of the house), the introductory matter, the account of the Holbein chamber, the account of the Tribune, which comprises, with additions, the matter in the eighteen page pamphlet, and the account of the Great North Bed-chamber which comprises the matter in the four page pamphlet—a total of forty-seven pages—exactly sixty-five pages are left. This may be merely a coincidence but the conjecture does not seem an unreasonable one.

It



It is possible that only one copy of this catalogue may have been preserved, though more must have been in existence in Walpole's time if it was intended for an exhibition catalogue. Constant use would doubtless have soiled and worn out the copies, and they would probably have been destroyed after fulfilling their purpose. It apparently was not intended for a separate publication, as appears to have been the case with the pamphlets of eighteen and four pages, but as Kirgate seems to have kept specimens of most, if not all, of his work, it was natural to find a copy in his collection.

The *Description of the Villa of Horace Walpole* which, as we have seen,  
was

was completed in July 1774, made its appearance with Kirgate's name and the date 1774 on the title page. It contained one hundred and twenty pages (last page blank), but later additions under the headings of 'Appendix,' 'Additions,' 'List of the Books,' and 'More Additions,' bring the total up to one hundred and fifty-eight pages. These additions were made from time to time as the collections increased, and acquisitions as late as 1786 are recorded, thus overlapping the edition of 1784 as first printed.

Walpole proposed having prints of his house and grounds added to the catalogue, and the preparation of these prints was carried on in a desultory

ultory fashion for a number of years. In 1780 he was planning to take up the matter of completing the catalogue and prints during the next summer. Some difficulties were in the way, for so many additions had been made to the collection that he found it would be necessary to add an appendix or to reprint. In the spring of 1781 the plates were nearly completed, and the question of an appendix came to the front. This he regarded as an awkward method but thought he could not 'afford to throw away an hundred copies.'

Eventually he grasped both horns of the dilemma. The 1774 *Description* was brought up to date by appendices, and a rearranged and revised  
*Description*



*Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole*, accompanied by plates, was printed and stands as the final and definitive edition. It appeared with Kirgate's name on the title page, dated 1784, and contained eighty-eight pages and twenty-seven plates. Like the earlier edition it received subsequent additions, covering accessions at least as late as 1790, bringing the total to ninety-six pages.

The two editions differ materially in size, as will be seen from the measurements given in the bibliography, the 1774 edition being a small quarto and the 1784 edition a royal quarto. The subject matter of the 'Appendix' pages 121-145, 'List of Books' pages 146-148, 'Additions since the  
Appendix'

Appendix' pages 149-152, of the earlier edition is distributed in its proper place among pages 1-88 of the later edition. The 1784 edition also shows signs of some re-cataloguing and of rearrangement in different parts of the house of the various articles described.

Pages 153-158 of the 1774 edition, headed 'More Additions,' are identical in subject matter and plan of arrangement with pages 89-92 of the 1784 edition, which appear there under the heading of 'Appendix'; while pages 93-96 of the final edition comprise acquisitions after 1786 which do not appear in the earlier edition in any form.

The absence from a copy of the  
*Description*

*Description* of some, or even all, of the various appendices included in pages 121-158 of the earlier and in pages 89-96 of the later edition, by no means indicates an imperfect copy but merely an uncompleted copy. That is, it was probably perfect when issued; for undoubtedly some copies of the catalogues found their way into the hands of Walpole's friends from time to time, although in limited numbers.

The copy of the 1784 edition from which the description in the bibliography is mainly drawn does not contain pages 93-96, the collation being completed from another copy. Walpole's own statement as to his publications showing 'all the beautiful

tiful negligence of a gentleman' can well be applied to these catalogues.

The *Description* opens with a brief account of Strawberry Hill and then describes the various rooms in the house and some of the buildings in the grounds. The contents of the rooms—pictures, furniture, curios, etc.—are enumerated, and in many cases a history of the articles is given, or the way in which they were acquired is told. Sometimes an elaborate account is given, and occasionally a few lines of verse by Walpole are found, either relating to the articles described or to their donor. A rather inaccurate list of the books printed at Strawberry Hill is also included.

As

As already stated Walpole's original plan seems to have been to have prints of the house prepared, which should be added to the 1774 edition. But the work of preparation progressed very slowly, and as late as 1780 apparently seven plates only had been finished. When he finally decided to reprint the catalogue he seems to have abandoned his first plan, and to have had the illustrations completed solely for the 1784 edition. In fact many of the plates, on account of their size, were hardly adapted to the first edition with the possible exception of the six large-paper copies.

By July 1784, at which time the new edition was probably going through  
the



the press, he had come to refer to the earlier one as a 'very imperfect list,' which 'was printed several years ago, but was suppressed.' It is probably safe to assume that any copy of the 1774 edition containing prints must be regarded only as an extra illustrated copy. In Baker's sale catalogue a copy is listed with plates, the number not stated, but from an accompanying note they seem to have been proofs of only a few of the prints which were probably laid into this copy.

Walpole's attitude towards these two catalogues is somewhat curious, and different from his treatment of the other publications from his press. Commonly the books were either  
 given



given away or else sold by Dodsley or some other book-seller. But the two catalogues were held back. The Reverend William Cole had received a copy of the first, which caused some annoyance later by passing into the hands of a dealer after Cole's death. Sir Horace Mann undoubtedly had a copy of the second, but he was in Florence, a safe distance from London.

A copy was refused in 1787 to Lord Ossory who usually received all the Strawberry Hill publications. Walpole explains to Lady Ossory his refusal of the *Description* by writing that 'though printed, I have entirely kept it up, [*i.e.* held it back] and mean to do so while I live, for very sound reasons.' His justification is that he  
is

is 'so tormented by visitors, that two or three rooms are not shown to a-bridge their stay.' Also, the enamels and miniatures were kept under lock and key and if visitors had access to the catalogue and knew of their existence they would insist on seeing and handling them.

This statement tends to confirm the conjecture as to the catalogue of sixty-five pages. The enamels, miniatures, etc., which were kept locked up, were in that portion of the house described in the eighteen and four page pamphlets. Since it was desired to preserve these curiosities from visitors' inspection, the natural method was to omit their description from the Exhibition Catalogue.

Possibly

Possibly there was another subconscious reason for holding back the *Description* which Walpole hints at half-jestingly to Hannah More in 1790. He had bought pictures and curiosities and had hoarded baubles ‘that in truth I cannot keep long, but that will last for ever in my catalogue, and make me immortal!’

When and how the catalogues did become distributed can only be conjectured. At the time of the dispersal of the contents of Strawberry Hill in 1842, only a few copies appear in the sale catalogue. In an obituary notice which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* immediately after Walpole's death it is stated that a catalogue of Strawberry Hill had been  
 drawn

drawn up and printed in 1774, and reserved as a bequest to his particular friends after his death. This notice, however, was not conspicuous for its accuracy so far as it related to Strawberry Hill publications.

Still the statement receives a certain measure of confirmation from the remarks of Miss Berry in her preface to *The Works of Horace Walpole, Earlof Orford*, in five volumes, London 1798, which included the *Description of Strawberry-Hill*.

She says: ‘the Catalogue and Description of Strawberry-Hill has been hitherto in the hands of those only to whom lord Orford bequeathed the few copies which he had himself printed there.’

Probably

Probably this can not be taken very literally as the 'few copies' amounted to three hundred in round numbers, and it does not seem likely that the only method of distribution was through Lord Orford's will. As a matter of fact an examination of the will fails to show any specific reference whatsoever to the *Description*.

In a codicil executed only a few months before his death he bequeathed to the Misses Berry and to their father a carefully described wooden box containing 'all such of my own Literary works as have been heretofore published, or have been printed, or still remain in Manuscript.'

Full authority was given to the Berrys to publish the works, which  
 resulted



resulted in the appearance in 1798 of the five volumes referred to above. Their nominal editor was Robert Berry, but the actual editor was his daughter Mary, Walpole's favorite. It is possible that he may have left instructions with Miss Berry as to the disposal which he wished to have made of the catalogues, but this can only be a matter of conjecture.\*

In the preface to the *Description of*

\* Since this paragraph was written there has been kindly sent over for inspection, by Mr. James Tregaskis, the antiquarian book-seller of 232 High Holborn, London, a collection of extra-illustrated Strawberry Hill sale catalogues formed by T. Crofton Croker. In this collection there appears a manuscript list entitled, 'A list of persons to whom the *Description of Strawberry Hill* was bequeathed by Lord Orford.' The list comprises the names of sev-



1784 Walpole wrote that it was not intended for public sale and originally was designed only as a means of assistance to those who visited the place. He added also that the account of the pictures and curiosities was given with a view to their future dispersion. And he reflected that ‘some transient pleasure may even hereafter arise to the peruser of this catalogue.’

enty-eight persons and two libraries. Against fifteen of the names the word ‘dead’ is written. No source or authority is given for this list.

As has been stated above, no reference whatsoever to the *Description* can be found in Walpole’s will, proved in 1797, but the existence of this list of names may serve as a partial confirmation of the conjecture that instructions regarding the disposal of the catalogues might have been left with Miss Berry by Walpole.

Evidently

Evidently the thought had long been present in his mind of the final disposal, not only of his books, but also of the curiosities which he had so eagerly collected. Fifteen years before his death, even then feeling the approach of old age, he wrote ‘I have little time left to enjoy any thing, and who knows what will become of Strawberry, and how soon it may be put up to auction?’

More than half a century passed by, however, before this question was answered.





ADMIT

*Mr. Smith & Co. Friends*

TO THE PRIVATE VIEW AT

STRAWBERRY HILL

*Signed George Robins*  
Commencing March 23rd.





## *SALE CATALOGUES*

**A**T Walpole's death in the year 1797 Strawberry Hill was left to his great-niece Laura, Dowager Countess Waldegrave, and her heirs, but with the right of life tenancy to Mrs. Anne Seymour Damer, the daughter of Walpole's cousin General Conway. Mrs. Damer occupied Strawberry Hill until 1811 when she relinquished it to the heiress, Lady Waldegrave. In 1835 Lady Waldegrave's grandson, George, had succeeded



ceeded to the title as seventh Earl, and to the possession of Strawberry Hill.

On May 31st 1841, there appeared in the *Times* a brief notice from the well-known auctioneer George Robins to the effect that he had been instructed to sell by auction the 'magnificent contents' of Strawberry Hill, 'the renowned seat of the Earl of Waldegrave.' This was followed one week later by an elaborate announcement of the forthcoming sale which was to be held on Monday, July 19 and the twenty following days. It was stated that a detailed catalogue was in process of preparation, which would be ready fourteen days before the sale, at the price of two shillings, sixpence



sixpence each. On June 14 Mr. Robins announced that the sale at Strawberry Hill was of necessity delayed, in consequence of the approaching dissolution of Parliament, but that he would not fail to give the earliest information to the public when the auction would take place. This dissolution of Parliament was brought about by the fall of the Melbourne ministry on account of the Corn-Law agitation. One of the minor effects was the postponement of a number of auction sales until a more favorable opportunity offered.

A portion of Robins' announcement at this time is worth reproducing as a specimen of his florid style. He continues his statement that he  
will

will give early notice to those interested, as to when the deferred sale will occur, by saying that he contents 'himself at present by promising that a constellation of all that is recherché and unequalled as an ensemble throughout the world will well reward them for the disappointment occasioned by the necessity for this postponement.'

Nothing more is heard from Robins on this subject until February 7, 1842 when a brief preliminary advertisement again appears in the *Times* stating that 'Mr. George Robins is honoured by having been selected by the Earl of Waldegrave to sell by public competition, on Monday, April 25, and twenty-four following days  
(Sundays

(Sundays excepted), the contents of Strawberry Hill.' Two weeks later a more detailed advertisement follows in which reference is made to a 'catalogue raisonné.' It is promised that the reader will be gratified with a faithful report of the curiosities at Strawberry Hill in the catalogue, which will be adorned with a portrait of Horace Walpole 'and illustrated by six drawings on wood by the inimitable Cruikshank.'

Unfortunately one part of this project was not carried out, for on March 14th Robins announces that the six drawings will be 'executed by W. A. Delamotte, Esq.' He states that the catalogues will be ready March 28th, that there will be a private view at  
 Strawberry

Strawberry Hill on that day, and that the public will be admitted on April 4th. Examination of the catalogue speedily reveals the fact that the drawings were indeed 'executed' by Delamotte and increases the regret that the original plan of Cruikshank illustrations was not carried out. As a matter of fact the woodcuts, eleven in number, which appear in the 'Prefatory Remarks' to the catalogue were evidently taken, together with the body of the 'Remarks,' from an article by Dudley Costello, entitled 'Strawberry Hill' which appeared in the March, 1842, number of *Ainsworth's Miscellany*.

In addition Delamotte supplied a design for the cover of the catalogue  
and

and another more elaborate one for the half title, into both of which he worked details which were intended to represent some of the more notable curiosities of the collection. The design on the cover was also used, with a change in the letter-press, as a card of admission to Strawberry Hill for the private view.

An advertisement on March 28th announces that the catalogues are ready for distribution, and one on the following day states that the 'catalogue raisonné is at length completed.' This advertisement also adds that 'there will be two hundred catalogues in the second edition (to be ready next week), printed on large paper, the price 12s., and Mr. Robins flatters



flatters himself and is inclined to hope the patrons of the fine arts will preserve this catalogue as a valuable memento of the name and imperishable fame of Horace Walpole, to hand it down to future generations.' It refers to the woodcuts as ten in number and mentions the half title. The small paper editions were published at seven shillings.

The catalogue brought forth a variety of criticism and comment. It was called a 'remarkable document' and regarded as 'not amongst the least of the curiosities' of the sale. A letter to the editor of the *Times* begins, 'the long expected catalogue, than which, perhaps, a more incorrect piece of typography never left the

the





GEORGE ROBINS



the press, announces' etc. On the occasion of the first day's sale Robins replied to the critics and gave further cause of offence when he 'challenged the rivalry of persons better acquainted with the names of authors and books, and professed his ability to produce as correct a catalogue as Mr. Evans, of Pall Mall.'

Notwithstanding its inaccuracies the call for the catalogue was considerable. The supply at the house was exhausted before the day of the public view and a number of editions or issues were brought out in quick succession. From contemporaneous statements it seems probable that over four thousand copies were distributed before the beginning of the sale.

sale. The *Evening Mail*, which took a very cynical view of the whole proceeding, said, 'a vast number of catalogues have been sold; indeed, more than, we believe, on any former occasion.'

On Monday, April 18th, in a *Times* advertisement (dated April 16) of the first six days of the sale, April 25-30, covering the books, the public was notified that 'correct catalogues of this portion of the sale will be ready on and after Monday for distribution gratis to booksellers, and to the public 6d. each only, which will also admit the bearer to the auction.' The same advertisement in the *Times* of April 25 has a slight variation at the end and states that the catalogue will  
 'admit

‘admit the bearer to the auction, *during the book sale.*’

This would seem to imply that a limited catalogue of the book sale only (the first six days) was issued at a reduced price. In the course of an examination of the catalogues and of descriptions of them in booksellers’ lists, covering a period of a number of years, no trace of such a catalogue has ever been found. It would hardly be safe to assume that specimens of the catalogue do not exist, though, by reason of being a partial catalogue only, it would have been less likely to have been preserved. It seems wiser to preserve an open mind on the subject, pending the possible appearance of a copy.

As

As the sale was originally advertised, the seventh and eighth days were to be devoted to the large collection of prints which Walpole had possessed. Many objections having been made to the sale of the prints in their badly catalogued and jumbled-up condition, it was announced, also on April 18th, that they had been withdrawn for a separate sale which would be held in London at the conclusion of the sale at Strawberry Hill. A 'very elaborate catalogue of this portion only' was in course of preparation and would be ready for delivery on May 10th.

The re-cataloguing of the prints was entrusted to the veteran auctioneer and printseller Thomas Dodd,  
 who



who was referred to by the *Times* as ‘a gentleman well qualified for such a task.’ The original cataloguing had been the work of Samuel Woodburne to whom Robins, in the ‘Prefatory Remarks,’ had expressed his acknowledgements ‘for his luminous observations on the collection of Engravings.’

On May 2nd Mr. Robins had ‘the honour to announce, that in obedience to very many pressing applications, he has in deference to public opinion had a second edition of the large paper copies printed, the first having been eagerly and quickly sought after by those who feel anxious to possess a sterling reminiscence of the splendid museum at Strawberry  
berry

berry Hill, to enable them to hand down to the latest posterity a proud record of the imperishable fame, demonstrated by the assiduity, the overpowering talent, and untiring devotion to the arts which was manifested during a period extending over sixty years by Horace Walpole. The fifth edition of the smaller size is now in course of distribution at Strawberry Hill, and in Covent Garden.'

If, as seems probable, the two catalogues mentioned in this advertisement are the ones described in the bibliography as VI. and VII., which certainly were the last to be issued covering the twenty-four days sale, a rather curious condition is shown. By May 2nd the portion of the sale including

including the books,—the first six days,—had already been completed, and yet these two catalogues contain the most detailed and accurate description of the books, carried out more fully than in any of the other catalogues.

Possibly this fact may throw some light on the question of the limited catalogue referred to above. For curiously enough, in setting up the first six days in VI. and VII. two different fonts of type were employed, one similar to that used in the earlier catalogues and the other a heavy faced type whose presence is very noticeable, even in a casual glance at the page. It seems to have been employed indiscriminately and without any definite

definite plan and may simply have come about through a shortage of type. It does not appear at all after the sixth day.

Now it seems possible that the first six days of these catalogues, with their extended descriptions and type anomalies, represent the 'correct catalogue' distributed to booksellers gratis and sold at 6*d.* to the public; that after serving its purpose at the sale of the books, either additional impressions were run off, or oversheets utilized and bound up with the sheets already printed for the last sixteen days, and then issued as the second large paper and fifth small paper editions referred to in the May 2nd advertisement.

By

By this means the shrewd auctioneer would have been able to supply the popular demand, utilize oversheets, and obtain 12*s.* and 7*s.* respectively to recoup himself for the earlier distribution gratuitously to dealers and at 6*d.* to the public. A slight measure of confirmation may be given to this theory from the fact that all the sale catalogues were printed by Messrs. Smith and Robins, King St. Long Acre. These two issues seem finally to have appeased the popular demand for catalogues, for on May 30th 'it is respectfully announced, that of the fifth and last edition of the small paper copies there are nearly one hundred left, and of the large paper copies about thirty.'

Whatever



Whatever may have been the merits or defects of the catalogues, public curiosity was strongly directed towards Strawberry Hill during the month of April 1842. It was stated that eighteen thousand persons had already visited the collection during the first fifteen days of the public view, and later on it was asserted that more than fifty thousand persons had been 'attracted to this repertory of art and bijouterie, during the present view of Strawberry-hill, which continues daily, even during the sale.' To accommodate the attendance at the sale a temporary gable-roofed building was erected on the grounds at Strawberry Hill, adjoining the house, 'seventy-five feet in length, forty feet wide,





The Hall at Strawberry Hill.

May 7, 1842. J. W. Fairholt



wide, and about seventeen feet in height to the tye-beams or level, with an additional ten feet to the point of the gable.'

The collection of prints was ready for inspection at the auctioneer's rooms in Covent Garden on June 6 and the sale took place there, 'June 13 and the nine following days (Sunday excepted).' Here again Robins' inaccuracy is clearly manifested, as in the public advertisements the sale was constantly referred to as a twelve days sale, notwithstanding the statement to the contrary on the title page of the catalogue and the internal evidence of the advertisements themselves. Of the ten days sale catalogue, the 'very elaborate' one, which represented

resented the seventh and eighth days of the original catalogue, apparently only one edition, on small paper, was issued.

At the conclusion of the sales two lists of 'Names of purchasers and the prices' were published under the title of *Aedes Strawberryanae*, the first giving the prices, by lots, of the twenty-four days sale at Strawberry Hill, as originally advertised, and the second of the ten days sale at Covent Garden.

Singularly enough, in the first price list, when the seventh and eighth days are reached, 'the names of the purchasers to the lots as originally formed, and the prices produced at the more detailed sale, are here arranged

ranged as if really sold at the first sale.' This is rather a remarkable performance and it probably would not stand too close a scrutiny, but at all events, in the final tabulation of the results of the sale by days the total proceeds of the seventh and eighth days, corresponding to the ten days sale, are carried in correctly. It may be said in passing that the total produce of the sale was £33,450. 11s. 9d.

One pamphlet of interest to Strawberry Hill collectors appeared as an aftermath of the much criticised catalogue,—the little sketch attributed to T. Crofton Croker, entitled *Gooseberry Hall*. It comprises eight leaves and is a parody on the title page,

page, conditions of sale, and what the author designates as 'Puffatory Remarks,' of the Strawberry Hill catalogue.

In the accompanying bibliography an attempt has been made to differentiate the various editions or issues of the sale catalogues and to show the chronological order in which they probably appeared. It is based on the examination and comparison of a considerable number of copies of the catalogues.

It is difficult to say whether there were actually five separate editions of the small paper copies, as Robins' advertisement would seem to imply. Five issues, differing more or less radically, can easily be identified,  
and



and also the two large paper editions.

The catalogue listed as I. is clearly the first issue. It has been called the 'Dunciad' and also the 'bastard' catalogue but perhaps the best designation is that of a writer in the *Athenæum* in 1842 who terms it the 'first and worst edition.' The title page states that 'the Catalogue (at 7s each) will admit Four Persons to the Public View, and be a passport to the Purchaser throughout the Sale; they may be had at "Galignani's Journal" in Paris; of Mr. I. A. G. Weigel, of Leipzig; at Strawberry Hill; at the Auction Mart and at Mr. George Robins' Offices, Covent Garden.' On the last page a note appears, to the effect that 'some inaccuracies will be discovered

ered in the Catalogue, arising from a want of sufficient time for its examination,' etc. These errors were to be 'carefully rectified in the Second Edition,' a small portion of which was to be printed on large paper.

Number II. has the same note on the last page but these additional words on the title-page, 'a few copies are printed on large paper at 12*s.* each.' It corresponds quite closely to I., though occasionally it shows signs of recataloguing in isolated titles. The most conspicuous difference is that the tenth day's sale comprises four more lots than in I., or 156 as against 152.

Number III. has the note on the last page and the title page agrees with  
II.,

II., but it shows further signs of re-cataloguing. At least sixteen pages differ from I. and II. in the number of lots on the page. The twelfth day's sale has seven additional lots. The heading 'Miscellaneous' at the top of page 130 in I. and II. disappears and is not met with again. There is also a curious error in signature DD, doubtless arising from the printer's carelessness in arranging the form. The first page of the nineteenth day's sale precedes the last page of the eighteenth day. The text is transposed although the pagination runs on correctly.

Number IV. is the first large paper edition, apparently at first glance the same issue as V. which is on small paper.

per. It agrees with the latter in cataloguing more lots on eight out of the twenty-four days than the preceding catalogues. It has inserted pages 53\* and 54\*, as does V. On the other hand, and particularly in the first six days sales, comprising the books, IV. agrees more frequently with the three earlier catalogues than with V. But it has one feature in which it differs from all the other catalogues: inserted pages 67\* and 68\*, comprising, together with a dozen additional lines on page 68, twenty-seven lots, unrelated to Walpole, which were not sold at the sale at all. In IV. and V. the note on the last page has disappeared. The title page of V. is similar to that of II., III., VI., and VII., while that  
of

of IV. differs from all others in reading, 'The Catalogue (at 12s.) will admit Four Persons,' etc.

Numbers VI. and VII. which are small and large paper issues respectively seem to agree with each other throughout. They represent a real recataloguing of the first six days. Palpable errors are corrected and the the various lots catalogued at much greater length, so that the matter ending on page 67 in I., II., and III., and on page 68 in V., is expanded to eighty-six pages in VI. and VII.

The seventh and eighth days are omitted entirely and the catalogue continues with the ninth day. In its accuracy as to titles V. corresponds more closely with VI. and VII. than  
with



with its predecessors, which will account for the position assigned to it in the bibliography. It is, on the whole, the best single catalogue for purposes of reference to the entire twenty-four days, but VI. and VIII. together furnish the most complete account of the whole collection and are essential to any one who may wish to refer to the various lots in their most detailed form.

The examination of catalogues which are apparently of the same issue occasionally reveals minor differences, but none of sufficient importance to warrant regarding them as separate issues. These variations may have been caused in some instances by the detection and correction

tion



tion of an obvious, but previously overlooked, error while the sheets were coming off the press.

In other cases the slight variation is undoubtedly due to a broken letter or the dropping out of a letter or numeral from the form. One fact soon becomes apparent. The greater part of the variations and changes occur in the first eight days. Indeed this might almost be narrowed down to the first six days. Titles of books in foreign languages, particularly the classics, show the greatest number of inaccuracies in description. Doubtless they would be detected by a larger number of readers than errors in the description of china, paintings or curios, and criticism may easily  
 have

have been more centered on this portion of the work.

The changes in the last sixteen days come about largely through the occasional addition of extra lots and the correction of a few obvious errors, as, for instance, the substitution of the correct word 'Faenza' for 'Faenna.' It seems possible that in this portion of the catalogue a larger number of sheets were run off the same form without corrections than in the first part. And also that a few of the discrepancies in the catalogues may have been occasioned by binding up sheets of an earlier issue of the last part with those of later and corrected impressions of the first part.

It

It is obvious that the deductions here made, and the classification of the various issues, may be modified by the examination of a still larger number of catalogues as opportunity offers, but it does not seem probable that any material changes will be made thereby.







## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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### *Descriptive Catalogues*

#### I

CATALOGUE of Pictures and Drawings  
in the Holbein-Chamber, at Straw-  
berry-Hill. MDCCLX.

Small octavo,  $4\frac{3}{4}$  by  $7\frac{5}{8}$  inches, pages 8,  
sewn, uncut. Title on first page.

#### 2

Pictures, Curiosities, &c. in The Cabinet of  
Enamels and Miniatures, and in The Glass  
Cases on each Side of it.

Quarto,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  by  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches, pages 18, uncut;  
page-numbers in brackets at top of page in  
centre. Bluish gray wrappers. Title printed  
on first page of cover. No date (1773-1774?).

Curiosities

3

Curiosities in the Glass Closet in the Great Bedchamber.

Quarto,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  by  $9\frac{3}{8}$  inches, pages 4, uncut; page-numbers in brackets at top of page in centre. Bluish gray wrappers. Title printed on first page of cover. No date (1773-1774?).

4\*

A Description of the Villa of Horace Walpole, Youngest Son of Sir Robert Walpole Earl of Orford, at Strawberry-Hill, near Twickenham. With an Inventory of the Furniture, Pictures, Curiosities, &c. Strawberry-Hill: Printed by Thomas Kirgate, M.DCC.LXXIV.

Small quarto,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  by 9 inches, cut. Half-title, 1 leaf (with view of Strawberry Hill first used on title-page of *Life of Edward Lord Herbert*

\*Kirgate's sale catalogue, London 1810, has this item:—  
‘Lot 410. [Description of the Villa at Strawberry Hill] for shewing the House, very scarce.’

This is the catalogue of 65 pages, referred to on page 10 as being probably a partial set of sheets from the 1774 *Description* and intended only for an exhibition catalogue.

of



of *Cherbury*, 1764). Title-page, 1 leaf. Pp. 120 (last page blank). Appendix, 121-145. List of the Books Printed at Strawberry-Hill, 146-148 (last page blank). Additions since the Appendix, 149-152. More Additions, 153-158. 100 copies, 6 on large paper.

5

A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole, Youngest Son of Sir Robert Walpole Earl of Orford, at Strawberry-Hill near Twickenham, Middlesex. With an Inventory of the Furniture, Pictures, Curiosities, &c. Strawberry-Hill: Printed by Thomas Kirgate, MDCCLXXXIV

Royal quarto, 9½ by 12 inches, uncut. Title-page, 1 leaf. Preface i-iv. Pp. 88. Appendix, 89-92. Curiosities added since this Book was completed, 93-94. More Additions, 95-96. Plates, including frontispiece, 27. At end of Preface, Walpole's crest and motto as it appears on title-pages of Vols. I. and II. of *Anecdotes of Painting*, both first and second editions. 200 copies.

*Sale*

*Sale Catalogues*

I.

**S**TRAWBERRY HILL, the renowned seat of Horace Walpole.

Mr. George Robins is honoured by having been selected by the Earl of Waldegrave, to sell by public competition, the valuable contents of Strawberry Hill, and it may fearlessly be proclaimed as the most distinguished gem that has ever adorned the Annals of Auctions.

It is definitely fixed for Monday, the 25th Day of April, 1842, and twenty three following days (Sundays excepted), and within will be found a repast for the Lovers of Literature and the Fine Arts, of which bygone days furnish no previous example, and it would be vain to contemplate it in times to come.

The Catalogue (at 7s. each) will admit Four Persons to the Public View, and be a passport to the Purchaser throughout the  
 Sale;

Sale; they may be had at "Galignani's Journal" in Paris; of Mr. I. A. G. Weigel, of Leipsic; at Strawberry Hill; at the Auction Mart; and at Mr. George Robins' offices, Covent Garden. The Private view will commence on the 28th Day of March, and the Public will be admitted on Monday, April 4th.

Quarto, 8 by 10 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches, green wrappers. Portrait. Half-title, 1 leaf. Title-page, iii. Conditions of sale, iv. Prefatory Remarks, v-xxi. Arrangement of the Auction, xxii-xxiv. 1-67, 68 blank, Preliminary Remarks, 69-71, 72-250 = xxiv + 250 pages.

On page 250, 'Note.—Some inaccuracies will be discovered in the Catalogue, arising from a want of sufficient time for its examination, in order to be prepared by the time it was originally announced; these errors will be carefully rectified in the Second Edition, a small portion of which will be printed on large paper.'

## II.

Title-page same as I. but with the addition after the words 'Covent Garden,' of the following;

lowing; — ‘A few copies are printed upon large paper, at 12s. each.’

Quarto, 8 by 10 inches, pink wrappers. Portrait. i-xxiv. 1-67, 68 blank, Preliminary Remarks, 69-71, 72-250 = xxiv + 250 pages. On page 250, Note as in I.

*Identification:* Advertisement of large-paper copies on title-page; note on page 250; last lot on page 112 numbered 156; without transposition of text at pages 186-187 as found in III.

### III.

Title-page same as II.

Quarto, 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  by 10  $\frac{3}{8}$  inches, blue wrappers. Portrait. i-xxiv. 1-67, 68 blank, Preliminary Remarks, 69-71, 72-250 = xxiv + 250 pages. On page 250, Note as in I.

*Identification:* Last lot on page 73 numbered 29 through error, should be 26; lacks heading ‘Miscellaneous’, page 130; transposition of text, pages 186-187, the Nineteenth days’ sale beginning on page 186, the Eighteenth days’ sale ending on page 187.

### IV.

Title-page same as I. with the exception  
of

of substitution of words '(at 12s. each)' for '(at 7s. each).'

Large-paper copy, folio,  $9\frac{3}{8}$  by  $12\frac{1}{8}$  inches, gray wrappers. Portrait. i-xxiv. 1-54, 53\*, 54\*, 55-68, 67\*, 68\*, Preliminary Remarks, 69-71, 72-250 = xxiv + 254 pages.

*Identification*: inserted pages 67\*, 68\*.

V.

Title-page same as II.

Quarto, 8 by  $10\frac{1}{4}$  inches, gray wrappers. Portrait. i-xxiv. 1-54, 53\*, 54\*, 55-68, Preliminary Remarks, 69-71, 72-250 = xxiv + 252 pages.

*Identification*: Inserted pages 53\*, 54\*; without inserts 67\*, 68\*.

VI.\*

Title-page same as II.

Quarto,  $8\frac{3}{8}$  by  $10\frac{3}{8}$  inches, pink wrappers. Portrait. i-xxiv. 1-86, 87 blank, notice of

\*An advertisement in the *Times*, April 18, 1842 mentions a catalogue covering only the portion of the sale devoted to the books, April 25-30. This was probably a limited catalogue of eighty-six pages of text, describing the books with greater accuracy and detail than any of the earlier issues, and corresponding to pages 1-86 in catalogues VI. and VII.

deferred



deferred sale of print collection, 88, 89-90, 97-250=xxiv + 244 pages.

*Identification:* Small-paper copy; notice of deferred sale of prints, page 88; absence of pages 91-96.

## VII.

Title-page same as II.

Large-paper copy, folio, 9¼ by 12 inches, pink wrappers. Portrait. i-xxiv. 1-86, 87 blank, notice of deferred sale of print collection, 88, 89-90, 97-250=xxiv + 244 pages.

*Identification:* Large-paper copy; notice of deferred sale of prints, page 88; absence of pages 91-96.

## VIII.

The Collection of Rare Prints & Illustrated Works removed from Strawberry Hill for sale in London.

A Catalogue of the extensive and most valuable Collection of Engraved Portraits of the most illustrious and other eminent British Characters that figure in the Annals of History and Biography, — [27 lines] — numerous Manuscripts and Books applying  
to



to the Fine Arts, &c., &c., as originally collected by Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford; which will be sold by auction, by Mr. George Robins, at his Great Rooms in Covent Garden, on Monday, the 13th day of June, 1842, and nine following days (Sunday excepted), commencing at one o'clock precisely each day.

The whole will be open for inspection on Monday, June 6th, and during the week, and Catalogues had (at 2s. 6d. each) at Mr. Geo. Robins' offices in Covent Garden.

Quarto,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  by  $10\frac{7}{8}$  inches, brown wrappers. Title-page, i. Conditions of sale, ii. Address, iii, iv. Order of each day's sale, v, vi. 3-131 = vi + 129 pages.

The color of the wrappers of the copies described is given as a matter of possible interest. It is not an infallible guide to the issue, as the wrappers of similar issues sometimes vary in color. All the catalogues were printed by Smith and Robins, King Street, Long Acre. Each has a shortened title on the cover, with a facsimile of the signature of George Robins. This title

is

is printed in a device designed by Delamotte,  $4\frac{3}{16}$  by  $5\frac{9}{16}$  inches, which was also utilized for a special card of admission to the private view at Strawberry Hill. The short title of catalogues I.-VII. is, 'A Catalogue of the Contents of Strawberry Hill'; of catalogue VIII. is, 'A Catalogue of the collection of Scarce Prints, removed from Strawberry Hill.'

IX.

*Aedes Strawberryanae.*

Names of Purchasers and the Prices to the Sale Catalogue of the choice Collections of Art and Virtù, at Strawberry-Hill Villa, formed by Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford. [quotation] [seal] London: printed for J. H. Burn, 102, St. Martin's Lane; and may be had of all Booksellers, and Dealers in Antique Furniture, Picture Galleries and Repositories. Price seven shillings and sixpence.

Quarto  $8\frac{3}{4}$  by  $11\frac{1}{4}$  inches, brown wrappers. Apology for Strawberry Hill, signed 'Hor. Walpole,' 1 leaf. Pp. 1-58. Title as above on cover. Shortened title on page 1. Records the entire

entire twenty-four days' sales. Twenty-five copies, on large royal quarto, were issued at fifteen shillings.

The 'Apology for Strawberry Hill' is rather ingeniously constructed by welding together detached sentences from Walpole's preface to the 1784 edition of the Description of Strawberry Hill.

X.

*Aedes Strawberryanae.*

Names of Purchasers and the Prices to the Detailed Sale Catalogue of the Collection of early Drawings, Etchings, and Prints, Engraved Portraits of eminent British Characters, Drawings and rare Reproductions of Hogarth, Manuscripts and Works relative to the Fine Arts; withdrawn from Strawberry-Hill for sale in London.

Granger founded the *materiel* of his Biographical History of England, on the Collections of Engraved British Portraits, in the possession of Horace Walpole at Strawberry-Hill; and of James West. The Catalogue of  
of

of Engraved British Portraits, methodically disposed in Classes, by Anthony Wilson, under the assumed name of Henry Bromley 1793; was an arranged Catalogue of Walpole's Collection, with additions; in which all the unique or rare conditioned Prints at Strawberry-Hill are distinctly traced, on reference. [seal] The names of Purchasers, and the Prices, to the Twenty-four days' Sale-Catalogue of Pictures, Miniatures, and other Rarities at Strawberry-Hill, forms a distinct publication, price seven shillings and sixpence. *Twenty-five Copies*, on large royal quarto, price Fifteen Shillings. London: Printed for J. H. Burn, 102, St. Martin's Lane. Impression limited to fifty copies. Price three shillings.

Quarto, 8  $\frac{5}{8}$  by 11  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches, brown wrappers. Pp. 1-20. Title as above on cover. Shortened title on page 1. Records the ten days' sale only.





*Seventy-five copies printed at the Montague Press*

*April, 1915*











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