

WILTON HOUSE, SALISBURY.

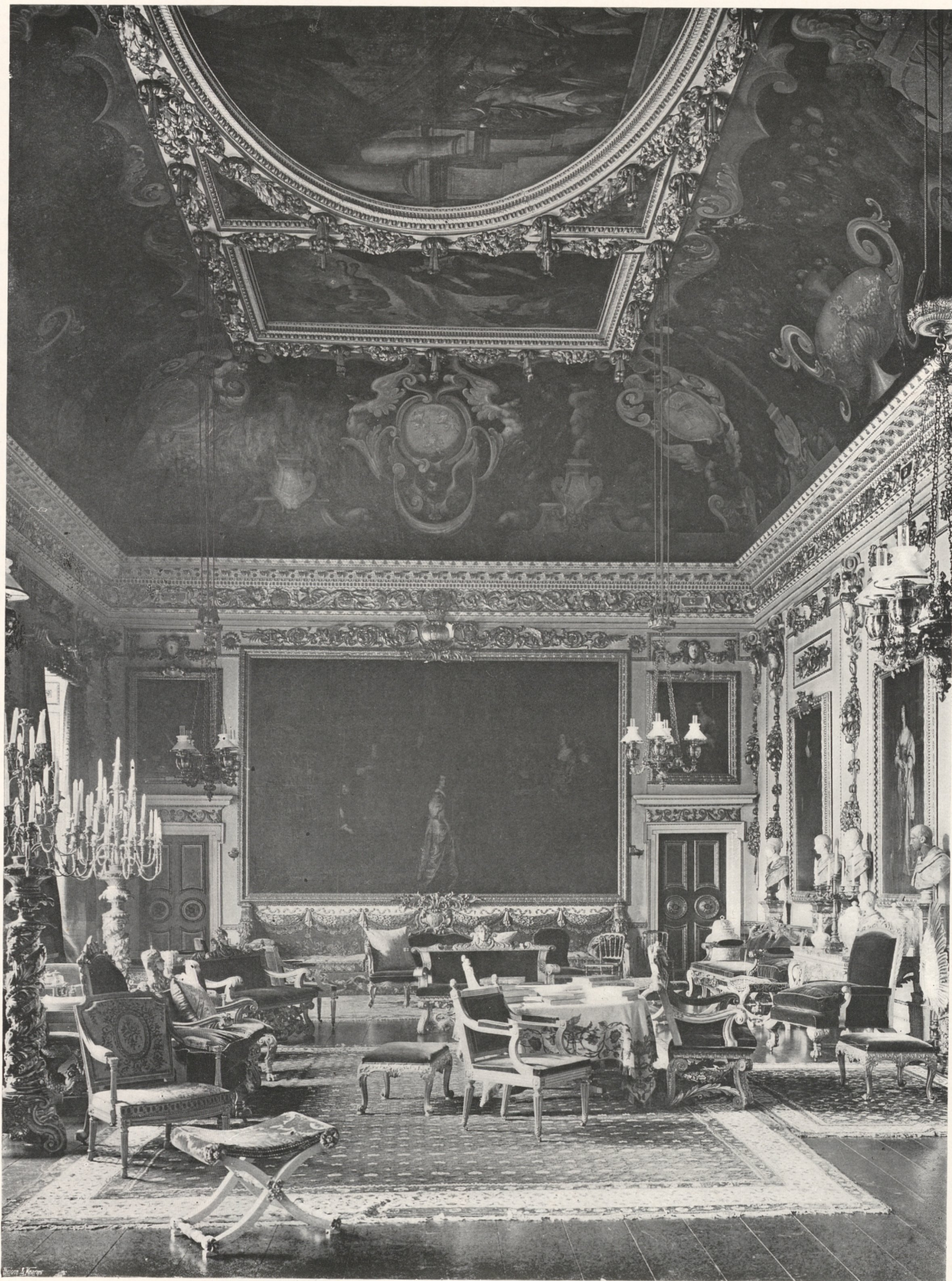
THERE is very much in the history, character, and stately beauty of Wilton House to commend it to the attention and admiration of Englishmen. Its associations are interwoven with the lives of the famous, it is in itself a wonderful architectural creation, its noble apartments contain many masterpieces of great sculptors and painters, and it is surrounded by gardens surpassingly beautiful. Its interests are therefore many-

sided. In the long line of its possessors, distinction has alighted on almost every one; they have been men equally famous in the court and the field, and even still more do they hold a large place in the intellectual history of the country. We are privileged to enter some of the princely chambers, there to survey the beauties flowing from the liberal hands of these successive Earls of Pembroke.

We do not forget that the house is in a real sense the vesture of the man; that its character springs from his individuality, and thus that it is the reflection of the personalities of those who have dwelt therein. It would be unpardonable, therefore, to forget the Herberts, Earls of Pembroke—the architect-earls and *cognoscenti*—who reared and adorned the structure we depict. Sir William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke, Aubrey's "mad young fighting fellow," who married the sister of Catherine Parr, had received from Henry VIII. the grant of the late Abbey of Wilton, and in his house there entertained Edward VI., in 1552. He showed a certain dexterity in politics beyond his associates, for, having been concerned with Northumberland in the plot in favour of Lady Jane Grey, he was with the Lord Mayor when Mary was proclaimed in Cheapside. When



THE COLONNADE ROOM.

*THE DOUBLE CUBE ROOM.*

she was dead he hastened to Hatfield and was at Elizabeth's first council. A man of strong personality and great power was this creator of Wilton House. Of his building there, the east front, much altered, alone remains, together with the elaborate porch

Sidney, is commemorated in the famous epitaph assigned to Ben Jonson, but really by William Brown :

"Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother!
Death, ere thou hast slain another,
Wise, and fair, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee!"



A CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE DOUBLE CUBE ROOM.

traditionally associated with Holbein, and now standing by itself in the grounds of the house. Improvements were effected by the second Earl, a man of high attainments, whose third wife, the sister of Sir Philip

It was this great lady's son who rose to such eminence in his time—"the Hamlet of Charles's Court," as the late Dr. S. R. Gardiner calls him—and who became a new Mécenas in his patronage of men of letters. Shakespeare,



SOUTH DOOR IN THE DOUBLE CUBE ROOM,

Massinger, Jonson, Donne, and many more gained by his favour. Inigo Jones is said to have visited Italy at his expense. The Earl and his brother were "the incomparable pair of brethren" to whom the Shakespeare first folio was dedicated. In the autumn of 1603 the Court was for two months installed at Wilton House, owing to the prevalence of plague in London, and Shakespeare and his company performed there on December 2nd in that year. The Earl delighted in the company of men of letters, and his son Philip, who succeeded as fourth Earl, was in many ways like him. He stood high in the favour

of Charles I., who, says Aubrey, "did love Wilton above all places." The King visited Wilton every summer before the Civil War, and was greatly interested in the building operations which were going on there. We have the authority of Aubrey for saying that, at the suggestion of Charles, the garden front of the house was rebuilt on an enlarged scale in 1633. The King wished the Earl to employ Inigo Jones, but that great architect was at the time busily occupied in the works at Greenwich, and "recommended it to an ingenious architect, M. Solomon de



THE CORNER ROOM.



THE SINGLE CUBE ROOM.

Caux, a Gascoigne, who performed it very well."

The south side of the house was burnt about the year 1647, and was rebuilt from the design of Inigo Jones, under the superintendence of John Webb, who married his niece. It is probable that Jones was not himself much at Wilton at the time, but there can be no doubt that the designs were from his hand, and on that ground Wilton House is a particularly interesting example of domestic architecture.

The stables were also designed by him, and Evelyn, who visited the place in 1654, said that they were well ordered and "yielded a graceful front, by reason of the walks of lime trees, with the court and fountains of the stable, adorned with Cæsars' heads."

The fourth Earl of Pembroke was a great collector, and works of Titian and Giorgione adorned his walls, but the fifth Earl, who, like his father, sided with the Parliament, sold many of the books and pictures. Successive owners have

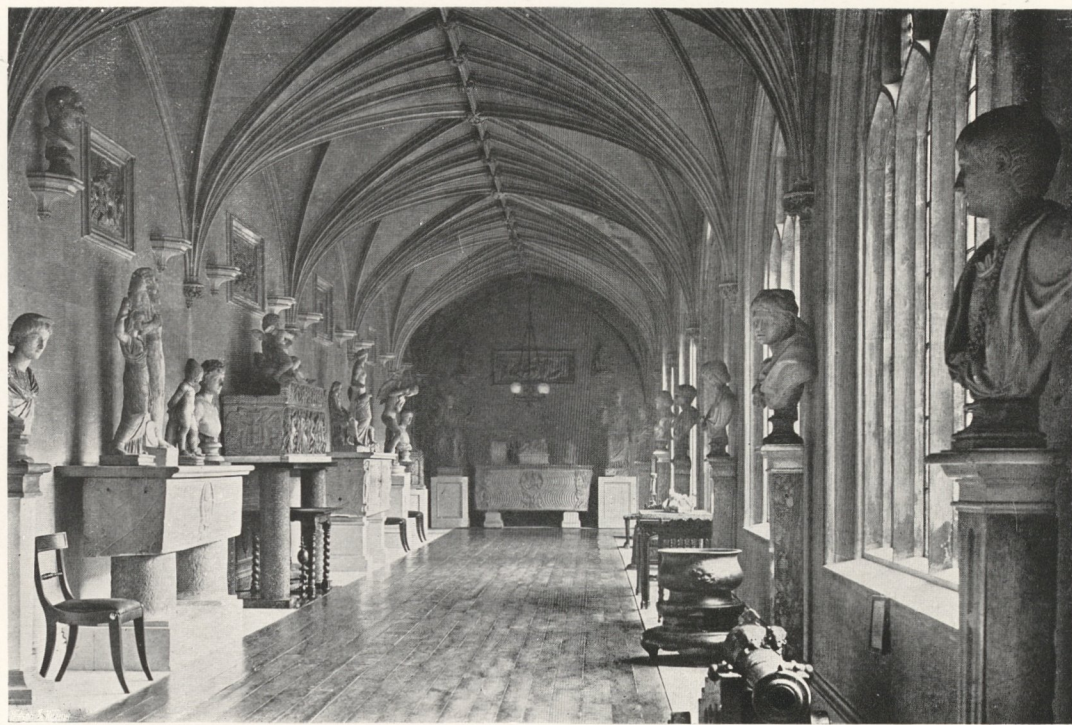
since added very much to the beauty and attraction of the place. The eighth Earl, a man of exalted taste and learning, was a collector of statuary, while his successor, who has been spoken of as the architect-earl, and inherited his father's taste as a virtuoso, was esteemed by Horace Walpole as "a second Inigo Jones."

It is not surprising, therefore, that the house presents considerable evidences of being an alteration and recasting of an older structure. The particular front—the south—designed by Jones is 188ft. long and contains in all seven rooms, of which the Double Cube Room, occupying the centre of the front, and so-called because its dimensions are 60ft. by 30ft., stands out pre-eminently as the work of the celebrated architect. It was specially designed to receive the famous Van Dycks which still adorn its walls. The harmony of the proportions and the richness and beauty of the architectural ornamentation are very impressive. On one side are three lofty windows, while the other three walls were panelled expressly to receive the Van Dycks, and it must be admitted that the framework is worthy of the pictures. The white walls with the gilded enrichment, throw into relief the glorious works which hang upon them, and the dark hues of the domed ceiling, which has an architectural design by Signor Tommaso, and panels taken from the legend of Perseus, have an excellent character, although some of its features seem too large for perfect unity of effect. The most famous Van Dyck contains portraits of Philip Earl of Pembroke and his Countess, and of eight members of their family. The picture of the three children of Charles I., which hangs over the mantel-piece, is a beautiful work. The

room has also an admirable Charles I. in armour, Henrietta Maria, the Duchess of Richmond and her dwarf, Mr. Gibson, Philip Earl of Pembroke and Penelope his wife, and several other splendid works.

Another notable room in the suite is the Corner Room, with a splendid architectural mantel, over which is enframed a fine portrait of Prince Rupert by Honthorst. The perfection of the classic architecture and glorious pictures has a wonderful effect in this delightful chamber. The Colonnade Room, with its long line of fluted Ionic columns, and its grand architectural character and delicate colouring, is entitled to much admiration. The walls are white with gilded enrichments, and the clever union of the mantel design with the main entablature will be noticed. Many fine pictures are here, including a notable Rubens and a remarkable Parmegiano. Not less noteworthy is the Single Cube Room, although inferior in design.

Changes have been made in these rooms from time to time, and not all their features can be ascribed either to Inigo Jones or to Webb. Some of our pictures illustrate the work which Wyatt executed at Wilton House. In the centre of the house is the reconstructed courtyard, which he planned with much skill, although the Gothic cloisters belong to a period before the Gothic revival, and when the spirit of mediæval architecture had not penetrated the character of design afresh. The vaulted corridors here contain a glorious collection of marbles of value and interest—many of them brought together by the eighth Earl, and including some from the collection of Thomas Earl of Arundel, and the Giustiniani and Mazarin collections.



THE EAST CLOISTER.