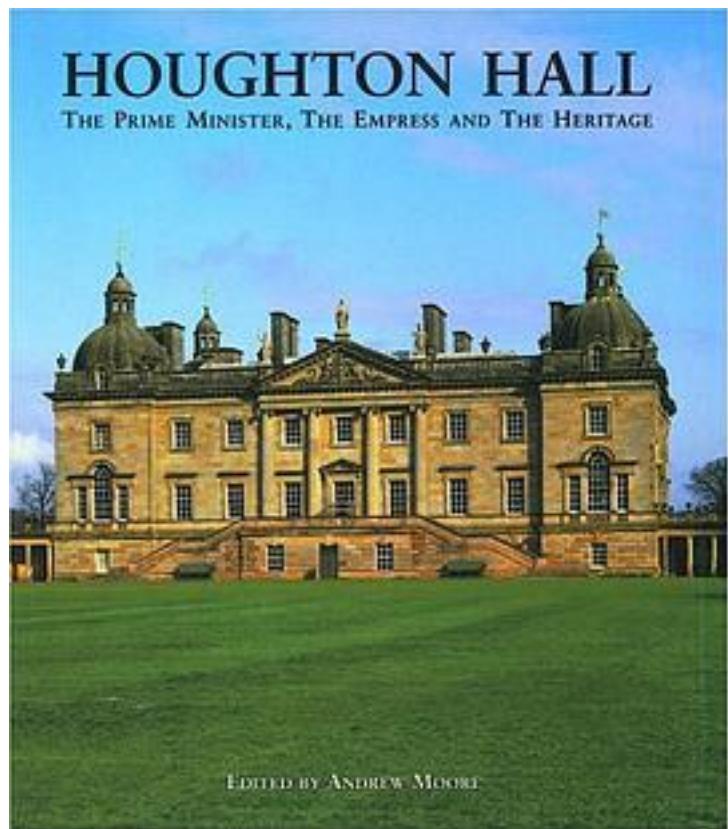


Houghton Hall



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During his lifetime, Sir Robert Walpole (1675 - 1745), first Prime Minister of England, amassed a magnificent collection of paintings and sculptures at Houghton Hall, the house he built in Norfolk. This book recreates the Houghton of Walpole's day, with many of its original paintings, drawings, and objets d'art, arranged room-by-room as Walpole and his friends and advisors, notably the great designer William Kent, would have shown them.

The innovative grandeur of the building and the splendour of its contents combined to make Houghton one of the premier houses of England, and thus it has remained. But a large part of Walpole's collection of paintings was sold for just 40,000 by his grandson George, Earl of Orford, to Catherine the Great, enlightened and acquisitive Empress of Russia's Golden Age. The majority remain in Russia, and only family portraits, furniture and sculpture are still to be seen at Houghton.

Essays by experts including John Harris and John Cornforth discuss the building and furnishing of Houghton, the Prime Minister as collector, the sale to Catherine the Great, and its legacy. This lavish book is the first to do justice to the rich and complex heritage of Houghton, one of England's greatest treasures.

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[Houghton Hall 下载链接1](#)

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