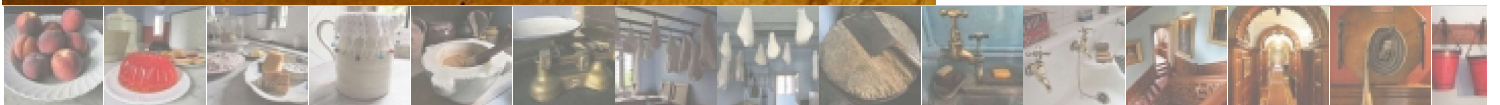




Es gab eine ganze Kofferkammer (Foto: Andreas Kuhr 2016)





- 1 **DOVER & HASTINGS**
- 2 **BIRLING GAP & SEVEN SISTERS**
- 3 **NYMANS & PETWORTH HOUSE**
- 4 **BOOMTOWN FAIR**
- 5 **STONEHENGE & WELLS**
- 6 **TINTAGEL & LEVANT MINE**
- 7 **LOST GARDENS OF HELIGAN**
- 8 **LANHYDROCK HOUSE**

LANHYDROCK HOUSE

[Lanhydrock House & Park](#) is known as the setting for film adaptations of Rosamunde Pilcher's novels ("Klippen der Liebe" (1999), "Im Zweifel für die Liebe" (2009)). But not us, because we only see such Schmonzetten as long as it takes to put them down. We ended up in this manor house because it was obvious (to our campsite Eden Valley Holiday Park), because the travel seduction pictures looked interesting and because we wanted to use our last day in southern England for an interesting sight.

PRETTY BUMPY STORY

CONSTRUCTION IN THE 17TH CENTURY

[Lanhydrock House](#) is located near Bodmin, about 14 km north of St Austell in the middle of Cornwall. The name Lanhydrock of the former monastery means Saint Hydroc, a Cornish-Celtic Christian missionary of the 5th century. After the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 under the church reformation of King [Henry VIII Tudor](#) (1491-1547), the estate came into private ownership of the Glyn family. In 1621, "the richest merchant in the West" (tin, wood, moneylending) Richard Robartes (1584-1634) from Truro acquired the Lanhydrock estate and had his family seat built there. His real name was Richard Roberts, but in 1624 he bought the Barony title of 1st Baron Robartes of Truro for £10,000 from the Duke of Buckingham, had his name changed to the more feudal Robartes and a noble family tree was added. Completed in 1626, the gray granite mansion is the current north wing of the complex in the Jacobean (Renaissance) style. His son [John Robartes](#) (1606-1685), Cornish politician in the English House of Lords, 1st Earl of Radnor, Viscount Bodmin, Privy Councillor, Lord Keeper of the Seal under [King Charles II.](#) (1630-1685)) had the house extended 10 years later in 1636-42 to a four-winged square and the gatehouse was built in 1651 (planned as a hunting lodge). In 1657 he had a private 340-hectare hunting game park fenced in (you don't treat yourself to anything else).





ady described as dilapidated and absolutely unfurnished. The Robartes must not have been very popular in the area, because the great-granddaughter of John Robartes and next heiress, Mary Vere Robartes (1696-1758), found that one of the worst tasks was to manage this unwelcome estate. In 1754 she even considered demolishing the dilapidated house and selling the land (estimated value £110,000). Her son George Hunt (1720-1798), who had inherited Lanhydrock in 1758, lived again in Lanhydrock House, which had been vacant since 1723. He had the east wing demolished in 1784 and the rest of the building renovated and refurnished in today's U-shape. In accordance with the prevailing clinker fashion, it was painted red.

In 1798, George Hunt's niece Anna Maria Hunt (1771-1861) inherited the house, but with £68,000 in debt (equivalent to about 6 million today), £100 in credit for running the house and 3 servants: an old housekeeper, her daughter and the gardener. Uncle George had bequeathed his fortune, shares in tin mines, copper and timber revenues and Lanhydrock furniture to other relatives. Although she lived mostly in Mayfair/London with her mother, the new owner reorganised the estate with the help of her estate managers William and Alfred Jenkins and gradually renovated the house. To protect the pictures, blinds were installed and heating stoves were to ensure the drainage of the building. Portland sandstone fashion now demanded a yellow coat of paint. By 1812, the debts had been paid off. From 1810 onwards, the fate of the Hunts took a tragic turn, 2 of their 3 sons and their husband Charles Agar died. For the next 50 years, Anna Maria Hunt remained unmarried and took care of Lanhydrock to position the estate in the best possible way for her only surviving son, Thomas James Agar (1808-1882). Thomas Agar took the name Lord Robartes, and in 1838 married the heiress of a large Cornish family, Juliana Pole-Carew. Thomas James also continued his mother's charity for the miners and was considered a "friend of the poor". From 1857-64 he had the house repaired, the brewery was converted into a billiard room, glass panes were inserted into the windows and the gardens were redesigned. Lord and Lady Robartes had a son, Thomas Charles (1844-1930), and lived in Lanhydrock.

FIRE & RECONSTRUCTION IN THE 19TH CENTURY

In 1881 the catastrophe happened: a major fire spread from the kitchen chimney over the entire south wing and half of the middle tract. Only the north wing with its 35-metre-long Long Gallery from the 17th century (with one of the longest stucco ceilings in England) and the front portal were spared. His son Thomas Charles, who had arrived from London the next day, telegraphed: "Gallery saved. Not quite as bad as feared." Although outwardly unharmed, his mother Lady Robartes died a few days later of smoke inhalation and shock. The following year, Lord Robartes also died of a "broken heart" over the loss of his wife. The masonry of the burned-out areas had withstood and could be used for the reconstruction, which was commissioned as early as 1881. The most modern equipment for the time was installed: fireproof ceilings, hot water supply, fire extinguishers in the house... However, the construction costs estimated by the architect Richard Coad of about 19400 pounds became 73000 in the end, which did not inspire the client.





1921) moved into the renovated Lanhydrock House with 80 servants. Between 1879 and 1895 they had 10 children, one of whom died in infancy. All other children grew up in Lanhydrock. Especially due to the turmoil of war at the beginning of the 20th century, there were no further descendants of the Agar-Robartes children. Because her admirers died in the war, only the eldest of the four daughters, Mary Vere (1879-1946), married, but remained childless and died in Lanhydrock. The 2nd child, the eldest son Thomas Charles Reginald, called Tommy, a politician and captain of the infantry (1880-1915) died in the 1st World War. He was shot in 1915 near Loos in Flanders. The 3rd child was Julia Caroline Everilda (1880-1969), called Eva, twin sister of Tommy. She remained single, as did her younger sister Edith Violet Kathleen (1888-1965), and they lived in Lanhydrock until her death. The 4th child, the second son Francis Gerald (1883-1966), became the 3rd Lord Robartes and 7th Viscount Clifden after the death of his father in 1930 and inherited Lanhydrock, where he lived with his two sisters. The 5th child, John Radnor (1884-85), died as an infant. Arthur Victor (1887-1974), the 6th child, became the 4th Lord Robartes and 8th Viscount Clifden after the death of his older brother Francis in 1966. He was married 2 times and had a daughter Rachel. As the last male Agar Robartes descendant, the titles died out with him. The 8th child, the 4th daughter Constance Margaret (1890-1936) became a nurse during the First World War and found her calling in it. She remained single and died at the age of 46. The 9th child, Cecil Edward (1892-1939) was also a soldier in the First World War, he died at the age of 47 in a nursing home in Plymouth. The youngest son Alexander George (1895-1930) was in the service of the English viceroy in India after the First World War, never got over his war trauma and committed suicide in 1930.

During World War II, Lanhydrock took in children who were brought to safety from air raids. In 1953, Francis Gerald Agar-Robares decided to transfer Lanhydrock House with 160 hectares of land to the [National Trust](#), on the condition that he could continue to live there. In 1954, the first 6 rooms were opened to the public. The last resident of the Agar-Robartes family in Lanhydrock was "Miss Eva" until 1969, who was 88 years old. Her grave is in the Lanhydrock cemetery. In the meantime, more than 200,000 visitors come to the park and the house with about 50 publicly accessible rooms every year.

THERE IS A LOT TO SEE...

From the park square we first go into the park, which is quite big. And there are so many people walking around everywhere? Saturday morning from 9 to 10 is the Lanhydrock Park Run. The National Trust now sits in the former hunting pavilion/gatehouse and collects the entrance fee (2016: £13.55, children half the price, free admission for NT members, like us for 10 days). Behind the gatehouse, a "front garden" opens up to the left and right of the gravel driveway to the manor house, which is suitable for Rosamunde Pilcher films, with rose borders (specialty: old English rose varieties) and boxwood clubs.

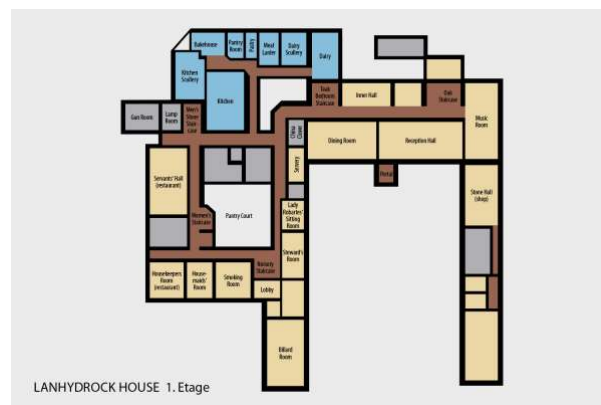
We first looked at the park, which leads in terraces to a hilltop behind the house. Below still a slic





In the three-winged manor house, you can visit about 50 rooms on 3 floors (from the ground floor to the attic chambers) (which takes a while): from the kitchen and utility rooms to the servants' rooms to the stately living rooms and bedrooms, salons and halls. The furnishings have been preserved or reconstructed as they were furnished and inhabited in the 19th and 20th centuries. Many rooms are furnished and vividly decorated as if the residents could come back right away. The technical facilities are high-tech from 1885 and later: fireproof ceilings, house telephone and fire extinguishing connections in the corridors, technical equipment in the kitchen, water-cooled sideboard.

IN THE HOUSE

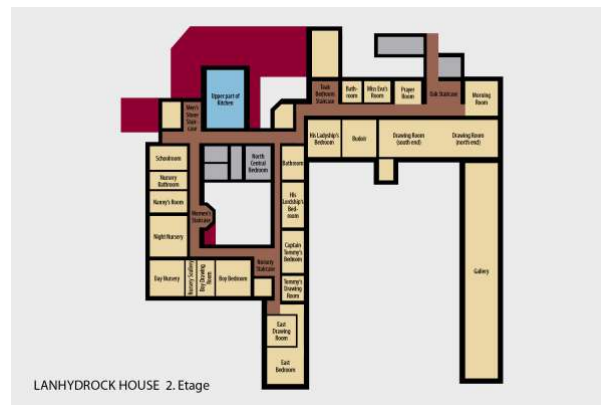


Lanhydrock House . 1st floor . Room plan

But first things first: Through the central entrance portal on the driveway, you enter the reception salon with a large fireplace. The seating area in front of it looks as if the Robartes have only gone out for a short time and are about to come back. But instead of the Robartes, you will meet the staff of the National Trust in period costumes, who keep a watchful eye on the visitors, but are also happy to answer questions. In the reception room, the National Trust reception steward greets you with the advice that bags and backpacks have to be put down. Photography (without flash) is allowed everywhere (which extended our visit to at least three times that time). The first central part of the house and the (left) south wing were burned out in 1881 and were rebuilt in the Victorian style by 1885. So did the inner hall, the teak staircase to the bedrooms and the dining room, which was not small (after all, they were parents with 9 children). The large representative staircases made of oak and teak and the wood panelling in rooms and corridors are also impressive. In the south wing there is also Lady Robartes' day room, the administrator's office and the not exactly cramped billiard hall (converted from the brewery in 1860). In the smoking room next to the billiard lobby lay a dead tiger (Nigel?) – smoking can be deadly – and in the back stood Tommy Agar-Robartes as a cardboard comrade (war can also be deadly). These lower salons were built until 1885 with fireproof ceilings with eye-catching geometric stucco work. In addition, there are the rooms of the housekeeper, the maid and the former servants' hall in a south-wing extension, where self-service is now the order of the day in the restaurant. The most exciting area on the ground floor, however, is the kitchen wing with the utility rooms in the rear annex. Ir



gill, which was rotated by the waste heat of the kitchen fireplace, are striking. There was also an in-house bakery and confectionery, a dairy kitchen, a butcher's shop and a cold room in which prepared food was kept fresh by cooling water in circumferential channels. Everywhere there are original furnishings, appliances, table decorations and fresh real food (e.g. tomatoes, eggs, cheese, bread, cakes, jelly) that are constantly being renewed.



Lanhydrock House . 2nd floor . Room plan

One of five stairs leads to the upper stately living floor. To the south, a little away from Lord and Lady, was the children's kingdom of the large family: bedroom and playroom with dolls (from Thuringia!), dollhouses and sewing machines for the girls and rocking horse, toy soldiers and slide projector for the boys (with hopefully X-rated pictures). The children are said to have been enthusiastic photographers. The nanny had her room in the children's kingdom. Next door was the baby room on the left and the school on the right. So she was surrounded by up to 9 children and certainly wasn't bored.

In the south and middle wings are the bedrooms and dressing rooms of the gentlemen: Two rooms in the south wing were furnished for Thomas Charles Reginald, alias Captain Tommy. It looks as if he had just come on leave from the front, but he did not return from Flanders in 1915. About 20,000 soldiers died at the Battle of Loos, Tommy Charles Agar-Robartes was hit by a German sniper and died the next day (April 30, 2015). His crocodile-skin toilet case was sent back, had been kept unopened for a long time and now lies on his bed. Speaking of laying on top: many museum beds, chairs and armchairs have something on them according to the tourist reservation style: no towels, but suitcases, bags, papers or mostly pine cones. On the one hand, there seems to be enough of them and on the other hand, they are butt-unfriendly enough not to sit on it and thus protect the valuable seating furniture from mean visitors' buttocks.

The bedrooms of the lordship and ladyship adjoin, large and furnished in detail, but not spectacular. The lord had just taken a foot bath in front of the fireplace, on the bed was certainly not the bathrobe, but rather something ceremonial. But I wouldn't have fallen asleep with the wallpaper pattern. The bathroom was also rather simple and functional: cast iron tub, fireplace & dressing table – that's it. The lady had a double bed (just in case), but there was only a hot water bottle in it... Next door, the Budoir, was also not as exciting as one imagines a "women's room" to be. Tea and cake dominated (but maybe the National Trust has also redecorated).





ing desks, sofas, tea tables and a hideous golden-legged sideboard with all kinds of knick-knacks, there is also a "fan curve" with pictures of the English royal family, including a Christmas greeting from 1954 from the new Queen Elizabeth II.

The figurative and ornamental stucco ceiling depicts biblical scenes, such as Adam and Eve in paradise, the expulsion, the construction of Noah's Ark... In between, there was also room for the incredibly diverse, detailed depiction of native and exotic plants and animals. All stucco ceilings of the house are whitewashed. This emphasizes the relief, forms a good contrast to the mostly dark wooden walls and would have been too heavy for the filigree ceiling suspension anyway with a colored painting (I read somewhere). The extensive old library with religious and classical books from the 17th century onwards is also impressive. Where the Robartes children used to bowl and the guests strolled, a large number of tourists now stroll through the state room. At the end of the gallery is the Steinway grand piano from 1926 (from Hamburg), which can be played by ambitious visitors.

In total, we spent about 3 hours in the house, were in almost all accessible rooms and took a lot of pictures. The visit to Lanhydrock Park & House was really very interesting and is highly recommended if you want to imagine the life of a wealthy Cornish noble family from the 16th to the 20th century. Background information on the family and house history, the respective residents and the rooms is advantageous.

We also found the restaurant run by the National Trust to be recommended (especially if you are very hungry, as we were after almost 5 hours of sightseeing).

CHURCH OF ST. HYDROC

But it wasn't quite over yet. Because the bell ringing in the church of [St. Hydroc](#) (right next to the manor house) announced a highlight that I had wanted to see for a long time: the special English church bell ringing.

St. Hydroc is an old monastery church from the middle of the 15th century (columns and arches in the central nave built around 1450, entrance portal with original woodwork from 1546) instead of an older chapel from the 11th century. An [Athelstan](#) bell (King of Wessex & England, 894-939) from the 10th century is preserved in the tower. It was consecrated in 1478 by [William Worcester](#) (Guilelmus Worcestrius, 1415-82) to Saint Hydroc, a Celtic early Christian hermit and missionary of the 5th century. In 1620, the church and the land came into the possession of the rich merchant Richard Robartes, who had his manor house built right next door. St. Hydroc was rebuilt and expanded to include the west tower and two side aisles. Like all the property, the church fell into disrepair until the end of the 18th century. The heiress Anna Maria Hunt and subsequent generations had the house and church repaired. In 1844, St. Hydroc's Church was used as a parish church at the expense of Thomas James Robartes, and by 1886-88 it was completely renovated (the alabaster altar and 8-bell ringing also date from this period). Public services are held, with Nigel Teagle (Lanhydrock's head gardener) ringing the bells.

Except for [change ringing](#): that is the responsibility of the Kunst-Glöckner-Verein. For this you





graphy (more would be stupid, because then the bellringer would wind himself up on the pull rope), with a bell chime in each case. When retreating, there is another bell strike and so on, so that a predetermined carillon is created. That's quite a bit of a draw, but it sounds great. After the game, the pull ropes are hooked onto the pull rope holder and pulled upwards so that not every fool can chirp.

This also heralded our journey home: 500 km to Dover, half the night (late) on rough seas to Dunkirk, a bit of car rubber on the beach of Sint Idesbald and 750 km home – then we were ready for a holiday again.

■ 2016 SOUTHERN ENGLAND, ARCHITECTURE 📍 2016, Agar-Robartes, Architecture, Camping, Cornwall, Garden, Manor House, Lanhydrock House and Park, Park, Travel, Southern England, Viscount Clifden

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