



At Home with the Soanes: Upstairs, Downstairs in 19th Century London

Susan Palmer

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A look at the day-to-day life once lived inside the home of celebrated British architect John Soane, now a museum that attracts 100,000 visitors a year

The product of many years' research by Susan Palmer, archivist to Sir John Soane's Museum, *At Home with the Soanes* paints a detailed picture of the social and domestic life at Nos 12 & 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, in the early 19th century—how the buildings were heated, the servants' daily duties, what meals were cooked, wines purchased and teas drunk—even the fate of the family's pet dog. Family life with two children—in many ways as difficult as modern offspring—is brought vividly to life and the below-stairs relationships of the servants are poignantly recorded. The evening social whirl of visits to theaters and supper parties is chronicled, and the description of seaside holidays on the Kentish coast, when Margate was in vogue, portrays the social niceties of promenades and dances. Originally published in 1997, *At Home with the Soanes* has been updated to include the latest discoveries that have come to light during restoration of the house and redesigned to include more than 100 illustrations, mostly in color, from the extensive Museum archive, including photographs of the newly-recreated "lost" private apartments. *At Home with the Soanes* offers a fascinating insight into this London family's life, both upstairs and downstairs.

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