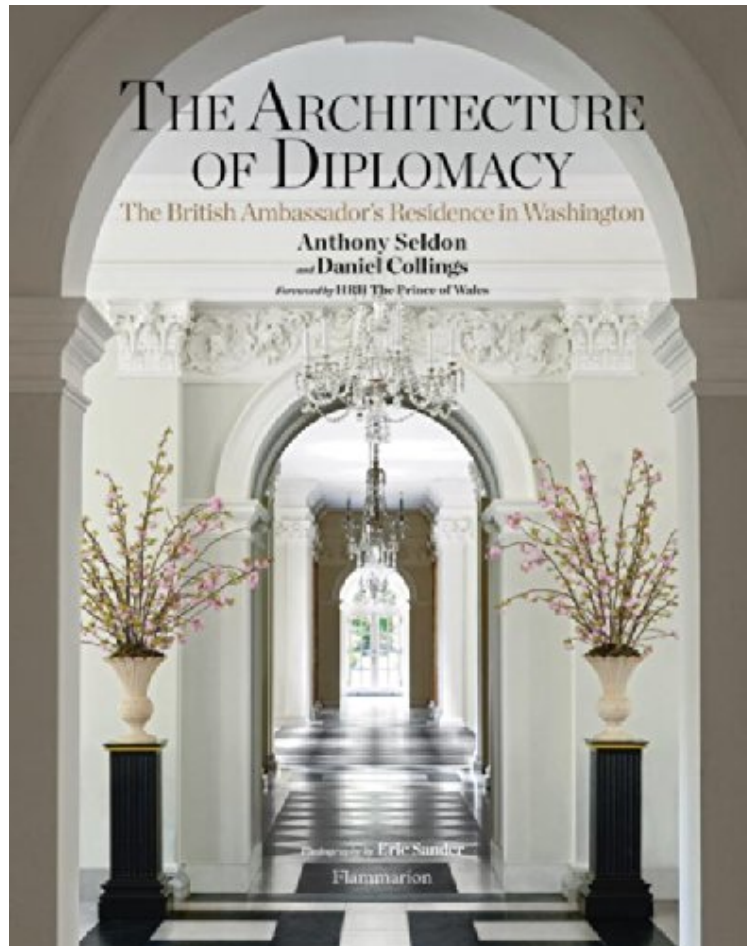


# The Architecture of Diplomacy: The British Ambassador's Residence in Washington

*Anthony Seldon, Daniel Collings*

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**Anthony Seldon, Daniel Collings : The Architecture of Diplomacy: The British Ambassador's Residence in Washington** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Architecture of Diplomacy: The British Ambassador's Residence in Washington:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. It's usually easier to criticize a book than to write one By David R. G. I'm not an unalloyed fan of the British Embassy residence. To me the bulky Queen Anne wings do not sit entirely happily with the lovely shadings, proportions and detailing of the portico. And if I lived in the place, the almost complete absence of any blues and greens in the main areas would leave something to be desired. But writers Seldon and Collings, with photographer Sander, have given us a book to treasure which has already received criticisms ranging from off-the-mark to downright harsh from other reviewers. I concur with certain points raised. More attention is needed to the backstage work which enables events and keeps the house in order. The font size for the notes is too

small, and possibly there should have been more of them. But contrary to some reviews, the historical background of the decision to build the Embassy is thoroughly described in an enjoyable and elegant style. How many of us had any idea that to qualified observers at the time, the U.S. and Britain were not far from war in 1928? Likewise the book takes us gracefully down the years perceptively noting how political climate changes affected activities within Embassy premises. It certainly is not good that the title was not attributed to an earlier book, but we don't know the circumstances. The title could have been determined by the publisher after the authors submitted the final manuscript. One reviewer quibbles droningly: the color photographs are "sterile and lifeless", interspersing them with text yields a confusing hodge-podge, and too many show orchids. Yet to have all the text in one section and photos in another would yield a page-flipping slog. The narrative is easy to follow if the reader pays the slightest attention. And one surely doesn't expect the photographer to have been permitted to take lots of photos of actual events, which in any case would leave the book open to charges of portraying visitors more than the building and gardens. As for the orchids, they are exquisite and for some of us it is a delight to imagine savoring them within the atmosphere and doings of the residence. Illustrations naturally take up more space than do words, but often they are worth it. And again, the historical context of the orchid collection, going back centuries, is fully explained. I haven't met the authors and likely never will, but their immense efforts in creating this book should be applauded. While not flawless, it is an exceptional and delectable account of the Embassy residence and its impacts on U.K./U.S. diplomacy. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Jack Campise Love it 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful book about Lutyens' only building in America, its history, architecture, and gardens. Superb photographs. By Tillie Traveling This book is about the only building designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens in the United States. Completed in 1930, it is a neoclassical English country house influenced by American Colonial architecture. The gardens are in the English style as well. In 1939, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth hosted a garden party there during their visit to America and Canada (the first ever by a reigning British monarch). Specially commissioned photographs of house and garden as well as the history from Presidents Roosevelt to Clinton and Prime Ministers Churchill to Cameron make this a book I couldn't put down.

The Residence is a beautiful place ... and your ambassadors use it well. It makes a big difference if you have an Embassy that is some kind of artistic expression, which therefore recalls the country's eminence. Dr Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State, 1973-7 Since opening its doors in 1930, the British Ambassadors Residence has been considered the premier diplomatic address in Washington. A neoclassical English country house with influences from American Colonial architecture, the Residence was built when the great British architect Sir Edwin Lutyens was at the very peak of his powers. His only building in the United States, its majestic interiors, exteriors and gardens in the English style have been delighting Washington's social and political elite for over eighty years. In this book, Anthony Seldon and Daniel Collings explore both the genius of Lutyens' design for the Residence and the rich history of Anglo-American relations that has unfolded within its walls. The house and its extensive gardens are lavishly illustrated by specially commissioned photography, while striking images from the archives bring to life important events from its past. In 1939, the Residence bore witness to the first ever visit by a British monarch to the United States. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth hosted a garden party there, Washington's social event of the decade, which was attended by the great and powerful of American politics, finance and high society. Through such prized events, and the skill of successive ambassadors, the building helped create and then embody the special relationship between Great Britain and America. From Winston Churchill's rambunctious visits during the Second World War to the dark days of Vietnam and the rejuvenation of the relationship during the Thatcher-Reagan period, the authors take the reader behind the elegant gates on Massachusetts Avenue deep into the corridors of power. This book offers an intimate and fascinating history, featuring previously untold stories of visiting royalty, presidents, prime ministers, and even the Beatles.

photography that lavishly illustrates the house and its extensive gardens, this book leads the reader behind the elegant gates on Massachusetts Avenue deep into the corridors of power. The book combines a masterful account of the history of the house and gardens with previously untold stories of visiting royalty, presidents, prime ministers and celebrities, to show why this Residence, its architecture and gardens occupy such a special place in the diplomatic history of the United Kingdom in the United States. I've been fortunate to visit the Embassy and it is as spectacular as this sublime book shows. If you're a Brit in America, or an American in the UK, this book should have a place in your collection. Politics and Style Blog "With a forward by HRH The Prince of Wales, the book not only delves into the great architecture and work behind Lutyens' design but also the untold stories of important events from the past and people who visited throughout history." -Veranda With many dozens of historical photos of politicians and statesmen, as well as beautiful contemporary shots of the building's interior, exterior, and gardens, this is the book to whet the whimsies of anyone who cares a whit about history, architecture, Anglo-American diplomacy, gardening, and exactly how to do a perfect coffee-table book. Foreword s Written by historian Anthony Seldon and Daniel Collings with photographs by Eric Sander, the book offers a fascinating history of the home and an in-depth look at how Lutyens' plan took shape. Home Design "...an astonishing new book that has recently been released...the book contains

inspirational images that won't disappoint: definitely add this tome to your design library!" -ArchitectDesign.blogspot  
full of lavishly produced photographs of the building, its private spaces and its English gardens Dallas NewsThe  
lavishly illustrated Architecture of Diplomacy is both a design and historical delight -ArrayAbout the  
AuthorANTHONY SELDON is a historian and one of Britains most distinguished political commentators. His  
published work includes the leading biographies of Gordon Brown, Tony Blair and John Major.DANIEL COLLINGS  
is a political historian and director of U.S. research for Margaret Thatchers authorized biography. He is based in  
Washington.ERIC SANDERs photographs have been published in numerous magazines worldwide, including  
Smithsonian, Life, Time, Newsweek, Le Figaro Magazine and Point de Vue, and in more than fifteen books.