

The Furniture History Society

# Newsletter 226

May 2022



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# A Neoclassical Epilogue at Windsor



Figure 1. Charles Wild (1781–1835), *Windsor Castle: the Upper Ward*, c. 1819, pencil, watercolour and bodycolour, 19.6 × 25.1 cm, RCIN 922096.

In 1997 in *Furniture History*, Hugh Roberts recorded ‘A Neoclassical Episode at Windsor’ in which he described the ‘programme of cautious modernization’ carried out by George III (1738–1820) and Queen Charlotte (1744–1818) from the mid-1770s, following the decision to restore Windsor Castle as the main royal residence outside London (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> Virtually ignored since the time of Queen Anne (1665–1714), the castle inherited by the king and queen was judged wholly ill-suited

and uninhabitable; the state apartments created under Hugh May (1621–84) for Charles II (1630–85) were, by now, over a century old, the domestic lodgings were cold and unfashionable, and a number of rooms were occupied as grace-and-favour apartments. The king’s architect, William Chambers (1723–96), was enlisted to supervise the makeover but, being engaged with refurbishments at Somerset House, he entrusted much of the work to his pupil and assistant, John Yenn (1750–1821).<sup>2</sup> Improvements to the state



apartments were chiefly conservative in nature, retaining much of the character of Charles II's building, including painted ceilings by Antonio Verrio (c. 1636–1707) and spectacular woodcarvings by Grinling Gibbons (1648–1721), which sat alongside Yenn's neoclassical additions.<sup>3</sup> The work largely comprised the hanging of rich silks in place of panelling and the introduction of smart neoclassical furnishings, including glass chandeliers, pier glasses and refined seat furniture, occasionally combined with furniture from past reigns. Beyond the state apartments, domestic lodgings were provided for the royal family. Yet more significant changes took place in the early 1790s, with the creation of a music room and drawing room for Queen Charlotte in the north-east of the castle, of which Yenn's designs are the main surviving record.<sup>4</sup>

However short-lived this episode would ultimately prove, a sizable quantity of furnishings connected to the work have been identified, and continue to surface. The exhibition *George III and Queen Charlotte: Patronage, Collecting and Court Taste*, held at the Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, in 2004–5, reassessed the king and queen's patronage of the arts, including new discoveries linked to Yenn's work.<sup>5</sup> Most recently, Lucy Wood traced a set of knotted-work silk bed hangings and chair covers, along with a set of wall hangings, probably intended for use in the king's private apartments.<sup>6</sup> The present note introduces some further modest findings associated with the campaign.

The first concerns two elegant mahogany armchairs which originally formed part of a wider suite (or suites)



Figure 2. Attributed to Robert Campbell (active 1754–93), armchair, c. 1780, mahogany, RCIN 39466.

made for the state apartments (RCINs 39466 and 72455) (Figures 2a and b). Pairs of the model are shown in the King's Closet, King's Drawing Room, Old State Bedchamber, and the Queen's Audience Chamber, in illustrations to William Henry Pyne's *History of the Royal Residences*



Figure 3. Charles Wild (1781–1835), *Windsor Castle: the King's Closet*, c. 1816, pencil, watercolour and bodycolour, 20.0 × 25.1 cm, RCIN 922104.

(1819), but there may have been more (Figure 3). They were supplied *en suite* with corresponding stools, large numbers of which survive and feature minor variations in design, including combinations of fluted and panelled legs, and guttae and spade feet. The illustrated armchair formerly had *guttae* feet which have since been reduced in height. In design, the armchairs are more restrained, less grandly decorated versions of the armchairs supplied to Queen Charlotte's State Bedchamber, along with ten stools and a magnificent state bed (RCINs 1141, 1142 and 1470) (Figure 4). One of these armchairs is inscribed with the name of the upholsterer James M. Brown and



Figure 4. Attributed to Robert Campbell (active 1754–93), *armchair*, c. 1780, gilded beechwood, upholstered in silk and wool, RCIN 1141.



the date 21 July 1780, and it is likely that the mahogany suite was supplied at a similar date.

Documentation for the period is frustratingly sparse but, like other furniture from the campaign, the suite is probably the work of the London upholsterer and cabinet maker Robert Campbell (active 1754–93), whom Pyne credited as the maker of the king's new throne, and was variously styled as 'Upholsterer to their Majesties' and 'Cabinet maker to the Prince of Wales' (later George IV(1762–1830)). Campbell's relationship with the Prince included, in

1789, providing an estimate for furniture at Carlton House for £10,500 and famously involved upholstering the chinoiserie seat furniture made for the Chinese Drawing Room.<sup>7</sup> Between 1780 and 1784, trade directories list a Robert Campbell operating in Windsor, suggesting perhaps that the firm took on additional premises during the commission.<sup>8</sup>

Campbell was probably also the author of the suite of painted armchairs and stools illustrated in Charles Wild's (1781–1835) view of the Queen's Drawing Room (Figure 5). An example of each can almost certainly be identified in the



Figure 5. Charles Wild (1781–1835), *Windsor Castle: the Queen's Drawing Room*, c. 1816, pencil, watercolour and bodycolour, 20.0 × 25.3 cm, RCIN 922102.

private apartments at Kensington Palace, and are currently not accessible (RCINs 20605 and 72509). The armchair, which has scrolled arms and finely fluted legs topped by turned *paterae*, shares characteristics with other seat furniture from the campaign. Wild's view shows that the suite was originally vibrantly painted, with garlands of flowers decorating the seat rails, reflecting the queen's taste for painted interiors and furnishings, as well as her love of botany. Photographic records show that the armchair has since been overpainted, but the stool may retain much of its original decoration. Notably, the stiff-leaf design at the top of the legs echoes the carved and gilded ornament on the seat furniture supplied to the queen's neighbouring bedchamber (see Figure 4).

Wild's view also shows that the seat covers were similarly decorated in a botanical theme; the king's new throne canopy featured floral embroidered garter blue hangings, designed by the celebrated painter Mary Moser (1744–1819) and worked by Nancy Pawsey (d. 1814). Miss Pawsey and her 'Royal School for Embroidering Females' – a charitable school for disadvantaged women – were also responsible for embroidering the queen's sumptuous bed and accompanying seat furniture and, given the queen's enthusiastic patronage, this work may well have extended to the suite in question.<sup>9</sup>

Painted seat covers were similarly employed in the royal residences, their creation being a favoured pastime of the princesses. At the Queen's House (now Buckingham Palace) the Saloon was furnished with nine sofas by the carver and gilder William Adair, with white

cotton velvet covers with flower painting by Princess Elizabeth (1770–1840) (RCIN 2535). Princess Charlotte (1766–1828) was likewise a gifted artist and in 1802 wrote to the king enquiring: 'I hope that Your Majesty will allow one to draw you some Chairs with a Pen on Velvet to be placed in [your] new Palace [The Castellated Palace, Kew] and that you will be so gracious as to decide whether they shall be flowers or landscapes'.<sup>10</sup> Physical assessment of the suite will perhaps reveal more.

Lastly, Wild's view of the Queen's Presence Chamber illustrates a pair of substantial pier glasses which, along with a matching pair in the adjoining Audience Chamber, remain *in situ* and stylistically must also date from the 1780s–90s (RCIN 35261) (Figure 6). Divided into fourteen mirrored panels by gilded mouldings, their original appearance is only superficially disguised by later gilded crests, perhaps added during William IV's reign (1830–37). A design by Yenn for a set of four gilded oval mirrors made for the King's Dressing Room and King's Closet (two of which are visible in Fig. 3) bears instructions that Campbell was to provide the glass and the talented carver Richard Lawrence (active 1732–95) – a pupil of Sefferin Alken – was to execute the frames 'in the very best Manner'. Since 1760, Lawrence had been charged with the care of Gibbons' carvings in the state apartments and was later employed at the Queen's Lodge – a modest residence to the south of the castle – to carve stars and garters for the Portland stone portico.<sup>11</sup> It is not inconceivable that both Campbell's and Lawrence's roles may have extended to the mirrors in question.



Figure 6. Charles Wild (1781–1835), *Windsor Castle: the Queen's Presence Chamber*, c. 1817, pencil, watercolour and bodycolour, 20.4 × 25.1 cm, RCIN 922099.

The mirrors aside, Wild's view reveals little in the way of wider modernisation; the large set of crimson upholstered stools probably date from the reign of George II (1727–60), and it has been suggested that the two mahogany desks were formerly in George III's library at Buckingham House. The small seventeenth-century metal marquetry writing table displays the French royal flag, presented annually to the monarch by the Dukes of Marlborough on the anniversary of the Battle of Blenheim (RCIN 35489).

Following Chambers' death in 1796, and with the king's growing interest in a gothic makeover for Windsor, this classical campaign was overshadowed by the work of Chambers' successor, James Wyatt (1746–1813), and more totally swept aside in subsequent reigns by Jeffry Wyattville (1766–1840). The discovery of further reminders of this short-lived episode is therefore particularly welcome.

MICHAEL SHRIVE

## Acknowledgments

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## Photographic Acknowledgement

All illustrations: Royal Collection Trust /  
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- 1 Hugh Roberts, 'A Neoclassical Episode at Windsor', *Furniture History* 33 (1997), pp. 177–87.
- 2 Hugh Roberts, 'Sir William Chambers and Furniture', in John Harris and Michael Snodin, eds, *Sir William Chambers: Architect to George III* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 173.
- 3 H. M. Colvin, ed., *The History of the King's Works*, vol. 6 (London: HMSO, 1973), pp. 373–75.
- 4 Hugh Roberts, *For the King's Pleasure: The Furnishing and Decoration of George IV's Apartments at Windsor Castle* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2001), pp. 3–9.
- 5 Jane Roberts, ed., *George III and Queen Charlotte: Patronage, Collecting and Court Taste* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2004), pp. 133–44.
- 6 Lucy Wood, 'The Most Splendid Bed in the Universe? Knotted-Work Hangings Made for George III', *Furniture History* 56 (2020), pp. 237–62.
- 7 Geoffrey de Bellaigue, 'The Furnishings of the Chinese Drawing Room, Carlton House', *Burlington Magazine* 109, no. 774 (September 1967), p. 520.
- 8 Geoffrey Beard and Christopher Gilbert, eds, *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers, 1660–1840* (Leeds: W. S. Maney and Son, 1986), pp. 140–223.
- 9 See also, Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).
- 10 Letter from Charlotte, Princess Royal, Duchess of Württemberg, to George III [...], 22 November 1802, GEO/MAIN/51689-90.
- 11 H. M. Colvin, ed., *The History of the King's Works*, vol. 5 (London: HMSO, 1973), p. 340.



Scholarships Awarded for the 'Wonder of Wood' Conference, Winterthur Museum.

Two members of the Early Career Development Group were awarded FHS scholarships to attend the international conference, 'The Wonder of Wood: Decorative Inlay and Marquetry in Europe and America, 1600–1900' at Winterthur, Delaware, in late April. Amy Lim, who is in the final stages of completing her PhD on 'Art and Aristocracy in Late Stuart England' at the University of Oxford, and Philip Ross-Burrows, a furniture restorer/conservator working from his own studio in Guernsey, were selected from a group of highly qualified young professionals and scholars engaged in the fields of furniture history, cabinet making and furniture conservation, who submitted applications to attend the conference. They will each receive a grant of £1,500 from the Tom Ingram Fund to cover registration fees and help with travel expenses. Amy and Philip will report on their experiences at the conference in the August issue of the *Newsletter*.

The Grants Committee, which was charged with evaluating applications for Europe and the UK, also recommended four additional applicants for bursaries offered by the conference organisers. These include FHS member and ECD

scholar Lindsay MacNaughton, who currently teaches on the Decorative Arts and Historic Interiors course at the University of Buckingham, Antonia Gerstner and Kirsten Friese, both engaged in the study of furniture conservation and marquetry at the University of Potsdam, and Nele Luttmann, who is completing her PhD on German architects in eighteenth-century Britain and Ireland at Trinity College, Dublin, and was a speaker at the ECD Research Symposium last November.

The three-day conference hosted by the Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library and the Philadelphia Museum of Art brought together the combined expertise of twenty-three exceptional scholars including academics, conservators, artists and craftsmen drawn from museums and private practice in America and abroad. Notable among the roster of distinguished speakers from the Furniture History Society were the marquetry expert Yannick Chastang and Council member and Wallace Collection conservator Jurgen Huber.

# BIFMO

## SAVE THE DATE: BIFMO-FHS Online Summer Course

### From Country Landowner to Merchant Prince: Furnishing the British Country, 1700–1900

THREE SESSIONS: 12 NOON TO 2.00 PM BST  
(8.00 AM TO 10.00 AM EST)

14, 15 AND 16 JUNE 2022

This June, on three consecutive days, BIFMO will be running an online course to consider the creation and furnishing of interiors in the British country house between 1700 and 1900. It will cover a period when the role of the country house shifted from a space of political and economic importance to one more closely associated with pleasure and entertainment. Each day, during a two-hour session, we will look at a stylistic period reflected in the interiors of specific country houses. All three sessions will begin with an overview given by Dr Megan Aldrich and followed by case studies of house interiors delivered by furniture and decorative arts specialists. Our first session will look at contrasting styles during the eighteenth century with reference to Temple Newsam and Holkham Hall. The second session will move onto neoclassicism and historicism. The third and final session will look at the innovation of styles in nineteenth-century interiors. Each day will end with a brief Q&A session.

For those who wish to delve further into these themes, there is an opportunity to join a smaller online discussion group straight after the session each day, where



Interior of Holkham Hall, Norfolk. Reproduced by permission of the Earl of Leicester and the Trustees of the Holkham Estate.

participants will have the opportunity to raise more in-depth questions about the period and discuss the case studies with experts. Participation in these smaller groups will incur an additional charge and places will be extremely limited and so early booking is recommended.

Tickets may be bought for individual days, but a discount will be available when booking all three sessions. Apart from the more intimate discussion groups, we intend to record most, if not all, of these sessions and hope to make the recordings available to ticketholders. All tickets will be sold through Eventbrite and will be available from the beginning of April.

A full programme will be available shortly on the FHS website and will be announced on the FHS Instagram account.

## The Mysterious Caesar Crouch

Beard and Gilbert noted in the *Dictionary* that Caesar Crouch subscribed to Chippendale's *Director* in 1754, but they were unable to identify his occupation or whether he had any connection to the furniture trade.<sup>1</sup> Information has finally been unearthed to reveal that he was indeed a furniture maker and evidently rubbed shoulders with several prominent men in the industry.

Caesar Crouch was born on 17 November 1707 in Ringwood, Hampshire.<sup>2</sup> His father (also Caesar) was 'a scholar from Eton, 1659', who attended King's College, Cambridge, earning a BA and an MA, later becoming a Fellow of the University and a practising minister.<sup>3</sup> On 1 May 1722 his son was apprenticed for seven years to John Belchier at a premium of £40, more than double the average amount at the time, which was £15. Apprenticeship premiums were usually determined by the prestige of the master, the quality of the training offered and, of course, the potential future profitability of being associated with a prominent tradesman. It would be expected that someone in Caesar Crouch's shoes would have taken full advantage of the opportunities that awaited him after his privileged apprenticeship; that he would have worked the mandatory two years as a journeyman before his master gave consent to the Joiners' Company for him to become a London freeman. This was, however, not the case; it was twenty-three years later when Belchier gave consent for his apprentice to be made free.<sup>4</sup>

As the son of a Cambridge academic and having John Belchier's name behind him, Crouch would presumably have had the social status, occupational skills and trade connections to set up his own competitive business. Why then did he fail to become free for over two decades? To be a freeman of London was to be an economically and politically active citizen; one needed to be a member of a London guild in order to vote and operate an independent business.<sup>5</sup> These rules were mostly adhered to in the Joiners' Company until 1725, when they lost a legal action to ensure that only freeman of London could practice their trade,<sup>6</sup> but many tradesmen of Crouch's echelon continued to adhere to guild regulations, especially if they wanted to exercise their right to vote.

Neither parish nor tax records have been found to determine his whereabouts from the time he was indentured to John Belchier until he became a freeman in 1752. Did he go abroad, or work as a journeyman all that time? Could it have been financial constraints that deterred him? If he simply defied diminishing City regulations and operated an independent business, it is most unusual that there is absolutely no trace of him over such a protracted period of time.

Whatever the circumstances, he first appeared 'on the radar' a month after Belchier gave his consent. On 13 November 1752 he married Frances Humphreys,<sup>7</sup> the widow of John Humphreys, an upholsterer on Ludgate Hill who had died in 1750.<sup>8</sup> The couple settled into their home together at the Black Swan in St Paul's Churchyard in 1753.<sup>9</sup>





An engraved invitation inscribed 'T. Chippendale Inv M. DARLY Sculp Northum'd Court Strand, c. 1755 © Chippendale Society. Reproduced by permission of The Chippendale Society.

In 1755 Crouch helped to organise an appeal to raise funds to replace tools belonging to Thomas Chippendale's journeymen destroyed by a fire in his St Martin's Lane workshop. Crouch hosted this event at his home. How he became involved in this appeal and what his interests were in Chippendale's workshop are unknown, but it seems likely he was somehow acquainted with the now famous cabinet maker, especially when considering that Matthew Darly engraved an invitation for the occasion. Is it fanciful to imagine he had some type of business relationship with Chippendale?

So, where was Caesar Crouch all those years and what was he doing? His case study is a perplexing one because he simply does not fit the mould! He died when he was nearly fifty-six and was buried at the parish church, St Gregory by St Paul, on 19 October 1763.<sup>10</sup>

Laurie Lindey  
BIFMO Managing Editor

- 1 Geoffrey Beard and Christopher Gilbert, *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers 1660–1840* (Leeds: W. S. Maney and Son, 1986), p. 214.
- 2 *England, Select Births and Christenings: Ringwood, Hampshire, 17 November 1707.*
- 3 J. A. Venn, comp. *Alumni Cantabrigienses*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1922–1954.
- 4 London Metropolitan Archive (LMA), Joiners' Company freedom admission, ref: COL/CHD/FR/02/0770-0-777.
- 5 Ian Anders Gadd and Patrick Wallis, eds., *Guilds, Society and Economy, 1450–1800* (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2002), p. 4.
- 6 Patricia Kirkham, *The London Furniture Trade, 1700–1870* (Leeds: W. S. Maney and Son, 1988), p. 142.
- 7 LMA, England marriage records, St Anne and St Agnes, City of London, 13 November 1752, ref. P69/ANA/A/006/MS06766/001.
- 8 LMA, England burial records, St Botolph, Aldgate, City of London, London, 16 September 1750.
- 9 LMA, land tax records, Castle Baynard, City of London, 1753.
- 10 LMA, England burial records, St Gregory by St Paul, 19 October 1763, ref. P69/GRE/A/0071/MS18935.

## New Discovery in Taprell Family History

The firm of Taprell, Holland and Sons was established c. 1815 by Stephen Taprell and William Holland. They received commissions from at least eight London clubs and All Soul's College, Oxford, in addition to Arundel Castle and Ickworth. After Taprell's retirement in 1843 the firm became Holland and Sons, the world-renowned mid-to-late nineteenth-century cabinet making and upholstery firm.

Whilst updating a BIFMO biography on William Quint of Ashburton, Devon (1778–93), I discovered that Quint apprenticed Stephen Taprell on 17 July 1789. Bells rang – could this be the same Stephen Taprell who went into partnership with William Holland in the early nineteenth century?

Although information about Taprell's parents could not be traced, the link with Ashburton in Devon has been confirmed by his will: Taprell bequeathed an annuity to his widowed sister, Elizabeth Bowden of Ashburton. Another tidbit of evidence found was in land tax records. In 1797 Stephen Taprell rented a property in Ashburton from a Miss Dunning (although there was at least one other man of the same name in that part of Devon at the time).

In addition to Taprell's apprenticeship, I also found that in May 1805 he married Hannah Holland at St James's Piccadilly, with William Holland in attendance. Hannah died quite young, at twenty-four, shortly after giving birth to their son, Stephen Junior, on 15 March. She was buried on 30 March 1806.



Trade stamp on the underside of an amboyna centre table made by Taprell, Holland & Son. © Wick Antiques Ltd.

Stephen Taprell died aged seventy-three in 1847. A man of considerable substance, his estate was valued at £3,157. He owned properties in London, including 29 Hertford Street, Mayfair, 24 Chester Terrace overlooking Regent's Park, and several houses in Maida Vale. He also had properties in Tunbridge Wells. Evidently he was a most generous man: in addition to the annuity he established for his widowed sister, Elizabeth Bowden, members of the Holland family were also beneficiaries of his estate.

Much revered by the Holland family, Taprell was buried in the family vault in Kensal Rise Cemetery. Another indication of family's affection was demonstrated by James Holland, William's second son; he named his first two sons, Stephen Taprell and George Taprell (Holland).

CLARISSA WARD  
*BIFMO Nineteenth Century Editor*

# FHS Events Calendar

\* Here you can find **all currently scheduled** forthcoming FHS Events; please refer to subsequent pages for more information. Additional events may still be added.

## 2022

7/8 May	BIFMO Online Presentation on Chinese material in British collections
13–15 MAY	UK Study Weekend to North Wales (postponed from 2020)
25 MAY	FHS Online Midweek Seminar 'New Perspectives: Furniture on Display at the Burrell Collection'
8 JUNE	Day Visit to Boughton House
14–16 JUNE	BIFMO: Summer Course from 12.00 to 2.00 pm BST
21 JUNE	Day Visit to The Cosmic House
7 JULY	Day Visit to Chequers
26 JULY	Day Visit to Longford Castle
August	No visits
23–25 September	UK Study weekend to Cardiff (postponed from 2020)
14–16 October	Overseas Study Weekend to Tuscany
7 NOVEMBER	Annual Lecture
26 NOVEMBER	AGM and Talks



# FHS Events

## Online Events

We are continuing our popular programme of online lectures and events, though less frequently. Online events are arranged at shorter notice, so we are unable to advertise them all in the Newsletter owing to publication lead-in times. However, we will email links to free lectures and other online events to all members about a week in advance. If you would like to make a diary note of forthcoming online events, please keep checking the FHS website where there is an up-to-date list and follow us on Instagram or Facebook (@furniturehistorysociety).

Online lectures are on Sunday evenings, usually at 7.00 pm UK time, and our occasional seminar-format events are on mid-week evenings, usually Wednesdays at 6.00 pm UK time.

Most online events are free to members, but there may be some for which we need to charge a small fee to cover our costs. Non-members can join for a small fee. BIFMO study courses will charge a fee for both members and non-members.

Recordings of many of our past lectures are freely available to members on the Events page of the FHS website. If you need a reminder of the login details, please email the Events Secretary, Beatrice Goddard (events@furniturehistorysociety.org).

If you have any enquiries, or suggestions for future speakers or topics, please email

events@furniturehistorysociety.org or telephone 0777 5907390.

## Future Society Events

### *Bookings*

For places on visits please apply by email or letter to the Events Secretary, Beatrice Goddard, providing separate cheques for each event or indicating that you wish to pay by card or online. The email address is events@furniturehistorysociety.org, or telephone 0777 5907390. For online payments you will be provided with a link to a payment page and an event reference. Where possible, joining instructions will be dispatched by email, so please remember to provide your email address if you have one.

Applications should only be made by members who intend to take part in the whole programme. No one can apply for more than one place unless they hold a joint membership, and each applicant should be identified by name. If you wish to be placed on the waiting list please provide a telephone number. Please note the closing dates for applications printed in the Newsletter. Applications made after the closing date will be accepted only if space is still available. Members are reminded that places are not allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, but that all applications are equally considered following the closing date.

### *Cancellations*

Please note that no refunds will be given for cancellations for events costing £20.00 or less. In all other cases, cancellations will be accepted up to seven days before the date of a visit, but refunds will be subject to a £10.00 deduction for administrative costs. Please note that in the rare instances where members cannot pay until the day of a visit, they will still be charged the full amount for the day if cancelling less than seven days before the visit, or if they fail to attend. This is necessary as the Society has usually paid in advance for a certain number of members to participate in, for example, a tour/lunch. Separate arrangements are made for study weekends and foreign tours and terms are clearly stated on the printed details in each case.

## Visit to Boughton House

KETTERING, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE NN14 8JY

WEDNESDAY 8 JUNE 2022

10.30 AM–3.00 PM APPROX.

This visit to the renowned Buccleuch Collection of fine arts, led by Yannick Chastang, will include the Great Hall, High Pavilion and State Apartments. As Master of The Wardrobe, Ralph, Earl of Montagu, later 1st Duke of Montagu (d. 1709), was responsible for furnishing the Royal Palaces and cultivated many northern European artists and craftsmen, including many Huguenots, such as the architect, engraver and furniture designer Daniel Marot and gilders like the Pelletiers. Works by these designers and craftsmen can be found throughout the State Rooms.



Boughton House



The Cosmic House © Sue Barr

Highlights of our visit include ceilings executed by the Huguenot artist Louis Chéron, gilt gesso furniture that includes a coffer by James Moore and a centre table by Jean Pelletier, and a Louis XIV tortoiseshell and brass longcase clock attributed to master cabinet maker André-Charles Boulle.

Yannick Chastang will lead the tour with a focus on the furniture, and in particular the conservation and recent discoveries made during the last ten years (including a pair of Boulle coffers on stand, a large Colbert cabinet on stand and a Gole Louis XIV/Montagu desk). We will be joined by Scott Macdonald, head of collection.

COST: £50 (INCLUDING TEA/COFFEE AND LUNCH)

LIMIT: 20

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:

FRIDAY 6 MAY 2022

## Visit to The Cosmic House

19 LANSDOWNE WALK,

LONDON W11 3AH

TUESDAY 21 JUNE 2022

2.30 - 3.15 PM

Charles Jencks (1939–2019), the writer, critic, designer and teacher, defined and refined the disparate and wide-reaching ideas behind Post-Modernism. The Cosmic House, designed in collaboration with the architect Sir Terry Farrell and built between 1978 and 1983, represents a synthesis of his ideas about science and the arts, which are embodied in everything from its front door to its furniture. It is a remarkable testament to the polymathic talents of both Jencks and his wife, the garden designer Maggie



Keswick, who with their friends designed everything and integrated art, furniture and ideas into the architecture and design.

Unusually for an interior of this period it remains substantially as it was designed, built and lived in, with all its original bespoke furniture and fittings intact. The newly established Jencks Foundation opened The Cosmic House to the public for the first time in September 2021.

COST: £20

LIMIT: 15

Please note it is possible we will run two groups if oversubscribed, with the second visit at 3.45 PM–5.00 PM.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: FRIDAY 20 MAY 2022

## Visit to Chequers

BUTLER'S CROSS, AYLESBURY,  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HP17 0UZ

THURSDAY 7 JULY 2022 (PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE FROM THAT PREVIOUSLY ADVERTISED IN THE FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER)  
11.00 AM–3.00 PM APPROX.

Chequers, or Chequers Court, is the country house of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. A sixteenth-century manor house in origin, the Grade I listed house has been the country home of the serving Prime Minister since 1921 when the estate was given to the nation by Sir Arthur Lee.

William Hawtrey built the house in around 1565, possibly on the basis of an earlier building. In the nineteenth century, the Greenhill-Russell family employed Henry Rhodes to make alterations to the house in the Gothic style. The Tudor panelling and windows were removed and

battlements installed. In 1892–1901, Bertram Astley restored the house to its Elizabethan appearance, with advice from the Edwardian architect Sir Reginald Blomfield.

The interiors and collection at Chequers today owe much to the vision of Ruth and Arthur Lee (later Viscount Lee of Fareham), who, from 1909 to 1921, devoted themselves to restoring the Elizabethan House. With Blomfield, the couple scoured auction rooms and antique shops in search of appropriate furnishings, as well as commissioning reproduction pieces from Gill and Reigate (decorators to George V) and Nicholls and Janes of High Wycombe. Other furniture in the house was inherited with the building. In 1917, the house was the subject of a three-part article by Avray Tipping in *Country Life*.

The collection includes a notable quantity of late seventeenth-/early eighteenth-century caned chairs – including a large suite of green lacquered chairs – as well as a number of lacquer pieces, and furniture with painted decorative surfaces. Specific highlights include a table made by George Bullock for Napoleon's Drawing Room at Old Longwood House, Saint Helena, and a substantial leather-bound trunk, decorated with brass studs, which purportedly belonged to James II when Lord High Admiral.

We will start with an introductory talk by the Curator, followed by a tour of the house and lunch. After lunch there will be an opportunity to examine items of furniture in more detail.

COST: £65 (INCLUDES TEA/COFFEE AND LUNCH)

LIMIT: 20

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:  
FRIDAY 11 MARCH 2022

## Visit to Longford Castle

SALISBURY, WILTSHIRE SP5 4ED

TUESDAY 26 JULY 2022

10.30 AM–12.30 PM

Situated on the banks of the River Avon near Salisbury, Longford Castle is the seat of William Pleydell-Bouverie, 9th Earl of Radnor. It was originally built in the late sixteenth century for Sir Thomas Gorges (1536–1610), courtier to Queen Elizabeth I, by the architect John Thorpe (1565–1655).

The castle became the residence of Sir Edward des Bouverie (1688-1736) in 1717. The des Bouverie family were descended from a Huguenot silk weaver, Laurens des Bouverie (1536–1610), who had fled from religious persecution during the Reformation and settled in London.

Sir Edward's brother, Sir Jacob des Bouverie, 1st Viscount Folkestone (1694–1761), succeeded to the title in 1736 and set out to alter the castle and the grounds. He commissioned some of the finest cabinet makers of the time, including Benjamin Goodison, William Hallett, William Vile and John Cobb, William Bradshaw, William Ince and John Mayhew, and Thomas Chippendale.

The Longford Castle collection, formed by successive generations of the family, includes paintings by van Dyck, Claude, Teniers and Hals, Reynolds and Gainsborough, oriental porcelain, Brussels tapestries, and exceptional eighteenth-century English and continental furniture.

A nearby lunch venue afterwards will be recommended in the joining instructions for attendees who wish to make personal bookings



The Renaissance Iron Chair of The Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph II made by Thomas Rucker and completed in 1574

COST: £30

LIMIT: 20

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:  
FRIDAY 1 JULY 2022

## Autumn Study Trip to Cardiff

FRIDAY 23 SEPTEMBER TO SUNDAY  
25 SEPTEMBER 2022

This two-night, three-day study trip will focus on William Burges and on Welsh furniture. Our visits include Cardiff Castle, remodelled in a spectacular Victorian Gothic style by William Burges for the 3rd Marquess of Bute, and Lord Bute's country retreat Castell Coch, where Burges created a Victorian dream of the Middle Ages.



Exterior of Castell Coch

We will visit the nearby St Fagans National Museum of History, an open-air museum of buildings from across Wales, and winner of the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019. After an introduction by the furniture curator, we will tour the site, which includes farmhouses furnished with vernacular Welsh furniture, industrial ironworkers' cottages and a school. There will be a chance to visit the Museum's recently opened and excellent galleries of Welsh furniture and crafts.

Other visits will include Tredegar House, one of the most significant late seventeenth-century houses in Britain, with its magnificent state rooms, and the small but important group of furniture commissioned by Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn held by the National Museum of Wales. This Study trip is led by Kate Hay, FHS Events Committee co-chair and previously assistant curator in the Furniture, Textiles

and Fashion Department at the V&A.

NB: Cardiff Castle and Castle Coch have steep spiral staircases, and we will walk around St Fagans, which is a large open-air park.

## Study Weekend in Tuscany

FRIDAY 14–SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER 2022

Our Autumn Study tour takes us to the Lucca area of Tuscany. We will be staying in the privately owned Villa Nottolini near Lucca. The villa, with its frescoes and neoclassical chapel, dates back to the fifteenth century and has been enlarged over the succeeding centuries. Plans for the weekend include a visit to Lucca to see the Museo Nazionale di Palazzo Mansi, a baroque villa with an enfilade containing a unique parade of original tapestries. The Villa Torrigiani, with its seventeenth century frescoes by Scorzini and eighteenth-century furniture original to the house. The late Renaissance Villa Bernadini, summer residence of Bernardino Bernadini, and also two private villas rarely seen by the general public.

To express interest please contact the Events Secretary on [events@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:events@furniturehistorysociety.org).

## FHS Annual Lecture

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES,  
BURLINGTON HOUSE, PICCADILLY,  
LONDON W1J 0BE

MONDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2022

6 PM FOR 6.30 PM START

Sir Hugh Roberts, GCVO, FSA, Surveyor Emeritus of The Queen's Works of Art and former Director of The Royal Collection.



Villa Nottolini, Tuscany

‘Ince and Mayhew: Interpreting the Record’

The lecture marks the publication by Philip Wilson in 2022 of *Industry and Ingenuity: The Partnership of William Ince and John Mayhew* by Hugh Roberts and Charles Cator. This book is the culmination of many years of research by both authors. It brings together for the first time a corpus of well documented or firmly attributed work by one of the leading metropolitan cabinet-making firms of the eighteenth century, a firm which was as well-known and successful in its day as that of Thomas Chippendale.

By the time furniture history had become established as a serious area of study in the twentieth century, much of the furniture produced by this long-lived business had lost its identity and no clear picture of the firm’s output existed. The lecture will examine the process

by which the authors have been able to retrieve evidence of some ninety-seven commissions, and to reconnect around three hundred pieces of furniture with patrons and documents.

**Admission to the lecture is free for members, but attendance is by ticket only, which must be acquired in advance.**

Please apply to the Events Secretary by email or post. Numbers are limited to 90. We plan to live-stream the event for those who cannot attend in person.



Marquetry top of one of a pair of tables made by Ince and Mayhew for the Earl of Caledon, 1785



# FHS Annual General Meeting and Works in Progress Talks

THE EAST INDIA CLUB, 16 ST JAMES'S SQUARE,

LONDON SW1Y 4LH

SATURDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2022

11.00 AM–1.00 PM

The Annual General Meeting for the year ending 30 June 2022 will be held at the East India Club. The AGM will start at 11.00 am (coffee from 10.30 am).

Talks will follow the business of the day. Speakers include Matthew Hirst, Curator at Woburn Abbey and Gardens, and Hugo

Burge, a Director of Marchmont, who will talk about how it has become a home to makers and creators, celebrating creativity across the arts, crafts, business and social enterprise. Full details of these and other talks will be included in the August Newsletter.

Admission to the AGM is free for members but all members wishing to attend should notify the Events Secretary at least seven days in advance. Tickets for a sandwich lunch with a glass of wine at the price of £22 per head should be booked with the Events Secretary at least seven days in advance. We plan to live-stream the event for those who cannot attend in person.



Arts events at Marchmont



Burrell Collection

## Online Lectures via Zoom

These details are correct at the time of going to press; please check the website..

WEDNESDAY 25 MAY 2022 18.00–19.15 (BST)

### **‘New Perspectives: Furniture on Display at the Burrell Collection’**

Laura Bauld, Burrell Project Curator

Ed Johnson, Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Art

The newly refurbished Burrell Collection in Glasgow is due to reopen this March after a multi-million-pound refurbishment project. The refurbishment will allow for a redisplay and reinterpretation of the furniture collection of over 500 objects. Donated

in 1944 by wealthy Glaswegian shipping magnate, businessman and respected art collector Sir William Burrell (1861–1958) and his wife Constance, Lady Burrell (1875–1961), the furniture collection includes chairs, chests, tables, beds and bedheads, stools, fireplaces, hutches and court cupboards. Most of the furniture was made in England, with just a few pieces known to have originated from Wales and Scotland, and some Continental examples. The talks will offer a behind-the-scenes exploration of the refurbished Burrell by curators and conservators, revealing the new methods of interpretation developed for the displays of furniture within the refurbished galleries.

Full details will be emailed to members and posted on the website nearer the time.

# Discoveries and Research Developments

## Some discoveries regarding the Sutton Scarsdale églomisé chairs and the 'forgotten' hall chairs from the same house

The suite of parcel gilt walnut chairs from Sutton Scarsdale with ormolu mounts and églomisé armorial panels is one of the most celebrated survivals from the early part of the eighteenth century; it has been discussed at some length in scholarly literature.<sup>1</sup> In addition to a few known examples still in private hands, pieces from this suite are in the collections of Temple Newsam, Leeds, and the Frick Collection, the Cooper-Hewitt Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, all in New York (Figure 1).

The chairs are likely to have been made c. 1730 and, due to the survival of a plaque at Sutton Scarsdale, the chairs' manufacture has been attributed to Thomas How, a London maker mentioned on the plaque as one of the thirteen craftsmen employed by the 4th of Earl of Scarsdale from c. 1724. How is the only furniture maker amongst the names on the plaque.

When the 4th Earl died, he left his finances in a ruinous state, and it has been assumed up to this point that the chairs were amongst pieces sold by the family to pay off debts at this stage. An intriguing reference from 1906 recorded Lady Dorothy Nevill's



Fig. 1 Walnut side chair, c. 1730;  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

recollection of the suite, in a decrepit state, in 'an old house in an eastern county',<sup>2</sup> and mentions their probable sale to an American collector, but little more was known.

The fate of the suite at this point has now been made clear. An article published in 1917 by the antiquary and private consultant Edmund Farrer makes clear that he was





A SUTTON SCARSDALE CHAIR  
OF 1730.



THE SALOON, YAXLEY HALL,  
IN 1905.

Fig. 2 From Edmund Farrer, 'Yaxley Hall and its Owners and Occupiers' (1917)

the man who brokered the sale of the suite, presumably via a middleman, and that Lady Dorothy Nevill was indeed correct that the suite had been residing for some time at Yaxley Hall in Suffolk.<sup>3</sup> Figure 2 reproduces the two images of the chairs from Farrer's article, including one lovely image of some of the suite in situ. No other images of the interiors of Yaxley at this stage are known to have survived, so this second image, Farrer's own photograph, is of great importance.

Mr Farrer's description of the chairs and his role in their dispersal is worth quoting in full:

Previously to the Yaxley Hall sale of 1905, acting on behalf of the owners, I was enabled to negotiate a sale of the Sutton Scarsdale set of chairs, which possibly by now have left the country. They were made of some light coloured wood, and decorated

with ormulu [sic.], while on the back of each, painted on glass and within a frame, was the coat of arms of the Earls of Scarsdale, with the winged angels for supporters. In the set were some fine settees, and furthermore some hall chairs with similar coats of arms on the backs. I have not been able to discover through what channel this furniture reached Yaxley Hall, for though it was the express wish of the last Earl that 'all furniture and household goods at Sutton should remain there and go as heirlooms', yet it was found necessary, as we shall see later on, to dispose of the place and almost everything connected with it 'except twenty-nine family pictures, which, together with a set of agate knives and forks, and silver spoons, twelve of each, have been at the request of Mr Nicholas Leeke delivered over to him'. The family pictures were, I believe, all there until the 1905 sale.<sup>4</sup>



This fascinating account answers some long-standing questions about the suite and explains their absence from the various sale catalogues connected with the Leeke family and Sutton Scarsdale, itself. Clearly the suite did indeed leave England prior to 1905, as it is next mentioned in the collection of the American collector Mrs Annie C. Kane in 1921, and some of the pieces in museum collections came directly from her. Although still speculative, as documentation does not

survive, it appears that chairs from the suite were exhibited by Charles Allom, the famous dealer and decorator, at the Franco-British exhibition in 1908. One is pictured in an article on the furniture in the exhibition by Haldane Macfall in the *Connoisseur* in August 1908 (Figure 3).<sup>5</sup> Given Allom's undoubted international reputation and clientele, it is likely that he sold the set to Mrs Kane.

Another crucial aspect of Farrer's account is that it sheds light on an exceptional pair of painted hall chairs recently rediscovered, without any provenance, in a private American collection (Figure 4). The arms on these chairs are also for the Leeke family, but differ slightly from those on the better-known suite. However, Mr Farrer's account mentions that the Sutton Scarsdale hall chairs had, 'similar coats of arms on the backs'.<sup>[6]</sup> Surely, therefore, this pair of hall chairs are part of this suite, making them an exciting addition to pieces now known to have come from one of the great houses of the eighteenth century.

CHRISTOPHER COLE



Fig. 3 From Haldane Macfall, *Connoisseur* (1908)



Fig. 4 Pair of painted hall chairs, c. 1730 (private collection)

### *Acknowledgements*

With thanks to the members of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, Wolf Burchard and James Lomax for their kind assistance.

- 1 For a full discussion see Christopher Gilbert, *Furniture at Temple Newsam House and Lotherton Hall*, vol. III (Leeds: Art Collections Fund with W. S. Maney and Son, 1998), pp. 581–82.
- 2 Ralph Nevill, ed., *The Reminiscences of Lady Dorothy Nevill* (London: Edward Arnold, 1906), pp. 228–30.
- 3 Edmund Farrer, 'Yaxley Hall and its Owners and Occupiers, part II' in *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* XVI, part 2 (1917), pp. 134–66. See p. 148, in particular.
- 4 *Ibid.*
- 5 Haldane Macfall, 'The Loan Collection of Furniture at the Franco-British Exhibition', *Connoisseur Magazine* (August 1908), pp. 211 and following.
- 6 Farrer, 'Yaxley Hall', pp. 134–66.

### Call for short articles on discoveries and research developments:

Have you discovered something you would like to share with the Society? The Newsletter can publish short articles on discoveries made on Society visits, or other discoveries and developments relevant to furniture history. Please send suggestions to: [research@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:research@furniturehistorysociety.org)

# Letter to the editor

## *The Redland Hotel Bed*

Dear Editor,

I write in response to the article 'George Shaw Revisited', published in the last issue of this *Newsletter*.<sup>1</sup> Much of this was devoted to asserting the antiquity of the bed from the Redland Hotel sold at Chester in 2010 and its identity as the 'Henry VII and Elizabeth of York marriage bed', both of which I questioned in my article 'George Shaw, Rogue Antiquary' in *Furniture History* 2021.<sup>2</sup>

This bed had been much promoted, notably through exhibitions at Bishop Auckland in 2013 and Hever Castle in 2015, through a conference funded by the Institute of Conservation held at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 2019, through a website (<https://henryviibed.co.uk>), in lectures by Dr Jonathan Foyle, and in several publications.<sup>3</sup> Even so, many dealers, collectors, auctioneers, curators and furniture historians remain unconvinced. This letter sets out some of the reasons why.

Three beds of this design, varying slightly in size, are known to exist. One was made by George Shaw for the Duke of Northumberland in 1847; a second is generally accepted as having been made by Shaw for an unknown client; the third, of identical design and construction and differing only in minor details, is claimed

by some to be the bed made for the marriage of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York in 1486.

Let us begin with the physical evidence. In 2011 two posts and four lion finials from the bed were sent to AOC Archaeology in Edinburgh for dendrochronological analysis. No matches to European or British chronologies were found; instead, 'significant correlations' were found with northeastern United States chronologies for white oak. The date for the latest or outermost growth ring was 1756.

Because the timbers had been trimmed, an unknown number of heartwood and sapwood rings were absent so it was impossible to calculate the felling date, but it must post-date 1756.<sup>4</sup> Subsequent work by AOC Archaeology and others has revealed a growing number of other examples of the use of American oak in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the bed has been cited in literature on the subject.<sup>5</sup> Research continues and will be published in due course.<sup>6</sup>

Because the AOC results did not fit the hoped-for late fifteenth-century date, a further dendrochronological analysis was commissioned from Ian Tyers in 2013. This also found no match with known European or British chronologies. As an alternative, Tyers sampled parts of a bed post, the headboard and cresting which were sent for carbon-14 analysis by the

SUERC laboratory at Glasgow University. The earliest growth rings of the post were found to date between 1450 and 1650 and its latest rings from 1640–1950. The broad date ranges are typical of carbon-14 dates for relatively modern artefacts and so were refined using the technique of ‘wiggle matching’. The ‘wiggle match’ dates for the posts revealed that the outermost rings probably dated from the third quarter of the eighteenth century – this seems to confirm the dendrochronology. While the date for the cresting appeared to be later still, with the largest portion of the dating probability lying in the nineteenth century, it fits comfortably into the chronology provided by the other samples as being from the late eighteenth or nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> The carbon-14 results indicate overall that none of the timber is of the Tudor period. The suggestion made in February’s article that the results are compromised by interference with varnish is rejected by both Tyers and SUERC. Samples were also sent to the Oxford radiocarbon lab, which confirmed the SUERC results,<sup>8</sup> and the results cross-match to carbon-14 analysis of other oak artefacts dendro-provenanced to late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century North America.<sup>9</sup>

A third independent dendrochronological analysis was carried out by Andy Moir in 2016.<sup>10</sup> Like the two previous examinations, it failed to find a match with any British or European chronology. However, a match was subsequently found with four more posts offered for sale by a London antiques dealer.<sup>11</sup> This proved that they all came from the same source but left us none the wiser regarding their date. Since

all the posts tested are identical in design and execution to the acknowledged Shaw beds, the inference is that these too are from the Shaw workshop.

In 2013 samples from the bed were tested for DNA at the Thünen Institut in Germany. The aim was to establish the origin of the oak – was it American or European? According to the presentations made at the ICON conference in January 2019, it was not possible to obtain DNA from the posts, but one of the four lion finials was subsequently tested and proved to be European oak, not American.<sup>12</sup> The haplotype identified – Haplotype 7 – occurs in much of Europe but is relatively uncommon in Britain. The dendrochronology and DNA results cannot both be right, and this conflict between the two scientific processes needs to be addressed. However, the DNA does not ‘disprove’ the wood’s Georgian felling date as Lindfield claims<sup>13</sup>; it merely suggests the finial is of European rather than American oak. Since European wood has been used in large quantities in England from medieval times to the twenty-first century, this is unremarkable. Meanwhile, the carbon-14 analysis stands. It is solid, well-founded science.

The claim that bed has ‘evidence of a medieval paint scheme’ is contentious. An analysis carried out in 2013 involved 250 samples taken from different parts of the bed.<sup>14</sup> It found that more than 99 percent of the bed’s surface had been stripped, but traces of pigment and other material survived in crevices in the carving. While none of the pigments found were modern, and indeed might plausibly have been medieval, all were also generally available



in the nineteenth century. This included the ultramarine which George Shaw also used on his 1847 'ancient hall cupboards' at Warkworth Castle. Natural ultramarine, derived from lapis lazuli, was rare and expensive, but it continued to be made by commercial paint suppliers into the twentieth century. There was nothing to prevent Shaw using it if he was so minded, and a comparative test should quickly establish whether the pigment used at Warkworth was the same.<sup>15</sup>

Even though the paint remains were scant and the stratigraphy badly disturbed by stripping, the 2013 paint report suggested that the bed was originally polychromed, decorated on a walnut-grained ground.<sup>16</sup> It is simply not possible to reconstruct an entire decorative scheme from less than 1 percent of the bed's surface, and the most that can be said is that there is fragmentary evidence for a paint scheme of unknown date. Again, comparative analysis against documented Shaw furniture could provide parallels for the treatment of the Redland Hotel bed.

Continuing with the physical evidence, the setting out and cutting of the diaper-pattern on the posts is unique to the three Shaw beds and other documented Shaw furniture. It emulates but does not accurately replicate the posts of the Stanley bed. Similarly, Shaw copied his rail designs from the Stanley bed but not their triple-layered construction; the Shaw version occurs only on his furniture and on the Redland Hotel bed. These are just the most obvious of the many technical differences between Shaw's work and the sixteenth-century originals. The similarity in the decorative carving of all three beds

is self-evident. Finally, the kerf marks of machine sawing are present on the panels and posts of the headboard; machine-sawn oak was not known in England before the seventeenth century.<sup>17</sup>

Aspects of the bed's form and decoration are also troubling. As far as can be judged from manuscript illustrations, most late medieval high-status beds were entirely covered in textiles, although this was not an invariable rule. A headboard formed of carved Gothic tracery is shown on Mary Magdalene's bed in a Flemish manuscript of 1479, and carved tracery headboards also occur on the four Lancashire beds made shortly after 1500.<sup>18</sup> At least three of these were known to George Shaw – the Stanley bed, the Lovely Hall bed and the Chetham's Library bed. Even so, all these beds originally had hangings. Why, then, is there no provision for textiles, nor any evidence of such, on the disputed bed?

What is an invariable rule for high-status beds, however, is the absence of a footboard: neither manuscript illustrations nor extant beds display this feature. Thomas Hunt knew this, as did Samuel Rush Meyrick, but George Shaw evidently did not.<sup>19</sup> Footboards only became a regular feature of grand English beds in the nineteenth century, and it was A. W. N. Pugin who in 1835 first published a medieval-style bed with a carved and panelled footboard (Figure 1).<sup>20</sup> It has much in common with Dearden's souped-up Stanley bed shown on the front cover of February's *Newsletter*, suggesting Pugin as a likely source. This footboard survived in a cut-down form in a photograph in Victor Chinnery's *Oak*



Figure 1. Design for a State Bed, from A. W. N. Pugin, *Gothic Furniture in the Style of the Fifteenth Century* (1835), pl. 11. This design shares several important anachronistic features with the Redland Hotel bed and with the Stanley bed as it appeared in 1913: three-panelled headboard, panelled footboard, armorial crestings on the tester, banderoles, carved heraldic finials. Photo: Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham, qNK2542.P8.

*Furniture* (1979); another shows the bed restored by its removal.<sup>21</sup> The presence of a footboard as an original, integral element of the Redland Hotel bed is an obvious anachronism and the strongest possible

initial indication that the bed is a nineteenth-century production.

An unprecedented feature of the Redland Hotel bed, only paralleled on George Shaw's other 'Paradise' beds,

Figure 2. Panel from a cupboard supplied by George Shaw to the Duke of Northumberland in 1847, showing *papelonné* used in typical Shaw fashion both on the escutcheon and as a background for the panel. Photo: the author.



is the large Adam and Eve panel of the headboard. The inspiration for the three-panel format may have come from Pugin's 1835 bed, but the subject matter, as I proposed in my 2021 article, was derived from an illustration in John Speed's *Genealogies* (1611), of which Shaw owned a copy.<sup>22</sup> In this woodcut, Adam and Eve carry banderoles with the very same text incised on the headboard – 1 Corinthians 15:56.<sup>23</sup> The wording goes back to the Matthew Bible, published in 1537, half

a century after Henry VII's marriage in 1486.<sup>24</sup> It is worth noting that the Stanley bed, which Shaw knew and probably 'improved', featured banderoles on its footboard. Banderoles are uncommon in English medieval woodwork, but Pugin's 1835 design, with banderoles on three sides of its tester, is again a likely source.

We are told that the bed 'incorporates highly unusual Tudor heraldry' which is only intelligible to those 'with a deep understanding of Tudor and royal

iconography'.<sup>25</sup> The first part of this statement is undoubtedly true; in fact, the heraldry is so unusual that nothing comparable can be found in surviving Tudor work. Where are the dragon and the greyhound, Henry VII's heraldic supporters? Where is his imperial crown? Where are the arms and insignia of his queen, Elizabeth of York? Where, indeed, is any version of the royal arms correctly depicted? The coloured escutcheon now on the bed cresting is a modern addition since 2010, copied and adapted from a similar cresting fixed above a door in George Shaw's house. Without this we are



left with five escutcheons hinting at a royal connection, two bearing fleurs de lis, one bearing a cross fleurie, one a St George's cross, and two with lions passant. The first three are mounted on a fishscale or papelonné field, a thing unknown in English royal heraldry but extensively used by George Shaw on his Warkworth furniture and elsewhere. He frequently used it to imply tincture, particularly to distinguish between the quarterings on escutcheons (Figures 2, 3). This is a clear indication that the arms were not painted originally.

Whether one looks at its design and imagery, or at the physical and scientific evidence obtained from it, the Redland Hotel bed is not a credible Tudor object. Since there is a wealth of firmly dated and provenanced Shaw material at Warkworth and elsewhere, comparative examination by carbon-14, dendrochronological dating and surface analysis should settle the matter once and for all.

Yours faithfully,

Adam Bowett

Figure 3. Escutcheon from the Redland Hotel bed, showing the same *papelonné* field. Photo: the author.



## Notes

- 1 Peter Lindfield, 'George Shaw Revisited: Ancient Oak, and Beds', *Furniture History Society Newsletter* 225 (February 2022), pp. 2–12.
- 2 Adam Bowett, 'George Shaw, Rogue Antiquary', *Furniture History* 57 (2021), pp. 109–47. See also Adam Bowett, 'Antiquarianism in Early Victorian Rochdale: The Trinity Chapel at St Chad's', *Regional Furniture* 34 (2020), p. 160.
- 3 For example, Jonathan Foyle and Peter N. Lindfield, 'A forger's folly? The productions of George Shaw (1810–76) for Chetham's Library, Manchester', *The British Art Journal* 26, 3 (2020/21), pp. 42–50; Peter N. Lindfield, 'Heraldic Forgery: The Case of George Shaw', *The Coat of Arms*, 4, no. 238 (2021), pp. 177–204; Peter N. Lindfield, 'Heraldic Depictions of Royal Continuity', *The Society for Court Studies International Quarterly Newsletter*, Spring (2021), pp. 4–6, Academia.edu.
- 4 A large file on the bed, which includes the dendrochronology and carbon-14 results, is held in the Department of Performance, Furniture, Textiles and Fashion at the V&A.
- 5 For instance, Anne Crone and Coralie Mills, 'Tree-rings, Timber and Trade: The Dendrochronological Evidence from Scotland', NWGD Scottish Woodland History Conference, Perth (2012), see: <http://www.nwdg.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/NOTES-XVII-2012.pdf>; Anne Crone, David Brown and Dan Miles, 'Dendrochronological evidence for the early trade in timber between the British Isles and the American colonies', Conference Proceedings, Tartu, Estonia (2017), see: [http://eurodendro2017.ut.ee/sites/default/files/eurodendro2017/files/book\\_of\\_abstracts\\_eurodendro\\_2017\\_tartu\\_estonia.pdf](http://eurodendro2017.ut.ee/sites/default/files/eurodendro2017/files/book_of_abstracts_eurodendro_2017_tartu_estonia.pdf).
- 6 Ian Tyers, personal communication, 16 February 2022.
- 7 Note that the cresting was not part of the AOC dendrochronological analysis.
- 8 Derek Hamilton, SUERC Glasgow, personal communication, 28 February 2022.
- 9 Ian Tyers, personal communication, 16 February 2022.
- 10 Lindfield, 'George Shaw Revisited', p. 11 and note 30.
- 11 Letter in the V&A files, 5 July 2017. The posts were with Joanna Booth Antiques, London, in 2014.
- 12 Presentations by Lasse Schindler and Dr Hilke Schroeder of Thünen Institut, Germany: Symposium | 01-LASSE from InHouseFilms on Vimeo; Symposium | 02-HILKE from InHouseFilms on Vimeo.
- 13 Lindfield, 'George Shaw Revisited', p. 11.
- 14 Helen Hughes, 'The Paradise Bed – Paint Analysis', report dated November 2013. Copy in the V&A files, Dept of Performance, Furniture Textiles and Fashion. See also: Symposium | 03-HELEN from InHouseFilms on Vimeo.
- 15 The Dutch forger Han van Meegeren used true ultramarine in his twentieth-century forgeries of paintings by Vermeer and De Hoogh. Synthetic ultramarine was developed in the 1820s but is chemically identical to lapis lazuli. The difference between the two is the particle size and shape, a somewhat subjective measure. See J. Plesters, 'Ultramarine Blue, Natural and Artificial', in A. Roy (ed.), *Artists' Pigments. A Handbook of their history and Characteristics* (Oxford: OUP, 1993), vol. 2, pp. 39–54.
- 16 Hughes, 'The Paradise Bed'.
- 17 The earliest oak showing the kerf marks of the Dutch wainscot mills occurs on early seventeenth-century English panel paintings. This was shortly after the establishments of the Dutch sawmills in the 1590s. However, the kerf marks on the Redland Hotel bed are much coarser, indicating a different type of sawmill, probably steam powered.
- 18 British Library, Royal MS 16 GIII, fol. 168v. This and illustrations of several plainer and lower parchemin-panelled headboards are reproduced in Eva Oledzka, *Medieval and Renaissance Interiors in Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: British Library, 2016), p. 111 and pp. 5, 20, 36 and 52. The same image also appears in Henry Shaw and Samuel Rush Meyrick, *Specimens of Ancient Furniture* (London: William Pickering, 1836), pl. 35; the Lancashire beds are discussed in Bowett, 'Rogue Antiquary', pp. 129–30.
- 19 Hunt correctly described Tudor beds as comprising '... posts, head-boards, and canopies'. None of the beds illustrated by Shaw and Meyrick had footboards [Thomas Hunt, *Exemplars of Tudor Architecture* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1830), p. 156; Shaw and Meyrick, *Specimens of Ancient Furniture*, pls. 35–39]. Some lower-status beds did have footboards as, for instance, in Oledzka, *Medieval and Renaissance*

*Interiors*, p. 108, depicting the Birth of the Virgin from an early sixteenth-century Cracow manuscript and showing a bed with a low footboard, but this is the bed of a carpenter's wife, without canopy, headboard or hangings.

20 A. W. N. Pugin, *Gothic Furniture in the style of the 15th century* (London: Ackermann and Co, 1835), pl. 11; the image was republished in A. W. N. Pugin, *Ornaments of the 15th and 16th Centuries* (London: Ackermann and Co., 1836).

21 Victor Chinnery, *Oak Furniture, the British Tradition* (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors Club, 1979), pp. 387 and 388.

22 Bowett, 'Rogue Antiquary', p. 132, fig. 28.

23 The only variation is 'stinge' for 'sting.' This is paralleled in the 1537 Matthew Bible, which also includes '&', omitted on the headboard, between the two parts of the verse. Adding 'e' to the end of a word, for example 'olde', was a standard antiquarianising device.

24 It has been suggested elsewhere that at some point after 1537 the original 1486 inscription was excised and the present one substituted. This is theoretically possible, but impossible to prove [Foyle and Lindfield, 'A Forger's Folly?', p. 44].

25 Lindfield, 'George Shaw Revisited', pp. 9, 11.

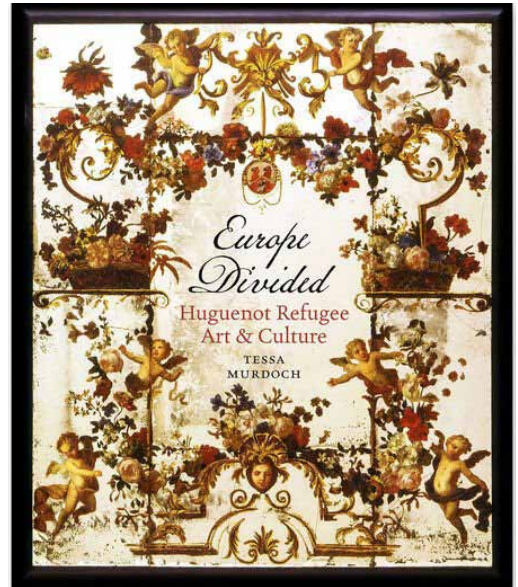
# Book Review

Suggestions for reviews should be sent to Dr Wolf Burchard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10028, USA (email: [Wolf.Burchard@metmuseum.org](mailto:Wolf.Burchard@metmuseum.org); telephone + 1 212 650 2208).

TESSA MURDOCH, *Europe Divided: Huguenot Refugee Art and Culture* (London: V&A Publishing, 2021). 320 pp., 266 illus. ISBN 9781-83851-012-1. £40.

Like a devout Calvinist escaping the persecution of the Sun King, a lavish publication dedicated to Huguenot art in Britain has emerged triumphantly from the inauspicious state of art history publishing. *Europe Divided* features almost every illustration in full colour, an elegant and varied graphic design, and nearly forty pages of footnotes and bibliography. In terms of scholarship it advances in every way the catalogue to the exhibition at the Museum of London that its author, Tessa Murdoch, curated in 1985 with the Huguenot Society of London, *The Quiet Conquest: The Huguenots, 1685–1985*.

Like *The Quiet Conquest*, which was held for the tercentenary of Louis XIV's formal recommencement of persecution, this publication commemorates in 2022 a date foundational to Huguenot identity: the 450th anniversary of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, in which



Protestants were killed in Paris with the tacit support of the state. Through the vicissitudes of the following decades, waves of refugees arrived in England, becoming a flood with Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes, with artists and craftspeople prominent among the number. The 'refuge' after 1685 is therefore the core of the book, but *Europe Divided* reaches back to Protestant French craftspeople in the sixteenth century and forward to the later eras of persecution that only ended with the revolution of 1789.

The most impressive feature of *Europe Divided* is its representation of an unprecedented range of Huguenot art

production from carving and cabinet making to painting and sculpture. The authoritative treatment of such a spectrum of practices is testament to the author's decades of experience mastering this material. Some media have long been regarded as distinctively Huguenot, like the carved mirror frames with *verre églomisé* of the Pelletier workshop, but the breadth of the book's representation gives equal billing to areas less identified with Huguenots like civil engineering, shining light on unfamiliar names like that of Charles Labelye (1705–81). The subtitle's reference to 'art and culture' is appropriate when the importation of decorative arts is often inextricable from other foreign practices, as in the case of the joiner Pierre Rieusset (fl. 1687–1716) whose parquetry techniques helped to introduce to Britain the French game of billiards.

While scholarship on Huguenot art has been developing over decades, the present moment makes this book particularly timely. Issues of personal identity are more relevant than ever, while the title of the volume suggests the connection to the idea of European division in our own time. Since *The Quiet Conquest*, masterpieces of Huguenot art have become much more accessible, such as those in the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection now on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, and in the refurbished British Galleries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The latter institution possesses one of the most magnificent creations of all Huguenot art and design, the ironwork balustrade created for the Earl of Chesterfield by Jean Montigny, a section of which was

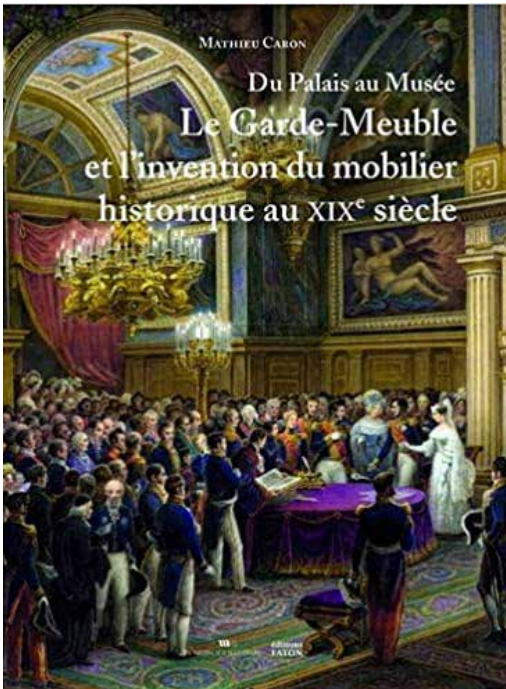
recently restored.

With its comprehensive treatment of Huguenot art and culture in Britain, the book raises two connected questions. The first is to what degree the Huguenot contribution in British art was distinct from that of Catholic immigrants who had emerged from either France or culturally French territories like those in the Spanish and later Austrian Netherlands. For Murdoch, Calvinist predestination resulted in an industrious mindset distinct from that of Catholic craftspeople, but she refrains from speculating about particularly Huguenot characteristics that cross multiple media.

The second question is whether the art and culture of the British theatre of the *refuge* was distinct from that of other centres like Amsterdam. Although the title of the book does not mention Britain, it is the British context which is the exclusive concern of the chapters focused on art and design. To this question, Murdoch suggests that it was the sheer scale of the movement of Huguenots to Britain that created networks of artists, craftspeople and patrons to be developed and for collaboration to be promoted between artists in different media. To tell a story so wide ranging and complex requires a colossal quantity of information to be marshalled, and *Europe Divided* does so with clarity and accessibility, doing justice to one of the most important and complex stories in European art.

MAX BRYANT





MATHIEU CARON, *Du Palais au Musée. Le Garde-Meuble et l'invention du mobilier historique au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Dijon: Éditions Faton, 2021). 496 pp. ISBN 978-2-87844-296-0. €69.

Coinciding with the opening of the Hôtel du Garde Meuble to the public and the bicentenary of Napoleon III's death, Mathieu Caron has published his masterful history of the Garde Meuble after the French Revolution. Central to his study is the question of national heritage, with an emphasis on the process of furniture and interiors becoming part of this heritage (captured in the French word 'patrimonialisation'). Adopting a broadly chronological approach, the book is divided into three sections: the mechanics of the Mobilier de la couronne from the Consulate to the Second Empire; the relationship of each political regime

with historical furniture; and the public display of national treasures from the July Monarchy onwards.

In the nineteenth century, pieces of furniture earned the status of historical documents intended to be preserved for posterity (Dominique Pety). Indeed, the concept of 'mobilier historique' emerged in 1820, argues Caron, in conjunction with the creation of the Commission des monuments historiques (p. 28). This museological duty to preserve began under the administration of Thierry de Ville d'Avray, and a wealth of case studies are provided to demonstrate different strategies of preservation and conservation. To restore the crown surmounting Marie-Antoinette's jewellery cabinet by Schwerdfeger, for instance, paintings in which the cabinet appeared served as a visual aide. Despite the administration mixing up two cabinets, this is an example of the insight we gain into the administration's process, thanks to the author's sleuthing in the archives.

Furniture and décor became an embodiment of the political regime's views and uses of the national past. Caron addresses the ever-evolving approach to 'remeublement', a word used to describe the practices of reusing, recycling and rediscovering national treasures, but also repairing and restoring antiques, and buying or commissioning new objects from contemporary makers. The case of preparing Fontainebleau for the visit of Pope Pius VII and Cardinal Fesch in December 1804 – an extraordinary episode in the First Empire's approach to furnishing former royal palaces – is worth singling out (Chapter 3). The purchases made from

antique dealers favoured the Louis XVI style, in keeping with the pomp and luxury required to host such guests. Conversely, Chapter 4 presents the July Monarchy's agenda for Fontainebleau, which would undergo a historically evocative redecoration rather than an accurate refurnishing attempt or restitution (p. 228). Fontainebleau appears again in Chapter 7, representative of former royal palaces showcasing the whole of French history through their furnishings.

Caron teases out the tensions between the ceremonial role of furniture in royal and imperial residences and the more personal tastes of the rulers who lived there (p. 155). An enduring taste for Boulle is evidenced, whether examined in Napoleon Bonaparte's apartments, where it rubbed shoulders with lacquer furniture in the neoclassical style, or when it is examined for Louis-Philippe within the context of the 1844 'Exposition des produits de l'industrie'.

Whilst the art market is a central player throughout the volume, Chapter 2 specifically addresses the administration's reliance on antique dealers and craftsmen who 'bought back' iconic pieces after the Revolution, to bolster the State collections. Caron explores how individuals from the ruling elite, but also those at the head of the furniture administration, influenced the preservation of furniture, and by extension, of France's national heritage. We learn of Empress Eugénie exacting pressure on the Liste civile to purchase Marie-Antoinette's lacquer table by Weisweiler and other pieces of royal provenance, in the Prince de Beauvau sale (p. 135). Several other key sales are singled out, such as Bercy, to shed light on

the different policies of the administration when engaging with the art market. Caron eloquently pieces together the puzzle, tracing objects through time and space, and analysing the attitudes of the Garde Meuble in relation to both historical and 'historicising' furniture. The book should be read in relation to a growing body of work by English-speaking scholars (Tom Stammers, Mark Westgarth, Diana Davis, but also Astrid Swenson and Martin Bressani).

Caron has already demonstrated that the July Monarchy's seminal approach to national history and heritage paved the way for Empress Eugénie's active preservation and promotion of the Louis XVI style (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 stresses the museological and scientific approach adopted during the Second Empire ('*démarche patrimoniale*'). The final section of the book delves into the display of objects that had gained the status of museum exhibits, whether in permanent 'period-rooms' or loan exhibitions, accessible to the public from behind ropes or within purpose-built cases.

This generously illustrated volume brings to life the motivations of different regimes for furnishing palaces and displaying collections in the nineteenth century. By shedding light on the inner workings of the Mobilier de la Couronne and presenting key players within its administration, Caron's expert navigation of the archives provides scholars of furniture, taste, collecting and the art market with the necessary contexts for further research. One can only hope that plans are underway to translate this tour de force and make it accessible to an even wider public.

LINDSAY MACNAUGHTON

PIERRE ARIZZOLI-CLÉMENTEL, *Palais Labia Venise*, 2 vols. in slip case: *Histoire, Architecture et Décor*, 79pp., 31 col., 15 b&w illus.; *Bal costumé – 3 Septembre 1951*, 95 pp., 26 col., 41 b&w illus. (Montreuil: Editions Gourcoff Gradenigo, 2021). ISBN 978-2-35340-353-0 and ISBN 978-2-35340-355-4. €145.

In 2013 and 2016, Pierre Arizzoli-Clémentel published books on Emilio Terry and Georges Geoffroy. The former was a member of the intimate circle of the Basque-Mexican-Spanish millionaire patron of interior decoration *in excelsis* (an Old Etonian to boot), Charles de Beistegui (1895–1970), and the latter was well known to him. In 2019, Arizzoli-Clémentel followed up with a delicious volume reproducing thirty-five watercolours of interiors in Beistegui's greatest creation, his transformation of the Château de Groussay, outside Paris, into a temple to his own taste. These were by the Russian Alexandre Serebriakoff (1907–95), the unrivalled twentieth-century master of this genre, and Arizzoli-Clémentel supplied an engrossing commentary. Now he has crowned this sequence with a splendid study of Beistegui's revival of the grand but neglected Palazzo Labia in Venice, which he purchased in 1948 and decided to sell in 1961, after illness.

The first volume, setting Beistegui's project within the international cult of Venice, presents a history of the palace and the Labia family, originally from Gerona in Spain, settled in Venice since 1528 and patricians from 1646, with a stress on its superb frescoes by Tiepolo, probably painted in 1746–47, and admired by Goethe. Its afterlife, from



1965, as the regional headquarters of RAI (Radiotelevisione italiana), when restoration involved the destruction of most of Beistegui's schemes, is noted, but the real conclusion to his brief reign was the 700-lot sale held in 1964, referenced throughout (the principal *commissaire-priseur*, Maurice Rheims (1910–2003), published an inaccurate and unsympathetic account). The dismantled interiors are illustrated by thirty-five glamorous colour photographs from an album presented by Emilio Terry in 1956. The main focus must be the fourteen state rooms on the *piano nobile* whose contents are listed in a 1959 inventory, also reproduced, as is a clear plan. Only in one room, the Salon des Indes, is *ancien régime* swagger interrupted by modernity, in the form of upholstered seating. The focus is the eighteenth century, although the Salon de l'Horloge of 1954, with a Sansovinesque fireplace and a frieze formed by paintings from Northumberland House, and the Salle des Amiraux, only finalised in

1963, with rostral columns and obelisks commemorating Venetian admirals, lean towards the seventeenth. The tapestries are particularly rich, as is the Venetian furniture (an oddity was a gilt walking frame from Palazzo Mocenigo said to have belonged to Caterina Cornaro (1454–1510), the last Queen of Cyprus).

Parade rooms demand animation, and on 3 September 1951 Beistegui held a legendary costume ball, the theme of Arizzoli-Clémentel's second volume, which animated the Palazzo Labia as never before or after. Thirteen exquisite and colourful watercolours by Serebriakoff record the event (a lost fourteenth, illustrated in black-and-white, records the most elaborate entry, that of Arturo López-Willshaw as the Emperor of a Chippendale China, whose entourage of twenty included Baron de Redé, his lover and future heir, as the Emperor's bird-catcher). The text analyses every scene, and the introduction gives a full account of the ball and its historic and immediate precedents, supported by a full list of invitees (a prodigious note lists those who refused), many photographs and extracts from contemporary accounts. For many, 1951 may connote the Festival of Britain; Beistegui's Palazzo Labia and his ball constituted its antitype, sumptuous, extravagant and unashamedly, ebulliently, magnificently nostalgic. High jinks indeed and a spectacular chapter in the history of interior decoration, collecting and display which well merits Arizzoli-Clémentel's clear and scholarly exposition

SIMON SWYNFEN JERVIS



# Reports on FHS Events

## Visit to Southside House

FRIDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2022

The Pennington Mellor Munthe Charity Trust's Curator Juan Tafur warmly welcomed our group. Southside House was originally a farm built around 1650 with two cottages at either end. By 1750, the structure had become two larger houses separated by a wall and later, in the Georgian era, the property was doubled in size with an extension on the garden elevation with the front elevation unified. Hilda Pennington Mellor purchased the property in 1931, bringing with her furniture and paintings from the family's Villa Françon near Biarritz. Wife of the famous Swedish psychiatrist, Axel Munthe, she lived in the east side of the property until 1954 when the house was unified under the direction of her son, Major Malcolm Munthe. Along with items from Françon, the house also has a large number of important paintings from the Wharton Collection bequeathed to Southside by the last Baron of Wharton which are now recognised as one of the best documented collections of historic picture frames.

Our tour started on the ground floor in the baroque-style entrance hall with its black and white stone floor and period-style furniture. On through a family receiving room with its ancient

Cordoba leather frieze probably brought from another property and more recent Pennington Mellor Munthe portraits. In the short corridor outside, one of the largest collections of paintings by Theodore Roussel have wonderful carved and gilded frames with thistle detail, c. 1640-50, with inscriptions unique to the Wharton collection.

On the first floor the group were shown the Major's study and the former master bedroom with an interesting late nineteenth/early twentieth-century German folding writing desk, and then the 'Prince of Wales Bedroom' with a canopied bed adorned with ostrich feathers and his emblem embroidered on a red velvet headboard, gloriously set off by walls of vibrant yellow silk damask and a blue ceiling. The Curator explained that Major Munthe created stories around his collection, with which he regaled his many visitors. For example, the Cabinet of Curiosities holds –allegedly—'Marie Antoinette's pearls' and an heirloom supposedly gifted by Queen Natalija of Serbia known as the 'Romanov talisman'. The group were interested by an unusual seventeenth-century style framed mirror hanging over the fireplace, inset with varnished mezzotints of the Orange family, concluding that it was probably put together by Major Munthe.

Back to the ground floor Tapestry Room



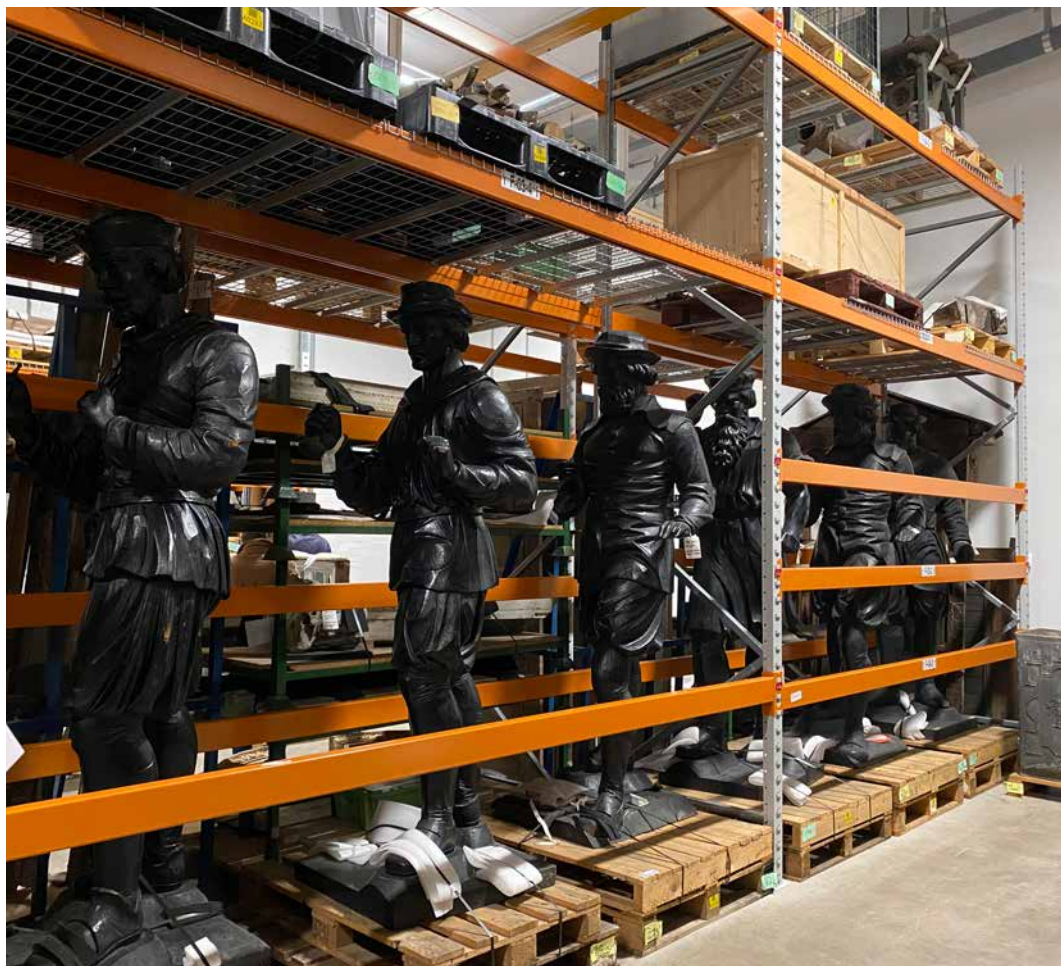
The Music Room,  
Southside House

hung with eighteenth-century theatrical scenery panels, attributed to Servandoni, supposedly from a production of Handel's *Water Music*. A folding panel revealed a rare surviving wig hole, allowing a gentleman to put his head through for a servant to re-powder his wig. Our final room was the Music Room, ranged with several large cut glass wall lights, delicate seat furniture from Françon, along with a Reynolds self-portrait, a portrait of

Angelica Kauffman and one of Emma Hamilton. The Major claimed that Nelson and Emma, who lived close by, visited the house and it was where Emma invented her 'Attitudes'.

The house has been sold, so it was a fantastic opportunity to see it before it changes hands. Our visit was concluded by thanks from Kate Dyson who had initiated this visit.

AMANDA RANSOM



The Architectural Study Collection, Wrest Park

## Visit to Wrest Park and Stores

WEDNESDAY 2 MARCH 2022

Our first views of Wrest Park were of a rather magnificent but faded 'French chateau' surrounded by twentieth-century industrial buildings that once formed the basis of the Silsoe Agricultural Institute, set in the Bedfordshire countryside. The buildings surrounding the mansion

have been given a new life housing the architectural study collection managed by English Heritage under the curatorship of Dickon Whitewood. Dickon gave us a condensed but highly informative tour of this extraordinary world.

The stores are divided into three parts containing objects from the monumental to the diminutive. It is a breath-taking experience to enter the first store. On floor-to-ceiling steel racking, with narrow

passages between, can be seen columns and stonework from the Roman city of Wroxeter, fragments of Bury St Edmunds Priory, trebuchet balls from Kenilworth Castle, statuary from Chiswick House, and cases containing items from Whitley Court. Moving to the second part of the stores we saw some 6000 architectural objects from over 800 sites mainly taken from London properties between Hackney in the east and Mayfair in the west. Doors, architraves, mouldings, fireplaces, staircases and lead cisterns, mainly from domestic buildings but also from public houses, schools and markets, the most dramatic of which are the nineteenth-century monumental carved wood figures of medieval tradesmen (the Belljack figures from the Columbia Market in Bethnal Green) and a wonderful adjustable tower ladder for changing the light bulbs in Covent Garden Market. The third store holds the more delicate objects including the important collection of wallpaper samples formed by Treve Rosoman, the collection's first dedicated curator. This comprises over 1000 samples removed from London properties, in some cases several layers charting the decorative chronology of a room.

We were then joined by Peter Moore, Curator of Collections and Interiors at Wrest Park and Audley End, who took us into the house itself. It was built between 1834 and 1839, replacing the original medieval house which had stood 200 metres to the south. The second Earl de Grey, an amateur architect, chose the eighteenth-century French style for the house whilst carefully preserving the

seventeenth-century formal gardens which surrounded the original house. Wrest Park had a relatively short life as a family home; it was sold and the contents dispersed in 1917. None of the original furniture remains in the house, but the rococo revival interior survives. A few of the paintings from the original house were rehung in the entrance hall where they remain today, and two of the bedrooms have remarkable survivals: one room with Chinese painted paper from the 1790s, that has been reused from the old house and remains in a fantastic state of preservation, and another bedroom with Zuber et Cie Eldorado pattern wallpaper of 1854, also well preserved.

The visit to the house provided an insight not only into the workings of English Heritage and the excellent work they do, but also into the dilemmas they face with a property like Wrest Park. Our grateful thanks to Dickon Whitewood and Peter Moore for our visit.

DAVID PICKUP



# Other News

## Grinling Gibbons and the Story of Carving

A V&A Conference

FRIDAY 24 – SAT 25 JUNE 2022, 10.30 AM–17.30 PM (BST)

The Lydia and Manfred Gorvy Lecture Theatre, V&A South Kensington

Tickets £15–£35 from the V&A website

Grinling Gibbons (1648–1721) is the most celebrated carver in British history. International experts will present the latest research on Gibbons, exploring themes of materials, production and design in Europe, 1600 to 1800. His closely observed depictions of full-bodied natural forms, executed in hyperreal detail, captivated audiences of his own time as much as they captivate audiences today. But how much is really known about this man, his work and its implications in terms of the way we think about carving now? As part of the year-long Gibbons tercentenary celebrations of 2021–22, the V&A is hosting a two-day conference to explore the story of Gibbons but also to investigate broader themes around the subject of carving in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Britain and Europe.

On day one of the conference, an invited panel of speakers will present the latest research on Gibbons and his work. On the second day, international scholars, across disciplines, will consider the broader

story of carving in this period, exploring themes of design, production, materials and techniques, and how these interacted to create the type of physical forms so recognizable as the product of Gibbons' world.

Speakers include, on 24 June: Ada de Wit, David Luard, Alan Lamb, Frances Sands, Gordon Higgott, Kira d'Alburquerque and Lee Prosser. On 25 June: Nick Humphrey, Jonathan Taveres, Lisa Akerman, Sandra Rossi, Maria Cristina Gigli, Ada de Wit, Lauren R. Cannady, Wendy Frère, and Tessa Murdoch. The full programme is on the V&A website.

## The Archive of the John Evan Bedford Library of Furniture History

The John Evan Bedford Library of Furniture History at the University of Leeds Special Collections is a collection of archive and print material compiled by the late art and antiques dealer John Bedford. The collection provides a rich resource for the study of furniture history from the 1600s to the present day through a wide range of material from rare books to estate papers and works of art to billheads and receipts.

The archive has now been catalogued and is available to researchers via the

University of Leeds Special Collections website. This is the first phase of the project team's cataloguing work with over 3000 print items still being catalogued. The archive covers topics ranging from the renovation of London townhouses in the eighteenth century, to the dissolving of the father/son business relationship at James Russel and Son due to the latter's mismanagement of money in the nineteenth century, through to Bedford's own antiques business in the twentieth century. The archival structure follows the original order established by John Bedford, with categories such as Bedford's General Archive Files and Cabinet Makers Archive comprising his own research cuttings. There are also discrete collections of billheads and ephemera as well as estate papers, auction catalogues, artwork, his library reference files and personal and family papers. Many parts of the archive also retain Bedford's original headings. For example, the 'Auction catalogues of household contents, collections, etc.' which contains ephemeral papers that were produced to advertise the contents of a particular house for auction and handwritten records of the items sold at such an auction, sometimes with the names of the purchasers.

Several items in Bedford's collection are marked with his original reference numbers relating to indexes that can be used to search by subject, as he would have done. The auction catalogues mentioned above for instance are labelled with the 'CTH' reference which stands for 'Catalogues - House Auctions'. We have recorded these references, where

they exist, on the online catalogue as 'Collector's number' showing Bedford's original cataloguing schema. One particularly interesting item in this part of the collection is the catalogue describing the contents for sale at Moreton Paddox in 1959 prior to its demolition, which includes photographs providing a glimpse into one of Britain's many lost country houses.

Another area of particular interest is the estate papers which include the 'Viscount and Lady Barrington Archive' comprising correspondence and accounts for the alteration and repairs to their home at 20 Cavendish Square, London between 1755 and 1757. Of note is a detailed bill from the gardener noting prices of plants, trees, flowers and herbs.

The archive is especially rich in ephemera, some of which Bedford labelled with the reference 'EM' to refer to 'Misc. ephemera and trade leaflets'. The ephemera ranges from posters and leaflets to advertisements and flyers. The ephemera also includes Bedford's significant collections of trade cards and billheads. The trade cards have all been digitised and catalogued in detail and are available to view online for research from anywhere in the world.

It has been interesting while cataloguing to uncover links between different parts of the collection. Businesses, for example, might have records across different series such as archive files, trade cards, billheads and other ephemera, and there are also links between people, exemplified in the



*The Cabinet Maker enjoying his tipping time* (MS 2241/13/3/5). Print made by Johan Fredrik Martin after Elias Martin. © University of Leeds Library

furniture historian archives of Edward T. Joy and Pauline Agius. The Pauline Agius Archive contains her research papers on many subjects such as Art Nouveau, British manufacturing industries and papers relating to her lectures and publications, but Agius material is not only found in her own archive. The books from her library are in the 'print items' collection, and her correspondence with Edward Joy is in the Joy archive.

The links between different sections of the archive are illustrated by an article on 'Thomas Dowbiggin, Royal Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer' written by Joy, found in the Cabinet Makers Archive and listed as from the Joy Archive, but which turns out to be Agius's copy. Since Bedford recorded the provenance of this item as the Joy archive it seems that Joy must have acquired Agius's copy of his article, pointing to their collaboration and interest in each other's work. The two archives together depict the relationship between these historians as well as providing access to their own research and book collections.

The furniture historian archives also illustrate the links between the archive and print material collected by Bedford which, when the print cataloguing is complete, will provide a comprehensive resource for furniture historians.

ZOE WOLSTENHOLME



# Grants

## Calling All Scholars and Museum Professionals

The Furniture History Society welcomes grant applications for independent travel, research or for participation in the Society's study trips both overseas and in the United Kingdom. Scholars and museum professionals working in the fields of furniture history, furniture making, decorative arts, interior design and conservation who are in need of support for travel and research are encouraged to apply.

The Society makes grants to individuals and organisations from two funds which have been established thanks to the generosity of members of the Society. They are administered by the Society's Grants committee (Chair: Adriana Turpin) which meets quarterly to consider applications – either for independent travel for study or research, or for participation in the Society's study trips, both overseas and in the United Kingdom.

## Tom Ingram Memorial Fund

Grants are awarded from the Ingram Fund towards travel and associated expenses for the purpose of study or research into the history of furniture. These grants are offered, whether or not the applicant is a member of the Society, where travel could not be undertaken without funding from

the Society; and only where the study or research is likely to further the Society's objectives. Applications towards the cost of the Society's own foreign and domestic trips and study weekends are particularly welcome from scholars and museum professionals. Successful applicants are required to acknowledge the assistance of the Ingram Fund in any resulting publications and will be required to make a short report on completion of the trip.

## Oliver Ford Trust

The Oliver Ford Trust supports research by emerging scholars and junior museum professionals in the fields of furniture history, the decorative arts and interior design mainly by sponsoring places on the Society's study weekends or foreign tours. Recent awards have included grants to enable participation in the Society's Symposium at The Frick Collection in New York; a weekend visit to the TEFAF (The European Fine Art Foundation) fair; and international conferences. Applications from individuals who are not members of the Society will be considered.

For further information or to download a grant application form, please go to the Grants page of the Society's website at [www.furniturehistorysociety.org/grants/enquiries](http://www.furniturehistorysociety.org/grants/enquiries). Enquiries should be addressed to the Grants Secretary, Jill Bace, at [grants@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:grants@furniturehistorysociety.org) or at 21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS.

# Publications

As a leading publisher in the field of furniture history, the Society offers for sale a wide variety of publications to both members and non-members. Among the publications that are currently available are the following:

*Index to the Dictionary of English Furniture Makers*, £20 (members £18)

Pat Kirkham, *The London Furniture Trade 1700–1870*, £20

Francis Bamford, *Dictionary of Edinburgh Furniture Makers 1660–1840*, £20

Jacob Simon, *Thomas Johnson's The Life of the Author*, £7.95

Judith Goodison, *Thomas Chippendale the Younger at Stourhead*, £6.95

Simon Swynfen Jervis, *John Stafford of Bath and his Interior Decorations*, £6.95

Simon Swynfen Jervis, *British and Irish Inventories*, £12 (members £10)

Morrison H. Heckscher, 'Chippendale's Director: The Designs and Legacy of a Furniture Maker', *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (May 2018), £15

*The Chippendale Society, Thomas Chippendale 1718–1779: A Celebration of British Craftsmanship and Design*, £5

**Post and packaging for the above UK £5.00; Europe £7.50;**

**Rest of the World £10.00**

Index volumes for *Furniture History*, vols I–X £5, XI–XV £5, XVI–XXV £5, XXVI–XXXV £5 **including post and packaging**

The following back numbers of *Furniture History* are available for purchase: XI (1975)–XIX (1983), XXII (1986), XXV (1989)–LVI (2020). A full list of articles published in these editions may be found on the Journals page of the website.

**Prices including post and packaging UK £28.00; Europe £32.00;**

**Rest of the World £35.00**

**Prices have been revised due to significant increases in postage, particularly to Europe and North America. Please see the website for details.**

To order these or any other FHS publication, contact the Society's Publications officer, Jill Bace, at [publications@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:publications@furniturehistorysociety.org) or 21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS. On receipt of your order, she will send you an invoice. Upon receipt of payment (which may be made by cheque, debit or credit card), orders will be despatched by the Society's printers.

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Council members can be contacted through the Events or Membership Secretaries, whose details are shown above. Contributors can be contacted through the Newsletter Editor, who is Sharon Goodman, 26 Burntwood Lane, London SW17 0JZ. Tel. 07855 176779; email: [sctgoodman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sctgoodman@yahoo.co.uk)

The views expressed in this *Newsletter* are those of the respective authors. They are accepted as honest and accurate expressions of opinion, but should not necessarily be considered to reflect that of the Society or its employees.

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## Copy Deadline

The deadline for receiving material to be published in the next *Newsletter* is 15 March 2022.

Copy should be sent, preferably by email, to Sharon Goodman email: [sctgoodman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sctgoodman@yahoo.co.uk), or by post to 26 Burntwood Lane, London SW17 0JZ. Tel. 07855 176779.

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COVER PICTURE: Charles Wild (1781–1835), *Windsor Castle: the King's Closet*, c. 1816, pencil, watercolour and bodycolour, 20.0 × 25.1 cm, RCIN 922104.