



THE FURNITURE HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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LIONEL CRANFIELD AND THE FURNISHING OF CHELSEA HOUSE 1620–1625

In 1620 Lionel Cranfield (1575–1645) purchased Chelsea House, one of the largest and most impressive riverside residences to the west of London. Cranfield had been born the son of a London mercer, but having made a fortune as a speculator on the European textile markets he was able to buy his way into government. By 1620 Cranfield was an established figure at court and held two significant and lucrative offices, as Master of the Wardrobe and Master of the Court of Wards. Within the next two years he was made Lord Treasurer and elevated to the peerage as the 1st Earl of Middlesex. This rapid accumulation of titles and positions required Cranfield to be seen to act, and indeed live in a manner befitting his newfound status.

The focal point of Cranfield's attempts to establish himself as a courtier was the acquisition and renovation of Chelsea. This substantial residence had previously been owned a number of leading courtiers and aristocrats including Gregory Fiennes, 10th Baron Dacre (1539–1594), Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury (1563–1612) and Henry Clinton, 2nd Earl of Lincoln (1539–1616). Once established at Chelsea, Cranfield set about instigating a series of changes to the fabric of the building, orchestrated by the court architect Inigo Jones. Previously it has been believed that Jones's involvement was limited to providing the design for a Doric gateway that was moved to Chiswick House, prior to the destruction of Chelsea House in the eighteenth century. However, payments in Cranfield's personal accounts reveal that Jones was also responsible for supervising changes to the body of the house (Centre for Kentish Studies U269/1 AP43). A comparison of two inventories for Chelsea, the first dating from the Earl of Lincoln's tenure in 1606 (The National Archives SP14/23/21) and the second from 1622 (Lambeth Palace MS 1228), suggests that these changes were relatively modest and did not involve the whole scale re-ordering of the



Fig. 1 Daniel Mytens oil painting of Lionel Cranfield dated 1623, copyright The Sackville Collection (The National Trust) Knole, Kent

house. Rather, Cranfield focused his efforts on the refitting of the interiors of Chelsea with a mind towards the entertainment of the king and his court. Contemporary etiquette and court ceremony necessitated that the house contained a series of state apartments, all equipped with matching furniture upholstered in rich textiles and passementarie. Sadly for Cranfield, soon after he completed the furnishing of Chelsea, he fell from favour, and following his impeachment in the Parliament of 1624, Cranfield was forced to surrender Chelsea to the Crown. His newly acquired furnishings were removed to his country house at Cophthall (later referred to as Copt Hall), in Essex and when each of his sons died without heirs, the estate passed to his daughter's son, Charles Sackville 6th Earl of Dorset (1643–1706). When Cophthall was sold, its contents were moved to the Sackville seat at Knole in Sevenoaks, Kent.

Details of how Cranfield first came to own these furnishings can be found in both his personal papers and the official records of the Great Wardrobe. As Master of the Great Wardrobe to James I, Cranfield was responsible for purchasing items for the furnishing of royal residences. This was a role to which Cranfield was well suited as he instituted new methods of accounting while pursuing a policy of reform and retrenchment. As part of his attempts to curb expenditure, Cranfield placed his own personnel in key positions in the Wardrobe, something which enabled him to bypass the existing bureaucracy and manage the department more effectively. A central figure in this operation was Richard Colbeck, Cranfield's Yeoman of the Wardrobe, who between 1618 and 1624 ran the Wardrobe on Cranfield's behalf while at the same time supervising the furnishing of Chelsea and Cranfield's lodgings at court. As part of his role as Yeoman of Cranfield's Wardrobe, Colbeck was responsible for managing the purchase and delivery of new goods and overseeing the ongoing care of the furnishings (Lambeth Palace Library MS 3361). This was a position of some significance, because although Cranfield himself took a keen interest in the furnishing of his own house, Colbeck appears to have been the individual who orchestrated the fitting out of Chelsea. In this capacity, he liaised with key family members on the provision of textiles, oversaw the purchase of paintings, and in the absence of Inigo Jones, supervised the craftsmen working on the house.

Most importantly, Colbeck's double role as household servant and Wardrobe official facilitated the purchase of choice commodities through the Great Wardrobe for Cranfield's own use. These were bought at advantageous rates that otherwise would have been unavailable to Cranfield. The purchase of two sets of tapestries in early 1620 is a case in point. One six-piece set of the story of Diana was recorded as being in Colbeck's custody within the Great Wardrobe in October 1619 (CKS U269/1 OW157). These were then sold to Lionel Cranfield in March 1619/20 for the sum of £257.12.00 (CKS U269/1 OW 46). At the same time Cranfield also purchased another seven-piece set of the story of Noah through the Wardrobe at a cost of £260.08.00. It is evident that these were Cranfield's most prestigious tapestries and that they were purchased specifically for the furnishing of the withdrawing room and the great chamber at Chelsea.

In July 1629 these tapestries were part of a collection of furnishings were briefly lent to Cranfield's close friend Edward Sackville 4th Earl of Dorset (CKS U269 E293). By a strange quirk of fate the Noah set appears to have returned to the Sackville family for a second time at the beginning of the eighteenth century when the contents of Cophthall were brought to Knole. While the sheer volume of furniture that was in transit between the various Sackville properties during this period makes it difficult to track the precise movement of the Chelsea tapestries, it is evident that by 1706 six pieces of the story of Noah were hanging in the room now known as the King's bedchamber at Knole (CKS U269 E79/2). By 1730, they had been replaced by a set of tapestries of the Story of Nebuchadnezzar, and appear to have been combined with a second set of Noah tapestries also hanging at the house. At the

beginning of the twentieth century the majority of these tapestries had either been sold or lost, aside from two (one from each set) which now hang in the private apartments at Knole.

Cranfield also bought directly from the merchants who specialised in fitting out the households of wealthy courtiers. At Chelsea this was the London Draper Hugh Goddard (c.1569–c.1625). A schedule of Goddard's bills dating between September 1620 and November 1622 held within the official Wardrobe papers relates that he was responsible for providing a substantial proportion of the furniture at Chelsea (CKS U269/1 OW35). These bills hold considerable detail as to the construction of the furnishings he provided, and also give a good sense of the variety of items that he was able to supply. Along with five suites of seat furniture and a number of high-status beds, Goddard also sold quotidian items such as rush matting, 'Bristol' carpets, coarse rugs and blankets. He also provided beds for Cranfield's most important servants, many of which featured canopies of say or dornix.

However, it is clear that Cranfield prioritised his most important furnishings over those of his servants, as the first suite of furnishings that arrived at Chelsea was designated for his marital bedchamber. The set was made up of a large beech bed, a great chair, two high stools and two low stools, all of which were richly upholstered in carnation damask. Another prestigious suite that Goddard supplied for Cranfield was that which accompanied a canopied couch bed for the bedchamber to the great chamber delivered in 1621. This couch bed, replete with six long cushions and fluted cups cost £16.09.05, almost as much as the suite of furniture pertaining to it. Both the couch bed and its canopy were finely upholstered in 'carnation velvett' embroidered 'on everie seame and between everie seame' with carnation silk and silver lace.

As furniture historians have noted, the couch is a difficult furniture type to define in this period. Yet, judging by its description as a couch bed as opposed to a couch chair, it seems sensible to suggest that this couch functioned as a day bed used for receiving visitors and guests. The 1622 inventory of the house relates that the bedroom in which this couch was placed formed part of the state apartments, which consisted of a great chamber, a bedchamber and a withdrawing room. Notably, the seat furniture in this adjoining withdrawing room, made up of a set of two great chairs, six back chairs, two high stools and four low stools, was also upholstered in 'carnation velvett' with 'carnation silke and silver' to match the canopied couch bed. It is clear therefore that the furnishings of the bedchamber and the withdrawing chamber were conceived as a continuous suite, showcasing Cranfield's wealth and sophisticated taste.

It is clear from the information provided in his bills that Goddard was not responsible for supplying the expensive fabrics that far exceeded the cost of the frames and upholstery they covered. Rather, it seems likely they were sourced by Colbeck and Cranfield through the Great Wardrobe (CKS U269/1 OW49). Nor was Goddard responsible for Chelsea's most impressive set of furnishings. This was the suite created specifically for Lady Cranfield's lying in ahead of the birth of her first son in December 1621. This important occasion was given even greater significance when it was decided that James I would come to Chelsea to christen his newborn namesake and godson. The commission for this special suite of furniture was given to Oliver Brown and John Baker, the king's own upholsters, although Cranfield ensured that both Colbeck and Goddard checked their bill to ensure that he was getting a fair price (CKS U269/1OW46). The bed was equipped with a large canopy, with curtains of crimson satin embroidered with gold and silver lace. There was also an accompanying pallet canopy presumably for a nurse to attend upon Lady Cranfield. The cradle, of crimson velvet and satin was embroidered with gold and was also equipped with a canopy suitable to the large sparver, while the matching seat furniture consisted of two great chairs, eight high stools, two low stools and one foot stool.

Once installed in the great bedchamber at Chelsea, the magnificent effect of this profusion of finely upholstered furniture was not lost on observers. John Chamberlain, writing to Dudley Carleton, noted that Lady Cranfield, 'is saide to lie in very gorgeously, and (yf all be true) far beyond the qualitie they were in not longe since'. (Chamberlain Letters), Vol. II, Philadelphia, 1939, p. 436.

The research for this article was supported by both the National Trust and Lord Sackville, to whom the authors owe their thanks for making Knole and its collections accessible to them.

Edward Town & Olivia Fryman

THE FHS MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

The Council of the Society is immensely grateful to those members who very kindly completed and returned the questionnaire. There were 174 respondents, which is approximately 12.4 per cent of the membership, and overall comments were extremely appreciative, highly praising the work of the Society, Council Members and Officers. There were many good suggestions and the general tone was both constructive and very positive, including several offers of practical assistance. Congratulations were expressed to Council on the questionnaire initiative. (The silence of the remaining members could be interpreted as indicative of approval of the Society's activities.)

Respondents were approximately one third academics (either museum curators or independent scholars), one third the commercial world (auction houses, advisors, dealers or restorers) and one third private individuals. The Society was very pleased to receive forty completed forms from non UK based members, with a wide range of age groups and varying lengths of membership, although members aged 55 or over and/or with over ten years membership comprised slightly over 60 per cent of the sample.

There was some interest in receiving notices and the *Newsletter* by email, but generally members wished to continue receiving both the *Newsletter* and, not surprisingly, *Furniture History* by post. A unanimous view was expressed that the website needs to be improved both visually and in content, and that it needs to be regularly updated. The Council is now in discussion with website designers to further these aims. A facility to book and pay for events, subscriptions and publications online is also being investigated, bearing in mind cost implications and the Society's policy that places on events are not assigned on a "first come" basis to ensure a good mixture of attendees ranging from academics to those with more general interests. Other ideas for the website are being considered, keeping in mind the Society's essential independent academic status, which precludes the promotion of commercial ventures or the provision of valuations. With the new website it is envisaged that Officers of the Society and the Editors of the *Newsletter* and *Furniture History* will be contactable via Society email addresses, whilst there will be a general enquiries email address by which members will be able to contact individual Council members and request details of suitable academic contacts for further advice.

The Society's *Newsletter* and its journal, *Furniture History*, were deemed to be academically excellent and members liked the introduction of colour illustrations. There was some feeling that the design of both publications could be updated and the question of peer review was raised. The possibility of reviving the idea of an editorial advisory board has

since been discussed in this context. Many members would welcome an updated *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers* and its extension to include later nineteenth- and twentieth-century makers, and its online availability. This is a project which the Council has actively pursued in recent years, but approaches to outside bodies for manpower and finance have proved fruitless so far. Nor have applications to JSTOR and similar vehicles to make *Furniture History* available on line yet borne fruit.

The support of research is a key activity for the Society and members' suggestions in this regard were much appreciated. Some of these are being considered by the Activities Committee, whilst the Committee of the Tom Ingram Memorial Fund are planning a more active campaign to collaborate with educational and academic bodies to assist students and curators, both financially and practically. Applications for grants towards the funding of commercial publications and ventures rarely fall within the Society's remit, but will continue to be considered on an *ad hoc* basis. This matter was discussed at the FHS Annual General Meeting in 2007.

Replies indicated that the Society's membership is very happy with the programme of events as kindly organised by the Activities Committee and its volunteer Members. The many ideas suggested for the future were most welcome and will be considered; it will be important to preserve the balance between a scholarly approach, informed by state-of-the-art trends in specific areas of research, and accessibility to all levels of expertise within the Society's international membership. Practical constraints should be borne in mind in relation to some ideas. For example as country houses extend their public opening hours private access for specialist groups has become considerably more difficult to arrange; and as scholarly standards depend on the generosity of experts with their time rapid repeats of popular study days or weekends are often difficult to arrange, not to speak of the demands repeat visits may make on the generosity of private hosts. The social element of visits, allowing time for members to mix and talk, is accepted as very important and will continue to be an element in the planning events, be they full study days or weekends or individual visits. Far from diminishing the educational aspect of the Society's activities this ingredient should enhance their value.

The wide range of members' interests in the decorative arts suggests that the Society should pursue its attempts to recruit new members via a variety of other academic bodies and professional groups. From enquiries made to other scholarly charitable societies, it emerges that the Society remains in a fortunate position with regard to its membership numbers and offers extremely good value for the level of subscription rates.

In conclusion, the Council of the Society believes that in the twenty-first century a much improved website will play a key role in its future development, both by attracting new members and by better satisfying members' requirements, particularly in the areas of research, publications, events and communication, although the *Newsletter* and *Furniture History* will continue as its flagship publications. The feedback of the membership has been particularly appreciated in relation to the website project, but it will also be taken into consideration in all aspects of the Society's pursuit of furthering the study of furniture history to an international audience.

Simon Swynfen Jervis, Chairman

OBITUARY

MICHAEL LEGG (1929–2011); A TRIBUTE.

Michael Legg died on Monday 21st February 2011 at home in his beloved Dorchester. Many members of the Society will not only have known Michael but will also have benefited from his help in explaining often obscure aspects of cabinet making and furniture history. His knowledge was wide and always freely given.

Michael came from an old Dorset family. His grandfather was involved in making carriages and his father was an antique dealer in Dorchester. He was born on 12th April 1929 in Fordington, on the outskirts of Dorchester. He left school at 13 and went to help his father, but traded on his own, renting a room from his father. He ran a restoration business in the Malthouse, Dorchester even before National Service and it was in this way that Michael started to learn about all the various aspects and mysteries of the cabinet trade that helped make him such a fascinating man to talk to in later years. He did his National Service with the Royal Artillery that was, as for many a formative experience and where he made friends for life. However, it has been said that he was late for his medical as he was investigating what was for sale in the local antique shops. His punctuality was notorious and, by his express wish, he was even slightly late for his own funeral.

After his stint with the Army and still never missing the chance of looking in antique shops and doing a deal, he returned to his joined his antique business in Dorchester where he continued to work throughout the 50s and 60s; although he spent much time with his father they always had separate businesses. He married and had two sons, Christopher and



Fig. 2 Photograph of Michael taken at Swarthmoor Hall on 3rd October 2009

Phillip, and eventually opened his own shop in 15 High East Street. Michael's second marriage, to Polly, was in 1973; they became an inseparable couple. Michael and Polly joined the Furniture History Society in 1980 and I especially remember meeting them both for what was my first FHS Conference centred on Bath and Badminton House in 1983. I was immediately struck by his wide knowledge. Over the years Michael increasingly gave of his wide knowledge explaining, for example, how drawer sides were always made in pairs and exactly why cabinet-makers only polished their saws on one side and this he did at numerous conferences, house visits and private viewings at the salerooms prior to major sales.

In 1984 Michael became one of the founder members of the Regional History Society, very much at the suggestion of another FHS member, the late Alun Davis. Michael has been Vice-President of the RFS for almost ten years, a tribute to his deep knowledge. In fact his awareness of regional difference was deeply rooted in his love of Dorset; from the poet Thomas Hardy through to Dorset clock-makers, the old-established Dorset Clock Society also made Michael their chairman. His knowledge of regional furniture types was also extensive and he would have relished the latest February FHS *Newsletter* with its article on Channel Islands furniture. There had been a strong connection with the port of Weymouth and the Channel Islands. and I have a fond memory of Michael recounting how he would come across the very distinctive late eighteenth century wardrobes which were very similar to French provincial armoires and could be dismantled into at least seven flat sections for ease of transport; yet in their design, looked typically English. Indeed he would also have loved to have seen the book woodworking tools, the flyer for which accompanied the *Newsletter*.

Adam Bowett has written how Michael showed him how to look at furniture in new ways, the better to understand the cabinet-makers who worked on the furniture that we are so interested in. Michael had always wanted to know why things were done the way they were; his father, an antique dealer of an older generation, always tried to warn him against upsetting the received opinions of furniture historians as it might put off the customers. Fortunately, Michael did not share this view and he was always, for many, the first person to ask if one wanted to know what a particular timber was or how some item had been made.

We shall all greatly miss Michael, with his soft Dorset accent, quiet humour, fund of stories and considerable expertise. We extend our sympathies to Polly and his two sons.

Treve Rosoman

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

THE TOM INGRAM MEMORIAL FUND AND OLIVER FORD TRUST GRANTS

The Committee of the Tom Ingram Memorial Fund is delighted to announce that the Oliver Ford Trust has most generously increased the funds available for disposal to suitable applicants to a total of £4,000 per annum for a period of 5 years. This is in addition to the current figure of approximately £1,200/£1,500 per annum generated for allocation from the income of the Tom Ingram Fund. At a time when funding for the arts is being considerably reduced by local and central Government this support is extremely welcome.

The Oliver Ford Trust, endowed under the will of Oliver Ford (1925–1992), wishes specifically to support curators and scholars under the age of 35, such as those studying for MA/PhD qualification, or at the beginning of their career in the field of furniture history or interiors. Oliver Ford grants have in the past supported travel for research projects and participation in the Furniture History Society's events. With the increased funds

that will now be available (and in the spirit of suggestions made by members on the recent questionnaire) other appropriate areas of academic support for suitable applicants are now being considered by the Committee of the Tom Ingram Memorial Fund Committee and will be notified in the near future.

The Tom Ingram Fund was established in memory of Tom Ingram (1913–1990), a distinguished archivist, who was one of the founders of the Furniture History Society and served as its President from 1979 until his death. The Fund awards grants towards travel and other incidental expenses for the purpose of study or research into the history of furniture and interiors. Its Committee also advises on the allocation of the Oliver Ford Trust grants.

The Committee of the Tom Ingram Memorial Fund, efficiently and enthusiastically chaired by Adriana Turpin for many years, has recently appointed Clarissa Ward, previously FHS Activities Secretary, as its Secretary. All applications/correspondence in relation to grants by the Tom Ingram Memorial Fund and the Oliver Ford Trust should be sent to The Tom Ingram Memorial Fund Committee, The Furniture History Society, 25 Wardo Avenue, London SW6 6RA (email clarissaward@hotmail.com).

FUTURE SOCIETY EVENTS

BOOKINGS

For places on all visits please apply to the Events Secretary, Sara Heaton, 18 First Street, London, SW3 2LD. Tel. 07775 907390 enclosing a separate cheque and separate stamped addressed envelope for each event using the enclosed booking form. 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 enclose a telephone number where you can be reached. Please note that a closing date for applications for all visits is printed in the *Newsletter*. Applications made after the closing date will be accepted only if space is still available.

CANCELLATIONS

Please note that no refunds will be given for cancellations for occasional visits costing £10.00 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 £5.00 deduction for administrative costs. Separate arrangements are made for study weekends and foreign tours and terms are clearly stated on the printed details in each case.

N.B. PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND SUFFICIENT STAMPED, SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPES FOR ALL APPLICATIONS, INCLUDING REQUESTS FOR DETAILS OF FOREIGN TOURS AND STUDY WEEKENDS

ANNUAL LECTURE — ADVANCE NOTICE

Wednesday 2nd November 2011

This year's FHS Annual Lecture is titled *Tapestry in Eighteenth-Century Britain* and will be delivered by Helen Wyld. The lecture will trace the story of the tapestry medium in eighteenth century Britain, looking at both native producers and the importance of French design and products, the increasing diversification of uses in furniture and other settings,

and finally considering the status of tapestry as a high-cost luxury medium in an age fast moving towards mass production.

Helen Wyld is currently working on a three-year project funded by the Paul Mellon Centre to research and catalogue the most important aspects of the National Trust's tapestry collection. Booking details will appear in the August Newsletter.

AUTUMN STUDY WEEKEND: LINCOLNSHIRE

Friday 30th September to Monday 3rd October 2011

Dr Tessa Murdoch and Mrs Frances Collard of the V&A Museum will lead our autumn study weekend in Lincolnshire. We will be based in Lincoln in a centrally located three star hotel where we will stay for three nights. The visit will start on Friday 30th September in the early afternoon when the coach will collect the group from Newark Station. We will then visit two private houses in the Grantham area before driving to Lincoln to our hotel which overlooks the Cathedral. Dinner will be at the hotel.

On Saturday 1st October we will spend most of the day at Belton House (NT) the former home of the Brownlow Family, known as the 'perfect English Country House'. There will be a chance for close study during the morning when the house is closed to the public. We will have lunch at Belton and some further time at the house in the afternoon. After tea at Belton we will drive to a private house for a study visit, where we will later have dinner.

On Sunday 2nd October we will leave for a private morning visit to Doddington Hall, near Lincoln, an Elizabethan house which has always remained in the same family, now owned by Mr and Mrs James Birch. We will be able to examine their collections of furniture, tapestries and historic wallpaper. After lunch we will drive to South Carlton for a private visit. We will then return to Lincoln where we will have a private visit to the Cathedral Library with fittings designed by Sir Christopher Wren. Dinner will be in Lincoln.

On Monday 3rd October we will drive to the North of Lincolnshire where we will have a whole study day at Brocklesby, by special permission of the Earl of Yarborough. The coach will deliver the group to Newark Station.

The Tom Ingram Memorial Fund and Oliver Ford Trust invite applications from students/junior curators and scholars for funding towards participation in this study weekend. All applications/correspondence in relation to grants by the Tom Ingram Memorial Fund and the Oliver Ford Trust should be sent to The Tom Ingram Memorial Fund Committee, The Furniture History Society, 25 Wardo Avenue, London SW6 6RA (email clarissaward@hotmail.com) by 1st June 2011.

Full information is available from the Events Secretary. Closing date for applications: 10th June 2011.

OCCASIONAL VISITS

STRAWBERRY HILL, Twickenham

Monday 6th June 2011, 10.00 am to 12.00 noon

Michael Snodin, of the V&A Museum and Chairman of the Strawberry Hill Trust has kindly agreed to lead a private visit to Horace Walpole's 18th century Gothic castle. After tea or coffee we will see the first phase of the nine million pound restoration of this remarkable Gothic fantasy. In 1994 Strawberry Hill was listed by the World Monuments Fund as 'one of the world's most endangered heritage sites'. Today after substantial grants

from the Heritage Lottery Fund and others, this well documented and fascinating house is returning to its former glory.

£ 20 per head Limit: 30 members

Closing date for applications: 23rd May 2011

SOUTH-GERMAN BOULLE EXHIBITION, Munich

Thursday 30th June 2011, 12.00 noon to 7.00 pm

Prunkmöbel am Münchner Hof — Barocker Dekor unter der Lupe: Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Prinzregentenstraße 3, 80538 München, 8th April to 31st July 2011 (www.bayerisches-nationalmuseum.de.)

Dr Melanie Doderer Winkler (FHS Activities Committee) has arranged with Dr Sigrid Sangl, furniture curator at the Bayerisches National Museum, Munich, to take a group round the forthcoming Boulle Exhibition. Dr Sangl has also arranged for an English-speaking guide to take the group to the royal Residenz (close to the Museum), where there are various pieces of early German Boulle furniture.

The heart of this exhibition is formed by four outstanding writing cabinets in the Boulle technique by the celebrated Munich court ébéniste Johann Puchwiser (c.1680–1744). Trained in Vienna, Puchwiser worked from 1701 onwards for the Bavarian elector Max Emanuel (1662–1726), who had a particular love for all things Boulle.

The exhibition explores the early eighteenth century taste for Boulle furniture in Southern Germany and adjacent areas, its stylistic development and specific manufacturing techniques. The holdings of the Bavarian National Museum are complimented by loans from Bruchsal, Munich, Nurnberg, Prague, Rastatt, Salzburg and Vienna. Ornamental prints and graphics further illustrate the change in taste in the field of interior design after 1700.

The group will meet in Munich for an early lunch followed by these two visits. The exhibition will be open until 8.00 pm that day.

Fee: £50 Limit: 15 members

For further information including suggested flights please contact Sara Heaton.

Closing date for applications 7th June 2011

ELTHAM PALACE, South East London

Tuesday 5th July 2011, 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm

Treve Rosoman and Annie Kemkaran-Smith, past and present curators of Eltham Palace for English Heritage, will lead a group around what is still the sole Art Deco house open to the public in Britain. The house has its roots in English medieval history, still retaining its original hammer-beam roof of c.1470 in the Great Hall.

The Art Deco house was built onto the Great Hall by Stephen and Virginia Courtauld in 1936; the architects were John Seeley and Paul Paget and the principal decorator was Peter Malacrida for White Allom & Co. The Society will have the opportunity to see some of the latest acquisitions and have a close inspection of the original dining table and chairs along with a pair of chairs with original needlework covers by Virginia Courtauld.

£ 10 per head Limit: 20 members

Closing date for applications: 10th June 2011

THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM AND NO. 1 ROYAL CRESCENT, Bath

Monday 11th July 2011, 10.30 am to 4.30 pm

Matthew Winterbottom, Curator of Decorative Arts, will lead a visit to the newly restored Holburne Museum. The Museum will reopen in May after 2 years major restoration. After lunch in the new Garden Café, we will move to No. 1 Royal Crescent, managed by the Bath Preservation Trust for a private visit. Victoria Barwell, curator, will explain the development plans and lead the visit around this remarkable Georgian Town House. There will be an opportunity for close examination of the furniture, and the visit will conclude with tea in the kitchen.

£ 45 per head Limit: 25 members

Closing date for applications: 10th June 2011

ADVANCE NOTICE

WELSH HOUSES STUDY DAY, 22nd October 2011

The Furniture History Society and The Regional Furniture History Society have arranged this joint study day of Welsh Houses in the Cowbridge Area. There will be a rare opportunity to see some private collections — Eglwys, Fferm, Ty Mawr a Phlas' (Translation: Church, Farm, Great House and Plas)

Further details will be available in the August *Newsletter*.

OVERSEAS TOURS

MALTA

Wednesday 26th October to Sunday 30th October 2011

Kate Hay, curator in the Department of Furniture, Textiles and Fashion at the V&A, is organising a study visit to Malta, based in Valletta for 4 nights. Visits will include the principal historic buildings and collections on the island and visits to private collections.

This event is now closed and fully subscribed.

ST PETERSBURG, Russia

A visit to St Petersburg is being planned for late April 2012.

Details will be available in the August *Newsletter*.

EXHIBITIONS, CONFERENCES AND COURSES

Please note that the following are not organised by the FHS. Information/booking instructions can be found under individual items.

'PRESERVING THE PAST, INSPIRING THE FUTURE' FURNITURE CONFERENCE, The Gateway, Buckinghamshire New University, Queen Alexandra Road, High Wycombe, HP13 6HN

Tuesday 7th June 2011

This thought provoking conference will look at new initiatives in predicted furniture activities for the coming century as well as examine key aspects of conservation and historical studies from the past.

Hosted by the Furniture Research Group (formerly the 20th century Furniture Research Group) and part of the new National School of Furniture, this event will include a keynote from the Head of the National School of Furniture: High Wycombe along with national and international speakers representing furniture conservation, design, history and manufacture.

For more information and booking details please contact: sharon.grover@bucks.ac.uk or call 01494 522 141 ext 3583.

GEORGE AITCHISON: LEIGHTON'S ARCHITECT REVEALED, Leighton House Museum, London W14 8LZ

8th May to 31st July 2011

While Leighton House is known internationally, its architect George Aitchison (1825–1910), remains a shadowy and under-appreciated figure. Besides his work for Leighton, he was responsible for some of the most beautiful interior decorative schemes of his time. Designed for a discerning and wealthy group of clients, they featured contributions from many of the artists and designers involved in the creation of Leighton House, including Leighton himself. This is the first exhibition in over 30 years to explore Aitchison's career and includes a number of his interior designs described as 'amongst the most exquisite and colourful 19th century architectural drawings in existence'.

BASKETRY: MAKING HUMAN NATURE, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, UEA, Norwich NR4 7TJ

Until 22nd May 2011

Basketry: Making Human Nature is the culmination of a major AHRC funded research project exploring the development and use of basketry in human culture over 10,000 years. It comprises world art objects and contemporary art from Western Amazonia, North America, Oceania, Africa, Japan, South-East Asia and Europe.

The exhibition, which includes practical items such as a reed boat, a donkey saddle bag and a suit of armour together with art and design pieces, challenges our notions of basketry and explores ideas about the place of basketry in human culture.

Amongst the contemporary art in the exhibition are works by Laura Ellen Bacon, Wilfried Popp and Lois Walpole, with new commissions from Mary Butcher and Ueno Masao. The exhibition also includes three works from the Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection of world art, which is permanently displayed at the Centre.

For more information see the website: www.basketry.ac.uk

MA IN DECORATIVE ARTS & HISTORIC INTERIORS, The University of Buckingham in collaboration with The Wallace Collection

Supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

This unique collaborative MA in French and British decorative arts and interiors is based at the Wallace Collection in London and the University of Buckingham's London teaching centre at the ESE in Grosvenor Place and the Victoria and Albert Museum. The programme

is taught jointly by Buckingham University and the Wallace Collection. Drawing on the Collection's unrivalled resources in French 18th century art, the programme focuses on first-hand study of the decorative arts within the historic interior and provides a thorough practical and academic training for careers in the art and heritage world.

Scholarships and part-time options available. To apply for this September contact Linda Waterman on 01280 820120 or www.buckingham.ac.uk/london/decorative-arts/

REQUESTS FOR HELP AND INFORMATION

WHERE ARE THE MISSING PIECES FROM THE ADAM LIBRARY SUITE AT KENWOOD?

A proposed re-presentation of Kenwood has highlighted the importance to recreate the Robert Adam scheme more fully in the Library. The original contents were sold from Kenwood in 1922 and the current whereabouts of five items of furniture designed by Adam, and made by William France c.1768–70 are still tantalisingly unknown.

They include; one (of three) gilded scroll stools (for the windows), two gilded sofas (to stand in the recesses opposite) and two pier tables. *Country Life* photographs of 1913 exist to show the appearance of the window seats and sofas before they were sold, whilst for the pier tables there is sparse written evidence in the original bill, stating, '2 very rich frames for your Tables with 8 legs to Each richly carv'd ...and gilded' Adam sketches and room designs also show evidence of what this suite may have originally resembled.



Fig. 3 One of two window seats recently discovered and now at Kenwood House.

A black and white photograph of one of the sofas was reproduced in Ralph Edward's *The Dictionary of English Furniture*, rev. ed. 1954, Vol. III, p. 97, fig. 61.

If anyone has any details regarding the whereabouts of objects from this suite, please contact Cathy Power, Senior Curator London on cathy.power@english-heritage.org.uk or tel. 020 7973 3495.

THE CFA VOYSEY SOCIETY

The Voysey Society has been founded to celebrate the *oeuvre* of architect and designer Charles Francis Annesley Voysey (1857–1941), one of the leading figures in both the Arts and Crafts movement and its immediate successors. It is the Society's objective to encourage research into all aspects of Voysey's life and work and to help to maintain his legacy. Amongst other activities, the Society hopes to develop a programme of lectures and visits around the country.

We are now seeking expressions of interest in joining the Society. In particular we hope to fill key committee roles including Executive Chair and Secretary. If you are interested in membership, please contact our acting membership secretary, Dr Peter King, with your name, postal address and email address. If appropriate, an indication of your willingness to take an active role will be especially welcome. There is no commitment and no cost at this stage.

To contact the acting membership secretary, email voyseysociety@gmail.com or telephone 01275 859028.

BOOK REVIEWS

Suggestions for future reviews and publishers' review copies should be sent to Dr Reinier Baarsen, Reviews Editor, Rijksmuseum, PO Box 74888, 1070 DN Amsterdam, The Netherlands, tel. 00-31-20-6747220. email: r.baarsen@rijksmuseum.nl.

Philip Temple, *The Charterhouse*, Survey of London Monograph 18 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), xiii + 317 pp., 91 col. and 73 b. & w. illus., ISBN 978-0-300-16722-1, £80

The Charterhouse, successively monastery, great Tudor mansion, Jacobean almshouse and school, and then, since the last departed to Surrey in 1872, exclusively an almshouse, is a remarkable survival in central London, a stone's throw from the Barbican. Its complex history is charted in this latest Survey of London Monograph, which brings the story up to the present day, including extensive accounts of the programme of restoration undertaken after bombs gravely damaged its historic heart on 11 May 1941, a campaign which lasted from 1946 to 1960, under the aegis of John Seely and Paul Paget, better known nowadays for their transformation of Eltham Palace for Stephen and Virginia Courtauld in the 1930s. Their Charterhouse work, too often ruthless or wilful by today's standards, does not escape criticism, but ensured the survival of the complex — and their Great Room chandeliers are nice specimens of 1950s taste.

The mediaeval survivals are fragmentary, but underlie Sir Edward North's transformation of the monastery, which was disbanded in 1538, into a modern house from 1545, following a miscellany of tenants, including the Bassano brothers, court musicians and instrument makers and, from 1542, the King's Tents, a major organisation with the capacity

to run up portable timber palaces in miniature. North sold the house to John Dudley, Earl of Northumberland, in May 1553, but that October Queen Mary returned it to him. Created Baron North in 1554 he lived to entertain Queen Elizabeth in 1558 and 1561. After his death in 1564 the mansion was sold to Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, whose intrigues to marry Mary, Queen of Scots, led to his execution in 1572. Howard House, as it had become, was now taken over by his then spendthrift son, Philip Howard, 13th Earl of Arundel, the future saint, who eventually died in the Tower in 1595. At this period there were several tenants including Francisco Giraldi, the Portuguese ambassador. A formal grant of 1601 gave Howard House to Arundel's half-brother, Thomas, Baron Howard de Walden from 1597, and created Earl of Suffolk in 1603 by James I, whom he had entertained lavishly for three days. It was probably the strain of his gigantic Audley End project which prompted Suffolk to sell Howard House in May 1611. The purchaser, Thomas Sutton, self-made, very rich and effectively childless, was determined to create a hospital, at once almshouse and school, as his own memorial. Almost instantly he chose the carver, Francis Carter, clerk of works to Henry, Prince of Wales, and later chief clerk to Inigo Jones, as his architect; Ralph Symonds, Carter's former master at Trinity College, Cambridge, was also involved. Sutton died as early as December 1611, but impetus was not lost, and in 1616 Sutton's Hospital was up and running.

From the point of view of furniture and interior decoration later episodes are not without interest. In the 1720s, for example, a joiner, Tobias Priest (not in DEFM), supplied a new communion table: in 1726 and 1754 the carver James Dryhurst worked on overmantels; in 1748 Sefferin Alken supplied a gilt frame; and in 1840 Crace & Sons decorated the Great Chamber for the architect Edward Blore. But the earlier periods prove the more rewarding. When the Hospital was set up each pensioner's room was supplied with a bedstead, mattress, bedclothes, bolster, towels, two rugs, fire-irons, table, chair, cup, spoon, candlestick and chamberpot, the early seventeenth-century basics. Tapestries were bought for the Great Chamber in 1615, some still surviving, and in 1626 Rowland Buckett, then Master of the Painter-Stainers' Company, painted and gilded its chimneypiece, a damaged but rare survival of high quality painted decoration of this period (Buckett is also recorded as having painted ten garden seats in the Wilderness in 1629). The Chapel was provided with a communion table in about 1613; also extant it incorporates Sutton's arms. Of the same date is the stone doorway to the Chapel, by Edmund Kinsman, an elaborate mannerist piece, stylistically identical to his Great Hall fireplace of 1614, which incorporates wooden cannons and balls made by the turner, Jeremy Winkle. A later Hospital introduction was the 1627 organ gallery in the Chapel by Robert Linton, Master of the Joiners' Company, with decorative carving by John James. All this Hospital work overlaid the North and Howard transformation of the monastery, of which the most striking surviving wooden elements are the sophisticated Great Hall screen of 1571, bearing the initials of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, and the neighbouring access gallery, probably a final contribution by his son, Thomas, Duke of Suffolk, in about 1610.

For this earlier period, however, the great contribution of The Charterhouse, beyond its careful and revisionist analysis of architecture and planning, is a series of full transcriptions, amounting to almost a hundred pages, of no fewer than four aristocratic Elizabethan inventories. The first and longest, taken in 1565, is that of Edward, Baron North, and includes both locations and prices. The second, of 1573, much shorter and unpriced, is almost certainly that of Thomas, Lord Paget, then a tenant, whose wife, Nazareth's, possessions are listed, with prices, in the third, of 1583, and also relatively brief. The fourth and final inventory, dated 1588, the year of the Armada, is unpriced and lists the possessions of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, then imprisoned in the Tower; second in length to that of Baron North, it is the richest of all. Cherry-picking from inventories is an arbitrary business,

but perhaps the following extracts (spelling modernised) may give some hint of potential: 1565 'In the gallery next the gate ... vii tables with poesies set in frames of wainscot ... a genealogy in French set in a case of wainscot'; 1573 'In the study ... A green carpet for a cupboard'; 1583 'The parlour ... Item one little very old stool for a woman covered with white and blue English turkey work'; 1588 'In the wardrobe ... three billiard sticks and one port and ii balls of ivory ... In the bedchamber at the end of the hall A long folded table of walnuttree upon a fair frame the posts whereof are cunningly wrought which table being unfolded and length containeth seven yards'. And there is so much more, whether functional or decorative, or both.

Simon Swynfen Jervis

Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide and Jeffrey Munger, *The Wrightsman Galleries for French Decorative Arts*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 260 pp., 228 col., 29 b. & w. illus., ISBN 978-0-300-15520-4, \$40.

This publication on the Wrightsman Galleries at the Metropolitan Museum, the series of rooms devoted to French decorative arts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, follows on to their refurbishment in 2006–2007, realized under the aegis of the British designer Patrick Kinmonth who was responsible for *Dangerous Liaisons*, the brilliant exhibition of eighteenth-century French costume held in these rooms in 2004. As Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide explains in her lucid and informative introduction, the success of that exhibition inspired the staff of the museum, together with Mrs. Charles Wrightsman who continues to take a very active interest in these galleries, to embark on a campaign to update the presentation of all the rooms. The introduction is refreshingly candid about many of the decisions taken, down to practicalities like historicising curtain rods. It is explained that the light levels, which can seem disturbingly low to the average visitor or the student desirous of studying the works of art on show, were evolved to reflect conditions in historical interiors during various parts of the day; the desire to evoke a natural, even at times theatrical, atmosphere in these period rooms has prevailed over more traditional concerns of museum display. One may applaud or question the result, but what the introduction clarifies is how strongly the very aspect of the galleries is due to their personal, even private, character. Mr and Mrs Charles Wrightsman, thanks to whose initiative and support the rooms were conceived and opened in 1963, have been extremely closely involved at every stage of their subsequent history. They have selected and guided the decorators involved, lent and donated many of the treasures on exhibition, and continued actively to search for appropriate acquisitions.

Unlike the earlier guide to the galleries, written by James Parker and Clare Le Corbeiller and published in 1979, the new publication does not describe the successive rooms with their contents, but comprises the presentation of just over 120 individual highlights, organized by medium. Of the sections that will be of special interest to readers of this *Newsletter*, those on the panelling and the furniture illustrate pieces that were nearly all covered in two earlier museum publications, *Period Rooms* of 1996 and *European Furniture, Highlights of the Collection* of 2006. However, there is a different flavour to the accompanying texts, particularly those on furniture. The basic factual and art-historical information is there, but in many cases it is augmented by quotations from diaries, letters and journals of the time, in order to give a sense of the way the objects were used and appreciated within the society in which they functioned. Many of the quotes actually come from English travellers and observers, Horace Walpole of course paramount among them, but

also Smollett, the Duchess of Northumberland and several others. The same approach is taken up in the other sections: those on gilt bronze and mounted porcelain, and on chimneypieces and fireplace furniture, feature a number of objects that had not been properly published since Francis Watson's catalogue of the Wrightsman collection of 1966–1970. Selections of textiles and leather, portraits, Vincennes and Sèvres porcelain, silver and gold boxes round off the highly delectable offerings. Although the importance given to contemporary comments may seem surprising in what is basically a form of guide-book, the emphasis on the original use and appreciation of the works of art is in accordance with the romantically historicising presentation of the galleries themselves.

Reinier Baarsen

SHORTER NOTICE

Alvar González-Palacios, *Nostalgia e invenzione, Arredi e arti decorative a Roma e Napoli nel Settecento* (Milan: Skira, 2010), 286 pp., 182 b. & w. illus., ISBN 978-88-572-0151-1, €32.

To call Alvar González-Palacios the doyen of historians of the Italian decorative arts might give the impression of a senior figure resting on his laurels. Not so: in 2010 alone he produced the major gathering of archival extracts and references from his files printed in the latest *Furniture History* and this book, whose title refers to that constant reworking of earlier sources combined with a vivifying originality which was such a constant of Italian art, particularly in the eighteenth century. *Nostalgia e invenzione*, in a stylish small paperback format, assembles fourteen articles first published from 1978 to 2008 in a variety of locations, be they journals such as the *Burlington Magazine* or *Antologia di Belli Arti*, or exhibition catalogues, or Festschriften, and three which are wholly or partly unpublished. The great majority date from the present century, and almost half are devoted to furniture and interior decoration, narrowly defined. These latter are split between the Kingdoms of Naples and the Two Sicilies (the porcelain cabinet at Portici; furniture from Palermo; the king's (Ferdinando IV) cabinet at Caserta; and the furnishing, also for Ferdinando, of the nearby (and much less well-known) Casino Reale at Carditello and Rome (Piranesi's decorative works; the carver Antonio Landucci, his wife Lucia Barbarossa, and her former husband, the carver Giuseppe Corsini; and the late eighteenth-century furniture of the Palazzo Caetani). There is the usual González-Palacios combination of delectable and interesting objects, magisterial discussion, and substantial and revelatory documentary appendices. Need one say more?

S.S.J.

REPORTS ON THE SOCIETY'S ACTIVITIES

STUDY WEEKEND TO NORTH PARIS CHATEAUX, Sunday 10th to Tuesday 12th October, 2010

The Modernist masterpiece of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye (built 1928/31) was the first visit of this FHS study weekend. Built as a weekend house for the Savoye family in a large garden of seven hectares and with views of the Seine, the house is now a state museum and much of the surrounding land has been developed. Even the most traditionally minded in our group were intrigued by the design of this iconic house, which clearly illustrates the five key points in the architect's beliefs. The interiors feature a few pieces of free standing

furniture which are either copies of work by Le Corbusier and his partners whilst storage space was integral to the architectural design within concrete divisions and surfaces.

It is not possible in the few words allowed for this *Newsletter* to do more than barely record that, on the Sunday afternoon, there was an FHS visit to the Chateau d'Ecouen, and how grateful we were for the guidance and time and expert exposition of its Curator, Thierry Crepin-Lebond. The Chateau was built by the Constable of France, Anne de Montmorency, in the late 1530s, and its present contents and furnishings display the quality and variety with which he would have been familiar. Some are even original, the painted chimneypiece surrounds, and much of the light walnut panelling of his library, delicately stencilled with gilded arabesque designs, including his monogram. Books and bindings are likewise contemporary.

Sixteenth century Medici, St Porchaire and Palissy ceramics are housed upstairs, together with Isnik, majolica and glass: objects in metal, clocks, astronomical instruments elsewhere. The Treasury Room has enticing wall cases filled with splendid silver and gilt vessels, French, German, Portuguese, 16th–18th century and a terrific Veneto Saracenic cabinet, late 16th century, similarly decorated to G. A. Baffo's Venetian spinet seen earlier. Enamels include plaques of remarkable size and quality, some of which he and his family would have known, and sculpture in bronze, wood or stone. Stained glass, leather hangings, and tapestry, including a series of ten pieces paid for in 1528 by our King Henry VIII, by no means complete the feast.

In the Chapel, where we first gathered, was the reredos, lent by the Louvre, composed of enamel plaques by Pierre Reymond. The original carved gilt wood frame of the second half of the 16th century contains lingering overtones of the Gothic enclosed in the new Italianate manner, its contents witnessing the continuing veneration of the work of Durer. Having noticed the multiple prie-dieu in pure Renaissance style of the first years of the 16th century from the Chateau de Gaillon, shortly afterwards we passed further woodwork from the Chateau. Lengths of screening are composed in the late Gothic manner, the ornament of one face more traditional than the other, which might betoken a small difference in date. Other separate panels from the Chateau are of exceptional sculptural quality. We should laud here the preservation of these and much else by Alexandre Lenoir. All ecclesiastical property was particularly at risk after the abolition of Christianity in October 1793. The dissolution of his Musée des Monuments Français in late 1816 encouraged collectors such as du Sommerard, whose collection was bought by the State in 1843. Some of this now enriches Ecouen.

Just as designs in sculpture or faïence are derived from print sources, so is much of the furniture. Jacques Androuet du Cerceau and Hughes Sambin, also an artisan, are the graphic sources that permeate it. Exceptions are the huge Italian architectural walnut 'treasury' cabinet, made for Cardinal Alexander Farnese late in the century, or the oak Dressoir carved with the date 1524. The latter is a hangover of Gothic forms, and is miles away in spirit. Making the point brutally that French 16th century furniture was formerly as lavishly polychromed and gilded as carved, is the tall two-part Armoire de Clairvaux, whose decoration was removed in the 19th century, a sad varnish giving the collector of the time what he thought he wanted. The Dressoir 'aux Harpies', though preserving its small polychrome marble panels, is polished wood, and much restored. In remarkable condition is a French cabinet of two doors on eight-legged stand, red leather covered, gold tooled, of the second quarter of the 17th century, an important precursor of the work of Pierre Gole.

Monday, another glorious Autumnal day, and the first glimpse of the Chateau de Chantilly through the trees and across the lake was that of a fantasy castle, enhanced by the drive past the vast and imposing stable block and through the manicured race course. We were met by our charming and erudite guide Anne Forray-Carlier in the opulent Main

Vestibule of the Grand Apartments of the Grand Chateau, built by Eugene Lamy for Henri d'Orleans, duc d'Aumale 1846–48. We visited first the Antechamber with the vast 'Le Meuble Mineralie' made in 1774 by George Haupt as a present from King Gustave III of Sweden to the Prince Conde, alas it had become separated from the collection of minerals during the Revolution. There followed a succession of lavishly decorated mid 19th century rooms in earlier period style and with a mixture of period and later furniture including a most impressive commode by Jean-Henri Riesener commissioned by Louis XVI for Versailles 1775 with magnificent ormolu mounts; good seat furniture by George Jacob, Jean-Baptiste Boulard and Francois II Foliot. Two bureau plats with cartonniers attracted interest, one commissioned by the duc de Choiseul and attributed to Simon Oeben c.1770 and the other attributed to Joseph Baumhauer was stamped for Jean-Francois Leleu; both were later in the celebrated collection of the Duke of Hamilton;. Also in the Galerie des Actions de Monsieur le Prince was a table attributed to Andre-Charles Boulle — all that remains of the original furnishings in his style for this room which were removed at the Revolution. We then split into groups for a visit to the Picture Galleries, the Chapel and, principally, the Petits Appartments Prives du duc d'Aumale in the old Chateau ('Petit Chateau' remodelled and decorated c.1875 again by Eugene Lami) an enfilade of small rooms with a quantity of distinctive furniture by Jean-Michel Grohe. But what captured everyones admiration was La Petite Singerie (together with La Grande Singerie), both with very fine white and gold decorated boiserie with slightly later painted decoration by Christophe Huet of charming monkeys and Chinamen replacing humans in different pursuits, the Petit Singerie 1735 and the Grande Singerie 1737 are a magnificent fantasy in delicate colours, an exotic triumph.

In the afternoon the group proceeded to The Royal Abbey of Chaalis, where we were greeted by Jean-Pierre Babelon, the distinguished historian and member of the Institut de France. The Cistercian Abbey of Chaalis had been founded by Louis VI 'The Pious' in 1137 and the group first viewed the ruins of the second abbey church before seeing the painstaking restoration work currently been undertaken on the outstanding frescoes by Primaticcio in the adjacent Gothic Chapel of Saint-Mary (1255–1260). To the north of this chapel stands, the sole surviving building from Jean Aubert's eighteenth-century additions to the site which was transformed into a chateau in 1854 to designs by D. H. Bellanger. In 1902 the Abbaye de Chaalis was purchased by the portrait painter Nélie Jacquemart-André and on her death in 1912 bequeathed to the Institut de France, together with her Paris mansion, which contains the finest works from her collection. In 1923 the Institut placed the Jean-Jacques Rousseau collection at Chaalis, which now also houses objects and furniture from Nélie's eclectic collections, together with the previous owners' furnishings which she had also acquired in 1902.

The collection now on display in the chateau comprises a very wide range of objects, including medieval furnishings and paintings, displayed in the former kitchen, and 16th, 17th and 18th century ceramics. The impressive great gallery (a former cloister, subsequently glazed) contains portrait busts in terracotta and marble, many of which are displayed on old chests or plinths and notable among them are those of Jacques Poitevin de Mezouls by Pajou and that of Cosimo I de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, by Bandinelli, which stands in front of two magnificent portières made at the Barberini tapestry workshop in the mid-seventeenth century. A series of reception rooms lead off the gallery. In the dining room there is a screen with panels painted with *singeries* by Christophe Huet, similar to examples in the Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris, and at Chantilly. Two fine plinths stand in the library, originally made for the apartments of the Grand Dauphin at Versailles in 1678 by Boulle (currently used to display portrait busts). They stand near to a commode, which has also been attributed to this master, although this is not certain. This room also

contains a console table with gilt-bronze mounts by Jean Bernard Honoré Tureau (“Toro”) (before 1731). The final room in this sequence, the principal drawing room, features a Régence parquetry bureau plat and, next to it, an armchair with the stamp of Michel Cresson (master 1742–63).

In the suite of four rooms on the first floor in which Nélie planned to live while at Chaalis is the “Eagle” Bedroom named after the handsome set of Empire furniture, decorated with these imperial birds, including a bed by Jacob-Desmalter (before 1813). Although one of the last purchases made before the death of her husband Édouard André (1892), this style of furniture was apparently not to Nélie’s taste and she would not have displayed it so prominently. Her own large bedroom displays a self-portrait by Rosalba Carriera (like Nélie a portraitist) and a transitional commode by Jean-Baptiste Fromageau, with parquetry of rosewood and lemonwood (after 1755). Nélie’s boudoir, which overlooks the chapel, has a mahogany desk with gilt bronzes by Dubois (master 1742–63) and a side cabinet by Pierre Harry Mewesen (a Scandinavian — before 1766). The upper gallery contains seventeenth-century tapestries and numerous 16th and 17th century tables and chests, as well as Renaissance and seventeenth-century paintings. The eight rooms which lead off this gallery, formerly monastic cells, were turned into guest bedrooms and each was furnished in a different style, ranging chronologically from Régence to Restauration. The first in this sequence is dedicated to the memory of the one-time curator of Chaalis and famous historian of the medieval period, Émile Mâle; its furnishings seem unlikely to have been to his taste, including a commode-tombeu stamped by Mathieu Criard (master 1738–76), veneered in amaranth, and a rosewood commode by Jacques Denisot (master 1720–1740).

The final day of our study tour was spent at the Chateau de Compiègne, where we were introduced to the royal and imperial history of the palace by its director, Emmanuel Starcky, and our morning studies were led by Helene Meyer. Originally a base for summer hunting, the royal chateau was rebuilt in the reign of Louis XV and finally completed in 1788 for Louis XVI and his wife, Marie-Antoinette. During the French Revolution Compiègne was taken over by the Ministry of the Interior and the entire furniture collection sold at auction in 1795, whilst all works of art were sent to the newly-founded Museum Central des Arts. Only a few have returned to the palace, most notably the nine Gobelins tapestries manufactured between 1736 and 1746 after cartoons by Jean-Baptiste Oudry (1686–1755) depicting the royal hunt at Compiègne.

The unique Double Antechamber, linking to the King’s and Queen’s apartments, served as a waiting room and was therefore initially filled with plain painted wooden stools and benches, covered in green velvet by Nicholas-Quinibert Foliot (1706–1776), delivered in 1785. The adjoining room was more elaborately decorated and Napoleon I used this room as his permanent dining room, for which purpose Jacob-Desmalter delivered in 1807 an early example of a table fix. This highly functional flame mahogany dining table has two half-rounded ends and four rectangular and geometrically arranged leaves allowing for maximum flexibility. The former King’s Bedchamber was altered and used by Napoleon I as the Salon de réception. Under the Second Empire this room was refurbished with neo-Louis XV chairs upholstered with old Beauvais tapestry. New chair types such as the confident (S-shaped chair for two) and the indiscret (spiral sofa for three) were also introduced. Typically for the period the majority of chairs have casters for easy movability. The adjacent Cabinet du Conseil still contains two of six painted silk portieres by Jacques-Claude Cardin (four more are in storage).

In 1804 Napoleon I declared the château a “domaine imperial”, and restored and furnished the palace as a great ceremonial platform with prestigious public reception rooms, a new ball room and lodgings for foreign sovereigns. Nearly all the furniture was supplied

by the workshops of François-Honoré-Georges Jacob-Desmaltre (1770–1841) and Pierre-Benoît Marcion (1769–1840). With one exception, all appartements de représentation are nowadays presented as richly furnished and highly decorated examples of the First French Empire style (1808–1810).

Marie-Antoinette's Games Room has some of the original furnishings including a six-panel gilded and painted screen by Jean-Baptiste Claude Sené (1748–1803) and Jean Hauré (1739–after 1796) covered with the same silk as the walls. Hauré also oversaw the making of the two large commodes executed in 1786 and 1787 by Benneman, copied for Compiègne from a model by Stöckel for the Queen's chamber at Saint-Cloud. Their rich ormolu decorations, which incorporate Marie-Antoinette's monogram, are by Charles-Jacques Tournay and Claude Galle (1759–1815). The wall-lights, supplied in 1787 and in the form of quivers, are after a model by Martin, carved and mounted by Pierre-Philippe Thomire (1751–1843). The King of Rome's Bedroom is another example where the 18th-century wall decorations prevailed but additional Pompeian-style panels had been inserted and the furniture is by Marcion.

Beyond the official apartments are the more private and intimate rooms, which we were immensely privileged to visit as they are not generally open. Of particular note in Napoleon's library a mechanical mahogany desk by Jacob-Desmaltre (two identical models are at Fontainebleau and the Trianon); adjustable in height and can be locked by the turn of a single key. The Empress Marie-Louise's personal rooms are much richer in their decorations than Napoleon's, the most elegant one being undoubtedly her circular boudoir-bedroom. The walls and soft-furnishings are all covered in white with the woodwork being either of exquisite mahogany or decorated with burnished gold. Another small semi-circular salon, covered in bright yellow silks contains a beautiful mahogany and ormolu embroidery-frame by Pierre Macret (1727–after 1796). The Salon des fleurs was used by Marie-Louise as her Games Room and is remarkable for its floral decorations by Dubois after drawings by Redouté. The Empress's dining room stands in strong contrast to these other rooms. Inspired by Egyptian antiquity the walls are covered with glazed stucco in imitation of yellow antique marble with black veining. The carpet in moquette couleur et peau de tigre. The nine-armed ormolu and bronze wall lights with the figure of Nike are later additions by Jean-Jacques Feuchère (1807–1852). Compiègne remained popular with the French rulers of the Restoration and July Monarchy period; the main addition to the château being the Petit Théâtre, a court theatre built in 1832 which has remained untouched with all its machinery and scene paintings.

Since then the chateau has become home to various museums, including the National Museum of Cars and Carriages, and in the afternoon of our study day we visited the Musée du Second Empire with curator, Laure Chabanne. This collection initially formed in 1927–8, was further expanded with the Ferrand Collection in the 1950s, the national collection of Second Empire objects in 1953 and various objects from the descendants of Napoleon in the 1970s.

In the Antichambre de la Chapelle, we saw an extraordinary jewellery cabinet by Charon frères, c.1855, the first of many pieces in the museum that were exhibited at the 1855 Exposition Universelle. Passing into the Salle d'Italie ones eyes were immediately drawn to the magnificently-framed famous Gobelins tapestry portraits of Napoleon III and the Empress, after the official Winterhalter portraits, originally hung in the Galerie d'Apollon, at the Tuileries. Also in this room was a meuble d'appui in ebony gilt-bronze and pietra dure, given by Mr James Hyde. In the next room was to be found an imposing (4 metres high!) bureau-ministre bibliothèque by Chastenot et Cie (the Association des ouvriers ébénistes *fl.* 1849–c. 1869) in rosewood decorated with carved trophies representing Astronomy, Mechanics and Architecture, caryatids representing Sculpture, Painting, Music and

Poetry, and represented on the pediments Commerce, the Navy and Agriculture. The Empress bought this impressive piece of furniture at the Exposition Universelle for 23,000 francs. Through into the Salle des Chasses, more opulent still, where we were dazzled by a completely regilded carved console table and matching central table with marble tops, made by Michel-Victor Cruchet in the Louis XVI style and delivered in 1858 for appartement A (along with one other console, three smaller consoles; the whole group of six pieces for 1650 francs).

The Salle Eugénie is a room dedicated to the memory of the Empress, where normally there is a lit à baldaquin in the Louis XVI style, currently under conservation. We saw in this room two veneered commodes in Louis XVI style, with gilt-bronze mounts by Guillaume Grohé (1808–1885), the taller of the two having been originally for the Empress's appartements at the Elysée palace, the other one having been in use at the time of Louis-Philippe at the Tuileries. Both were in the style of Riesener. In the Salle Giraud was an ebony armoire serre-bijoux mounted with porcelain plaques and acquired at the request of Napoleon III. The porcelain plaques are in the neo-rococo style and the piece was acquired from Moritz-Meyer of Dresden by the Mobilier de la Couronne in 1859. In the Salle Couture was an extraordinary secrétaire/médailleur in thuyawood, mounted with electro-plated gilt-bronze, which was another piece shown at the 1855 Exposition Universelle, was made by the Lyon-based partnership Daubet et Dumarest and bears the arms of the Empress (cost 26,000 francs).

The following room, the Salle Winterhalter was the imposing carved giltwood toilette serre-bijoux by Jules-Auguste Fossey (1806–1858) in the Louis XIV style, mounted with Sèvres porcelain plaques painted by P-M Roussel. It also was shown at the Exposition Universelle, and bears the Empress's cipher. She acquired it for 8,000 francs. Last, but by no means least, in our canter through the marvels of the Second Empire, was another example of Eugénie's purchasing power at the 1855 Exposition. Extraordinarily vegetal, prefiguring art nouveau by a half century, was a bonheur-du-jour by Alphonse-Gustave Giroux. Made of pearwood, sculpted into the excrescences of fowl and foliage, decorated with six painted panels by Labbé, this piece represented the non plus ultra of the Second Empire style.

The Society is immensely grateful to all the local curators and also particularly to Charles Garnett and Sylvain Lévy-Alban, who had organised the most scholarly visits, delicious local cuisine and, despite French transport strikes, a highly enjoyable and memorable study tour.

Full visit reports written by Jonathan Harris, Christopher Overton, Susan Bracken, Melanie Doderer-Winkler, Mia Jackson and Sara Heaton, are available from the FHS Events Secretary — please send large sae or email: furniturehistorysociety@hotmail.com

COPY DEADLINE

The deadline for receiving material to be published in the next Newsletter is 15 July. Copy should be sent, preferably by email, to m.winterbottom@bath.ac.uk or posted to Matthew Winterbottom, The Holburne Museum, Bath BA2 4DB, tel. 01225 820813

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