



THE FURNITURE HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

No. 187

AUGUST 2012

JOHN LINNELL'S REDISCOVERED BILL FOR FURNISHING AMMERDOWN HOUSE, SOMERSET

In their excellent survey of the work of William and John Linnell, Helena Hayward and Pat Kirkham refer to John Linnell's bill for furniture supplied in 1795/96 to Thomas Samuel Joliffe (1746–1824) for Ammerdown House in Somerset. However, the invoice was thought lost and a transcript was not therefore included in *William and John Linnell: Eighteenth Century London Furniture Makers* (1978). However, the invoice has recently been rediscovered at Ammerdown House and is here reproduced for the first time in its entirety.

The commission was perhaps John Linnell's last private commission before his death in March 1796. However, it is probable that most of the work was supervised by Thomas Tatham, John Linnell's cousin and brother of Charles Heathcote Tatham.

T.S. Joliffe Esq.

To the Estate of the late Mr John Linnell

1795

Nov 23rd

T.Tatham going to Ammerdown Coach hire & Expenses £3.13s.6d.

Dec 1st

23 Pieces of French grey and white striped paper @4/- £4.12s.0d.

16 Pieces of blue paper on satten white @8/- £6.8s.0d.

29 doz. of blue moulding Border @2/6 £3.12.6d.

12 best white cotton Tassells @1/3 £0.15s.0d.

1 Gros. of white cotton Line £1.4s.0d.

A case 16ft and packing D^o £0.4s.8d.

Porterage with D^o to the Kings Arms Holburne
Bridge

Dec 23rd

A frame for your Chimney Glass the mouldings
carved and gilt in burnished Gold on white
ground £2.18s.0d.
A Case 46ft and packing *D*^o £0.13s.5d.
Porterage with *D*^o to the Kings Arms Holburne
Bridge

1796

Jan. 26th

Paid porterage of a Case / containing Glass / from
Holburne Bridge to Berkeley Square £0.2s.0d.

May 12th

206 yds of green Tabaret @6/9 £69.10s.6d.
51 yds of rich green Mantua @3/6 £124.0s.6d.
130y½ yds of Superfine white Durant @1/6 £9.15s.9d.
20 yds of rich bellendine silk knotted Fringes, pea
green and white, 4in deep made very thick &
heavy @10/6 £0.10s.0d.
24 yds of *D*^o 3in deep @9/- £10.16s.0d.
8 large bellendine silk Tassells white and pea
green, 3 stitch cauls, knotted shags & ornament
with green silk egg hangers @13/- £5.4s.0d.
4 large silk Eggs @3/6 £0.14s.0d.
74 yds of large pea green silk rope Line & hooks @4/- £1.8s.0d.
52 yds of green Ribbon @3/- £0.13s.0d.
82 yds of green silk Line £2.1s.0d.

£148.15s.10d.

Brought forward £148.15s.10d.
4 rack pullies and screws £0.7s.0d.
4 long driving Cloakpins £0.4s.0d.
4 brass pulley rods containing 32ft8 and eight
brass screw Hooks £4.5s.0d.
2 very long window Cornices, ornamented and
gilt in burnished Gold in the best manner
on a white ground £12.12s.0d.
Making 2 very large p^r of rod window Curtains
of Tabaret lined with white Durant and bound
with ribbon, deep gathered Vallens lined & fringed
and green silk Draperies over *D*^o fringed compleat
silk, buckram, braid, oes, tape &c £6.8s.0d.
8 yds of large pea green silk rope Line for Bells
2 gilt Eggs for *D*^o £1.17s.0d.
16 pieces of montague damask green paper £6.8s.0d.
13 Quire of elephant paper £0.19s.6d.
277^{ft}6 of broad beaded moulding gilt in burnished
gold in the best manner @1/6 £20.16s.3d.
70^{ft}6 of Internal angular *D*^o @2/2 £7.12s.9d.
24 blocks for *D*^o £1.4s.0d.

8 sattinwood tablet back'd elbow Chairs with mouldings gilt in burnish'd gold round the painted tablets, the elbows carved, the legs turn'd, the backs, seats and elbows french stuff'd in fine canvas cover'd with the above Tabaret and nail'd with the best princes metal nails compleat	£44.0s.0d.
8 painted silk Tablets for <i>D^o</i>	£2.0s.0d.
Cutting out and making loose covers for <i>D^o</i> Of your printed Calico, thread, tape &c	£1.15s.0d.
2 large sophas to match the Chairs with square bolsters	£28.0s.0d.
Cutting out and making Cases for <i>D^o</i> of your printed Callico, thread, tape &c	£1.1s.0d.
	<hr/> £288.5s.4d.
Brought forward	£288.5s.4d.
A plate Glass 35 by 27 to match your own	£5.15s.0d.
2 Girandoles with top and bottom ornaments richly carved and gilt in burnish'd gold in the best manner to carry 4 lights each with cut glass pans, ormolu nosells and sockets cutting and stopping in your Glass and the above new one compleat	£39.15s.0d.
58¾ yds of wilton Carpet, thread, best tape &c and making a Carpet border'd all round	£20.11s.3d.
A long pole for <i>D^o</i>	£0.5s.0d.
A very large best Hearth rug	£1.8s.0d.
2 large Frames with ornaments in therm'd Legs and Gollosses [guilloches] in the rails gilt in burnished Gold in the best manner for your slabs	£18.18s.0d.
6 Chairs with caned backs and seats, painted sattinwood colour with green ornaments in varnish	£7.7s.0d.
A 5 ^{ft} 6 wainscot double veneer'd Bedstead with mahogany carved and fluted posts fine sacking bottom, bright compass rod and on french casters compleat	£13.12s.0d.
A sett of shaped moulding Cornices for <i>D^o</i> with Tablets, neatly jappan'd with ornaments to correspond with the furniture	£4.12s.0d.
66 yds of ell wide blue strip printed Callico @5/1	£16.15s.6d.
62½ yds of plain blue <i>D^o</i> @2/5	£7.11s.0½d.
20 yds of yd wide white <i>D^o</i> @1/5	£1.8s.4d.
Making a furniture for the above Bedstead with gather'd inside and outside Vallens bases &c lined and bound with the blue Callico, thread, tape, buckram, rings, &c	£3.16s. 0d.

5 ^{ft} 6 best wood and hair matrass in a fine white Case, border'd, bound and tyed down with silk tufts	£6.10s.0d.
A 3 ^{ft} 6 strip hair Matrass, border'd, quilted & tyed down compleat	£7.3s.0d.
A p ^r of 14/4 fine witney Blankets	£3.12s.0d.
A single 10/4 D ^o	£0.15s.0d.
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	£447.19s.5½d.
Brought forward	£447.19s.5½d.
A p ^r of wilton bedside carpets containing £3½ yds	£1.5s.0d.
18 yds of ell wide blue strip printed Callico @5/1	£4.14s.0½d.
23½ yds of plain blue D ^o @2/5	£2.16s.9½d.
12 yds of blue silk Line	£0.6s.0d.
4 large blue cotton vellum Tassells	£0.8s.0d.
3 yds of large blue cotton rope Line	£0.5s.0d.
2 large blue cotton Eggs	£0.3s.0d.
A Lath and 3 12 in iron brackets	£0.3s.0d.
A brass pulley rod and 2 brass screw Hooks	
A rack pulley and screws	£1.1s.0d.
Making a p ^r of rod window Curtains to match Bed furniture with gather'd Vallens lined and bound with blue Callico, silk, thread, tape buckram, oes, rings &c	£0.15s.0d.
A p ^r of sattinwood pole Firescreens the claws run, the ovals cover'd with green silk and sattinwood margins round D ^o varnish'd compleat	£3.18s.0d.
A Gallon of brown spirit varnish	£2.12s.0d.
A stone bottle	£0.1s.0d.
11 Cases and battins containing 824 ^{ft}	£12.0s.4d.
5 Matts used	£0.8s.9d.
2½ Quire of large brown paper, 2 Quire of Elephant	
8 Quire of whited brown, 8 Quire of silver paper	
5 doz ⁿ of screws, 2 Bedcords, pack thread tacks haybands &c and packing all the above furniture	£2.5s.0d.
The hire of 2 Carts and 3 Horses with D ^o to the Kings Arms Holborn Bridge and my man With D ^o Booking and Tolls	£1.1s.6d.
May 30 th	
My Forman going to Ammerdown unpacking All the furniture, smoothing the walls of Drawing Room, papering D ^o with Elephant paper pummice stoning and hanging D ^o with green paper, assisting the joiner to fix the gilt mould -ings Girandoles, Tables, fixing the Cornices putting	
	<hr/>
	£482.2s.10½d.

Brought forward £482.2s.10½d.
 up the window curtains compleat hanging
 the Bell Lines and laying down the carpet
 In Drawing Room, cutting out brown holland
 Cases for the sophas, Chairs, window Curtains
 Girandoles, Tables, Screens &c, cutting out bases
 and altering a field Bed furniture, cutting out
 and making a border'd tick mattrass, prepar^g
 and hanging with printed paper and border
 one Room a closet and a passage in Attic
 story, preparing and hanging with printed
 paper and border, a Bedroom, 2 Dressing
 rooms and 2 closets on first floor, putting
 up a large Bedstead with french castors
 putting up the cornices and furniture comp^t
 fixing the lath, rod & and putting up a p^r
 of rod window Curtains, with gathered Vallens
 making a roller Blind and fixing D^o in Bed
 -room, making 2 roller Blinds and fixing D^o
 in Library, making a roller for the bottom of
 Dressing room Door, covering p^r of stiff bands
 and sundry other jobs, 5 doz. stucco nails, 6000
 Tacks, 5 doz. Gilt screws, brass pins, 1 doz. of brass
 eyes for stairs, 1 doz. of large hooks and Eyes
 pummice stone &c

£9.4s.0d.
£491.6s.10½d.

Deduct: Cash paid for Gib Varnish £2:13s.0d.
 25ft of Borders returned £1:17s.6d.

£486.16s.4½d.

Deduct [?discⁿ] on this Sum £24:0s.0d.

£462:16s.4½d.

Add for varnish £2.13s.0d.

£465.9s.4½d.

A draft for £466 being the
 Balance of this account and a Consideration for
 The short pieces of Border returned see [?] [?]
 NB By Draft on Hodsol and C^o in the Strand

Received August 10th 1796 of Thomas Sammuell
 Jolliffe Esq the Sum of four hundred and sixty six Pounds being the amount of a bill
 delivered from the Estate if Mr John Linnell late of Berkley Square deceased and being in
 full of all demands from the said Estate. Received by
 Thos Tatham
 John Bond
 Executors

Amanda Sheridan and Matthew Winterbottom

EVENTS SECRETARY

The Council was sorry to have received the resignation of our Events Secretary, Sara Heaton, who has over the last 18 months organised an excellent series of events for the Society, which is grateful for her hard work and dedication. Sara will be leaving on 30 September 2012, so the Council has begun the process of recruiting her successor. The task, challenging but rewarding, is at the heart of the Society's activities. It comprises planning all events, is flexible and part-time, and requires reliability, commitment, initiative and administrative skills. It commands a modest honorarium (fee) and expenses. Expressions of interest and CVs should be directed to James Yorke FSA, Secretary, The Furniture History Society, 64 Peterborough Road, London SW6 3EB; jamesayorke@gmail.com, by 12 August 2012.

NEW FURNITURE HISTORY SOCIETY WEBSITE AND EMAIL ADDRESSES

We are very pleased to announce that the Society will re-launch its website in August. It has been completely redesigned and we hope it will improve access to INFORMATION, EVENTS, PUBLICATIONS, MEMBERSHIP, GRANTS, SALES and RESEARCH. To allow a site to grow and to be an enjoyable experience for Society members, we would welcome input and, from the time that the new site goes live in August, please email your comments and communications to the relevant Officer of the Society:

events@furniturehistorysociety.org
grants@furniturehistorysociety.org
journal@furniturehistorysociety.org
membership@furniturehistorysociety.org
newsletter@furniturehistorysociety.org
publications@furniturehistorysociety.org
research@furniturehistorysociety.org
website@furniturehistorysociety.org

Once the site is live, all members who have given the Society an email address will receive a Username and Password by email from the Society. You can then search for the site (address below) and on the top left hand of the home page you will see a members log-in button. Click on this and enter the Username and Password that has been sent to you and you will be able to use the site to a greater degree than the general public.

www.furniturehistorysociety.org

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.

Some advance event information (including weekends) will be available by email, please email the Events Secretary or send your email address with your application: furniturehistorysociety@hotmail.com

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 £10.00 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

Duncan Phyfe: Master Cabinetmaker in New York, Peter M. Kenney

The Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1

Tuesday 30 October, 6.00 pm for 6.30 pm – 7.45 pm lecture

To those with even a passing knowledge of furniture history, the name Duncan Phyfe is instantly recognizable. The apotheosis of Duncan Phyfe, described in his own lifetime as the 'United States Rage,' from a successful furniture maker to an American icon in the early twentieth century provides a logical starting point for a reconsideration of this renowned master cabinetmaker. Phyfe's brilliant craftsmanship and sense of design made him the leader of an entire school of cabinetmaking in early nineteenth-century New York. How Phyfe and the other cabinetmakers of this school forged their own distinctive version of the Grecian or classical style in its various iterations over time is a fascinating story of a celebrated master craftsman and the dynamic city he called home throughout his long career.

Peter M. Kenney is the Ruth Bigelow Wriston Curator of American Decorative Arts and the Administrator of the American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. He is the curator of the current Duncan Phyfe retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum, where he has worked for the past twenty-three years, principally with the seventeenth-, eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century American furniture collections.

Admission to the Lecture is free but attendance is by ticket only, which must be acquired in advance from the Events Secretary. Numbers are limited to 90.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND WORKS IN PROGRESS TALKS

The East India Club, 16 St James's Square, London SW1

Saturday 24 November 2012, 11.00 am – 1.00 pm

The Annual General Meeting for the year ending 30th June 2012 will be held at the East India Club. The AGM will start at 11.00 am (coffee from 10.30 am).

There will be a presentation on the Society's 50th Anniversary followed by Works in Progress talks including Rufus Bird, Deputy Surveyor of the Queen's Works of Art, Christopher Rowell, The National Trust, and Christopher Wilk and Joanna Norman of The Furniture Textiles and Fashion Department at the V&A who will give a general update on the department and an update on the Europe 1600–1800 Gallery.

There will be a special presentation by Dr John Martin Robinson on recent works at Wilton House.

Admission to the AGM is free but all members wishing to attend should notify the FHS Events Secretary at least 7 days in advance for security reasons. Tickets for lunch with a glass of wine at £20 per head should also be booked at least 7 days in advance.

ADVANCE NOTICE — THE 37TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM OF THE FURNITURE HISTORY SOCIETY

The Wallace Collection, Hertford House, Manchester Square, London W1

Saturday 9 March 2013

The Architect as Furniture Designer

The annual symposium will be organised by the FHS and Charles Hind, H. J. Heinz Curator of Drawings at the RIBA. The symposium will discuss a number of architects, from the eighteenth century onwards, in respect of their careers as designers of furniture as part of the interior decoration for the buildings for which they are best known.

Full programme and booking arrangements will be in the November *Newsletter*.

OCCASIONAL VISITS

FURNITURE GALLERIES, V&A, CROMWELL ROAD, London SW7

Wednesday 28 November 2012, 9.00 am – 10.30 pm

Curators Nick Humphrey and Leela Meinertas will lead this short preview tour of the V&A's new Furniture Galleries before they open to the public on 1st December.

These will be the first ever V&A galleries dedicated to furniture and its production, and the only such gallery worldwide with a comprehensive display of furniture from the Middle Ages to the present day. The gallery will display more than two hundred pieces of mainly Western furniture, many of which have not been on display for more than thirty years. Sixteen displays will address specific techniques of furniture making and decorating ranging from joinery, moulding and casting, digital manufacture and upholstery, to carving, marquetry, gilding and lacquer. A central, chronological display will present twenty-five key pieces from the collection.

For the first time ever at the V&A, digital, touch-screen labels will be used, providing additional images and information for each object. Alongside replica models displaying the

stages of historic techniques, a number of films will explore key techniques, and fourteen specially-commissioned audios will record the responses of contemporary experts to the work of historic designers. At the centre of the gallery, two table-screens will explore many of the materials used in furniture manufacture adjacent to a seating installation by contemporary designer Gitta Gschwendtner.

£15 per head Limit: 25 members

Closing date: 15 September 2012

THE WERNHER COLLECTION AT RANGER'S HOUSE, London SE10

Wednesday 3 October 2012, 10.30 am – 1.00 pm

There are still some places available for this visit. For full details please see the May *Newsletter* No. 186

OVERSEAS EVENTS

NEW YORK STUDY WEEKEND

1 – 4 December 2012

This visit is now fully subscribed.

ROME STUDY WEEKEND

11 – 14 April 2013

Adriana Turpin and Charles Garnett are arranging a spring study weekend to Rome. Details are still being confirmed. Please register your interest by email or the blue form as usual.

FHS RESEARCH SEMINAR, ORGANISED BY THE TOM INGRAM MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE (FHS GRANTS) WITH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE OLIVER FORD TRUST

Friday 23 November 2012, 10.30 am – 4.30 pm

The Wallace Collection, Hertford House, Manchester Square, London W1

The concept of this event is to present current studies of research on furniture history, design, construction, conservation and the history of interiors by MA and PhD students, and museum/heritage curators and professionals at an early stage of career development. The seminar will provide useful insights into current trends of research in the educational and museum world. The programme will include:

Mia Jackson, PhD student Queen Mary, University of London

André-Charles Boulle as a Collector of Prints and Drawings

Antonia Brodie, PhD student Queen Mary, University of London

A Room of One's Own? Unlocking the Closet 1650–1730

Wolf Burchard, PhD student Courtauld Institute of Art/Curatorial Assistant The Royal Collection

Charles Le Brun: Unity and Hierarchy in the 'Visite du Roy aux Gobelins'

Dr Naomi Luxford, post-doctoral research fellow University College London

Has it Changed? Is it Damaged? A study of Veneer and Marquetry surfaces

Elizabeth Bisley MA, Assistant Curator Furniture Textiles & Fashion, V&A

Painted Decoration and the Cultures of Imitation — study of an Eighteenth-Century Tyrolean Cupboard

Shari Kashani MA, Christies Furniture Department London

Imitation/Presentation: Some Observations on Medalliers and Coquilliers in Eighteenth Century France

Dr Barbara Lasic, Assistant Curator, Europe: 1600–1800 gallery project, V&A

Salon Tales: A set of mid-eighteenth-century panelling depicting the Fables of Aesop in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum

Peter Nelson Lindfield-Ott, PhD student University of St Andrews

Georgian Gothic Furniture: a New Pathway to interpreting British Gothic Furniture 1740–1840

David Oakey MA, Assistant to the Surveyor of the Queen's Works of Art

Henry Holland and Furniture

Diana Davis, PhD student the Wallace Collection & University of Buckingham

Wily brocanteurs: Retailing curiosity in the Regency

Christopher Maxwell, PhD student Glasgow University with the Virtual Hamilton Palace Trust

The Dispersal of the Furniture from the Hamilton Palace Collection

Myriam Tondeur, PhD student University of Sorbonne

The Architects and Creators of Furniture in the Belgian Modernism movement of the 1920s

Tickets are available to FHS members at £15 per head with a reduced rate of £5 for students. This includes morning coffee and afternoon tea at the Wallace, but not lunch. There are a variety of local cafés, restaurants in the area, or The Wallace Collection Restaurant (bookings tel. 0207 563 9505).

As this is an event organised by the Tom Ingram Memorial Fund (FHS Grants) please apply for a ticket booking form to Clarissa Ward, FHS Grants Secretary, 25 Wardo Avenue, London SW6 6RA, email grantsfhs@gmail.com, or tel. 0207 384 4458.

We are expecting this event to be very popular so members are advised to book in advance as there may not be tickets available on the day. If tickets are available on the day then these will be £20 for adults and £10 for students.

OTHER NOTICES

Please note that these are not organised by the Furniture History Society. Information/booking instructions will be found under individual items.

PRINCELY EUROPEAN COMMISSIONS IN PARIS 1650–1800

Symposium in memoriam Jean Néré Ronfort (11 April 1943 – 5 April 2012)

Petit Palais, Musée Des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris

27th–28th September 2012

Organised jointly by Association André Charles Boulle, The Boulle Project, Paris and Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, with the support of the French Heritage Society.

Speakers will include Ambassador Jean-Daniel Tordjman, Pr Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, Pr Joan Dejean, Christian Baulez, Patrick Lemasson, Lars Ljungström, Jean-Dominique Augarde, Christiane Ernek MA, Pr Dr Hans Ottomeyer, Bill Pallot, Jose Luis Sancho Gaspar & Javier Jordán de Urries, Pr Dr Peter Klein, Marc Voisot, Pr Robert Fohr, Tamara Rappé, Jonathan Marsden

For further information email acboulle@gmail.com

THE LONDON ANTIQUE TEXTILE FAIR

Old Chelsea Town Hall, London, SW3

7th October 2012

Among the many stalls there will be ethnic fabric and rugs, quality vintage clothes and accessories and European seventeenth- to twentieth-century costume and textiles. Organised by the Textiles Society. Proceeds go towards student bursaries and museum awards: www.textilesociety.org.uk

LOOKING AHEAD: THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE

The Attingham Trust 60th Anniversary Conference

The Royal Geographic Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7

12–13 October 2012

The Attingham Trust celebrates its sixtieth anniversary with a conference considering the current state of historic houses and house museums across three continents, in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, the United States and Australia. With the generous support of the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art speakers from each of those countries discuss successful current developments as well as the varying problems that each country faces.

This conference is open to all (alumni and non-alumni). The cost of the conference is £55 per day, to include all refreshments. The programme, a booking form and Paypal link (if you wish to pay this way) can be found on the Conference page of the Attingham Trust website www.attinghamtrust.org. There will be a special rate of £30 per day for students (under-graduate and post-graduate) studying History of Art, Architecture, Heritage Studies or a related subject.

For all further enquiries please contact Rebecca Parker at rebecca.parker@attinghamtrust.org or +44 20 7253 9057.

THE LONGCASE CLOCK AND ITS CASE — A Symposium arranged by the British Museum in association with the Regional Furniture Society, in memory of Michael Legg

The British Museum, London WC1

1 October 2012

How did people buy a clock in the eighteenth century? Who made the case? What was the interaction between customer, clockmaker and casemaker? Why do designs vary and what regional variations can be recognised? Did the longcase clock have a special role in the cultural consciousness of regional communities? This symposium brings together recent research on these questions. Speakers include Richard Bebb, Andrew King, Laurie Lindey, Eric Morton, John Robey and Susan Stuart and there will also be a visit to the study collection of provincial longcases recently donated to the British Museum by Michael Grange.

Fee: £20

For further information and to book telephone the Regional Furniture Society on 01305 264596.

SECRET SPLENDOUR: the hidden world of Baroque Cabinets

27 October 2012 to 6 January 2013

The Holburne Museum, Bath

This theatrical exhibition casts new light on some of the most magnificent furniture ever produced. Made from a wide variety of rare and exotic materials including amber, ivory, tortoiseshell, pietra dura and silver, cabinets-on-stands were one of the great status symbols of the seventeenth century. Their outer doors open to reveal exquisite interiors, originally designed to impress only the most privileged of guests. For the first time, a magnificent array of cabinets from the V&A Museum, Corsham Court and the Holburne Museum will be displayed fully open to enable visitors to see their extraordinary interiors, an experience formerly reserved for a select few. For further information see www.holburne.org

REQUEST FOR FURNITURE HISTORY

FHS Member and traditional upholsterer Stephen Franklin would like to obtain a complete set of *Furniture History* as would several other Members. If anyone is thinking of disposing of journals please could they contact Stephen directly on 07749 847251 stephen.franklin@homecall.co.uk or the Membership Secretary Brian Austen at brian.austen@zen.co.uk

NEW PUBLICATION ON ARDTORNISH HOUSE, ARGYLL

Peter Warren, *Ardtornish House. The Architectural and Decorative Marbles and Granite*

Ardtornish House is a mansion in the Scottish Highlands (in Morvern, Argyll) built by the Inverness architect Alexander Ross for the then owner, Thomas Valentine Smith, in 1884–91. It was refurbished by the Edinburgh architect John Kinross in 1908–10 for

Gertrude Craig Sellar. Among many fine interior fittings, in wood, metal and plaster, it contains a superb range of chimney-pieces and other fittings in Mediterranean coloured marbles, especially from France and Italy that are the subject of the book. This comprises chapters on the wider setting of the material used in the mansion, that is on coloured stone in architecture, on what was done by Ross and what by Kinross, on the marbles room by room and an account of each marble alphabetically.

£10.00 including p&p. Available from The Ardtornish Estate Office, Morvern, Argyll, PA80 5UZ (sale proceeds to the Morvern Heritage Society)

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. E-mail: r.baarsen@rijksmuseum.nl

Trevor Cooper and Sarah Brown (eds), *Pews, Benches and Chairs, Church seating in English parish churches from the fourteenth century to the present*, (London Ecclesiological Society: 2011) x + 500 pp., 403 b. & w. illus. ISBN 978-0-946823-17-8, £35.

It is surely unusual for any book noticed in this *Newsletter* to be focussed on a burning topic of controversy, and still more so if that controversy be not historical but rather liturgical, theological, functional and social, although history — and aesthetics — are certainly part of the mix. Moreover, *mirabile dictu*, this brouhaha echoes, continues and is in many respects the mirror image of a great argument which preoccupied our ancestors a century and half ago. Then the battle was to destroy the box-pews which were seen not only to deface the architectural unity of the vast majority of Gothic churches, but also to express and reinforce an iniquitous system by which privileged worshippers could monopolise the best seats in God's house. The now ubiquitous Victorian bench or bench-pew was then the answer, but this did not long remain uncontested, chairs gaining many supporters even in the late nineteenth century. Now the box-pew is no longer a major issue; their rarity, thanks to the thoroughness of Victorian extirpation, is such that most will probably survive for historic interest alone. But the Victorian bench or bench-pew is distinctly under threat, seen as cramping flexibility, drearily dominant and, sin of sins, lacking in comfort.

Pews, Benches and Chairs adopts a neutral stance, but describes a context in which new liturgies proliferate, along with informal music, projection screens and 'multi-sensory worship', bewildering and unsettling traditionalists. Of the thirty chapters in the book, by over twenty principal authors, five are background: one, on St Michael and All Saints, Abingdon, abandons neutrality, and in a high rhetorical tone presents a recent re-ordering (pews expelled, chairs and a Chartres-style labyrinth introduced) as a model of 'sacred geography'; another carefully documents the reasons for what is arguably an over-capacity of seating in Anglican churches.

Context is succeeded by history, first seven pre-Victorian chapters and then nine broadly Victorian. The earlier period highlights the need for historical and archaeological precision. Somerset bench-ends prove to have been repeatedly misidentified, and examination of pews at St Mary, Newent, Gloucestershire demonstrates that they were not 'largely Victorian', but carefully reduced seventeenth-century survivals. An account of the allocation of seats describes an intricate picture, but more than hints that, contrary to stereotypes of seething discontent among the groundlings, the leaders of local society were the most

likely to be responsible for quarrels and disorderly conduct. Whether this judgment would comfort the poor of Puddletown in Dorset, who were expected to stand in the belfry after an ambitious re-seating in 1635, is a moot point.

There was no uncertainty when, in around 1840, the Cambridge Camden Society mounted its attack on box-pews and dismissed them as 'eye-sores and heart-sores'. In 1855 a squire's pew, retained in the re-built mediaeval church at Spofforth in Yorkshire, was described by the Incorporated Church Building Society as 'a special object of deformity'. The architect William Butterfield railing against hassocks 'always in different stages of decay, raggedness and nastiness', and a doughty correspondence in *The Ecclesiologist* from 1844 to 1856 on the respective merits of benches or chairs, with the entrance of the moveable bench as a 'third way' (as now!) are revealing contemporary witnesses. The graphic evidence is supplied by sample illustrations from ten church furnishers' catalogues, with a price hierarchy from oak to pitch pine to pine to red deal, and such specialised products as a 'harmonium chair'. The twentieth century is largely passed by, although the latest 'Victorian' catalogue is of 1933 and it is touching to learn that H. Munro Cautley, the great student of Suffolk churches, designed the pews of Mildenhall church as a memorial to his wife, who died in 1958.

The penultimate segment moves back to the more or less contemporary, less in the case of an updated 1964 article which defines a church as 'the place of the Christian people', but also acknowledges the ungainly and boxy look of wooden stacking chairs derived from those designed for Coventry Cathedral by Gordon Russell. Indeed, despite lapses into dogmatism, these seven articles contain much that is practical and common-sensical, food for serious thought when a congregation considers its options. The finale, consisting of no fewer than fifteen case-studies, runs the gamut. 'Putting a loo in a family pew' strikes dread as a title, but proves to describe a sensitive and careful scheme, while at Redgrave in Suffolk the parishioners cherish their Victorian pews *and* find them an asset in mounting concerts etc.

In a coda one of the editors, Trevor Cooper, ponders the history of church seating and its future (not without some interesting evidence on open benches from music halls to pubs and wine bars), and concludes with properly Anglican uncertainty as to what the future holds. The 'pew rage' of earlier centuries has taken on a new meaning with all too frequent extreme prejudice against Victorian bench-pews. *Pews, Benches and Chairs* presents a splendidly variegated landscape of attitudes and possibilities. Let us hope that it helps to stop the pendulum swinging too far, as pendulums so often do. For furniture historians the book is full of new research and discoveries, but the treatment of the whole subject provokes fascinating reflections on the nature of functional — in the widest sense — change and adaptation. Strongly recommended.

Simon Swynfen Jervis

Georg Himmelheber, *Der Mailänder Kabinettschrank, Ein Augsburger Prunkmöbel des Manierismus* (Vienna: Liechtenstein Museum, 2010), 78 pp. 80 col., 7 b. & w. illus., ISBN 978-3-9502380-7-5, €29.50.

In November 2009 the most sensational piece of furniture to come on the market for a very long time was sold at Christie's in London, from a family collection in Milan where, unknown to the world, it had been kept for many decades, perhaps even centuries. It is the finest surviving example of a sixteenth-century Augsburg *Schreibtisch*, or writing cabinet, the prime representative, therefore, of the earliest class of furniture to acquire European renown as an art form at the time of its making. Contested by museums and collectors the

world over, the cabinet was acquired by the German dealer, Neuse, who following a commendably discreet conservation treatment sold it to the Prince of Liechtenstein who has put it on display in the Liechtenstein Museum in Vienna.

The cabinet has been fortunate in having Georg Himmelheber, the nestor of German furniture studies who in 2010 was honoured, on the occasion of his eightieth birthday, with a major symposium at the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin, devote the present publication to it. First of all, this provides an incisive description of the piece. The breathtaking beauty of the marquetry decoration, unparalleled in its complexity and liveliness, is captured in a generous series of illustrations. Even these, however, cannot do justice to the extraordinary, shimmering appearance of the various woods, reminiscent of embroidery in silks, which is particularly notable in those areas that have hardly ever seen the light of day, such as the sides of the small, removable, subsidiary cabinets within the interior. Nowhere else in the world can the original feeling of delicacy and preciousness of this type of decoration be experienced in alike manner.

Himmelheber convincingly attributes the Liechtenstein cabinet (or 'Milan cabinet' as it is here called) to the same workshop as the so-called *Wrangelschrank* in the Landesmuseum in Münster. Dated 1566, that famous piece was the subject of a monography by Lieselotte Möller, published in 1956. It is the only known cabinet with marquetry of the same outstanding quality, and many detailed analogies are pointed out. The decoration of the Liechtenstein cabinet is even richer and, unlike the *Wrangelschrank*, features a number of mythological scenes which, in parenthesis, would seem to belie the highly involved and fairly questionable iconographical interpretation of the *Wrangelschrank's* decoration proposed by Möller.

In her book Möller presented a large number of more or less related cabinets, some of which she attributed to Augsburg whereas many others were relegated to other localities in South Germany or the Tirol. Dieter Alfter, in his study of Augsburg cabinets of 1986, argued that the majority were actually made in Augsburg, uniquely famous at the time for its cabinet-making industry: the very nature of this large and sophisticated group of furniture points to its origin in a major centre where advanced methods of manufacture were being developed.

In several publications, Georg Himmelheber has greatly contributed to the present knowledge of sixteenth-century Augsburg cabinets. The discovery of the Milan cabinet has incited him to address the matter of attributions anew. He notes that it shares various pictorial devices as well as some idiosyncratic technical details with a number of lesser pieces, notably a cabinet in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, and concludes that these must have been made in the same workshop. Taking a brave plunge, he attributes the entire group to Lienhart Stromair, celebrated in his own time as the leading marquetry furniture specialist in Augsburg. In 1927 Adolf Feulner attributed to Stromair an impressive architectural cabinet, dated 1555, in a Spanish collection. Feulner assumed that this key piece had been made for Emperor Charles V for whom Stromair is known to have worked, but recently Sybe Wartena has established that it was almost certainly commissioned by the Emperor's brother, Ferdinand I. While questioning Feulner's attribution, Himmelheber mainly bases his own hypothesis on the superior quality of the Milan and Wrangel cabinets. As he points out, this quality is not shared by the Amsterdam example and its peers, and it could also be argued that those cabinets are part of a large, somewhat later production, in which the splendid inventions embodied in the great early pieces were popularized for a broader market. Such cabinets might have emanated from the same workshop, but equally from a spreading number of competing establishments. That the attribution to Stromair is all but straightforward, is indicated by Himmelheber's identification of two engravings after Philips Galle as the source for the corresponding scenes in marquetry

on the Milan cabinet. The engravings were apparently published in 1569, a year after Stromair's death.

It is the great merit of the present publication to point the way to a detailed stylistic and technical analysis of the hundreds of existing Augsburg marquetry cabinets. This will not be an easy matter: for example, the author feels that a number of different hands can be detected in the decoration of the Milan cabinet alone, drawing the attention to the lack of detailed information about workshop practices. An important step towards a greater understanding of Augsburg cabinet-making would be the publication of Sybe Wartena's exemplary thesis on the imperial cabinet in Spain. Meanwhile, Georg Himmelheber is to be congratulated on this study which will doubtless stimulate further research. He himself has demonstrated how this should be undertaken in a recent fascinating article on a group of mid-seventeenth-century cabinets — which he conclusively removes from the Augsburg canon.*

* Georg Himmelheber, 'Gallanterie Cästen', *Kabinettschränke des Frühbarock*, *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* 2011, pp. 35–45.

Reinier Baarsen

REPORTS ON THE SOCIETY'S EVENTS

BRITISH DESIGN 1948–2012: INNOVATION IN THE MODERN AGE

V&A, London, 11 April 2012

The FHS group was kindly taken around by Ghislaine Wood, curator of the exhibition, to whom we are immensely grateful. The exhibition was divided into three themes: Tradition and Modernity, Subversion, and Innovation and Creativity. It is the first V&A exhibition to look at contemporary design since 1978. Putting it together created an opportunity to identify gaps in the Museum's collection and to make appropriate acquisitions, e.g. an Ernest Race 'antelope chair' from the Festival of Britain. Furniture shown from the 1950s and 1960s were 'designer' rather than mass produced pieces. Highlights included: a Robin Day room divider, designed with a flexible form to suit the new, smaller homes of the post-war era and which was exhibited at the 1951 Milan Triennale; a David Booth sideboard (1951) in mahogany, rosewood veneer and white birch which was manufactured by Gordon Russell; Rodney Kinsman T5 stacking chairs; a Liberty-manufactured Max Clendinning cabinet (1965), made of plywood and which can be taken down and reassembled; and the commercially successful Peter Murdoch self-assembly paper chair (1968). The Brian Long Torsion Box shell chair (1970) was never put into production since the subsequent oil crisis made the use of plastic prohibitively expensive. It was recently discovered by chance at auction.

Under 'Subversion' were a number of pieces made during the 'creative salvage moment' when very young designers might make a chair out of old railings (or a cut-up motor car) found in a scrapyards and assemble it as part of a performance 'event' in a nightclub. This coincided with the demise of traditional manufacturing industries which was also a theme in 'Innovation and Creativity' where there were a number of items often for use in the home and familiar to visitors. Easily recognisable was a Robin Day Mark II polyprop chair (1963). An example of how the individual still plays a part was a Glass Hill wooden chair on which David David had crayoned in the design by hand.

David Wurtzel

STUDY DAY: TEMPLE NEWSAM HOUSE, Leeds, 21 May 2012

Despite frustrations of train travel experienced by the group arriving from London, this proved to be a most enjoyable and informative day. The morning was spent with curator Polly Putnam who introduced Chapter Two of the current exhibition *Beds and Bedding in Britain 1650–1850*, (15th May–11th November, 2012).

Focusing on objects associated with the use of bedrooms and dressing rooms, various themes are illustrated, from leisure to the rituals of social etiquette. As well as items of ceramic, glass and silverware, we viewed an exquisitely embroidered coif and nightcap (loaned from Manchester Art Galleries) and a finely carved Chippendale cornice covered with chintz, from Harewood House. Prints by Rowlandson and Gilray add satirical and social comment to the bedroom scene.

Beds from the collection were highlighted around the House. We examined two rare examples in more depth. A folding chest-bed *c.* 1760 originating from Nostell Priory is the type that could be moved around and opened out as required by a servant. This fine example retains its mattress platform with original coarse linen base-cloth, tacking and lacing in place. We also saw a unique vernacular painted bed *c.* 1724 from a cottage on the Scottish borders, covered with a Cumbrian blanket.

To discuss the recent restoration of the bed from Hinton House, Somerset, Polly was joined by Annabel Westman, who was closely involved this project. Originally commissioned by the 1st Earl Poulett for a possible visit from Queen Anne in 1711 (which never happened), this bed had a chequered history until Christopher Gilbert acquired it for Temple Newsam in the 1981. In recent years the collapsing canopy caused concern. At last, funding was raised to address structural problems and to carry out conservation and reconstruction of the bed-hangings. A decision was made to display the extant headboard and tester with three inner valances, conserved by Caroline Rendell, while the other pieces will be carefully stored. The cornice has been re-carved and the lower bedstock reconstructed. Close examination by the in-house furniture conservator, Ian Fraser, revealed that the bed once had a flying tester, so the heavy footposts were removed and the canopy is now supported from the ceiling. The bed is displayed in low light from a set of Baroque-revival sconces recently acquired from Chatsworth.

Thorough research was carried out on the textile elements and the reproduced pieces are faithful to evidence found, down to the finest detail. Along with researchers and conservators, this impressive project involved a carver, weavers, upholsterers and an artist-in-residence. The quality and skills shown are a credit to English craftsmanship.

In the afternoon, James Lomax, Curator Emeritus introduced the Chippendale Society and showed us many pieces from the collection, now housed at Temple Newsam. We were able to closely examine some drawings and pieces of furniture, and compare and contrast three Chippendale pole screens from different periods. Finally we had a presentation from Jack Metcalfe, Marqueteer, on his study of the veneers on the Diana and Minerva Commode at Harewood House, and his replica commode which will soon be completed.

Nicola Gentle

KENSINGTON PALACE, Tuesday 26 June 2012

At the new east-facing entrance, Alexandra Kim, Curator of Kensington Palace, briefly explained the approach adopted for the redisplay of the Palace which allows visitors to choose one of four routes (William III; Mary II; Queen Victoria; Modern royals), and that differing types of interpretation had been employed, including art installations (which

would not be on as we were going in before the public arrived). This was key to the first part of the visit.

Sebastian Edwards, Curator, Historic Royal Palaces, then led us through William III's apartments, explaining that very little material could be strongly attributed to Kensington Palace, at any period, since all goods and chattels were frequently moved, or had not survived. This seemed to be particularly true of furniture, since an otherwise-homeless Chair of State, possibly made for the Prince of Wales' coming of age in 1783, was included in these early rooms. Disappointingly there was no opportunity to debate this curiously hybrid piece, its shield-back an early example in 1783. The Cupola Room, the first of those redecorated by Kent, in 1722, was dominated by a large centrally-placed musical clock by Charles Clay and John Pyke, with Rysbrack, Roubiliac and Amigoni involved in its decoration, though the maker of its mahogany base was not mentioned. Kent's influence was also seen in picture frames in the King's Gallery. Back-tracking into Mary's private apartments, we saw a much-altered marquetry cabinet, probably supplied by Gerrit Jensen. Sebastian then related the story of 'the warming-pan bed' associated with the birth of James Stuart in 1688. The bed — scarcely visible behind a curious 4ft high fence — had been drastically altered on several occasions, though the five-colour Genoa velvet — similar to that in Mary's bedchamber at Het Loo — is stunning.

As the house was by now open to the public, there was no opportunity to discuss a series of mahogany seats of various designs in the Queen's Gallery, possibly c. 1715 by Richard Roberts, or the organ cabinet attributed to Benjamin Goodison with alterations attributed to William Vile, and discussed by Matthew Winterbottom in *George III & Queen Charlotte — Patronage, Collecting and Court Taste* (2004). Hanging near this was one of five chandeliers by Gumley and Moore — if anyone knows the whereabouts of the other four, Sebastian would be delighted to hear.

The Queen's apartments had, however, been invaded by installations like the fence round the bed, so it was a not-entirely-happy group which retired for coffee. It was then explained that, in an attempt to retain the massive new audience which had visited the 'Enchanted Palace' exhibition, the staff had sought to infuse a similar feel in those sections of the display not yet fully completed. It was, therefore, with some trepidation that we set off for 'Victoria Revealed' with its curator, Dierdre Murphy. Although the lack of objects attributable to the Palace still applies for this period, there was a very different feel as Queen Victoria's own voice could be heard with quotations from her letters and diaries printed on walls and carpet, and there was even (discreet) labelling (lacking in the earlier sections). An 1844 piano, two cradles and a finely restored frame to a portrait of the Queen by Winterhalter, were displayed.

Many thanks to all involved for an interesting visit. For FHS members there was, perhaps, rather less furniture than we might have hoped for, but Historic Royal Palaces receives no money from Government or Crown, so they have a very tricky path to steer to maximise such an expensive site. However, having only recently visited Kew Palace for the first time since its restoration in 2006 (and appreciating that it is a very different proposition), I found that an 'enchanted palace' and the interpretation both available and delightful. Kensington Palace has not, as yet, quite found its feet, and it is to be hoped that the spirit of the place won't be lost along the way.

Judith Hodgkinson

THE OLIVER FORD TRUST AND TOM INGRAM MEMORIAL FUND

In line with one of its roles — the promotion of interest in interior design — the Oliver Ford Trust has generously expressed the desire to sponsor a place on each FHS study weekend or foreign tour. Applicants should either be a student with a particular interest in interiors, or a junior museum professional. Applications from non-members will be considered. Grants will be awarded via the Tom Ingram Fund, to which candidates should apply.

The Tom Ingram Memorial Fund makes grants towards travel and other incidental expenses for the purpose of study or research into the history of furniture (a) whether or not the applicant is a member of the Society; (b) only when the study or research is likely to be of importance in furthering the objectives of the Society; and (c) only when travel could not be undertaken without a grant from the Society. Applications towards the cost of FHS foreign and domestic trips and study weekends are particularly welcome from scholars. Successful applicants are required to acknowledge the assistance of the Fund in any resulting publications and must report back to the Panel on completion of the travel or project. All applications should be addressed to Clarissa Ward, Secretary FHS Grants Committee, 25 Wardo Avenue, London SW6 6RA, email grantsfhs@gmail.com, who will supply application forms for the Tom Ingram Memorial Fund and the Oliver Ford Trust. Please remember to send an s.a.e. with request.

The committee requests that applications for study trips be made well in advance of the final deadline for acceptance — preferably at least six weeks before.

COPY DEADLINE

The deadline for receiving material to be published in the next *Newsletter* is **15th September**. Copy should be sent, preferably by email, to Elizabeth Jamieson ea.jamieson@fiscali.co.uk or posted to Elizabeth Jamieson, 10 Tarleton Gardens, Forest Hill, London SE23 3XN.

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