

At **Stourhead** we were led by Christopher Rowell, the National Trust's advisor for furniture who came especially to be with us. Sir Richard Colt Hoare's commission for over £5,000 worth of furniture between 1795 and 1820 was undoubtedly one of Chippendale the Younger's most important undertakings, as significant as Dumfries House and Harewood were for his father. The documents have been published by Judith Goodison who has identified 163 pieces of furniture of which some 103 survive in the house today, ranging from grand pieces for the reception rooms to simple flower troughs and matting for the garden buildings. Perhaps the most memorable ensemble is in the Library in its unique Egyptianising style but elsewhere the distinctive *directoire*-inspired furnishings resulted in a remarkably successful collaboration between a discerning patron and an inventive designer - craftsman. Stourhead also has many other treasures of furniture, not least a set of open backed chairs and sofas supplied by Giles Grendey and a fine pair of gilt pier glasses probably by William Linnell. Other pieces in the Saloon may belong to earlier furnishing campaigns by the Chippendale workshops: a set of chairs, some side tables, and a commode. But the star item has to be the 'Pope's Cabinet', the magnificent Roman *pietra dura* cabinet made for the family of Sixtus V and acquired by Henry Hoare II in Italy in 1741. It has been meticulously restored and will be the subject of a major publication in the near future. Those who still had the strength made their way down to the gardens to enjoy one of the most idyllic places on the planet.

The visit to our final house, **Stanway**, was led by Shelagh Wemyss, one of our participants. This most beautiful and unspoilt of Cotswold houses, built of mellow golden stone, contains the unique and ravishing pair of chinoiserie canopied day beds. These have long been attributed to Chippendale, not only because of their similarity to a design in the *Director*, but also because of their association with the Hon Frances Charteris of Amisfield who was a subscriber. It was revealing to see that the undersides of the canopies were covered with left-over sections of Chinese wallpaper. Just as we emerged into the brilliant mid-day sunshine the stupendous fountain, the biggest gravity-fed example in Europe, was turned on for our benefit. It was the perfect ending to a memorable five days.

Our special thanks go to Tony Mills for his meticulous organisation.

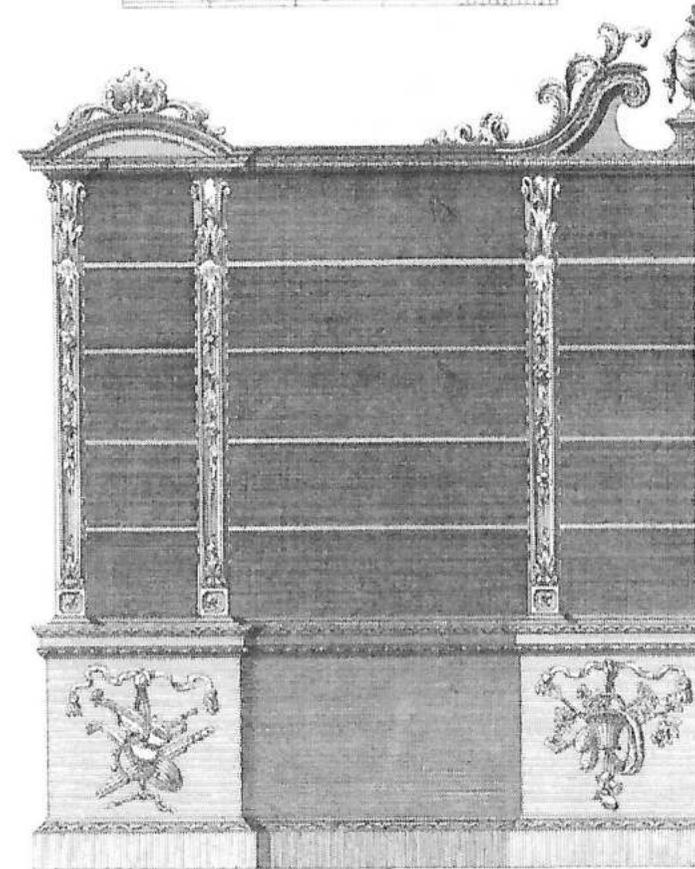
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FOR FUTURE EVENTS SEE SEPARATE SHEET

# The Chippendale Society

President: Lord St Oswald

*A Library Bookcase*



*Published according to Act of Parliament 1760*

Plate XCII of *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director* (1762): 'A Bookcase without Doors to the upper Part. The Trusses Pilasters and Drops of Flowers are pretty Ornaments, as well as those on the Pediment, and of the bottom Doors: But all of them may be omitted, if required.'

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## Visit to the West Country 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Thirty members of the Chippendale Society and Leeds Art Collections Fund participated in this five-day visit based at the very comfortable Old Bell Hotel at Malmesbury.

Our first stop on our way down from Yorkshire was at **Arbury Hall**, near Nuneaton. The house is very much the late 18<sup>th</sup> century monument of the learned Sir Roger Newdigate, whose portrait by Arthur Devis shows him seated at his library desk, both of which were on display. It has some of the most spectacular Gothick interiors of its date in England. Scattered throughout the house was a set of fine Gothick chairs with embroidered covers of pre 1765, and other highlights were Archbishop Laud's ebony cabinet, a fine lacquered Charles II cabinet, and especially the documented chandeliers of 1788 and 1804 in the Saloon and Dining Room by William Parker. The charming Rose Garden was looking at its best.

Our first call the next day was at **Corsham Court** where we were made very welcome by the knowledgeable owner James Methuen-Campbell. He described the genesis of the picture collection and the series of rooms which were created to contain it. The well-known furniture is as impressive as the paintings. In the Gallery is the long set of armchairs traditionally and convincingly attributed to Chippendale on account of their style and the method of nailing, the Adam-designed pier glasses and tables in the Gallery, the commode and torcheres by John Cobb in the Cabinet Room, and the mirrors from a design by Thomas Johnson. Less well known are a table probably by Henry Hill of Marlborough, and the unique pair of 17<sup>th</sup> century Japanese lacquer chests, imitating shagreen, with shaped panels of mother of pearl, the interiors with untouched blue decoration. In the Gothick Library Wing we were shown more interesting pieces, including a writing table attributed to Chippendale the Younger, perhaps from the 1790s. We were able to admire the Capability Brown parkland and many of us ventured as far as his Gothick Bath House.

After lunch in **Lacock** village, we were given a private tour of the Abbey, the medieval nunnery which was greatly Gothicked by John Ivory Talbot and his friend Sanderson Miller in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. Its contents have recently been acquired from the family by the National Trust. The octagonal Sharrington Tower contains one of the most interesting surviving Mannerist stone tables surviving from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century, carved with beasts and monsters, not dissimilar to another seen on the recent visit to Grimsthorpe. The Trust's new acquisitions include a set of rare *sgabello* (shell

backed) Charles I hall chairs, the Gothick side tables in the Hall and Gallery, and a group of early 19<sup>th</sup> century furniture in the style of Gillows including a fine Carlton House desk.

Our second morning was spent at **Badminton**, where the fourth Duke of Beaufort had been a subscriber to Chippendale's *Director*. Our guide here was the celebrated architectural historian John Harris who began by taking us to Swangrove, a charmingly castellated hunting lodge at an extreme corner of the park. Its interiors included an exceptionally rare room with faux marbling and chinoiserie decoration. From here we visited the church with its fine late 18<sup>th</sup> century joinery. In the Hall we admired the enormous sporting paintings by Wootten with their virtuoso frames carved by John Boson. From here we moved to the Billiard Room to see the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century Gothick style library steps and early 17<sup>th</sup> century overmantel, then to the Study to see the William Vile library table, the Dining Room with its Gibbons carvings and Ince and Mayhew side tables, the immense Great Drawing Room with its seat furniture attributed to Morel and Seddon, the Library with its set of Chinese inspired cockpen chairs. The smaller rooms were admired for their fine portraits, wallpapers designed by Thomas Willement, a Kentian overmantel mirror from Worcester Lodge and a fine serpentine chest on a gilt stand very close to a design in the *Director*. We were given a special privilege in being allowed upstairs into the Chinese Bedroom, with its wonderfully preserved mid 18<sup>th</sup> century wallpaper, to see the replica chinoiserie furniture copied from the famous group originally supplied by John Linnell and sold in the 1930s – the bed is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum and for many years was thought to have been by Chippendale.

After such spectacular ducal riches it was good to spend the afternoon at **Frampton Court**, a delightful relatively small early 18<sup>th</sup> century house in the baroque style, possibly designed by John Strahan. The fine joinery included the panelled Drawing and Dining rooms and a retractable dog gate at the foot of the stairs. Some rare wall hall lanterns, a set of elm country Chippendale chairs and a Broadwood grand piano of 1801 were all admired, as was the charming Gothick Garden House seen from the end of the canal. On our way back we stopped at Worcester Lodge, William Kent's last work and which forms a triumphal arch eye catcher when seen from Badminton House three miles away.

Next day we arrived at **Wilton** in good time for our private tour before the general public were admitted. Chippendale is known to have supplied over £1,500 worth of furniture to Lord Pembroke between 1763 and 1773 alone, but identifying the pieces is hazardous. We admired his great Violin Bookcase and the two bookcases and library writing tables designed by Sir William Chambers and made by Chippendale for the London house. It was interesting to compare their style with other celebrated Chippendale bookcases, notably at Dumfries House and formerly at Aske Hall. Unravelling the story of the spectacular gilt seat furniture in the Double Cube and Colonnade Rooms is not easy (some of which arrived after the Wanstead sale in 1825), but it seems possible that some was supplied by Chippendale. Other late 18<sup>th</sup> century gilt seat furniture in the Corner Room had distinct affinities to a set at Harewood. The recently restored Dining Room contains the remarkable group of 18 Chinese export chairs made of *huali* wood and dating from the 1730s.

## **Visit to Wentworth Castle and Wentworth Woodhouse 6<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

### **Led by Dr Patrick Eyres**

These two vast 18<sup>th</sup> century houses were built by rival members of the Wentworth family as expressions of their political and social status. The Castle (originally known as Stainborough Hall) was bought by Thomas Wentworth, Lord Raby and later Earl of Strafford in 1708. It was immediately adjacent to the property of his detested kinsman Thomas Watson – Wentworth, Lord Malton (later Marquess of Rockingham) at Wentworth Woodhouse. For years the two families, one Tory, the other Whig, built, rebuilt, extended and embellished their mansions and gardens in deliberate rivalry of each other. Eventually victory had to be conceded to Lord Rockingham whose house had become the biggest in England and one of the largest in the world.

In recent years Wentworth Castle has been owned by Barnsley Council and been the home of the Northern College for training of teachers. Its future looked very bleak until it was taken into the ownership of the Wentworth Castle Heritage Trust which has brought about the near miracle of raising over £10m to rescue the mansion and restore the park and its extraordinary series of buildings. Dr Eyres is one of the trustees and will describe the work which has been done to date.

Wentworth Woodhouse, whose historic landscape and equally important buildings suffered disastrously in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, became the property of Rotherham Council. The mansion was partly run as a college until passing into private ownership in the 1990s. A series of misfortunes had seen much fall into disrepair until the present owners took it on in 1998 since when there has been an astonishing and continuing recovery.

Tickets are £45 per head to include transport by Britannia coach, coffee, all admissions and tours, and lunch. We are due at Wentworth Castle at 10.30 for coffee and then we will be divided into two rotating groups for the gardens and the house. After a light lunch at the Castle we will travel to Wentworth Woodhouse for a visit from 2.30pm. We anticipate departing Wentworth Woodhouse at about 5 pm.

**Because of the anticipated high demand for the limited number of places applications will be balloted at 2pm on 18<sup>th</sup> September.**

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## **Lecture and Lunch. Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October at Temple Newsam 11.30 – 3.30** **Lecture by James Lomax, Hon Curator of the Chippendale Society.**

### **‘Gothick, Chinese and French: styles of subversion in mid Georgian England’**

The early 18<sup>th</sup> century saw the relentless rise of classical Palladianism as the universal ‘establishment’ style for building and decoration. Yet English men and women are never circumscribed by imposed rules of good taste and frequently glory in subverting them. By mid century three ‘alternative’ styles had emerged: Gothick, glorifying the art of the Middle Ages albeit pregnant with overtones of forbidden Roman Catholicism; ‘Chinese’, always associated with loose women and immorality; and ‘French’, now known as Rococo, a style which was often seen as profoundly anti patriotic, irrational and unnatural. Yet with champions like Horace Walpole or Thomas Chippendale this tension saw a great flowering of art and architecture.