

At **Burghley House** we were given a highly memorable privileged visit by Jon Culverhouse and Caroline Crookall. We were particularly focussed on the periods of the 5th Earl of Exeter (1648 – 1700) and his great grandson the 9th Earl (1725 – 1793). The former was probably the most extravagant collector of his generation who created the State (George) Rooms after four visits to Italy. He was responsible for the most magnificent of all the Italian *pietra dure* cabinets seen on this trip, attributed to Leonardo van der Vinne; the bed by Francis Lapierre; and the ebony, brass and pewter side table attributed to Gerrit Jensen (interesting to compare with the examples seen at Drayton and Boughton). Some of his 17th century marquetry furniture was re-used by his great grandson on a series of commodes and cupboards made by Ince and Mayhew. He was a loyal customer for at least 12 years. Their versatility enabled them to provide their client with an extraordinary range of pieces in a variety of styles: from the wildly rococo candlestands for the hall, the Gothick chairs for the chapel, a pair of collector's cabinets, and a new state bed in an archaic style. Possibly also by them was the elaborate chinoiserie china cabinet, very much in the Chinese Chippendale style, and also a group of ormolu mounted mahogany serpentine commodes in the George Rooms. From the early 1780s until 1804 Lord Exeter's main supplier was James Newton who provided over £4,000 worth of goods. His highly refined *fin de siècle* style, which includes early Egyptianising features, could be seen at its best in the cabinets and pier glasses in the Blue Drawing Room and are interesting to compare with Chippendale the Younger's work in the same vein. The final coup de grace was when Caroline produced an original leather cover for one of the Ince and Mayhew commodes, with pretty stamped decoration, carefully put away after its arrival from London in the 1760s until its recent discovery and restoration.

Our final visit was to **Lampport Hall**, the remarkable mid 17th century classical house by John Webb. In addition to the fine family portraits and the good 18th century furniture we admired the Grand Tour paintings acquired by Sir Justinian Isham in the late 1670s. He also bought two magnificent Venetian ebony cabinets for 250 ducats, with exquisitely painted glass drawers and doors, which we were allowed the exceptional privilege of inspecting at close quarters.

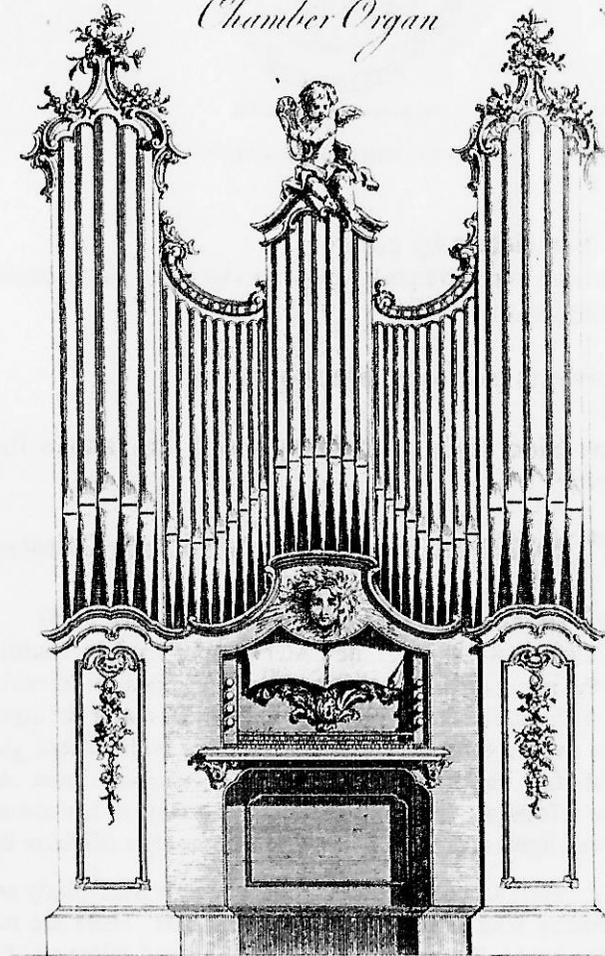
From the upper windows of our base at the excellent **Barnsdale Lodge Hotel**, which faced across Rutland Water, we could see the semi-sunken **Normanton village church**. It was for this church that Chippendale provided the entire funeral arrangements for his old client Lady Heathcote in 1772. When the family vault of the church was abandoned for the creation of Rutland Water in the early 1970s and the coffins lifted for re-interment elsewhere, our late Hon Curator and President obtained permission to remove some of Chippendale's coffin fittings. We were not able to visit the church but a member of the committee was able to pass round on the coach one of the 'large strong chas'd brass [lifting] handles gilt', a trophy from Chippendale's undertaking department.

This memorable visit was made possible because of the meticulous planning by Tony Mills and James Lomax to whom we are very grateful. Britannia Travel transported us in great luxury while the staff at Barnsdale Lodge accommodated us in great comfort and fed us with style.

The Chippendale Society

President: Lord St Oswald

Chamber Organ



Chippendale's cabinet maker

Thomas Chippendale

From plate CIII of the third edition of *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director* (1762). One of 'Two designs of Organs for a Chamber. Organs of this sort differ in Bigness, according to the Rooms they are intended for, and the Number of Stops required in them'

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Forthcoming events (see separate sheets)

14th December: Sion Hill, near Thirsk and Christmas lunch at the Crab and Lobster, Asenby

July 16th – 20th 2012: Five day visit to North Norfolk Country Houses

Report on Visit to Northamptonshire 18 – 22 July 2011

Some 28 members of the Society and the LACF met for lunch at **Doddington Hall**, near Lincoln. Among the remarkable 17th century furnishings is a set of twelve bobbin turned armchairs in the hall, an elaborately carved looking glass with the royal arms and, in a different vein, the two magnificent Neapolitan cabinets with painted glass panels. There was a surfeit of fine mid Georgian furniture (including three en suite Kentian mirrors). From the 1760s are the truly remarkable group of late rococo papier mache looking glasses, wall lights and frames, very much in the style of Pierre Babel.

Kelmarsh Hall, the early Georgian James Gibbs house, is particularly associated with the influential 20th century interior designer Nancy Lancaster. There are many reminders of her taste still in the house. We were able to admire a good selection of the fine furniture supplied to the 6th Earl of Coventry at **Croome Court**, Worcestershire which is on loan. Lord Coventry employed Robert Adam as his presiding genius and a variety of different furniture makers including Vile and Cobb, the Linnells, France and Bradburn, Pierre Langlois and Ince and Mayhew. It was thus a perfect place to be able to compare the work so many of Chippendale's contemporaries and rivals. We were only able to identify one small plain clothes press with S shaped escutcheons and locks which might have been by Chippendale. The stars were probably the most avant garde pieces: the 'striped' marquetry chest commodes by Ince and Mayhew of 1765, Adam's *athenienne* intended to support a Sevres jug and basin; the Vile and Cobb 'double anthemion back' armchairs from the Gallery for which Sefferin Alken carved the details. The apparently French *bureau plat*

with Greek key marquetry in the frieze could have been mistaken for Linnell's furniture for the library at Osterley.

The treasures of **Boughton House**, 'the English Versailles', can barely be described in a single paragraph. The highlights of the French furniture are undoubtedly the bureau attributed to Pierre Gole and made for Louis XIV; the pieces attributed to Andre Charles Boulle including a long case clock, a magnificent cabinet (one of only four known) and no less than three 'marriage coffer' on stands; an ormolu clock by Caffieri; and the Sevres mounted bureaux by Baumhauer and Martin Carlin (perhaps made for Madame du Barry in 1768). The English baroque furniture is again astounding: in the Low Pavilion Ante Room alone are three commodes and pier glasses by Gerrit Jensen (the English Boulle): two decorated in *parti* and *contre parti* brass and tortoiseshell inlay and one veneered in coromandel lacquer. Other pieces attributed to Jensen include at least one 'triad' from the State Rooms decorated in virtuoso floral marquetry, while his contemporary Jean Pelletier is represented by a magnificent gesso pier table. In a similar style is James Moore's massive gesso coffer, and the same royal cabinet maker probably supplied the stands for the pair of white japanned cabinets. The State Rooms, with their carefully graded suites of upholstered chairs, sofas and stools reach a climax with the magnificent state bed, given to the V&A in 1916 but returned, fully restored in brilliant crimson damask, in 2004.

At **Drayton Hall** we continued our exploration of the baroque style with the curator Bruce Bailey focussing on the periods of the 2nd Lord Peterborough and his daughter the Duchess of Norfolk. In the King's Dining Room were three walnut tables with metal, floral and seaweed marquetry, a pair of fine lacquer travelling trunks and an elaborately brass-bound 'coffret' or travelling chest which Mr Bailey opened up for us. The pair of 'platformed' lacquer cabinets in the Drawing Room reflected the passion for displaying Chinese porcelain in the baroque country house as did a very rare set of early hanging shelves. The State Apartment provided a magnificent array: an extremely rare ebony table with silver mounts; an equally rare scagliola veneered 'triad', and a superb dressing table and pair of candlestands in ebony and ebonised wood with brass and pewter marquetry supplied by Gerrit Jensen in 1688. The State Bedroom is dominated by the miraculously preserved state bed with its hangings of floral embroidery. The slightly earlier princeswood candlestands and table display the remarkable carved boxwood toilet service perhaps by Henri Bagard of Nancy.

After such a surfeit of baroque splendour it was a relief to visit the quieter charms of **Cottesbrooke Hall**, a quintessential English Queen Anne House, with beautiful gardens, and a celebrated collection of sporting pictures in a series of elegant rooms all in use by the family.

At **Elton Hall** we admired the very fine portraits, Old Masters and Victorian paintings, and the magnificent library. The English and French furniture and other decorative arts of the 18th century are exceptional. In addition to the *pietra dure* 'Michelangelo' cabinet, the highlight is undoubtedly the pair of cabinets on stands made in 1803 for William Beckford by the Vulliamys displaying panels of exquisite 17th century Japanese lacquer. They were acquired at the legendary Hamilton Palace sale.

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