

# THE CHIPPENDALE SOCIETY

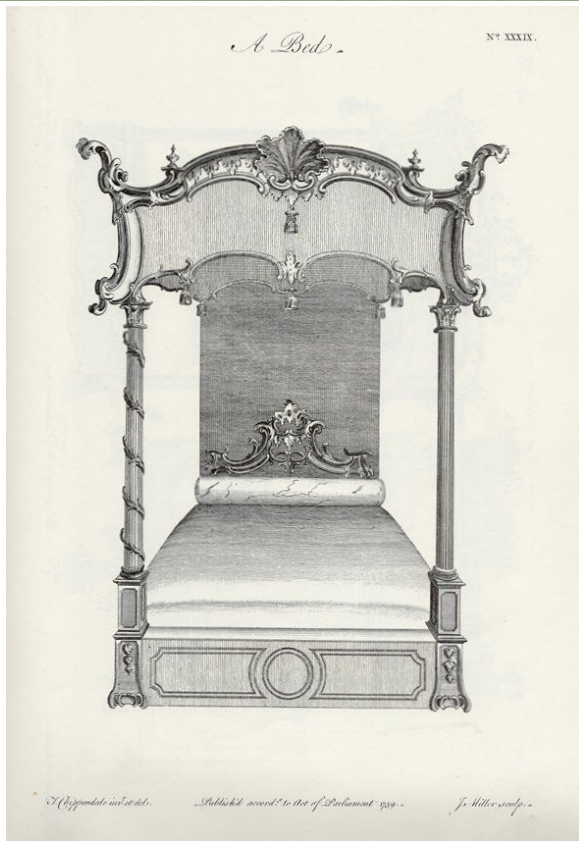


President: the Lord St Oswald

NEWSLETTER No. 143

[www.thechippendalesociety.co.uk](http://www.thechippendalesociety.co.uk)

October 2018



*Plate XXXIX from the Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director (1762)*  
*'A Bed which has been made for the Earls of Dumfries and Morton. One of the Pillars is composed of Reeds, with a Palm-Branch twisting round. The Tester is covered, and the Bottom-Edge of the Cove is cut into the Shape nearly that of the Cornice, and a thin, slight Ornament fixed on, and the Inside Valens fixed to it. In the Middle of the Tester is a carved, oval Ornament, three feet, nine Inches, by two Feet, eight Inches; and from that to each Corner, is a piece of Foliage and Flowerings. The Corner-Pieces, which come down from the Cornice, are Wood, and the Valens fixed to them. The Pillars are eight Feet, six Inches high, and the Bedstead six Feet, seven Inches long, and six Feet wide.'*

## SOCIETY EVENTS AUTUMN 2018

### Autumn Study Day 2018

October 17<sup>th</sup>: Visit to **Cannon Hall, Barnsley** and **Cusworth Hall, Doncaster**. (see Newsletter 142)

Applications for this event can still be accepted. Please contact Cathy Lambert, whose details are on the next page, if you are interested.

### Christmas Lunch, 13<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018

We have organised the Christmas lunch at the Durham Ox, a charming well recommended restaurant/pub situated in the village of Crayke, two miles north of Easingwold. the pub is over 300 years old and located on an ancient Celtic track-way linking Scotland to York. Our lunch will be taken in the Ox barn with a private bar, cosy wood burning stove and disabled facilities.

In the morning, before we arrive at the Durham Ox we are privileged to have a private tour of the workshop, showroom and visitor centre of furniture makers Robert (Mouseman) Thompson by their Historian or a member of the Thompson family. The business is run by the descendants of Robert Thompson and still makes oak furniture decorated with the trademark mouse. The visitor centre contains rooms set in the 1930's full of furniture made by the original Robert Thompson and which is so sought after today.

**Price per person** is £57.50 to include Britannia Coach Travel, a guided tour of the Thompson Workshop, showroom and visitor centre and Christmas lunch as above, payable by 10th November 2018. (see overleaf)

Please apply for places on the accompanying form and send with your cheque, made payable to the *Chippendale Society*, to Cathy Lambert, Honorary Events Secretary, The Chippendale Society, Nesfield Hall, Nesfield, Ilkley, LS29 0BN

Please indicate where you will be picked up by the coach and also your choice of menu.

Any queries, contact Cathy Lambert on email:

[cathylambert2@gmail.com](mailto:cathylambert2@gmail.com) or by phone:

mobile no. 07950 206002

Please see separate flyer for a special event at Temple Newsam on 19th October 2018, 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm

### Matching Patron and Maker: Seven Virtuoso Music Stands

an exhibition by the Master Carvers Association to celebrate Chippendale 300

## REPORT: SCOTLAND 24<sup>th</sup> –27<sup>th</sup> JULY 2018

Twenty-nine members spent a very informative four days in Scotland and Cumbria visiting **Drumlanrig, Mount Stuart, Dumfries House and Hutton-in-the-Forest**. As these houses have been visited by the Chippendale Society in fairly recent times, a detailed report of each is unnecessary so only various highlights have been noted.

**Drumlanrig**, home of the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry has been a stronghold of the Douglas clan for over 600 years. The fairytale castle with its turrets and towers looked magical, glowing pink in the local Drumlanrig stone on the sunny afternoon of our visit.

In our first room, the Front Hall, one of our members pointed out the seventeenth century iron yett or gate with its intricate locking mechanism to thwart unwanted intruders. Drumlanrig's enfilade of rooms are on the first floor and we soon espied a beautiful inlaid cabinet by André Charles Boulle supported dramatically, on a stand, by Omphale, Queen of Lydia and Hercules. Supposedly a gift from Louis XIV, it is certainly a royal piece with the fleur-de-lis decoration, a medallion of Louis XIV at the top and the inscription 'Le Roi Soleil' inside. At the other end of the room stands another dazzling piece by André Charles Boulle, this time in tortoiseshell and brass. These two have their counterparts, the former in Malibu and the latter in the Wallace Collection. In the piers are a pair of astonishing *verre églomisé* bordered mirrors, attributed to John Gumley, with carved crestings sporting the arms of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Argyll.

The tortoiseshell and brass Louis XIV bureau-plat in the Ante Room was another splendid piece of furniture to be studied. On the staircase Gallery the set of virtuoso rococo giltwood sconces suggested the hand of James Pascall, but are nearly overshadowed by the silver sixteen arm chandelier weighing 54 kilograms which possibly belonged to Catherine of Braganza at Whitehall Palace. In the Dining Room there was much interest in the silver sconces with royal monograms. The *Director* style chairs have recently been identified as having come from the villa at Richmond.

On a lighter note we were amused by the portraits of members of the household at Dalkeith Palace painted in the early 1800s particularly the chef who was, importantly, showing his few remaining teeth ! The castle has a wonderful collection of paintings but we were unable to see the famous Rembrandt, 'Old Woman Reading' (1655) that was recovered from theft and is on loan to the National Gallery of Scotland.

Our second visit was to **Mount Stuart** on the Isle of Bute home to the Marquess of Bute. Most of the house that exists today was built by the third Marquess after the fire in 1877. One of the high-

lights of our visit was a peek at the wonderfully eclectic William Burges chapel - one of the few survivors of the fire.

The third Marquess commissioned the Edinburgh Gothicist architect, Sir Robert Rowand Anderson to rebuild Mount Stuart. The result is an example of extreme Victorian Gothicism. The Marble Hall, a square within a square, with towering marble columns, the constellations in the ceiling and stained glass representing the seasons high above is more than stunning. Much of the charm of Mount Stuart is the iconography and the attention to detail for example the enchanting frieze of St. Margaret of Scotland in the Family Bedroom, designed by H.W. Lonsdale, to the ornate door furniture representing the use of the room such as flowers for the ladies, to the plethora of carved oak leaves throughout the house (a clan motif).

This home was designed with all the modern conveniences of the time - electricity, central heating, en-suite bathrooms and the first ever an indoor heated swimming pool which we were privileged to view. Many of the unusual light fittings were designed by Robert Weir Schultz - some crystal spheres and others translucent urns on chains like mosque lamps.

The most memorable furniture perhaps was the distinctive group from the first Marquess' time, especially from Luton Hoo and dispersed around the house. This included the pair of side tables designed by Robert Adam and topped with Roman mosaics. A truly superb *pietra dura* table inlaid with Medici coronets in the corners and a heraldic double headed eagle in the centre might have been easily missed, as could the superb mid 18th century 'French' clock in the Library with gilt mounts strongly suggestive of Pierre Langlois' work at Woburn. Whilst enjoying our lunch in the Purple Sitting Room there was much discussion over an elegant lead lined table box. Various uses were mooted but the puzzle was solved on our visit to Hutton-in-the-Forest where we saw a similar item - a Dutch table box designed to house a tea kettle and heating device ! We were given the special privilege of a presentation and handling session of the 4<sup>th</sup> Marquess' antiquarian collection of Scottish silver by Lynsey Nairn the Curator to whom we are particularly grateful.

It seemed fitting to be visiting **Dumfries House** on our third day, owned by the present Marquess of Bute before being saved for the nation by Prince Charles. The third Marquess doubled its size using the same architect Robert Weir Schultz who he had employed at Mount Stuart.

Our visit, however, was to partake in some of the celebrations for *Chippendale 300* to mark the tercentenary of the birth of

Thomas Chippendale. The fifth Earl of Dumfries personally undertook the furnishing of his new Adam designed house after the death of his first wife in 1755. It contains probably the best and most extensive collection of early Chippendale furniture on which our tour concentrated. Our first highlight was the recently renovated suite of two sofas and fourteen chairs in the Blue Drawing room. We learnt that 360 yards of blue damask had been originally ordered for this suite and also the best bed. The current damask has been copied from an original piece of eighteenth century damask and the soft furnishings reupholstered in their original form. The blue silk matches the vibrant colours of the 250 year old Axminster carpet that has also recently been renovated. The carpet closely corresponds to the ceiling design suggesting the involvement of Robert Adam and foreshadowing the development of the unified decorative scheme characteristic of later Adam interiors.

James Lomax gave us an illuminating talk on the wonderful Chippendale rosewood breakfront bookcase supplied in 1759 for £47 5s and which is an amalgam of designs in the *Director*. The classical temple front is veneered in a geometric honeycomb pattern and topped with a pediment with rococo gilt scrolls and watery icicles either side of an asymmetrically arranged gilt basket of fruit.

In the dining room the majestic mahogany suite is by Alexander Peter and consists of a two part dining table, sideboard, two dumb waiters and 24 chairs. However the girandoles at either side of the fireplace were supplied by Chippendale in May 1759. This wonderful pair is designed in a naturalistic rococo style with Chinese hoho birds and figures.

In Lord Dumfries' study we were privileged to see the Chippendale library table, supplied in 1759, open at one end to reveal the covered writing slope. Made in a figured mahogany with rococo style gilt brass handles and triple wheel castors, it illustrates all the details of a superb quality Chippendale piece.

In the Parlour we saw the only known card tables supplied by Chippendale and around which were arranged some of Chippendale's intricately carved elbow chairs, now upholstered in a bright yellow silk damask. Chippendale also supplied the richly carved gilt window pelmets and the eye-catching looking-glasses on the wall piers.

In the Family Bedroom following we were amazed at the conservation of the Chippendale mahogany bed. The cornice appears to be painted but in fact it has been covered with blue silk fabric carefully draped and manipulated to fit. In the same restoration, the mattress was also replaced in the eighteenth century manner with three separate mattresses on the bed. The first stuffed with horsehair, followed by the second stuffed with wool and finally the top mattress is stuffed with feathers.

Our tour took in further delights upstairs including an early bouffe *bureau Mazarin* recently restored by Yastick Chastang and thought to be the original state dressing table.

Lunch was followed by an interesting and informative lecture by our own James Lomax titled 'The Exhibition, Chippendale 300,

the Curator's View'. Part of the Chippendale 300 celebrations James illuminated the members on the trials and tribulations of mounting an exhibition.

Our final house, **Hutton-in-the-Forest**, Cumbria is the home of Lord Inglewood who delighted us by joining our tour in the Drawing Room. Hutton-in-the-Forest is a mixture of styles with various improvements and extensions made by successive owners from medieval to nineteenth century.

The oldest part of the house is the entrance, the Stone Hall, part of the thirteenth century Pele Tower built by the De Houten family from where Hutton-in-the-Forest acquired its name. The Stone Hall is a small barrel-vaulted room with a trap door in the ceiling through which the family would escape from dangerous attackers. Here there is a macabre display of items from of a previous era including two man traps.

Leaving the Stone Hall via the romantic Cupid Staircase, thought to date from around 1680, two major Mortlake tapestries still in remarkably good colour are on display on the landing. Rare in the north of England is the Long Gallery housing a variety of original and Victorian copies of early furniture.

Much discussion was made in the Blue Drawing Room over a commode which may originate from northern Europe, possibly by George Haupt or Fuhrlogh. Lord Inglewood thought this plausible as one of his ancestors had connections with Sweden in the eighteenth century. A superb Exhibition-style Renaissance Revival centre table, possibly by Pogliani of Milan of ebony inlaid with ivory was noted.

The original William Morris Trellis pattern wallpaper is still found on the corridor to the Cupid Room and remains in good condition. The room is named after the delicate stucco plaster cupid on the ceiling executed by Joseph Rose the Elder. A remarkable picture in this room is of 'Walter Vane and his Family', dating from 1730 and by Hogarth.

More William Morris wallpaper hangs in Lady Darlington's Room, decorated in Arts and Crafts style and with a collection of metalwork from the Keswick School of Industrial Art. The Dining Room is designed in a neo-gothic style. Numerous family portraits overlook a beautiful Gillows dining table and overhead hangs a recently commissioned modern neo-gothic chandelier.

The final room, the Hall, is a favourite with the family. Remodelled in the Victorian times by Salvin but retaining the old panelling and Cupid Staircase at one end, and with family portraits, antlers and armour decorating the walls.

The Potfest ceramic exhibition was on in the grounds during our visit, one of the UK's biggest selling exhibitions. Lord and Lady Inglewood collect modern ceramics and it was interesting to see how throughout the house old and modern decorative arts can live quite happily together.

Report by Cathy Lambert



## REPORT: VISIT TO NORTHANTS, CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND ESSEX 4<sup>th</sup>—6<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018

The superb furniture at Althorp, seat of the Spencer family for 500 years, has been described as some of the most important in the country, and comes from a variety of sources: the most significant being the great inheritance from Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, grandmother of the Hon John Spencer; the furnishings of Spencer House, built by the first Earl Spencer, designed by John Vardy and finished by James Athenian Stuart by 1766; and the re-modelling campaign of Althorp in the very last years of the 18th century under Henry Holland.

In the Wootton Hall we encountered the first furnishings from Spencer House almost all of which were removed to Althorp in 1926 when it was first tenanted. Dominating the room is the magnificent gilt bronze lantern designed by James Athenian Stuart, and probably made by Dietrich Nicholas Anderson for the main Staircase; and the set of richly carved hall chairs in an advanced neo Classical style. These may have been designed by John Vardy and executed by his brother Thomas, but they are close to a design by Chippendale published in the third edition of the *Director* (pl. XVII, dated 1759). There is no documentary evidence that the Spencers ever used the St Martin's Lane enterprise and every indication that they patronised Chippendale's rivals. Two boldly carved marble top tables attributed to Benjamin Goodison belong to the Palladian 1720s-30s campaign at Althorp, while the part-antique marble blackamoors from the Marlborough inheritance were probably intended for the Palm Room at Spencer House.



Upstairs, the Ante Room, now used as an informal dining room, contains the first examples of fine French furniture, here a *re-gence* commode in rosewood with ormolu handles, escutcheons and borders to each of the drawers. The Great Room, beyond, is dominated by the magnificent pair of pier glasses and tables from the Great Room at Spencer House (for which replicas were made by Dick Reid during its total refurbishment for Rothschild's in the 1980s). A pair of boule *mazarin* dressing tables were juxtaposed in the piers: the early 18<sup>th</sup> century example with exceptionally fine Berainesque brass inlay contrasted with the lesser quality of its 19<sup>th</sup> century 'pair'. There were a pair of secretaires by Adam Weisweiler, incorporating fine Japanese lacquer, ebony and exquisite ormolu. They were bought in 1791, together with a number of French pieces from the *marchand mercier* Dominique Daguerre who had a thriving business selling ultra luxurious French furniture, particularly to the smart Carlton House Set in the years immediately before and during the French Revolution. A set of *Director*-style splat back chairs surround the dining table. Close by, in the King William Bedroom, we were able to glimpse (from behind the ropes), a rare example (for Althorp) of an English late rococo chimney glass in four compartments sporting trailing leafy forms, palm branches, dragons and flowers. In the Queen Mary Bedroom we admired the seventh Earl's needlework chair covers.

The great Picture Gallery astonishes with its set of 24 portraits of Charles II's courtiers by Sir Peter Lely, all in their auricular 'Sunderland' frames, each slightly different, together with the great van Dyck of the Earl of Bristol and the Duke of Bedford at the far end. Only slightly less astonishing are the group of seven Chinese and Japanese lacquer cabinets on stands arranged in the piers opposite the paintings: some are pairs, and nearly all are of exceptional quality. Unfortunately, the suite of chairs and sofas from the Ball Room at Spencer House made by John Gordon (later Gordon and Tait), not dissimilar to the suite seen last year at Blair Castle and which usually grace this room, were not on display.

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The Gallery and Saloon, with their great range of Spencer portraits, are lined with good mahogany parlour chairs, one set reminiscent of a *Director* design, another with palm motifs in their backs suggesting a Spencer House origin, perhaps after a design by John Vardy. The pair of ormolu tripod candelabra, Athenian Stuart's brilliant invention based on the Lanthorn of Demosthenes in Athens, executed by Dietrich Nicholas Anderson and first seen at Kedleston, are complete with their original painted pedestals having been key elements in the Painted Room at Spencer House, perhaps the earliest example of a room in the new 'Antique' style.

From here we proceeded to the enfilade of State Rooms by Henry Holland. In the Drawing Room the ropes were lifted for us to admire the Reynolds portraits, the pair of mahogany library 'commode tables' perhaps derived from a plate in the *Director*, Georgiana Spencer's satinwood and harewood bureau, inset with the initials of her children, a brilliant palm entwined mirror probably designed by John Vardy from the Music Room at Spencer House. Beneath it was a chest of drawers by Saunier, with Japanese lacquer panels and open side shelves, acquired through Holland and Daguerre in 1791, together with two pier tables (now in the Marlborough Room) – the suite apparently intended for the Dining Room at Spencer House. The supremely elegant white and gold seat furniture and canapés are by Francois Hervé, a Frenchman working in London, much patronised by the Carlton House set, once again no doubt ordered through Holland's intervention. The Billiard Room next door had a similar suite of commode and two corner cupboards by Saunier clad with Japanese lacquer panels. The Regency settees were covered with gros point needlework apparently worked by Lavinia Countess Spencer. In the Library the

scholarly atmosphere was enhanced by the comfortable early Regency furniture including the spiral library steps, probably mostly supplied by John King, although an earlier quartetto music desk was noted.

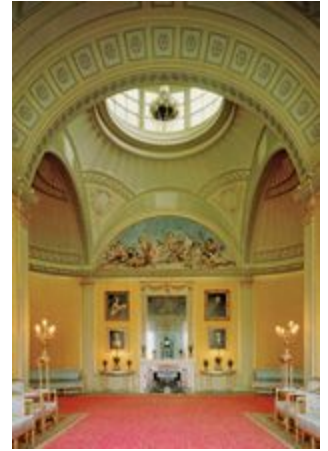
The Marlborough Room, now the main Dining Room, contains most of the enormous suite of 54 chairs with curved backs and serpentine balusters seen around the house and supplied by Seddon c1800, with the magnificent pair of sideboards with ormolu enrichments designed by Holland and the accompanying pier tables by Saunier. Two oval branch – entwined pier glasses probably, perhaps from the Vardy period at Spencer House, date from a couple of decades earlier. Finally, the Sunderland Room is now an informal library with bookcases from Spencer House, elegant mahogany seat furniture from the 1760s, and a fine late 17<sup>th</sup> century walnut cabinet on stand. Here our guide very kindly produced two volumes of the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl Spencer's manuscript catalogue of the collections, every item written up in his own hand with notes on provenance, attributions, and conservation. The preservation of this truly remarkable and princely ensemble is very largely due to him.

We were unable to see a number of significant interiors and pieces such as the experimental neo-Classical suite made for Lady Spencer's apartments at Spencer House but nevertheless there was plenty to admire for one afternoon. For more information see Peter Thornton and John Hardy, 'The Spencer Furniture at Althorp', *Apollo*, 1968, vol. LXXXVII, pp. 179-189, 440-451, and vol. LXXXVIII, pp. 266-277.

After a convivial dinner at our comfortable hotel, we set off next day for two contrasting Cambridgeshire houses. Wimpole Hall has a roll call of some great English architects – James Gibbs, Henry Flitcroft, Sanderson Miller, John Soane – and some well known names in English life – the great bibliophile Edward Harley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Oxford, the jurist Lord Chancellor Philip Yorke, Earl of Hardwicke, and finally Elsie Bambridge, daughter of Rudyard Kipling who bought the house in 1938 and saved it from dereliction. Although the great majority of the furnishings from these different periods have been lost, including everything from the consignment of £675 worth of goods supplied by Chippendale between 1777 and 1784, enough has remained (or been repatriated) to suggest the appearance of the interiors at these times. The Entrance Hall with its striking encaustic tiled floor contains two painted console tables in the rococo style; one is 19<sup>th</sup> century, the other c1940 – probably ordered from local craftsmen by Mrs Bambridge to make a pair. Indeed this was but the first example of her predilection to employ the well-known Cambridge firm of Ratee and Kett to copy or enhance existing pieces. Other examples, variations on the famous side tables designed by Matthias Lock for Ditchley and now at Temple Newsam, are found in the Grand Dining Room and Gallery. The former room (recently restored) contains an interesting group of views of royal palaces apparently painted in oil on papier maché by Jennens and Bettridge of Birmingham. The small Breakfast Room, beyond, has the first of the fine Palladian chimneypieces from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century designed by Flitcroft and carved by Sefferin Alken when the Hardwicke's first arrived, with a charming fancy picture attributed to Mercier in the overmantel. In the Saloon was an otherwise unremarkable cupboard which turned out to be an 'Ascham Cabinet' – intended for the storage of bows and arrows, later converted for billiard cues and named after the fa-

ther of modern toxophily.

The arcaded T shaped Yellow Drawing Room, intended for the display of pictures and as a venue for assemblies, is one of Sir John Soane's masterpieces of design, rising through two storeys and top lit with a domed lantern (soon afterwards supplemented with a gasolier). Dating from 1793 its dramatic effects provide an interesting contrast to the almost exactly contemporaneous but infinitely more reticent Holland campaign at Athorp. The suite of four sofas, which fit exactly into the curved apses, and the 14 chairs were evidently designed for this room probably by Soane and his associate Dominique Daguerre, recently fled from France, and have a superb fin de siècle elegance about them, again useful to compare with the Hervé pieces at Althorp. Four torcheres in this style bought by Mrs Bambridge are not entirely convincing.



Soane's second contribution to Wimpole is the inventive Book Room of 1806, with its three elliptical arches springing from the bookcases. This gives onto James Gibbs's magnificent Library which once housed Harley's great collection. The most significant item of furniture today is the fine library steps in the form of a pulpit, designed by Henry Keene with Gothick details for which the drawing survives in the V&A. From here we turned to the Gallery, created by Flitcroft in the 1740s from Gibbs' series of small cabinet rooms. Surviving from this date are two magnificent gilt pier glasses and en suite console tables, classic examples of the Palladian repertoire, as is the side table close to the model designed by Matthias Lock with a Herculean mask apron, once again similar to the examples once at Ditchley.

In contrast to these grand interiors one enters the Bambridges' *petit appartement* of two smaller rooms, still with their fine Flitcroft designed chimneys, which they used as their sitting rooms, painted in buff and cream with 18<sup>th</sup> century painted Austrian furniture, together with their remarkable collection of Continental conversation pieces and porcelain. The Ante Room contains a unique table whose top of geometric parquetry is painted in trompe l'oeil with playing cards, writing implements, coins and papers, signed by the young French artist Louis Boilly and dated 1774.

Ascending Gibbs' magnificent staircase with its plasterwork of different dates one views a couple of surprisingly small bedroom suites whose main interest lies in the charming conversation pictures; the Lord Chancellor's has a *lit à la polonoise* of c1780 repatriated by Mrs Bambridge, and other good furniture probably acquired from Cambridge and other local antique shops. Finally, one descends to view Gibbs' Chapel – surely the richest baroque country house chapel in the country, with its illusionistic paintings by Sir James Thornhill. It also has a remarkable hexagonal oak pulpit, with fine architectural mouldings, surely also designed by James Gibbs and similar to examples found in his other churches. The altar table is richly gilded with four carved cherubs' heads at the corners and may be from the Flitcroft pe-



riod as also the flanking tall candlestands. The fine ironwork communion rail is attributed to Thomas Robinson who succeeded Tijou as blacksmith at St Paul's Cathedral.

From here we proceeded to Anglesey Abbey, and after lunch we free-flowed through the house on our own steam. In complete contrast to Wimpole the collections reflect the taste of the Anglo – American plutocracy of the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, with their tapestries, oak and walnut furniture (many with supposed historical associations), expensive clocks, old master and English paintings - all arranged in happily luxurious 'Old English' interiors of the 1920s. It remains very much the creation of the connoisseur Huttleston Broughton, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Fairhaven who went to the leading dealers of his day. Among the high-lights were 'Shakespeare's chair', an oak mid 16<sup>th</sup> century probably French caquetteuse; a three - tier Regency chinoiserie automaton clock by Henry Bovell; an Anglo – Indian dressing table c1760s from Vizagapatam, inlaid with ivory scrolling flowers etc; a late Kentian hall bench attributed to John Linnell. In the Library were two monumental writing tables: one in mahogany and brass mounted c1810 attributed to Tatham, Bailey and Saunders; and the other formerly at Houghton, in walnut, with fluted pilasters flanking the cupboard doors, possibly designed by Colen Campbell. Hanging between them are two of the five silver chandeliers made by B.F. Behrens for George II's use in Hanover.

Of particular interest to us was David Garrick's dressing table which was opened for us specially. It is part of the suite made for the actor's bedroom at his villa at Hampton, about 1775 and which the Society owns one of the small bookcase-bed cupboards. Like the other pieces the dressing table is made of mahogany and subsequently, after Eva Garrick's intervention, japanned in cream and green with chinoiserie decoration. The interior revealed the sliding dressing mirror, the various fitted boxes in their compartments, and trays for razors and blades. Nearby a suite of *Director* style side chairs with Gothick traceried backs sadly turned out to be 20<sup>th</sup> century, and also a fine serpentine Gothick blank-fretted side table. A vast Italian table, probably Roman, in the form of a shell - fountain supported by a merman and mermaid apparently dates from c1730. The roll top desk with marquetry decoration depicting a townscape was formerly attributed to David Roentgen and from one of the palaces of Tsar Paul I but is probably by a Russian imitator.

Next day, our visit to Audley End coincided with an unscheduled film shoot so we were prevented from visiting some of the interiors but our protestations secured permission to see the Chapel and Adam Rooms which were otherwise closed. The vast Jacobean house has a rich and complex history with furnishings and collections to match. Our particular interest however centred on the period of Sir John Griffin Griffin, later Lord Howard de Walden and 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Braybrooke, who inherited the house in 1762 and undertook two major campaigns of refurbishment: with Robert Adam in the 1760s and early 70s, and in the mid 1780s for a proposed visit of George III. The total expenditure on furniture between 1776 and 1797 amounted to £8,476 – he was almost in the same league as Edwin Lascelles at Harewood.

Beginning in the Saloon (as the Great Hall was out of bounds) we admired Sir John's enhancement of the Jacobean elements of the room and his white and gold colour scheme untouched



David Garrick's dressing table.. Photo by Warren Smith

since 1786. We were greatly struck by the set of Chinese Chippendale armchairs whose backs and arms bear considerable similarity to Plate XXIV (1754) and XXVI (1762). Their cane seats and frames have evidently been renewed. Their tapering square section front legs with recessed panels topped by a Gothic trefoil rise to a squat capital which seems to be feature of the St Martin's Lane enterprise. In fact Sir John is only recorded as having bought a one-off hexagon 'Claw Table' for three guineas in 1774, almost certainly from Chippendale's stock of these popular items. Otherwise he seems to have patronised a number of Chippendale's rivals, especially (as at Althorp) Gordon and Taitt.

The first of the suite of rooms which followed along the south wing, remodelled and furnished in the 1820s by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lord Braybooke and retaining a Regency / early Victorian character, contains the magnificent white and gold Moorfields carpet supplied in 1785, together with some chairs from c1730 recovered in matching tapestry. The Library had a superb Louis XV bureau plat with truly exceptional gilt bronze mounts, attributed to Latz. Passing to the north wing via the Picture Gallery with its important early 19<sup>th</sup> century taxidermy we reached the Neville and Howard Rooms. The former contained a superb serpentine bombé chest of drawers with gilt bronze mounts, said to be English but of truly Germanic appearance. The Howard Rooms contain the furniture ordered for the proposed visit of George III and Queen Charlotte in 1786 which never materialised. They were moved here in the 1970s having originally been in a new apartment on the south wing. Foremost is the State Bed, hung with French grey (light blue) Chinese silk and passementerie, supplied by Chipchase and Gordon at a cost of £398 (exclusive of hangings). The embroidered coloured leaves and swags were supplied by J. Seneschal at further cost. This compares with the Harewood state bed supplied by Chippendale for £250 (also exclusive of hangings). This magnificent structure is probably the very last of the great State Beds of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was accompanied by four stools and three armchairs to match, in accordance with royal protocol. The Dressing Room beyond had a pair of exceptional mahogany chests of drawers again with unusually lavish gilt bronze mounts.

We were delighted to see the 'Carpenter's Gothick' chapel, designed and built for Sir John by his joiner John Hobcraft, decorated with plaster and timber imitating stone, and complete with its original seating and fittings. The preacher's chair was the star turn, carved in olive wood at great cost by the well-known vir-

tuoso craftsman Sefferin Alken.

From here we descended to the ground floor of the south wing to see the Adam Rooms, part of a new State Apartment created for Sir John in the late 1760s / early 1770s in a particularly difficult space, two of which were opened for us especially. The Great Drawing Room features a replica of the three colour silk 'damask' or brocatelle, in crimson, silver and green, somewhat overwhelming in this low ceilinged room, but a remarkably early and rare example of this fashion. The chairs and sofas, supplied by Gordon and Taitt, were upholstered to match, and arranged in such a way that the patterns on their backs lined up exactly with the wall hangings. The tables were originally intended to have scagliola tops designed by Adam to echo the ceiling design, but in the event they were given 'rich Inlaid

tops' at £30 – almost imitating Roman mosaics and in a style far removed from Chippendale's usual repertoire of scrolling acanthus, anthemion and paterae. The room beyond – the Little Drawing Room – must be one of the most exquisite interiors of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century with its painted *grotesque* decoration by Biagio Rebecca, polychromatic 'mosaic' ceiling, columned alcove (widened to allow for Lady Griffin Griffin's voluminous hooped dresses) and richly gilt seat furniture and pier glass.

Thus ended a memorable visit for which we have to thank Cathy Lambert for her excellent planning and organisation.

Report by James Lomax

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