

There are a few details and simplifications of the chair which do not quite correspond to Chippendale's plate, but these would have been sanctioned by the master. In his notes referring to this design Chippendale wrote 'If the Carving was thought superfluous, the Outlines may be preserved, and they will look very well.' Mr Cade suggests that it might have been made around 1815 soon after Blain's apprenticeship, maybe even as a 'trial piece'. However, a slightly later date may be preferred since Blain is unlikely to have stamped his furniture until he was reasonably established. The carving appears to be vigorously Regency in execution. If any members would like to inspect the chair (which is for sale) please contact the Hon Curator at Temple Newsam House.

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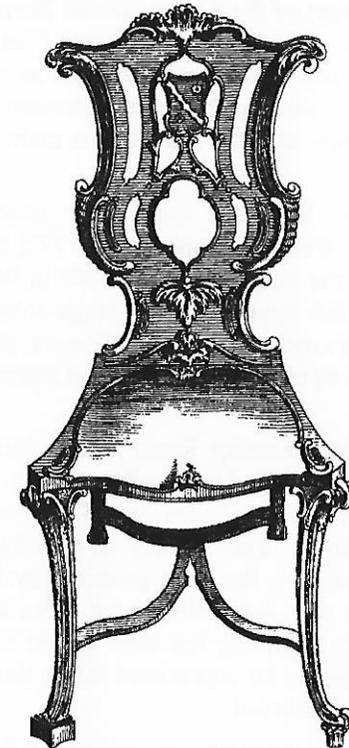
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The Chippendale Society

President: Lord St Oswald

Hall Chair.



T. Chippendale inv: et del.

J. Miller sculp.

NEWSLETTER No 93

April 2002



VISIT TO BURTON CONSTABLE

On 15th April some 42 members of the Society visited Burton Constable. We were greeted by Dr David Connell, Director of the Burton Constable Foundation, who gave us an excellent introductory lecture and then split us into three groups for our private view of the house: one visiting the prints, drawings and textiles, another to the roof and behind the scenes, and the third to the main rooms. After lunch the process was reversed.

For Chippendale enthusiasts there are three main areas of interest: the rare 'horseshoe' table supplied to Winifred Constable in 1772; the suite supplied to the London house in 1774; and the magnificent ensemble in the Great Drawing Room from 1778-9. In addition to this there is a whole range of furnishings by a variety of London and Yorkshire makers over a period of 150 years, plus a myriad of works of art and curiosities assembled by the family. It is a real mecca for everyone interested in historic houses.

The restoration of the Great Drawing Room is now almost complete and the furniture had only just been re-installed in time for our visit. The room has to be one of the best surviving grand ensembles of the late 18th century with its great looking glasses, seat furniture and tables. The 'overlay' of the 1840s consisting of the silk wall coverings and seat upholstery, the great paintings by Dubufe and the gigantic palm tree ottoman give it an even richer dimension. The story of the restoration of the looking glasses and their re-gilding has been told in *Country Life* recently but their splendour has to be seen to be appreciated. Only the carved and gilt curtain pelmets are now waiting to be returned.

There are many other fascinating puzzles concerning the furnishings of this period. Some members were interested in the role of Wright and Elwick of Wakefield, Yorkshire's leading upholsters in the late 18th century. Their magnificent full tester bed in the Gold Bedroom was much admired, and their painted oval mirrors are juxtaposed with Chippendale's in the King's Bedroom (the latter being very close to those in the Dining Room at Paxton). There are at least two other great gilt pier glasses of theirs which recall Chippendale's 'Dumfries House style' and bear close comparison with work from St Martin's Lane. For those who would like to return to Burton Constable for a more leisured visit a bibliography is provided on a separate sheet.

CHIPPENDALE IN LIVERPOOL

Mr Malcolm Cade of Bideford, Devon, has written to say that he has a mahogany hall chair corresponding almost exactly to the example published by Chippendale in Plate XXIII of the third edition of the *Director* (cover). No other hall chairs of this design appear to be known, by Chippendale or anyone else. What is truly remarkable is that it is stamped 'A. BLAIN/LIVERPOOL' for Arbuthnot Blain (not Arthur Blain as suggested by *The Dictionary of English Furniture Makers*).

Mr Cade has undertaken considerable research revealing that Blain's father Samuel moved from Killybegs, Co. Donegal, to Liverpool and set up a workshop in 1794, the year of Arbuthnot's birth. The younger Blain's early career is shrouded in mystery but he appears to have been associated with a cabinet maker named Chatham prior to joining his uncle Thomas in the firm in 1835 whereupon it became T & A Blain. Blain died in 1868 and the firm was carried on by his grandson until it was dissolved in 1925. (continued overleaf

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Annual General Meeting

will be held at Otley Civic Centre on **Monday 13 May** at 7.30 pm.

The Annual Dinner

will be held on **Tuesday 11 June** at Otley Golf Club, 7.00 for 7.30 pm,

The speaker will be **The Countess of Wemyss and March**.

Please use Functions Entrance.

No tickets will be issued but applications, including seating preferences, should be made by completing the reservation form below and returning it with your cheque. Please indicate if any vegetarian meals are required. Guests and potential new members are very welcome.

.....
Please reserve..... places for the Annual Dinner at £17 each. Total amount enclosed £

Name

Address

.....

.....
Please tick if any vegetarian meals are required and indicate how many

I/We would like to sit with

Please make cheques payable to *The Chippendale Society* and send to

John Holdsworth Esq, 74 Riverside Park, Otley, W Yorkshire LS21 2RW

A BURTON CONSTABLE FURNITURE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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