

THE ATTINGHAM TRUST

FOR THE STUDY OF HISTORIC HOUSES AND COLLECTIONS

Dear Attingham Alumni...

In these extraordinary times I am writing to you all hoping that you are ok and keeping safe and well. With alumni now heralding from five continents, it is difficult to keep track, but Covid-19 has certainly reunited us all in turning our lives upside down. On the Attingham front, you may have heard that we have very sadly had to postpone the four residential courses we were running in 2020: the 35th Study Programme in Ireland (June), the 69th Attingham Summer School (July), 24th Royal Collection Studies (September) and the new course on the Country House Library (September).

As I write this, a decision is still to be made on French Eighteenth-Century Studies (non-residential in October). But despite this depressing news, I want to assure you that The Attingham Trust, with the help of the American Friends of Attingham and, most importantly, with *your support* will survive this setback. Indeed, all those booked on the courses this year have been offered a place next year and most have accepted, which is enormously encouraging.

At this stage, it is impossible to know what effect this pandemic will have on our lives and careers. For many working in museums, historic houses and heritage institutions, life was already pretty precarious and this crisis will doubtless fundamentally affect modes of operation in ways that it is not easy to imagine. However, all of us are fortunate in being able to share our love of historic houses and collections, beauty and landscape and this sense of history is what we must make sure we continue to foster and develop. Attingham will be looking at its own activities in the light of evolving developments but we shall continue to organise courses that have always 'enrich[ed] each of those who took part and for the rest of their lives' - *Sir George Trevelyan* (1906-1996), one of our founders.

While we reflect back on our memories for stability, knowledge and comfort, we also need to look to the future. There will be so many demands on us when we start the slow process of getting back to 'normality' (whatever that may mean). It is with this in mind that we urge you to please keep your contributions flowing towards our scholarship fund, which has been sadly decimated over the last months, and ask *you all* to consider making a donation. Many of you have been the beneficiaries of scholarship assistance in the past or have seen the opportunities that financial support has given others and know how critical it can be. All donations make an impact and help to create the rich and varied dynamic of our global network, which is at the very heart of Attingham. We are always immensely grateful for your support.

*For more details of how you may contribute to the Scholarship Fund, please visit the **Support Us** sections on The Attingham Trust and American Friends of Attingham websites.*
(www.attinghamtrust.org; www.americanfriendsofattingham.org)

To conclude on an upbeat note, to quote Helen Lowenthal, the driving force behind the founding of Attingham in 1952: '*This is one of our principles, that we would try and make everyone happy...*' After 68 years of enacting this principle, we are committed to ensuring this remains the case in the future. Please keep an eye on the websites.

Annabel Westman

Executive Director, The Attingham Trust

A Prince's Treasure: From Buckingham Palace to the Royal Pavilion. The Royal Collection Returns to Brighton

In September 2019, 123 magnificent objects, removed from the Royal Pavilion in the late 1840s, were returned on loan by Her Majesty The Queen for a two year period as a happy consequence of the reservicing of the East Wing of Buckingham Palace, a ten year project to overhaul the entire building's services and infrastructure. The East Wing, which contains the majority of objects once at the Royal Pavilion, was the first to be decanted of furniture and objects. This has resulted in a curatorial dream, a once in a lifetime opportunity to place objects in the original locations for which many were designed or later placed. The three major state rooms at the Pavilion now look as close as possi-

this was going on inside the future of the building was debated and in 1850, after much argument, the Brighton Town Commissioners bought the building and its estate for £53,000. But the former royal palace was a stripped and devastated wreck. Various misunderstandings and rivalries between two departments of the royal household and the government department known as the Office of Woods and Forests, led to fittings being removed which the Town Commissioners later argued were part of the building's freehold. These included over 40 chimneypieces. In 1851 the *New Monthly Magazine* complained that 'if a pulk of Kozacs from the Don, a band of Red Republicans from Paris, or a host of Californian



The Music Room ©Royal Collection Trust/Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020; photographer Jim Holden.

ble to the way the patron, George IV, intended them to look when the Pavilion was completed in 1823.

After Queen Victoria's final visit to the Royal Pavilion in 1845 she decided she no longer required the building as a royal palace. A great deal of uncertainty followed and it was widely believed the Pavilion was likely to be demolished. In 1847 and 1848, 137 van loads of furniture and decorations were removed and later installed in the new east wing at Buckingham Palace. While

gold-seekers had been turned loose into the Pavilion... they could not have committed a tithe of the ravages effected by the delegates of the Woods and Forests.' Fittings and furniture removed from the Pavilion were eventually integrated into the Chinese Luncheon Room, the Centre Room and the Yellow Drawing Room at Buckingham Palace. The majority of objects returned on loan have come from these three rooms as well as from the Principal Corridor.

Brighton's purchase of the Royal Pavilion secured its future. In 1863 Queen Victoria returned major fittings not required at other royal palaces. Further fittings were returned in 1898, 1912, 1920 and 1934. This tradition of royal generosity continued under the present monarch when in 1955 Her Majesty returned on long loan more than 100 items of furniture and decorative objects. The royal loans of 2019-2021 include some of the most splendid objects once in the building. The undoubted highlight is the reinstallation into the Music Room of the six magnificent porcelain pagodas made in China in about 1803 and placed here in 1817. Words alone cannot convey how splendid this ensemble looks. It was the greatest collection of porcelain pagodas ever assembled in one place. The return of the pagodas, together with the 'Rock' clock, the Orleans vases and other fittings has meant that for the first time in 172 years visitors can see this magnificent room in its full splendour. Transformed thus, it is quite simply one of the great rooms of the world.

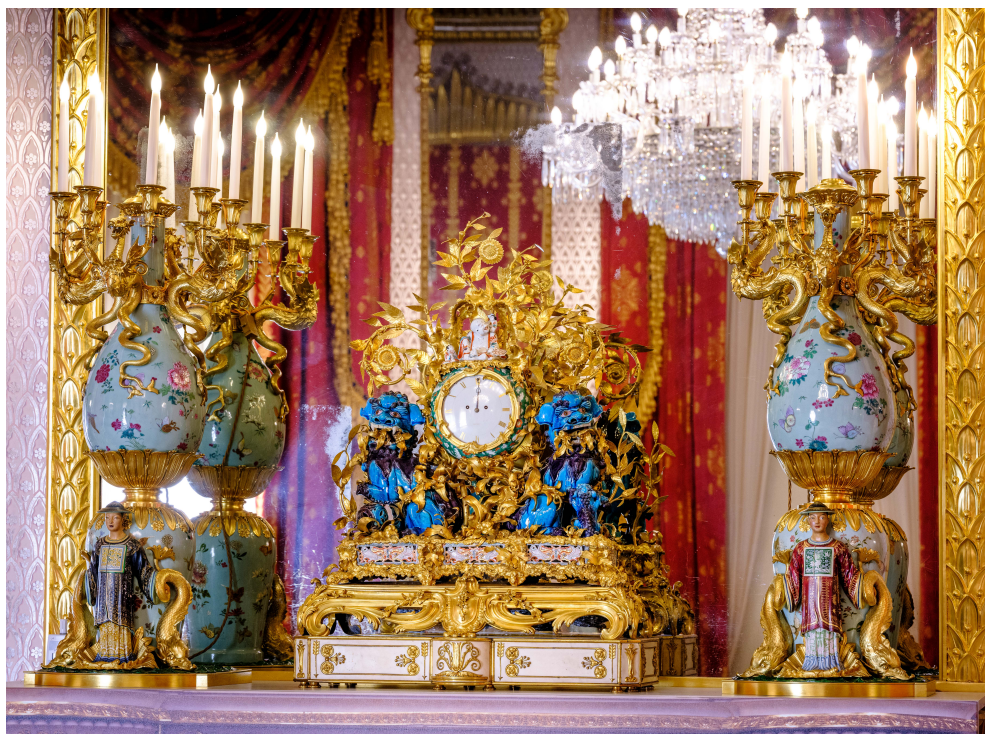
The almost equally magnificent Banqueting Room now has its full complement of sideboard tables, designed by Robert Jones, 'the chief decorative artist of the Palace' and made by Bailey and Sanders in about 1819. On the chimneypieces now sit a clock and barometer, also designed by Jones and made, or more accurately compiled, by B.L. Vulliamy. These superlative examples of European chinoiserie are lavish examples of the Pavilion style at its confident best. At the time of writing, two of the four original over doors, also designed by Jones, have been installed.

Baxter's *Stranger's Guide to Brighton* (1824) remarked that they resembled burning gold.

In September 2018 the Saloon re-opened after a six-year restoration. To celebrate this event, Her Majesty The Queen generously returned six of the original chairs on long-term loan as well as a magnificent tripod enclosing a Chinese celadon bowl intended as a potpourri. These were important loans but they have since been supplemented by objects of almost overwhelming magnificence. These include the celebrated 'Kylin' clock, a most extraordinary extravaganza, a pair of candelabra fronted by mandarin figures, and six bottle-shaped celadon vases with gilt-bronze mounts. The vases are of a size appropriate to the dimensions and sumptuous decoration of the Saloon.

There are many more extravagant, wonderful, sometimes outlandish objects included in the loan. It is a tragedy that at a time when the Pavilion looks more magnificent than it has ever looked since it ceased to be a royal palace, the building had to close on 17 March in response to the coronavirus pandemic. It is not currently known when it will re-open. When that day comes it is hoped to hold a special event for Attingham alumni. But whatever happens, do not fail to visit even if you have been many times before. You will be astonished at the transformation of the building memorably described by Osbert Sitwell as 'the most peculiar mirage that ever floated over our Northern seas.'

David Beevers (SS '78; RCS '98; SP '02, 09, 15, 17)
Keeper of the Royal Pavilion, Brighton



The 'Kylin' Clock ©Royal Collection Trust/Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020; photographer Jim Holden.



Norwich River, Afternoon, c. 1819 Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery (Norfolk Museum Service)

A fascinating project at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery is now underway, albeit behind temporarily closed doors. The project asks: how exactly does a regional painter, recognised within his own locality as a force in modern painting, secure his national reputation?

This major exhibition at Norwich Castle (title to be confirmed) will commemorate the bicentenary of the death of the artist John Crome (1768-1821). Regarded as a British landscape master and a charismatic teacher in his own time, Crome founded the first art society in Britain outside London, the Norwich Society of Artists. The Society soon developed into the first exhibiting artists' society to hold an annual exhibition along the lines of the Royal Academy and later became internationally known as the Norwich School of Painting.

Crome's work was rooted in the Norwich cityscape and Norfolk's landscapes – the small streams, farm fences, creaking gates and ancient trees of the local landscape – images that captured the modernity of rapid painting. Now seen as quintessential portrayals of the Norfolk landscape, his compositions were sometimes criticised as too modern in his lifetime. At the 1806 Royal Academy exhibition, one London critic disparaged Crome as 'a modern', lamenting the lack of 'finishing' in his painting.

Through a series of choice loans from public and private collections to supplement Norwich Castle's own pre-eminent collection, the exhibition will showcase paintings, drawings and etchings to illuminate Crome's status as a Master of British landscape painting. This will be first major exhibition dedicated to Crome since 1968. It will reveal the twists and turns of Crome's reputation, notably following his death in 1821, when 'an immense concourse of people' attended his funeral and his national reputation seemed set for posterity.

After his death Crome's compositions became synonymous with the Norwich School and therein, the exhibition argues, lay the sometimes tortuous trajectory of his reputation into the 21st century.

An innovative aspect of this exhibition will be the technical analysis of Crome's painting technique. Norwich Castle will collaborate with lenders to analyse his oil paintings, following on from work already undertaken on Norwich Castle's own paintings.

Throwing new light on Crome's painting technique will help with longstanding issues over the misattribution of his work. The project team believes that technical studies are the key to help characterise his practice and distinguish his work from that of his followers and imitators.

Finally, the exhibition aims to collaborate with other cultural institutions to take Crome beyond the Castle walls through outreach and events taking place around the city and turn this exhibition into a significant celebration of Crome as both a leading landscape painter and as a proud son of Norwich. *Revisioning John Crome* is curated by Dr Giorgia Bottinelli, Curator of Historic Art, Norwich Castle and the exhibition will be accompanied an illustrated catalogue.

Exhibition Dates: 23rd April - 5th September 2021

Dr. Andrew Moore (SS '94; RCS '96; SP '03, 09, 10, 15; LHC '10)

Director, From College Library to Country House (September 2021)

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Opening up the Soane

Sir John Soane's Museum in London is well known to many Attingham alumni and has been called the 'supreme example' of the house-museum. The celebrated English architect John Soane (1753-1837) left it to the nation on his death requiring that it be kept 'as nearly as possible' exactly as it was at that time. However, over the subsequent two centuries changes were made, in particular the dismantling of many of his extraordinary and romantic interiors to make way for example, for curatorial offices or for the introduction of services – or even at the whim of individual Curators! In 2016 a major 7-year restoration project, *Opening up the Soane*, the brainchild of the then Director, Tim Knox, was completed. It included reinstating a number of important interiors including the entire second floor of the house where Soane had his 'Private Apartments' – including his bedroom, bath room, 'Oratory' and Model Room. Craftsmen and women from England, Wales, the Republic of Ireland and the United States were involved. A film about the project has now been completed by film-maker Jonathan Crane, made possible by one

of the Museum's most generous supporters, Mrs Elizabeth Cayzer, who felt that an archive record of this extraordinary project was essential to record the work for posterity. Although it wasn't possible to cover every aspect of the project in huge detail – not least because we weren't able to do that much filming as it went along – it stands as an inspiring memento of what was achieved.

It focuses on the historic restoration rather than on any of the other works that were done so beautifully behind the scenes (lifts to achieve disabled access, a new shop and new exhibition gallery) and features Attingham alumni. Sadly the restoration of Soane's bed, led by Annabel Westman, is not specifically featured because it followed on after the main part of the project was completed – but we hope that omission can be rectified in the future!

Watch the film here: soane.org/outs

Helen Dorey (SS '07; SP '09, '10, '16, '17)
Deputy Director and Inspectress,
Sir John Soane's Museum

"A Crown of Netherland": Dutch Influence in Early Long Island Homes and Decorative Arts

Just before social distancing restrictions prevented large gatherings and stay-at-home orders shuttered museums, many Attingham alumni gathered at Colonial Williamsburg's 73rd Antiques Forum to explore the American home. As one of the speakers, I had the privilege of sharing with friends and colleagues the influence of Dutch culture and design on early Long Island domestic interiors.



Long Island Siruaid, Robert Ryder (active c.1670-1681), London c.1675. Ink on vellum. John Carter Brown Library, Brown University

In 1626, the southern tip of Manhattan Island became the operating base for the Dutch North American colony of New Netherland. The settlement grew, and within a decade, its frontier pushed across the East River onto western Long Island into present-day Kings (Brooklyn) and Queens Counties. By the 1660s, Kings County was home to a mixed group of farmers from throughout the Low Countries. Further east, English religious dissenters and later Huguenot refugees settled in Queens County. This cultural convergence resulted in a hybridized regional style. Although Long Island's Dutch colonial history was brief, the impact of New Netherland endured well beyond English conquest in 1664. Estate inventories indicate that the highly visual culture of the Dutch Republic carried over to its North American colony, even to its more rural areas. When Gerret Van Duyn (1632-1706), a carpenter and wheelwright, died in Kings County in 1706, his possessions included five printed pictures, two looking glasses, a silver beaker, and an old "Dutch" cupboard, which was undoubtedly a *kas*. In the Netherlands, *kasten* were central features of affluent households. For colonists of Dutch descent, they became important signifiers



John Bowne House, c.1661, Flushing, Queens.

of status, lineage, and identity in English colonial New York.

Surviving examples of early western Long Island architecture and decorative arts provide evidence of the region's diverse cultural influences. The circa 1661 John Bowne House in Flushing, Queens reflect both English and Dutch traditions in building construction and domestic space. John Bowne (1627–1695) was a prominent English Quaker. His surviving account book documents the work of both English and Dutch craftsmen, including Dutch-born joiner Francis Bloetgoet (died 1676). Bloetgoet likely trained in a Dutch craft tradition and created for the English Quaker household a pottery shelf, box bed,

and kas—household furnishings typical of contemporary Dutch interiors.

By the early eighteenth century, Dutch families from Kings County migrated eastward and settled in Queens County's predominantly English communities, bringing their customs and traditions with them. A number of kas- ten from this period with histories of ownership in English families suggest that a strong local identity developed that was not necessarily connected to one's ancestral origins.

A kas made in Queens County around 1755 for a Quaker couple bears striking resemblance to kasten from Kings County. As tastes slowly Anglicized, traditional forms like the kas adapted to change. The outline of the older form is still visible in a fashionable clothes press made in Brooklyn around 1800.

The Dutch-American house has long served as a reminder of Long Island's Dutch beginnings. The lasting popularity of the kas or homes with stoops, overhanging eaves, and double Dutch doors attest to a local taste that transcended generations; a style born from the union of tradition and innovation in a place where many cultures mixed together on the edge of New Netherland.

Lauren Brincat (SS '19)
Curator, Preservation Long Island



Kas, Hempstead, Queens County, c.1755. Sweet gum, yellow poplar, and mahogany veneer. Yale University Art Gallery, 2000.29.1.



Clothes press, Flatlands, Kings County, 1780–1810. Cherry, tulip poplar, walnut veneer. Preservation Long Island, 1981.31.

• REFLECTIONS IN 2020

The V&A as a country house: some comparisons in a time of pandemic

The past few weeks have seen museums pondering the twin challenges of maintaining visitor numbers and revenue, while at the same time enforcing the new norms of social distancing. The Victoria and Albert Museum is perhaps more fortunate than most as its hitherto overlooked heritage as a country house might offer solutions to some of these challenges.

In the early days of its history, the Museum enjoyed a semi-rural situation. The 12 acre plot to the south of Hyde Park identified by Prince Albert and Henry Cole for their expanding museum of ornament and design, was in the sparsely-populated hamlet of Brompton, famous since the seventeenth century for its market gardens, nursery grounds and healthy air. On 23 June 1857, *The Times* newspaper reported that the buildings of the South Kensington Museum 'are agreeably approached through a large garden, with a carriage-way' (since enclosed by Aston Webb's 1909 extension) and in June 1858 the paper noted that 'the Museum at Kensington is a wonderful favourite of the public, considering its remote and far from central situation'.



The original entrance to the South Kensington Museum, designed by Francis Fowke in the classical revival style of 15th century Italy, and built 1863-1903. In the foreground, the John Madejski Garden, designed by Kim Wilkie in 2004-2005. ©V&A Images

Nearby underground stations and the main arterial road that runs past the front of the building have joined the Museum to central London, but as with many country houses, the building itself offers areas where social distancing is achievable or places where visitors can self-isolate. Grand entrances and splendid staircases characterise the country house; Aston Webb's

ample entrance hall has walls lined with Portland stone and pavonazza marble, and a vestibule ceiling of teak and holly. Just as in a country house, the decoration also celebrates ownership. The V&A is in part a monument to Prince Albert, its founder and patron; had Queen Victoria not been persuaded otherwise by the eighth Duke of Devonshire, Spencer Compton Cavendish, the South Kensington Museum would have been renamed 'The Albert Museum'.¹ Portrait roundels of Victoria and Albert greet visitors in Aston Webb's entrance hall, and there is an earlier mosaic portrait of Prince Albert at the north end of the 'Prince Consort Gallery' (the architecture since rearranged so that today he presides over the entrance to the Theatre and Performance galleries, but there are plans to restore the space to its original design). The V&A's lack of a grand, central staircase, country house style, is an advantage these days: the wide staircases running off to the left and right of the hall are perfect for socially-distanced circulation around the Museum.

Country house models may, however, offer a solution to the management of visitor numbers. In the eighteenth century it was fashionable for the owners and staff of country houses to host visits by tourists who inspected the buildings and their contents. Kedleston Hall, one of the earliest monuments to neo-Classical taste, became a destination for members of the landed gentry and leisured middle class unable to afford the expense of travelling around Italy on the Grand Tour. Visitors were taken around by the housekeeper, who pointed out notable paintings, sculpture and architectural features, and a guide book to the house appeared in 1769. Prior to lockdown in the UK, the Museum's volunteer guides successfully led tours; after reopening their role could be adapted to that of the stately home housekeeper.

Once past the main entrance, the Museum's flat roofs might be reimaged to offer space for solitary contemplation, just as those of the typical English country house provided a platform to survey the estates of their owners. From this vantage-point, visitors would see that just as new owners and priorities have changed the architecture and land-use of country houses, so the cramped layout of Museum buildings reflects the challenges posed by an ever-growing collection. Museum and Victorian country houses also share the same building materials, namely a combination of new technologies – plate glass and cast

¹ John Physick, *The Victoria and Albert Museum. The History of its Building* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1982), p.

iron – and traditional brick and tiles. Both the South Kensington engineers and the country house designers shunned stucco, condemned at the time (particularly by Ruskin in his *Stones of Venice*) as a deceptive element in architecture because it hid what lay beneath. Museums and country houses also continually face financial pressures, and roof-top visitors could appreciate how the Museum has maximised the agricultural potential of its roofs by setting aside an area for beehives. While production is hardly on the scale of that encountered at Chatsworth or Wimpole Hall farm, V&A honey has occasionally been sold in the V&A shop.

Rather as in a country house, the efforts of the entire staff are dedicated to preserving the existing collections. Miss Doris Bodger, who worked in stately homes for fifty-eight years, recalled in a letter of 1972 that ‘when I visit some of the Stately Homes today, and see some of the beautiful furniture in such a lovely state of preservation, I often think how much the owners owe to we servants who took such a pride in our work’.² V&A conservators, mount-makers, packers, cleaners, educators and curators would second her words. Moreover, staff working patterns for the Museum’s daily maintenance, at least in the early days of the South Kensington Museum, echoed (consciously or not) those of country houses. Essentially, the work took place out of the public eye which was an arrangement achieved, as Henry Cole explained, by flexible working hours:

The daily works of cleaning, heating, ventilation, lighting, removal and arrangement of objects especially necessitated by loans ... are carried out with promptitude and without inflicting inconvenience on the visitors. The works, when necessary, are performed in the very early morning, or are carried on through the night, so as not to interfere with the use of the Museum.³

An efficient workforce toiling physically apart from visitors in a building that allows for social distancing – the arrangement seems perfect for the present times. The relevance of these parallels between the Museum and the country house to future V&A strategy suggested in this short piece, is, however, entirely speculative and intended to amuse. Most staff are currently furloughed and those who remain on the payroll are (like their colleagues across the sector) wrestling with organisational and financial challenges that the V&A’s Victorian founders would never have imagined. However, they will no doubt demonstrate the same ingenuity and tenacity as the families who, also against difficult odds, managed to preserve their beautiful country houses for the twenty-first century to enjoy.

Kirsten Kennedy (SS ’15; RCS ’18)
Curator, Metalwork Section, V&A Museum



The view from the roof of Fowke’s entrance looking east. The pyramid-like glass roofs of the 1873 Architectural Courts (now the Cast Courts) are in the foreground; the beehives are on a sheltered section beyond. ©V&A Images

² Cited in Frank Victor Dawes, *Not in Front of the Servants* (Century, with National Trust, 1973; repr. 1990), p. 100.

³ Physick, p. 165.

Social Distancing in the Kitchen at Crathes Castle

At Crathes Castle, there is a series of rooms that have functioned as kitchens at some point in its history.

Visitors start their tour in these ground floor rooms. Each consists of a vaulted ceiling, tiny windows and extremely thick walls. The first room is called the First Kitchen which is the original one which served the castle. It still retains its massive inglenook fireplace with a wrought iron sway to hold the heavy cauldrons of food required to feed both upstairs and downstairs. Our guides at Crathes delight in challenging their audience to attempt to lift the largest cauldron – a difficult feat even without any food in it! They relate how, before the 17th Century, much of the cooking was done by men and boys as brute strength was required to lift these mighty utensils. The sway, or chimney crane, was often an adjustable piece of apparatus used to suspend the pots above an open fire at different heights. There was usually a horizontal spit below; placed across the andirons or firedogs, and used to turn large joints of meat to ensure even cooking over the fire. By necessity, all this activity generated both noise and smells which were not always palatable to the family and guests who were living above the suite of kitchens. Whilst communal living, eating and even sleeping together in the same room had been common



place in earlier times, by the 17th century the family tended to withdraw to more private spaces.

The food was prepared in separate kitchens and then transported by servants up to the Great Hall or to a withdrawing chamber, often just off the Hall. They withdrew not just physically but also symbolically. The delineation between upstairs and downstairs became more marked and a clue to this lies in the door visible in the photograph of the First Kitchen. It leads to the staircase that winds its way to the upper floors and the family apartments. It is covered in thick green leather – a precursor to the ‘green baize door’ of later years – which acted as both sound-proofing and added a protective layer to preventing the drift of kitchen odours upstairs.

It also meant that the servants had direct unobtrusive passage to upstairs without being seen.

The green baize door became firmly associated with the dividing line between servant and master. It served as the point between the two domains and trespassing beyond meant going into foreign territory, only permitted by servants if they had permission or were summoned. It was the universal signal of the dividing line between the two halves of the castle and, as such, was an early form of social distancing with which we are all now becoming familiar.

Vikki Duncan (SP '14)

Curator North, The National Trust for Scotland

‘Beyond the Barrier’ and other stories from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation



“Thank you for these glimpses into buildings we love and cherish.” “This may be my favorite object in your collection! Thanks for sharing its story!” These are just a few of the sentiments shared by virtual visitors to the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation during the COVID-19 quarantine. No doubt, similar comments abound as staff at many museums and historic sites around the world look to alternative digital methods to keep their institutions in the forefront of potential visitors’ minds. Without actual visitation, we at Colonial Williamsburg have also turned to Social

Media to maintain awareness of our institution and provide long-time supporters and others perusing Facebook newsfeeds with reminders of the importance and relevance of our mission: “To feed the human spirit by sharing America’s enduring story.” Conversations with Williamsburg’s 18th century residents through interpreters in our African American, Native American, and Nation Builders programs; online guitar lessons with musicians from our 18th century ensembles; and special focuses on conservation labs, museum and library objects, and historic buildings and gardens, all inform and entertain virtual visitors at every age.

From our home offices we connect with colleagues across the country via live Facebook chats, Microsoft Teams initiatives, and Zoom meetings. And, while maintaining appropriate social distancing, we don nitrile gloves and masks made by our team of textile conservators and Costume Design Center fabricators as we continue to check the status of our historic buildings and care for our collections on a daily basis. Our conservators safely perform necessary work to our vast collections to ensure that exhibit schedules stay on track as we prepare for reopening. Our architectural team has sought new ways to draw virtual visitors into the preservation process through photos of continuing building maintenance, onsite behind-the-scenes videos, and narrated PowerPoint presentations. Archaeological outreach has taken a similar approach to engaging online visitors by focusing on below-ground finds via filming at active dig sites and in labs with cleaned artefacts, and by featuring new and old discoveries on our blog.

Other well-received outreach endeavors include “Beyond the Barrier” video segments that highlight objects on view in our historic properties, but which – due to time constraints of normal tours – might be overlooked. Printable coloring book pages entertain and educate the young and old alike. And our museum educators and curators continue to draw connections between current pop culture and the 18th century allowing virtual visitors to see objects in new ways be it an 18th century silver cruet set or a 19th century depiction of a tiger.

Numismatic Discoveries

Back in September 2019 I was asked to present a paper at a numismatics conference in Germany in April 2020. As the head of the Archives department at Christie’s, the auction house, I was curious, bemused and delighted to be asked in equal measure: I know nothing about the world of coins and medals. Usually up for a challenge I be-

In the midst of everything, contractors are wrapping up the donor-funded construction of a 65,000-square-foot expansion to our Art Museums, though at a slower rate due to social distancing. When we reopen, visitors will be welcomed into an expanded, updated facility with many new exhibitions on view.

Conscious of hardships from many fur-



Furniture conservator Chris Swann (SS '10) preparing a chandelier for exhibition

loughs and layoffs, including those in our own organization, Colonial Williamsburg has found ways to support the local community through contributions of vegetables grown in Foundation gardens and meals prepared by our hospitality team to those in need, and by opening our formal gardens for free so all can find some respite in nature’s beauty from this crisis.

Perhaps never truer is the phrase: “Absence makes the heart grow fonder.” We at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation have put that proverb to the test, reminding our supporters and (we hope) future supporters through growing digital avenues including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Roku and Apple TV channels, emails, etc. that preservation and learning doesn’t stop – can’t stop – even in the midst of a challenging times.

Angelika Kuettner (SS '10)
Associate Curator of Ceramics and Glass
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

gan the exercise of trawling through our collection of annotated sale catalogues that are held in the UK HQ offices in the St James’s area of west London.

I am at my happiest when looking at the careers of the first two Christie’s, James Christie (1730-1803), the founder of the firm and his son,

also James (1773-1831), which keeps me neatly in my favourite historical period: that of the Georgians. As it turns out, between 1774 and 1831 there were one hundred and fifty sales of collections of coins: 65 of them taken by the founder; 85 of them taken by his son.

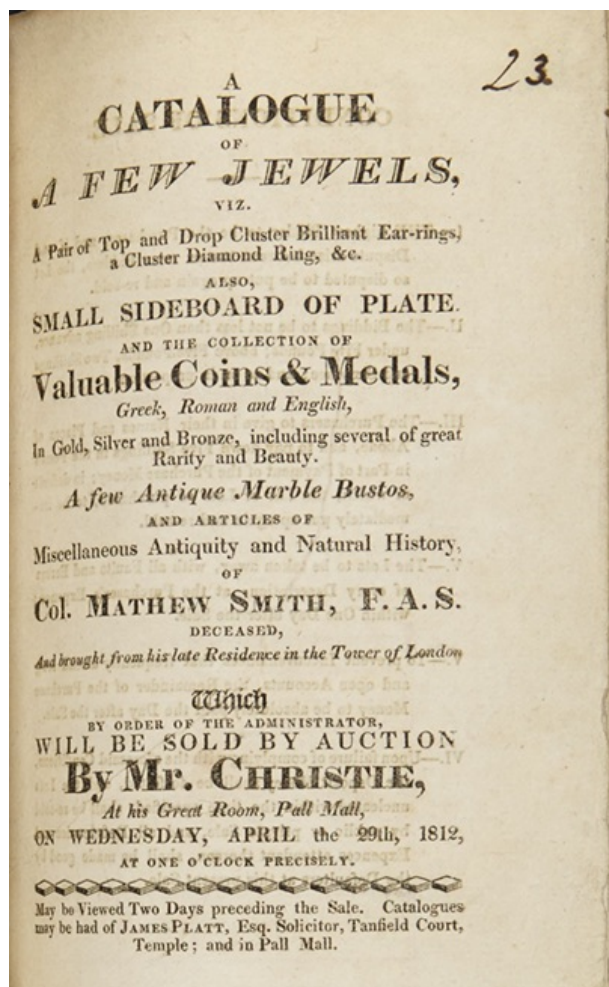
Then in March 2020 Coronavirus slammed into Europe and the Archives provenance research team began working from home from 17 March 2020. My flight to Stuttgart was booked, the hotel near the conference venue was chosen in the university town of Tübingen, in south-west Germany, which looked like a lovely place to spend a few days. Medieval architecture to enjoy, artworks to view and delicious German food (and wine) to savour. I was really looking forward to the few days away.

Working from home proved a bonus situation as I now had time to drill down and get up-close and personal with some of the individual coin collectors. During my submersion in a part of research that I love, that of collating information while putting together a paper or presentation: All this data and how best to write about it and what slides to put together?! During this time-stealing exercise I came across the sale of many types of coins. That of British groats, Cromwell crowns, coins with Saxon kings: Offa, Ethelwulf [sic] and Ethelred. Rupees of Alaodien, Shah Jehangier and the Tipoo Sultan. Along the way, I was introduced to new terms, such as 'milled' and 'hammered' money, mint marks and reading Latin engravings such as "Paux missa per orbem" on a 1713 Queen Anne farthing "Peace sent forth throughout the World". I have learnt many new and fascinating stories and I have seen evidence of coins made by the French *moneyer* and engineer Peter Blondeau (died 1672), and by the Italian medalists Giovanni Hamerani (1646-1705) and his son, Ottone Hamerani (1694-1768) & and by the Dassiers of Geneva, Jean Dassier (1676-1763) and his son, Jacques-Antoine (1715-1759).

Then on the 1st April 2020 (no joke), the entire Archives team were furloughed (what exactly did that mean? Not an expression I had heard or used before!). The conference by this time had been cancelled (hopefully postponed until 2021), my flight was cancelled as it was being used to repatriate German nations and I had received a refund from my hotel.

My slides were almost complete and my paper almost finished. I planned to focus on a handful of collectors, including the following individuals. A large and important collection of coins & medals came under the hammer on 29 April 1812 the property of Colonel Matthew Smith, F.R.S., F.S.A. (Fellow of the Royal Society, Fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquaries), 2nd Colonel of the Tower Hamlets Militia and Major

of the Tower of London, later styled Resident Governor of the Tower, from 1793 until his death in 1812.

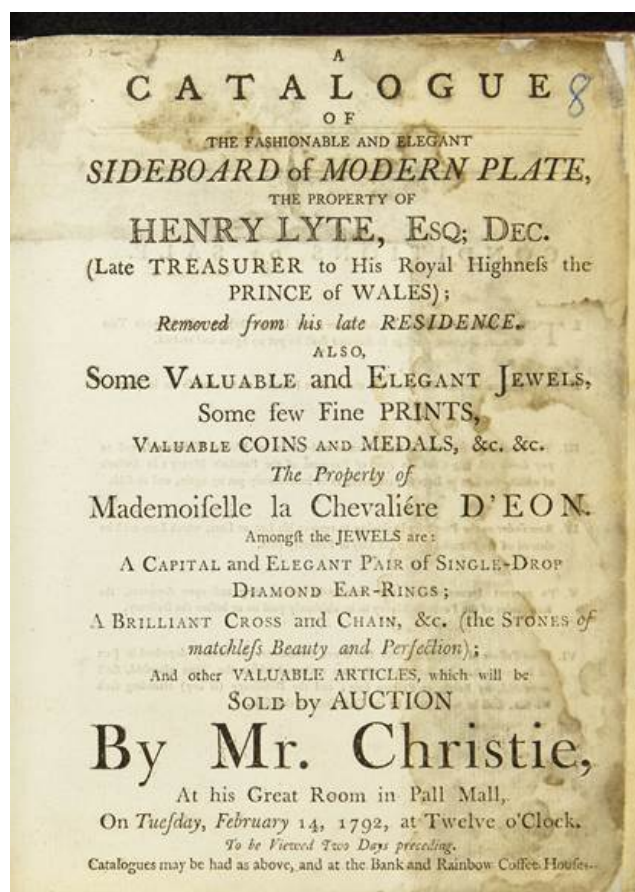


Catalogue of the Colonel Mathew Smith sale

He died in the Governor's House in his 73rd year on the 18 February 1812 and I did find out that in 1800 his salary was £182-10s. His sale consisted of 98 lots with 1,757 coins and three mahogany cabinets. And his important collection was made up of examples of silver and gold Greek and Roman coins; Greek kings in Silver; Greek cities in silver and roman coins relative to Britain. Prices ranged from 5 shillings for a small parcel of 'Foreign coins', to £10-10s [10 guineas] for a rare and scarce gold Roman coin of Pompeia Plotina (65-121 C.E.), the Roman Empress and on the reverse her niece Salonia Matidia (68-119 C.E.), who both brought back the Emperor Trajan's ashes to Rome in 117 C.E. The top lot which fetched £15-15s [15 guineas] for two silver coins of the Greek city Teos, one with an incuse reverse, both scarce and purchased by 'R. P. Knight'. The entire collection fetched £269, which if you reflect on his salary from 1800 was equivalent to nearly a year and halves salary. A rich hoard indeed!

A most infamous 'lady' sold her collection in 1792 when the French diplomat Mademoiselle la Chevalière D'Eon (1728-1810) sold a collection

of coins and medals. He of cross-dressing, sword-fighting, soldier and spying-for-the-king fame.



Catalogue of the Mademoiselle la Chevalière D'Eon

The sale was held on 14 February 1792 – Valentine's day – and included many jewels that he/she was famous for wearing. The prices at this sale, again show the direct link with a famous provenance and prices were healthy, with a medal of

King Charles II fetching £22-15s. And ancient silver coins of Roman Emperors including Nero, Trajan, Augustus & Commodus. Alas, the sale failed to raise enough to cover her debt. Again, he turned to friends for help.

The third person I was going to linger on refers to a series of sales held in 1819, including collections of oriental curiosities, jewels and silver held in May at Christie's, (with the impressive collection of books sold the following month and tapestries came under the hammer in August). The title-pages, one of which we can see here, contain no published seller name. They were rather important sales as they were the property of Queen Charlotte (1744-1818), the German born wife of King George III of Great Britain. The second day of the sale held on Monday 24th May, began at 1pm with a collection of silver coins, medals and gold coins. The collection of coins was miniscule in comparison to her porcelain and oriental works of art and the highest price of £16-10s was reached for a parcel of gold coins of Philip IV, one of Charles III & Charles IV of Spain, one of Joseph I of Portugal and three of his daughter, Queen Mary I of Portugal, bought by 'Abensen'.

So, mid-furlough. No work. No research. No conference to attend. My days suddenly became freer and my husband and I take a daily walk together, I have time for yoga stretches and lots of reading. No commute and no deadlines! At least I have a garden and the weather is fine and now I know a little more about Roman emperors and Saxon kings. Stay safe and keep well.

Lynda Macleod (SP '11)
Associate Director, Head of Archives
Christie's, London

Message from Massachusetts

In addition to my regular job at the Massachusetts Historical Commission, I also teach an undergraduate class in historic preservation at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design (fun fact: it's the only public art college in the US). Like most colleges and universities, in mid-March the decision was taken not to re-open after Spring Break; all students were sent home and all classes became online-only. We had an extra week off and then classes had to transition to being online-only. No one knew what to expect, whether students would be engaged, or how some of the work would be done (turns out it couldn't—many of us had to rework our syllabi).

I held the first video-conference class with some apprehension, but nearly every one of my 22 students showed up. They seemed to appreciate the structure—many of them were ex-

tremely bored, holed up in their childhood bedrooms and looking forward to reconnecting with the college and with classmates, even if only remotely. Since that first class, nearly every one has had all students show up. Since most everyone who can is now working from home and staying home, I have managed to bring in some guest speakers to provide insight into different aspects of historic preservation that I would have been presenting myself had we stayed in a classroom setting. Despite being all online, I think this component of the revised course has made the class more engaging, because I could never have brought these guest speakers to my classroom due to both logistical reasons and departmental budget restraints. Fellow Attingham Summer School 2010 alum Lauren Northup joined one class to talk to students about the important

work she does at the Historic Charleston Foundation, after which we engaged in a productive discussion and Q&A. Another week, a friend who works in Mexico as an architect and preservation professional provided students with an international perspective of the field of preservation and talked about working for the National Institute of Anthropology and Culture as well as some of her own personal rehabilitation projects.

While there is something lost being outside of a classroom setting, I am very happy with how the semester has turned out given the circumstances, and I may even consider these remote lectures for future semesters, given how well-received they've been.

Ben Haley (SS '10)
Massachusetts Historical Commission



In the gardens at Parham (SS '19)



Tour of the Painted Hall at Greenwich during restoration (RCS '17)



There's nothing quite like a Dane... (SP '16)



Forty winks at Audley End (SS '19)