



THE ATTINGHAM TRUST

FOR THE STUDY OF HISTORIC HOUSES AND COLLECTIONS

The Curious Life and Mysterious Death of Algernon Langton Massingberd



Gunby Hall from the South West (National Trust)

The re-discovery of a hoard of 18th and 19th century documents, letters and diaries of members of the Massingberd family of Gunby Hall, Lincolnshire, has cast new light on various aspects of the history of this family and place. In particular the story of Algernon Massingberd (1828-1855) is brought into sharper perspective, a mildly amusing episode of waste and wantonness in the orthodox version of the family history.¹

Algernon, adorned with the sobriquet 'Naughty' to distinguish him from his namesake father, was born on 11 September 1828 in Fulham, London. The only child of the Reverend Algernon Massingberd and Caroline Pearce, his parents took him on a Europe tour the following year, which included sojourns

in the Low Countries, Switzerland, Italy and Germany. The reason for the tour is unrecorded, but it was probably undertaken to ease the restlessness and debilitating weakness that dogged his father's life.

A brief interlude of settled family life, while Algernon *père* held the curacy of Heacham, Norfolk, brought the first description of the child Algernon from the pen of his waspish, ever critical and, by this time evangelically inspired grandfather, Peregrine Langton Massingberd. Staying in Heacham for a few months, he described 'Alge as we all call him' in his sixth year; 'a singularly fine child...a sensible affectionate, intelligent child and, by his Father, admirably well managed...but, being kept exceedingly strict by his father: like a bow that is much bent; the moment the cord is cut the recoil is naturally violent

¹ The Gunby Tree Book

in proportion... his mother... is much too lenient and allows him to be most troublesome in talking loud & in giving his opinion – to a degree that makes him very troublesome...at other times, for whole days together ...you never hear a word from him...Thus I sadly fear that if dearest Alge be not sent to school, his father will never regret the circumstance but once; and that will be for the remainder of his life.²



Algernon Langton Massingberd, chalk drawing in profile c1834 by the Reverend Algernon Langton Massingberd (photo, pers colln)

1834 saw further travelling abroad for little Alge. At Mannheim Alge met his grandmother for the first time, Elizabeth Mary Anne Massingberd, the heiress of Gunby, who was living abroad without her husband (Peregrine) after the irretrievable (and financially ruinous) collapse of their marriage. Sadly, her thoughts on meeting her grandson are not recorded, but her death at the end of 1835 precipitated a return to England and the family took up residence at Gunby Hall (referred to as Gunby Park at this time), following the surrender of the tenancy by the Cholmley family.

Estranged from his father over money matters,³ the Reverend Algernon's mental state seems to have veered from depression to high elation. In 1837, his sister, Mary wrote that her brother was due to leave Gunby for America 'in search of that peace and tranquillity of mind which, Alas! I fear change of place is not likely to procure....'⁴ Leaving his wife behind, it was noted that '...little Alge is allowed to run wild, & hunt the lambs etc. in the Park'⁵ so it was decided to send him to school, placing him in the household of the



Algernon Langton Massingberd, oil on canvas, c1845, English School (photo, pers colln).

Rev. William Molson at Mumby near Alford, Lincolnshire, where at the age of 13 Algernon was recorded in the census of 1841. However, later that year (or early in 1842), Algernon was bought a naval commission as a midshipman. His log books are preserved at Gunby, but are infuriatingly uninformative as to his life as a naval officer. His various ships were in service in the Far East, plying the Indian and Atlantic oceans, where he was recorded as having 'distinguished himself early in life in the navy in the war with China', although he himself reported that he had been set before a sort of "mock court martial" for storming a Chinese battery without orders and carrying off a Tartar flag.⁶ It was in the China seas that the news of his father's premature death was brought to him. He came home early in 1845 (still only 16 years of age), which is when he (or his mother) commissioned the only known portrait of him in adulthood. He is dressed in the uniform of a midshipman, although it is at this period that he persuaded his mother to buy him out of the navy and, in 1848, to buy him a commission in the 13th

² Diary of Peregrine Langton Massingberd, Vol 16. 1834 et.seq. Uncatalogued, Massingberd Papers, Lincoln County Record Office.

³ Ibid

⁴ Diary and Letter book of Peregrine Langton Massingberd, Vol 14. Uncatalogued, Massingberd Papers, Lincoln County Records Office.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ The Lincolnshire Chronicle, Northampton, Rutland and Nottingham Advertiser, September 12 1849

Light Dragoon Guards followed by the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards.⁷

In the interim Algernon studied under Archdeacon Dennison, the church reformer ('that rank Pusey-ite Dennison' as Peregrine referred to him) but no record has come to light of his reaction to this period of religious instruction, (except that nothing is ever heard again of a possible career following his father into the Church⁸). He also travelled in Europe, but as his grandfather ceased to keep a journal during the 1840s,⁹ it was left to his uncle (and heir) Charles Langton Massingberd to discover what happened to Algernon and how he ended up in the jungle of South America.

It all started in Europe where in the ferment of nationalist politics of the old Austro-Hungarian empire, Algernon formed an enthusiasm for personal adventure and political revolution that was to shape his future. It was there he met Louis Kossuth, a Hungarian politician, who espoused the cause of his country's independence from the Austrian crown. In the year of Revolutions (1848) when the French crown was lost and the Austro-Hungarian Empire rent in two, Kossuth played a major part in setting up the provisional government of the short-lived republic of Hungary and was its President. The bloody repression by the imperial Austrian authorities landed Kossuth in Turkish exile for two years, where he held court to a steady stream of like-minded revolutionary politicians and idealistic youths, among whom was Algernon. Algernon was entranced by Kossuth and wrote a pamphlet overflowing with praise for the Hungarian revolutionary.¹⁰

By this time, Algernon, who had celebrated his majority in 1849, had started to live the high life of a Horse Guards officer, taking a house in Eaton Square and indulging in gambling and shady horse dealing,¹¹ which put considerable strain on Gunby's finances.¹² When Kossuth arrived in England late in 1851, an unwelcome guest and a dangerous revolutionary in the opinion of Queen Victoria and her Government, Algernon immediately offered his house in Eaton Square and helped to organise Kossuth's progress to Southampton, where he embarked for America, making speeches as he went.¹³ Algernon

soon suffered the consequences of his misplaced generosity. He was required to resign his commission in the Guards and, hounded by creditors and angry horse-dealers, he decided to follow his hero to America, never to return to England.

Here firm evidence of Algernon's activities becomes scarce. Examination of the archive fills out some of the detail, thanks to Charles's painstaking research to prove his nephew's death and thus wrest the estate from the clutches of Chancery. In particular, three letters in Algernon's hand which chart his enthusiasms, his wild ambitions, his penury and his travels in the New World, help to bring into focus this last episode of his life.

Algernon stayed in New York for a while and was with his mother in Havana, Cuba by April of 1852, whence he wrote to his agent, Mr Vessey, a typically enthusiastic and ungrammatical letter requesting money. He was full of praise and wonder at the youth and energy of the country (America), with ideas for money-making schemes involving the purchase of land near Lake Nicaragua where a canal was bound to be built to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. He wrote again from New York in high-flown rhetoric on the American system of democracy with pleas for money and suggestions that 'the old idea of selling outlying lots, reducing the mortgage, felling the timber...' even of borrowing against his grandfather's eventual demise when 'some £500 or £450 falls in...' should be employed. The third letter from Lima, addressed to 'My dear Friends' dated 25 June, was written after a voyage to Australia in 1854 where he became acquainted with a Mrs Blandford,¹⁴ of whom he became 'very fond' and offered to marry her 'on numerous occasions'. She assisted him in his enterprise as a butter merchant in Sandridge, the landing site of the newly founded settlement of Melbourne, where he lived under the assumed name of Andrew Mann. When he decided he had to flee his Australian creditors and return to New York, she gave him her savings 'about £30 in gold pieces'. Mrs Blandford's trade had been in sewing machines and this is the trade Algernon adopted or resumed on his return to New York. Out of the

⁷ The Manchester Examiner and Times, October 25 1851

⁸ The Gunby Tree Book

⁹ The Manchester Examiner and Times, October 25 1851

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ The Daily News, Tuesday March 2, 1852

¹² Stamford Mercury, 11 November 1853. p4

¹³ 'The Reception of Kossuth in England and the Magazine Punch in 1851, Thomas Kabdebo, pub. Hungarian Studies 1/2 (1985).

¹⁴ Manuscript declaration of Mrs Elizabeth Thornhill, 27 day of October 1860, uncatalogued, Massingberd Papers, Lincolnshire County Records Office

profits from sales he appears determined to give her the fare and three months living expenses in New York on her return from Australia, due time for him to return from the 'Southern States' to join her. The letter tails off into an incoherent rant against his enemies and pleas to his friends to look after his interests. He indicated that he should receive any further communication at the American consulate in Kingstown, Jamaica. Evidently, he was planning to go away and was making preparations for his final adventure, thus dating this last letter to June 1855.¹⁵

The most reliable evidence of what happened next, following enquiries made by his family, came from the casual intervention of one Howard Saunders who read about the case in the 'Times'. It appears that Algernon joined an expedition party of Italians, Americans and Chileans led by a Mexican into the interior of Peru, following the river Huallaga to the Brazilian border. They appear to have been disorderly and violent to the native inhabitants, and when they reached the border village of Tabatinga, many were slain by the Brazilian border guards. Some escaped, but although Algernon was not among their number, his distinctive rifle, made by the company of Sharpe, was carried by one of the survivors.

Algernon's habit of living under assumed names made the definitive identification of him among those killed at Tabatinga impossible. In addition, a rumour was current of an Englishman, travelling alone (without white companions) down the river Huallaga drowning when he struck his head on a low branch. Was this Algernon, disgusted at the behaviour of his companions, striking out for home on his own?¹⁶ Saunders relayed the story, but evidence from consulates in Peru quoting the same rumour, cast doubt on the reliability of the source. The brass memorial in the church at Gunby quotes the affray at Tabatinga as the time and place of Algernon's

death, as does that invaluable source of family lore kept at Gunby, the Gunby Tree Book.

The absolute truth will never be known, but enough evidence was adduced for Vice Chancellor Bacon to give a ruling that Algernon had indeed died in or shortly after June 1855, but this verdict was not promulgated until December 1870.¹⁷ Only then was uncle Charles able to assume ownership and management of the Gunby estate and begin the task of repairing the damage wrought by his nephew's reckless career. Inevitably sales of land followed and the estate was significantly reduced in scale, including much of the land upon which Skegness was to be developed. The estate was consolidated around the villages of Bratoft, Burgh and Gunby and some of the contents of the Hall bought back from Mr Hollway, the tenant who had purchased items to help Algernon raise funds.

The brief, mercurial career of Algernon Langton Massingberd sounds to have come straight out of sensationalist fiction. Indeed, a novel, entitled 'Lost Sir Massingberd' was published in 1864 by James Payn, but the author appears to have borrowed only the resonant name for his villain and nothing of Algernon's story. 'Naughty' Algernon's childish soubriquet seems somehow inadequate when put against the extraordinary life he led. With him the slight strain of madness that is evident in the depression and elation of his father and of his own life came to an end, but eccentricity, endeavour and brilliance continued in the Massingberd line, exemplified in the character of Charles' eldest daughter and heir, Emily Caroline, whose story must be the subject of a further essay.

Andrew Barber, (SS '88; RCS '07; SP '15)
Former Curator, National Trust

- SAVE THE DATE -

Tuesday 29th March 2021

Alumni Reunion to celebrate **70 years** of The Attingham Trust
at Bonhams, 101 New Bond Street, London W1S 1SR

¹⁵ Three letters in Algernon Massingberd's hand, manuscript, uncatalogued, Massingberd Papers, Lincolnshire County Records Office

¹⁶ Evidence of Howard Saunders, manuscript letters, uncatalogued, Massingberd Papers, Lincolnshire County Records Office, summarised in *The Herald*, December 24 1870

¹⁷ Vice Chancellor Bacon's Court, Lincoln's Inn, Saturday 17th December 1870. Re. Massingberds Trusts. Judgement. Manuscript, uncatalogued, Massingberd Papers, Lincolnshire Records Office

The Tijou Screen at Hampton Court Palace



The Tijou Screen, which stands at the river end of the Privy Garden at Hampton Court Palace, is one of the many and probably the best known of the works in wrought iron, created in 1690 by a Frenchman called Jean Tijou at the command of William III. The Screen is composed of twelve panels interposed with pilasters, six bearing crowns, six plain, each panel displaying one of six repeated central nationalistic emblems: the rose of England, the Garter, the Irish harp, the entwined initials of William and Mary, the Scottish thistle and finally the French fleur de lys – which remained incorporated in the Royal Coat of Arms until 1801, but possibly more familiar to the young Tijou as a device he may have copied in wrought iron for William's enemy, Louis XIV, when he was formerly in his employment at St Germain en Laye.

The flamboyant decoration of the Screen was created in a repoussé technique and two of its panels with other details are illustrated in Tijou's *New Book of Designs* published in 1693. Originally conceived three years earlier for Marot's Great Fountain Garden on the east front of Hampton Court, its tenure in that position may have been short lived, - it may, in fact, never have been installed there at all. What is sure is that a decade later, William III approved its installation in his Privy Garden to serve as a *clair voyer* between garden and river but the king died before the garden was completed and the blacksmith, like so many others craftsmen, was left unpaid.

320 years is an extraordinary long life time for such intricate out of doors ironwork, especially in an English riverside location. It has lived through wars, fire and flood. So, what happened to it and how did it survive at all?

It was moved in 1731 by Queen Caroline to form a boundary between the park and the river on the terrace leading from the palace to the

Pavilions, where it received scant attention as royalty moved out of the palace and grace and favour residents moved in.

By 1860, Henry Cole, the Director of the new South Kensington Museum commented 'it is perishing' and the following year the panels were removed to the Victoria and Albert Museum, and immediately sent for repair and restoration, with much repoussé work being replaced with electrotypes. The garter screens were returned to Hampton Court for exhibition in the Great Hall whilst separate panels were sent out by the museum on loan to cities as far apart as Edinburgh, Dublin and Nottingham for use as teaching aids. Restored to its 1701 position at the river end of the Privy Garden in 1901, it was re-painted not in the original colour of iron grey, but black, following the general trend for ironwork of the period. 20th century repairs, interrupted by two world wars and following changing ideas in conservation and restoration, varied from the occasional coat of paint to wholesale wrought iron replacement of the decorative features, sometimes plating them with contemporary protective coatings, notably zinc chromate and cadmium. Over time, the appearance of the ornamental detail of the



screen, particularly the leaves, began to change from the flamboyant living illustration of Tijou's work to a flatter imitation, which required new fixing points to attach it to the original frame.

One panel of the screen is currently about to receive a new method of conservation and restoration. With meticulous patience, the architect, Andrew Harris, has identified original survivals from the original Tijou screen by means of metallurgy, paint analysis and detective work, has studied these fragments, alongside historic photographs and documented repair work and has



begun to see how the intricate design of the panels fitted together re-using the original fixing holes.

We are also fortunate to have at hand, a talented and skilled master smith and repoussé worker, Paul Allen, of Motcombe Forge, who by studying remaining examples by Tijou, his work at St Paul's and other pieces at the V&A, has developed working drawings of the acanthus leaves. This is enabling him to recreate and bring Tijou's ironwork back to vibrant life.

Susanne Groom, (SS '98; RCS '03)

This Historic Royal Palaces project has been supported by Historic England and the Cultural Recovery Fund.

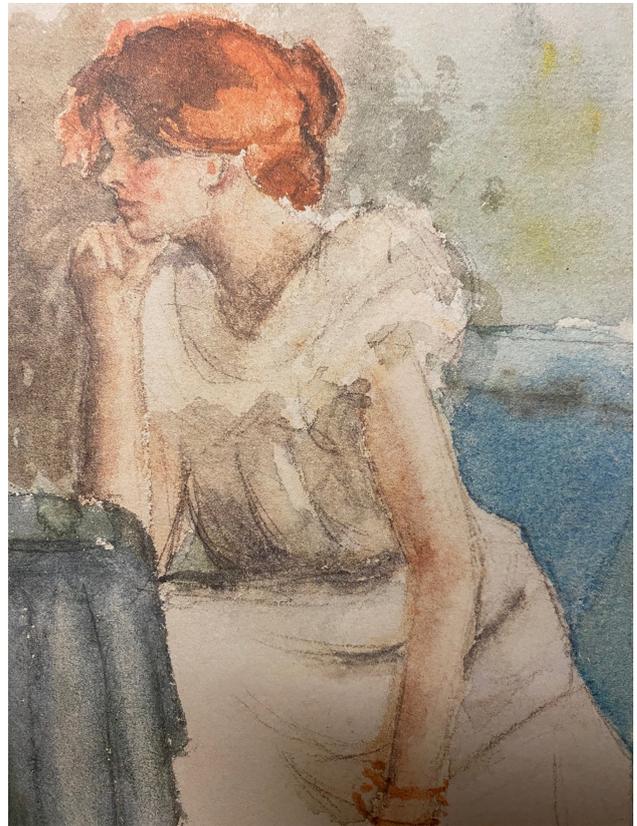
Any questions or screen-related information from abstruse sources should be addressed to Daniel.jackson@hrp.org.uk.

Ruth Lane Poole and her Irish Australian connections

The much-anticipated exhibition Ruth Lane Poole: a woman of influence, celebrating the life and work of little-known interior furnisher, Ruth Lane Poole, became just one of COVID-19's many disruptions and disappointments in 2021. Installed in July at the Canberra Museum and Gallery ('CMAG'), the exhibition brought together for the first time, family archives, Ruth's furniture designs and furniture from Australia's two vice-regal and prime ministerial residences in the national capital. It closed a month after opening to comply with public health orders, never to reopen before its scheduled end date.

Irish-born Ruth Lane Poole (nee Pollexfen) was appointed by the Australian Federal Capital Commission in 1926, as a 'furniture specialist' with a brief to prepare the official residences for occupation by the governor-general and the prime minister in time for the opening of Federal parliament in Canberra by the Duke and Duchess of York in May 1927. Newly arrived in Australia as the wife of the Commonwealth's forestry adviser, Ruth had secured the confidence of Melbourne's elite as the authoritative author of home furnishing articles in *The Australian Home Beautiful*. It was however her impressive pedigree as a member of the Irish literary and artistic Yeats family and in marriage, the academic brilliance of several generations of Lane Poole Orientalists and Arabic scholars, that gave her the social credentials for the task.

Ruth's aesthetic drew on the tutorship of her cousins whose circle of Irish Celtic revivalist friends in Dublin encouraged the appreciation and revival of traditional arts, crafts and literature and the opportunities for women to work in creative industries. Her guardian, Susan Mary 'Lily'



Ruth Pollexfen, circa 1905, watercolour by Beatrice Elvery (1881-1970), painter and stained glass artist and sculptor associated with the Irish Celtic Revival movement, image © from the estates of Ruth Lane Poole's daughters, Charlotte Ruth Burston and Phyllis Gainsborough Hamilton, by descent to their families.

Yeats and Susan's sister, Elizabeth Corbett 'Lolly' Yeats, espoused the complimentary ideals of William Morris and the English Arts and Crafts movement for the recognition of and admiration for beauty in nature and design. These values were aligned with those of her husband, forester

Charles Lane-Poole, whose life's work was devoted to promoting the values respect for and sustainable use of timber.

In sharing her views on good taste and design with readers of the magazine, Ruth upheld Morris' advice to 'have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful', urging her followers to avoid unnecessary ornament, dispense with their ugly inherited atrocities and respect the honesty of traditional craftsmanship.



Queensland maple dining chair with PM monogram, made for The Lodge, 1927, image © Wendy McDougall, courtesy The Australiana Fund and The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Ruth's brief to furnish the rambling pastoral homestead, Yarralumla, for the Governor-General and his family was constrained by the awkwardness of its pre-existing architecture, while the cottage to be built for the prime minister, The Lodge, was domestic in scale and temporary until such time as a more appropriate residence could be built. That time is yet to come.

Federal Cabinet had determined her small budget which was to be spent on Australian-made items and only when there was no alternative, could the 'best British-made' be considered. A traditionalist at heart, Ruth looked to the master

cabinetmakers' examples of original English period furniture she had seen in London's Victorian and Albert Museum for guidance on the most appropriate styles to furnish formal and informal rooms. She claimed that 'there can be nothing fundamentally new in furniture design', preferring 'all the old designs that have lived down through the centuries'. These she had copied as measured drawings and shared the commissions for their manufacture among the leading cabinetmakers in Melbourne.

For the items that could not be made or sourced in Australia, Ruth enlisted her cousin Lily's help in locating reproduction Medieval tapestry wall hangings, fabrics from Liberty of London, wallpapers and fabrics from Sanderson and Co and Morris & Co, household items from Heal and Company, prints from Cuala Press and fine Irish linen from William Liddell. She commissioned Hardy Brothers in Melbourne to identify suppliers of good quality reproduction Georgian silver plate and cutlery from Sheffield, fine bone china from Royal Worcester, Crown Derby, Wedgwood and Copeland and Spode and reproductions of Waterford lead crystal glassware. She made sure that every item was selected not just with an aesthetic sensibility to suit the intended occupants' expectations but with a practical and defensible rationale to satisfy the bureaucrats.

In furnishing the two residences in Canberra, Ruth departed little from her advice to domestic homemakers, scaling up where hierarchy and protocol demanded it for the occupants. Reflecting on the privilege of her position, she championed the opportunity to promote the use of Australian native timbers and proudly explained that 'in the matter of furniture there is not one piece in the whole house made of imported timber'. That this furniture and many of the household contents chosen by Ruth survive in situ and continue to be used today is testament to the timelessness of her visionary approach to furnishing the temporary abodes of those with the custodianship of two of Australia's most significant residents and their contents.

Margaret Betteridge (RCS '18)
Director, Betteridge Consulting Pty Ltd

- APPEAL FOR PHOTOGRAPHS -

As part of the 70th Anniversary celebrations we are asking for photographs of alumni taken on Attingham courses over the years.

Any you have that we can select from would be very welcome
Please email them to Rebecca: rebecca.parker@attinghamtrust.org
Thank you!

A Painting of Lorna Marsali Woodroffe Lang by Philip de Laszlo

An acquisition made in 2021 was the culmination of almost 18 months of careful research and delicate negotiation. A painting of Lorna Marsali Woodroffe Lang (formerly Forbes-Leith of Fyvie) by society painter Philip Alexius de Laszlo forms the centrepiece of a new display at Fyvie Castle in Aberdeenshire. Lorna was born in 1893 to Ethel-Louise Forbes-Leith and her husband, Sir Charles Rosdew Burn. Burn adopted his wife's surname when she inherited Fyvie Castle from her father, Alexander Lord Leith of Fyvie. Lorna spent her childhood in the family castle of Fyvie in the North East of Scotland. It was in 1913 that Lady Leith of Fyvie, Lorna's grandmother, Marie-Louise, commissioned Lorna's portrait from a family friend, the painter Philip Alexius de László. He was the preferred portrait painter of choice for the nobility and the gentry and all who enjoyed a high social status in Britain and Europe.

Eager to be useful when the Great War broke out in 1914, Lorna enlisted as a volunteer nurse at Stoodley Knowle hospital in Devon, her father's former family home, where she nursed alongside her mother who was the matron. It was during this mission, already considered daring by her family, that she fell in love with Captain Frederick Conyers-Lang. With him, she created a scandal by eloping and getting married in London in 1916 against the advice of her family.

Unfortunately, the marriage was not a happy one; her husband was considered to be something of a fortune hunter and was repeatedly unfaithful. In 1933, then a mother of two but still strong willed she decided to divorce Con and later married another soldier, Colonel George Prior, whom she had also met whilst working as a nurse. They were both passionate about race-

horses and horsemanship and they decided to settle on the country estate of Fishleigh House. Upon the death of her husband Lorna moved to Thorpe Mandeville Manor where she died in 1975.

With the initial estrangement from her family, the portrait of Lorna never returned to Fyvie for where it was intended, but instead passed, by descent, to Lorna's granddaughter who offered the portrait up to auction having first contacted Vikki Duncan, Curator with the NTS to see if the Trust was interested. The wonderful connection endures since the family estrangement was only recently resolved by connecting cousins who did not know of one another's existence until the portrait came to light.

Philip de László, an artist renowned for his glamorous portraits of the well-connected and the wealthy, at the beginning of the 20th century, was the artistic heir to Singer Sargent, with whom he rubbed shoulders alongside the literary and the intellectual figures of the era. His paintings are rare in museums as the portraits he produced were generally highly prized

within families.

This painting was listed on the De Laszlo Archive Trust as "untraced" since its commission and I was able to confirm its existence with the kind assistance of Katherine Field, Senior Editor at the De Laszlo Archive Trust. The National Trust for Scotland is indebted to both the National Fund for Acquisitions and the Art Fund for their generous grant funding which made the purchase possible.

Vikki Duncan (SP '14)
Curator North, The National Trust for Scotland



Historic Interiors in The Netherlands

In October 1993 a remarkable conference was held in San Lorenzo de el Escorial in Madrid: 'The preservation of historical complexes and their movable heritage' ('La conservacion de los conjuntos historicos y de su patrimonio mobiliario'/'La conservation des ensembles historiques de leur patrimoine mobilier'). This five-day event, masterminded by José Maria Ballester, head of the Cultural Heritage Division of the Council of Europe, was held under the Presidency of Honour of their Majesties the King and Queen of Spain. The conference hosted no less than 123 delegates from 30 European countries plus Canada. One of them was Martin Drury CBE, former vice-chairman of The Attingham Trust. Twenty different lecturers focused on various aspects of the coherence of decorative complexes, the circulation of moveable cultural property and the challenges of preservation and protection. As well as the opening reception in the [Salón de Columnas of the Royal Palace](#) in Madrid, there were side-visits to, amongst others, the [Royal Palace of La Granja de San Ildefonso](#) and the [Royal Palace of Riofrío](#).

This conference can be considered as the starting point of the discussions within the various national heritage institutions on the importance of movable heritage within its original surroundings. This conference was in fact the immediate cause for the official recommendation by the ministers of the Council of Europe on these matters: [Council of Europe, Recommendation No. R \(98\)4 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Measures to Promote the Integrated Conservation of Historic Complexes Composed of Immovable and Moveable Property](#), adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 March 1998 at the 623rd Meeting of the Minister's Deputies.

As in some other countries, in the Netherlands this Recommendation of the Council of Europe has been the basis for subsequent activities on this topic.

Presently the [Cultural Heritage Agency](#) of the Netherlands (the Dutch equivalent of Historic England) is preparing a publication on the very same subject: historic interiors, and more specifically 'interior ensembles' in the Netherlands.

This publication will be dealing with the relationship and the extraordinary cohesion between the historic building and all its fixed elements (structure, exterior and fixed interior components) on the one hand, and the moveable objects within that building on the other hand.

All together this book will profile a selection of 100 different ensembles throughout the-



Cannenburgh Castle (Gelderland Trust for Natural Beauty and Historic Houses), Bedchamber with its early 18th century bed, chairs and some family portraits (photo RCE, W. Van Der Sar 2017)

country: from castles and country houses, to churches, town halls, farmhouses and city homes, industrial buildings and board rooms, windmills, and even one or two ships. Quite a few are centuries old, the most recent however is only dating from 2013! This forthcoming publication is aiming to highlight the variety and the value of 'interior ensembles', so as to increase more awareness and understanding of these decorative complexes. This will hopefully contribute to better upkeep and conservation, and hopefully even recognition within the various heritage bodies. Quite remarkably, several Dutch politicians have shown serious interest in this topic, and have asked to register a shortlist of some highly important churches with delicate interior ensembles.



Protestant church of Hegebeintum with the characteristic 17th century pulpit, bible, chandeliers and hatchments (photo RCE, W. van Der Sar 2017)

Call:

Aside from the various Dutch ensembles, we are planning to include as 'pars pro toto' 15 iconic locations from several countries scattered around the world. Even though we do have a shortlist, we

are still in need of one or two iconic locations. Ideally these ensembles would either exemplify the national characteristics of the country concerned, or be linked with an attractive and/or remarkable story about the meaningful relationship between the building, its interior, the objects, its upkeep and/or its relation with the intangible heritage and persons involved.

Any reaction is most welcome, and can be sent to: e.koldewej@cultureelerfgoed.nl

Dr Eloy Koldewej (SS '89; SP '03, '12)
Historic Interiors Specialist
Assistant Professor, Utrecht University

Rewriting West Dean's history: a summary of recent research

Frederick (1827-1905) and Sarah (née Ashworth) Bower, who owned West Dean for twenty years, are neglected in its narrative.¹⁸ Reasons for this, and unexpectedly close links between consecutive owners have been newly discovered during 'lock-down' research. Though Lancashire was Bower's familial and commercial base, he acquired huge wealth in Shanghai, as chronicled by colleagues, significantly his partner Thomas Hanbury (1832-1907)¹⁹ also now revealed as Sarah's cousin.²⁰

Frederick was called a 'nabob'²¹ who bought West Dean to sell it on. In fact, the last heir of the Lords Selsey mortgaged it²² until he could sell to Bower, who consolidated the estate²³ and opened the parkland when 'many acres of rhododendrons bloomed.'²⁴ Newly discovered posthumous sale catalogues²⁵ prove he also acquired West Dean's art collection and collected modern British genre paintings, engravings and "old Nankin ware and other porcelain."²⁶ (Intriguingly, lot 48 was '(two) Breughel: A landscape with Cavaliers...; and A Chinese town').

The Bowers were cotton brokers²⁷ and

Ashworths were radical Quaker mill-owners.²⁸ Their roots were as foreign to Sussex landowners as was their accent. During the 1860s famine among Lancashire mill workers, an outcome of the American Civil War,²⁹ 'American merchants, connected with houses of the highest standing in Liverpool' shipped relief food from America. American-born Daniel James chaired their committee³⁰ while the Ashworths controlled distribution. Each family made a fortune not only from trade, transport and wartime speculation, but principally from slave-grown cotton imports,³¹ enabling the successive acquisitions of West Dean by Frederick Bower in 1871 and Daniel James' son William Dodge James in 1891. However, while Bower's daughters married back into their Quaker family circle,³² James' sons married into the aristocracy,³³ ensuring their acceptance into the elite leisured society of Sussex of favoured by King Edward VII, godfather of Edward James who founded West Dean College.

Janet Sinclair (SS '06)

¹⁸ For a summary of the Ashworth family history [here](#)

¹⁹ Letters of Thomas Hanbury (1832-1907), RHS Lindley Library, transcribed on line [here](#). A. Moore (2004) *La Mortola: In the footsteps of Thomas Hanbury*.

²⁰ Rachel Christy (b.1802) and Charlotte Christy (b.1806) married, respectively Daniel Bell Hanbury, and Edmund Ashworth. W.H. Beable (1927) *The history of Christys*

²¹ J. Buckland & S. Wain (2018) *At West Dean: The Creation of an Exemplary Garden*; West Dean Gardens Guidebooks n.d.; Nabob 'was applied sarcastically to British officials of the East India Company returning home after amassing great wealth in Asia'. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/nabob>

²² *Morning Post*, 8 September 1871. "Wills & Bequests".

²³ West Dean Archive *Handlist of Deeds* numbers 3118; 2427; 2429; 2437

²⁴ *Sussex Agricultural Express*, 30 May 1891: 'CHICHESTER THE WEST DEAN ARBORETUM- Mr. F. Bower, J.P, of West Dean Park, announces that his arboretum will be opened to the public from June 2nd until June 21st inclusive

²⁵ *Catalogue of the Collection of Ancient and Modern Pictures and Water-Colour Drawings, the Property of Frederick Bower, Esq., Deceased, Late of Broomfield Hall, Sunningdale: Many of the Pictures by Old Masters Were Collected by Lord Selsey of Westdene, Lord High Chamberlain to George III*. Annotated copy documenting low prices and many items 'bought back' by the family at The Mellon Centre for British Art, London

²⁶ *Morning Post*, Monday 29 January 1906, London; *The Illustrated London News*, Feb 6, 1906 ;

²⁷ Frederick's nephews, later Sir William Bower Forwood (1840-1928) and Arthur Bower Forwood, Bt. (1836-98) made a fortune during the American civil war 'first from wartime speculation and blockade running, and then from telegraph and cotton futures'. Killick, J. R. (2004)

²⁸ Engels, F. (1845) *Condition of the Working Class in England 1845*, described Ashworth's mills. Roberts, D. (1979) *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*

²⁹ Powell, J. (2018) *Cotton, Liverpool and the American Civil War*, PhD thesis, University of Liverpool

³⁰ James negotiated with transport companies and government to exempt shipping charges and duties. Alvord, C.A. (1864) *Report of the American International Relief Committee for the Suffering Operatives of Great Britain, 1862-63*. pp20-34.

³¹ *Liverpool Merchants and the Cotton Trade 1820-1850* in Scholl, L.U. (2000) *Merchants and Mariners: Selected Maritime Writings of David M. Williams*. Liverpool University

³² Alfred Ashworth, Edmund's son, married Sarah and Frederick's daughter, Edith. Hanbury's business partner Egbert Iveson married Agnes Bower. Sarah's sister Alice married Richard Christy. E.H. Milligan (2009). *Biographical Dictionary of British Quakers in Commerce and Industry - 1775-1920*.

³³ Lowitt, R. (1954) *A Merchant Prince of the Nineteenth Century*; Cleland, R.G. (1952) *A History of Phelps Dodge*; Knopf A., Dodge, P. B. (1987). *Tales of the Phelps Dodge Family*

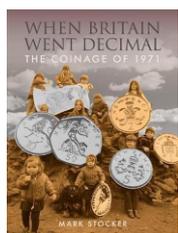
The aim of the exhibition was to present the choice of the finest 17th-century Dutch paintings from the Polish collections, accompanied with some fine examples of coins, Delftware, drawings, medals, maps, metal objects, old prints, pieces of furniture, textiles and weapons.

We found it necessary that the *Girl in the Picture Frame* and the *Scholar at His Writing Table* by Rembrandt, which are the jewels in the collection of The Royal Castle in Warsaw, should be presented in a wider context that would enable better understanding of Rembrandt's sublime art. After the exhibition *36xRembrandt*, which took place in our museum in 2019, this was another step in attempt to familiarize the wider public with Dutch old masters.

The artworks were arranged according to the following topics: Power, War, Dutch Landscape, Colonies, Science, Religion and Philosophy, Burgher's Home, Art and Culture and Entertainment. Each room contained a single engraving by Rembrandt, thematically related to the particular room. Thus Rembrandt acted as a discreet guide leading the visitors through the exhibition of artefacts created in his homeland during his lifetime.

PUBLICATIONS

When Britain Went Decimal: The Coinage of 1971



Fifty years have now passed since D Day – the bloodless decimalisation of British currency in 1971. Pounds, shillings and pence, operative for over a millennium, finally yielded to a far simpler system.

The UK was the last major nation-state in the world to adopt decimal currency, but why was it so slow to do so? What changed politicians' and peoples' minds about it in the 1960s? Were Britain's plans to join the EEC influential? What was the impact of India, South Africa and Australasia going decimal several years earlier? Or did it simply happen because of common sense, with a decimal system so much easier to learn? The route to find the right designs proved complex, with interfering politicians, struggling artists, and at one stage an angry Duke of Edinburgh! It took over five years to come about, and then there was the seven-sided 50 pence: a design classic we would say today, but

In total, we gathered over 200 objects in the exhibition's rooms, including 4 paintings from abroad. We were very proud to present 3 landscape paintings from Dulwich Picture Gallery in London (which has close historical ties with Polish king Stanisław August). The fourth painting was a portrait of Johannes Maccovius (Jan Makowski), Polish philosopher and theologian, who married Saskia van Uylenburgh's sister and thus entered Rembrandt's family.

Apart from the mentioned, the highlights of the exhibition included: a rare flower pot made in Delft for Willem III and Maria II Stuart, paper coin (14 Stuiver 1/2 Gulden) produced during the siege of Leyden in 1574, portrait of Saifudin Sultan of Tidore, small Celestial globe by Willem Janszoon Blaeu, Sybilla Merian's *Metamorphosis insectorum* and last but not least *A Rooster and a Hen with Chickens and Pigeons* by Melchior de Hondecoeter, newly acquired painting, which once was in the royal collection of Stanisław August and has never been exposed publicly since the end of the 18th century.

Alicja Jakubowska (SS '16)
Curator of Paintings, The Royal Castle in Poland

what did the media and public think of it on its launch in 1969?

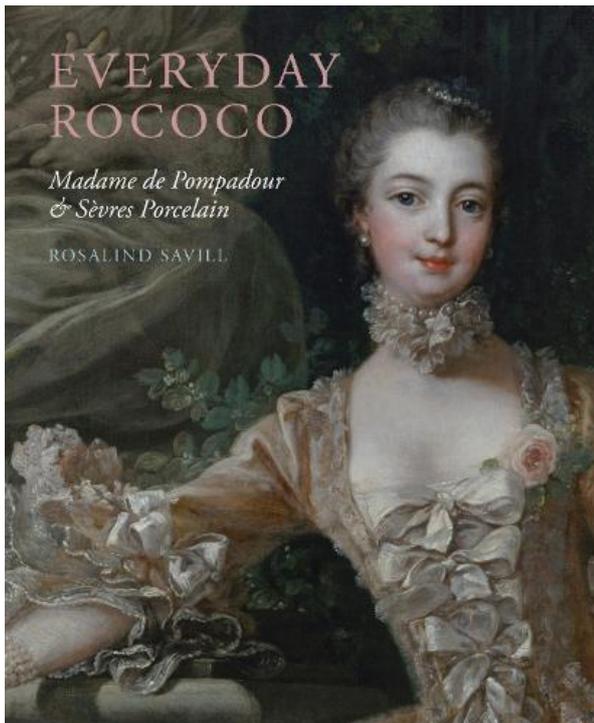
When Britain Went Decimal takes readers through the changeover leading to D Day and beyond. How smooth and successful was the process? Did newspapers secretly hope it would fail? While decimalisation might have seemed right at the time, did it lead to inflation, as many people believe today?

Entertainingly written and beautifully illustrated, this first book on decimalisation since 1973 attempts to answer all these questions and more, looking as much at the design – indeed the 'art' behind the new coinage – as at social, economic and political history.

Visit www.spinkbooks.com and/or books@spink.com quoting 'MARK35'. Or contact Fabian Rigby on +44 20 7563 4110.

By Mark Stocker (SS '12; RCS '06)
Curator of Historical International Art
Museum of New Zealand

Everyday Rococo: Madame de Pompadour and Sèvres Porcelain



Jeanne Antoinette Poisson (1721-64), Marquise de Pompadour, became the official mistress of Louis XV of France in 1745, and for the rest of her life their patronage of Vincennes/Sèvres helped to make it one of the greatest porcelain factories in history. Vincennes, founded in 1740, moved to Sèvres in 1756 and in 1759 the King bought out the shareholders and it became a wholly royal enterprise. The lives of Louis XV and Mme de Pompadour coincided with a new informality in domestic life echoed in the rococo style of interiors and the decorative arts. Ornament based on flowers and foliage, or watery imagery from the sea, rivers, lakes and fountains, introduced wave patterns, rockwork and shells. But by the end of Mme de Pompadour's life, the new more formal neoclassicism had superseded it.

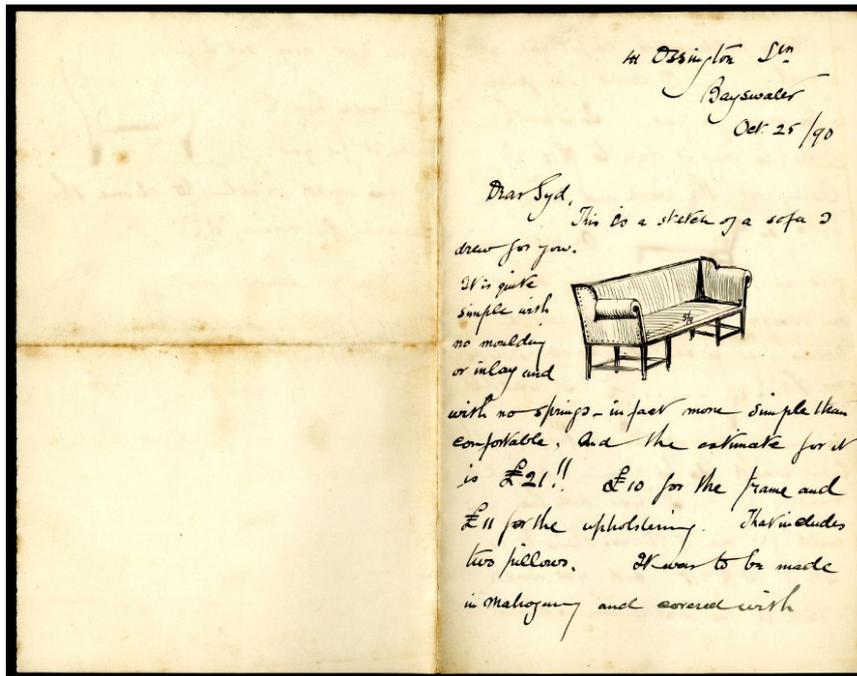
Mme de Pompadour began collecting Vincennes when she was 25 in 1747 and her last purchase was from Sèvres in December 1763, four months before her death aged 42. The Sèvres factory's sales records, the accounts of her supplier Lazare Duvaux, and her postmortem inventory, reveal the extent of her purchases for use or display in almost every room, for personal use or for entertaining. She was often the first person to buy the latest models or design, and favoured some of the boldest rococo vases in vibrant

colours, painted with children, cherubs, Teniers's rustic scenes, harbour views, chinoiseries, birds and animals from her menagerie, and even her favourite dogs. In addition to grand garnitures of vases, she bought dog bowls, chamber pots, snuff boxes and presents for friends and officials to secure her position at home and abroad.

Everyday Rococo: Madame de Pompadour and Sèvres Porcelain is a year-on-year chronology of her daily life and purchases. After an introduction to Mme de Pompadour, the rococo and the Vincennes/Sèvres factory, the twenty following chapters each address a year in her life from 1745-64 and her purchases month-by-month, which are identified where possible. Sometimes these are closely connected to events in her life at Court or to her furnishing projects. There are also sections on how Vincennes/Sèvres porcelain featured in daily life: in the bedroom, bathroom, dressing room, boudoir, cabinet, salon and dining room; how the pieces were used, with sections on porcelain flowers, flower vases, pot-pourri and ornamental vases, tea, coffee and chocolate, eating and drinking in the private apartments, dining, the toilette and cosmetic wares, washing and hygiene, interests and pastimes, learned and artistic pursuits, lighting, the cellar, biscuit sculpture and pets. They also touch on the care of porcelain, her daily routine, her health and milk mania and her brother's inheritance. Mme de Pompadour has been the subject of numerous biographies, and of exhibitions at Versailles, Munich and, most recently, London in 2002, where she was shown as a major player in the history and art of eighteenth-century France. But this book concentrates on another aspect of her life, the everyday details for which Vincennes/Sèvres catered so perfectly.

Published to mark Madame de Pompadour's 300th birthday in December 2021 by the Unicorn Press (2 volumes in a slip case, 300 x 245 mm, 1,232 pages, 660 colour illustrations, weight 7.5 kg, £200).

By Rosalind Savill (SS '75; RCS '08)
Trustee of The Attingham Trust



Part of a letter from Ernest Gimson to his brother Sydney. Gimson Family Archive

Annette Carruthers is working with Barley Roscoe on the letters of Ernest Gimson (1864-1919), with the aim of publishing them as a book. They are full of vivid information about, among other things, his experiences as a young architectural assistant in late-Victorian London, the adventure of establishing a new life in the Cotswold countryside, practical details of setting up a cabinetmaking business and the effects of the First World War on work and everyday living. We enjoy reading them and think others will too.

We have access to letters in The Wilson in Cheltenham, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the British Library and a few other archives, but if anyone knows of any in collections we might not have come across we would be very grateful for information on their whereabouts.

[Annette Carruthers \(SS '90\)](mailto:Annette.Carruthers@st-andrews.ac.uk)
vac@st-andrews.ac.uk

Monument, minne, museum. Stockholms slott under det långa 1900-talet

Monument, memory, museum. The Royal Palace of Stockholm in the long 20th century



This book examines how the Royal Palace of Stockholm gradually, from 1880-2000, became established as a monument in art and cultural history, as well as a site of national heritage. The musealisation process of the royal residence is described by analysing the origin of new

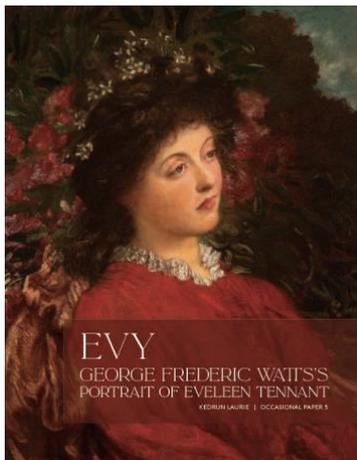
museal and exhibition milieus, and changes in the palace's State and Bernadotte Apartments. These measures were taken to enhance and manage this cultural heritage and to make it accessible by using art historical and antiquarian expertise. The study explores the origins of the Palace Museum

(1936), Gustav III's Museum of Antiquities (1958, 1992), the Treasury (1970), the Royal Armoury (1978) and the Tre Kronor Museum (1999). Furthermore, the Royal palace's dual function as a national monument and royal residence is discussed, and how this has been a condition of the musealisation process.

Hardcover | 576 pages
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Uppsala University

By [Rebecka Millhagen Adeswärd](#)
(SS '05; RCS '09; SP '19)

Evy: George Frederic Watts's Portrait of Evelyn Tennant



In the 1870s the young Eveleen Tennant was much admired for her beauty and through her mother's London salon frequented some of the best-known artists and writers of the day. The ambitious Mrs Tennant, determined to secure her the best

possible match, had her lovely daughter's portrait taken many times over, most notably by J. E. Millais and G. F. Watts.

The painting of her by G F Watts at the Delaware Art Museum was a favourite of the artist. He was equally fond of and protective towards its sitter. But the picture's girlish simplicity, like that of Eveleen herself, is deceptive. The much-pursued Eveleen ended by eluding reductive definitions of her to become a sensitive pho-

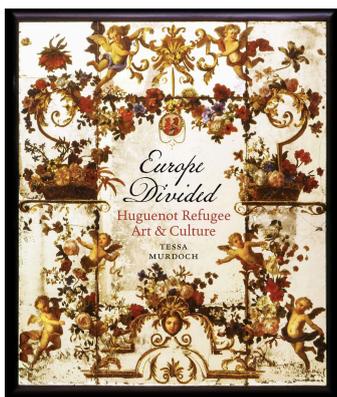
tographer in her own right. Her photographs of famous contemporaries and of her young family are now at the National Portrait Gallery, London. Drawing particularly on the lively unpublished journals of Eveleen's sister Dorothy, Kedrun Laurie presents new and intriguing research into the artist, the sitter and the portrait itself. She recounts the passage of the picture into the Delaware Art Museum through the bequest of the family of Samuel J. Bancroft Jr., who bought it from Agnew's in 1900, and discusses it in the context of his collection.

The museum now holds the most comprehensive collection of Pre-Raphaelite works outside Great Britain. It publishes this volume as part of a scholarly series of Occasional Papers, a tradition initiated to highlight particular aspects of the museum's collection, and to coincide with the redisplay of the museum's Pre-Raphaelite Galleries.

Paperback, 72 pages
ISBN-13 : 978-1736789919

By Kedrun Laurie (SS '82 and SP '14)

Europe Divided: Huguenot Refugee Art & Culture



This richly illustrated book focuses on the extraordinary cultural contribution made by Huguenot families in the British Isles, who were part of the diaspora of over 200,000 refugees that left France in the late 17th century to join

communities already established in exile. It looks, too, at their international network, which spread across northern Europe and beyond to America and South Africa.

First-generation Huguenot refugees included hundreds of trained artists, designers and craftsmen. Beyond the French borders, they

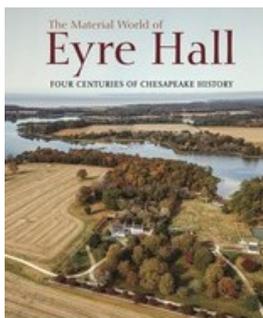
raised the quality of design and workshop practice, passing on skills to their apprentices, families and to successive generations, who continued to dominate output in the luxury trades.

Although silver and silks are the best-known fields with which Huguenot settlers in the British Isles are associated, their significant contribution to architecture, ceramics, design clock and watchmaking, engraving, furniture, woodwork, sculpture, portraiture and art education provides fascinating insight into the motivation and resolve of this highly skilled diaspora.

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By Tessa Murdoch (SS '01; RCS '06)
Former Research Curator, The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection

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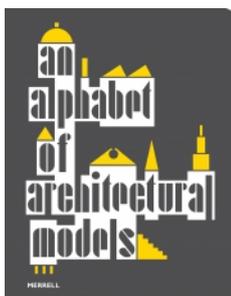
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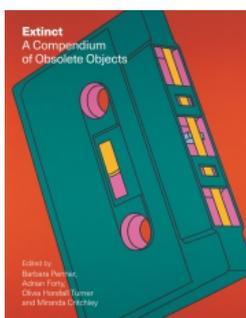
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