



# National Trust Arts, Buildings & Collections Bulletin

SPRING 2022

*In this issue:*

**Changing Rooms**

Dahl's glittering assemblage at Petworth

**Music, Maestro**

Conserving and playing historical musical instruments

**50 Great Trees**

A new book in the National Trust's Collections series

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Front cover:  
Detail of chamber organ, 1765, James Gravenor  
(fl.1741–68), Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire (NT 108761)  
Photo: National Trust Images/Robert Morris

This page and overleaf (top to bottom):  
*Margaret Sawyer, Countess of Pembroke*,  
1690–9, Michael Dahl (1659–1743),  
Petworth House, West Sussex (NT 486217)  
Photo: National Trust Images  
Ancient beech, Plas Newydd, Anglesey  
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Double-action ‘Gothic’ harp, 1843, Sebastian  
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Photo: National Trust Images/Andreas von Einsiedel  
Recording for *Sounding Erddig*, Erddig, Wrexham  
Photo: Jeanice Brooks  
Excavation of burial chamber, 1939, Mercie Lack  
(1894–1985), Sutton Hoo, Suffolk (NT 1940312.2.26)  
Photo: Original by Mercie Keer Lack ARPS © Trustees  
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# Foreword

Welcome to the spring issue of the National Trust's research journal,  
*Arts, Buildings & Collections Bulletin*.

In this issue we delve into the fascinating photographic archives documenting the discovery of Sutton Hoo, consider the exciting exploratory conservation work to restore the late 17th-century 'Beauty Room' at Petworth, and highlight the recent discovery at Knole of an 18th-century mirror crest.

It feels extremely positive that, after the challenges we have all faced over the past two years, National Trust properties are now welcoming so many visitors, and that our research into historic houses, collections, gardens and the practice of conservation and engagement has restarted at pace.

Over the course of the past year, we have benefited hugely from our supportive university partnerships, which work with curatorial, conservation, archaeological and horticultural staff across the National Trust. Our partnership with the University of Oxford is developing collaborative research focussed on houses, collections and gardens, and a new partnership with University College London supports conservation approaches across the historic environment. Elsewhere, we are working with the universities of the GW4 Alliance (Bath, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter) to develop property-based projects and have recently started working with Newcastle University in projects across the North. We also continue to work with the [Jewish Country House project](#) and keenly anticipate participation in the first major conference in June this year.

We have also recently established a scheme of doctoral fellowships with the British Library, which will explore authors' houses and dispersed collections from National Trust houses. The outcomes of our research projects and partnerships range from scholarly articles and books to conference contributions and involvement in collaborative doctoral studies, including projects on pre-Reformation textiles and the early histories of chocolate consumption.

I'm also delighted that so much new research is being published in book format by the National Trust's Cultural Heritage Publishing team. Last year we published two books on our collections (*125 Treasures from the Collections of the National Trust* and *100 Paintings from the Collections of the National Trust*) and our forthcoming titles include: *50 Great Trees of the National Trust* (April) by Simon Toomer; the first archaeological research monograph on Chedworth Roman Villa, written by 29 expert contributors (May, published in partnership with the Roman Society); and a major scholarly book on *The Art of Tapestry* by Helen Wyld (October, co-published with Bloomsbury).

Finally, I am very pleased to say we will be relaunching this online magazine in autumn 2022 with a new title, *National Trust Cultural Heritage Magazine*, and a broader range of content. This will include additional articles on our living collections in gardens and parklands, updates on our collections and conservation projects, research initiatives and publications, and interviews with a wide range of staff. The new magazine will have the same research-based articles at its core, focussing on built and cultivated heritage. We welcome any feedback or comments from existing readers on articles they would like to see included (please email [abc@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:abc@nationaltrust.org.uk)).

**Dr Tarnya Cooper**  
Curatorial and Conservation Director



# ABC Briefing

News, events and publications



## #BlossomWatch Day

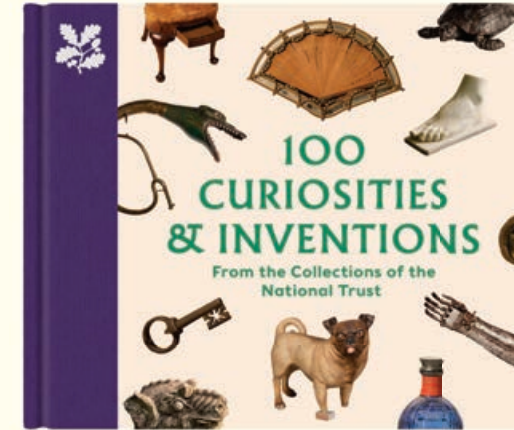
National Trust sites across the UK

23 April 2022

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/blossom-watch](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/blossom-watch)

The National Trust cares for hundreds of trees that blossom in the spring, many of which are historical varieties. Visitors are invited to join in with the Trust's celebration in the run up to #BlossomWatch day on 23 April by sharing their own pictures of beautiful blossom on social media.

The blossom-watch web page (see above) includes a list of National Trust places to see stunning spring blossom around the UK, as well as news of the Trust's work to help communities blossom with greener spaces and circles of blossom trees, and information about the importance of blossoming trees for nurturing wildlife.



Forthcoming:  
September 2022  
Hardback  
RRP £10  
224pp  
150 x 180mm  
978-0-70-780462-0

## 100 Curiosities & Inventions from the Collections of the National Trust

This beautifully illustrated book brings together a selection of 100 surprising, unusual and wonderfully weird objects in the National Trust collections – one of the largest and most significant holdings of fine-art and heritage objects in the world. It features forgotten gadgets, imaginative inventions, humorous gifts and peculiar personal treasures. From dodos and dioramas to witch bottles and wooden pets, all of these objects have stories to tell and they provide unexpected insights into the lives of those who made, owned or used them.

In this forthcoming book from the National Trust's Cultural Heritage Publishing programme, each object is accompanied by a wealth of images and an informative text. It concludes with a gazetteer of places where these remarkable items can be found. The lead author, Katie Knowles, is Assistant National Curator for Engagement at the National Trust. She specialises in interpretation and has contributed to a range of publications on Trust collections.



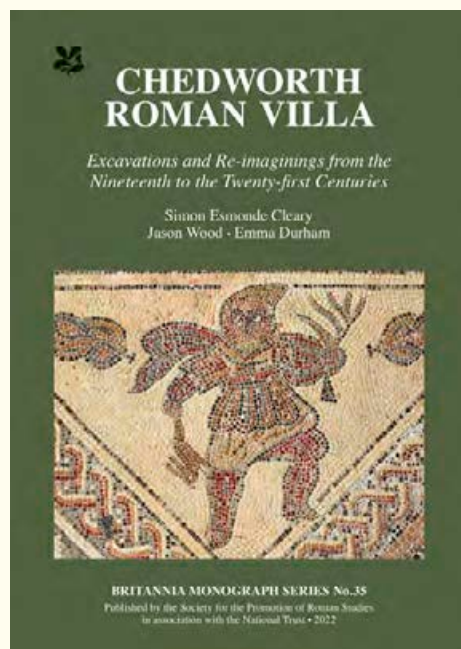
Photo: City blossom, Cheltenham – National Trust Images/James Dobson

## Chedworth Roman Villa research monograph

Like many National Trust properties, Chedworth has more than one story to tell. This new research monograph, published by the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies in association with the National Trust, provides an account of all the stages of investigation, from the Victorian pioneers through to recent excavations. Written by 29 expert contributors led by Simon Esmonde Cleary, Jason Wood and Emma Durham, it is the first comprehensive academic publication since the site's discovery in 1864.

It was a chance discovery by a gamekeeper in 1864 that led archaeologist James Farrer, uncle of landowner Lord Eldon, to begin the first excavations, and to build the lodge and museum that remain part of the site today. Chedworth was donated to the Trust in 1924, having been bought from the owner by public subscription. Some things about Chedworth are unchanged over the centuries. Even in the 2nd century A.D., although the landscape will have been very different, it would have had the same sense of remoteness that it has today. The modern visitor to Chedworth, finding the place at the end of the winding Cotswold lanes, is greeted by a 21st-century visitor centre and conservation building, enabling visitors to see at close quarters the mosaic floors, hypocaust systems and bath house rooms of the west range.

Published in the Britannia Monograph series, this important volume includes accounts of the very latest research, techniques and emerging understanding, including specialist finds reports, laser survey and fabric analysis. Its assembly is a tribute to the National Trust's commitment to the highest standards of research and scholarship in the conservation of the historic sites it cares for.



Published by the Roman Society in association with the National Trust's Cultural Heritage Publishing programme.

Forthcoming: May 2022  
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Order enquiries telephone:  
+44 (0) 1226 734350  
Also available from the National Trust shop at Chedworth Roman Villa, GL54 3LJ



Photo: Conservation cleaning – National Trust Images/James Dobson

## Constable Revealed

Anglesey Abbey, Gardens & Lode Mill

29 April–31 October 2022

Pre-booking not required (by guided tour only in August)

Online exhibition from 29 April, [www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk)

John Constable's largest ever canvas, *Embarkation of George IV from Whitehall: The Opening of Waterloo Bridge, 1817* (NT 515574) has recently undergone 250 hours of conservation work at the Royal Oak Foundation Studio at Knole in Kent. Conservation work has removed the thick layer of discoloured, treacly brown varnish that covered the canvas. The improvements to the painting's appearance are so dramatic, it almost looks like a different time of day or season. The texture of the paint surface and details can also be seen much more clearly. This project has been funded by the Royal Oak Foundation and has been undertaken by the National Trust's first Remedial Paintings Conservator, Sarah Maisey.

The painting's return to Anglesey Abbey marks the start of an object trail, highlighting the property's small but significant collection of Constables. The 1st Lord Fairhaven (1896–1966) amassed a small but significant collection of Constable's works at Anglesey Abbey in the mid-20th century. This diverse group of paintings shows the varied approaches Constable brought to his art. They range from early oil paintings of his native East Anglia, to a late watercolour of Stoke Poges Church. Ongoing research, analysis and conservation of this little-known collection continues to reveal new dimensions of Constable's practice.

# The Many Faces of Petworth's Beauty Room

Richard Ashbourne

Assistant Curator, London and South East

James Rothwell

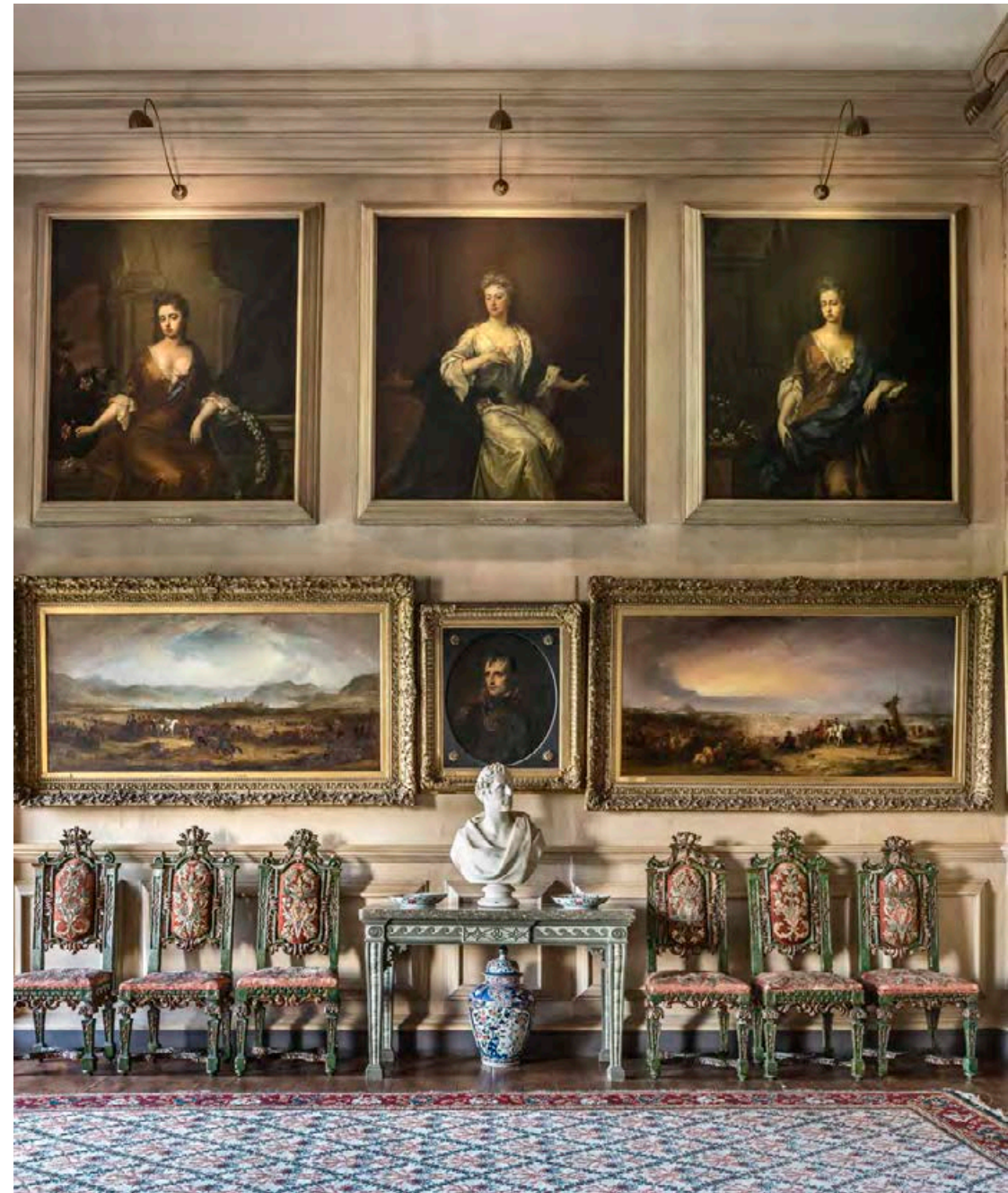
National Curator, Decorative Arts

In December 1703 at Petworth in Sussex a remarkable event took place in an extraordinary room. The Archduke Charles of Austria, recognised as King of Spain by Britain and her allies, supped with Prince George of Denmark, Queen Anne's consort, in what is now known as the Beauty Room (Fig. 1). This magnificent Baroque space was then hung with predominantly full-length female portraits between a profusion of mirrors in which the glittering assemblage, both real and painted, could be seen intermingling.

There was no other room quite like it in England and few on such a scale even on the Continent.<sup>1</sup> It survived the vagaries of fashion until the early 19th century,<sup>2</sup> when George Wyndham, 3rd Earl of Egremont (1751–1837), who was struggling to house his burgeoning picture and sculpture collection, decided to 'cut off their legs', reducing all the portraits to three-quarter length to make space for a shrine to the defeat

of Napoleon. Most of the mirrors were removed at the same time. And thus the room remained until a request came from Tate Britain in early 2019 to borrow two of the portraits as highlights for the following year's exhibition, *British Baroque: Power and Illusion*, provided they could be returned to full-length. The request prompted a re-evaluation of the significances of the room, and the commencement of the first phase of a dramatic conservation and restoration campaign that is still under way.

Petworth House, the southern seat of the mighty Percy family, was transformed into a Baroque palace by Charles Seymour, 6th Duke of Somerset (the 'Proud Duke', 1662–1748) and his heiress first wife, Lady Elizabeth Percy (1667–1722). The work began in 1688 and encompassed the creation of the stupendous west front (Fig. 2) – 320 feet long – with a central hall and flanking apartments behind on the ground floor and, beyond them, a magnificent staircase



1. The Beauty Room as it was in 2019, prior to the commencement of work to two of the Beauties  
Photo: National Trust Images/Andreas von Einsiedel



2. The principal façade of Petworth House, as transformed for the 6th Duke and Duchess of Somerset from 1688

Photo: National Trust Images/Arnhel de Serra

that led to what was initially the principal apartment of state on the first floor, also behind the west front and culminating in a gallery at the southern end. Archival references and strong stylistic similarities to proven work in the Netherlands make it highly probable that the designer was the Huguenot Daniel Marot (1661–1752), who had been brought over to England by William III (r.1689–1702).<sup>3</sup> As such, and given its scale and the rate of survival, together with the social and political significance of the patrons, Petworth is one of Britain's most important surviving buildings from the Baroque period.

The Beauty Room was the great parlour or dining room of the Duke and Duchess's house, with a withdrawing room (now the White and Gold Room) and bedchamber (now the White Library) continuing the apartment to the south. It was also pivotal

to the principal ceremonial route, leading to the Grand Staircase and thus the first-floor state apartment. The space was recorded as 'Dining Room' in the 1750 inventory of Petworth<sup>4</sup> and in the Proud Duke's will it is noted as having a silver cistern 'commonly placed on the floor before my Side Board in that room at the usual times of Dinners and Suppers'.<sup>5</sup> A detailed account of the protocol around the visit of the Archduke Charles, published in 1704, is a key source for understanding the planning and formal use of Baroque Petworth. Having been shown the house by the Prince, who acted as host, the 'King' was taken to supper,

*... which was serv'd up with so much Splendor and Profusion, and yet with so much Decency and Order, that I must needs say I never saw the like. The Table where they Supt was an Oval, and very large, the King sat about the middle of it,*

*and the Prince almost at the end. He [the King] Eat [sic] and Drank very heartily, but tasted no Liquors but his own, which were, the small Drink, Water discoloured by the infusion of Cinamon, and the strong, red and white Tyrol Wine. When he calls for either of them, his Taster, who is also one of the Lords of his Bed Chamber, brings the Liquor in a little Bottle and covers it, or rather hides it with a Salver, upon which he pours out what he Tasts, near as much as we call a Supernaculum. Then the King pours out what he pleases which is commonly a Glass Tumbler full, and drinks it off. The disposition of his Bread is as singular as anything else; for it is broke into very small Mammocks, laid upon a Plate cover'd with a Napkin and placed on his left Hand, from whence he takes it bit by bit, but keeps it always cover'd, I could not learn whether this was Custom or Superstition; and here it may not be improper to tell you, that I believe he has an Aversion for Dogs, because I observ'd one of his Noblemen take up a Dog whilst the King Supt and with great Caution and Secrecy carry it out of the Room ... At Supper he was attended by all the great Officers he brought over with him.<sup>6</sup>*

The principal feature of the Beauty Room was the series of eight portraits of late Stuart aristocratic women, six full-length and two three-quarter-length. All but one are by Michael Dahl (1659–1743) and their unusual proportions – they are very wide and the overdoors wider still – suggest they were specifically painted for the room. Tabitha Barber, who curated the Tate show, is of the opinion that they are of 1695–6 and the eighth picture, the *Duchess of Marlborough* by Sir Godfrey Kneller, is dated 1705.<sup>7</sup> The Kneller perhaps supplanted a now lost or unidentified Dahl as a consequence of the heights to which the Duchess had risen, being Groom of the Stole, Mistress of Robes and Keeper of the Privy Purse to Queen Anne.



The first written record of the series is George Vertue's c.1730 description: 'Dutches of Marlborough. whole lenght [sic] Knellr. a fine picture 6 whole lenghts Ladies painted by Mr. Dahl. beauties. these are very well & deserve the characters of the best works of Mr. Dahl.' He omitted to note that two of the pictures were three-quarter-length but this is confirmed in the 1748–50 inventory, which lists '6 pictures of full length in panels' and '2 Do [ditto] in half length over the doors'.<sup>8</sup>

The portraits were set into the panelling with mirrors in between, while above all the full-lengths except that over the fireplace were paintings of cupids after Polidoro da Caravaggio. The arrangement must have been striking and it bears some similarity to Marot's Audience Chamber of 1696–8 at The Hague and his late 17th-century interiors at Heemstede, too, although in neither of those cases is there an interspersing of mirrors. In spite of later alterations it is clear

from the panelling how the various elements were arranged, as has been illustrated by James Finlay (Fig. 3).

The room appears to have remained broadly in its original configuration until the 3rd Earl of Egremont decided to move his shrine to the defeat of Napoleon from what is now the Somerset Room but was then known as the Bonaparte Room.<sup>9</sup> Sir Francis Chantrey, whose 1828 bust of the Duke of Wellington was the focus, alongside a portrait of the vanquished Emperor by Thomas Phillips, advised that the wall opposite the fireplace was the favoured location. Lord Egremont, rather than removing the full-lengths, is said to have instructed: 'cut off their legs, I do not want their petticoats; their heads shall be placed in three [sic] small panels above, and the battles [Vittoria and Waterloo by George Jones] with the marble bust of the Duke shall be placed below.'<sup>10</sup> It may well have been the

Earl's perpetual moving about of his pictures that persuaded those executing his wishes to fold up the unwanted canvas at the back of the pictures rather than throwing it away.

The Napoleonic scheme did, in the event, survive the Earl but was nevertheless short-lived, being dismantled after 1869 and only re-instated in the 1990s as a holding arrangement 'pending the longer-term possibility of restoring the paintings to full-lengths and re-instating the 6th Duke's original Beauty Room'.<sup>11</sup> All the evidence survives to allow that to be undertaken, and following careful assessment of comparative significances and external and internal consultation the decision was taken to proceed, commencing with the two portraits for the Tate exhibition (*Mary Somerset, Duchess of Ormonde* and *Rachel Russell, Duchess of Devonshire*), which have now returned to Petworth in their magnificent, restored state.

3. Mock-up of the 18th-century Beauty Room by James Finlay, showing how the various elements were arranged  
Photo: National Trust/James Finlay

4. The back of the *Duchess of Ormonde*, showing the folded bottom section  
Photo: National Trust

5. The back of the *Duchess of Devonshire*, showing the folded bottom section  
Photo: National Trust





6. Conservator Jim Dimond restoring the *Duchess of Devonshire*  
Photo: National Trust/Rah Petherbridge

7. Chalk inscription found on the stretcher of the *Duchess of Ormonde*, signed 'Edvardus Retentor' and dated '1835'  
Photo: National Trust/Richard Ashbourne



### The restoration and new findings

At the outset of the project, a particular concern was the state of the portions of the pictures that had been cut off, re-attached to the lining and folded up behind (Figs 4 and 5). However, examination by conservators revealed that, except for some sagging caused by a lack of tension, they were in good condition, possibly because they had been kept in the dark for so long in what appear to have been relatively stable environmental conditions. There was very little difference in colour or texture between the bottom portions and the rest of the paintings.

As the restoration work began (with funding support from Philip Mould & Company), previously hidden information emerged (Fig. 6). The discovery of a chalk inscription on the Duchess of Ormonde's stretcher provided new evidence for the proactive way in which the 3rd Earl managed his collection of paintings. It reads: 'after they are lined All paintings should be painted at the backs Edvardus Retentor 1835' (Fig. 7).

'Edvardus Retentor' was identified by Andrew Loukes as the Latinised pseudonym of Edward Holder, who is known to have worked at Petworth, including on the picture collection, for the 3rd Earl from 1833 to 1836. The inscription suggests that Holder intended for all of the Beauties to be verso painted, after relining, presumably because this was believed to offer protection. This treatment was applied to other pictures in the collection, including *Macbeth and the Witches* by Sir Joshua Reynolds (NT 486153), the back of which is thickly coated in red paint. Perhaps the paintings were thought to need this treatment following their truncation in the preceding decade. However, if this was the meaning of the inscription, which seems the

most likely interpretation, it was not in fact carried out, because none of the Beauties have been painted 'at the backs'. The stretchers of both pictures are believed to be the originals, amended for the new size, with nail holes indicating they had been at a different level.

As well as the physical examination of the pictures, paint analysis was carried out in certain areas to deepen our understanding of the materials and techniques used by Dahl, and to compare the paintings as a set.<sup>12</sup> The blue pigment used for the Duchess of Devonshire's spectacular shawl, for example, was determined to be high-quality lazurite (natural ultramarine), which is also used for the Countess of Carlisle's shawl. The yellow highlights of the Countess of Pembroke's green dress consist of two layers: a green layer, possibly of verdigris or green earth mixed with yellow ochre, lead white and an unidentified blue pigment; and a surface layer of similar composition with fewer green particles (Fig. 8). A 'weakly defined and uneven' boundary between the layers suggests wet-in-wet painting, in which one colour is laid down over another before the first layer has dried, producing some intermingling of colours and the beautifully blended effect that can be seen in the finished work.<sup>13</sup> These discoveries shed new light on the creation of the Beauties and the rich visual effects Dahl achieved.

The history of the paintings was also investigated. No bills or receipts for the pictures' commission by the Duke and Duchess of Somerset have been found, leading to the uncertainty about their date of creation. The first written references appear in the notebooks of George Vertue, who visited Petworth multiple times in the 1730s (another of his comments is quoted above): 'At Petworth are several whole length pictures of Ladyes, beautyes, painted

several years ago for the Duke of Somerset, that shew the great skill of Mr. Dahl in Art, beauty, of grace, genteel artfull draperies finely painted & well dispos'd.<sup>14</sup>

These entries reveal the wonder of the Beauties in this period, but not why the women who make up the group were chosen. They have in the past, mistakenly, been taken to be the beauties of Queen Anne's court. Tabitha Barber argues that ties of family and friendship to the Duke and Duchess of Somerset unite the group, and their display as a set served to advertise and cement this network.<sup>15</sup> However, the political and court connections of the women and their families are also likely to have been a factor in their selection (these and the family ties are given below). When Queen Mary died childless in 1694, Anne became heir apparent, and indeed her hereditary claim to the throne surpassed William's. The shifting dynamics of the court during this politically volatile period help explain the Beauties chosen (including the later addition of the Duchess of Marlborough), for while many of the women's husbands had court and government roles under William, others had strong ties to Anne and would go on to have positions under her and her consort when she became Queen in 1702. All were connected to the courts of one or the other, and some to both. (The Somersets were Master of the Horse and a Lady of the Bedchamber under Anne, and the Duchess was subsequently Groom of the Stole, in succession to the Duchess of Marlborough.)<sup>16</sup> In this way, the Beauties can be seen as a public celebration of court and the Somersets' enduring place in it. This is reinforced by the fact that it has long been thought the Petworth Beauties were designed to emulate the Hampton Court Beauties, commissioned by Mary II from Sir Godfrey Kneller in 1690.<sup>17</sup>

The Beauties' family links, and their and/or their husbands' official roles were as follows:<sup>18</sup>

**Anne Capel, Countess of Carlisle**

(1674–1752) was a first cousin of the Duchess of Somerset. Her husband, Charles Howard, 3rd Earl of Carlisle (1669–1738), was a Gentleman of the Bedchamber to William III.

**Jane Temple, Countess of Portland**

(1672–1751) was the stepmother of the Countess of Carlisle's sister-in-law, Mary Bentinck, Countess of Essex (1679–1726). The Countess of Portland's husband, William Bentinck, 1st Earl of Portland (1649–1709), was Keeper of the Privy Purse and Groom of the Stole to William III.

**Margaret Sawyer, Countess of Pembroke**

(d. 1706), was married to Thomas Herbert, 8th Earl of Pembroke (c.1656–1733), Lord President of the Council under William III and Anne.

**Juliana Alington, Viscountess Howe**

(1665–1747) was a first cousin of the Duke of Somerset. Her husband, Scrope Howe, 1st Viscount Howe (1648–1713), was appointed Comptroller of Excise by William III in 1693.

**Mary Somerset, Duchess of Ormonde**

(1664–1733), was a first cousin of the Countess of Carlisle. She was a Lady of the Bedchamber to Anne, and her husband, James Butler, 2nd Duke of Ormonde (1665–1745), was a Gentleman of the Bedchamber to William III.

**Rachel Russell, Duchess of Devonshire**

(1674–1725), then known as Marchioness of Hartington, was a Lady of the Bedchamber to Anne. Her husband, William Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Devonshire (1672–1729), was a first cousin of James Butler, 2nd Duke of Ormonde. The Duchess of Devonshire's mother, Rachel Wriothesley, Lady Russell (c.1636–1723), was the half-sister of the Duchess of Somerset's mother, Elizabeth Percy, Countess of Northumberland (1646–



8. *Margaret Sawyer, Countess of Pembroke*, 1690–9, by Michael Dahl (1659–1743), oil on canvas, 165 x 155cm, Petworth House (NT 486217)  
Photo: National Trust Images



9. *Mary Somerset, Duchess of Ormonde*, 1690–9, by Michael Dahl, oil on canvas, 236 x 146.8cm, fully restored, Petworth House (NT 486210)  
Photo: National Trust Images/James Dobson

10. (Overleaf) *Rachel Russell, Duchess of Devonshire*, 1690–9, by Michael Dahl, oil on canvas, 236.6 x 147.5cm, fully restored, Petworth House (NT 486212)  
Photo: National Trust Images/James Dobson

90), making the Duchess of Somerset and the Duchess of Devonshire cousins.

**Barbara Talbot, Viscountess Longueville** (1671–1763), was married to Henry Yelverton, 15th Lord Grey of Ruthin and 1st Viscount de Longueville (c.1664–1703/4), a Gentleman of the Bedchamber to Prince George of Denmark.<sup>19</sup>

**Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough** (1660–1744), was, among other roles, Keeper of the Privy Purse to Anne (represented in her portrait by the key).

Some of the Beauties were also connected through their families to the Kit-cat Club.<sup>20</sup> The Earl of Carlisle, the Duke of Devonshire and the Earl of Essex were all members alongside the Duke of Somerset.

As research continues, two of the Beauties, at least, are once again able to speak for themselves (Figs 9 and 10).

### The future of the Beauty Room

Plans were afoot prior to the outbreak of the pandemic to continue with the conservation of the paintings and to draw up costed plans for the complete restoration of the Baroque space, as well as applying for any listed building or other statutory consents required for the alteration of the fabric of the room, which it should be possible to achieve in an entirely reversible fashion.

Activity has now been resumed, and it is to be hoped that the prospect of enabling the public at large to step into the dazzling experience that was this room when it was visited by the ‘King of Spain’ and an elite few in the early 18th century will garner enthusiastic support from potential funders. A contemporary art and research initiative, ‘Permissible Beauty’, led by Professor Richard Sandell of Leicester University, is at the same time using the pictures to explore why some forms of beauty are more permissible than others today.

### Notes

Acknowledgements: the authors wish to thank Lord Egremont for providing access to the Petworth House Archive.

1. For a discussion of series of portraits of ‘beauties’ see Catharine MacLeod and Julia Marciari Alexander, ‘The “Windsor Beauties” and the Beauties Series in Restoration England’ in MacLeod and Alexander (eds), *Politics, Transgression and Representation at the Court of Charles II*, New Haven and London, 2007, pp.81–122.
2. The alterations were carried out in 1826–8.
3. Christopher Rowell, *Petworth*, 2012, p.40.
4. West Sussex Record Office, Petworth House Archive (hereafter PHA) 6263, inventory of the household goods at Petworth of the late 7th Duke of Somerset, March 1750.
5. The National Archives, PROB 11/766/395, Will of the Most Noble Charles Duke of Somerset, proved 19 December 1748.
6. Abel Boyer, *The History of the Reign of Queen Anne, Digested into Annals, Year the Second*, London, 1704, pp.13–14.
7. Tabitha Barber (ed.), *British Baroque: Power and Illusion*, London 2020, pp.121–3 and pers. comm.
8. Vertue Note Books vol. 2, *Walpole Society Journal*, vol. 20, 1931–2, p.81.
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18. Court roles: Sainty and Bucholz, op. cit., note 17. Family links: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, unless specified otherwise.
19. National Trust Collections website, entries for [NT 996332](#) and [NT 996299](#).
20. National Portrait Gallery Collections website, [The Kit-cat Club portraits](#).





1. Woolsthorpe Manor,  
Lincolnshire • Isaac Newton's  
Apple Tree • Apple (*Malus  
domestica* 'Flower of Kent')  
• Family: Rosaceae (rose) •  
Deciduous • Best seen  
in spring and autumn  
Photo: National Trust Images/  
Paul Harris

## Publications

# 50 Great Trees of the National Trust

April 2022 sees the publication of the latest title in the National Trust's Collections series (see page 36), *50 Great Trees of the National Trust* by Simon Toomer. To mark the occasion, we invited five members of staff from across the organisation to talk about their favourite trees featured in the book.

### **Isaac Newton's Apple Tree, Woolsthorpe Manor, Lincolnshire**

This tree has gravitas. It is small but perfectly formed and we know it as the tree that stands at the beginning of so many things. This particular tree attracts more than

50,000 visitors a year, who gravitate to this location in Lincolnshire to see where it all began for Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727). This is his birthplace and the place where a simple apple tree inspired new thought.

Today, it connects to visitors in the same way that this humble fruit has done throughout the history of Western civilisation. Some describe the tree as the 'arboreal alpha' because of its emotional, physical and cultural significance: a motif through time. The fall of that apple for Newton resonates through so many stories: from scenes of ancient Greece and the

Garden of Eden to modern technology; the simple apple symbolises both the beginning and the way forward. We see it clasped in the timeless hands of poets, writers, sculptors, artists: Milton, Dürer, Rubens. I love this tree for its own lovely fruit but also for its roots, deep in time and culture.

An apple from the progenitor of this very tree began a revelation that formed a theory. A brilliant young mathematician who wanted to escape the plague when he was a student in Cambridge, Newton returned to Woolsthorpe Manor, and it was here that his famous encounter with the apple took place. Here his law of universal gravitation was born and this tree, a graft from the original that Newton sat beneath, provides an authentic way for us to reach back in time and connect to Newton and the roots of his inspiration.

Like the apple tree itself, *50 Great Trees of the National Trust* continues to reveal new stories – not only tales from the past, but images that throw us forward in time and outward into space. Simon Toomer shows us the image of the seeds from this tree germinating and growing strong in zero gravity on the International Space Station, and the National Trust Plant Conservation Centre propagating this variety to safeguard the genetics for the future.

Few trees carry such gravitas, few are so symbolic and few have sown the seeds of thought as well as this little apple: rooted in the past and reaching to the future – a tree to inspire us all.

*Andrew Jasper, National Head of Gardens and Parklands*

### **Douglas fir, Cragside, Northumberland**

The first thing that strikes you about the Douglas firs in the pinetum at Cragside is their sheer size – they are enormous. Most are over 50 metres tall and one, at over 63

metres, is among the tallest of its kind in England. These giants have real presence; standing beneath them, with their branches making kaleidoscopic patterns against the sky, is both mesmerising and humbling.

At less than 160 years old, these Douglas firs are relatively young. They could live for 500 years or more and are still growing upwards, reaching towards the pale Northumbrian sky. Despite their size and apparent robustness, Douglas firs are vulnerable to extreme weather; the roots tend to be shallow, meaning they can topple if caught by strong winds. Fortunately, the cool, moist conditions in the pinetum at Cragside provide an ideal environment for them. Here, the topography of the Debdon valley offers protection from strong winds and the nearby burn ensures the plentiful supply of moisture needed to grow these spectacular trees. They form part of an extensive collection of conifers planted in around 1865 for the industrialist, inventor and arms manufacturer Sir William Armstrong (1810–1900). Many thousands of Douglas firs were established across the estate, but it is here, clustered around the house and iron bridge, where they make a lasting impression. In a different setting, these vast trees could out-scale a building, but at Cragside the cumulative effect of huge conifers on the steep hillside surrounding the house gives a feeling of rugged beauty and wildness.

Close-up, the trees have some unique characteristics. The rough, cinnamon-coloured bark recalls the cracked surface of a chocolate Swiss roll and this deeply fissured bark provides an ideal hunting ground for treecreepers and nuthatches, while tiny goldcrests and coal tits often forage among the foliage. The pendulous cones display distinctive three-pointed bracts, making them instantly recognisable –



a useful hint if you struggle to identify conifers. Within the group of Douglas firs some individuals stand out for their unusual limbs, which have a cross-section shaped like an inverted teardrop. Most Douglas firs shed their lower limbs as they grow taller, but these trees retain their branches almost down to ground level, giving a very different appearance. They lack the towering height of the conventional specimens but are strong and full of character, making them my true favourites within this very special tree collection.

*Alison Pringle, Gardens and Parklands Consultant, Yorkshire and the North East*

2. Cragside, Northumberland • Douglas fir (centre foreground) • *Pseudotsuga menziesii* • Family: Pinaceae (pine) • Evergreen • Height: c.60m • Age: approx. 150 years  
Photo: National Trust Images/Andrew Butler

### Ancient beech, Plas Newydd House and Garden, Anglesey

I grew up on Anglesey, it gave me my love of being outdoors and a curiosity for plant identification, their English and Welsh names. Most of the plants I learned were fairly scrubby, heathland plants because the salt-laden, windswept north-eastern coast wind pruned and stunted most trees.

As a result, I was mainly surrounded by ash, willow and hazel, none of which were able to show me their true growth habit. However, up the lane on the Llys Dulas estate was a small beech woodland, with views across Dulas estuary to Liverpool beyond. As a seven-year-old, their smooth grey bark resembled a tree painted in a book of fairy tales. These beech were certainly the largest

trees I encountered for a number of years, apart from a solitary monkey puzzle in a front garden near my school bus stop.

As a child I visited Plas Newydd with my grandparents and later took my young daughter on school holiday visits to her grandparents. The woodlands at Plas Newydd always seemed unfamiliar, their scale and obvious age felt unusual for the

island flora I knew. I didn't realise until this book was written that these woodlands are home to the beech with the largest girth in the UK.

The Plas Newydd beech, *ffawydden* in Welsh, could certainly share a few stories, possibly ones to rival the Mabinogion tales that we studied at school – which seems fitting, because thin slices of beech wood were once used for writing on. Beech are wind-pollinated and their fairy-tale appearance can set the imagination to hearing voices on the wind as you walk through these woods. Perhaps beech trees do speak. Beech leaves were used for stuffing mattresses because the leaves take a long time to break down and they were thought to be good for skin conditions. The mattresses stuffed with crisp leaves became known as 'talking beds'.

I'm even more intrigued by this tree's location and form, as it hints at the human touch: it could be a group of many plants, and it may have been cut to form a hedge at one time – all chapters in its life story that might help to account for its multi-faceted trunk and record-breaking girth. Today, with no living relatives on Anglesey, I'm prompted to return to see this *ffawydden* tree and relive some childhood memories of Plas Newydd.

*Pamela Smith, Senior National Consultant Gardens and Parklands*



3. Plas Newydd House and Garden, Anglesey • Ancient beech • *Fagus sylvatica* • Family: Fagaceae (beech) • Deciduous • Best seen in autumn for fungi and leaf colour  
Photo: National Trust Images/ James Dobson

## Giant redwood, Killerton, Devon

One thing that always amazes me when I think about the planting of trees is the amount of vision, trust and selflessness that is required. To be able to envisage what the landscape might look like and how it may change over the next 1,000 years, to have faith in those who will take custody of your tree and nurture it throughout its life and to do this knowing that you will never be able to appreciate it at its full potential, but are in fact planting it for generations of people you'll never meet, to me, is extraordinary.

Giant redwoods are the largest organisms to have ever lived on this planet. As you stand at the foot of this tree, as thousands of visitors do each year, it's hard to comprehend its size and age. Nobody knows how long redwoods can survive in the UK, because the species was only discovered by intrepid British seed hunters in 1853. This particular tree was planted at Killerton in 1858, yet at 164 years old it already dwarfs everything else around it, despite (in tree terms) still only being a teenager.

My family have lived and worked on the Killerton estate as far back as any living relative can remember. My mother was born on the estate, my grandmother worked in Killerton house, my great-grandfather was head gardener for over 50 years, and his parents, grandparents and great-grandparents were all farmers or labourers in Budlake or Broadclyst, so I really feel like I've returned to my ancestral home. Although I never met most of them, and a lot has changed since they were here (the motorway cutting the estate in half, trainlines and roads being added, hedgerows and hedge-banks being taken away, to name just a few), there's always one constant that connects us with our pasts – trees.

*Harry Whiting, Ranger Teams apprentice, Killerton*

4. Killerton, Devon • Giant redwood  
• *Sequoiadendron giganteum* •  
Family: Cupressaceae (cypress) •  
Origin: USA (California) • Evergreen  
• Introduced to UK: 1853  
Photo: National Trust Images/  
Stephen Robson





5. The Wyne, Hampshire • The Hundred Guinea Oak • *Quercus robur* • Family: Fagaceae (beech) • Deciduous • Height: 22m  
Photo: National Trust Images/James Dobson

### The Hundred Guinea Oak, The Wyne, Hampshire

There are, perhaps, more beautiful trees in the National Trust's parks and gardens, but none that conveys, to me anyway, such great antiquity. The venerable Hundred Guinea Oak in the garden at The Wyne began to grow an astonishing 600 years ago. Now cherished and conserved as a beautiful and rare constant in a changing world, in the late medieval and early modern periods oak trees were prized for what they provided: acorns for fattening pigs, bark for tanning leather, wood for fuel, and timber for building to provide protection from the worst of nature's vagaries. It is no wonder that this tree is named after a timber merchant's offer to buy it, or that its then owner, William John Chute (1757–1824), turned down the offer because the tree was 'too valuable to lose'.

In 1590, the poet Edmund Spenser (1552/3–99) singled out oak trees as 'the builder oake, sole king of forrests all'. We owe the survival of many of our buildings to the fact that their frames and roofs were made of oak timbers, which were large, strong and capable of withstanding centuries of weather and strain. Oak was the primary material used to make furniture and woodwork in the early modern period. Inside The Wyne, several of the rooms are lined with oak installed by William Sandys, 1st Baron Sandys (1470–1540). More than 400 panels carved with stylised folds of linen in imitation of wall hangings – the technique is called 'linenfold' – run the full length and height of the Oak Gallery. Intended to exclude draughts and warm the room, at The Wyne the panelling is also used to great decorative and symbolic effect, being carved with the heraldic devices – many of them derived from the natural world – of Henry VIII and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and the Sandys family. An inventory taken in

1541 records that the furniture in the room – 'ii small tables of waynscot' and 'another small table or cubbord of waynscot with a bottom carved' – was also made of oak. The term 'waynscot' refers to oak grown in the Baltic, which Britain imported from the 13th century because the timber was lighter and easier to work than native-grown oak.

Unlike the Hundred Guinea Oak, this furniture has not survived at The Wyne. It is hard to say why this particular tree escaped felling, but it was perhaps thanks to the Chute family, later owners of The Wyne, who chose a site close by the tree to build two summerhouses and, in so doing, incorporated it into a garden, saving it for later generations to care for and enjoy.

*Megan Wheeler, Assistant National Curator, Furniture*



To order *50 Great Trees of the National Trust*, visit: [shop.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://shop.nationaltrust.org.uk)

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# Magnum Opus

## *Andrew Garrett and the conservation of the National Trust's musical instrument collections*

Christopher Nobbs

National Trust Adviser, Musical Instruments

Although there are many museums of musical instruments in the British Isles there is not, as in other European countries, a designated national collection. But perhaps it is not too far-fetched to see the instruments of all kinds in National Trust properties, spanning a period of almost five centuries, as a national museum of music. Centralised collections under one roof often have advantages in prestige, yet the great variety of dispersed collections in the UK has an advantage in accommodating many different approaches to museum practice. This diversity is mirrored within the National Trust: from carefully assembled playing collections of keyboard instruments, to the idiosyncratic miscellanies of individual collectors, alongside many discrete examples. Often, the association with a house and family has spanned generations, and an instrument's life – and afterlife – can vividly illustrate changes both musical and domestic. The unifying factor for this great gallery of musical artefacts has been the care and scholarship of Andrew Garrett (1938–2021), who was appointed Adviser by Hermione Sandwith in 1982.

The Trust's holdings can give a comprehensive history of several types of instrument: earlier keyboards and the piano, from its beginnings in this country to the present day, and a generous sampling of other traditions; a sequence of harps illustrating the evolution that led to the modern concert instrument; a good sampling of bowed and plucked strings, woodwind and brass, as well as amateur and dilettante instruments. Pipe organs and reed organs are well represented, and there are modest collections of non-European instruments.

All curators, conservators and house staff in the Trust know the conflicts of care versus use. These become even more of a problem with dynamic objects, such as clocks and carriages, and the tension becomes particularly acute with musical instruments. Visitors do want to hear them – and often, if possible, play them – and although questions of wear and tear can be sympathetically appreciated, the more complex ethical dilemmas raised by the decision to restore an instrument are much harder to explain. As well as the almost unavoidable losses



1. Organ by Bevington & Sons, London, 1865: a two-manual and pedal instrument with nine stops made for Erddig; a self-playing barrel mechanism can be fitted over the lower keyboard (NT 1151253)  
Photo: National Trust Images/Andreas von Einsiedel



2. A double-action 'Gothic' harp by Sebastian & Pierre Erard, London, 1843, Charlecote Park, which was acquired in 1854 by Mary Elizabeth Lucy, an accomplished performer on the instrument (NT 533800)

Photo: National Trust Images/Andreas von Einsiedel

of material and information, restoration can result in the need for more demanding and expensive aftercare. There is always a danger that, beyond the first fanfare of performance and celebration, a newly awakened instrument presents a new set of challenges, which can only be met with the aid of expensive, specialist skills.

Before and during his career with the Trust, Andrew developed an acute appreciation of these issues. The questions arising in the treatment of two very similar instruments give an object lesson in his discrimination and skill. After the Trust acquired Calke Abbey in Derbyshire in 1984, Andrew discovered a harpsichord made by Burkat Shudi (1702–73) in 1741, in a hayloft above the stables (see page 21). Shudi, a Swiss immigrant, had a European-wide reputation, with Haydn, Frederick the Great and Empress Maria Theresa among his customers. With his rival Jacob Kirkman, Shudi dominated harpsichord building in London. Forsaken in the tidal changes of musical fashion in the later 18th century, the instrument was a unique survival. Saved from later modification or repair, it preserved ephemeral details and materials otherwise lost. After it was recovered, treatment had to be archaeological in documentation and delicacy, before it was removed for conservation. In a first flush of excitement, a restoration to playing condition might well have been considered, but Andrew, in harmony with the ethos of the Trust's approach to Calke Abbey, made sure that only the most basic cosmetic work was done to make the instrument fit for display.

At around the same time decisions had to be made at Chirk Castle, Wrexham, where another Shudi harpsichord had gone through the more usual cycle of neglect and repair since it was made in 1742. Here it was judged appropriate to restore to playing condition,

and recitals on the instrument by Robert Woolley and Alan Cuckston were broadcast in 1985 and 1988. Thanks to Andrew and Richard Clayson's fine workmanship, the harpsichord remains in good order today with minimal attention. As we get closer to the present, the risks associated with restoration might seem to lessen for more modern instruments, especially as more of them survive. However, another such sleeping beauty, resting in benign neglect, was a Broadwood grand piano of 1802, discovered in the attic of an outbuilding at Killerton, Devon. There was considerable resistance to taking a similar approach to that adopted at Calke but Andrew prevailed. As he wrote in 1995: 'It is the present condition of this instrument which makes it unique and important; I know of no equal either in private or public hands'. A similarly precious example, in a state that can inform restorers or makers of replicas in the future, is a Broadwood grand at Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire, a contemporary of the now very much restored piano that Thomas Broadwood presented to Beethoven in 1818.

The basic conservation work for display of the Killerton piano as found was carried out by David Hunt, who has done excellent conservation and restoration work on early pianos in Trust properties. An example that particularly delighted Andrew was David's highly skilled recovery in 1989 to its original state of an exceptionally ornate Broadwood grand piano built in 1802. The piano is the property of Lord Belmore at Castle Coole in County Fermanagh. David's experienced eye put two and two together: a very dilapidated and partially stripped grand piano in the attic and, elsewhere, a set of Wedgwood medallions and tablets applied to a later cabinet. Reunited with the restored piano, these are a uniquely elegant enrichment of an exceptionally fine musical instrument.

Conservative restoration by specialists is an important objective in the care of more recent instruments, particularly pianos of the later 19th and early 20th centuries. These can often be maintained in playing condition without subjecting them to radical renewal.

Two collections of playable historical keyboard instruments are housed in Trust properties, The Benton Fletcher Collection at Fenton House in London and the Cobbe Collection at Hatchlands Park in Surrey. Both have been venues for many recitals and recordings and have offered exceptional access to both established players and students. The instruments at Fenton House since 1952 and at Hatchlands since 1987 have stimulated for many an abiding fascination with the classical repertoire played on instruments for which it was conceived. Beginning as early as 1973, with Richard Clayson, Andrew had been involved in the restoration of nine of the instruments at Fenton House and, crucially, he was instrumental in setting up a fresh regime of care and maintenance in 1984 when Mimi Waitzman and Donald Mackinnon were appointed Keepers of the collection. Their tradition is continued to the present day by Ben Marks, appointed in 2013.

Fenton House and Hatchlands contain two particularly significant and celebrated harpsichords from the workshops of the Rucker's dynasty in Antwerp, often described as standing in the same relation to the harpsichord as do the Cremonese masters to the violin. Many players would judge the 1636 Andreas Ruckers at Hatchlands (Fig. 3) the star of that collection, and the 1612 Ioannes Ruckers at Fenton House, on loan from Her Majesty the Queen, was a magnum opus of restoration by Clayson and Garrett in 1984. Almost as fascinating as an original is the English counterfeit of a Ruckers, from the beginning of the 18th



3. Harpsichord by Andreas Ruckers, Antwerp, 1636, enlarged in Paris by Henri Hemsch in 1763; Cobbe Collection, Hatchlands Park  
Photo: Cobbe Collection Trust



4. Part of the display in the Music Room at Snowhill Manor, including, among other instruments: serpents, ophicleides, keyed bugles, horns, bassoons, hurdy gurdies, and two Irish harps by John Egan  
Photo: National Trust Images/James Dobson

century, now at Ham House, Surrey; a highly influential instrument during the revival of the harpsichord, whether sailing under false colours or unmasked.

Andrew conserved or restored instruments both before and after his appointment as Adviser. With Richard Clayson he worked on harpsichords at Westwood Manor in Wiltshire; at Lyme Park in Cheshire, a John Hitchcock harpsichord c.1770; and at Tatton Park, also in Cheshire, an Abraham & Joseph Kirkman harpsichord of 1789. Gradually, Andrew gathered together and collaborated with a chosen band of conservators and restorers from the small world of qualified specialists. David Hunt has already been mentioned; others include Jeffrey Clamp, Lucy Coad, Pádraig ó Dubhlaoidh, Pamela and Phillip Fluke, Miles Hellon, Alastair Laurence, and Paul Neville.

One particularly close professional friendship during Andrew's years as Adviser was with Dominic Gwynn and the late Martin Goetze, whose organ building and restoration company, Goetze & Gwynn, was established in 1980. Andrew was fascinated and impressed by their conservation work, while they were strongly influenced by the style and methods of his approach to other kinds of keyboard instrument. Their work is represented in a dozen instruments in the Trust's care. Among the most remarkable

is the 'Finger and Barrel' organ of 1824 by James Bishop at The Argory in County Armagh, by far the most ambitious and impressive self-playing instrument in these islands. Many other automatic and reproducing instruments were also part of Andrew's remit: barrel organs, polyphons, musical boxes, pianolas, phonographs and gramophones; some can be heard and many give a personal record, in their barrels, rolls, and cylinders, of the tastes of the past residents of a house. Goetze & Gwynn's work on more conventional organs in Trust properties includes restorations at Belton House in Lincolnshire, Canons Ashby in Northamptonshire, Erddig in Wrexham, Hatchlands in Surrey, and Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire; and important conservation at Petworth in West Sussex, Staunton Harold Church in Leicestershire and Knole in Kent.

The number of musical instruments in a property might be something between one and several dozen – after a visit by Andrew, more were sometimes identified – but there were also the challenges of the large and varied collections such as those at Erddig, Calke and, above all, the romantic musical miscellany at Snowhill in Gloucestershire (Fig. 4) of over 150 instruments. Andrew brought care not just to the instruments but to an often contradictory variety of previous attempts at identification and cataloguing. These researches illustrate the wilder shores of his esoteric knowledge of instruments. He was also involved in the use of instruments in performance and recording, both commercial and for the BBC, and his comprehensive descriptions of instruments and their condition form invaluable groundwork for current initiatives such as *Sound Heritage* (see page 22). Andrew's records will be essential to the post-pandemic approach to music in the houses of the National Trust.

# Andrew Garrett (1938–2021)

Andrew Garrett, who died in October 2021, was for 34 years the Adviser on Musical Instruments to the National Trust. By the time of his retirement, Andrew had produced a digital catalogue of over 1,200 instruments and musical artefacts, the majority fully described and very many with thorough organological assessment and background material. Alongside the surveys that created this invaluable resource, Andrew guided properties, regional curators and conservators in the care and maintenance and, where justifiable, the restoration and use of instruments. Through him, it can be said the Trust became truly self-aware in the realm of music and musical instruments.

Andrew was born in Halifax in 1938, and was a chorister at Christ Church in Oxford before going on to Lancing College on a music scholarship. At Oxford, Andrew read History and there met Richard Clayson, who was reading English. Andrew played the violin and Richard keyboard and, wanting a harpsichord for their music-making, they decided to build one themselves. This simple instrument most unexpectedly set the course of their lives thereafter. It attracted the attention of the maverick instrument builder and collector Michael Thomas, and they spent a year working with him at Hurley Manor, near Maidenhead. Both Andrew's and Richard's families were initially bemused, not to say alarmed, by what seemed a highly unusual and precarious choice of

career, so much at odds with conventional expectations. But in 1963 the fortuitous availability of premises, and the generous initial help of friends who had faith in their serious intentions, enabled them to set up on their own account as 'Early Keyboard Instruments' in Lyminge, near Folkestone. They restored early pianos and produced new harpsichords and clavichords, assisted by the skills of a master carpenter and cabinet-maker, E.T. ('Ted') Burren. Financially very risky, this venture was far from being a self-indulgent 'Arts & Crafts' lifestyle choice.

In the late 1960s they were among the first makers in Britain to closely imitate surviving historical instruments of various traditions, and soon Clayson & Garrett was a name with an international reputation. Both partners' work helped underpin many significant projects in live music and recording and, after Richard's tragically early death in 1987, Andrew's achievement in maintaining the business required great fortitude.

In the labour of surveying, cataloguing and caring for the Trust's musical instruments, Andrew had the essential help of his wife, Paddy. With her aid in more recent years, Andrew continued, despite very serious problems with his eyesight, stoically digitising material and enhancing the system and order of his archive. In brain-work or hand-work, his requirement of himself and others was demanding; his was the spirit of Housman's 'accuracy is a duty not a virtue'.



It was often perfectionism that inhibited his preparation of text for publication, but certainly not the loquacity and wit of his unpublished writing, and he gave generously of his time in response to almost any inquiry from within or without the Trust. His range of knowledge was astonishing, and others' work gained much from the scholarship of his prompt and comprehensive replies. Language was Andrew's delight and playground, and it was easy to be overawed by his linguistic range in the Classics and modern languages.

Andrew will be very much missed by all the specialist conservators, restorers and technicians who cared for the Trust's musical instruments. They will always remember him as much more than a professional colleague; he was wonderfully entertaining company to work with, nor will the raconteur of long Lyminge lunches be forgotten by those privileged to share them.

**Christopher Nobbs**  
National Trust Adviser, Musical Instruments

1. Andrew Garrett in 1984 shortly after discovering an 18th-century harpsichord made by Burkat Shudi (1702–73), at Calke Abbey in Derbyshire (NT 290036)  
Photo: Paddy Fraser

2. Another Shudi harpsichord, at Chirk Castle, Wrexham (on loan to the National Trust from Mr Guy C. Myddelton), which Andrew Garrett and Richard Clayson restored to playing condition (NT 1171097)  
Photo: National Trust Images/John Hammond





1. Wiebke Thormählen plays dances for fiddle in the Servants' Hall at Erddig for recording in January 2020  
Photo: Jeanice Brooks

# Sounds Like Home

## *Hearing Erddig's past*

Professor Jeanice Brooks  
Department of Music  
University of Southampton

Dr Wiebke Thormählen  
Royal College of Music

*Sounding Erddig*, a collaboration between the National Trust, the University of Southampton and the Royal College of Music, aims to recapture the domestic soundscape of nearly two centuries of life at Erddig, Wrexham. Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of the 'Music, Home and Heritage' grant (2017–21), researchers aimed to imagine the house through its historic sounds, asking who frequented which spaces, what sounds and music were heard, and how these established relationships between different members of the household. The project has culminated in the creation of an extensive library of professionally recorded sounds and music, now freely available online at <https://sound-heritage.ac.uk/sounding-erddig>.

Erddig made for an excellent test case because of the size and diversity of its indigenous collections, and the prominence of instruments and sheet music within them. At over 30,000 items, Erddig's holdings are among the Trust's largest, offering the

potential to record the sounds produced by a vast range of objects, from servants' bells to drying racks. Many of Erddig's musical instruments, including the 1865 Bevington organ, a fine harmonium by Christophe & Etienne (c.1868), and a late 19th-century Collard & Collard grand piano (c.1876), are maintained in playing condition. Among the more unusual survivals is an early 19th-century harp-lute (NT 1151261) by Edward Light (1747–1832), complete with its original case and several volumes of music.

Bound music books and loose sheet music still in the house include not only scores for its harp-lute, piano and organ, but abundant vocal repertoire, as well as music for instruments such as harpsichord and harp that are no longer held at Erddig. Two years of research into these previously unexplored music holdings, supported by an extensive cataloguing and conservation exercise by the Trust, revealed a heterogeneous mix of genres and styles. Accumulated consistently over a lengthy period, these musical sources

provide a valuable overview of the changing sound of British country houses from the mid-18th to the mid-20th century, as well as a rich and unique portrait of music-making at Erddig itself.

Combining the extant musical sources with documentary material in the North East Wales Archives, Flintshire Record Office, such as receipted bills, accounts and family correspondence, allowed the project team to map this varied repertory to particular occupants and events in Erddig's past. For example, several early 19th-century occupants played and took lessons on the harp, and records of payments to hired musicians testified to the presence of fiddlers for special occasions in the late 18th century. In one case we uncovered a family drama: letters from the mid-1760s relate the story of the clandestine purchase by teenage Anne Jemima Yorke (1754–70) of an expensive harpsichord, a luxury the family had to hide from the wealthy uncle on whom their fortunes depended. Original songs by Louisa Yorke, *née* Scott (1863–1951), and her sister Helenita (1873–1940) – a published composer of considerable skill – gesture toward the creative aspects of the house's early 20th-century history.

The project saw the selection of over 80 pieces of music from Erddig's collections for professional performance and recording. In an effort to represent not only chronological breadth, but the variety of former occupants, the recordings include material that could have been heard or performed by servants and estate workers as well as by members of the Yorke family. A significant feature of Erddig's music collection more generally, and one reflected in the selection, is the prominent role of female residents: a focus on sound and music helps to foreground the importance of women, who often do not appear in conventional

2. John W. Bratton, 'The Teddy Bears' Picnic (Characteristic Two Step)', London, M. Witmark & Sons, 1907 (detail); the copy was inscribed by Louisa Yorke, *née* Scott, and the inside cover is marked 'Erddig Park/Wrexham/Xmas 1908' (NT 3090294)

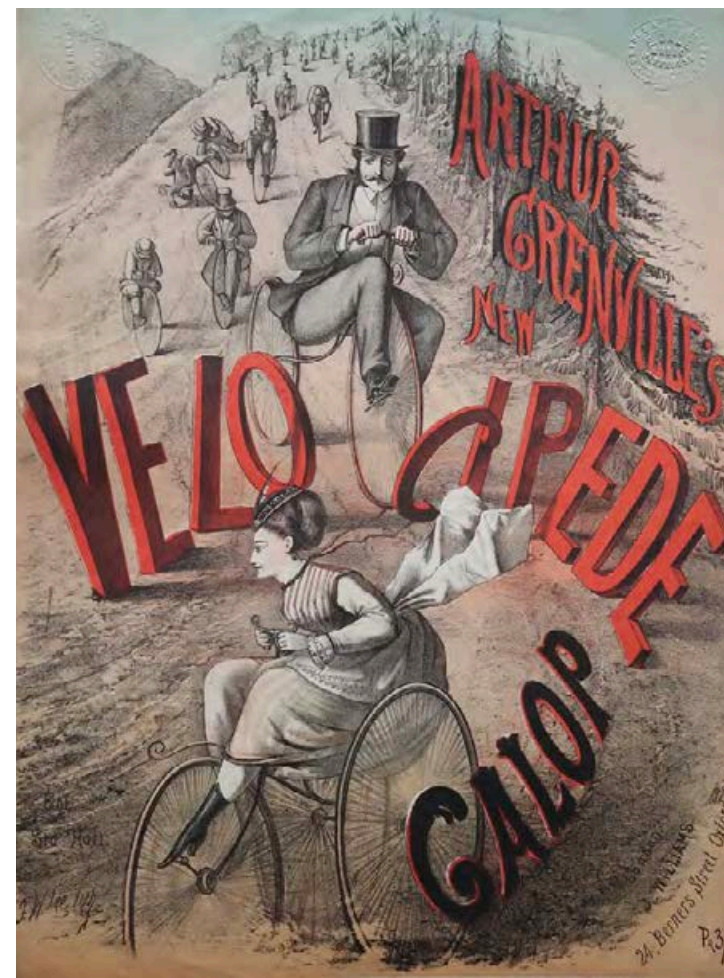
Photo: Jeanice Brooks

3. Arthur Grenville, 'New Velocipede Galop', London, Williams, 1869; this piece was acquired at a music shop in Chester at a time when Erddig's owners were also assiduously acquiring 'boneshakers' and other early bicycles during the velocipede craze of the late 1860s (NT 3225874)

Photo: Jeanice Brooks

histories of the house but whose influence on its lived experience was profound.

In addition to the information about Erddig's sonic history gleaned from archival documents, scores and instruments, several significant themes guided the choice of music for performance and recording. Erddig's border location is represented by the way Welsh song threads its way through the collection: in vocal versions in both Welsh and English, and in instrumental arrangement from the simple to the spectacular, such as the brilliant variations on 'Ar Hyd y Nos' ('All through the Night') for solo piano that were played by Victoria Yorke, *née* Cust, in the mid-19th century. Children's music includes the original piano version of John W. Bratton's favourite, 'The Teddy Bears' Picnic' (Fig. 2), while the sounds of devotion include a staff scratch choir recreating Sunday evening hymn-singing, as well as hymns and voluntaries played on the harmonium in the Tribes Room.





4. Harp-lute specialist Taro Takeuchi tuning the Erddig instrument during recording in the Entrance Hall/ Music Room, January 2020  
Photo: Jeanice Brooks

Most musical recordings were produced on site using the scores and instruments still at Erddig today in a variety of rooms, including the Wet Laundry and Servants' Hall, as well as formal entertainment and worship spaces. For cases such as the harp, where instruments have disappeared over time, performances were recorded in the Royal College of Music's studios, using historical instruments similar to those once played at Erddig. Performers include leading historical music professionals Jean Kelly (harp), Taro Takeuchi (harp-lute), Jonathan Scott (harmonium), David Ponsford (organ), and Dominika Maszczyńska (piano), as well as students and staff from the Royal College of Music. To contextualise the musical repertory and re-situate music within Erddig's wider soundscape, *Sounding Erddig* also includes recordings produced through 'sound-walking' exercises conducted on site with Trust staff and volunteers. Participants imagined the past uses of rooms and objects, and recorded sounds ranging from the environmental noises created by rain in the courtyard or fire in the Dairy grate, to sounds made by activities and objects, from mangles to kitchen tools. The results have been combined into a bespoke online repository with playback and download capacity, developed by the University of Southampton's research application team.

The online database is searchable by instrument, composer, resident, date, room, theme, and many other parameters, allowing users both to browse and to construct more focussed playlists around particular periods, individuals, spaces or themes. Future plans involve the development of both on-site and online interpretations that will draw on the repository for sound material. For now, *Sounding Erddig* invites curators, volunteers and visitors to approach the house's layers of history with their ears.



# Photographing Sutton Hoo's Ghost Ship

*The remarkable record of Mercie Lack and Barbara Wagstaff*

Laura Howarth

Archaeology and Engagement Manager

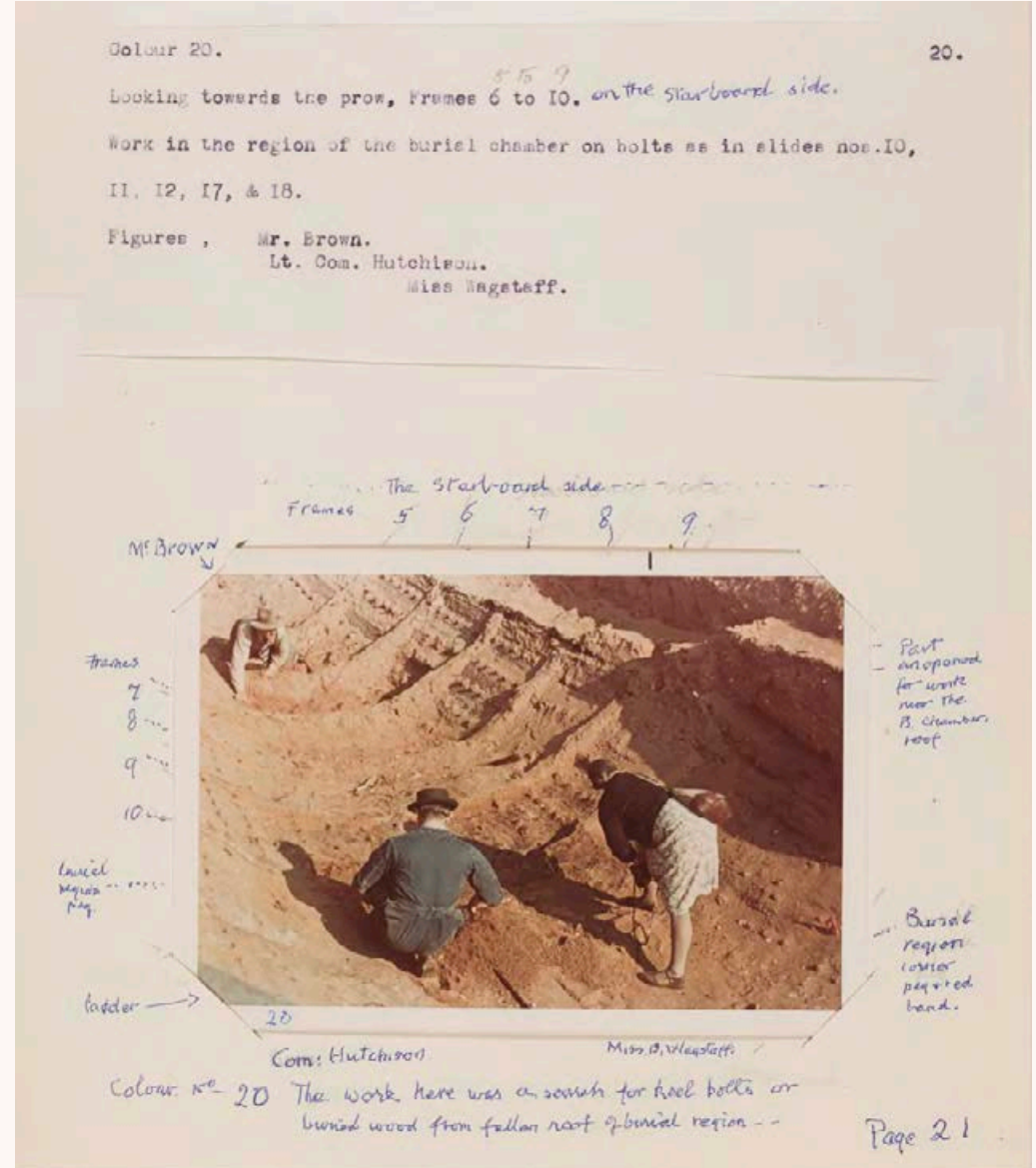
*Each photograph seems  
to me like a great treasure*  
Mercie Lack

In 1939, on the brink of the Second World War, the thrilling archaeological discovery was made at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk of a rich Anglo-Saxon ship burial. The ship had lain beneath a burial mound for some 1,300 years and the acidity of the sandy soil had rotted away its timbers, leaving behind the fossil of the ship's 27m-long hull, peppered with rusty iron rivets. Within the undisturbed burial chamber, archaeologists uncovered astonishing treasures, including the iconic Sutton Hoo helmet, which were later gifted to the nation. The discoveries made at Sutton Hoo changed our understanding of the Anglo-Saxons; a people previously seen as uncivilised were illuminated as culturally sophisticated.

Mercie Keer Lack (1894–1985) and Barbara Wagstaff (1895–1973) were friends, schoolmistresses and serious amateur photographers. Hearing the news of the

discovery, Lack sought and was granted permission by lead archaeologist Charles Phillips (1901–85) to return with Wagstaff to photograph the unfolding excavation. By this point, the ship's precious cargo had been removed by the archaeologists, but Lack and Wagstaff captured a detailed photographic record of the ship itself. Present on site between 8 and 25 August and armed with their Leica cameras, Lack took 297 and Wagstaff 150 black-and-white stills. This represents approximately 60 per cent of the total number of recorded contemporary negatives from the excavation. Lack also took a short section of 8mm cine film.

For much of the time that Mercie Lack and Barbara Wagstaff were on site, a team from the Science Museum was also present, surveying the ship. These photographs are not only an invaluable part of the archaeological and photographic record still referenced today, but also a slice of social history illuminating an excavation taking place on the eve of war. Providing another dimension to the excavation



## 1. Labour of love

This page from Mercie Lack's colour photograph album depicts Barbara Wagstaff (bottom right), Lieutenant Commander Hutchison of the Science Museum (bottom left) and local archaeologist Basil Brown (top left) at work. The photograph is surrounded by Mercie Lack's meticulous handwritten and typewritten annotations, which reveal key details about what we can see in the photograph, for example the significance of the red flags that mark the burial chamber area. It seems that these annotations were added and revised over a number of years following the 1939 excavation; a real labour of love. (Colour album, NT 1940312.2.26)

Photo: Original photograph by Mercie Keer Lack ARPS © Trustees of the British Museum, digital image © National Trust



record are Lack's meticulously annotated photograph albums, capturing key details and information that could otherwise have been lost.

In addition to the black-and-white photographs, remarkably Mercie Lack and Barbara Wagstaff had also each managed to obtain a roll of 35mm Agfa colour slide film, which briefly went on sale in Britain before the outbreak of the war. Approximately 45 of these colour slides have survived, and they bring a very different dimension to the story of the dig. They are thought to be among the earliest colour photographs of an archaeological excavation.

Sutton Hoo and that summer of 1939 continued to be subjects of keen interest to both Mercie Lack and Barbara Wagstaff throughout their lives. Mercie Lack

began to draft a book about her experiences at Sutton Hoo and both women went on to become Associates of the Royal Photographic Society.

A collection of Mercie Lack and Barbara Wagstaff's Sutton Hoo photographs, believed to comprise their personal sets, was given to the National Trust by Mercie Lack's great-nephew over a period of years. The significance of this collection has been reflected in a successful bid for internal funding to conserve and digitise the images to ensure that they survive for future generations, as well as support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.

The digitised collection can now be explored both at [Sutton Hoo](#) and via the National Trust [Collections website](#).

## 2. Local knowledge

In 1937 Edith Pretty approached Ipswich Museum about the mounds that lay on her estate. The museum sent local archaeologist Basil Brown (1888–1977), who was familiar working with Suffolk's sandy soils, to investigate. During the summer of 1938, Basil Brown excavated three other mounds within Sutton Hoo's Royal Burial Ground, all of which had been robbed but which contained tantalising traces. Photographed here in 1939, Brown was a consistent thread throughout that summer of discovery that revealed Sutton Hoo's Great Ship Burial, even helping to cover the fossil of the ship with bracken and hessian after war was declared. (Barbara Wagstaff contact and loose prints, NT 1940327.2.17.2.9)

Photo: Original photograph by Barbara Wagstaff ARPS © Trustees of the British Museum, digital image © National Trust

### 3. Capturing a moment in time

Here, Barbara Wagstaff captured Mercie Lack and members of the excavation team seeking shade from the summer sun to look at contact print sheets, quite possibly Mercie Lack's own. The excavation through the burial mound can be clearly seen in the background. Both Mercie Lack and Barbara Wagstaff had an interest in Sutton Hoo that extended beyond their own photographs, however. On the morning of 15 August, we know that Charles Phillips showed them enlargements taken by archaeologist O.G.S. Crawford, which recorded the discovery of objects earlier in the dig. Mercie Lack said it made 'the whole thing come to life on the very spot where the ceremony of the burial must have taken place'. (Barbara Wagstaff contact and loose prints, NT 1940327.2.23.2.2)

Photo: Original photograph by Barbara Wagstaff ARPS © Trustees of the British Museum, digital image © National Trust



5.50.

Off to lunch!

An interesting general view looking towards the stern, still covered by steps -

.1 o'clock. Aug. 15<sup>th</sup>

### 4. Lunch break

Two artists visited the Sutton Hoo excavations during the summer of 1939: Cor Visser, who also painted portraits of the landowner Edith Pretty and her son Robert, and W.P. Robins (photographed), who made several sketches and prints. Robins was running a summer field school at the Bull Hotel in nearby Woodbridge, and it seems likely that this is where he met lead archaeologist Charles Phillips and some of the other excavators, who were lodging there. Mercie Lack's careful annotations reveal that this photograph was taken on 15 August at one o'clock and it is captioned 'Off to lunch!', a reminder of that important part of any excavation. (Book I.B, NT 1940314.2.59)

Photo: Original photograph by Mercie Keer Lack ARPS © Trustees of the British Museum, digital image © National Trust

## 5. Royal visit

On 22 August, Princess Marie Louise (1872–1956) visited the excavations and had tea with Edith Pretty (photographed third from right). A granddaughter of Queen Victoria, Princess Marie Louise (photographed second from right) had been staying in Cromer, possibly visiting Sandringham. The princess remarked how interested Queen Mary (mother of King George VI) would have been to see the excavation but, unfortunately, with the declaration of war on 3 September, this return visit never occurred. Princess Marie Louise ran a hospital for wounded soldiers during the First World War, had travelled extensively and had a keen interest in art and archaeology, so she would undoubtedly have had much to discuss with Edith Pretty, who shared similar interests and experiences. (Book II.B, NT 1940317.2.42.2)

Photo: Original photograph by Mercie Keer Lack ARPS © Trustees of the British Museum, digital image © National Trust



## 6. The site today

Sutton Hoo is England's Valley of the Kings, with around 18 burial mounds within its Royal Burial Ground, many having been ploughed down over the centuries. Dating to the early 7th century, the mounds are thought to be the resting place of the East Anglian ruling dynasty, the Wuffings. The site has recently undergone a transformational visitor experience project, 'Releasing the Sutton Hoo Story', which was supported by players of the National Lottery through the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, and individual donors and supporters.

Photo: ©National Trust Images/Justin Minns



# Out of Exile

## *A Gerrit Jensen mirror crest returns to Knole's Showrooms*

Samantha Bailey  
Property Curator, Knole

Knole House in Sevenoaks, Kent, has been the ancestral seat of the Sackvilles since the early 17th century. Created from a Tudor archbishop's palace and royal residence, it was acquired by Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset (1536–1608), in 1605 to build a dynastic estate worthy of receiving the royal court of James I (1566–1625). The stunning Jacobean interiors that visitors see today are the result of Thomas Sackville's vision. Knole also houses a rich collection of royal Stuart furniture, state beds, court portraiture and decorative arts drawn together by later owners.<sup>1</sup> The main rooms on display to visitors are those collectively known as the Showrooms, where decorative interiors and fine furnishings vie for the visitor's attention and create an atmosphere of ancient wealth, pomp and glory.

This is in stark contrast to the Attics. Open to visitors via special tours, they have names such as 'The Pigeon Lofts' and 'The Retainer's Gallery' that hint at their previous uses. These spaces provide a glimpse into the workings of a historic estate, where every spare room is utilised for the storage of the great miscellany of items accumulated by successive generations. Occasionally, however, an item that has been exiled into long-term storage will be

recognised and recalled as a lost treasure. This has already happened at Knole with a wonderful ebony 'kussenkast' (cushion cupboard), which was rediscovered in pieces during the 'Inspired by Knole' project, and painstakingly reassembled and conserved (NT 130974).<sup>2</sup> Named after its pillow-like protrusions, this piece of imposing 17th-century Dutch furniture had not been in the Showrooms for over 100 years. It is now on display in the Spangle Bedroom.

Recently, another discovery was made in the Attics, this time in the Upper King's Room. This space sits directly above the King's Room – the principal room of the Showrooms – and, like the rest of the Attic spaces, has been given over to storage. The find came about through the re-identification of an already catalogued item in the collection. All the objects at Knole that are cared for by the National Trust are entered into an electronic collection management system, which requires regular record management. In the course of this routine work, it was noted that a piece of furniture located in the Upper King's Room that had been catalogued as a table leaf (Figs 1 and 2), might, in fact, be something altogether more exciting.



1. Item originally catalogued as a semi-circular table leaf, Knole (NT 941271)  
Photo: National Trust Images/Amy Law

2. Detail of the decoration  
Photo: National Trust Images/Phil Dimes





3. Gerrit Jensen black and gold japanned pier table, c.1691, Knole (NT 129554)  
Photo: National Trust Images/Phil Dimes

4. One of a pair of Gerrit Jensen torchères, c.1691, Knole (NT 129466)  
Photo: National Trust Images/Phil Dimes

The piece is semi-circular and has a distinctive dark finish that resembles that of a japanned suite of furniture (c.1691) by Gerrit Jensen (d.1715), displayed in the Showrooms in the Venetian Bedroom. This suite is made up of a table, two torchères (see Figs 3 and 4) and a pier glass, and is likely to be the suite mentioned in a bill from Gerrit Jensen to the 6th Earl of Dorset, Charles Sackville (1638–1706), dated 21 December 1691 and described as ‘a Table, Stands and Glass Japan’. Examination of the online catalogue entry for the pier glass and table showed that their design was markedly similar to that of the table leaf, although the latter was in much poorer condition. The entry relating to the pier glass stated: ‘cresting missing’.

The table leaf was collected from the Upper King’s Room and taken to the Venetian Bedroom. It was an exciting moment when, with the help of a furniture conservator and Knole’s Senior Collections and House Officer, the piece was offered up to the mirror, and confirmed to be the missing crest.

Gerrit Jensen was the principal furniture maker to the crown in the mid-to-late 17th century. According to Gervase Jackson-Stops, he was ‘the leading London cabinet-maker in the reigns of William and Mary and Queen Anne’.<sup>3</sup> He is thought to have been responsible for creating the only metal-inlaid furniture in England, and rivalled the best-known cabinet-makers in Paris, Pierre Gole (c.1620–84) and André Charles-Boulle

(1642–1732). Jensen’s origins are unknown, although it is probable that he was born in the Netherlands and learned his trade in continental Europe before coming to England. He had a workshop in Covent Garden, London, which employed a total of 14 apprentices during the years in which it operated, some of whom continued to work for Jensen once their training was complete.

Jensen’s workshop produced fashionable furniture with metal inlays and elaborate flower and ‘seaweed’<sup>4</sup> marquetry, as well as wholesaling items such as mirror glass. Existing examples of this furniture survive in the Royal Collection, at Ham House, and in numerous private collections. Thanks to surviving invoices, Knole has at least two suites that can be accredited to Gerrit

Jensen: this japanned suite and the rare surviving silver suite in the King’s Room.

A search of the historical inventories at Knole suggests that the last time the mirror and crest were displayed together was in 1864: ‘Lady Betty Germaine’s Sitting Room; A Pier Glass in a Gilt and stained lac Japan frame with Circular top; 1864’. However, there is no mention of the mirror in the inventories after this date, possibly because it had been removed from display, or perhaps simply because the inventories are incomplete. What is known is that when the National Trust took ownership of Knole in 1946, the suite was part of the Showroom display, but the crest was not.

Having spent at least 70 years in separate areas of Knole, the crest and the rest of the suite inevitably looked very different when they were finally reunited. There is a long history of water ingress in the Attics; former workers sometimes had to shovel away the snow that found its way inside (marking these occasions for posterity by writing the dates when snow was removed in pencil on the Attic walls). The environmental conditions of these spaces are currently monitored but not managed, so they are also subject to wide-ranging changes in relative humidity.

As a result of these fluctuations, which had caused the wooden substrate of the crest to swell and contract, the crest was suffering from many issues. These included degradation of the lacquered surface, severe cracking and lifting of the lacquer, and losses to the lacquer and raised areas of wood veneer. There was also evidence of previous interventions in the form of overpainting. The crest was sent to the studio of conservator Lin Ritter, who had worked on other pieces of the suite and was familiar with the decoration. Her brief was to make it stable enough for display.

Rather than seeking to minimise any obvious aesthetic differences between the mirror and crest caused by their long separation, it was decided that, since they help to illustrate the history of the suite, they should be retained.

Lin consolidated the lifting lacquer to the front of the panel and the decorative black paint at the back of the panel; filled losses to the lacquer and gesso of the border decoration; cleaned and re-varnished the panel; and consolidated historical fills and overpainted areas.<sup>5</sup> During this treatment, she used ultraviolet (UV) light to help identify the materials used for the surface decoration. UV light cannot be seen by the human eye because the wavelengths emitted are too short, but when certain materials absorb UV light they reflect it in longer, visible wavelengths. Different materials reflect different wavelengths, which are visible as different colours, and this makes material identification possible. The analysis highlighted a discrepancy in the current understanding of the suite: the panel fluoresced as though it were made from Asian lacquer, rather than the European copy of the technique – japanning.

In Asian lacquer the resin material is made from the highly poisonous sap of the *Rhus verniciflua* tree, which was native to East Asia. It is a natural plastic that is highly resistant to water, acid and heat.<sup>6</sup> During the 17th century, this material was not available to Europeans, who used a mixture of spirit varnishes and resins instead.<sup>7</sup> It was also common practice to import Asian lacquer panels and use them as a veneer for furniture carcasses<sup>8</sup> – although the joints between the panels are visible in such pieces, disrupting the continuity of their design. As the Knole suite did not display these traits, and because the invoice for the piece stated ‘japan’, the suggestion that the crest incorporated Asian lacquer was unexpected.

During the treatment of the crest, five samples of the decorative surface were taken for further analysis, along with three from elsewhere on the suite (a torchère scroll foot, a table leg and a mitre joint in the mirror frame). During the sample-taking process, Lin examined the suite under UV light and found that it was unlikely that other pieces of the suite were Asian lacquer. The paint samples were then sent to Dr Tracey Chaplin for microscopy analysis to try to gain further clarity on the decorative materials used on the various elements of the suite as well as the carcasses; to investigate the decorative surface interventions; and to explore the structure of the table.

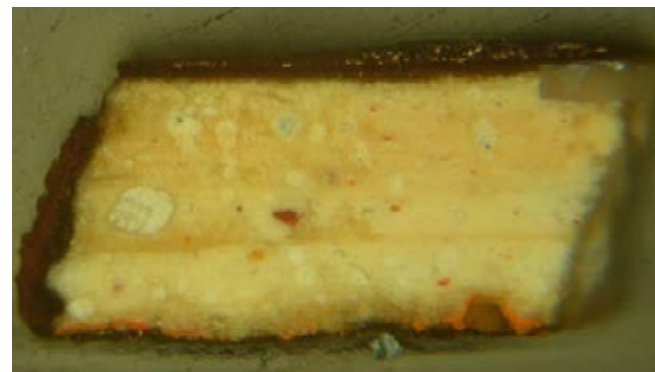
Of all the elements of the suite, the appearance of the table in particular suggests that it may have undergone later structural alterations. The handles used on the drawer are of a brass swing ‘swan-neck’ design (see Fig. 3) more commonly found from the 1740s onwards, while the scroll legs suggest an inconsistency with the rest of the suite.

Similar tables from this period (Fig. 5), including those attributed to Gerrit Jensen, typically have a sympathetic finish that unites the various components with a single style of surface decoration – whether that is metal marquetry, oyster veneering or japanning. The legs on the Knole table, however, have a different finish to the table top. The legs are ebonised and the scroll relief is highlighted with a gold layer, with no trace of the japanned surface decoration, although the cross beam continues the japanning.

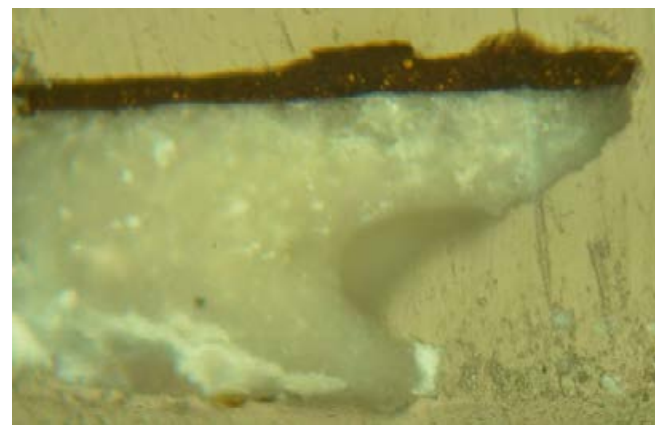
Microscopy analysis of the suite showed a significant difference in the layer structure of the mirror crest (Fig. 6) and mirror when compared to the torchère (Fig. 7) and table leg. While they all showed evidence of an organic layer associated with either Asian lacquer or japanning, the ground layers of the torchère and table leg were a



5. Side table, c.1675, possibly Dutch, displaying ‘Bantamwork’ (incised brightly decorated lacquer) over all surfaces, Ham House (NT 1140053)  
Photo: National Trust Images/Christopher Warleigh-Lack



6. and 7. Cross-sections shown in reflected white light from (above) the raised gesso border on the mirror crest, displaying a yellowish ground layer; and (below) from the scroll foot of the torchère, displaying a more brilliant white ground layer  
Photos: Tracey Chaplin



much brighter white, suggesting a possible difference in the origin of the pieces, and supporting the idea that some elements of the suite may be imported Asian lacquer.

There were also differences between the stratigraphy (or layer structure) of the cross sections of the torchère and the table leg. The torchère had a clear decorative scheme, including evidence of red pigment in the dark layers, whereas the table leg had at least three layers of the preparative white ground covered only with a black layer containing no other pigments. This supports the idea that the table legs may not have originally been from this group. Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) analysis was carried out on the samples taken from the adhesive layer and the wax/varnish layer on the crest, since these samples did not have a clear stratigraphy that could be examined visually. FTIR analysis uses the sample's absorption or reflection of infrared light to generate a spectrum that can then be compared to common data held in spectroscopy software to enable the identification of compounds. It was found that the adhesive layer was derived from proteins such as animal glue, and the wax/varnish layer had a spectrum associated with urushi lacquer, supporting the conclusion that the crest and mirror are veneered with Asian lacquer.<sup>9</sup>

The reason why the crest and mirror were separated remains a mystery. It is unlikely to have been driven by the fashion of the period or by the taste of the owners at the time because another mirror of a similar date at Knole retains its crest, and both Ham House and Boughton House have examples of Gerrit Jensen mirrors displayed with crests. The suite may have fallen into a poor state of repair, with the table and mirror crest suffering the most. Perhaps the intervention to the table legs was considered a success, but that to the crest was not,

so the latter was placed in storage. Without additional evidence, however, that remains a supposition.

While this article explores recent findings about the mirror crest and its relation to the rest of the suite, further research is required – on both this suite and on the Knole furniture collection as a whole – to gain a better understanding of how furniture was used and remodelled by previous custodians of the collection.

### Notes

1. Frances Parton, *A Souvenir Guide, Knole, Kent*, National Trust, 2019.
2. The 'Inspired by Knole' project was a multi-disciplinary project that took place between 2013 and 2019 to deal with the failing built structure of Knole, the unregulated environmental conditions of the Showrooms, and the impact this had on the decorative interiors and collections. New spaces were opened to visitors, including the Attics, Gatehouse Tower and Conservation Studio.
3. Adam Bowett and Laurie Lindey, 'Looking for Gerrit Jensen', *Furniture History*, vol. 53, Furniture History Society, 2017.
4. A style of marquetry incorporating finely detailed foliate designs.
5. Lin Ritter, 'Conservation Treatment Report for Mirror Crest', unpublished, National Trust, 2021.
6. James Wyatt and Barbara Brennan, *Lacquerware of East Asia*, metmuseum.org, 2004.
7. John Stalker and George Parker, *A Treatise of Japaning [sic] and Varnishing*, Oxford, 1688.
8. Sir Frances Watson, 'A Note on French Marquetry and Oriental Lacquer', *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal*, vol. 9, 1981, pp.157–66.
9. Dr Tracey Chaplin, 'Technical Report (Draft): Analysis of Samples from Gerrit Jensen Suite', unpublished, National Trust, 2022.



8. The reunited Gerrit Jensen suite with the mirror crest in situ  
Photo: National Trust Images/Phil Dimes



# Loans

## *Selected highlights, 2022*

The National Trust looks after one of the largest and most important collections in the UK and we regularly lend to national and international exhibitions organised by museums, galleries and cultural heritage organisations. We are delighted to share below some of this year's exciting highlights from our busy lending programme. These exhibitions present new curatorial research, ideas and themes, and bring together works from the Trust's collection alongside important works from other collections, often for the first time.

It can take several years to bring an exhibition to fruition and a huge amount of planning goes into realising each loan. This includes curatorial research, the selection of items, expert assessment to ensure the item is stable and safe to travel, as well as any necessary conservation treatment, analysis and research. Another team of experts – including registrars, art handlers and transport agents – is involved in the exhibition design process, agreeing display methods and the logistics of deinstalling, packing and moving items. As well as an exhibition, this work leads to publications and enhanced cataloguing that enable new knowledge and stories to be shared with audiences around the world.



### **Carlo Crivelli: Shadows on the Sky** **IKON Gallery, Birmingham**

**23 February–29 May 2022**

[www.ikon-gallery.org/event/carlo-crivelli](http://www.ikon-gallery.org/event/carlo-crivelli)

Loan: *Two Evangelists, Saint John the Evangelist, the Author of a Gospel and possibly Saint Luke* by Carlo Crivelli

National Trust property: Upton House, Warwickshire

This spring the IKON Gallery in Birmingham will showcase the work of the Italian Renaissance artist Carlo Crivelli in the first UK exhibition dedicated to his work. It is organised by the IKON Gallery in partnership with The National Gallery, London, and co-curated by Jonathan Watkins, IKON Director, and Amanda Hilliam. It will explore Crivelli's experimental techniques with perspective, *trompe l'oeil* and sculptural relief.

The Trust is lending an important work by Crivelli, *Two Evangelists, Saint John the Evangelist, the Author of a Gospel and possibly Saint Luke* (two panels, joined together), from the outstanding paintings collection at Upton House. These panel paintings once formed part of an altarpiece made for the church of the Frati Conventuali di San Francesco at Montefiore dell' Aso, in the Marche, Italy. They will be shown alongside important pieces from the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Vatican Pinacoteca and The Wallace Collection.

1. *Two Evangelists, Saint John the Evangelist, the Author of a Gospel and possibly Saint Luke*, c.1471–3, by Carlo Crivelli (c.1430–95), tempera and oil on panel (poplar), 31.7 x 23.5cm, Upton House, Warwickshire (NT 446807)

Photo: National Trust Images/Angelo Hornak

**Reframed: The Woman in the Window**

**Dulwich Picture Gallery, London**

**4 May–4 September 2022**

[www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/whats-on)

Loan: *Woman in a Red Dress*, attributed to Gabriel Metsu

National Trust property: Polesden Lacey, Surrey

Also opening later this spring is a special exhibition at the Dulwich Picture Gallery exploring the motif of the ‘woman in the window’. The exhibition brings together over 50 examples by artists from ancient times to the modern day who have used this motif to elicit a particular kind of response from the viewer, from empathy to voyeurism.

The Trust is lending Polesden Lacey’s *Woman in a Red Dress*, attributed to the Dutch artist Gabriel Metsu. In 17th-century Dutch art, portraits of Black women as subjects in their own right are rare. It is likely that this painting is a *tronie*, a head-and-shoulder study of an imagined or idealised person, which is nonetheless modelled on a real individual.

*Woman in a Red Dress* will appear alongside works by artists including Rembrandt, David Hockney and Louise Bourgeois, and ranging from late Cypriot bronzes to Phoenician ivory reliefs, Italian Renaissance paintings to contemporary photography and installation art.



2. *Woman in a Red Dress*, c.1660–9, attributed to Gabriel Metsu (1629–67), oil on canvas and panel, 22.9 x 17.8cm, Polesden Lacey, Surrey (NT 1246502)  
Photo: National Trust Images



**Superbarocco: Arte a Genova da Rubens a Magnasco  
(Super-baroque: Art in Genoa from Rubens to Magnasco)  
Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome  
26 March–3 July 2022**

[www.scuderiequirinale.it](http://www.scuderiequirinale.it)

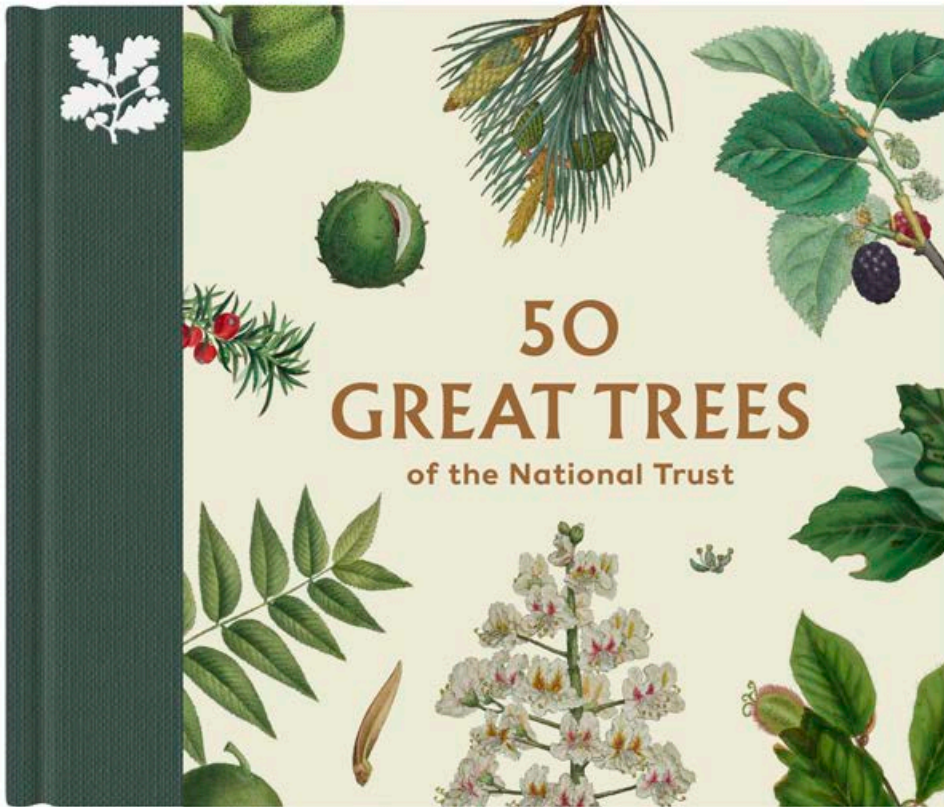
Loan: *The Stoning of Saint Stephen* by Sir Anthony van Dyck  
National Trust property: Tatton Park, Cheshire

This long-awaited exhibition, delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic, will open in Rome this March. It celebrates the sumptuous artworks created in Genoa during the 17th and 18th centuries, a period nicknamed 'La Superba' due to the quality of work being produced in the city at this time.

An important painting from Tatton Park in Cheshire, *The Stoning of Saint Stephen* by Sir Anthony van Dyck, is being lent by the Trust. It depicts a kneeling Saint Stephen in the red and gold vestments of a deacon as he is stoned by five men, the foremost of whom is Saul. The picture previously hung in the palace of Charles IV in Madrid until 1808. It subsequently entered the collection of Wilbraham Egerton of Tatton Park in 1814 and has been at the property since that date.

3. *The Stoning of Saint Stephen*, 1623–5,  
by Sir Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641),  
oil on canvas, 177.8 x 149.9cm,  
Tatton Park, Cheshire (NT 1298202)

Photo: National Trust Images



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**Simon Toomer** is a forester, arboriculturist and botanist. He is Curator of Living Collections at Kew Gardens and was formerly Senior Consultant for Plant Conservation with the National Trust and Director of Westonbirt, the National Arboretum.

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