

# Historical Wall Coverings and Wallpaper Restoration



## **Paul Bramley**

ISS Institute/TAFE Fellowship

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State Training Board, Victorian Government

# Summary

The Australian Wallpaper Industry and Australian Heritage face a major problem with the documentation and identification of existing Historical Wall Coverings.

Conservation methods with Historical Wallpapers need documentation.

Networks need to be identified and resources shared for the future of Australian Wall Coverings.

There is a shortfall in trades skills in the area of wallpaper restoration, principally in relation to heritage buildings.

Historical Wallpapers can encompass new technology with the use of computers.

Internet access to information and reproduction of designs.

There needs to be one central reference Centre to deal with Australian Historical Wallpapers

Australia needs to strive towards a National Museum of Wall Coverings

The fellowship encompassed three continents.

Exposed the leading historians, manufactures and individuals who not only worked in the Wallpaper Industry, but also shared the same passion as I do.

I thank the International Specialised Skills Institute for allowing me this opportunity.

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Staff of Painting and Interior Decoration at Central Gippsland Institute of Tafe

Finally my financial manager, tour organiser and appointment manager without who's help this wallpaper journey would not have happened., my wife Sonya..

## Introduction

The International Specialised Skills Institute is an innovative National Independent Organisation which provides opportunities for Australian Industry and Commerce to gain 'Best in the World Skills,' and experience in the areas of, traditional and leading edge technology , management or design. The Institute identifies skills gaps and provides solutions through the overseas Fellowship program , education and training.

The major sponsor, The Office of Employment, Training, and Tertiary Education, encourages excellence in vocational education and training through the Fellowship.

The International Specialised Skills Institute Fellowship was awarded to Paul Bramley to undertake a program in Wall coverings and Wallpaper Restoration with a focus on transposing the skills into heritage and contemporary contexts.

The current situation is one of a spiralling down of qualified tradespeople to apply Wall Coverings as less and less wall coverings are being used.

Heritage Victoria supported an application for further research and training on Wallpaper restoration in Victoria.

“ While there are numerous places of cultural heritage significance throughout Victoria with wallpaper Decoration, we have often had difficulty in the past locating people with the necessary skills in identification, repair or reproduction of wallpapers.” Ray Tonkin .Executive Director Heritage Victoria.

Organisations that have an impact on this Industry

Heritage Victoria, TAFE Institutions, Private providers of training, Wallpaper Suppliers.

Other wall space users ie glass, paint , fabric ceramics.

A number of skills gaps have been identified exposing Australia's limited knowledge in Historical Wallpapers.

The report looks at Historical Wallpapers and Wall Coverings on the world scene with a view of transposing the skills and knowledge gained to Australia.

# The Fellowship Program.

## Introduction

The nature of the International Fellowship was to gain experience and knowledge globally in relation to wall coverings and to share this knowledge on returning to Australia.

The Fellowship was also to enable the attending of a course on Historical Wall Coverings with a view to gain experience and networks worldwide.

The Fellowship enabled travel and the ability to meet the leading Wall Covering experts throughout the world. The Fellowship was also to provide examples of Historic wall coverings, how they are conserved and stored.

## Skills Gaps

The following skill gaps were identified;

Craftsmanship in period paperhanging

Historic Wallpaper installation

Installation of antique murals, Chinese panels.

Hand printed and Block printed reproductions

Loss of skilled tradespeople in Paperhanging due to lack of skills and confidence in hanging wallpaper.

Loss of skilled wallpaper tradespeople due to techniques no longer practiced.

## Knowledge Gaps

Sources of Historic Wallpaper

Producers of reproduction wallpaper

Historic reproduction of wallpapers from documentation

National register of Historic Wallpaper Consultants

National register of Historic Wallpaper installers.,

# Care and Conservation Course

## Part 1

*A course for practising professionals responsible for the care and conservation of wall coverings in the context of the historic interior.*

Chichester England was the venue for Conservators of the world to attend a five-day workshop on the Care and Conservation of Wall Coverings

West Dean College

Led by Allyson McDermott the aim of the course was primarily to promote a better understanding of the historical significance care and conservation of Wall Covering material. Allyson McDermott established her own studios in 1980 and has since gathered a team of qualified, experienced and dedicated conservators, specialising in the conservation of works of art on paper, historic wallpaper and all paper-based artefacts. Prior to 1980, as well as being a practising conservator. Allyson lectured at Gateshead University and was instrumental in setting up the MA Conservation Course there. She continues to lecture extensively both in the UK , and internationally, on all aspects of Conservation and Historic Interiors and has been published widely. Allyson and her team continue to make groundbreaking advances in the world of conservation.

The course concentrated on common issues relating to a variety of materials including; Chinese Export papers, Flock, Machine printed papers, Embossed Wallpapers, Wall mounted Textiles not including tapestries drapes or screens or wall paintings, Leather Hangings and Linoleum.

The program covered historical background survey of wall coverings, technology of production and fabrication, identification using chemical tests, examination using polarized light microscopy, recording, monitoring, diagnosis and treatment options including cleaning, conservation, reproduction and long term options for preservation.



Also included were site visits to Petworth House, Allyson McDermott's Conservation workshop and King George 1V Brighton Pavilion.

## **Course Outline**

### **Day 1**

#### Conservation research at English Heritage

Helen Hughes Senior Architectural Paint Researcher, English Heritage

#### The Historic Interior a Holistic approach

Helen Hughes

#### Conservation within a major historic house.

Anthony Wells Cole .Principal Keeper , Temple Newsam House

#### The Long Room Temple Newsham House

Anthony Wells Cole

#### Print Rooms History and Conservation.

Allyson McDermott Director Conservation Studios Petworth House

### **Day 2**

#### Conservation of fixed Wall coverings (Textile)

Mary Berkouwer Textile Conservator

#### Textiles Manufacture and Reproduction

Guy Evans Historic Furnishings Conservator

#### UP Park case study

Guy Evans

### **Day 3**

#### Visit King George 1V, Brighton Pavillion

Heather Wood Conservator Royal Pavilion Brighton.

Visit Petworth House

Visit Mc Dermott Studio Petworth.

Evening

The Conservation of Wall mounted Linoleum

Rob Payton Deputy Head of Conservation Museum of London.

**Day 4**

Wallpapers History and use C18th

Alyson McDermott

Wallpapers History and use C19th

Christine Woods Curator, The Whitworth Gallery Manchester

Identifying and dating Wall coverings

David Dorning Conservation Science tutor. West Dean College.

Allyson McDermott

**Evening**

Practical Session. Making joined wallpaper and Block printing of Wallpaper.

**Day 5**

Leather wall coverings History and style

Roy Thompson Conservator, The Leather Conservation Centre.

Leather Wall coverings Care and Conservation

Roy Thompson

Conservation and care of Embossed and imitation leather Allyson McDermott

## **West Dean, Summary Report.**

The leading individuals in the Wall Covering Conservation Industry in England presented the training. They concentrated on the use of wall coverings in historic and traditional buildings. The topics presented were by lecture and hands on work in laboratories and studios. Topics included conservation of wall coverings by English Heritage, specific examples of wall coverings, their use and preservation in historic settings and the typical aspects of restoration of materials through an understanding of organic chemistry. Many examples from broad and varied history of wall coverings were addressed.

One of those more enjoyable and educational was the direct training of wall covering printing techniques.

A foundation of traditional as well as advanced printing techniques was included.

My understanding of hand printed wall coverings and joined paper began at this venue.

Conservation of these materials and methods were a focus of these presentations.

Many examples of dramatic conservation techniques for wall coverings were presented and among the most interesting was Linoleum and Leather.

Damage due to fire, water, and the age of materials were a large part of the education presented in classroom formats.

These examples for direct preservation as well as re-creation of materials will greatly enhance my understanding as well as work projects in the future.

The several site visits to houses containing historically important and conserved wall coverings were also an important part of the course.

The wall coverings studied on the site not only were a direct experience visually but meeting the conservators involved in the projects provided important links.

**For a detail of class notes please refer to appendices.**

Monday 25 June 2001

Visit to Kenward House North London Hampstead

Treve Rosoman



Kenwood House is home to the finest collection of Old Master paintings given to the British Nation in the twentieth century. In this home you will discover masterpieces by Rembrandt, Vermeer, Hals, Van Dyck, Gainsborough, Reynolds, Turner and many other great artists in a collection formed around 1890 by Edward Cecil Guinness First Earl of Iveagh, chairman of the world's most successful brewery. The architect Robert Adams remodelled the house in 1764 to 1779 for the judge William Murray, First Earl of Mansfield. Also in this House is based Treve Rosoman from the English Heritage Trust. Wallpaper consultant.

The Wallpaper collection included joined wallpaper, block printed wallpaper, rag paper and Chinese painted paper. Treve also demonstrated how a wall surface could give a social history through wallpapers. He had an example of 17 layers of wallpaper that had been removed from one wall. Each layer had been removed and remounted between tissue paper.



Treve Rosoman showing a rare double flocked pattern on joined paper.

### Knowledge gained

This was my first viewing of a number of wallpapers that were once on the same wall. Australia needs to be focused on historical buildings that have kept their wallpapers intact.

It is important to have a team at the ready to be able to safely recover papers. Once recovered the papers need to be stored correctly.

On the world scene there are a number of different methods of storing wallpapers.

Australia needs to address this if there is an intention to store wallpapers.

English Heritage is the overriding body responsible for wallpapers of historic buildings.

Treve also mentioned that English Heritage were also very fortunate to gain Lottery Money to restore Historic buildings. It was interesting to see photos of historic buildings with large scaffolding roofs over them for protection while they were being repaired.

Tuesday 26 June 2001

Victoria and Albert Museum

Gill Saunders

Curator wallpapers



The Victoria and Albert Museum has one of the most comprehensive collections of wallpapers in England. Gill Saunders, curator of the Wallpaper collection, demonstrated how they were documenting and storing historical wallpapers. One of the most interesting parts of the collection is the Cowtan Collection. This is a collection of wallpaper samples by a Company of Decorators that recorded every project worked on during the C19th. The collection has a number of volumes and each volume records the customers name and address, each wallpaper which was used and which rooms were wallpapered.

The Victoria and Albert Museum “ Prints Room “ is open to the public. Artisans can use the room as a reference.

Gill Saunders is also the secretary of the English Historical Wallpaper Society .

The Society was founded in 1986; the Wallpaper History Society was established to promote an awareness and understanding of historic and contemporary wallcoverings. The society’s aims are threefold; to encourage research and provide information on all aspects of wallpaper design, production and consumption; to foster an awareness of the importance of preserving period decorations ; and to provide a much needed point of contact for all the different groups and individuals now interested in these issues. Its scope is broad and encompasses not only the history of wallpapers but also topics relating to other types of wall coverings and the subject of interior decoration as a whole. The society organises a programme of regular events including lectures and seminars, visits to wallpaper collections and historic houses and towns of design and manufacturers archives.

Wall paper panel from the Victoria and Albert Museum



Hand painted Chinese Wallpapers were luxury items imported to decorate many English Country Houses.

This panel of wallpaper depicts a festival scene watercolour on paper

About 1790 – 1800.

### Knowledge gained

The visit to the V & A showed the importance that Artisans place on the reference collection of wallpapers. While attending an Artist was getting inspiration from a wallpaper printed in the late 1790's. The Artist was employed to create the backdrop for a play based during the 1760 to 1790.

Interior decorating students were also researching periods of style.

This showed the importance of saving Wallpapers.

In the reference room the storage of wallpapers were in a controlled environment and most placed either in specially designed boxes, mounted under glass or placed in filing cabinets.

Posters from the war years were stored in large glass frames.

The procedure for viewing wallpapers was that you were expected to wash your hands before viewing and view one page at a time.

You were allowed to take copies of the wallpapers but you had to sign a form stating you would only use the copy in an educational format.

The patents office in London is also another important record place for wallpapers



Wednesday June 27 2001

Hamilton Weston Wallpapers

Georgina Hamilton and Robert Weston



Georgina Hamilton and Robert Weston are Architectural historians and designers who specialise in reproducing authentic wallpapers for the restoration and refurbishment of period interiors.

Hamilton and Weston's hand printed and machine printed wallpapers cover 200 years of classic British design , from beginning of William and Mary's reign in 1690 to the end of Queen Victoria's . The company also makes contemporary borders and fabrics translated from old wallpapers. Hamilton and Westons clients include English Heritage and the National Trust , Museums, International Architectural and Design Practices, Film and Television companies and other individual clients throughout Europe, Canada, Australia, the Middle East and the United States of America..





### Knowledge gained

Accompanied Robert Weston to a mansion overseen by English Heritage, but now owned privately. The mansion was a building that Sir Winston Churchill was to retreat to, had Germany invaded England. The present owner planning to modify a bedroom into a bathroom. We met with the Interior Decorator and Robert Hamilton's task was to identify the existing wallpaper. He identified the wallpaper as Chinese imported wallpaper dated approximately 1910; this meant that the owner was responsible for a number of actions. Leave existing, remove and conserve, remove and replace in another part of the house, or board over leaving existing wallpaper in tact.



Thursday June 28 2001

Anaglypta and Lincrusta Factory.

Contact Jon Cagier

Kelly.Blezard

Anaglypta and Lincrusta are two products invented in the C19th and are still popular today.

1874 saw the invention of Tynecastle Tapestry developed by William Scott Morton in Edinburgh.

1877 Lincrusta Walton developed by Frederick Walton the inventor of Linoleum.

1883 Lincrusta Walton manufactured in America by Frederick Beck & Co under license from the patentee.

1884 Thomas James Palmer took out patents for embossed decorations made from paper pulp. He was at that time working for the Lincrusta Walton company and was manager of their London showrooms.

1885 Palmer left Lincrusta Walton to develop the product independently.

1908 Expansion of the Anaglypta works at Darwen . Extremely high relief wallpapers were produced from this time onwards.





Anaglypta and Lincrusta are both raised relief decorations . By using the embossing method it is possible to imitate tapestry and silk damask effects.

#### Knowledge gained

Lincrusta -mainly used on dados. The product has very high relief. Made from putty linseed oil and a resin.

Anaglypta made from rag or paper has remained popular in contemporary context because it is applied to ceilings or walls and then painted in any colour.

Noted the various methods of manufacture and the ability to reproduce past relief papers.

Friday 06 July 2001

Le Musee Du Papier peint

## Part 2

Wallpaper Museum Rixheim France

Curator Bernard Jacque



This museum has the most examples of wallpapers in the world. . 600,000 in total.

Ground floor demonstrates past machinery used.



Organised by collection showing different periods eg. Art Deco , Art Noveau.

Tapestry type wallpapers popular at the end of the C19th. The museum is separate to the Zuber Company that shares the same building. The Museum operates financially separate to Zuber although the museum does display some Zuber wallpapers.

People from all over the world send Bernard Jacque samples for identification . He has a team which goes out to projects to recover the wallpapers, that require conserving. At present the museum has over 40,000 different blocks for printing wallpaper. Architects need to see where to use wallpapers and he often gives lectures about the collection.



The Wallpaper Museum was to be situated at the Textiles Museum in France The Wallpapers and textiles grew to such an extent that the two had to be separated. . A tour of the Museum indicated the close link between textiles and wallpaper. The Textile museum has over 6 million examples of textiles. The museum conducts classes in conjunction with the local University and the students learn the art of block printing using existing blocks dated back to the C18th century



This panorama is one of a number on display in the paper museum.

Bernard Jacque conserves all his historic wallpapers on to Japan paper and linen then stores them between tissue papers in closed draws. When displayed wallpapers are then held in place using a piece of timber across the top and bottom.

#### Knowledge gained

Important to start collecting wallpapers also to be able to identify panoramas.

Australia's first wall panorama "Les Sauvages de La mer Pacifique

Dufours other works all placed on linen, so Panoramas can be placed into storage.

Importance of wallpapers to French people, Architect redesigning complete complex.

Wallpaper manufacturing equipment on display.

Team of individuals for recovery when required.

Museum of wallpaper was part of textile museum, out grew Textile museum.

Textile museum runs courses in conjunction with wallpaper museum.

Monday 09 July 2001

Museum of Domestic Architecture Amy Collier

## Part 3

The most modern and up to date facility



This facility has humidity and temperature control as well as the most modern storage systems available in the world. The Wallpapers are contained in a firing system. The file concertinas and locks shut . In the unlikely event of fire the wallpapers are self-contained in the system .If sprinklers engage the filling system sits approx 200mm above floor level, so reducing the possibility of flood damage. The Museum has examples of wallpapers used through different periods and has had cubicles created to demonstrate interiors of yester year. .





### Knowledge gained

State of the Art storage system.

Advised there is no point to collect wallpapers if there is no support for monitoring devices. Wallpapers need to be stored in correct temperature control and correct humidity levels.

Comprehensive Wallpaper book collection for sale and for reference..

Design students design wallpapers for manufacture annually.

Tuesday 10 July 2001

Sandersons Wallpaper Manufacturer

Contact Freddie Lurnet

Sanderson Archivist..



Sanderson Wallpapers archive is in Denham , Middlesex. They have a large collection of nineteenth and twentieth century wall coverings, including some Japanese leathers and French embossed papers. The Historic collection includes some 250 sets of blocks for wallpaper printing ranging from the 1860's to the 1970's. The company also has wallpapers from other manufacturers including Jeffery & Co, William Woollens & Co, Charles Knowles, Heifer – Scott and Essex & Co. A separate section is devoted to Morris & Co. All designs can be printed to specific colours and information about specific colours and original colouring is often available from the Sanderson archive. Facilities are also available to reproduce designs from client's original documents, or creating a new design.



Knowledge gained

Sanderson's provide the most comprehensive service for manufacturing wallpaper.

Can manufacture archive wallpapers from their collection.

Would be the best contact if wanting to identify wall covering. – Have large archive which includes the collections of a number of older manufacturers which have been purchased by Sanderson's.

Wednesday July 11 2001

Chelsea Design Centre

Contact Zoffany Tina Merriamn

Zoffany is an historic manufacturer of wallpaper, including twelve wallpapers for Temple Newsham House, Leeds. Zoffany is also known for their fabric ,carpet paint and trimming collections . Their latest addition also includes a furniture range.



One of the most noted collection is Temple Newsham house. Owned by the English Heritage the building is undergoing extensive restoration.



Knowledge gained from Zoffany.

Comprehensive collection including paints and fabrics.

Contemporary wallpaper manufacturer as well as Historical wallpaper reproducer.

Wednesday July 11 2001

Chelsea Design Centre

Ornamenta

Contact Louise Latham

Owner Jane Gordan Clark

Ornamenta are also situated in the Chelsea Design Centre. Founded in 1987 they specialise in hand printed and trompe l'oeil wallpapers . They are creating wallpapers in a new image for the modern interior .The companies approach is to produce informal random, motifs of natural forms in a palette of soft colours and bold metallics.



Chelsea Design Centre

Interior Decorators and Designers Association

The Interior Decorators and Design Association is also located in the Chelsea Design centre and it is an important reference point for contacts in London and the United Kingdom. For interior Design Schools Universities and Correspondence schools see attachment IDDA..



Knowledge gained from Chelsea Design Centre

Largest collection of interior designers manufactures and design consultants in London.

Ornamenta - contemporary manufacturer of wallpapers.

Will lead the way in new themes for wall design 2000 and onwards.

Jane Gordon Clark's book from Ornamenta "Wallpaper in Decoration" is a modern interpretation. "Print Rooms" is a collection of prints that were part of the wall decoration in the eighteenth Century

Artists wallpaper will provide decoration for walls in the future.

Wednesday July 11 2001

Cole and Son Wallpaper Manufacturers

Contact Mrs Beacham

Manufacturers of Hand printed wallpaper since 1875 In their cellar they have over 3,500 blocks for hand printing dating from the 1700's.. At present the Perry factory of Cole and Son is relocating and the new factory will have a special bunker built to replicate the conditions of the cellar.



Among the historic houses for which Perry has provided wallpapers include; Balmoral, Buckingham Palace, Woburn Abbey, Brighton Pavilion, The White House and Number 11 Downing Street. The price varies from fifty pounds a roll to four hundred and fifty pounds a roll. Little has changed in the production of hand print wallpapers, the carved block is still dipped into the paint tray and aligned by tiny pin marks and applied to the paper. After printing the wallpaper is hoisted up out of the way.



Example of recovered wallpaper dated approximately 1780 – 1790



Knowledge gained

Hand block printed wallpaper is still manufactured.

Blocks produced in the previous 100 years of the company will be placed into storage that is temperature and humidity controlled.

Shown 100 years of colour range of wallpaper and shown that colour, fashion and design is cyclic.

Thursday 12 July 2001

Whitworth Art Gallery Manchester

Contact Nicola Walker

Curator Christine Woods

The Whitworth Art Gallery is the leading Wallpaper Gallery in Great Britain. They have many fine collections and hold wallpaper exhibitions throughout Europe.

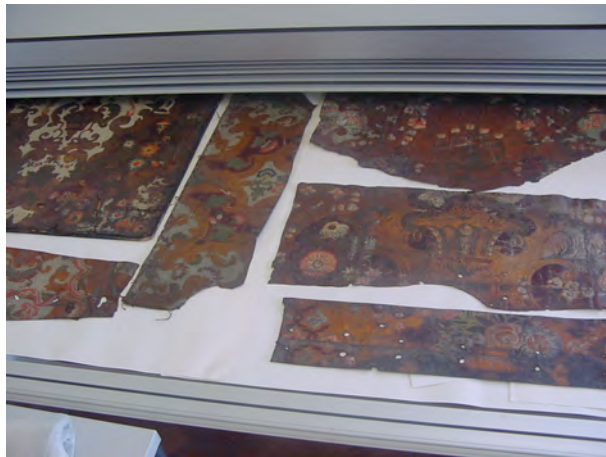


A local developer purchasing Historic mansions takes the opportunity to document the mansions in very fine detail. A copy is then passed onto the Whitworth Art Gallery for their records of the mansion.





Stored fragments at the Whitworth. Stored under glass and on large racks.



More fragments saved, this time leather wall coverings stored in drawers.



French wallpaper by Defour . Stored under glass and placed on a rack.

### Knowledge gained

Leader for Historical Information. Christine Woods is Curator of the collection and leads the Historical Society of Wallpapers for England.

Most of the collection is under glass as the Whitworth is constantly sending their collection throughout the world.

Large display area for wallpapers.

Unique design of display unit specifically manufactured to display wallpapers.

Friday July 13 2001

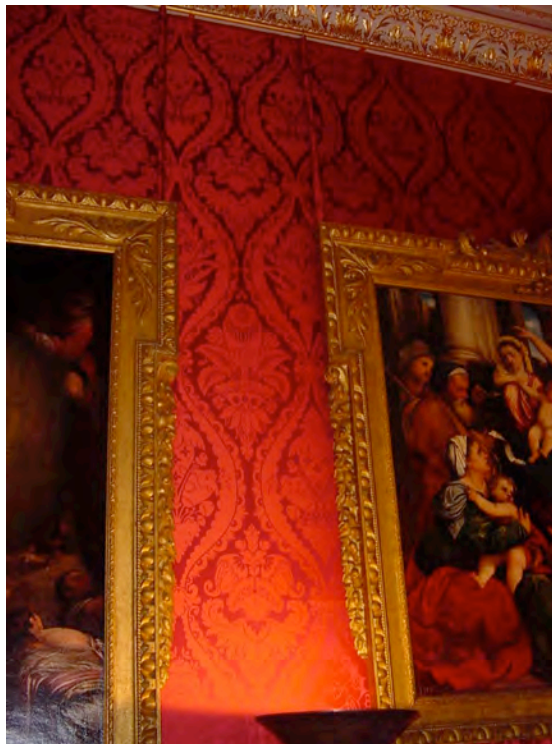
Kensington Palace

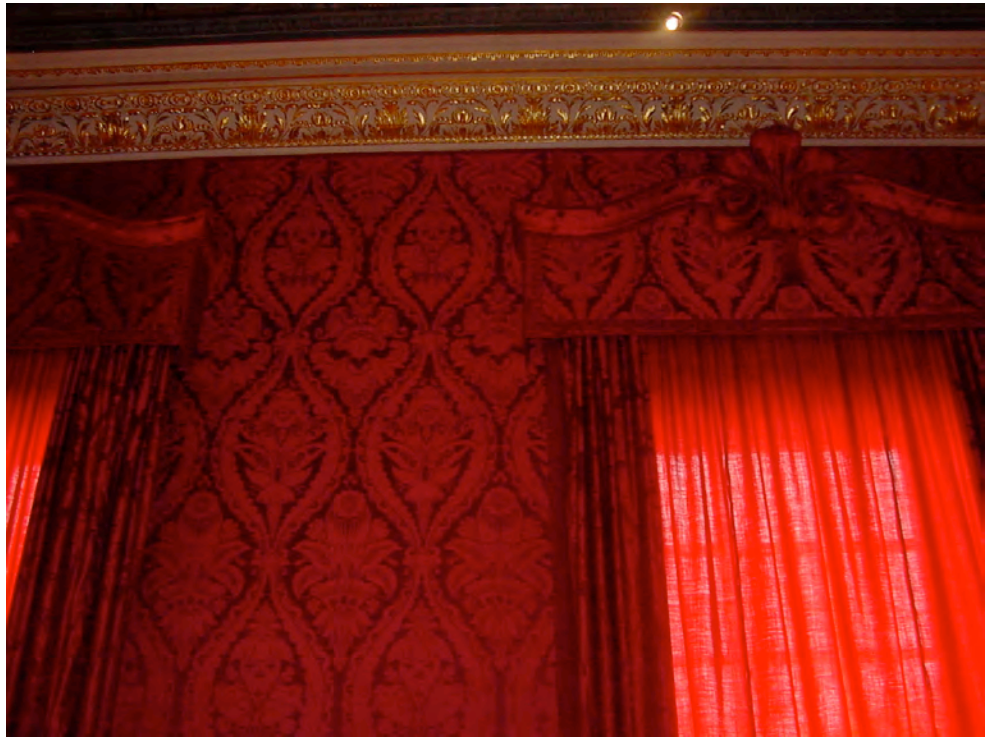
Contact - Victoria Richards.

Kensington Palace : Once a private country house the building was acquired by William III and Mary II in 1689. The house was adapted for royal residence by Sir Christopher Wren. For the next 70 years the palace was the centre of life and government. In the C19th Kensington was the birthplace of Princess Victoria (later Queen Victoria ).Parts remain residence for the Royal family. The State Apartments and Royal Ceremonial dress Collection are open to the public.



A red damask silk on the wall. Kings Gallery . Cornice ornate gilding





Another view, red damask silk, Kings Gallery ,applied to walls .



Close up of wallpaper Queen Mary's bedchamber.

Knowledge gained

Victoria Richards Supervisor of Preventative Conservation Historic Royal Palaces responsible for five palaces.

Introduced to French Polisher responsible for all furniture in the palaces.

Silk Damask in Kings room - learnt application methods

Ceilings painted on canvas and were recently conserved

Rooms not seen by the public are very spartan.

Friday 13 July 2001

De Gourney

Contact

Margot Briscoe Knight

De Gourney specialises in hand painted wallpapers in the Chinese Export and European Classic styles as well as painting other wallpapers to customer's designs and specifications. Wallpapers can be customised to fit rooms. Designs can be printed on paper or silk. Painted grounds can be in any colour as well as antique finishes.



Fabrics can be supplied in separate panels or sewn together vertically to facilitate further treatment..





Friday 13 July 2001

Zuber

The French company Zuber are also based in London . Specialising in block printed wallpaper panoramas. The example below is an example of a Dufour panorama as seen in Rixheim ,Southern France Museum.



This Dufour panel of wallpaper was found in an antique shop in Portebello Road England.

Price: Three hundred pound.

Monday 16 July 2001

## PART 4

Smithsonian Institute New York

Curator of Wallpapers Joanne Warner

Cooper – Hewitt National Design Museum.

Rooms with a view: Landscapes & Wallpaper.

An exhibition that depicted history and social periods through wallpaper..



The exhibition brings together a remarkable spectrum of European and American wallpapers that reflect the human desire to bring nature indoors.



Joanne Warner in front of EL Dorado – French wallpaper 1849 printed by Zuber et cie



Curator of wallpapers Joanne Warner Dufour mural

Wallpaper and frieze stored in archival boxes.



Tuesday 17 July 2001

Farmers Museum Cooperstown

Wallpaper Curator

Wendy Weeks

The Farmers Museum in Cooperstown New York State is an historic village and working farm. One can meet the craftspeople who continue the traditions of tradesmen from the C 19<sup>th</sup> The American Paper staining Manufactory is run by Wendy Weeks curator . Wallpaper is produced exactly the same way it was in the C19th . by journeymen craftsmen and by hand.

At the museum they produce wallpaper and band boxes that are authentic.



Papers are printed with distemper paint from hardwood – surfaced blocks. The result is authentic wallpaper with patterns taken from the collections of American museums and historic sites.



Thursday July 19 2001

### American Paperhangers Guild Conference

The National Guild of Professional Paperhangers conducted an annual Convention and Tradeshow. New products and educational sessions are a feature of the conference. The programme is designed to enhance the skills of even the most experienced paperhanger. The educational programme addresses the following objectives

To offer creative methods to deal with common installation and removal issues.

To discover the latest information about technology and its affects on contractors and manufacturers.

To teach those involved how to retain clients while developing new ones

To emphasize customer service and business management skills.

To showcase the finest products available for the paperhanger.

To explain the impact of the current pending legislation and litigation will have on the entire paperhanging industry.

To give the membership the opportunity to provide input and to help move the guild into the future.

To promote fraternity and communication among guild members.

As a guest speaker I spoke about the International Specialised Skills Institute the awarding of the Fellowship and the Care and Conservation course attended in England . The message to the convention was with regard to the recording of skills that are about to be lost. Two examples spoken about were the hanging of Hessian on horizontal lining boards and an architect who had saved remnants of wallpapers.

The paperhangers Convention exhibition included over 50 companies associated with the Paperhangers Guild.



Knowledge gained

Five members started the American Paperhangers Guild initially.

There were five hundred members at the 2001 conference out of a total of 900.

Paperhangers Guild very supportive of same concept for Australia.

Made important contacts for future development in Australia.

There was a lack of time to make contacts from Trade exhibition.

Friday and Saturday 20 -21 July 2001

Visit to Colonial Williamsburg Virginia

Contact Laura Bass Parry

Williamsburg was the capital of Virginia from 1699 to 1780. In this colonial town you will find 88 original and reconstructed buildings. You will encounter people of the past, a community of working tradespeople and historical interpreters. There are over 30 public exhibition sites. Town life in the 1770's.



Horse drawn carriage in front of the Governor's palace.



Existing leather wall covering internal walls Governors Palace in the upstairs middle room.

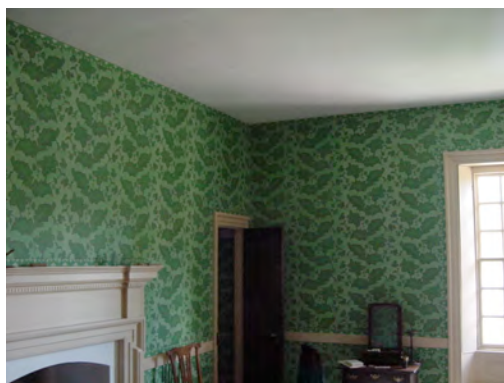
Other wallpapers included “Print Room Papers.”



Chinese imported wallpapers.



And hand block printed wallpaper.



All researched and reproduced for the Colonial Williamsburg Museum.



### Knowledge gained

Colonial Williamsburg Museum showed the application of Historical Wallpapers.

The Wallpapers were researched and re-manufactured to look authentic.

The museum explained the birth of America and showed various individuals and how they lived in the period.

Each of the houses at the museum has a tourist guide, dressed in period costume. The guide then explains the history of the house and how they played their part in the American Independence.

Tuesday July 24 2001 San Francisco

Bradbury and Bradbury Art Wallpapers

Owner Bruce Bradbury

A 20-year-old business based on block printing and hand screen-printing.

Specialising in various periods.



Examples of hand printed wallpapers.



Benches with complete roll ready for printing.



The future for wallpapers historic and contemporary.

Photo shows operator using a computer to generate a new design in wallpapers for an existing Church ceiling space.

#### Knowledge gained

Art wallpapers respond to change quickly and can address the need for reproduction of Historical wallpapers.

It is possible to reproduce wallpaper, as demand requires.

Digital wallpapers will be the future development for wall surfaces

# Recommendations

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Historic Opportunities

To **Provide** Australians in the area of Wall Coverings and Wall papers with skills and knowledge so that they can contribute to the Conservation and Restoration of our Australian Heritage in line with best in the world practice.

To **Position** TAFE as the provider of innovative, quality courses for those seeking employment opportunities in the Historical Wall Coverings and Wallpaper related Industries.

- ❑ Young people - apprentices
- ❑ Career pathways for those in other areas such as Print Technology, and Design.
- ❑ Contemporary and Heritage Architectural areas such as Interior Decorators Architects and Restorers.
- ❑ The Community – the public in general who are interested in Historical Wall Coverings for their own homes or public buildings such as the National Trust.

To **invite** specialists in Historical wall coverings to Australia to provide best in the World Practice.

These Individuals have expressed an eagerness to have closer contacts with Australian Businesses and those involved in Heritage.

Bernard Jacque – Musee De Papier – France. – Interested in Displaying in Australia.

Allyson McDermott . Interested in guest Lecturing.

### **Contemporary opportunities.**

To **Promote** Wall Coverings and Wallpapers as an alternative contemporary approach to Wall treatments to Architects, Builders, Interior Designers and Decorators.

The Fellowship focused on Historical Wall papers and Wall coverings. At times it was very hard to remain focused on Historical issues rather than contemporary ones.

It is my recommendation that there is follow up in both areas, the Historic use and the contemporary use of wallpapers.

Unfortunately I did not have enough time to follow up trade contacts at the American Paperhangers Conference in Philadelphia. It is important that the Foundation supports the attending of an Australian at the next Paperhangers Conference in America, where Historical as well as Contemporary issues are addressed.

## **KEY ISSUES:**

### **Lack of leadership in the Wallpaper Industry.**

A professional body needs to be set up to lead the Industry in Australia. It should involve individuals whom share a common interest in Wall Coverings and Wall Papers. The Independent Body would then be able to make recommendations to Governments, Community Groups and the General Public. The stakeholders would be from Industry, TAFE, and individuals whom have an express interest in Historical Wall Coverings.

### **Lack of Australian Manufacturers of Wall coverings.**

At present there is not an Australian Manufacturer. Worldwide markets are waiting if the product is correct. World wide there are becoming less and less manufacturers. The growing trend is in Art Wall Coverings. Individual Artisans providing individual service to clients. Australian Artisans need to be made aware of the potential of a world market in Wall coverings.

### **Lack of Skills in identification of existing wall coverings.**

At present there are very few trained in the identification of Historical Wall coverings used in Australian Heritage. Australia needs to build upon existing experience and share information Australia wide.

### **Lack of skills in repair of wall coverings**

Limited experience in Historical Wall Covering repair. An Australian Conference on Wall Coverings would identify those with experience and from whom to seek advice.

### **Lack of skills in reproduction of wall coverings.**

Limited experience in the reproduction of existing Heritage Wall Coverings.

### **Lack of an Australian network for wall coverings.**

### **Lack of skills in Traditional techniques**

Limited experience in Traditional techniques of hanging wall coverings.

- ❑ Scrimming ,
- ❑ Hanging joined paper.
- ❑ Hanging Hand Printed wallpapers and fabrics.
- ❑ Hanging Wallpapers with selvedge.
- ❑ Geometrical ceiling layouts

## SOLUTIONS

- 1 Develop Wall Covering courses to increase skills, knowledge and attitudes regarding Wall coverings.
- 2 Develop a Master Learning Centre for Wallpaper and identify industry groups to assist in the development of the Centre.
- 3 Establish a Paperhangers Guild. Stakeholders to be Industry Representatives, TAFE and Individuals interested in Wallpapers.
- 4 Set up a Wallpaper Forum for the Industry. Invite interested Industry Representatives Architects, Interior Decorators, and individuals with a concern for Wallpapers and Wall coverings.
- 5 Develop partnerships with leading training and educational Institutions and manufacturers worldwide
- 6 Establish a not for profit Historical Wallpaper Organisation for Victoria.
- 7 Set up an international network of Historians involved with wallpaper conservators so as to be able to identify Wallpapers and Wall coverings.
- 8 Set up an Internet site concentrating on Wallpaper specialists and Wallpaper Conservators throughout Australia.
- 9 Join the Historical Wallpaper Society in Europe giving Australia Historical information from worldwide conservators.
- 10 There is at least one existing collection of wallpapers in Australia which needs to be recorded and stored correctly. This would require permission from the owner and Government funding. This collection could be lost if we do not achieve this in the near future.

*And finally, work towards a Historical Wallpaper Museum for Australia.*

## **PROGRESS SINCE FELLOWSHIP**

- ❑ **Call for the immediate forming of a Wallpaper Forum for the Industry.**

*PROPOSED CONFERENCE FOR 2002 HAS SUPPORT FROM CENTRAL GIPPSLAND INSTITUTE OF TAFE.*

- ❑ **Establish a Paperhangers Guild.**

*CONTACT WITH MASTER PAINTERS AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENT PAINTING AND DECORATING TAFE.*

- ❑ **Maintain contacts with leading wallpaper conservators, consultants, and manufacturers worldwide.**

*NETWORK ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONALLY HAS CONTINUED.*

Lorne Simpson	Historical Conservation Architect Calgary. Canada
Allyson McDermott	Wallpaper Conservator England.
Heather Wood	Conservator King George The Fourths - Brighton Pavilion
Jon Caiger	Anaglypta Lincrusta Manufacturer England.
Fred O'Connor	Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities New England Boston USA
Christine Woods	Curator. Whitworth Art Gallery. Manchester England

- ❑ **Join the Historical Wallpaper Society giving Australia historical information form worldwide conservators.**



*HAVE JOINED AS A MEMBER. RECEIVING INFORMATION FROM THE SOCIETY.*

□

- **Develop a Master Learning centre for wallpaper.**

*SUPPORT FOR THIS CONCEPT BY CENTRAL GIPPSLAND INSTITUTE OF TAFE*

- **Set up an international network of Historians involved with wallpaper and wall coverings so as to be able to identify Wallpapers and wall coverings.**

*HAD AN EXISTING PROJECT ALREADY SINCE FELLOWSHIP.*

*INTERNATIONAL SEARCH FOR WALLPAPER AT A PRIVATE RESIDENCE IN GEELONG.*

**Work towards establishing a Historical Wallpaper Museum for Australia.**

## A Final Comment

Other places of interest included;

A 10 Day tour of Europe including Amsterdam, Germany, Venice, Florence, Italian Lakes, Lucerne Switzerland, and Paris.

A major highlight was the visit to Versailles – The Palace and Gardens. Created by the “ Sun King” Louis XIV. Main features included the Gallery of Battles and the Hall of Mirrors.

Also in Paris a tour of Notre Dame, the Eiffel Tower Arc De Triomphe and Champs Elysees.

The tour of Kensington Palace was exceptional. Victoria Richards who is the Supervisor of Preventative Conservation of five Historic Royal Palaces in London gave me a guided tour. Victoria was also a participant on the course at West Dean Chichester. The highlights included wallpapers as well as items of the Royal wardrobe. These included dresses from the Queen Victoria and Princess Dianna.

In New York ,a visit to the Solomon Guggenheim Museum on Fifth Avenue to see the work of Architect Frank Gehry.

*The fellowship has enriched my life, increased my knowledge and made me realise that at 50 years of age there is still much to learn and much to give.*

*I thank the organisation.*

## **Appendices.**

Heritage Victoria.

West Dean Historic Notes:

West Dean Tutors.

West Dean Wall Coverings in situ.

Papering the Nation - Christine Woods.

Conservation of Textiles Ham House Surrey

Wallpaper Conservation Longfellow Historic Site

Planning for Paint analysis - Frank S Welsh

Solutions – The Influence of Locations on Treatments.

The History of Wall coverings - Nicola Allen – Jones.

The Conservation of Wall Mounted Linoleum – Robert Payton. Museum of London.

Care and Conservation Certificate.

National Guild of Professional Paperhangers.

## Participants West Dean Course.

### Participants:

Paul Bramley	Interior Decorating Teacher and Wallpaper Specialist
Sarah Bull	Conservator, Gloucestershire (bursary)
Victoria Bunting	Northeast Documentation Conservation Centre, Massachusetts.
Karen Craig	Conservator, Lougheed House, Conservation Society, Canada
. Anne Downey	Senior Paper Conservator, Conservation Centre of art and Historic Artefacts
Fred O'Connor	Wall coatings and Wall coverings Specialist, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Boston
Victoria Richards	Supervisor of Preventive Conservation, Historic Royal Palaces, London.
Lorne Simpson	Conservator Architect, Calgary
Rachel Wales	Conservator, Ross on Wye (bursary)
Nicola Walker	Conservator, Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester (Bursary)

Judith Weatherall

Decorative Arts Conservator (50 % tutor discount)

Maeve Wooley

Historic Scotland Intern ( Glasgow Museums )



**Heritage**  
VICTORIA

7 November 2000

Naura House  
Level 22  
80 Collins Street  
Melbourne 3000  
Telephone (03) 9655 6519  
Facsimile (03) 9655 9720  
[www.heritage.vic.gov.au](http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au)  
[www.doi.vic.gov.au/heritage/](http://www.doi.vic.gov.au/heritage/)

Ms Nita Schultz  
Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE  
Mid valley Campus  
Cnr Princes Drive and Monash Highway  
MOREWELL  
VIC 3840

Dear Ms Schultz

#### **WALLPAPER CONSERVATION RESEARCH AND TRAINING**

Further to the conversation with Megan McDougall last week, I am writing to confirm Heritage Victoria's support for further research and training on wallpaper restoration in Victoria.

While there are numerous places of cultural heritage significance throughout Victoria with wallpaper decoration, we have often had difficulty in the past locating people with the necessary skills in identification, repair or reproduction of wallpapers.

I understand that there is a proposal for Paul Bramley of the Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE, Painting and Decorating Department to undertake research on technological developments and training programs on wallpaper conservation. There is certainly a need in Victoria for the work he is proposing. It would also be important for Paul to familiarise himself with the Burra Charter, which sets out the conservation principles generally adopted in Australia. If you have any further queries, please contact Megan McDougall on 9655 9743.

Yours sincerely

**RAY TONKIN**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Copy for Paul Bramley

**WEST DEAN COLLEGE**

THE EDWARD JAMES FOUNDATION  
**department of continuing education**

## COURSE PROGRAMME

**PC FD 9    Care and Conservation of Wallcoverings**  
**West Dean College**  
**17 – 22 June 2001**

**COURSE LEADER:**

**Allyson McDermott**, Director,  
Allyson McDermott Conservation Studios

**COURSE DEVELOPER:**

**Patricia Jackson**, independent conservator  
and part-time lecturer, West Dean College.

*a short course in the professional conservators in practice series*

**w e l c o m e**

to

**WEST DEAN COLLEGE**

The Edward James Foundation



## ON ARRIVAL

On Fridays and Sundays a cup of tea or coffee is available in the Dining Room for students arriving between 15.30 and 17.30.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE COLLEGE

On the evening of your arrival you are asked to gather in the Oak Hall at 19.15 where a member of staff will welcome you to the College and introduce you to your tutor. Midweek and Saturday meeting times are different - please check with the College Office.

## FIRE REGULATIONS

Please read the instructions in your bedroom, as they explain the action you must take in the event of a fire while you are there **at night**. Also, check the way to your nearest fire exit.

If the fire alarm sounds while you are elsewhere in the College **during the day**, please make your way out of the building promptly and report to your tutor outside the main entrance.

## MEAL TIMES

Breakfast	8.00 - 8.45
Coffee	10.30 - 11.00
Lunch	12.30 - 13.30
Tea	15.30 - 16.00
Dinner:	
Weekdays (except Fridays) & Sats	19.00 - 19.45
Fridays & Sundays	19.30 - 20.15

## STUDIO WORKSHOP TIMES

On the first evening 20.15 - 21.30  
then 9.15 - 12.30 & 14.00 - 17.00  
Students may continue to use studios and workshops until 22.00, with their tutor's agreement, especially with regard to safety. Courses finish at 15.00 on the last day and workshops must be vacated by 15.30.

## CRAFT SHOP

The College Shop supplies many of the materials you will need as listed on your course details, alongside West Dean College sweatshirts, T-shirts and artists postcards.

Opening times:  
Mondays & Saturdays 8.45 - 16.15  
Tuesdays - Fridays,  
& Sundays 9.00 - 16.30  
Times of closure for meal breaks are listed on the Craft Shop door.

## COLLEGE LIBRARY

Opening times:  
Mondays to Fridays 9.30 - 13.00  
13.30 - 17.00

At weekends and in the evenings the key to the

library can be obtained from the Duty Officer in the College Office or the Security Officer. The library holds a wide selection of art, craft photography, gardening and conservation/restoration books.

## COLLEGE OFFICE

This is open from 9.00 until 17.00 every day including weekends. The hours are extended on days of arrival. Staff will be pleased to help with any questions you may have, including course enquiries. West Dean College gift vouchers used towards payment of short course fees to the value of £10, £25, £50 and £100 can be purchased from here as well as essentials you may have forgotten to pack. Meal tickets for guests can also be purchased from the College Office, but must be booked at least five hours in advance.

## SECURITY

A night security officer is on duty from 17.00 to 9.00. Should you need help, please contact him and he will take whatever action is necessary. He can normally be found either in at the Security Desk by the front door or in the Steward's Room, or reached on extension 259 or 202.

## LATE RETURN & OVERNIGHT ABSENCE

The front door is locked at 23.00 (23.30 on Fridays & Saturdays). Anyone planning to be out late must sign out and give their intended return time in the Late Book at Reception, so that they can be let in. Notification of overnight absence is required in case of fire.

## VALUABLES

The Trustees of the Edward James Foundation cannot accept responsibility for any loss of, or damage to personal effects or belongings. You are advised to keep your bedroom door locked. Valuables can be handed in to the College Office for safe keeping.

## TELEPHONES

There are four public telephones near the Reception desk. They take coins or cards (available from the College Office or the Bar).

Useful telephone numbers:

Taxi service	01243 782403
Rail Travel Enquiries	0345 484950
Chichester Bus Station	01243 783251
Local Doctor	01243 527264
St Richard's Hospital, Chichester	01243 788122
West Dean College	01243 811301
West Dean College fax	01243 811343

There is a telephone in the Vicarage for internal use, e.g. to call the night security officer whose extension number is 259 or 202.

# WEST DEAN COLLEGE

THE EDWARD JAMES FOUNDATION

WEST DEAN, CHICHESTER, WEST SUSSEX, ENGLAND, PO18 0QZ T (01243) 811301 F (01243) 811347 E-mail [westdean@pavilion.co.uk](mailto:westdean@pavilion.co.uk)

## CARE AND CONSERVATION OF WALLCOVERINGS

17 – 22 June 2001

### COURSE LEADER

**ALLYSON MCDERMOTT, Director of Allyson McDermott Conservation Studios at Petworth House**

Allyson established her own studios in 1980 and has since gathered around her a team of qualified, experienced and dedicated conservators, specialising in the conservation of works of art on paper, historic wallpapers and all other paper based artefacts.

Prior to 1980, as well as being a practising conservator, Allyson lectured at Gateshead University and was instrumental in setting up the MA Conservation Course there. She continues to lecture extensively both in the U.K., and internationally, on all aspects of Conservation and the Historic Interior and has been published widely. Allyson and her team continue to make ground breaking advances in the world of Conservation

### TUTORS

MAY BERKOUWER, Textile Conservator

SUSAN CAMPION, Studio Director, Allyson McDermott Conservation Studios

DAVID DORNING, Conservation Science tutor, West Dean College

GUY EVANS, Historic Furnishings Consultant

HELEN HUGHES, Senior Architectural Paint Researcher, English Heritage

ADRIAN MCDERMOTT, Project Conservator, Allyson McDermott Conservation Studios

ROB PAYTON, Deputy Head of Conservation, Museum of London

ROY THOMSON, Conservator, The Leather Conservation Centre

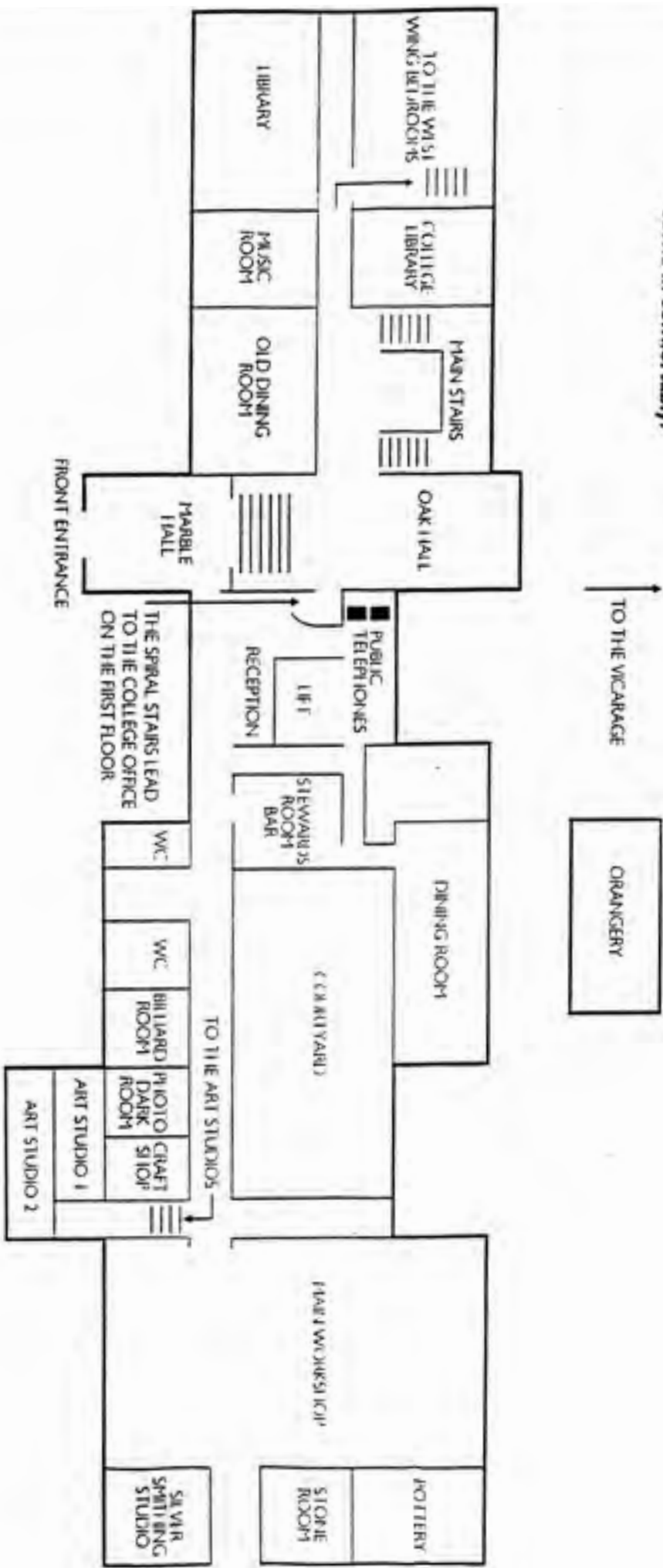
ANTHONY WELLS-COLE, Principal Keeper, Temple Newsam House, Leeds

HEATHER WOOD, Conservator, Royal Pavilion, Brighton

CHRISTINE WOODS, Curator, The Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester

# Welcome to West Dean

If you are visiting West Dean College for the first time, the following map should help you find your way around and settle in comfortably.



## THE STEWARD'S ROOM BAR

This is run by the West Dean Social Club and is open to all tutors, students and conference delegates for the duration of their course.

Bar opening times:

Daily	12.00 - 13.30
Mondays to Saturdays	18.00 - 23.00
Sundays	18.30 - 22.30

Bottles of wine may be purchased from the bar and taken into the Dining Room. Smoking is permitted in the Steward's Room.

Newspapers are available in the Steward's Room and may be ordered through the College Office.

## THE OAK HALL

The Oak Hall is a quiet sitting room particularly for non-smokers. A no smoking policy is in force throughout the College, except in the Steward's Room.

## RECREATION

Television can be watched in Housemaid's Sitting Room during the evenings. The video "The secret life of Edward James" is shown every Wednesday and most Saturday nights at 20.15 in the Housemaid's Sitting Room.

There are two hard tennis courts in the gardens. Charge for use is £2 per hour and bookings can be made in the College Office.

There is a full size snooker table in the Billiard Room close to the Steward's Room. Chalk can be provided by the barman. You will need a token (available from the Bar) for the Billiard Room lights. This will allow about half-an-hour's play.

There is a small swimming pool in the Vicarage Gardens. For safety reasons swimmers are asked not to use the pool alone. You can check details of times when the pool can be used (summer time only) in the College Office.

## TAPESTRY STUDIO

This is normally open for visits on Wednesdays between 13.30 and 14.00 when you are welcome to view the work in progress.

## GARDENS VISITOR CENTRE

Officially opened by the Prince of Wales and designed and built in collaboration with his Institute of Architecture, the building is open daily from March through to October (opening times: 11.00-17.00). The shop sells plants and a range of quality and imaginative gifts.

## GARDENS AND ARBORETUM

Students are welcome to walk in the gardens. You

can also take a route map of the Parkland Walk to St Roche's Arboretum which takes about an hour and a list of the specimen trees and their positions. Please take notice of warnings placed at the ends of the walk.

## LOCAL STORE AND POST OFFICE

The West Dean General Store and Post Office is within easy walking distance of the College. The easiest route is to leave by the green door in the wall next to the church, and turn left down Church Lane to West Dean village and take the second turning on the right.

### General Store opening times:

Weekdays (except Tuesdays and Saturdays)	7.30 - 20.00
Tuesdays	7.30 - 13.00
Saturdays	8.00 - 20.00
Sundays (September - end May)	10.00 - 14.00
Sundays (June, July, August)	10.00 - 18.00

### Post Office opening times:

Weekdays (except Tuesdays and Saturdays)	7.30 - 20.00
Tuesdays	7.30 - 13.00
Saturdays	8.00 - 20.00

## CHURCH SERVICES

Details of Services can be found on the notice board in Reception.

## AT THE END OF YOUR COURSE

Assessment forms are available for your comments in the College Office.

Students are asked to vacate their rooms by 15.00 on the day their course ends. (We should be obliged if you would pack before breakfast so that the rooms can be cleaned by the household staff). The West Dean minibus leaves the front door at 15.40 to take students to Chichester Railway Station.

If you wish to use the minibus please give your name to the College Office by 12.30 on the day of departure.

Please make sure you have handed in your bedroom key before you leave.

## BOOKINGS FOR FURTHER COURSES

Bookings for further courses can be made through the College Office.

**WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR STAY  
HERE AND LOOK FORWARD TO  
WELCOMING YOU AGAIN TO WEST  
DEAN COLLEGE.**

# WEST DEAN COLLEGE

THE EDWARD JAMES FOUNDATION  
PRINCIPAL: DAVID LEIGH PhD BSc Dip Cons FRC PSA

WEST DEAN  
CHICHESTER  
WEST SUSSEX  
ENGLAND  
PO18 1QZ

## PCIP course on Wallcoverings 17<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2001

T +44 (0) 1243 873301

F +44 (0) 1243 873343

E-mail [westdean@panix.com](mailto:westdean@panix.com)

Web site <http://www.westdean.org.uk/>

- 1 Old Dining Room -**  
A copy of the original wallcovering was made of Brocatelle in 1988
- 2 College Library -**  
The wallpaper was restored in December 1990 and the proposed work was as follows:  
  
"Carefully remove two pieces of antique wallpaper damaged by water. Reline and restore damaged areas. Prepare the wall surface damaged by water penetration and seal with alkali resisting primer.  
  
Rehang the antique wallpaper to the right of proposed new bookcase. Match the blank areas above bookcase to the antique paper."
- 3 Boudoir -**  
A copy was made of the silk wallcovering in 1987, the fabric is now cotton and flax.
- 4 Room 2 Jill's office -** see report attached.
- 5 Spiral Staircase -** The existing wallpaper and Tilly Losch footprint carpet was copied in 1987.
- 6 Room 43 -** see report attached.
- 7 Corridor outside Room 65 -** painted wallpaper by John Floyd Morris, war artist 1930/40.

12 June 2001

EDWARD JAMES FOUNDATION (INCORPORATED) LIMITED

# WEST DEAN COLLEGE

THE EDWARD JAMES FOUNDATION  
Fellowship: DAVID LEIGH PhD BSc Dip Cont FHC FSA

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Web site <http://www.westdean.org.uk/>

## ROOM 43

The conservator's report dated 1 June 1991 on the wall panels -

"Of the 13 panels they are divided into three types -

- Type a) There are nine of these and they are all in reasonable condition. There is some minor touching up of the background, but the main figures are in good condition. I would like to point out that the background colour is a very dirty grey and not, in my view as pleasant as the background colour of the
- Type b) panels. There are three of these and they represent Goddesses and the background and figures require substantial retouching, although the paper itself appears to be sound.
- Type c) panel of which there is one only, also represents a Goddess but appears to be of a different type having a blue background and a different colour figure.

To bring the 13 panels into some form of unity I suggest that the background of the three type b) panels is retouched, and the background of the nine type a) panels is repainted to match as well as the one type c) panel.

JW/12 June 2001

## **HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE HOUSE AND GROUNDS**

### **West Dean House**

A mansion known as Cannon House was built here for John Lewkenor in 1622. Small areas of the masonry of this house surviving can be discerned at NW corner by the church. In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century the estate was the property of the Peachey family and remained so until 1871. In 1794 Sir James Peachey was created Baron Selsey and in celebration of the family's advancement, in 1804 commissioned James Wyatt to rebuild the house – a job completed by Wyatt's son Benjamin. Photographs, usually on display on the curved staircase wall outside the main office, show this early 19<sup>th</sup> century building before later remodelling. The main existing frontage is still Wyatt's; the extremely high quality flintwork uses Norfolk rather than local flints.

In 1891 William James purchased the estate with money made in America. The house was extensively remodelled by Ernest George and Harold Peto – see dates above Oak Hall fireplace and over front door. A major exterior alteration was the addition of the porte cochere; the main rooms of the interior, known as the 'state rooms' were completely replanned and refurnished. Many antiquities were bought to enhance the rooms, including Classical columns, Renaissance woodwork, 17<sup>th</sup> century tapestries, most of which survive in their original settings, as can be judged by the early photographs.

The James family were lavish entertainers and held many house parties at which King Edward VII was often present – again photographs of these events are displayed. The house is featured in Aslet's *The Last Country Houses*. Edward James, the youngest child and only son, inherited the estate. He was married briefly to the dancer Tilly Losch, whose footprints are immortalised in the stair carpet in the turret next to the office. He was a great patron of the arts, particularly painting, music and dance; and also wrote poetry. He was also an important figure in the Surrealist Movement and had close links with many painters, particularly Salvador Dali with whom he had an arrangement to purchase all his paintings over a period of years. He had no children and himself created the Edward James Foundation in 1964 to foster the arts and traditional crafts. Thus the college, created in 1971, still functions within this remit, with courses in art, crafts, conservation, music and gardening. The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum was established in 1967 in adjacent fields and is part of the original concept.

### **Gardens and Grounds**

Much of the present layout dates from the major remodelling of house and estate carried out in the early 1800s, including the Water Garden to the west of the house, comprising rustic house, cascade and bridge, and the walled garden to the east. The walled garden, replacing an earlier kitchen garden nearer the house, incorporates on its south, lower, side a crinkle-crinkle wall to provide micro-environments for tender fruits, a thatched apple store and a cistern. Behind the house is an orangery, possibly originally a palm house. Previously the surroundings had formed a hunting park but the area was landscaped and planted in fashionable parkland style, with border belts and clumps, and enclosed by the extensive flint park walls c. 1818.

The Arboretum was created in 1840s and subsequently added to. It was damaged in the 1987 hurricane but has been replanted. Edward James is buried there and his grave is in a clearing near the entrance flanked by two Coade stone figures of muses.

In the walled garden, glasshouses and the pit-yard developed through the later 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the late Victorian and Edwardian heyday a large range of Foster and Pearson greenhouses was added. A huge range of specialist vegetables and fruits including figs, grapes, peaches, melons and pineapples was produced and there were special greenhouses for poinsettias, carnations etc. The greenhouses later became derelict but have been restored mainly in the 1990s, with minimum replacement of original materials. The walled garden area also has been rescued from dereliction and replanted with regard to the original design and to provide a new teaching resource.

In 1895, Gertrude Jekyll was commissioned to redesign the Water Garden but only the work on the flower borders was carried out. The colonnaded pergola with gazebo was designed by Harold Peto and the foundation stone laid by Edward James in 1911 – an Edwardian dream. This also was damaged in the hurricane, restored and replanted, and reaches its fully splendour in June and July. The sunken garden, nearby, was designed by Edward James in 1930s.

Workshops to accommodate an increasing number of specialist courses have continued to be created out of the estate building stock. The most recent is the conversion of a later 19<sup>th</sup> century covered cow yard or dairy, part of the House Farm complex, and adjacent to a Sussex barn of 1820s, into a workshop known as the Old Dairy Workshop.



**CARE AND CONSERVATION OF WALLCOVERINGS  
TIMETABLE**

<b>Professional Conservators in Practice: The Care and Conservation Of Wallcoverings</b>	
<b>Registration and Introduction</b>	<b>Sunday Evening 17<sup>th</sup> June</b>

<b>TIME</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>TUTOR</b>	<b>FORMAT</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
4 -7pm	Registration			College Office
	Coffee			
7.15	Welcome to West Dean House	Duty facilitator	Talk	Oak Hall
7.30	Dinner			Dining Room
8.30	Welcome to the college	Pat Jackson	Talk	Kings Room
	House tour	Allyson McDermott	Talk	Kings Room/ State rooms

<b>Professional Conservators in Practice: The Care and Conservation Of Wallcoverings</b>	
<b>History and Technology</b>	<b>Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June</b>

<b>TIME</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>TUTOR</b>	<b>FORMAT</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
8am	Breakfast			Dining Room
9am	Introduction to day			Kings Room
9.30	Conservation research at English Heritage	Helen Hughes	Lecture	Kings Room
10.30	Coffee			Dining Room
11am	The historic interior – a holistic approach	Helen Hughes	Lecture	Kings room
12.30	Lunch			Dining Room
2pm	Approaches to conservation within a major historic house	Anthony Wells-Cole	Lecture	Kings room
3pm	The Long Gallery at Temple Newsam House.	Anthony Wells-Cole /Allyson McDermott	Talk	Kings room
3.30	Tea			Dining Room
4 - 4.45	Print Rooms; history and conservation	Allyson McDermott and Susan Campion	Lecture	Kings Room
7pm	Dinner			Dining Room
8pm	Case studies from participants		Lecture	Kings Room

**Professional Conservators in Practice: The Care and Conservation Of Wallcoverings****Textiles****Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June**

TIME	EVENT	TUTOR	FORMAT	VENUE
8am	Breakfast			Dining Room
9am	Introduction to day			
	Approaches to conservation of fixed wallcoverings at Brodsworth Hall (Textile)	May Berkouwer	Lecture	Kings Room
10.30	Coffee			Dining Room
	Case studies (Wallpaper)	Allyson McDermott	Lecture	Kings Room
11.15	Open forum	Allyson McDermott/May Berkouwer		
12.30	Lunch			Dining Room
2pm	Analytical techniques	David Dorning	Practical Session	Books
3.30	Tea			
4pm	Textiles: Manufacture and reproduction	Guy Evans	Practical	Books
	Break			Dining Room
5pm	Uppark; case studies	Guy Evans	Lecture	Kings Room
7pm	Dinner			Dining Room
8-9pm	Uppark Conservation and reproduction, case studies	Allyson McDermott	Lecture	Kings Room

**Professional Conservators in Practice: The Care and Conservation Of Wallcoverings****Visits****Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June**

TIME	EVENT	TUTOR	FORMAT	VENUE
8am	Breakfast			Dining Room
9am	Leave for visit		Minibus	Front of house
	Brighton Pavilion	Heather Wood	Tour	Pavilion
10.30	Coffee			On coach
	Brighton Pavilion	Heather Wood	Visit	Archives
12.30	Lunch		Packed lunch	On coach
2pm	Petworth House	Allyson McDermott	Visit	Petworth House
3.30	McDermott Studio Petworth		Visit	In studio
5pm	Return to West Dean			
7pm	Dinner			Dining Room
8-9.30	The conservation of Wallmounted Linoleum	Rob Payton		Kings Room

**Professional Conservators in Practice: The Care and Conservation Of Wallcoverings****Wallpapers****Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>TUTOR</b>	<b>FORMAT</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
8am	Breakfast			Dining Room
9am	Introduction to day			Kings room
	Wallpapers history and use in 18 <sup>th</sup> century	Allyson McDermott	Lecture	Kings Room
10.30	Coffee			Dining Room
11am	Wallpapers history and use in 19 <sup>th</sup> century	Christine Woods	Lecture	Kings Room
12.30	Lunch			Dining Room
2pm	The Conservation and reconstruction of Wallpapers Case studies	Allyson McDermott	Lecture	Kings Room
3.30	Tea			Dining Room
4pm	Identifying and dating wallpapers	David Dorning / Allyson McDermott	Demonstration	Books
7pm	Dinner			
8pm	Wallpaper grounding and printing	Allyson / Adrian McDermott	Practical	Art Room / Workshop

**Professional Conservators in Practice: The Care and Conservation Of Wallcoverings****Leather****Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>TUTOR</b>	<b>FORMAT</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
8am	Breakfast			Dining Room
9am	Introduction to day			Kings Room
	Leather wallcoverings: General principles, history and styles	Roy Thomson	Lecture	Kings Room
10.30	Coffee			Dining Room
11am	Leather wallcoverings: Care and Conservation	Roy Thomson	Lecture	Kings Room
12.30	Lunch			Dining Room
1.30	The conservation of embossed and imitation leather papers	Allyson McDermott	Lecture	Kings Room
	Certificates and Evaluation Discussion	Pat Jackson		Kings Room
3.30	Tea			Dining Room
3.40	Transport to station			Front of house

# W E S T D E A N C O L L E G E

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**Report by Arthur Adamson dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1995 on the wallpaper in Room 2. The report was written for the "Cook Log" the quarterly magazine of the "Captain Cook Study Unit"**

## Joseph Dufour's Panoramic Wallpaper "Les Sauvages de le Mer Pacifique".

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The French scenic wallpaper "Le Sauvages de le Mer Pacifique" which I have seen only once, is indeed a beautiful wallpaper, but its memory lingers on in the colour photographs and slides I have of it. Recorded examples are few throughout the world, to give one an idea of this, a set was sold at auction in 1989 for a reputed quarter of a million dollars.

Between 1804-1805 Joseph Dufour printed his first scenic (panoramic) wallpaper "Le Sauvages" in Macon. Composed loosely on the discoveries made by the Captain's Cook, de la Pe'rouze other voyagers of the Pacific. The designer was Jean Gabriel Charvet Prior to going into production, Dufour promoted his wallpaper by publishing a brochure describing in great detail each panel, also claiming educational motives for this undertaking, and what an undertaking!

The complete set of "Les Sauvages" comprised of twenty lengths, each length being part of a separate scene and each scene in turn being part of the overall panorama. A length was made up of jointed sheets of handmade paper (continuous machine made paper was not available until about 1820.) Each length is numbered from 1-20. In her book "Historic Wall-papers" Nancy McClelland gives a detailed translation of Dufour's brochure. The following are brief descriptions of each scene according to the brochure and other articles written on this beautiful wallpaper.

Dufour takes us on a voyage of discovery of his own, showing the inhabitants of various places visited by Cook and fellow travellers. The characters who are placed in each panel of this decoration are curious not only through their costume, they are more interesting because of their industry and sometimes pleasant in their customs. This was all developed from the information available at the time.

Starting with the inhabitants of Nootka Sound in cold Canada, visited in March 1778. A woman is pictured hanging fish in a sort of hoop-net, to dry out.

Then on to the inhabitants of Ulietea & Happaee, two of the Friendly Islands, visited in 1777. This shows a group of men and women taking a meal under the breadfruit tree.

Next we travel to Otahiti, the scene shows O-Too, King of Otahiti on his throne, his daughter and sister to his right, dancers dance to an orchestra composed of flutes, drums and a chorus of young girls.

Then on to Tanna, one of the New Hebrides, visited by Captain Cook in July 1774. Several islanders are seen together with a girl proffering a panpipe to one of her compatriots, as if to invite him to mingle with the King's orchestra.

We then move on to what for us, as members of C.C.S.U. must be the most important scenes in the whole panorama. It shows the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands, occupied in watching a battle that is taking place in the background. To quote Nancy

MCClelland's translation of Dufour's booklet "We have endeavoured to give in these two strips (lengths VIII & IX) the scene of the death of Captain Cook on the Island of Owhyhee, on February 14th 1779. The battle in which Captain Cook was killed has been painted entirely in the middle distance: it was impossible to bring the design nearer because the proportions of the two frigates, the Resolution and the Discovery, which took part in the action"

Unquote. This action is based very much on John Webber's engraving "The Death of Captain James Cook at Kealakekua Bay, Hawaii".

From what I have read, the volcano that one sees in the distance is based on the description of one which exists on Taunā, one of the New Hebrides.

The next panel features the Maoris of New Zealand, tall and tattooed. Seated on a rock, at the foot of two large gris-gris trees, wearing a flaxen cloak is Kaora, their chief.

Next the inhabitants of the Straits of Prince William who are represented in this scene, closely resembling in build, colour, manner and attire, the natives of Nootka, whose neighbours they are.

In this picture, at the entrance to a small bay is a vessel filled with islanders of Annaamoka. This island is included among the Friendly Isles, and was discovered in 1643 by Tasman.

The New Caledonia inhabitants depicted in this scene stand at the foot of a banana tree, from which the women are picking fruit.

The King of Tongatabo, is pictured here under a banana tree with one of his favourite wives, he is a tall, handsome figure with the most dignified, elegant and war-like costume imaginable. In the background are two groups of wrestlers having combat.

Here King Honoo and the Queen of the Island of St. Christine, are shown assisting at a fête with the savages of Tongatabo.

In the foreground of this scene we have three natives from the Marquise Islands, seated at the foot of a great palm tree.

Inhabitants of Easter Island and Pelow Island conclude this unique Tableau.

Words cannot fully describe this unique and beautiful wallpaper. It must be seen to be appreciated. Where can it be seen. Many examples are in private collections, but the list I give at the end are examples I have managed to trace in Museums and historic buildings throughout the world, only through correspondence, regrettably. Finally, a while ago I managed to obtain an article on the example of this wallpaper at "The Philadelphia Museum of Art". The article in The Pennsylvania Museum Bulletin, published in Oct. 1921, states the following "It came to the Museum through the generosity of Dr. Anna Mitchell McAllister; her grandmother, wife of John McAllister the well known engraver and optician, long a notable figure in Philadelphia, was Captain Cook's sister-in-law. Mrs Cook presented her sister with these rolls, doubtless made with special care, as a remembrance of her association with the Captain, so the pedigree of this gift is in itself interesting", unquote. Can anyone throw any further light on this interesting statement.

If anyone can help me with any information on this wallpaper or the whereabouts of other examples Please let me know, likewise if anyone shares my interest and I can help in any way, please contact me.

#### Examples.

Musee Municipal de Urumines, Macon.  
The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco.  
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania.  
Museum of Fine Art, St. Petersburg, Florida.  
Honolulu Academy of the Arts, Hawaii.  
Historic Deerfield, Massachusetts.  
Australian National Gallery, Canberra.  
Australia Art Gallery of New South Wales.  
West Sussex, England. Private Collection.

#### Fragments:

Ulster Museum, Belfast.

#### Untraceable:

One that once hung in Laxton Hall, Northamptonshire.

Arthur Adamson.

WEST DEAN COLLEGE

THE EDWARD JAMES FOUNDATION  
Supported by THE RADCLIFFE TRUST

**professional conservators in practice**

*Paul Bramley*

*has successfully completed the following course:*

**THE CARE AND CONSERVATION  
OF WALLCOVERINGS**

**17 – 22 JUNE 2001**

Course Leader



Date *22 June 2001*

Certificate No. *PCFD01/1*

## The History of Wallpapers.

Throughout history, from their appearance in the mid fifteenth century to the present day, wallpapers have been used as an imitation to the other art forms. They have always been the cheaper equivalent for those unable to afford the more expensive finishes such as tapestries, painted cloth, mural paintings, leather hangings and wooden panelling. They are able to imitate the textured effect of the more sumptuous fabrics such as silk damasks and velvets. It is doubtful that wallpaper was ever intended to be permanent since by its construction it lacks the durability of the other fore mentioned arts. Instead it became very much a fashionable decoration reflecting the current art trends of the time, taking inspiration from textiles and mural paintings. Wallpapers were never original in their sources, they drew upon symbols and imagery from textiles and mural paintings.

The earliest mention of wallpaper in Europe was in 1481, documenting payment made for paper by Louis XI, which was subsequently hung at the Royal Chateau of Plessis-Les-Tours. These papers were described as 'Grand Rouleaux' showing that the sheets had been pasted together before painting. This was a technique which became fashionable much later in Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century, and which I will discuss in further depth later. It seems unlikely that Louis XI would have intended his wallpaper to be a permanent decoration since, with paper being the cheaper equivalent it seems likely that the genuine tapestries or silk wallhangings would have lined the walls of his chateau.

During Richard III's reign, in 1483, a statute was passed stating that no painted paper be bought into England. This ban on the import of foreign papers was not repealed until 1773 when a customs duty was imposed instead. It seems unlikely that traders paid any serious attention to this ban, although early trading of wallpapers were not extensive. By the mid eighteenth century, however Chinese papers were clearly imported by the East India Company who, it seems had privileged rights and were thus able to ignore the ban.

From the mid sixteenth century to the mid seventeenth century stained papers, as they were known, were not essentially used for decorating walls, but more for the lining of deed boxes, chests and book bindings. These early papers were termed 'domino' after the Italian papers imitating marble which had become popular in usage for book bindings. At this time makers of early domino papers were also manufacturing wallpapers. For example, the paper makers belonged to the Stationers company. Many paper stainers also worked in stationary due to the unpredictability of the wallpaper profession. The Dictionnaire Universel of the time tells how early seventeenth century paper hangings were confined to the poor or to the lesser bourgeoisie, the richer classes using tapestries or hand paintings placed directly onto the plaster.

In France in 1586 the Guild of Dominotiers was established. It seems unlikely that the real 'domino' papers were ever used on wallpapers since the process of production was completely different. The French 'domino' patterns are not simply marbled papers, the term, as used by those French artists, applies to papers with small motifs which are often naive in character. Makers of these domino papers were also manufacturing wallpaper, but in a completely different way. The fundamental difference was that lining papers were complete in themselves, often with a border or margin surrounding the pattern, whereas the 'sheets' of wallpaper relied upon other pieces to complete the design. The pattern on lining paper was very small. Zoffany's "Little Book" is characteristic of this with small motifs, produced through an almost crude block printing method.

Characteristic subjects for these papers were simple and pictorial ones featuring depictions of saints or devils, classical portrayals of the four seasons, sentimental imagery and religious subjects. Very often the designs were supported by explanations which made the illustrations more intelligible. This is a logical addition considering the closeness the paper stainers had to book illustrators.

There is no surviving evidence of the existence of freehand papers in the seventeenth century. It does, however seem likely that hand painted designs did exist considering their attempt at



printing process. Enormous technical innovations were being made to improve the production method. The first successful machine was patented in 1839 by Pottery and Ross of Darwen. This was an adaptation of the method traditionally used in calico printing resulting in an engraved roller printing machine. Here, the paper passed over the surface of a large cylindrical drum and received an impression of the pattern from a number of rollers arranged around its base. These were simultaneously linked with colours beneath each one. Progress would of been made earlier but for the fact that machine production was dependent upon a good quality paper, which until then was not available, to make continuous rolls.

The designs made during these early years of machine printing were often crude, unexciting and characterless. The design had to be kept small. By the 1850's the machines were so developed that they were able to print perfectly registered patterns of up to eight colours. The standard of English papers was rapidly declining. This crisis reached its peak in 1851 during the Crystal Palace exhibition. This was meant to be a showcase for British design. However most of the honours afforded were to abroad, with the highest given to the Parisian firm of Delincoourt. It seems that despite the leaps forward England was making in the industrialization of the manufacture of wallpaper, it was suffering because they had begun to overlook the necessity of good design.

A leading figure campaigning for artistic reform at this time was A. W. N. Pugin. While paper manufacturers were yearning for naturalism in the form of realistic motifs, Pugin stressed the need for stylized subjects and a two dimensional pattern. Pugin was one of the leading figures in the Gothic Revival, harking back to the medieval period. The Gothic Revivalists preferred designs with flat repeats, with conventionalized ornament rather than realistic motifs. In Pugin's decoration for the Houses of Parliament, which he designed in conjunction with Sir Charles Barry, Pugin incorporates Tudor Roses and the Fleur de Lis design. These are both austere examples of medieval designs. Zoffany's "Black Book" uses this fleur de lis pattern in the "Florentine Lily Paper", so called because it was also the emblem of the city of Florence.

While Pugin was primarily an architect and a theorist, a leading figure in design at this time was Owen Jones. Jones very much believed that contemporary work should be founded upon the achievements of the past. In 1856 he published his "Grammar of Ornament". This was a very influential book, discussing the variety of ornaments used in design from all cultures and ages. Jones believed that "all design should be based upon a natural construction". Like Pugin, he shows a preference for gothic art. In Zoffany's "Black Book" there is a paper named after Owen Jones which embodies his beliefs in the use of two dimensional design and geometric shapes.

William Morris is the person with whom one most associates with this period in wallpaper design. He saw beauty, imagination and order as fundamental to every design. Like Pugin and Jones his designs for fabric and wallpaper are rigidly two dimensional in feel. Drawing upon nature for inspiration he produces some of the greatest wallpapers of his time. One of his earliest designs is the "Daisy" paper of 1864. Here, he has managed to render clumps of country flowers into a realistic design while remaining at the same time abstract and two dimensional. The "Daisy" in Zoffany's "Temple Newsam" Collection dating from 1760 - 80 clearly predates Morris' paper. It is a crudely printed paper consisting of a geometric open latticed pattern with small dots possibly a result of the pinning method. Morris' paper is more complex by contrast. Although he accepted the need for flatness in design, he did give a certain degree of depth to his paper where he felt it was necessary to relieve the monotony and rigidity of the design. To achieve this, he overlaid and interwove one pattern with another giving the impression of a relief.

All Morris' work was hand printed according to the block method. Both the Gothic Revivalists and the Arts and Crafts artists believed in a return to the traditional crafts methods as practiced by the early medieval artists. They saw the decline in the English arts as a result of the industrialization process which took any sense of character out of design. Although they wanted their art to appeal to the entire population, because of the process' involved in traditional techniques, it only actually reached the richer classes.

In 1871 "Sanitary Papers" were introduced. These were the first washable papers ever to be placed onto the market. The vinyl papers produced today are a more developed version of these. Using spirit and oil based colours which would make them resistant to water, these papers were varnished to strengthen the papers properties. They were introduced by the English firm of Heywood, Higginbottom and Smith and were a response to the growing concerns for cleanliness at the end of the nineteenth century. They became very popular in the decoration of bathrooms and kitchens.

Zoffany's collection is a very important one because it traces the history of wallpapers from their early existence in the seventeenth century with the Domino papers in the "Little Book", to nineteenth century Gothic Revival papers in the "Black Book". The "Temple Newsam" Collection is fascinating because it contains so many original and varied examples of wallpapers. Fragments found at this house near Leeds, included seventeenth century Spanish embossed, painted and gilt leather decorations, Owen Jones and William Morris designs and fragments of original flock paper. In Zoffany's "Temple Newsam" book are reproductions of some of these early papers still reproduced by the hand printed method. A number of these papers feature in other Zoffany books which are machine printed making them more affordable and therefore more accessible.

Long may Zoffany continue to trace the development of paper design and continue to cater to the needs of the modern home.

27/05/94 Nicola Allen-Jones.

# THE CONSERVATION OF WALL-MOUNTED LINOLEUM

Robert Payton

## HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT OF FLOOR CLOTHS AND LINOLEUM

- 1578 - Fallopius recorded the treating of linen with gum, lead, water tallow and wax
- 1636 - patent for 'painting with oyle cullers upon woollen cloth'
- 1694 - Simon Thememan's patent (336/1694) for printing flowers and figures on waxed cloth
- 1751 & 1790 - patents for the application of india rubber or gum lastic to fabric
- 1754 - factory in Knightsbridge manufactured floor cloth by applying rosin pitch, Spanish brown, beeswax, linseed oil, melted onto canvas and applied by pressure. Patented by Nathan Smith 787/1763.
- 1836 - John Pickersgill's patent for the application of hot unvulcanised rubber and pigments to a woven base cloth
- 1844 - Elijah Galloway added pulverised cork to unvulcanised rubber to make Kamptulicon
- 1860 - Frederick Walton's patent 209/1860 to make Linoxyn and apply to cloth
- 1864 - Frederick Walton's patent 3210/1864 to make Linoleum

# THE CONSERVATION OF WALL-MOUNTED LINOLEUM

ROBERT PAYTON

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(Also in: *Scottish Local History Forum Journal*. Feb 1993)

## THE CONSERVATION OF A GROUP OF WALLHANGINGS AT HAM HOUSE, SURREY

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### Abstract

Textile conservation has reached an interesting point in its relatively brief history as a profession. Many of the advances made over the last forty years have been characterised by a change in attitude and approach rather than a change in method. The basic techniques which pioneered the profession are still in use today but their application and execution have become much more refined and sophisticated. Enough time has now elapsed for the conservator to be able to evaluate in a real situation the effects of the inappropriate use of these techniques in early conservation procedures. He or she has access to a whole range of experience of their application in broadly parallel situations. In addition there is now a substantial body of objective scientific research into the properties of materials and fibres. The effects of this cumulative picture have changed the conservator's approach. The reason for or purpose of a method has as much importance as the method itself and the predominant question that might be asked when assessing a conservation project today is more likely to be why rather than how.

At Ham House, in the Antechamber to the Queen's Bedchamber, there is a group of hangings which were probably first conserved in the 1950's. This early work incorporates methods familiar to textile conservators everywhere; traditional couching using silk threads, and what was then a new technique - the use of a thermoplastic adhesive on a silk net substrate. None of this early work has withstood the test of time and to some extent its failure has dictated the more recent choice of treatment. Conservation is not yet complete on the full set of hangings; work undertaken in the last six years has revealed more about the nature of the degradation of the hangings and given valuable experience in their handling. This, in turn has influenced the conservator's approach but the basic methods remain unaltered.

### Introduction

Ham House is unique among great English houses of the 17th century in that much of its interior decoration, particularly from the latter part of the century survives. The north facing front of the house is essentially the same today as it was when completed in 1610. Major internal alterations and redecoration were carried out in the 1630's, and in the 1670's the back of the house was extended to create a new series of rooms which include the Queen's Bedchamber and its Antechamber. By 1677 the house had been completely refurnished and redecorated

again. With these later additions the interiors of Ham began to conform to those of the great Baroque palaces of France. These changes of fashion and design are meticulously recorded in a remarkable series of inventories dating from 1654. Detailed accounts exist of paintings, furniture, bed linens, carpets, curtains and wall-hangings as well as seasonal changes of furnishings. (1).

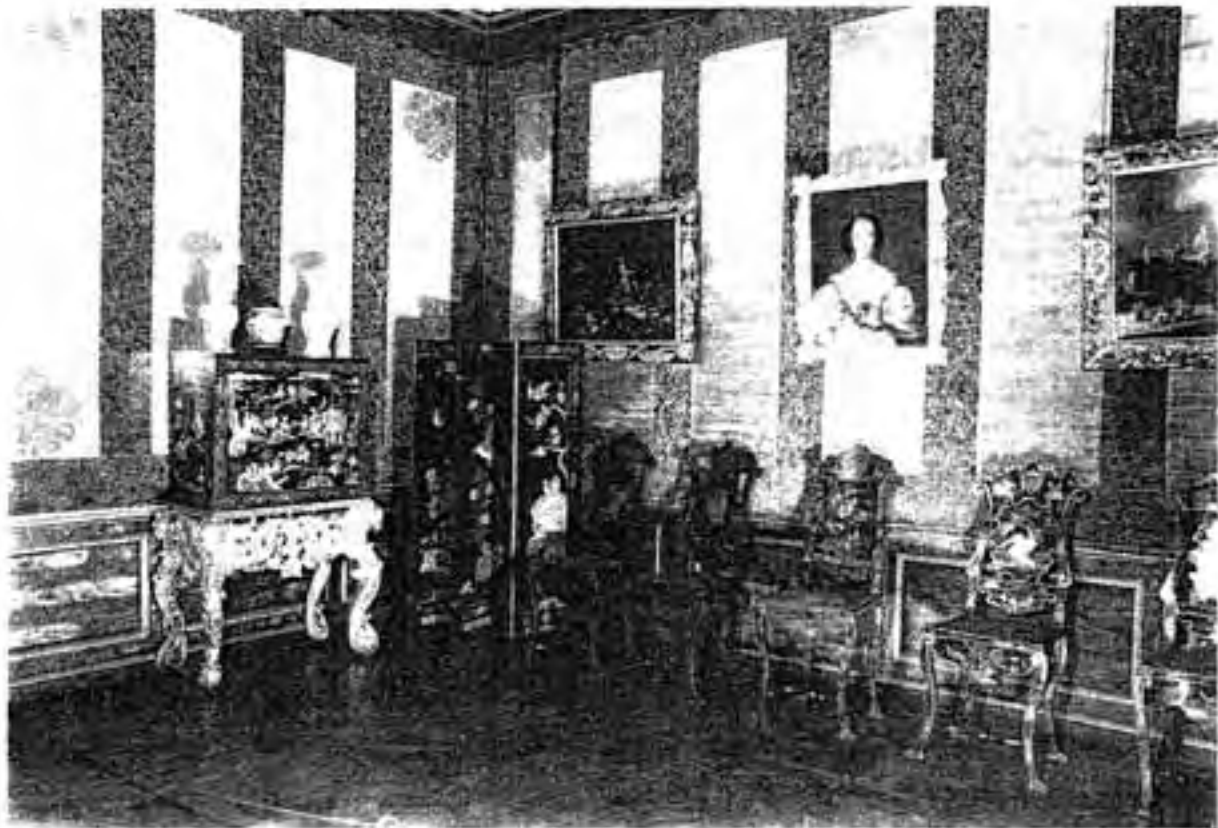
The inventory of 1683 describes the Antechamber as 'hunge with foure peices of blewe Damask, impaned and bordered wth. blew velvet embroidered with gould and fringed'. There are in fact five sections to the set specifically designed for the room. The back wall of the Antechamber which faces the windows is covered by a large central section (4.15m wide x 2.67m high) flanked by two narrow single panels. A third narrow panel fills the gap between the fireplace and the back wall. The wall facing the fireplace is covered by another large single section (3.35m wide x 2.67m high). Despite their condition the hangings still retain a sumptuous appearance. Hangings of this date were designed to be seen to full advantage in candlelight or in the low diffused light created by suncurtains and they rely on strong contrasts of colour and texture for their effect. Common ways of achieving a lavish and costly appearance were the use of complex brocades and damasks, metal thread embroidery, appliqué and cording. Contrasting panels of fabric were popular and impaned panels of an expensive weave meant that a whole loom width could be used economically in a flexible arrangement which could be made to fit any size of room without interfering with the overall design (2). The hangings in the Antechamber are constructed in this way.

### Construction

The main fabric of the hangings is a silk damask of loom width 54-55cm. The damask is of French origin, almost certainly from Paris, and may have been used in different colour combinations at Ham. The same fabric occurs in hangings in the Isabella Chamber at Salsta near Uppsala in Sweden (3). The original colour of the damask in the Antechamber was lilac pink (4) which can now only be seen on the lower portion of the central panel of the section facing the windows of the room. Until 1972 this area was covered by a large mirror. The unprotected areas of damask have faded to a dull yellow. The panels are surrounded by blue silk velvet (5) borders embroidered with a freely drawn floral design worked in silk cord wrapped in gilded silver metal thread (6). In each corner of the room the hangings are decorated with a more formal appliqué motif of blue damask flowers embroidered and outlined with cord and metal thread. A fringe of blue bell-like tufts headed by a silk and metal thread gimp surrounds each section.

The hangings are very solidly constructed with a sound understanding of the mechanical stresses involved in displaying large areas of heavy textile. There are two interlinings. The first, of blue linen, acts as a support for the weight of the embroidered velvet borders. The edges of the velvet borders are

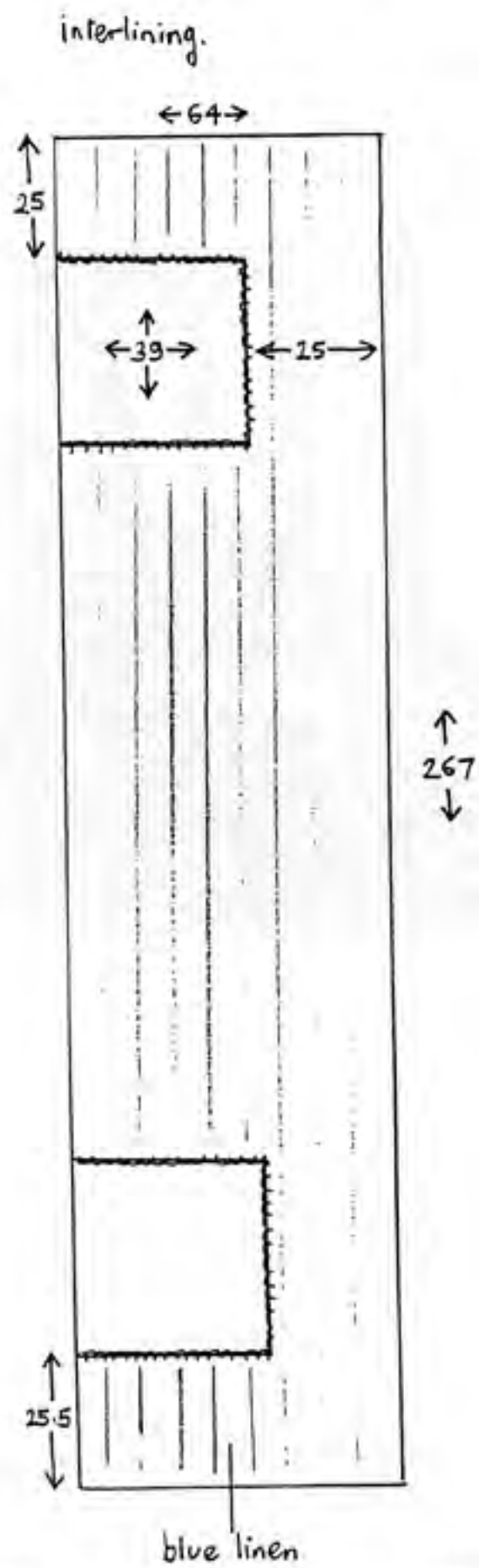
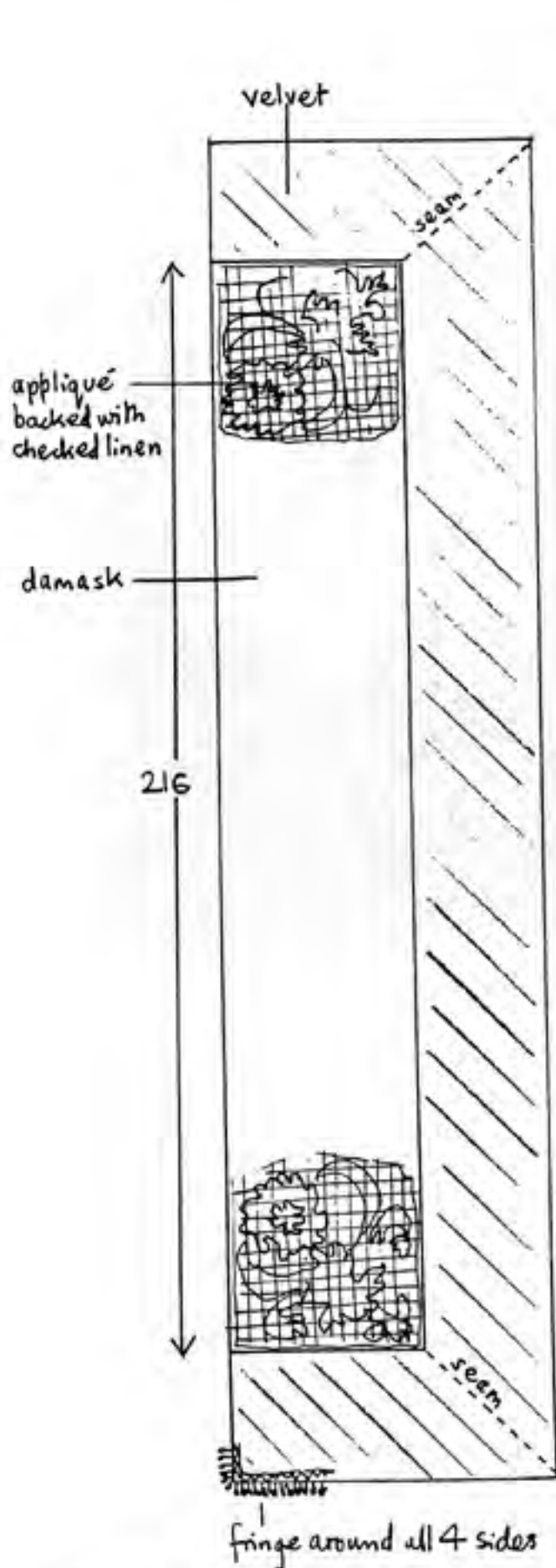
Fig.1: The antechamber to the Queen's Bedchamber showing the two main sections of the hangings before more recent conservation work was undertaken.



buttonhole stitched with blue linen thread to this first interlining. Behind each of the appliqué motifs in the corner panels of the room the interlining is cut away to accommodate the extra depth of the panel in this area. The appliqué motifs themselves are worked through to their own support of checked blue and white linen. The cut out areas of blue interlining are backed by a further square of bleached linen which is attached to the second interlining of bleached linen. Both interlinings are linkstitched to the final lining of each section.

The damask panels are attached to the interlinings by black linen thread using an overwhipping stitch. Where the damask and the velvet borders meet, the join is covered with fine silk cording. Finally each section is attached to staple-like eyes on wooden battens on the wall of the Antechamber by a series of iron hooks (7).

The solidity of the construction is an indication both of the skill of the 17th century upholsterer and the value of this particular set of hangings. The interrelationship of the various layers has been carefully considered. A cross section of the construction would reveal an even distribution of these layers ensuring that the tensions involved in vertical display are minimised. The interlinings (particularly the blue linen)



Construction of a single panel from the back wall of the Antechamber.  
 (measurements in centimetres).



have a supportive role. More substantial stitching (buttonhole stitching) has been used where necessary to hold the weight of the heavy velvet and lighter stitching used to attach the silk panels. The final weight of the hangings has been further supported by the even spacing of the iron hooks which extend around all four edges of each section.

There is no reference in any of the inventories to alternative sets of hangings for this room as there are for other rooms at Ham. They were designed to be a permanent fixture. Their survival for three hundred years is impressive proof of the mastery of construction attained in the 17th century. In a very broad sense these simple but practical principles are the same as those which govern modern conservation today.

### Light Damage

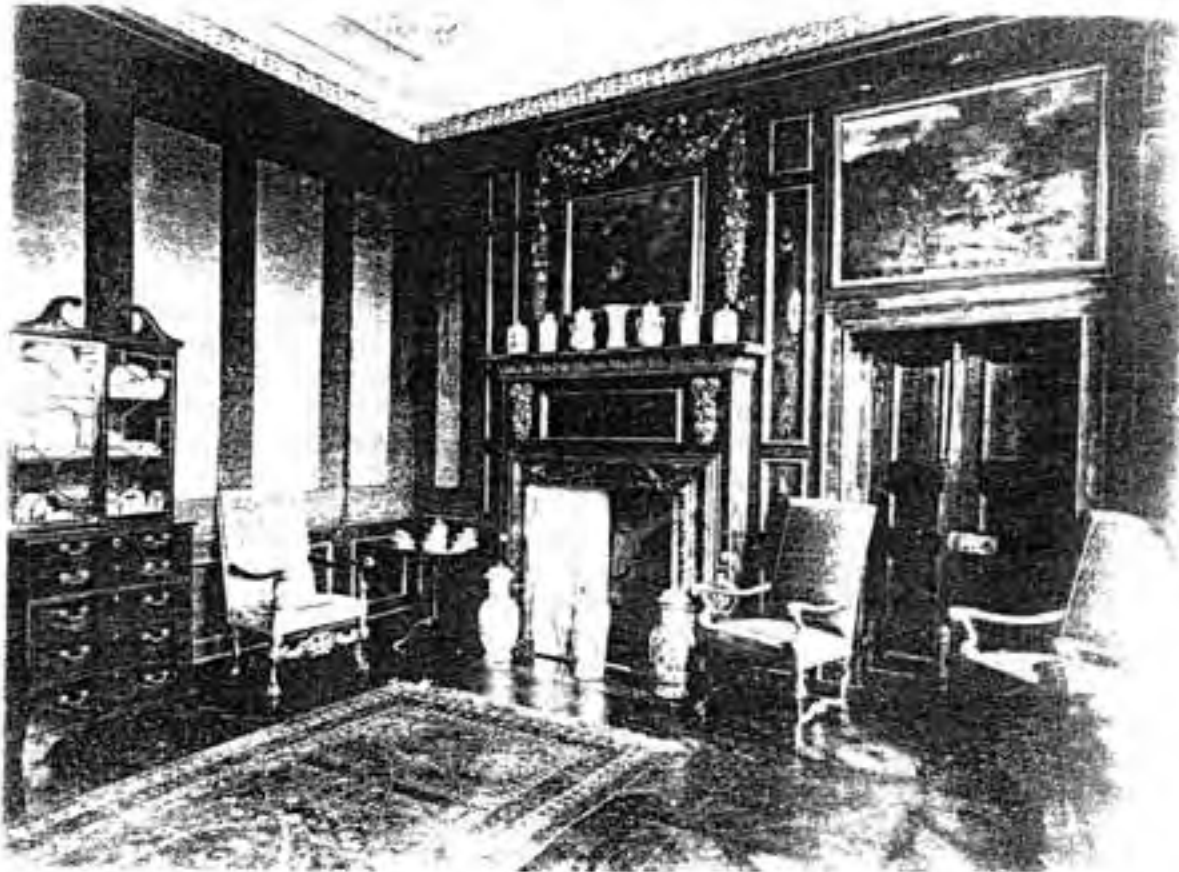
The Antechamber is south facing and rooms on this side of the house have been subject to the effects of a high morning sun. Protection from sunlight and dust was integral to the installation of extravagant furnishings and the inventories contain numerous references to case covers and sun curtains. Above the hangings in the Antechamber are the remains of fittings for protective curtains of 'yealow stript Indian sarsnet' (8) but despite the well documented care of furnishing textiles in the 17th and 18th centuries, the condition of the hangings, particularly along their lower edges, and the overall degree of fading suggests a prolonged period of neglect at some point in their history. A set of impaned hangings of red brocade survives in the Queen's Closet (also south facing). The condition of the brocade is such that when conservation work was carried out in the 1970's, several of the panels had to be replaced with plain silk. Fragments of another set of damask hangings from the Duke of Lauderdale's Bedchamber (also south facing) can be seen in the Museum room of Ham House. In 1879 a visitor to the house describes it as 'dilapidated' with 'marvellous old rooms with lovely delicate silk hangings of exquisitely beautiful tints though mouldering in rags' (9). A photograph of the Antechamber taken in 1904 however, still shows the hangings in relatively sound condition which suggests substantial light damage during during the first half of the century. In a raking light, distinct crease marks and cockling can be seen on the damask panels of the two largest sections; they must have been taken down and folded in storage at some time when deformation of the fibres was already advanced but long before they reached their present state of deterioration.

### Early Conservation

When inspected in the 1980's the hangings were found to be in a very degraded condition. A gap of about 65cm separates the ceiling of one room from the floor of the next at Ham and dust from this cavity had settled in thick layers along the top of each section. Apart from minor running repairs to the split velvet of the border areas, no work had been carried out since the early conservation. No records exist of this work. Early work with thermoplastic adhesives began in the 1950's and from the style of conservation it can be assumed that work on the

damask of the back wall panels (the large central section and one single panel) was completed at that period. The adhesive used was probably Vinamul 6525, a copolymer of polyvinyl acetate and polyvinyl caprate (10), applied to a silk net tulle.

Fig.2: A photograph of the antechamber taken in 1904. The hangings appear to be in relatively sound condition.



The net support had been crudely adhered to the back of each panel and does not extend into the turn backs of the damask. These folds are now particularly fragile. Pigment has been applied to disguise gaps in the weft at the lower edges of the panels, and in conjunction with the effect of the adhesive, has led to further embrittlement. The pattern of the net has marked through to the front of the damask in several places.

The work on the panels facing the fireplace is more difficult to date since couching was well established as a repair technique for the fabric of English country houses at least twenty years previously. Silk thread has been used with a linen support but has disintegrated towards the lower edges of the panels where they have been exposed to the effect of a bright morning sun. Despite the difference in approach to the repair of the two main sections of the hangings, neither method has succeeded in substantially halting the degradation of the damask. Predictably the warp face of the weave has dusted away and in both cases left an imprint on the linen behind the damask.

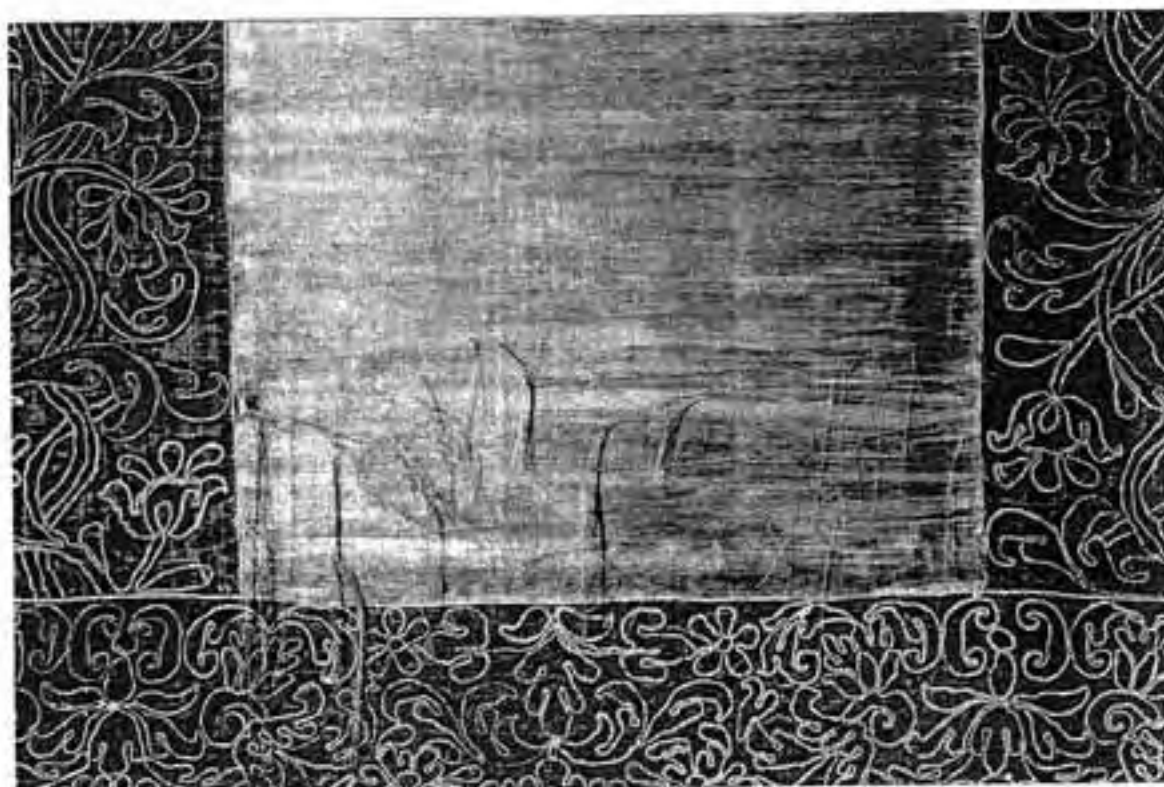


Fig.3: Condition of the lower edge of a panel from the section facing the windows of the antechamber, before recent conservation.

Consequently the weft threads are hanging loose. On those panels conserved using adhesive treated net the extent of the breakdown of the warp face is greater; there are loose weft threads throughout the hangings. Where the couching survives on the second main panel the weave is still intact but the overall condition is still extremely fragile.

#### Failure of Early Conservation Work

To a large extent the breakdown of the early conservation can be attributed to the lack of any monitoring of light levels in the Antechamber. In the early 1980's the room was lit by a series of spotlights and the windows were shuttered. There are no accurate records of how the room was lit before that time; neither are there any records of the condition of the silk damask when it was first conserved. However, both sets of panels were removed from their surrounding borders when they were first treated. This suggests that the silk still retained some flexibility at this time. Consequently both the panels and their conservation materials must have been exposed to further light damage since the 1950's. The effect can clearly be seen on the silk thread used on the panels which were couching. It has survived intact only on the upper sections. The damask itself is more damaged at the lower edges; again, clear evidence of

exposure to high light levels and typical of the angle of exposure in a south facing room.

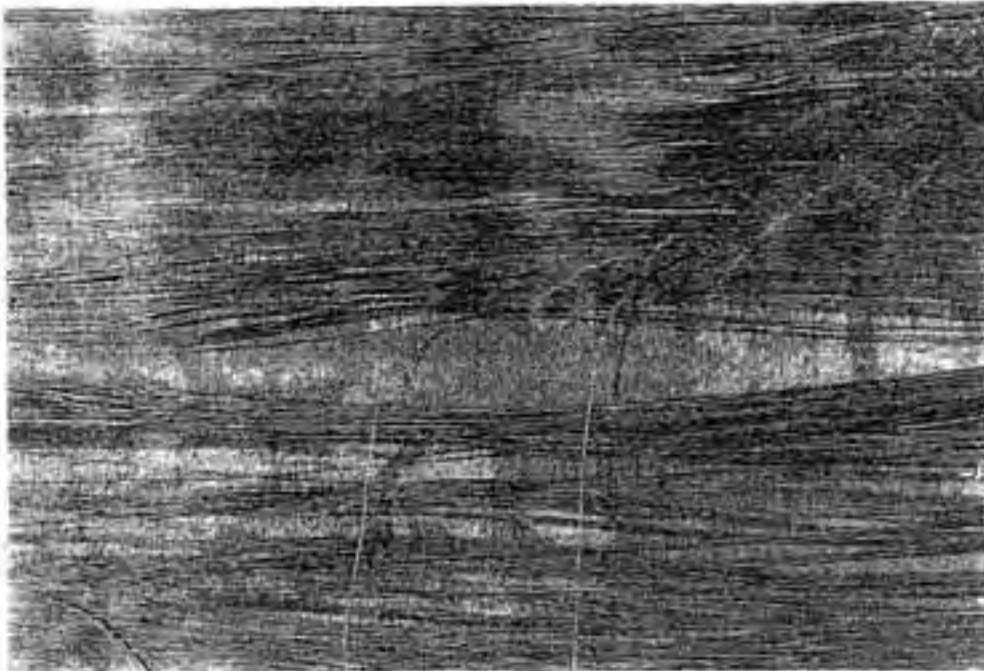
Techniques which would be adequate for similar objects in a controlled environment nearly always need adjustment for objects on open display. In early experiments with adhesive techniques there was a misunderstanding of the consequences of using this method without any supplementary stitching to support complex weaves such as brocades or damasks, commonly used for wall hangings. Part of the nature of such weaves is to present more facets from which light can be reflected. Adhesion alone cannot provide a full support to an uneven surface. The breakdown of the warp face of the damask has been exacerbated by this inevitable unevenness and by the rigidity of the treated net in an uncontrolled environment.

### Recent Conservation Work

In the last six years, two panels from the back wall of the Antechamber have been re-conserved. Techniques and materials have been reassessed in the light of what has been learnt from the failure of the early conservation. Breaking strength of a silk thread (Zwicky and Co - Switzerland) comparable in diameter to that originally used to couch the panels in the Antechamber and two polyester threads (Gutermann U81 and U151) were compared before and after light ageing. The unaged silk thread showed a breaking strength of about 35% of that of the unaged polyester thread. Ten samples of each were placed in a Microscal MK1 light fastness tester for 1140 hours (the equivalent of 47 days of continuous exposure) using a Phillips ML 500W Mercury Tungsten bulb as light source (between 20-22,000 lux). Reduction of strength on light ageing was 5% for U81, 36% for U151 and 34% for the silk threads. Surprisingly U81, the finer of the polyester threads showed better stability on light ageing than U151. Aesthetically U81 is a preferable choice to U151 since couching is less obtrusive with a finer thread but its colour range is limited and for this reason could not be used in the more recent conservation of one of the panels.

In addition to a more informed choice of materials, the recent conservation work has been undertaken within a much wider framework and as part of a more general programme of care for objects on open display. During the last six years a concurrent rota of housekeeping has been established. About one day a month is set aside for the inspection and cleaning of textiles. Running repairs are carried out on objects which are too vulnerable to be moved or as in the case of the hangings, where previous conservation is no longer effective. The size and condition of the large central section from the back wall meant that work had to be carried out in situ. Reversal of the early work could not be considered. The dimensions of this section meant that unless the hangings were vertical it was difficult to work on the central areas without causing damage to the outer panels. The embrittlement of the silk ruled out any possibility of using a stitching technique. A compromise was reached. The loose weft silk which occurred at the base of four of the panels was re-attached using a solution of carboxymethylcellulose.

- Fig. 4: Detail of a panel originally conserved using adhesive treated net. The silk is embrittled and the warp face of the damask has left an imprint on the linen support.



- Fig. 5: Detail of a panel originally conserved by couching with silk threads. The couching has disintegrated and remains of the warp face can be seen on the linen support.



The panels were then covered with dyed polyester gauze (Stabiltex 0). Because the original stitching connecting the panels to the hangings was removed in the early conservation work it was possible to release short sections (20cm) at a time on either side of each panel and take the edges of the Stabiltex around the back, finally restitching both the covering and the damask panel to the sound interlining of the hanging. Four of the panels were completely enclosed, but only two thirds of the central panel was covered, leaving the sounder unfaded section of damask exposed. Stabiltex was chosen for its durability; it has a more crystalline structure than nylon and is thus more resistant to photodegradation and chemical attack; the condition of these panels is such that the present work cannot be modified within the foreseeable future. Stabiltex is denser in appearance than nylon tulle but its visual appearance is quite acceptable when used vertically.



Fig.6: Detail of two panels from the section facing the windows after recent conservation. On the panel on the left, the weft has been re-attached using carboxymethylcellulose. On the panel on the right, the final stage, covering with Stabiltex, has been completed.

The narrow single panel to the right on the back wall was of manageable size and the silk appeared to be in better condition. It was removed intact and re-conserved in the studio. The adhesive coated net had been applied only as a patch; it was

easy to remove manually and reverse the original work. The basic techniques which had been used originally to conserve the hangings were applied in modified form. The support fabrics (dyed Stabiltex O treated with 60% Mowilith DMC2, and cotton lawn) were bonded together on the vacuum hot table before being applied to the damask. Thus the adhesion was stronger between the two support fabrics and only minimal between the bonded supports and the damask. In theory this would act as a supplement to the couching and give just enough adhesion to hold the panel in place while the final part of the treatment - couching the three layers together was undertaken. In practice the structure of the damask weave caused problems as it had in the original conservation. The weak warps held to the support while the brittle wefts tended to pull away.

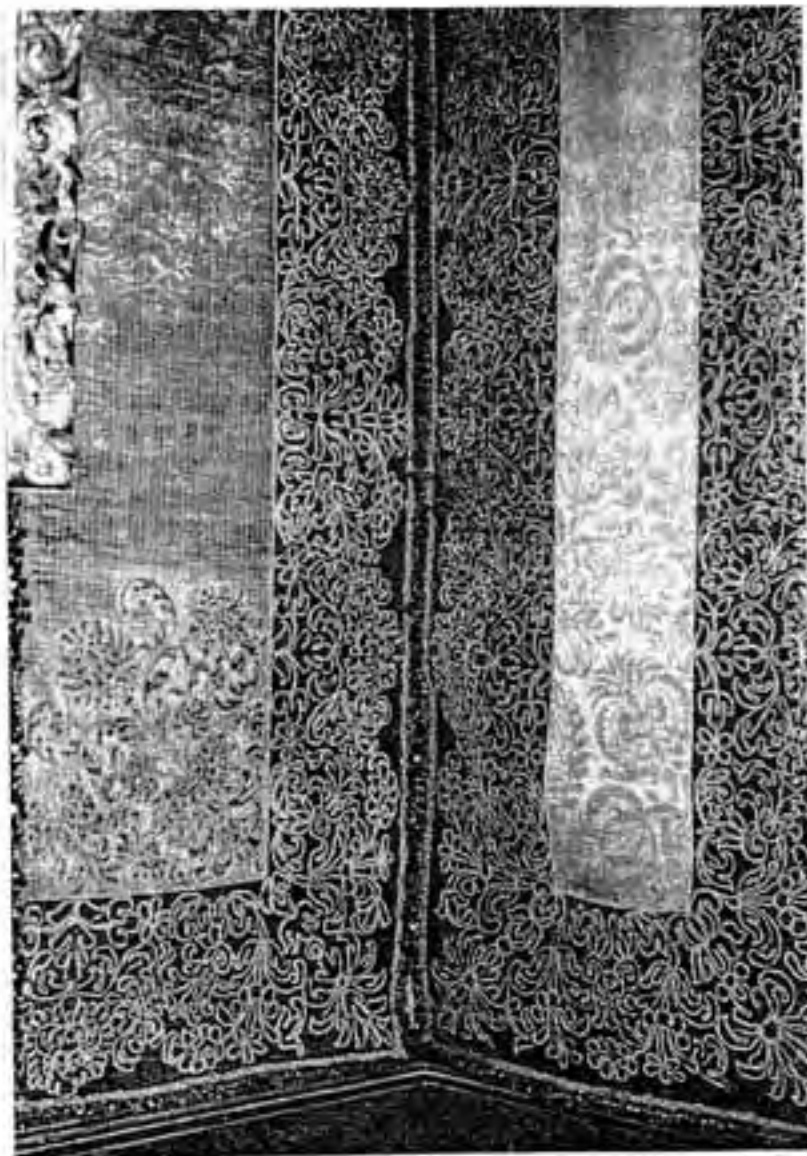


Fig.7: The single narrow panel (left) after conservation.

Attempts to realign the panel resulted in further damage to the silk. The eventual successful completion of the conservation of this panel resulted in a greater understanding of the difficulties of handling silk in such an advanced state of degradation. There are three sections still awaiting conservation. Panels from these sections will be faced with nylon tulle as a temporary protective measure and removed one at a time from their surroundings. They will be transported completely flat to the studio since even folding over a roller is likely to cause further cracking. Greater consideration will be given to planning every move in advance.

### Conclusions

The history of the conservation of these hangings illustrates one of the more obvious advances of the profession. The ability of the conservator to relate choice of method and materials to a wider environmental context.

In the last three years a survey of light levels has been completed at Ham. Sun curtains and supplementary blinds have been fitted and there are plans to refit case curtains. As a result of the survey, the supplementary blinds are lowered to a three quarters position in the morning and altered to a halfway position in the afternoon. It is hoped that a more sympathetic artificial lighting system will be installed perhaps in the form of electrically operated candleabra rather than the spotlights which now illuminate the room. More than fifty years of light damage in this century have led to light levels in the room coming full circle. The hangings can now be viewed in lux levels which approximate to those which have ensured the survival of the hangings for over three hundred years.

### Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Dr. Agnes Timar-Balazsy, National Centre of Museums, Budapest, for the analysis of the dyes. I also wish to thank, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Jo Darrah, Science Section, for the analysis of the metal threads; Boris Pretzel, also of the Science Section for light ageing tests on the silk and polyester threads and Yvonne Shashoua of the British Museum for tensile strength tests on the threads. Special thanks are due to Nicola Gentle and Gill Owens, Textile Conservation Section, Victoria and Albert Museum for their help and encouragement in the preparation of this paper and to Nicola Gentle for the line drawing of the construction of one of the panels from the hangings. Finally I should like to thank Dr. Jonathan Ashley-Smith, Head of Conservation for permission to publish.

### Materials and Suppliers

Silk Thread: Zwicky and Co., CH 8304 Wallisellen, Switzerland.

Polyester Thread: Perivale Gutermann, Wandsworth Road, Perivale, Greenford, Middlesex.



Carboxymethylcellulose sodium salt high viscosity:  
 BDH Limited; P.O. Box 15, Freshwater Road,  
 Dagenham, Essex, RM8 1RP.

Stabiltex 0: Plastok Associates Limited, 79, Market  
 Street, Birkenhead, Wirral, Merseyside  
 L41 6AN.

Mowilith DMC2 (Resibond 50): Trubond Adhesives Limited, Unit 2A,  
 Grove Bell Industrial Estate,  
 Wrecclesham Road, Farnham, Surrey.

Cotton Lawn: MacCulloch and Wallis Limited,  
 25-26 Dering Street,  
 London W1R 0BH.

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- (2) THORNTON, P., Authentic Decor, The Domestic Interior 1620-1920, (1984) 22.
- (3) STAVENOW-HIDEMARK, E., 'The Isabella Chamber at Salsta; A Swedish State Bedroom in the French Taste', Furniture History, Volume 21 (1985) 193-202.
- (4) Dye Analysis of the silk of the damask showed the lilac pink to be lac (Coccus lacca).
- (5) Dye analysis of the silk from the velvet showed the blue to be indigo.
- (6) Analysis of five samples of metal thread showed them to be cast, drawn and rolled wire of gilded silver. The proportions of silver, copper and gold are similar to those calculated to other 17C European threads.
- (7) FOWLER, M J., and CORNFORTH, J., English Decoration in the 18C (1974) 122-123.
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- (9) THORNTON, P., and TOMLIN, M., The Furnishing and Decoration of Ham House, published by the Furniture History Society (1980) 189.
- (10) Identification was inconclusive. The functional groups identified show that the adhesive may be polyvinyl acetate.

# **SOLUTIONS – THE INFLUENCE OF LOCATIONS ON TREATMENTS**

**Post prints of the forum held at**

**The Museum of London**

**19<sup>th</sup> April 1999**

Edited by Sarah Howard



**UKIC**

UNITED KINGDOM  
INSTITUTE FOR  
CONSERVATION  
OF HISTORIC AND  
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TEXTILE  
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## **FOREWORD**

“Solutions – the influence of locations on treatments”, was the title of the forum organised by the UKIC Textile Section to coincide with the Section’s 8<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting.

The forum aimed to look at practical solutions to constraints demanded by site, display, storage, loan conditions and transportation. Speakers, who represented museums, the National Trust and freelance textile conservation studios, emphasised practical and innovative approaches to some unusual and complex conservation problems. This publication includes the talks given by five of the speakers.

Particular thanks go to Frances Hartog for organising the forum and to the Museum of London for hosting the event. Thanks also go to Allison Chester for chairing the presentations and to the members of the textile section committee who helped to make the day run smoothly. Finally, thanks to Zenzie Tinker for her role in helping to proof read this publication.

Sarah Howard

## **CONSERVATION TREATMENT OF 19TH CENTURY SILK DAMASK FIXED WALL COVERINGS AT BRODSWORTH HALL.**

**May Berkouwer and Crosby Stevens**

Textile Conservators (Independent)

### **Introduction**

Brodsworth Hall was built during the 1860's by Charles Sabine Augustus Thellusson. The Thellusson and Grant-Dalton family retained possession of the house for several generations and each added to its decoration and contents. Nonetheless the house slowly went into decline. When English Heritage took on the property in 1990 it was in a state of serious disrepair and a comprehensive programme of conservation was begun.

A conservation strategy for the house and contents was developed. The underlying philosophy was to conserve the house as it had survived into the 1990's and to preserve its many layers of history. The public would then be able to see some of the original splendour as well as later redecoration and eventual decline. Minimal intervention was preferred for treatment wherever possible.

In practice these principles had to be compromised in a number of ways, not least through conservation treatment itself. Even minimal treatments of cleaning and supporting to make safe altered the appearance of objects and changed the atmosphere of decay which was first encountered. In addition pragmatic factors forced adjustments in the arrangement of contents to create a visitor route safe for objects and visitors. Certain objects could not go on open display because of their poor condition and the lack of time or budget to make them sufficiently stable before opening. Other factors included the introduction of environmental control and safety equipment.

Here we will show how the underlying philosophy combined with the immediate conservation needs and practicalities influenced and shaped the treatment of one single object albeit a rather large one, namely the silk wall coverings of the largest room in the house, the Drawing Room.

To help illustrate some conservation points on the Drawing Room wall coverings, reference will be made to the yellow silk damask wall coverings in the South Hall which underwent a similar treatment.

### **The Conservation Programme**

Brodsworth Hall was in very poor condition. The building structure needed a great deal of attention for the roof, chimneys, windows and outside stonework, as well as electrical re-wiring, heating, installation of environmental control measures, fire and burglar alarms. The contents had suffered from light, damp, wear and tear, and poor housekeeping and the resulting problems included insect infestations. The first step was to meticulously document all contents with inventory numbers, descriptions, photographs and records of location.

It was decided to remove all moveable contents from the house to a large off-site store to enable the structural work on the building to be carried out. Very large objects, like statues, which could not be moved were protected with hardboard boxes in their original positions. Structural work and dusty indoor works were thus carried out in an empty house. In situ conservation treatment of fireplaces, painted walls and ceilings were also programmed for when the house was empty, timed to follow works creating dust. The outside stonework was treated last while the re-dressing of the house was underway inside. At times deadlines slipped and incompatible tasks were carried out simultaneously, resulting in some inefficiencies. This was a consequence of the very tight programming of a complex set of tasks involving several teams of contractors.

Conservation treatment of individual objects was carried out by various conservation studios throughout.

The house was opened to the public in July 1995.

### The Drawing Room Wall Coverings

**Description** - The Drawing Room at Brodsworth Hall is a large south-facing room made up of a large main room and a connecting smaller room, measuring in total 17.2 m long x 7.45 m wide.

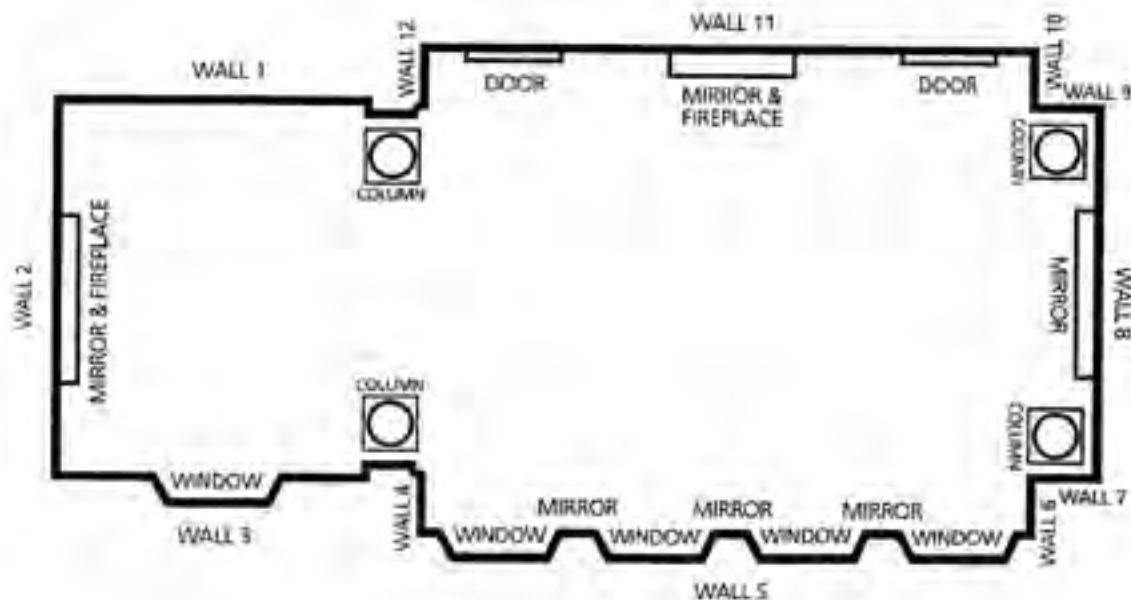


Diagram of Drawing Room (not to scale)

The walls retain their original red silk damask wall coverings installed during the 1860's by Lapworth & Sons. The red silk damask may have been a late alteration from the scheme originally planned: the bill sent in 1863 by Lapworth & Sons, the company that first furnished the house, mentions white watered wall paper for the Drawing Room.

The wall height covered with fabric measures 4.1 m from the skirting boards to the bottom of the ceiling cornice. The walls have a smooth plaster finish. They are covered with cotton bump interlining fabric tacked directly into the plaster, without battens along the edges. The silk damask is stretched over this and also tacked into the plaster. This slightly unusual application may have been a result of having prepared the walls for paper rather than fabric.

The silk damask is of medium weight and appears quite light for furnishing fabric. It has a floral pattern of bouquets in medallions and linking garlands with a repeat of approximately 720 mm. The original colour was a vibrant pink-red, almost magenta, matching the equally bright carpet although all the colours are now much faded where exposed to light. The dye used for the silk damask wall coverings was cochineal.

Gilt moulded wooden frames are installed over the silk damask with metal brackets screwed into the wall through the fabric. The edges are finished with matching gilt wooden fillets.

**Condition** - The wall coverings were in poor condition. There was a great deal of surface dust and black grime, particularly in the upper sections. There was much light damage as well as deterioration caused by airborne pollution from coal dust and smoke. In most areas the colour had severely faded to a much gentler red than the original. The fibres had deteriorated, leaving the fabric friable and splitting in many areas, with fragments breaking off. The lower sections in direct sunlight had suffered the most. There was mechanical damage in the lower sections particularly in vulnerable areas around light switches and fireplaces.

Damp walls and plaster had caused deterioration of the bump interlining and silk damask in places. Tacks holding the fabric and screws holding the gilt mouldings had corroded and caused bleaching and discoloration of the silk damask. In some places salt efflorescence from the damp plaster was bulging behind the silk.

Large areas were covered with cotton damask repair patches, probably installed in the 1970's. The patches were tucked under and held in place by the gilt fillets without stitching, and some were ill-fitting. Raw edges show in places. The patches conceal areas of silk damask in extremely poor condition.

### **Options for Conservation Treatment**

**Aim of conservation treatment** - The Drawing Room is one of the more important Ground Floor Rooms and one that English Heritage wished to show in a more respectable condition. The wall coverings had to be made safe for open display and had to be presented in a way that followed the overall strategy of preserving rather than restoring.

**The options for treatment** - Three main conservation options were identified and are discussed below. Key issues were whether to retain or remove the repair patches, taking into account the weakness of the silk damask and the available budget.

**Full conservation treatment** - Full conservation treatment would have involved taking down the top silk layer of wall covering and probably the cotton bump layer as well for cleaning and support treatment. With this approach the repair patches could be either conserved for reinstatement or packed for storage. Given the large area of the wall space and the shattered condition of the damask this was not really a realistic option, even if there had been unlimited resources. It would have been necessary to separate the panels for handling. This would have been highly interventive and therefore undesirable within the ethos of minimal conservation guiding the treatments at Brodsworth Hall. The practical difficulties of the task would have created severe risks for the textiles particularly in the largest sections, both during taking down and during re-instatement. It is questionable whether the time and funding required would be well-spent as the conserved fabric would have inevitably remained very weak and could not be expected to remain stable indefinitely on open display.

**Replacement** - Replacement of the top layer of silk or of the silk and bump would have involved commissioning a replica fabric and storing the original for reference. This offered a solution that was long lasting. However it would have been prohibitively expensive and the use of a reproduction on such a large scale would have constituted a departure from the general philosophy to conserve what remained of the house. It might also have fundamentally altered the historic feel of the room. It was decided that it would be better to retain the original fabric for as long as its condition would allow.

**In situ first aid treatment** - Another option was to carry out the most essential work for slowing down degradation: surface cleaning, securing loose fragments and support with a conservation fabric. The older repair patches would remain in place to protect and hold the damaged silk behind them. The bump would not be treated. This option fitted well with the conservation philosophy of preserving all the layers of the history of the house and minimal intervention, and it was financially realistic. If in time a different approach were favoured then either full treatment or replacement could still be carried out. However there were also risks with this treatment option: the conservation procedures of cleaning and stabilising might involve a small amount of damage, and the silk might not remain stable for very long after treatment.

**The choice of conservation treatment** - It was decided to follow the strategy of in situ First Aid treatment for most of the walls. However unforeseen building work led to different choices for a few of the smaller panels. Two short walls (numbered 4 and 6), at right angles to the south-facing windows, were in poor and damp condition; the plaster was damaged and in need of repair which could not be carried out without removing the coverings. Once taken down they could not be re-instated without proper treatment. It was decided to give these two panels full conservation treatment and not to reposition the cotton repair patches afterwards. Full conservation of this relatively small area had the added advantage of allowing us to assess the effectiveness of such treatment with a view to possible future treatments on other panels in the room.



The south wall with windows (numbered 5) is long but only had small amounts of silk damask above and to the sides of the windows. The silk damask was made up of many narrow strips, apparently off-cuts, tacked directly onto the wall without cotton bump behind. The silk was in very poor condition and excessively soiled although less faded than other areas as it was not in direct daylight. Building works had to be carried out in this area and so we decided to remove these fragments too. The pieces were stored for reference and the area was later covered with a dyed plain-weave fabric. For this wall it was considered acceptable to use a simple fabric in a suitable colour rather than attempt to replicate the damask. The space is quite small and mostly obscured by window pelmets, mirrors and gilt fillets and ornaments. A variety of maintenance tasks will have to be carried out in this area in the future and a vulnerable fabric would be problematic.

So in this one room the practical circumstances led us to adapt our philosophy into three different solutions with a possibility of moving on into yet another in the future.

#### **Conservation Treatment**

Before any work was undertaken full documentation was completed to record all the gilt wooden elements and the silk damask panel locations and their condition. Trials were carried out to discover whether our intended methods would work and some adjustments were made at this point.

Gilt fillets, mirror frames and ornate gilt mouldings were removed where necessary by furniture conservators from the Tankerdale Workshop.

**Taking down wall coverings** - The coverings from the three smaller walls were taken down in February 1992 as follows.

*Two short walls 4 and 6* - The silk damask was covered with protective nylon net to create a sandwich and this was secured with minimal stitching to the cotton bump fabric.

The tacks along the edges were lifted where possible. In some areas the silk fibres were so deteriorated that the fabric came loose almost of its own accord. Where the tacks were corroded or still secure in the plaster it was safer to cut the fabric around the tacks with a scalpel. The fabric was released from the lower edge upwards.

Once the covering was ready to be taken down, a scaffolding unit was positioned. With two people at the top, two on the middle level and two or three on the ground, the wall covering was lowered onto the floor. On the reverse side a considerable amount of soiling was found to have penetrated through the cracks in the plaster. On wall 4, salt efflorescence had formed on the plaster surface and had caused bulging of the fabric; this had been caused by corroded water pipes in the wall behind.

The wall coverings were sent to the Textile Conservation Studios at Hampton Court Palace for a full conservation treatment of wet cleaning, adhesive support and a nylon net overlay.

*Wall 5* - The coverings of wall 5 were made up of many pieces of silk damask attached directly onto the plaster. Fortunately they were not as friable as the other sections. The coverings were divided into manageable sections at joins. The fabric was cut around the tacks for release.

The sections were lifted down, documented, vacuum cleaned and packed for storage in acid free tissue and acid-free card boxes.

**Protection during building works** - Whilst all the moveable contents at Brodsworth Hall were removed for the duration of the building works, the wall coverings stayed in situ. Treatment of the wall coverings was programmed to take place after building works and wall painting conservation had been completed. Protection was needed until then and was put in place during March - June 1992.

It was decided to install waxed down-proof cambric dust covers. Much thought went into devising a method of attaching the dust covers. At one point we thought we might be able to use existing nails on the top edges of the ceiling cornices which appeared to have been positioned for exactly that purpose. However this would cover up part of the cornices and the wall paintings conservators needed access to these. We decided to remove the gilt fillets along the top and bottom of the silk to give us space to attach the dust covers; the gilt frames remained in place. This also allowed for the furniture conservators to carry out some essential treatment on the fillets.

At this point the silk coverings were given a brief surface vacuum clean using soft brushing to remove thick layers of dust found mainly in the upper sections. The silk was very fragile and caution was needed to avoid breaking up the fabric or removing the surface wefts of the damask.

Severely damaged areas were given a temporary nylon net cover to secure the fragments. These were held by the gilt fillets and minimal stitching to the cotton bump fabric. In the South Hall the silk damask was even more friable. Here the temporary nylon patches were secured with stitches through little polyfelt tabs to relieve strain on the silk.

We had intended to fix the dust covers by stapling into the plaster. This did not work because the plaster had hardened too much with age. In the end we had wooden battens installed along the top edges where the gilt fillets had been, screwed into the wall at intervals. Onto this strips of hooked Velcro were stapled. Dust covers were made to measure with looped Velcro along the top edge. Polyester wadding cushions were attached at the top to raise the dust covers and reduce the strain of their weight on the gilt moulded frames on the wall.

The covers were installed with a generous overlap of at least 150 mm on the joins. The joins were closed with brass safety pins. In awkward areas and around pillars various improvisations with cotton tapes, polyfoam wedges etc. were used to secure the dust covers.

**In situ First Aid Conservation treatment** - In situ work of wall coverings in the Drawing Room started in earnest in August 1994 and was completed during the Autumn. Work was carried out by two conservators working together. May Berkouwer worked on the project almost throughout, assisted at different times by Sarah Foskett, Clare Stoughton-Harris and Crosby Stevens.

Two mobile scaffolding units, Hoover Dustettes vacuum cleaners and a number of lighting units were used. Building and safety regulations required the lighting to operate on 110V, but the dustettes needed 240V, and all needed safe transformers and extension leads. The logistics of managing scaffolding alongside miles of electric cables shared with other teams of workers were challenging and certainly added to the working time in a way that had not been anticipated.

The silk damask was vacuum cleaned with the Hoover Dustettes and light brushing to lift surface dust. Again care was taken not to brush too harshly or to prolong treatment too much as this caused excessive loss of fibres.

Large quantities of nylon net were dyed in three colours to match the different shades in the silk damask caused by fading. Split and fragmented areas were protected with nylon net. The boundaries of these areas were defined by how the net could be secured safely and unobtrusively. We could not stitch through open areas of fabric because it was too friable and stitching caused further damage. The nylon net edges were tucked under the gilt fillets by approximately 30 mm. The net was then secured by stitching closely along the edge of the gilt frames and fillets where the fabric was slightly stronger, using curved needles and cotton thread. The stitching went into the cotton bump fabric behind to give some hold without straining the silk damask too much. Some stitching was also possible in the holes and splits of the silk. However we avoided stitching too close to the fabric as movement of the fabric occurred with changes in relative humidity levels and close stitching might damage the silk.

Bulging salt efflorescence and crumbling plaster had to be removed from behind certain sections. In these areas the silk damask and interlining were released from the lower edge and the gilt frame lifted away a little. Loose material was brushed out. Fortunately the plaster was otherwise in a stable condition.

In certain areas only the lower parts of a panel needed protection and we decided to leave the stronger areas uncovered. However we could not stitch along the horizontal edge of the nylon net across the silk damask, nor could we leave it open as it stretched too much and would sag. This created a practical problem. After much experimentation by Crosby Stevens we developed a method of running threads along the top edge of the net only which could then be pulled taut to hold it up. First we tried transparent nylon threads but these were found to stretch too much. We then used Gutermann Skala thread stitching in three lines approximately 15 mm apart. The ends of the Skala were secured by stitching alongside the edges of the gilt frames into the stronger silk and the bump.

In the South Hall where stitching into the silk damask was problematic anywhere the method was refined by Clare Stoughton-Harris. Here we managed to tuck the ends of the Skala thread under the gilt fillets by using thin Melinex strips to send the thread through underneath them. The Skala threads were then secured by tying around the gilt frames. The result was barely visible and worked satisfactorily.

Changes in relative humidity cause the silk damask to expand and contract, which results in sagging and tightening of the fabric. Even though environmental controls are now in place and conditions are reasonably stable, we considered this a strong reason for keeping the stitching in holes between fragments to a minimum.

The treatment subtly improved the general appearance of the room and removed some of the feeling of dilapidation, but the overall impression is nonetheless of minimal intervention.

**Replacement fabric on Wall 5** - A chintz furnishing fabric was chosen to replace the silk put into store, selected for its colour and weight. It was used with its reverse side showing to avoid the sheen.

The wall was covered with new cotton bump interlining fabric over which the new fabric was stretched. Tacks and staples were used for installation.

**Re-instatement of panels on Walls 4 and 6** - The silk damask panels for these walls had been conserved at the Textile Conservation Studios. We re-hung these fragile sections using Velcro fastener. Re-instatement was carried out in November 1994.

Walls 4 and 6 themselves were treated by the appropriate specialists, the cracks filled and areas re-plastered. New wooden battens were embedded into the plaster for re-hanging of the panels with Velcro. Wooden plugs were positioned in awkward corners where battens were unsuitable and for the repositioning of gilt fillets. This work caused a slight alteration to the shape of the wall.

The walls were covered with new cotton bump interlining fabric stapled into the new wooden battens; tacks were used in shaped areas either into the wooden plugs or into plaster. For the top and lower edges 50 mm wide Velcro, along the vertical edges 30 mm wide Velcro was used. Strips of the hooked side were stapled onto the wooden battens.

For re-hanging we adapted a method used at Hampton Court Palace as follows. The conserved panel was laid out on a board covered with smooth Melinex which would allow it to slide. The piece was lined up in front of the intended wall in such a way that it would slide underneath the scaffold between the legs. The front of the scaffold was covered with Tyvek to prevent abrasion of the panel. The top edge of the panel was then attached to a loose batten with Velcro. The batten was gently hoisted up with cords while sliding the panel underneath the scaffold towards the wall and upwards without touching the scaffold.

Once hoisted into position the panel was transferred to the Velcro on the walls. The fastening was adjusted along all edges until the correct position and tension were achieved.

The gilt fillets were re-instated by the Tankerdale Workshop furniture conservators. Some adjustment was necessary to allow for the additional thickness of extra layers of bump and Velcro.

#### **Environmental Control and Housekeeping**

Environmental control methods have been put in place and will help preserve the wall coverings for as long as possible. Light levels are kept low during the open season. The relative humidity is under controlled by temperature regulation. There is a good programme of conservation cleaning and the wall coverings are being monitored. During the closed winter season the house is 'put to bed' in a similar way to National Trust houses. The wall coverings remain uncovered because of the practical difficulties of moving scaffolding around the room and the problem of securing dust covers. The rooms are mostly in darkness during the closed season.

#### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to acknowledge the role of Caroline Cary-Whitworth, Regional Curator, in leading the project, and the English Heritage house staff at Brodsworth Hall, in particular George Newton, for unfailing practical support.

#### **Suppliers Information**

Brass Safety Pins, 1", No. 42241

Central Trimmings Ltd., 59 Knowsley Street,  
Manchester M8 8JF  
Tel. 0161-834 1485.

Cotton Bump Interlining ST72

F.R. Street, Frederick House, Hurricane Way,  
Wickford Business Park, Wickford,  
Essex, SS11 8YB  
01268 766677

Downproof Cotton Cambric

Whaleys (Bradford) Ltd., Harris Court, Great  
Horton, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD7 4EQ  
01274 576718

Conservation Nylon Net

Dukeries Textile & Fancy Goods Ltd.,  
Fearfield Buildings, 4 Broadway (off Stoney  
Street) Lace Market, Nottingham NG1 1PR  
0115 950 7488

Gutermann Cotton Thread	John Lewis and MacCulloch & Wallis, London
Gutermann Skala Polyester Thread	Gutermann Ltd., Wadsworth Road, Greenford, Middlesex, UB6 7JS
Velcro	Selectus Ltd, Biddulph, Stoke-on-Trent, ST8 7RH

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## Papering the nation: English 19th century wallpapers

'The history of wallpaper in the mid-19th century is dominated by two issues - the growth of new middle-class markets and the massive expansion of the industry arising from the introduction of steam-powered machines'

Joanna Barham 'The English Response: Mechanization and Design Reform'  
in L.Hoskins (ed.) *The Papered Wall*, Thames & Hudson, 1994

At the beginning of the 19th century the French wallpaper industry was dominant. Its manufacture was of a high standard and French papers were regarded in England as representing the height of fashionable style. Although tariffs were charged on foreign goods being imported into England, English wallpapers were themselves subject to substantial Excise duties, which, according to the Government Inquiry of 1835, hindered expansion and made it difficult for English manufacturers to compete with their rivals abroad.

In spite of the development, in 1805, of technology which enabled the production of continuous paper, wallpapers continued for another 20-30 years to be made up of small sheets pasted together before printing and the method of printing remained a craft-based process - slow, labour-intensive, expensive. In the early 1830s the British produced annually approximately one million rolls of wallpaper printed in this way but increasing use of continuous paper in the 1830s, mechanization of the industry in the 1840s, and the gradual removal of Excise duties had a dramatic effect. By 1874 the British wallpaper industry was churning out in the region of 32 million rolls annually. These changes coincided with an enormous increase in the population of England and Wales and a similar increase in incomes. In the 1870s there was a boom in speculative building and by the turn of the century almost 77% per cent of the population lived in urban areas. With almost 90% of its output machine-produced, the French ousted from their position as arbiters of wallpaper fashion, global export markets established and greatly increased domestic consumption of a range of wallcovering products wider than ever before, the British industry was regarded as occupying the leading position in world wallpaper manufacture and the market was saturated with cheap wallcoverings.

This lecture provides a general overview of these developments, focusing in particular on the range of products manufactured, the differences between hand- and machine-produced papers and other wallcoverings, and shows how different types were used in decorative schemes of the period.

**Christine Woods**

**June 2001**

## Guidelines For Planning Architectural Finishes Investigations

By Frank S. Welsh

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The foundations for these guidelines were developed in outline form by Thomas H. Taylor, Jr., Chief Architectural Conservator of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, in Virginia USA. They have been developed and edited by Frank S. Welsh.

They were issued as a special publication with *Finish Notes*®, a biannual newsletter produced by the Frank S. Welsh company of Bryn Mawr, Philadelphia, USA, and appeared with the Spring 1994 issue. We are indebted to Frank Welsh for permission to reproduce them.

### Introduction

It is often confusing for the individual responsible for an historic site to know how to initiate a paint analysis project. It has become a very specialized field of research over the past decade. These guidelines are designed to help you not only plan for but also specify, administer and review an investigation and microanalysis of historic architectural paints and wallpapers.

### The Preparation

Since the methods for investigating historic finishes vary among specialists, clients should discuss the project with the specialist in the early planning stages. This is helpful for both large and small projects, either public or private. Before you contact the specialist, collect information about the building: its location, age, architectural style and historical significance. National register forms are excellent documents for this purpose. You should also anticipate the scope of the project - the spaces you want investigated and the level of detail for the microanalysis. The scope might be minimal for example, a quick on-site survey to find out if any original paints survive on the exterior of your building, or an assessment of the amount or condition of original decorative painting. On the other hand the project's scope might be extensive and require a comprehensive study of finishes in every room to determine the color and composition of several layers of coatings from different periods. Your objectives for the architectural finishes investigation should be clearly defined. Do the early finishes simply need to be



investigated for the sake of documentation only or do you also need to reproduce them.

### Setting Things Up

Help the specialist get to know your project quickly and easily by compiling a summary of historical and architectural background information as described in "The Preparation". One of the easiest ways for us to help you is to arrange for a site visit so the specialist can see the building and the condition of the finishes first hand. When distance and travel costs are constraints then a good assortment of photographs must suffice. In either case be aware of this and be prepared to provide as much of the relevant historical and architectural documentation that exists in order to introduce the building. Old photos, letters, drawings, or even historically associated objects may shed light on historic finishes and/or colors.

Explain what the eventual preservation objective is for the structure. Is it going to be restored and interpreted to visitors or just preserved as is or maybe even renovated for adaptive reuse. If there are any constraints on the project, now is the tie to make them known. Examples: a tenant who lives on the second floor of the house who needs a day's notice before anyone can come in, or a government agency which requires a signed release of liability or specific insurance coverage.

### Requesting Proposals

After all of the necessary information is gathered and the specialist has been contacted, you should request a proposal for your paint analysis project. If yours is a government project, you may need to speak with and request proposals from several individuals. Use the following three points to help you specify what you want in your request for proposals (RFP). (1) Make sure that everyone you request proposals from is provided with the same information and that each knows your project requires more than one bid. (2) Make sure that you seek individuals with similar qualifications and experience. (3) Seek proposals from individuals with the same level of expertise that is appropriate for your project.

Some projects are important enough to warrant a second opinion. This may occur for instance, when the analysis of pigments using polarized light microscopy is essential. Other potential problem areas involve confirmation of paint layers, paint colors, color analysis using spectrophotometry, media analysis using Fourier Transform Infrared Micro-Spectroscopy (FTIR), fiber identification in

wallpapers, etc. If a company you would like to do the job lacks the necessary equipment or finds something that they are unfamiliar with during the job, they should be prepared to call upon and work with a more experienced specialist with more high-tech instruments. In other words, determine in advance if there is anything your specialist may not be able to accomplish and be prepared to call in a consultant's consultant to investigate that portion of the project. Don't put yourself in the awkward position of not knowing whom to consult if presented with confusing findings or conclusions.

### Contracts And Agreements

Contracts are always important. Sometimes a verbal agreement will suffice. Other times a letter or even a purchase order is satisfactory. Occasionally though detailed contracts are essential. The most common one is the A, I, A's "Standard Form of Agreement" between Architect and Consultant for Special Services". Contracts serve different purposes for different projects. Basically they serve to protect both parties in the event there is an unforeseen circumstance or a misunderstanding.

### Getting Things Started

#### The Investigation and Sampling

Be prepared for the on-site investigation and help the consultant by providing a good work table, chair, extension cord, light, and ladders necessary to access all painted surfaces in need of sampling. Have all files, old photos, documents and notes ready for the analyst's review. The investigation usually will start with a survey of interior rooms or of the exterior in order to gain a quick overview of paint layering, color distribution, and general types of finishes. It also allows the analyst to plan for the number of samples to take and to determine the best location for on-site microscopical examination and subsequent comprehensive laboratory analysis. This survey also provides the opportunity to discover any hidden decorative wall paintings by using a bright raking light that accentuates the relief of the patterns.

When the sampling begins the analyst's objectives are to discover not only the best color evidence but also the best layering evidence. The samples are generally no larger than 1/4 inch in size. The principal tools used in the sampling process are scalpels, X-acto knives, and occasionally miniature saws and drills. Always discuss the techniques of sampling beforehand if you are concerned. Keep in mind that the size of a sample and the quantity of

samples is less important than the selection of a good sample. The substrate (wood or plaster) must be removed at the same time. Because of the scraping and cutting involved in sampling, a paint investigation sometimes may seem intrusive. If not done carefully it can actually be destructive.

Samples should never be taken all around a room at sight or eye level. This approach is not only obtrusive but it precludes the opportunity of finding the best evidence of layering and of original colors. Original colors are best located in corners and underside edges of features, where wet paint when first applied accumulated in thicker layers. Each sample's location should be carefully identified both verbally and diagrammatically. Observations about the architecture, the finishes, their condition, and evidence of finish removal should be recorded in field notes. Photographs are taken to document the spaces or any unique characteristics of the site.

The person examining the samples will usually be the same person who extracts them from the structure. However, time and financial constraints sometimes dictate that you have to select, take and mail the samples to the analyst yourself. You may be able to remove an entire element or even part of a feature to send off for analysis. The importance of careful sample selection and extraction can not be over emphasized because it directly affects the outcome of the microanalyses.

For the evaluation and determination of decorative painting, exposure windows must be made to reveal the patterns and colors and their surface appearance and condition. This is accomplished by carefully removing all layers of later paints which cover the artwork. A few paint samples here and there, though, never suffice for this type of peeling and revealing. This type of conservation effort takes a great deal of time, patience and expertise because often methodologies must be devised which work without harming the original paints.

## In the Lab - Microanalysis

### Examining the samples

The initial examination of samples in the laboratory typically can be started with the unaided eye, then possibly with magnification using a hand-held magnifier, and finally microscopically - all depending upon the size and nature of the samples. They may be unmounted fragments such as small slivers or chips or even sections of the actual features. In the process notes are taken to

identify the substrate - plaster, wood, metal, or masonry. There may be occasions where the type of plaster, the species of wood or the type of metal and/or factory finishes are useful if not essential to identify.

At the time of the microscopical examination, the stereomicroscope is the first instrument used, with a magnification range of 10-105X. With it the analyst primarily examines layers to determine the nature of a coating and the general color. The samples can then be mounted for crosssectional analysis in wax or resin if necessary. The objective of the stereo microscopical analysis is to determine the general composition, texture, thickness, gloss, and color of each layer of historical significance. In this process the analyst observes any prime coats and the presence of sealers on plaster such as glue or shellac that may have been applied prior to painting or papering. Finish coats are typically differentiated by trapped accumulations of dirt between layers. If walls were papered once, the microscopist might be fortunate enough to have some evidence of those fibers. If so the observations can be noted for inclusion into the lab data.

Oftentimes during analysis the analyst notices small particles of pigments (called agglomerates) or thin layers of clear or tinted glazes. These can be removed for examination and analysis with another microscope using higher magnification. Generally this process requires a compound microscope called a polarized light microscope (100X-1000X). The identification of pigment composition is essential for understanding the nature of a paint or coating and also its original color and possibly its age. With the polarized light microscope a particle's physical and optical characteristics can be identified. A white lead pigment can be distinguished from a titanium dioxide white pigment, and a cotton fiber can be distinguished from a hemp or jute fiber. Microchemical tests can also be performed to identify media, distinguishing for example, a distemper paint from an oil paint. Metals and finishes such as galvanizing can also be analyzed and specifically determined.

When neither the stereomicroscope nor the polarized light microscope, in trained hands, can answer the question challenging the analyst, then supplementary instrumental analysis must be used. This is typically done by a lab which has the resources to own the instruments and use them frequently. Supplemental instrumental analyses include: X-ray diffraction, scanning electron microscopy (SEM), and Fourier Transform Infrared Micro-Spectroscopy (FTIR).

In compiling the laboratory data the major effort is to

thoroughly describe the finishes of importance to the project, including: the number of layers of coatings, the types of coatings, i.e., paint, stain, varnish, paper, etc.; the colors; the gloss and any decorative effects achieved by multi-layer applications. Other characteristics might include: film thickness; hardness; opacity or translucency; film texture, ie., ropiness, sand finish, etc.; solubility, and any descriptions of dirt, grime, soot or other surface accretions. You should look for and expect this level of detail on the projects you deem important. It promotes accuracy, reliability and credibility.

To be continued...

Frank Welsh is a noted American analyst of old and modern architectural paints, wallpapers, fabrics and other coatings. He has performed analysis on hundreds of restoration projects in both the USA and other countries since 1974. He may be contacted at 859 Lancaster Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010. Tel: 215-525-3564. Fax: 215-525-1333.

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(President)

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## WALLPAPER CONSERVATION AT THE LONGFELLOW NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE: PARLOR AND DINING ROOM

Elizabeth Kaiser Schulte\*

**Abstract**—This paper describes the *in situ* treatment of two historic wallpapers in the Longfellow National Historic Site, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The papers, hung in the dining room and parlor, were machine printed. They were installed during the 1880's and between 1844-46, respectively. The defects and deterioration problems are discussed. These include: structural defects involving the plaster and its foundation; support defects; design layer defects; and surface accretions, coating and overpaint. Then, the treatment steps are discussed. These include: structural consolidation; consolidation of the support; cleaning; compensation of support and design; and application of a protective barrier.

### I. INTRODUCTION

DURING the summer of 1977, three graduate fellows from the Winterthur/University of Delaware Art Conservation Program, Laura Juszcak, P. Christine King Young and I, conserved the wallpaper in the dining room and parlor of the Longfellow National Historic Site in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Anne Clapp, Paper Conservator of the Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum, surveyed the wallpaper prior to the project. Based on her survey, it was decided to treat the paper *in situ*. In many areas, the wallpapers, which were not backed, were so firmly adhered that removal would have created too high a risk of damage. Also time constraints favored *in situ* treatment.

Both of the wallpapers were machine printed. The dining room wallpaper, installed during the 1880's, shows the influence of Charles Eastlake, the Victorian aesthete. It contains a stylized floral design printed in brown paint with a linear background ornamentation of gold metallic paint. The support is rag paper, composed primarily of linen fibers. The parlor paper, supposedly selected by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's wife, Fanny, was installed sometime between 1844 and 1846 following their 1843 wedding. Its naturalistic design, characteristic of the Rococo Revival, contains a large floral pattern printed primarily in red, green and grey balanced by grey and white ribbon scrolling. Its support is composed of bast fibers, probably hemp or ramie. This paper was hung over an older paper of Chinese origin which depicts a landscape. The chief pigment used in the older paper's design was malachite, and paper mulberry fibers comprise its support.

### II. DEFECTS AND DETERIORATION PROBLEMS

NUMEROUS DEFECTS and deterioration problems plagued the wallpapers: structural defects involving the plaster and its foundation; support defects; design layer defects; and surface accretions, coating and overpaint.

Insecurities in the plaster support were most critical in the dining room, where the plaster had detached from the laths in several places. Holes in the plaster

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from nails and screws were numerous in both rooms. Each paper was extremely fragile and brittle. Losses and tears in the paper supports, often occurring along plaster cracks and cleavage sites, were numerous (Figs. 1 and 2). Extensive cleavage between the layers of wallpaper was a significant problem in the parlor (Fig. 2).<sup>1</sup> Losses in the design area of the parlor paper resulted primarily from external forces such as abrasion from furniture movement.

Water damage caused by a leaky roof stained the paper, especially at the corners. Heavy dirt and soot accumulations from coal heating vents collected on the paper in all areas not covered by a work of art or a piece of furniture (Fig. 3). The pictures seem to have protected the paper to a certain extent. In the dining room, additional staining and darkening resulted from the uneven varnish coating. In areas where the furniture sat against the wall, staining from furniture polish also resulted (Fig. 4).

### III. TREATMENT

THE *in situ* treatment involved the following steps: 1) structural consolidation; 2) consolidation of the support; 3) cleaning; 4) compensation of the support and design; and 5) application of a protective barrier.

I shall begin by describing the treatment of the dining room wallpaper. The first step after preparing condition reports and photo documentation involved structural repairs. Plaster detached from the laths was re-adhered using an acrylic latex copolymer masonry binder, "Acryl 60."<sup>2</sup> This was applied by means of a large syringe inserted through holes in the plaster. After application, pressure was then applied to the wall to insure contact between the plaster and the laths.<sup>3</sup> The cracks and holes were filled with a 1:1 mixture of fine sand and lime. Damaged plaster which had caused holes or tears in the wallpaper was, of course, readily detectable. But when the crack or hole was covered by the paper, it could only be detected under close visual and tactile examination of the wall surface. When the hole or crack was concealed, it was exposed before filling, by incising the paper along pattern lines and peeling the paper back.

Before consolidating the support, we carefully surface cleaned the paper by vacuuming the wall with a brush attachment through a plasticized fiberglass screen. This removed some of the dust, dirt and other accumulations that could have become lodged in the paper during consolidation.

After completion of vacuuming and structural repairs, the tears and areas of cleavage were consolidated with a 1:1 mixture of wheat starch paste and methyl cellulose made up according to the packages' directions. We used proprietary products because we wanted a paste that would be easy to obtain, easy to make and, due to the quantities needed, not terribly expensive. We had tested these products prior to the start of the project.<sup>4</sup> The adhesive's consistency was adjusted according to circumstances.

Several techniques were used to consolidate the paper support. Where the paper was torn and the wall exposed, the paste was brushed directly on the wall. Pieces of plaster often accumulated in the bottom of the tears so these areas were cleaned before adhering dislodged flaps to avoid piercing the paper. When there was no area of exposed wall and blind cleavage was detected by the use of raking light and by the emission from the wall of a hollow sound when tapped, the wall was



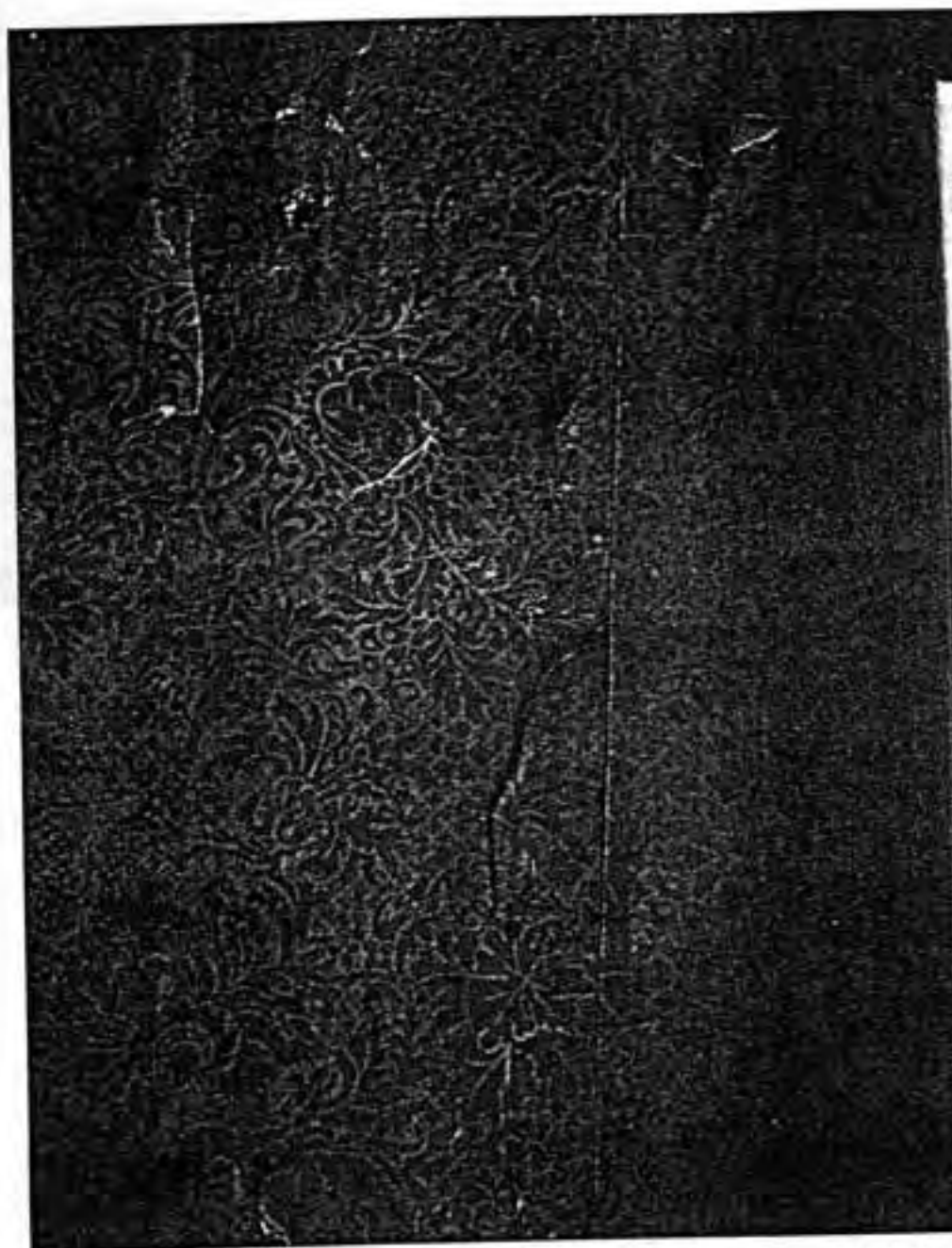


FIG. 1 Dining room paper before treatment. Raking light detail of tears, losses, blind cleav-  
and holes in the plaster.



FIG. 2 Parlor paper before treatment. Detached flap exposing underlying paper. Tears in paper along plaster cracks evident in area left of flap. Waterstaining along top edge.



FIG. 3 Parlor paper before treatment. Heavy dirt and soot accumulation. Design loss from furniture abrasion at lower left.

exposed by incising the paper following the design pattern and opening the flap with a spatula. The wall was then cleaned with an airbulb, paste was applied to the wall with a brush, the flap was re-attached to the wall, and the area around the incision was blotted with a cotton ball to absorb any excess paste or moisture. This helped prevent staining. The alternative method utilized spinal tap and butterfly needles<sup>7</sup> to inject paste into closed cleavage pockets. The detached areas were then re-attached by gentle pressing with a cotton ball. The butterfly needle was especially useful when working in corners. Old patches were also removed at this time with scalpels and moist swabs.

After consolidation of the paper support, the wallpaper was cleaned. The dark, uneven, discolored, resinous coating was removed with acetone and large cotton swabs<sup>8</sup> (Figs. 4 and 5). During cleaning, the over-paint was also removed.

After cleaning, the support and design were compensated. Losses in the support were repaired by inserting a paper of similar texture and thickness. The paper was first toned with watercolor to approximate the background color of the wallpaper. The outline of the loss was recorded by placing a piece of paper over the loss and tracing its contour. The tracing paper was then placed on top of the insert paper and the outline of the loss was transferred to the insert paper by perforating it with a probe. The perforations were then scored with a scalpel and feathertorn. The inserts were applied to the wall with a methyl cellulose/wheat starch paste mixture. The design motifs, which were easily reproducible due to the repeats, were penciled in and inpainted with watercolors. The background color was more accurately toned at this point (Fig. 6).

The treatment of the parlor wallpaper basically followed the same steps as that of the dining room paper. Variations did occur along each step. The first step, that of structural repairs, was a very minor one. Only holes in the plaster needed to be filled. Again this was done with the 1:1 mixture of sand and lime.

After carefully vacuuming through a plasticized fiberglass screen, the mildly flaking paint layer was consolidated with a brush coat of gelatin. Testing prior to the consolidation showed that solvent cleaning could be successfully accomplished through the gelatin layer.

Consolidation of the paper support followed consolidation of the paint layer. This process was complicated by the fact that the paper was multi-layered and cleavage had occurred not only between the wall and the paper, but between the layers of the papers. In some areas, the two papers were still adhered. However, when re-adhering the bottom layer to the wall, separation between the layers would occur due to the action of the moisture of the paste on the water soluble adhesive used to attach the upper paper. Because syringes were used, the moisture could not be blotted out. The consolidation sequence was such that the bottom layer was first attached to the wall and then the top layer of the paper was re-adhered to the lower layer. The syringe was the most valuable tool when dealing with the consolidation of layered papers. A methyl cellulose/wheat starch paste was used as the adhesive.

The paper along the baseboards and parts of the upper molding was lifted and a strip of mulberry paper approximately six inches wide was pasted to the wall. The wallpaper was then pasted to the mulberry paper. This was done to give the paper support and to provide that the extremely fragile paper would not have to conform to the sharp angles of the molding. The mulberry paper provided a smoother transition to the baseboard molding.

Large detached pieces of the wallpaper were backed with Japanese paper

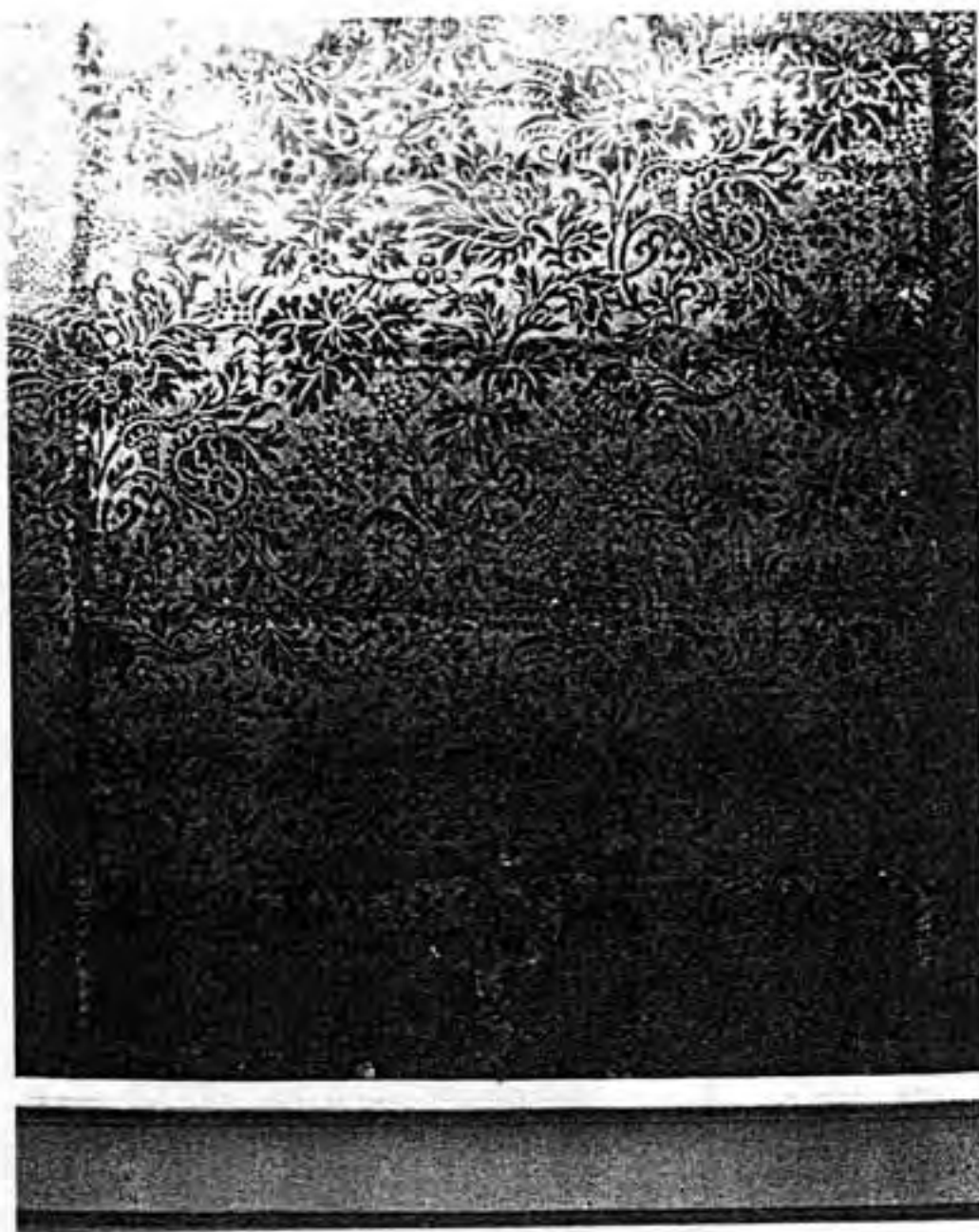


FIG. 4 Dining room before treatment. Uneven varnish coating and staining from furniture polish.

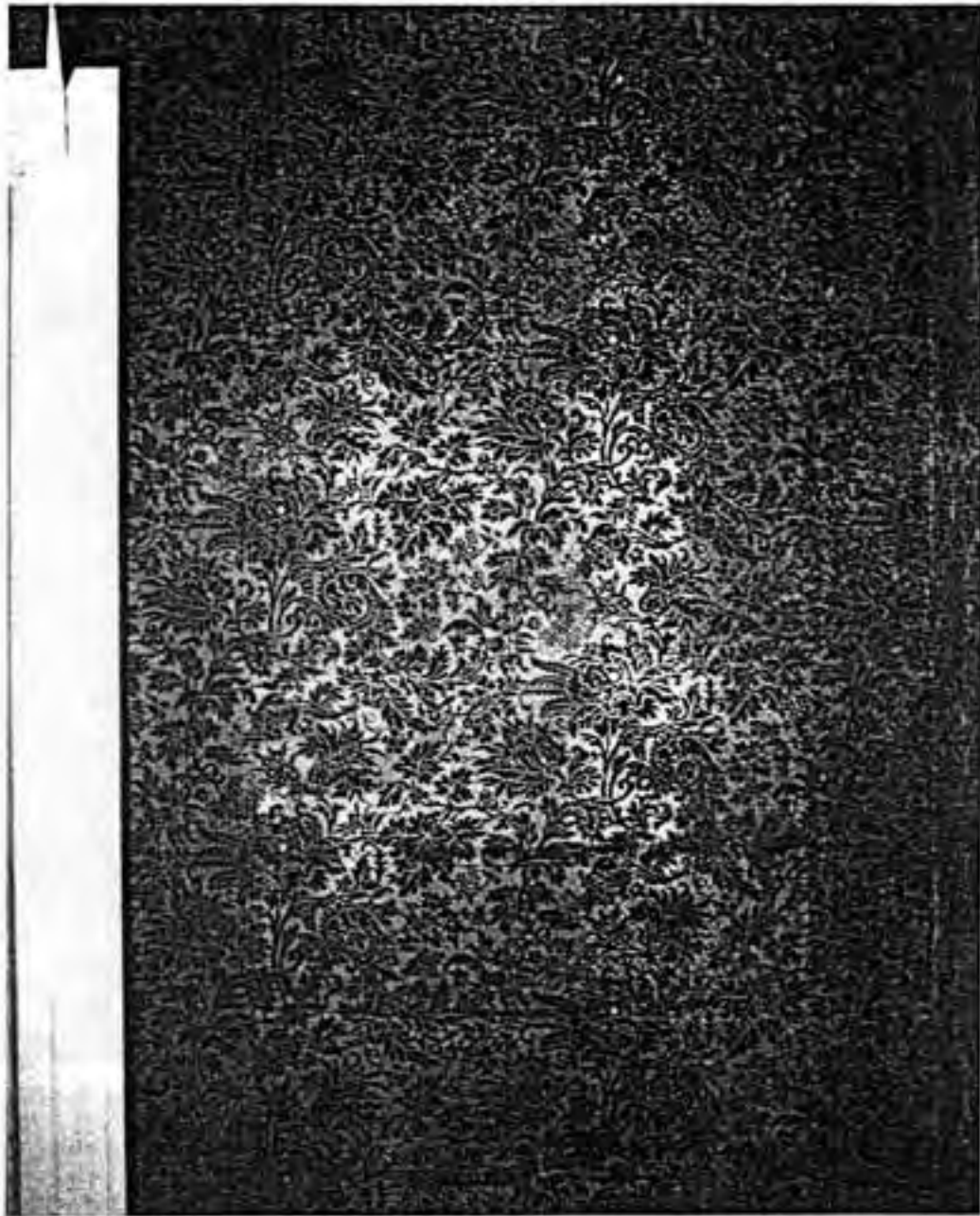


FIG. 5 Same wall as Figure 4 after cleaning of the uneven varnish coating and staining from furniture polish.



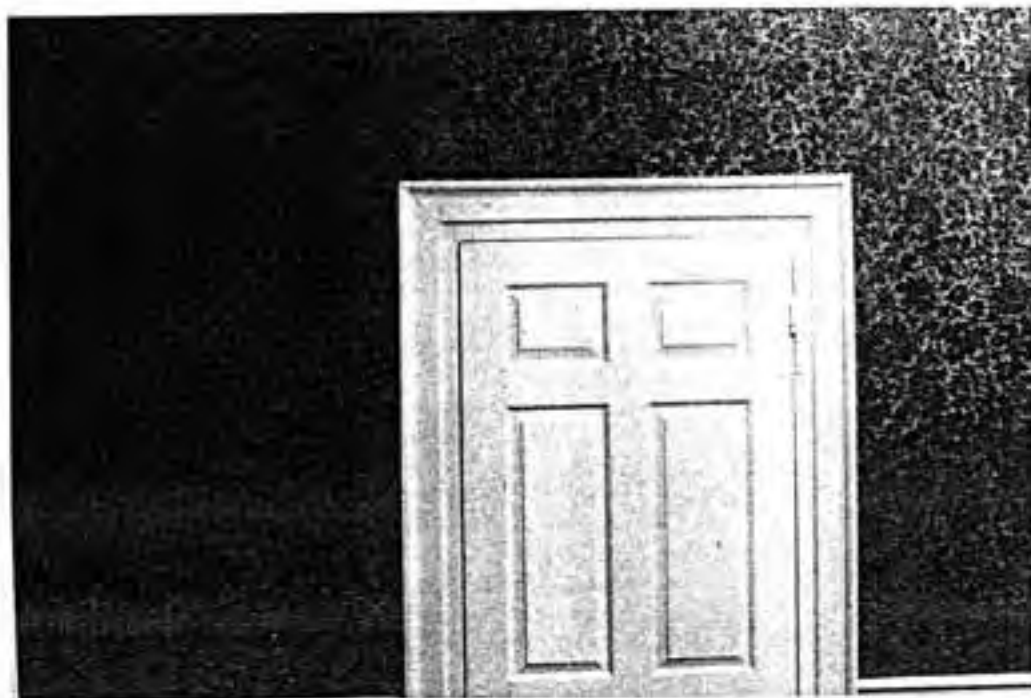


FIG. 6 One of the walls in the dining room after treatment.

before re-adhering to the wall. One flap was re-attached to the wall with hinges in order to permit viewing of the handpainted Chinese paper below. This flap, located behind a desk, will be accessible for study purposes.

Following the consolidation, the paper was cleaned. A 9% solution of ammonia was used in the white areas. Acetone and a hexane/methyl ethyl ketone mixture were used on the rest of the paper.

Once cleaning was completed, design and support compensation were started. Three methods were used. Small losses were inserted in a manner similar to that used in the dining room. Areas of exposed mulberry paper along the baseboards were sized with gelatin and inpainted with watercolors. Patches for large losses were inserted using aforementioned techniques and reproduction wallpaper which had previously been made from this room.<sup>8</sup> These inserts were then toned with watercolor.

As a final step, both sets of wallpaper were given a protective coating of Acryloid B-72 in toluene. Because it originally had a semi-gloss surface, the dining room was brush coated with a 12 1/2% solution. The parlor was brush coated with a 4% solution. This coating was applied to give the paper protection from dirt, airborne plaster and sawdust that would result from the continuing restoration of these two rooms and the rest of the house over the next five years.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

THE *in situ* treatment detailed above stabilized the wallpapers and improved their appearance. Because of the treatment, it was possible to retain the wallpaper as an integral part of the house, and in this respect, the treatment was quite successful.

The parlor paper was the more deteriorated of the two papers. Deterioration, especially that caused by staining and soiling, was so advanced by the onset of treatment that irreversible damage had occurred. The main goal with this room was to preserve the paper as much as possible. That goal was attained. From an aesthetic viewpoint, the appearance of the paper also was improved. However, this improvement can only be termed comparative. It still remained quite discolored, lacking its original crispness. The visual improvement of the dining room paper after treatment was more pronounced.

The treatment was accomplished during an eight-week period by three full time conservators. Members of the curatorial staff, acting in a paraprofessional capacity, assisted with various steps. It was feasible to integrate such work with the operation of the house without total disruption. Except when using solvents, the two rooms were open for tours during this time, in part to inform the public about the conservation effort.

*In situ* treatment proved to be a practical way to address the problem of six hundred square feet of deteriorated wallpaper, to make it exhibitible without an exorbitant expenditure of time or money.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I WISH TO THANK Anne Clapp for her guidance and the staff of the Longfellow National Historic Site, especially Kathy Catalano for her assistance and great interest in this project.

#### REFERENCES

1. The water soluble adhesive used to attach the upper paper to the lower also had impregnated the pigment layer of the lower causing it to transfer to the back of the upper paper.
2. "Acryl 60" masonry binder can be obtained from Standard Dry Wall, Bristol, Pa. It is a co-polymer emulsion based on butyl acrylate and methyl methacrylate. It also contains a few other additives such as an anti-foaming ingredient.
3. This step was done by the Restoration Carpenters at the Longfellow National Historic Site.
4. Various proprietary wallpaper adhesives were tested and proved satisfactory: Metylan Wallpaper Paste, Golden Harvest Non-staining Paste, Glutoline Wallpaper Paste, Rex, Sears Wallpaper Paste and Golden Harvest Vinyl Adhesive. Each adhesive was brushed on a piece of modern wallpaper and then artificially aged in an oven at 100° c. for 72 hours. Each sample was then tested after aging for folding endurance, paste solubility and general appearance. The folding endurance and appearance were similar for all the samples. The methyl cellulose samples showed greater solubility than the wheat starch paste after aging.
5. Obtain through a medical supply house.



6. Initially an 8:1 mixture of hexane/dimethyl formamide was used for cleaning. This mixture was used because our solvent tests had shown that acetone had a slight effect on the gold design when in prolonged contact with it. We found, however, by altering technique that acetone could be used safely and effectively. When we were assisted with the cleaning by members of the curatorial staff, we felt it necessary to use acetone for safety reasons even though precautionary measures had been taken when using the aforementioned solvents.
7. This paper was reproduced by the Birge Company, 310 Niagara Street, Buffalo, New York 14202.



## National Guild of Professional Paperhangers, Inc.

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July 30, 2001

Paul Bramley  
Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE  
1 May Street  
Moe, Victoria, Australia 3825

Dear Paul:

On behalf of all of the members of the National Guild of Professional Paperhangers, and its administrative staff, we thank you for your skill and expertise as a speaker during our recent Annual Convention & Tradeshow in Philadelphia.

Your segment of the presentation on *The Paperhanger in America* with Robert Kelly, C.P., proved to be excellent and was much discussed by participants. Thank you so much for your efforts on the behalf of the Guild and for spending some of your time in the U.S. with us.

Sincerely,

Claire Lea  
Association Executive