

**THE TRANSFORMATION OF NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE:  
INTERIOR DECORATION AND FURNITURE FOR THE  
THIRD DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND  
BY NICHOLAS MOREL AND ROBERT HUGHES**

**Clare E. Baxter**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil  
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**The Transformation of Northumberland House:  
Interior Decoration and Furniture for the  
Third Duke of Northumberland  
by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes**

**Clare E. Baxter**  
**M.Phil. Museum and Gallery Studies**  
**October 1999**



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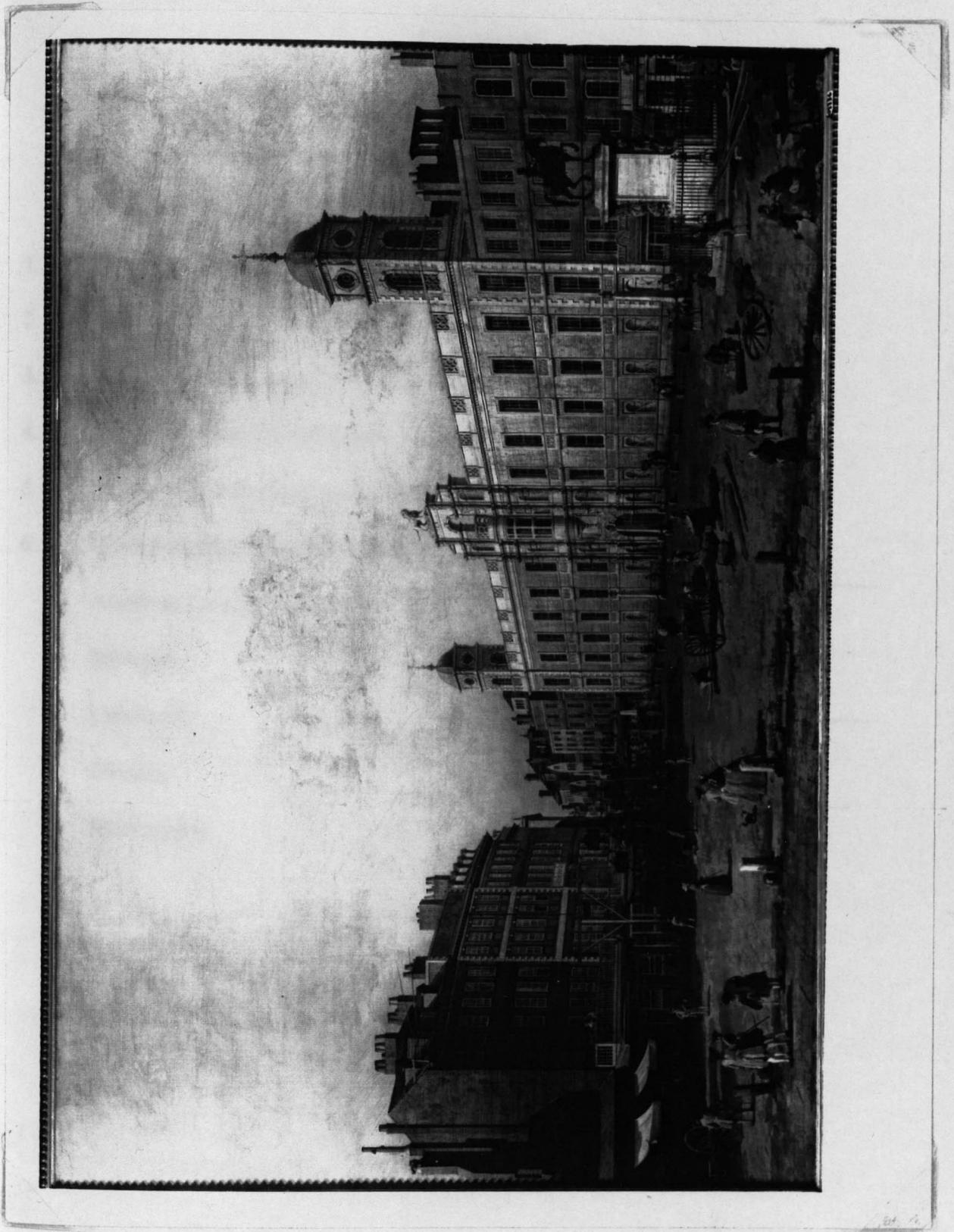
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View of Northumberland House, The Strand, London, by Canaletto, 1752.

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# Synopsis

This thesis introduces the characters of the Third Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, who commissioned much work from Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes for Northumberland House between 1822-1825. It then reviews works by Morel and Hughes between 1805 and 1822, their fashionable business, and the association with the Prince of Wales which influenced this commission.

A summary of the building history of Northumberland House explains its state as inherited by the Third Duke in 1817. External works and related internal restructuring aimed to create a property reflecting the Duke's wealth and elevated social status whilst retaining earlier alterations. The suite of state apartments on the newly-modified south side of the house, for which Morel and Hughes designed furniture and furnishings, is described with reference to works of contemporary craftsmen, Thomas Grundy, William Croggon, William Collins, Robert Jones and Thomas Ponsonby.

Analysis follows of accounts for furniture supplied by Morel and Hughes between 1822 and 1825. Each room and its furniture, often with exact locations, is described. This, combined with interior photographs *circa* 1874, helps create a picture of Regency splendour. The Morel and Hughes commission is examined, highlighting the importance of textiles in Regency England, with sections on wall hangings, window curtains and draperies, upholstery and *passementerie* and floor coverings.

In 1826 Morel left the partnership, joining George Seddon. Robert Hughes, however, continued to work for the Third Duke until 1842 and examination of his accounts reveals seasonal work opening and closing Northumberland House and the supply of some new furniture. Analysis is made of major commissions by the Third Duke and Duchess in 1827 and 1832 of Hughes for work at Syon House.

Reference is made throughout to items of furniture and textiles surviving in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland, and a detailed illustrated catalogue concludes.

**Diagram illustrating the progression of the known careers of Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes, 1795-1842**

Nicholas Morel  
Tenterden Street, Hanover Square  
1795-1802

Nicholas Morel  
13 Great Marlborough Street  
1802

Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes  
13 Great Marlborough Street  
1805-1825

Nicholas Morel and George Seddon  
13 Great Marlborough Street address used  
but work produced at Seddon workshops in  
Aldersgate Street 1826-1831

Robert Hughes  
115 Piccadilly, nr.  
Green Park  
1826-1842

## Introduction

Hugh Percy inherited the dukedom of Northumberland after the death of his father in July 1817. His inheritance made him a very rich man with income derived from coal mines and wayleaves as well as a massive estate rental.<sup>1</sup> Like his father before him, the Third Duke's political sympathies lay with Charles James Fox and he was associated with the circle of the Prince Regent, later King George IV. As such, Hugh Percy was the recipient of numerous honours, being made Knight of the Garter, 1819; Vice Admiral of Northumberland and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1822; carrying the Sword of Justice before King George IV at his coronation in 1821; selected as the King's personal representative at the coronation of Charles X of France in 1825, and appointed Lord Lieutenant and Governor-General of Ireland, 1829-1830.

He had married Lady Charlotte Florentia Clive, daughter of the First Earl of Powis and granddaughter of Clive of India, by special licence on 19 April 1817 in the Glass Drawing Room of Northumberland House. Charlotte Florentia was an accomplished amateur artist with a taste for the arts. She is known to have designed a house and a substantial piece of table silverware; designed and decorated one of the Long Gallery closet rooms at Syon, as well as publish a book which incorporated her pictures of Northumbrian castles. She was generally acknowledged as an intelligent, benevolent and sensitive character; contemporary newspaper articles frequently wrote of her in the most complimentary terms. Charlotte Florentia must have been a great influence on Hugh, Third Duke, as well as a source of much support. As Duchess, she entertained lavishly and frequently, particularly at Northumberland

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<sup>1</sup> *Guide to Syon House* by Dr. Colin Shrimpton, 1995

House and Syon, for large numbers of guests (often in the hundreds) of fashionable royalty, foreign ambassadors, ministers, aristocrats and gentry and she accompanied the Duke when matters of state dictated that he go to France and Ireland. Her high social standing is perhaps best exemplified by the fact that Charlotte Florentia was appointed Governess to the young Princess Victoria from 1831 until she became Queen in 1837.

A man of fashionable taste, the Duke would have undoubtedly been aware of the Prince Regent's apparently endless alterations and elaborate decorative schemes at Carlton House, and later at Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace. Close connection with the King and his circle made it inevitable that the Duke should patronise many of the same artists and dealers. Indeed he may well have become aware of the work of Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes through their Carlton House commissions. The Duke certainly invited the King to view their work at Northumberland House in 1825 showing off the improvements he had made.<sup>2</sup> The Third Duke and Duchess would have had an active role in the commission of work undertaken by Morel and Hughes in determining design, colour and pattern in the refurbishment of Northumberland House. Like the Duchess, the Duke is known to have been involved in building schemes where his opinion was freely given to the architect, such as with the Northumberland Hall in Alnwick,<sup>3</sup> and there is evidence in the accounts to indicate the high level of involvement of both the Duke and Duchess in the progress of works. Requirements at Alnwick in particular must have been specified since the partners would not have visited there.

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<sup>2</sup> Williams, T., *Northumberland House, Historical and Descriptive Notes*, 1875, p.101 records that 'Mr Nash the Architect was in waiting to receive his Majesty' and that the Housekeeper conducted the King through the house.

<sup>3</sup> Information supplied by Dr. Colin Shrimpton, Archivist to the Duke of Northumberland

Robert Hughes's work at Syon House would have been undertaken in the same vein. It was a favourite place of the Duchess and she and the Duke invested a lot of time and money in making improvements there, both external and internal, especially after Northumberland House was completed. In their time, Syon House was clad with Bath stone and a porte cochere was added to the west front. Charles Fowler added a clock tower to James Wyatt's stable block and built the Great Conservatory which became the focus of the Duke's passion for gardening and patronage of botanists, as well as a centrepiece at the great fetes held at Syon in the 1830s and early 1840s. Inside, the Robert Adam interiors were restored, furniture repaired, and the private dining room, drawing room and a number of bedroom suites completely refurbished by Robert Hughes.

This thesis puts the work of Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes into the context of the building works taking place at Northumberland House, 1820-1825, and then examines the specifics of their commission. It is also a study of the work which Robert Hughes continued to undertake for the Third Duke after his partnership with Nicholas Morel ended early in 1826. By this date, improvements to Northumberland House were complete and the focus had shifted to Syon House, on the banks of the Thames in Middlesex, a property which remains in family ownership today. A catalogue of all the furniture and furnishings by Morel and Hughes and Robert Hughes which survive in the Northumberland Collection completes the thesis.



**Plate I** Hugh, Third Duke of Northumberland; miniature painted by Christina Robertson, 1836



Smith, G. and Gilbert, C. (eds), *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers 1660-1840*, Leeds, 1986, p. 223  
1987, p. 222

**Plate II** Charlotte Florentia, Third Duchess of Northumberland; miniature painted by Christina Robertson, 1836. Note the view of the Grand Staircase in the background.

## Chapter One

### Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

It is believed that Nicholas Morel was of French extraction and he is known to have associated with the group of Anglo-French craftsmen who worked for Henry Holland and Dominique Daguerre, most prominently at Carlton House at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> Accounts from Nicholas Morel, then based at Tenterden Street, Hanover Square, exist for furnishings provided at Carlton House at this time, although Morel evidently suffered the same fate as many other craftsmen and artists working for the Prince, with payments frequently mounting in arrears.<sup>5</sup> By 1805, Nicholas Morel, at this date at 13, Great Marlborough Street, was joined by Robert Hughes about whom nothing seems to be known at this time. Together they supplied furniture for the Prince Regent, such as a mahogany sideboard with bronzed mounts and griffin supports for the New Dining Room at Carlton House in 1810 for £182.16s.<sup>6</sup> and other items typical of the French Empire taste of the early nineteenth century. Aristocratic patrons included the Earl of Bradford at Weston Park, Staffordshire, 1802-1803 and 1805-1806. There the partnership supplied materials for upholstery and new decorations for a number of rooms in the house as well as a variety of furniture, from a pair of functional swivel library chairs to a set of gilded Drawing Room chairs with carved ram's heads on the arms.<sup>7</sup> In 1810-1811, Morel and Hughes were paid £2200 for providing furnishings for the interiors of Belvoir Castle, newly restored by James Wyatt for the Duke of Rutland.<sup>8</sup> Other payments to the firm have been found in the account

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<sup>4</sup> Beard, G. And Gilbert, C. (eds), *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers 1660-1840*, Leeds, 1986, p.623

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p.623

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p.624

<sup>8</sup> Yorke, James, 'Belvoir Castle Leicestershire-I', *Country Life*, Vol. CLXXXVIII, No.25, 1994, p.89

books of the Earl of Mansfield for Kenwood House, 1808; Harewood House, 1809 and of the Duke of Buccleuch at South Audley Street, London in 1813.<sup>9</sup>

At Longleat the Second Marquis of Bath undertook the modernisation of the Elizabethan mansion employing Sir Jeffry Wyattville as architect, 1806-1818 and 1829-1831. During the earlier period, Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes supplied furniture and furnishings in 1808, 1810-1811, 1813-1814. Their work included a substantial amount of textiles, largely in the form of curtains and their elaborate draperies and *passementerie* (supplied for the Marquis's London home in Grosvenor Square as well as Longleat) and bed furniture. Of the 'hard' furniture which was supplied, much has survived at Longleat. The suite of giltwood seat furniture comprising a large sofa, 'richly carved, the [seat rails] ornamented with a Vitruvian Scroll honeysuckle & rosette border & large rosettes at the Corners: the Elbows supported by Consols, with carved foliage, resting on lions claws...'<sup>10</sup>, with a large chaise-longue, four banquets and four bergere chairs *ensuite* were made in 1814 for the Drawing Room (now the Red Library as altered by John Diblee Crace). The elaborate cornices supplied for the Library at the same date survive in that room (now called the Green Library) as well as an earlier (1808) tripod table, the marble top supported on ram's head monopodia.

By 1821, the year before the firm's work for the Third Duke of Northumberland began, their premises included a dwelling house, warehouse, workshops and a warm air stove in the cabinet-making shop with stock and tools insured at £5000.<sup>11</sup> This indicated a sizeable business; a comparable figure being the insurance of Thomas and George Seddon's stock in

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<sup>9</sup> Beard, G. and Gilbert, C., *op.cit.*, p.623

<sup>10</sup> Longleat Archives, ref. 210

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p.624

1818 for £10,000.<sup>12</sup> The first bill in the Northumberland Archive for work by Morel and Hughes is dated 31 July 1822; the last bill of their partnership is dated 24 August 1825, the receipt attached dated 17 January 1826, being the last account bearing both of their names. These accounts would seem to provide the most complete record of the work of this partnership to date and their examination affords detailed study of one aspect of fashionable taste in Regency England, 1822-1826. The interiors of the main suite of apartments at Northumberland House were entirely redecorated and furnished by the partners in a complete process of harmonisation in use of materials, colours and styles to create rooms of elegance and splendour fitting for the high status in society held by their wealthy clients. The total bill for this work amounted to £42,596.9s.5 ¾ d.

In 1826 Nicholas Morel joined George Seddon in a partnership to provide furnishings for King George IV at Windsor Castle and, in the same year, was sent to France by the King to find designs and patterns.<sup>13</sup> Robert Hughes, however, stayed in business on his own and moved premises to 115 Piccadilly, near Green Park. By 1827 the printed letterhead of Hughes's bills announced him as 'Upholsterer & Cabinet Maker To their Royal Highnesses The Duke & Duchess of Cambridge'. He continued to work extensively for the Third Duke until 1842, not only with the seasonal opening and closing of Northumberland House, but also in upholstery work and supplying a number of pieces of new furniture, particularly for Syon House.

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<sup>12</sup> Kirkham, P., *The London Furniture Trade 1700-1870*, Leeds, 1988, p.77

<sup>13</sup> Collard, F., *Regency Furniture*, Woodbridge, 1985, p.154

## Interior design in Regency England

Morel and Hughes's refurbishment of the suite of state apartments at Northumberland House reflected the changes in social habits which had an important effect on interior decoration at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The practise of the best room, or rooms, of the house being opened for only one or two days each year was declining with the growing inclination for less formal gatherings of people. The French influence, with their notion of salons where guests were free to disperse and form scattered groups, was the dominant force. Humphrey Repton observed these social changes in 1803<sup>14</sup> and referred to the concept of reception rooms being unified by their furnishings. At Northumberland House, Morel and Hughes successfully achieved this with the complimentary concepts for furniture design and choice of fabrics and carpets in the Ante Room, Saloon, Drawing Room and Boudoir. An increase in informality in social occasions corresponded with a desire for simplicity in design and execution. The interiors by Morel and Hughes were indeed splendid, and expensively so, but the tone was one of refined neo-classical taste, a calm style chosen by the Duke with little of the exaggeration displayed by George IV at Carlton House and, later, Brighton Pavilion.

By the Regency period, a sharp definition between an architectural and non-architectural interior was developing.<sup>15</sup> Architects were less inclined to design an interior with regard to its decoration, as William Chambers, Henry Holland and, most famously, Robert Adam had done. Interiors were more likely to be decorated by painting, wallpapers, fabrics, sometimes complemented with architectural features such as pilasters and mouldings, as with the Grand Staircase at Northumberland House. Therefore the distinction between the employment of an architect and an upholsterer was even more pronounced. Cundy's employment as architect at

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<sup>14</sup> Morley, J., *Regency Design 1790-1840*, London, 1993, p.222

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p.229

Northumberland House was finished when the building works and the Grand Staircase were completed and it is not clear what influence, if any, that he had with regard to the design of the new suite of state apartments. The importance of the upholsterer was further enhanced at the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth centuries by the increasing number of pattern books which were published. The circulation of ideas which such publications allowed made the schemes of interior decoration accessible to the growing middle-class population, who could indulge in their dreams of home improvement.

Publications such as Thomas Hope's *Household Furniture and Decoration* (1807), and more particularly, George Smith's *Collection of Designs for Household Furniture and Interior Decoration* (1808), Ackermann's *Repository of the Arts...*, published by volume, 1809-1828, and John Taylor's *Upholsterer's and Cabinet Maker's Pocket Assistant* (c.1825), were well-illustrated and gave consideration to the subject of interior decoration as a whole, as well as its particular components, such as furniture or ornamental devices. The elevation of the upholsterer as a prominent figure in interior design had been noted as early as 1747 by R. Campbell who wrote:

I have just finished my House, and must now think of furnishing it with fashionable Furniture. The Upholder is chief Agent in this Case: He is the Man upon whose Judgement I rely in the Choice of Goods; and I suppose he had not only Judgement in the Materials, but Taste in the Fashions, and Skill in the Workmanship. This Tradesman's Genius must be universal in every branch of Furniture; though his proper Craft is to fit up Beds, Window-Curtains, Hangings and cover Chairs that have stuffed Bottoms...<sup>16</sup>

The description of the expertise and skill required applied equally to Morel and Hughes at Northumberland House almost eighty years later. In the new suite of state rooms, they were responsible for the wall hangings, curtains, draperies, floor coverings, upholstery of seat furniture and the making of numerous items of new furniture as well as the repair of old. To

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<sup>16</sup> Campbell, R., *London Tradesmen*, 1747, quoted by Clabburn, P., *The National Trust Book of Furnishing Textiles*, London, 1989, p.69

this end they were the people who liaised with the carvers and gilders, mercers and drapers, weavers and any other associated tradesmen. The power and influence of this partnership is evident, not only advising but directing the project and organising the workers.

Unfortunately very few interior views of Northumberland House exist and none which are contemporary with the refurbishment of the Regency period. Engravings published by the *Illustrated London News* and guides to the Great Exhibition in 1851 show some aspects of the house four years after the death of the Third Duke and there is a series of rather lifeless photographs taken as the rooms were being cleared prior to the demolition of the house in 1874. To truly create the image of princely splendour which there was in 1825, just after the improvements were completed, one must really depend on the written word: Thomas Williams's manuscript history of the house; the 1847 inventory of effects and contemporary household accounts, particularly those of Morel and Hughes. These, pieced together with illustrations of items of furniture and some interior views, are the sources to inspire the imagination to re-create the magnificence of Northumberland House in its prime during the Regency period.

## Chapter Two

### Building history of Northumberland House

Situated in Charing Cross in the parish of St Martin in the Fields, Northumberland House was built *circa* 1605 by Bernard Jansen and Gerard Christmas for Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton. At the Earl's death the house passed to his nephew, the Earl of Suffolk, hence the building's early name Suffolk House as annotated on the earliest known view in an undated drawing by Wenceslaus Hollar *circa* 1647.<sup>17</sup> This view shows the house, comprising of a square block around a central courtyard with tall towers to each corner, rather like the White Tower of the Tower of London. The property came into the possession of the Percy family by part dowry, part purchase when Algernon, Tenth Earl of Northumberland, married Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk, in 1642. This Earl employed the architect Inigo Jones to rebuild the south front which Evelyn described in his Diary entry of 9 June 1658, as being 'tolerable were it not drowned by a too massy and clumsy pair of stairs of stone without any neat invention'.<sup>18</sup>

Elizabeth Percy, granddaughter of the Tenth Earl and heiress of the great Percy estates, married in 1682 Charles Seymour, Sixth Duke of Somerset. Their son, Algernon, Seventh Duke of Somerset, created Earl of Northumberland in 1748, used the architect, Daniel Garrett, to make improvements to the front of the house 'in order to make it appear less like a prison'.<sup>19</sup> Algernon's daughter and heir, Elizabeth Seymour, had married Sir Hugh Smithson in 1740. A Yorkshire squire of considerable personal fortune, Sir Hugh inherited the earldom in 1750 and changed his name to Percy. He proved to be an admirable choice of

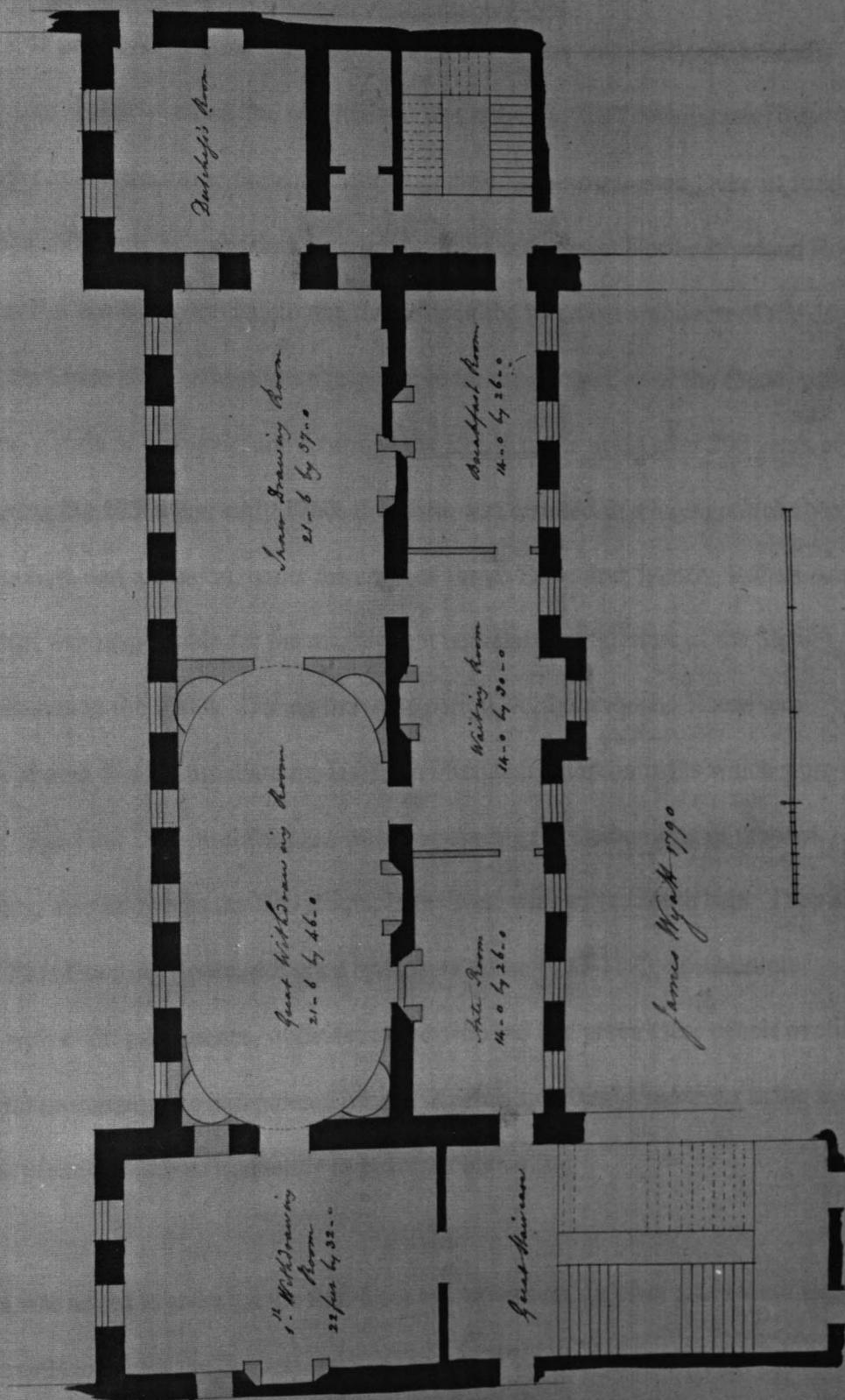
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<sup>17</sup> Drawing in the Pepysian Library, Magdalene College, Cambridge

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Williams, *op.cit.*, 1875, p.2

<sup>19</sup> London County Council, *Survey of London*, Vol.XVIII, 'The Strand', London, 1937, p.12

*A Design for the alteration of the Apartments in the South  
Front of Northumberland House on the one pair of Stairs*



**Plate III** Plan of proposals for alterations to the apartments on the first floor, south side of Northumberland House by James Wyatt, 1790.

husband: an able politician; a great manager and improver of the vast Percy estates and a patron of the arts. His love of art and architecture was shared by his Countess who was herself an eager and enthusiastic collector. Sir Hugh Smithson was created Duke in 1766. The First Duke and Duchess embarked on grand building schemes at Northumberland House, Syon House and Alwick Castle employing the skills of the foremost architects of the day. At Alwick, the Duke and Duchess were responsible for the restoration of the castle, which had fallen into a state of disrepair, and returning the family to the north after 200 years of absence. During the 1750s and early 1760s the castle was restored in a high *gothick* style, for which the Duchess had a passion, under the aegis of James Paine and, latterly, Robert Adam. At Syon, Adam was responsible for the magnificent neo-classical interiors of the State Rooms undertaken in the 1760s. During the same period Northumberland House was considerably altered to accommodate the lavish and frequent entertainments which were hosted there. The First Duke and Duchess were responsible for the building of the vast Picture Gallery, also known as the Ball Room, in the west wing of the south side. They also created the Glass Drawing Room, designed by Robert Adam 1773-1775, an elaborate contrivance with eight pier glasses, walls decorated with red and green glass panels overlaid with gilt-metal ornamentation and painted panels. Adam's structural alterations to the house to enable this creation were subsequently to prove problematic.

James Wyatt was asked to redesign the first-floor apartments on the river side (south side) of Northumberland House for the Second Duke (1786-1817) but his design of 1790<sup>20</sup> was never executed. However, unspecified masons' work had already begun at Northumberland House by January of 1817<sup>21</sup>. Hugh, Third Duke, inherited the estates after the death of his father in

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<sup>20</sup> Syon MSS B.XV.2.e

<sup>21</sup> Syon MSS U.I.63 (Bundle 2)

July of that year and extended the building works to the garden front and the east and west outer walls of the quadrangle. Work was also undertaken at Syon, Little Syon (residence for the Duke's sisters, Lady Elizabeth and Lady Agnes, and his widowed mother)<sup>22</sup> and the house in Brentford occupied by Joseph Strutt, the Duke's Archivist. All work came under the direction of Thomas Hardwick who organised masons (Thomas Grundy & Company); plasterers (Francis Bernasconi & Son and Henry Watkins); glaziers (J.Naylor & Son); slaters (W.& J. Sharp); carpenters (John Perry & Son) and paper-hangers (Robson & Hale). In April 1818 the bricklayers were employed building the new washhouse and laundry at Syon.

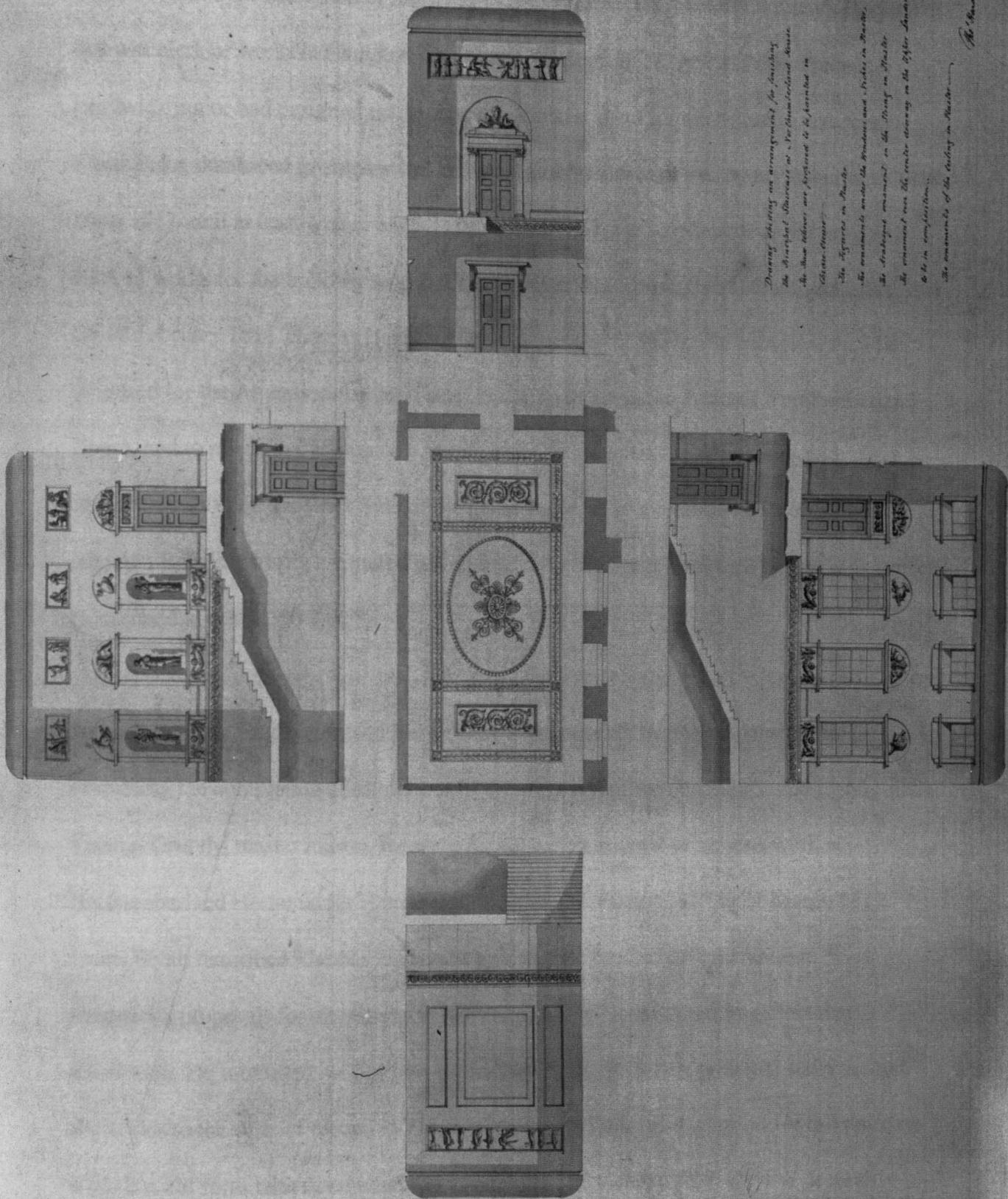
Thomas Hardwick's father, Thomas Hardwick senior (b.1725-d.1798), set up business as master mason at New Brentford, Middlesex. In the 1760s he was the master mason for the internal remodelling of Syon House to the designs of Robert and James Adam<sup>23</sup> The nave of St Lawrence's Church, Brentford was rebuilt to his designs in 1764; in 1781-82 he was responsible for rebuilding Hanwell Church, Middlesex.<sup>24</sup> His son, Thomas Hardwick junior, became a pupil of William Chambers in 1767 and was admitted to the Royal Academy schools in 1769 winning the Silver Medal for architecture in the same year. Hardwick travelled in Italy for three years making measured drawings of buildings, both antique and contemporary, returning to England in 1779. In the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Hardwick

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<sup>22</sup> Property and nine acres of land which the Third Duke purchased to the north-east of Syon Park specifically for this purpose. On the death of the Dowager Duchess and Lady Elizabeth Percy (Lady Agnes married) Little Syon was pulled down and the land added to Syon Park. (Williams, T., *Historical and Descriptive Notes about Syon House and its Vicinity*, 1872)

<sup>23</sup> Syon MSS U.III.5, 21-27

<sup>24</sup> Howard Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840*, London, 1995, p.458-459



*Drawing showing an arrangement for finishing  
the Staircase at Northumberland House.  
The door above was proposed to be placed in  
the center.*

*The figures in the  
the ornaments under the Windows and under the  
the Staircase ornament in the Dining in the  
the ornament over the center doorway in the upper Landing  
to be in completion.*

*The ornaments of the ceiling in the*

*Th. Hardwick  
May 1819*

**Plate IV** Drawing of proposal for the decoration of the new Grand Staircase at Northumberland House by Thomas Hardwick, May 1819.

was surveyor to the Marquess of Salisbury's London estate and St Bartholomew's Hospital and was clerk of works at Hampton Court until his death in 1829.<sup>25</sup> In 1809 Thomas Hardwick junior had designed the Muniment House at Syon for the Second Duke. Hugh, Third Duke, continued to employ this architect and builder favoured by his father until 1819. From 1817 until at least March 1819 Thomas Hardwick was responsible as surveyor and clerk of works for the building works at Northumberland House, Syon House and Little Syon. On 28 February 1818 Thomas Hardwick gave a quote of £2800.0.0 'to compleat the Plan proposed for the Alterations of the Center Building of the South Front of Northumberland House, and to raise the Ceilings two feet.'; also 'To compleat the Alterations and Improvements upon the West Side of the Quadrangle, as proposed (in addition to the common Repairs already estimated and delivered to His Grace) will cost as nearly as can be ascertained about £2300.0.0'.<sup>26</sup>

No receipts exist for payments to Hardwick but presumably he was responsible for overseeing the completion of alterations to the west side of the quadrangle and repairs since Thomas Grundy, master mason, received £1000.0.0 on account of masons work at Northumberland House under Hardwick's direction, 16 August 1817 to 27 March 1819. James Wyatt described Thomas Hardwick as 'a regular bred, classical architect'.<sup>27</sup> Hardwick's proposals for alterations to Northumberland House certainly reflect that description. He submitted his designs, dated May 1819, for a new principal staircase and alterations to the suite of reception rooms of the upper floor. His proposal for the staircase<sup>28</sup> is of classical form with three windows to one side of the staircase, each with decorative

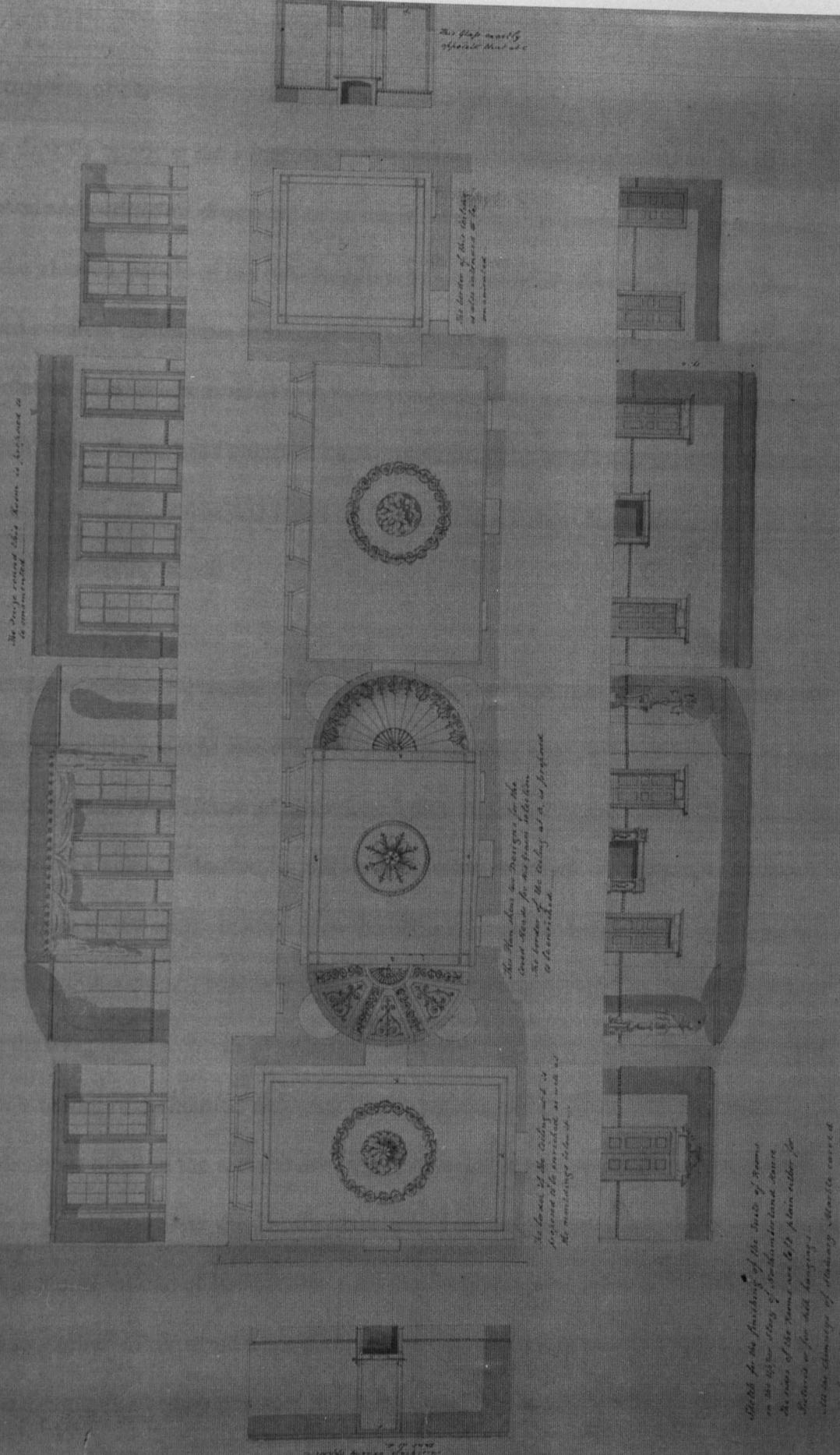
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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, p.459

<sup>26</sup> Percy Letters and Papers, Vol.79B, f.109

<sup>27</sup> Quote from Farrington's Diary, 20 Jan 1799, *op cit.* Colvin, p.459

<sup>28</sup> Syon MSS B.XV.2.f<sup>o</sup>



The design of this room is to be finished in the same manner as the other rooms.

The floor of this room is to be finished in the same manner as the other rooms.

The design of this room is to be finished in the same manner as the other rooms.

The plan shows the design for the Great Hall for the new house in the same manner as the other rooms.

The design of the ceiling and of the ornaments to be executed in the same manner as the other rooms.

Sketch for the finishing of the suite of rooms on the upper story of Northumberland House. The walls of the rooms are to be plain either for sculpture or for hanging. The ornaments of stonework should be carried over the lower story might be being wrought in sculpture with the rest of the house instead of stonework. It is much to be desired in England that the ornaments and spaces might be carried over the whole parts of England.

Th. Hardwick

Plate V Design proposals for the suite of state rooms on the south side of Northumberland House by Thomas Hardwick, May 1819.

plaster trophies of classical armour to the architrave and foliate swags to the pediment. The alcoves, directly opposite the windows, each contain a classical plaster figure, their architraves and pediments decorated in an identical manner to those around the windows. Above the alcoves, panels of bas reliefs, painted as chiaroscuro, feature just below the decorated cornice. Arabesque ornament in the string is also executed in plaster. Ceiling ornamentation of stucco is divided into three compartments, each bordered by laurel-leaf decoration with a flowerhead patera at the intersection. The centre compartment contains an oval decoration of anthemion and scrolling foliage with a central arabesque ornament to each of the smaller flanking panels.

Hardwick's proposals for the suite of four state apartments (see plate V)<sup>29</sup> offer the idea of changing the central room to one with semi-elliptical ends, each with two alcoves, as James Wyatt proposed in 1790. Hardwick illustrates lights standing on pedestals in these alcoves. An alternative he notes, if desired, would be to introduce a screen of columns with square recesses at each of the ends. In his design the ceilings in the first and third drawing rooms are decorated with a central rosette encircled by an arabesque border. In the coved ends of the large drawing room a choice of ornamentation of compartments of arabesque scrolling foliage or a border of anthemion radiating from a segmental fan flank a simple central ornament. Sides of all of the rooms have been left plain for pictures or silk hangings and Hardwick suggests that 'Over the Center doors might be hung drapery to correspond with the sides of the rooms instead of Architraves'. All the fireplaces were to be of statuary marble carved in low relief: all illustrated are plain except that of the largest salon which features vases on pedestals flanked by pilasters on the uprights. At the extreme outer walls of the house, at either end of the suite of rooms, were to be fireplaces. The one on the east wall was

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<sup>29</sup> Syon MSS B.XV.2.f<sup>4</sup>

to have a pier glass above to face directly opposite one of the pair of glasses flanking the fireplace on the west wall, presumably so as to have some dramatic effect of light and space when all the doors would be open throughout the *enfilade* at an entertainment.

In the same month as Hardwick presented his plans, the Third Duke consulted the architect Charles Robert Cockerell (b.1788 d.1863) who undertook a survey of Northumberland House. On 21 May 1819, Cockerell wrote to the Duke with proposals for improvements which he believed were structurally necessary and suggested that this necessity was combined with the modernisation of the interior. Noting the alterations, additions and improvements by the hands of various architects, Cockerell comments that this would account 'for the present insolidity of the Fabric & serves as a caution to future alterations'<sup>30</sup>. The structure had been seriously impaired by Adam's alterations. Cockerell drew attention to the urgent need to rebuild the wall between the Large and Small Dining Rooms on the ground floor which had sunk, noting that this wall would be the only one required to be rebuilt if proposals were adopted to fortify the piers of the south wall by using additional pilasters. The architect observed the deficiencies of the layout and the size of the apartments, lamenting their narrowness in proportion to their length, which made their appearance more suited to that of galleries than salons; the lack of connection between them and the lack of any grand and convenient access 'whereby the extent of the suite is much diminished in appearance & in effect & the magnificence of its character lessened'.<sup>31</sup>

One of his major criticisms was the principal staircase which he described as 'dark and encumbered by the enclosure under the second flight, & unpleasant in its sudden approach

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<sup>30</sup> Percy Letters and Papers, Vol.94, f.6-8

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*

from the Hall door on the left...'. Cockerell noted that there was sufficient space to allow dramatic alterations to the staircase '... which would contribute also to its cheerfulness & convenience; the two lower windows might be entirely opened & this important Feature in a Palace might be rendered imposing'.<sup>32</sup> The defect of narrowness applied equally to the apartments on the first floor as on the ground floor where alterations to their subdivisions (as Hardwick had proposed) would not effectively remove the gallery-effect. Instead, Cockerell suggested that the whole width of the building should be used for these rooms and that 'a noble Salon' should be created in the centre with 'a lofty coved Ceiling at least 25ft high'. Whether Duke Hugh approached Cockerell for advice only or with the possible intention of employing him as architect is not clear. Thomas Hardwick, although a proficient draughtsman and able designer, was predominantly a surveyor and designer of churches and minor public buildings.<sup>33</sup> He never did manage to achieve election to the Royal Academy and it was Thomas Cundy (b.1765 d.1825) who was selected by the Third Duke as the architect for the alterations to the south front and the creation of new internal and external staircases at Northumberland House. Cockerell, who was a friend and fellow archaeologist of the Third Duke's brother, Lord Prudhoe<sup>34</sup>, probably exercised quite an influence on the Duke's decision as the work which Cundy executed addressed all of Cockerell's recommendations.

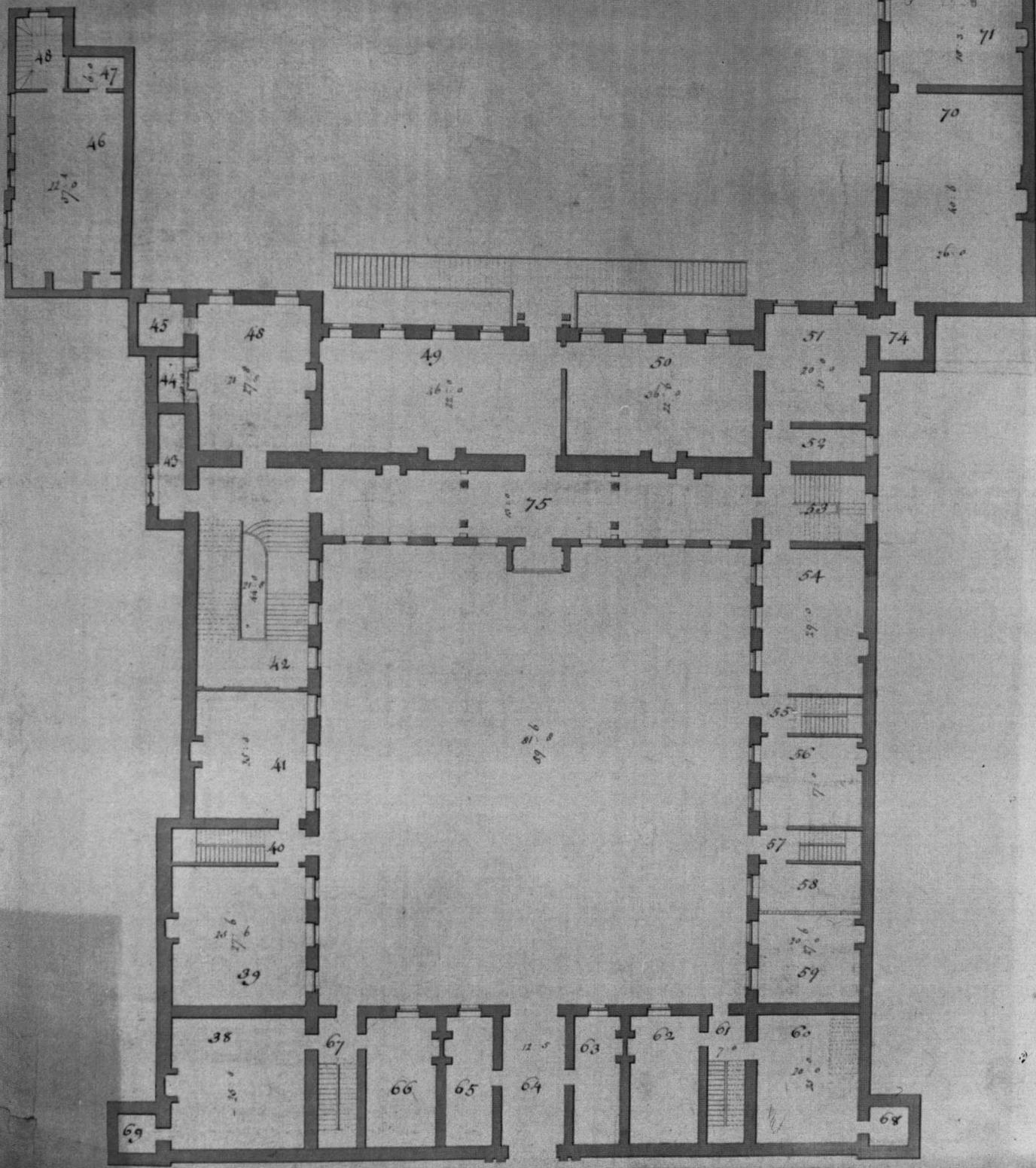
Thomas Cundy was the eldest son of an owner of a small estate in Cornwall. After a time as an apprentice to a builder in Plymouth, Cundy gained employment as clerk of works and

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<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

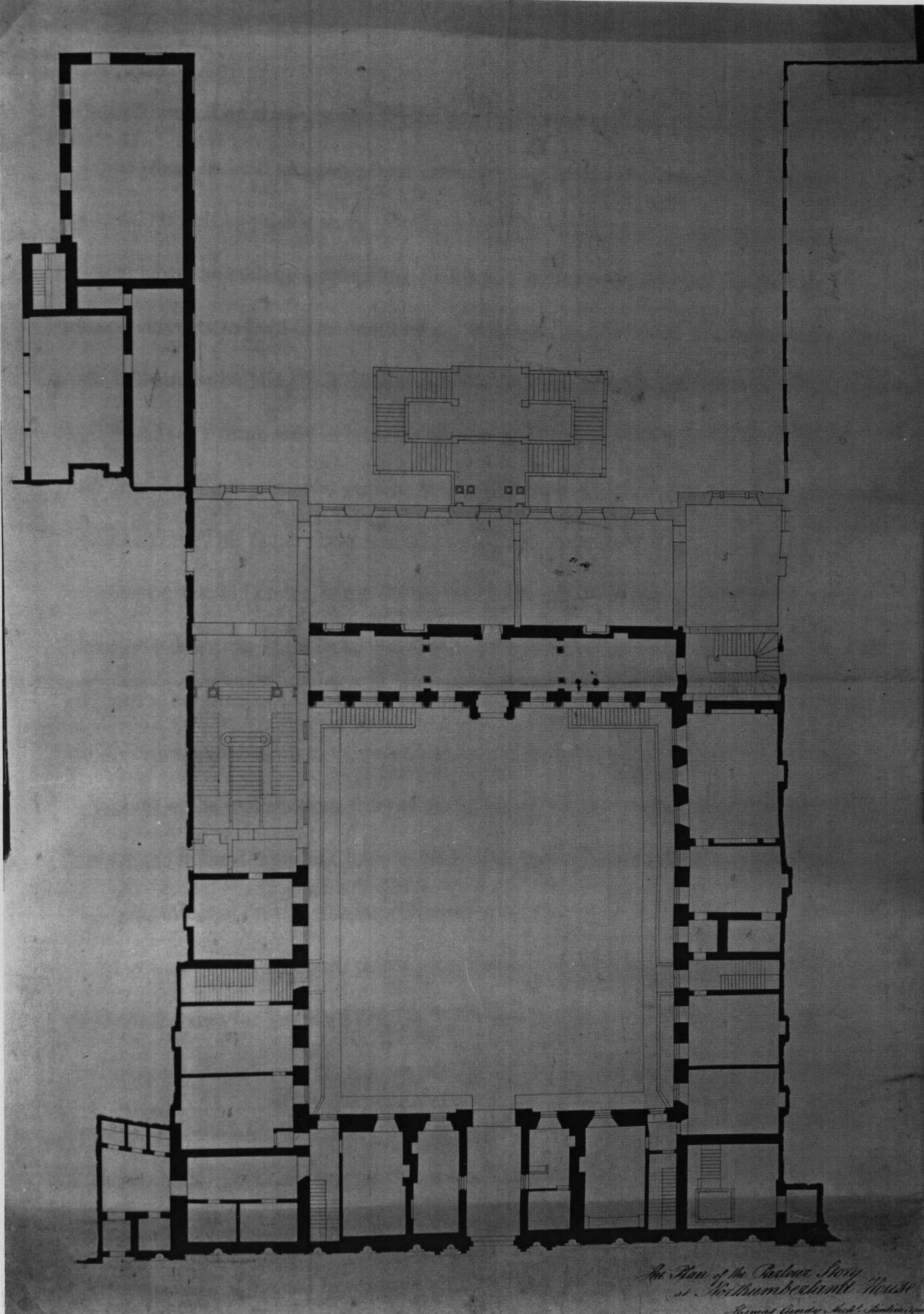
<sup>33</sup> Colvin, *op cit.*, p.459

<sup>34</sup> Lord Prudhoe was the title of Algernon Percy (b.1792 d.1865) brother of the Third Duke who inherited the dukedom in 1847.



*Plan of the Ground Floor*

**Plate VI** Plan of the ground floor rooms, *circa* 1750. Note the stairs and arrangement of the windows on the south side as compared with Cundy's proposals (plate VII).



**Plate VII** Plan of the ground floor showing Thomas Cundy's proposal for alterations to the south side including the two new staircases, April 1821.

educated himself by private study. By the late 1790s he had premises in Ranelagh Street, Pimlico where he built up a prosperous business as architect and designer. In 1821 he educated himself by private study. By the late 1790s he had premises in Ranelagh Street, Pimlico where he built up a prosperous business as architect and designer. In 1821 he became surveyor to Lord Grosvenor's estates in Belgravia and Pimlico which were then about to be laid out for building.<sup>35</sup> In 1816 Cundy visited Rome with his son, Thomas Cundy junior (b.1790 d.1867). Both were in business together and there are difficulties in assessing the son's contribution to particular projects before 1825 when Cundy senior died. Thomas Cundy junior continued his father's business, succeeding him to the post of surveyor of the Grosvenor estate in London, and probably completing work begun by his father at Syon House. No doubt the Third Duke was attracted to the higher standing of Thomas Cundy with his position as surveyor to the Grosvenor estates and his extensive experience of designing and making improvements to various aristocratic houses both in London and the country. The towers at the east and west front of the façade of Northumberland House had already been altered to the designs of Cundy in 1818. This reduced them in height by one storey having the effect of creating the impression of greater elevation to the centre of the front with the Percy lion. George Stewart, painter, supplied in '...Gilding in Double Gold 2 large standards & vanes for Turretts £10.10.0'.<sup>36</sup> The first receipt from Thomas Cundy in the Northumberland Archive is for the sum of £300.0.0 'on Acct for Architectural Designs and Working Drawings', dated 10 November 1820; the final balance of his account was paid on 23 August 1824. By 1820 Jonathan Parsons fulfilled Hardwick's role as clerk of works and kept account of expenditure and works undertaken at Northumberland House and Syon House until 1837. Thomas Drew was the surveyor overseeing works, his commission being

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<sup>35</sup> Colvin, *op cit.*, p.284

<sup>36</sup> Syon MSS U.I.63 (Bundle 5)

2 ½ % of the total payments to the various tradesmen. The workmen were given dinners each year while the main building work was being undertaken, from September 1820 and thereafter each January until 1824.

Comparison of Cundy's design<sup>37</sup> with the plan of *circa* 1750<sup>38</sup> (see plate VI) shows the extent of this architect's changes to the south front. In Cundy's plan, dated April 1821 (see plate VII), with the rebuilding of the entire south wall the new garden façade was placed some number of feet south of the old thereby adding much-desired width to the state apartments. Consequently, each window was widened and the two windows of each tower were combined into one wide tripartite one (see plates VI and VII compared with VIII and IX). The central façade, previously of four windows either side of a central window/doorway, was reduced to three on each side. Cundy created a new external staircase and designed a magnificent new internal one of marble and scagliola which led from the marble-clad Entrance Hall. This staircase led directly to the new apartments of the Ante Room, Saloon, Drawing Room and Boudoir, all of which opened out through the windows onto a balcony which extended along the whole of the south front overlooking the gardens and the River Thames. By using the Portland Staircase at the far end of these apartments one would return to the ground floor to enter the west end of the Entrance Hall into the two dining rooms on the right (see plate XI). The windows of the Large Dining Room opened onto a flight of steps leading into the gardens. After the Dining Rooms were the rooms created by the First Duke and Duchess of Northumberland: Glass Drawing Room, Tapestry Room and Ball Room.

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<sup>37</sup> Syon MSS B.XV.2.g

<sup>38</sup> Syon MSS B.XV.2.d

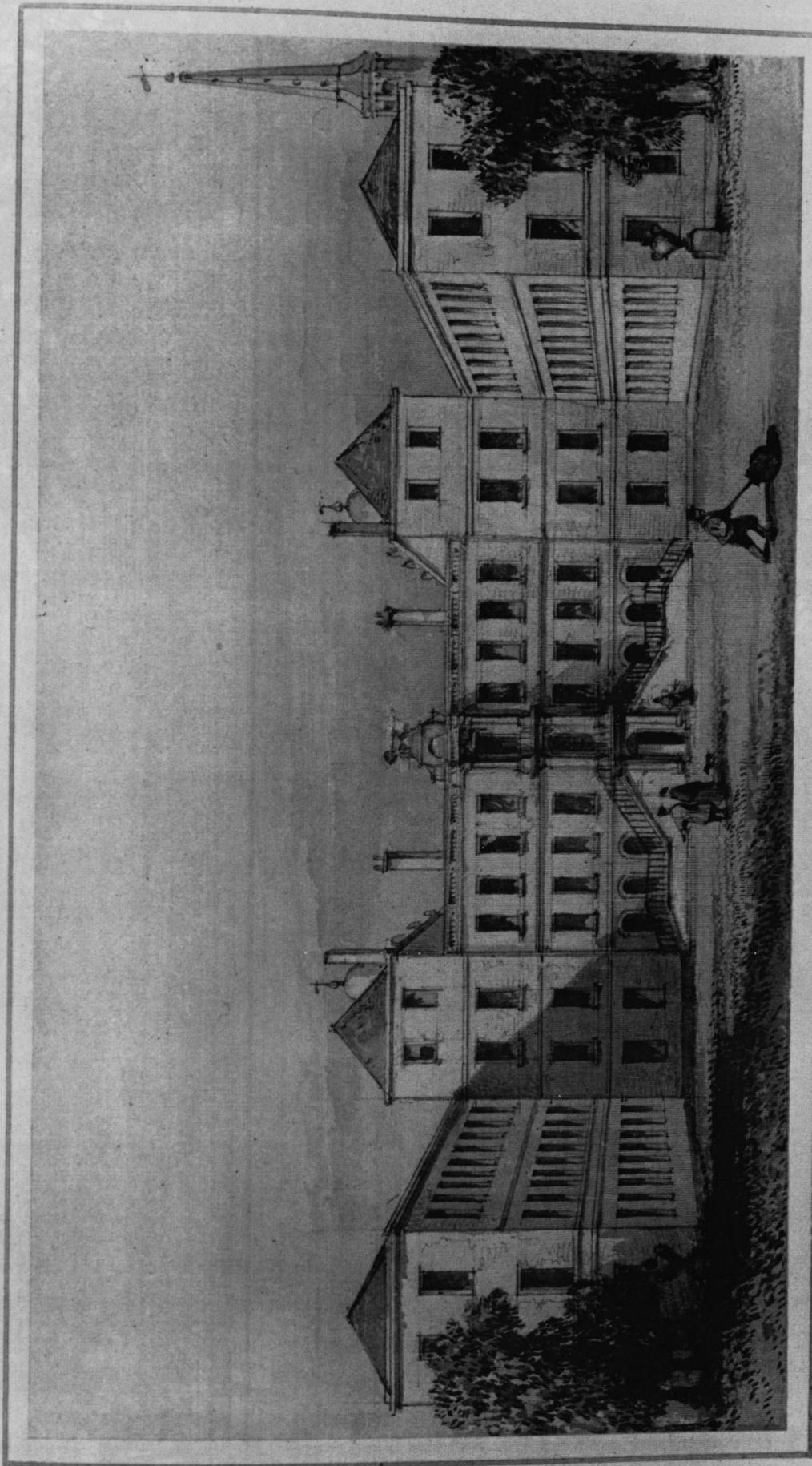
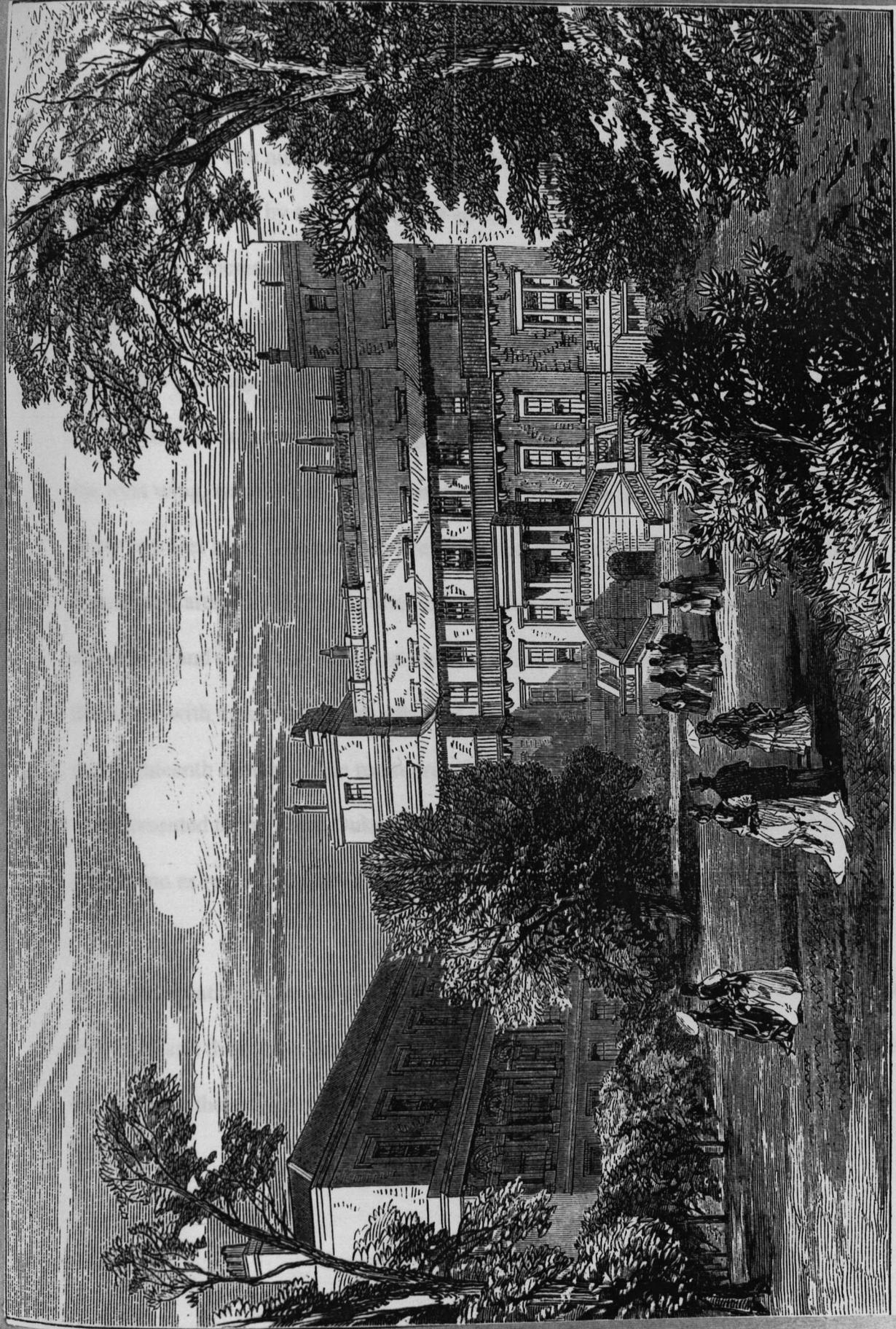


Plate V.

**Plate VIII** View of the south side of Northumberland House before Cundy's alterations, circa 1760.



THE GARDEN FRONT, NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE.

Plate IX View of the south front of Northumberland House after Cundy's alterations, circa 1874.

Robert Adam's elaborately decorated Glass Drawing Room was also necessarily altered by Cundy's work. The number of windows in the south wall was reduced from four to three, each being widened by a foot and a half so that they extended to five foot each with a proportionate increase to the intervening piers.<sup>39</sup> The Tapestry Room fenestration was also necessarily altered, as one of the rooms looking out on the south side, with the two windows reduced to one large window. The tapestries by the Paul Saunders workshop in Soho hung there in 1758 were retained. Leading from the Tapestry Room and occupying the whole of the west wing, was the Ball Room, one hundred and three feet long, twenty-six feet wide and thirty-two feet high. The massive fireplaces designed by Joseph Wilton and carved by Benjamin Carter in 1757<sup>40</sup> supported overmantels surrounding portraits by Thomas Hudson of the Earl and Countess, later First Duke and Duchess, of Northumberland. The walls were decorated with massive cartoons after old masters commissioned from artists in Italy in the mid-eighteenth century. This room provided a suitably theatrical setting for the great Sevres vase presented to the Third Duke by King Charles X of France when he attended the latter's coronation as representative of King George IV in 1825.

It was the creation of the new Grand Staircase and the new suite of state apartments on the first floor and the refurbishment of the old state apartments on the ground floor which was the focus for the activities of numerous craftsmen at Northumberland House in the early 1820s.

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<sup>39</sup> Owsley, D. and Reider, W., *The Glass Drawing Room from Northumberland House*, London, 1974, p. 27

<sup>40</sup> Allen, B., 'Joseph Wilton, Francis Hayman and the chimney-pieces from Northumberland House', *Burlington Magazine*, April 1983, pp.195-202



-NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE-

-PLAN OF THE PRINCIPAL FLOOR-

-SCALE 10 FEET TO AN INCH-

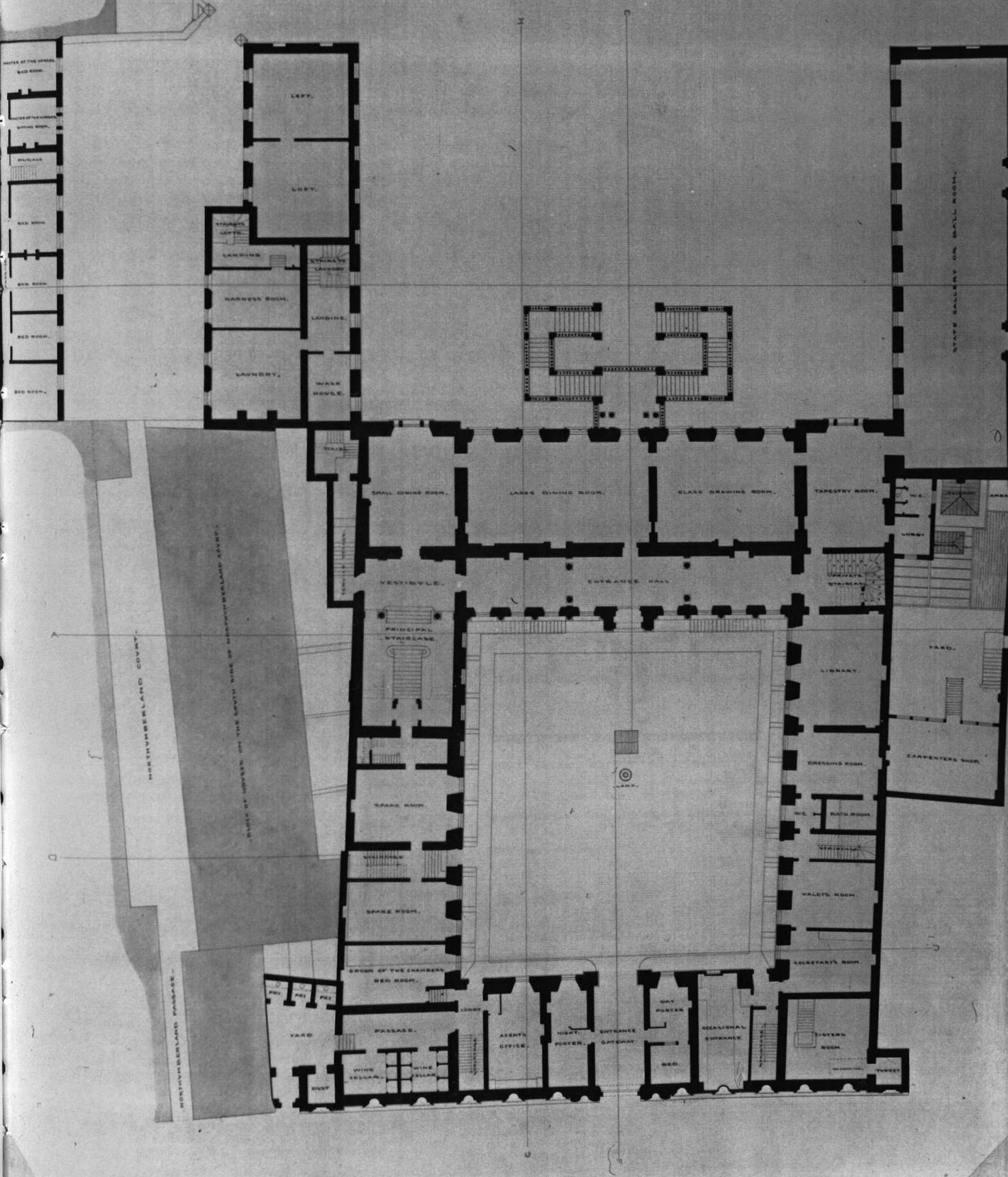


Plate XI Plan of the ground floor by Charles Barry, 1854.

- NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE -

- PLAN OF THE ONE PAIR FLOOR -

- SCALE 10 FEET TO AN INCH -

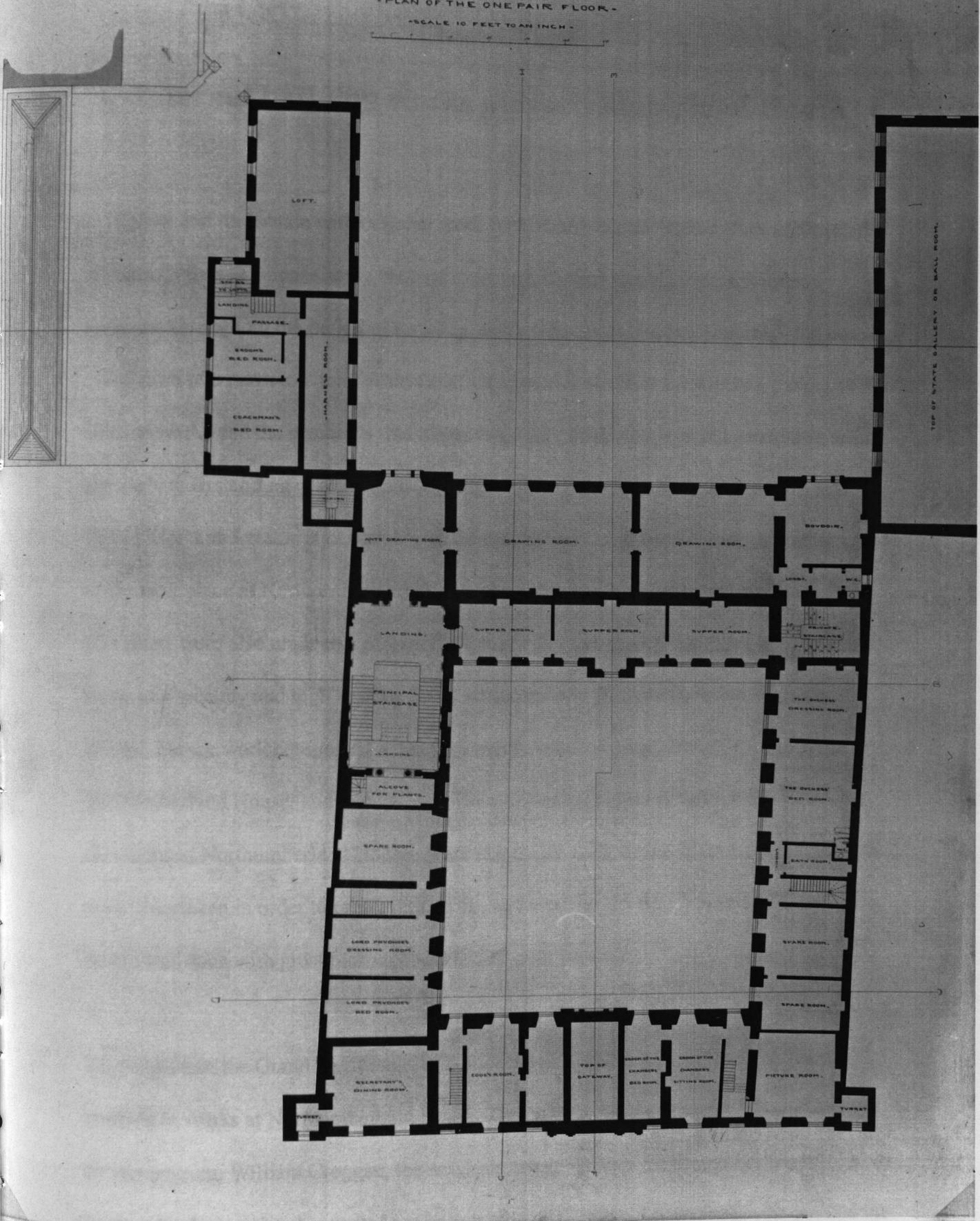


Plate XII Plan of the first floor by Charles Barry, 1854.

## Chapter Three

### Internal building works at Northumberland House

Craftsmen and tradesmen with ongoing work such as Morel and Hughes, Thomas Ponsonby, William Collins, Thomas Cundy, Robert Jones and Thomas Grundy received interim payments throughout the period of building works with the balance of account being met on completion of a particular job. From these accounts it is possible to develop a picture of the order of works and the standards that were employed. Sympathy with old decoration and an apparent understanding of renovation and restoration seems to have figured largely in the Third Duke's undertakings at both Northumberland House and Syon House. Major structural works took place at Northumberland House, partly due to severe structural problems, but alterations were also made to a property that needed to live up to the reputation of a town house of a wealthy and high ranking Whig aristocrat with great status in contemporary society. Hence work continued for the first twenty years of Hugh Percy's time as Duke at Northumberland House, and then at Syon House, creating homes of splendour. Structural alterations at Northumberland House meant that major work on the Glass Drawing Room had to be undertaken in order to preserve it. This, and work on the Ball Room and Tapestry Room, was done with great thoroughness and at great expense.

The creation of the Grand Staircase, 1822-1823, was a collaboration of many craftsmen involved in works at Northumberland House: Thomas Cundy, the designer; Thomas Grundy, the stonemason; William Croggan, the scagliola artist; William Collins and Edmund Thomas Parris, who designed and executed the balustrade and lighting; Robert Jones who painted the ceiling and Morel and Hughes who supplied the finishing touch of the stair carpet. Cundy's



INTERIOR OF NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE.—THE GRAND STAIRCASE.

Plate XIII View of the Grand Staircase designed by Thomas Cundy, published in the *Illustrated London News* when the house was open to the public in 1851 for the Great Exhibition.

design for a new staircase was conceived on a massive scale, in terms of both size and decoration. It was intended to have a dramatic impact on the visitor as the approach to the series of new state apartments on the south side of the house. The staircase measured 52 feet by 24 feet and was just over 49 feet high, the stairs, floors and landings made entirely of white and veined marble executed by Thomas Grundy. Grundy's bill for the mason's work was £4243.0.1/2d.<sup>41</sup> William Croggon and Company, the successors to Coade and Sealy at Coades Ornamental Stone & Scagliola Marble Works at Lambeth, supplied the scagliola, used for the walls, pilasters and columns, in 1822 at a total cost of £1920.18s.5d.<sup>42</sup> They also supplied the plaster models for many of the decorative features of the staircase including 'A Grecian Honeysuckle Freeze for the front of the Landing Grand Staircase' (£3Guineas.3s.3d.) and 'A rich Ornament for the Suffit of Music Gallery' (£4Guineas4s.4d.).<sup>43</sup> Prior to the Northumberland House commission Croggon is known to have supplied fourteen pilasters in *giallo antico* for Downing College, Cambridge, and four similar columns for the library at Ickworth, Suffolk, as well as eight *sienna* pilasters for the dining room at Apsley House.<sup>44</sup> The Grand Staircase of Northumberland House provided a scale of work previously unpractised by Croggon and no doubt helped him in securing the most elaborate and expensive commission in his career for the principal staircase at York House, later Stafford House, beginning in 1826.<sup>45</sup> At Northumberland House the walls of the Grand Staircase were cased with *sienna* scagliola marble and divided by *verde antique* scagliola columns and pilasters capped with bronze capitals of the Corinthian order, the pedestals of the two

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<sup>41</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d.(5)

<sup>42</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.e

<sup>43</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.e

<sup>44</sup> Yorke, James, 'Better than any original', *Country Life*, 1 April 1993, p.54-55

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*, p.54



NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE, STRAND: THE STAIRCASE.

[See p. 993, ante.]

Plate XIV View of Cundy's Grand Staircase published in *The Builder*, December 1873, just prior to the demolition of Northumberland House.

columns at the foot of the staircase being ‘immense solid blocks of fine veined marble quarried especially for the purpose’<sup>46</sup>

The staircase itself consisted of a central flight of steps which divided at the first landing into two further flights to the right and left. Above the first landing was the Music Gallery for the orchestra. Extending from the upper landing along three sides of the staircase walls the string course was moulded with running vitruvian scroll. The door frames and cornices were of veined marble. The frieze above was decorated with scrolling arabesques which imitated the design of the balustrade. Above was the coved ceiling reaching to the central skylight. Decorated by Robert Jones, this was a triumph of *trompe l’oeil* at which he was experienced through his work at Brighton Pavilion for the Prince of Wales.<sup>47</sup> Jones painted ‘the upper part of the Grand Stair Case, to represent a continuation of the enriched Architecture as surmounted by a Dome, ornamented with Numerous Compartments, and Pattera with a Gold Centre, and Spandrils, and Soffit in imitation of Bas-Relief, with the Ornaments and Window Frames finished in different tients to connect the Painted Decoration with the upper parts of the Architectural Cove’ for £197.0.0.<sup>48</sup> The stylised paterae to the centre of each painted panel of the four sides of the cove is reminiscent of the motif used by Morel and Hughes on the seat rails and upholstery of the furniture of the Ante Room which led directly from the top of the staircase. The scrolling arabesques of the frieze and balustrade, another motif which is continued in the carpet designs of the state rooms and inlaid borders of some of the furniture, is repeated in Jones’s painting in the corners of the cove.

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<sup>46</sup>William, T., *Northumberland House Historical and Descriptive Notes*, 1875, p.9

<sup>47</sup>Morley, J., *Regency Design*, see pp.322, 331

<sup>48</sup>Syon MSS U.III.8.d.(5)



**Plate XV** Detail of the balustrade of the Grand Staircase, now fitted at 49, Prince's Gate, London.

The staircase balustrade of elaborate ormolu scrollwork was, according to Thomas Williams,<sup>49</sup> designed by Edmund Thomas Parris and William Collins who also designed the pair of candelabra which stood at the foot of the staircase. Collins was certainly responsible for their execution as his accounts record supplying on 4 December 1823 for £2000: 'The Grand Staircase Railing executed in Grecian Metal consisting of a rich Vitruvian Scroll highly chased & finished and fixing the whole completed in the Great Marble Staircase at Northumberland House' as well as making '2 Large Candelabra 9 Feet high with 5 Branches on each having Lamps highly enriched chased and finished and fixing the same upon Marble Bases at foot of staircase'.<sup>50</sup> Further evidence that Edmund Thomas Parris was involved with the Grand Staircase is provided in Collins's accounts which record work a year later in 'Removing A part of the Bronze and Brightening the Bases & Capitals of all the Columns & Pilasters...including Mr Parris's time...'.<sup>51</sup> The whole of the staircase was 'lighted by a magnificent Chandelier [also by Collins] of Ormolu on which are displayed the Armorial Lions rampant of the Percies'.<sup>52</sup> A handrail of french-polished Hispaniola mahogany made by William Warne completed the staircase.<sup>53</sup> When Northumberland House was opened to the public during the Great Exhibition in 1851, the author of a printed guide described the 'Magnificent Staircase' as 'the most superb...in the country...' and 'without exception the most splendid feature of the building'.<sup>54</sup> A taste of the rich splendour of the decoration can

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<sup>49</sup>Williams, T., *op.cit.*, 1875, p.10

<sup>50</sup>Syon MSS U.III.8

<sup>51</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.f

<sup>52</sup> Williams, T., *op.cit.* 1875, p.10

<sup>53</sup> Parts of the balustrade survive at No. 49 Princes Gate, London. Originally extending from the hall to the second-floor landing, the two lowest flights were removed when the house was converted into flats in 1921 leaving only a section from the first-floor landing to second-floor landing. (Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England Survey of London, 1999)

<sup>54</sup> Anonymous, *Northumberland House: Its Saloons and Picture Gallery*, printed by H.G. Clarke and Co., London, 1851

be had from viewing the miniature of Charlotte Florentia, Third Duchess, painted by Christina Robertson in enamels, *circa* 1836 (see plate II ).

John Morley gives Robert Jones's dates *fl.c.* 1785 - *c.* 1835. On his receipts of payment to the Third Duke of Northumberland Jones describes himself as an 'artist' but, as John Morley has made clear,<sup>55</sup> he was quite evidently a designer. At the Brighton Pavilion for the Prince of Wales Robert Jones had a great input as designer and painter. Morley states that he had probably worked in the workshops of Frederick Eckhardt and Jean-Jacques Boileau and that his style exhibits great French influence in his 'revived rococo' interiors at the Pavilion, particularly the Yellow Drawing Room (no longer in existence by 1821).<sup>56</sup> For the Pavilion, Jones designed the Saloon, the Axminster carpet and wall cabinets for that room; chairs carved with dragons' wings and monsters for the Music Room and Spode gas torcheres with gilt-bronze dragons for the Banqueting Room. In the latter room he was responsible for the ceiling of palm leaves, 'partially trompe l'oeil and partially painted copper' and evidence suggests that Jones was also in charge of the decoration of this room.<sup>57</sup> George Smith specifically commented on two of the King's designers, Mons. Boileau and Robert Jones, 'who stands at the head of his profession' in ornamental painting, in his *Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide* of 1826.<sup>58</sup>

In 1822, in the Glass Drawing Room of Northumberland House, Robert Jones painted 'an exact restoration of the whole of the enriched Ceiling...prepared from the Plaster, and finished with all its Ornamental detail in Gold and Silver. The different fonds(?) Relieved by

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<sup>55</sup> Morley, J., *op.cit.*, pp.331, 341, 342, 428

<sup>56</sup> Morley, J., *op.cit.*, p.339

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, p.342

<sup>58</sup> Smith, G., *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide*, London, 1826, p.104, quoted by Morley, J., *ibid.*, p.408

a Variety of tints, and with painted arabesque Compartments, and Groups of Figures in Colors forming Pictures, illustrative of different Subjects from the Heathen Mythology'.<sup>59</sup> He also painted arabesque ornaments on the cove, added to the room during the alterations, and enriched the frieze and cornice, so as to correspond with the cove which they supported. The cost for his work was £1187.0.0.

There is no evidence to suggest that Robert Jones had any involvement at Northumberland House beyond his ceiling painting of the Glass Drawing Room, Tapestry Room and Grand Staircase but it would be reasonable to suppose that he had some influence on the design of the Tapestry Room and Grand Staircase ceilings which would have been well within his capabilities. He prepared, painted and gilded the ceiling of the Tapestry Room and finished it 'in imitation of a Sky, Gilding the Architectural Soffit which frames it and enriching the four sides of the Cove with Festoons, and Vases of Fruit, relieved and heightened with Gold, and worked on a ground of light timent wrought over with Silver Ornaments' (£200.0.0).<sup>60</sup> The four sides of the cove were also decorated so as to appear as if they continued the sky from the ceiling, 'connected from the Cornice, with the Architectural Soffit, by an imitation painted and heightened with Gold, of the Carved and Gilt ornaments which frame the Panels of Tapestry, the Whole of the Cove enriched with an imitation of Grey Trellis and Green Foliage, with Flowers &c. as seen on the Sky' (£164.0.0).<sup>61</sup> A fraction of this painting on the cove can be seen in a photograph of the interior of the Tapestry Room, *circa* 1874 (see plate XXX)

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<sup>59</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(5)

<sup>60</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(5)

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*

The extent of work and the care exercised in the restoration and improvement to the rooms which had been altered by the Third Duke's grandfather in the 1750s and 1770s is also clearly exhibited in the bills of Thomas Ponsoby, carver and gilder of Regent Circus, Piccadilly, London. In 1817 Ponsoby took down all of the figures in the Tapestry Room and it was removed to his workshops for cleaning in 1820 as glass, gilt ornaments and



Asminster carpet to surround Your Grace's large carpet

<sup>10</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8

<sup>11</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(5)

**Plate XVI** View of the Glass Drawing Room, watercolour by an unknown artist, *circa* 1874.

<sup>12</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.35

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

The extent of work and the care exercised in the restoration and improvement to the rooms which had been altered by the Third Duke's grandparents in the 1760s and 1770s is also clearly exhibited in the bills of Thomas Ponsonby, carver and gilder of Regent Circus, Piccadilly, London. In 1817 Ponsonby took down all of the tapestry in the Tapestry Room and it was removed to his workshops for cleaning; in 1820 all glass, gilt ornaments and frames, glass borders and panels from the Glass Drawing Room were labelled and numbered and removed to his workshops.<sup>62</sup> Structural alterations to the house meant that the ceiling was probably removed - hence Robert Jones's painting of an exact replica - and a cove was added in order to retain the Robert Adam interior. Working on this room was an enormous task and very costly, amounting to £1353.19s for Ponsonby's efforts. His accounts of 1822<sup>63</sup> record that the gilding and preparation was removed from all of the old metal ornaments which were repaired and restored, all 'reprepared' and regilded. Every area of the room is listed in meticulous detail as are the panels of glass which were stripped of all the old materials on the back, repaired, resilvered and repolished. Each dimension of the plate glass is recorded. An indication of other work needed to make good Adam's interior can be gleaned from the itemised accounts: Ponsonby was paid £197.8s. for fourteen 'Arabesque pilasters'; a further £192.10s. for twenty-two 'very richly carv'd Capitols' for these pilasters and £34.1s. for '146ft new rich reeded border on flat ground with bevil edges rich foliage'.<sup>64</sup> Morel and Hughes were paid £3.10.0 in 1823 for adding four new pieces of cornice 'to fill spaces left unfinished in piers between windows etc'<sup>65</sup> and £44.13s. for '19 yards of superfine Axminster carpet to surround Your Grace's large carpet'.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8

<sup>63</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(5)

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.38

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*

In June 1823, at the Duke's directions, Ponsosby and his men erected scaffolding and test-cleaned the gilding of the chimney pieces of the Ball Room. The room was then completely emptied by Ponsosby's men under the direction of the Housekeeper, Mrs Jane Edwards, who organised the dispersal of many of the pictures, mirrors, busts and furniture into other apartments. The five large cartoons and the portraits of the First Duke and



From January to June 1821 Thomas Dubbin executed the modelling for the stucco work of the new state apartments, that is the Ante Room, Saloon, Drawing Room and Boudoir, as

<sup>1</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d.(B)  
**Plate XVII** View of the Ball Room, watercolour by an unknown artist, *circa* 1874.

In June 1823, at the Duke's directions, Ponsonby and his men erected scaffolding and test-cleaned the gilding of the chimney pieces of the Ball Room. The room was then completely emptied by Ponsonby's men under the direction of the Housekeeper, Mrs Jane Edwards, who organised the dispersal of many of the pictures, mirrors, busts and furniture into other apartments. The five large cartoons and the portraits of the First Duke and Duchess were removed to the floor where they were covered with sheet lead to protect them. 'At increased Wages allowed in consideration of the nature of the work'<sup>67</sup> Ponsonby's men dusted, cleaned and made repairs where necessary to the whole of the room. A detailed description of the ceiling is given in the accounts which serves to emphasise the complicated nature and vast scale of the work which cost £354.0.0 to complete. Repairs and regilding of the frames of nine of the large pier glass frames, oval and square, repolishing and resilvering of the glasses; removing the elaborately carved ornaments from the panels of the window shutters removing all the old paint to the wood, repairing them and refixing, also the window architraves and two chimney fronts were 'rendered as perfect as possible'. A new doorway was cut from the Tapestry Room into the Ball Room; Ponsonby's account describes the large quantity of paper used to cover the remaining tapestry panels while the work to alter the doorway took place. During the years 1823 and 1824 gilding work in the Ball Room was undertaken by the firm which included everything: dado, doorways, windows, chimney fronts, tablets over windows, frames for mirrors, frames for the five large paintings, entablature around the room, and totalled £3446.13s.2d.<sup>68</sup>

From January to June 1821 Thomas Dubbin executed the modelling for the stucco work of the new state apartments, that is the Ante Room, Saloon, Drawing Room and Boudoir, as

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<sup>67</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d.(8)

<sup>68</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d.(8)

well as work for the ceilings of the Glass Drawing Room, Tapestry Room and Dining Rooms. For the Saloon and Drawing Room among the mouldings made were 'A Rich Flower 3 feet 6 inches Diameter for the Ceiling; A Forus of Laurel leaves and Berries Circular; A Rich Scroll with 2 Flowers Circular; Three Flowers for Pannels 8 Inches Diameter'.<sup>69</sup> During that same year and the following one, Ponsonby and his men undertook the gilding work 'Wholly done with double gold & in the most workmanlike manner'<sup>70</sup> in the Boudoir, Ante Room, Saloon and Drawing Room; references to 'Grecian ovolo egg & tongue'; 'Raffle leaf husk chain'; 'rich vitruvian scroll'; honeysuckle and anthemion motifs appear frequently in the accounts. In the Ante Room as well, '1 very bold, & fully enrich'd center flower 3 ½ feet diameter consisting of 8 plain indented OGee leaves with turned ends 19" long, & 7" wide on an average gilt all over,...etc.' was executed. Thomas Grundy and his masons carved the fireplaces in these rooms from statuary marble 'agreeable to the design given, very rich & bold enrichment in No. 2 Blockings, 2 Pillasters, 1 Frieze, 1 Bed mold and 1 Necking or Astragal'.<sup>71</sup> In 1823 mason's work polishing the carved statuary marble fireplace in the Saloon alone, took the 'Mason 14 days £3.17s.; Polishers 521 days £110.14s.3d.; and Materials £6.10s.'. <sup>72</sup>

Lighting in these rooms, and indeed much of the house, was supplied by one William Collins of 227 The Strand, London. Collins described himself on his printed bill-head in 1822, initially as 'Glass Manufacturer to his Majesty and their Royal Highnesses the Duke of Sussex, and Princess Elizabeth' and, later that year, as 'Glass Enameller Glass Manufacturer to the King and to the Royal Family'. Collins seems to have specialised in enamelled glass

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<sup>69</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.b

<sup>70</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(5)

<sup>71</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(7)

and he certainly employed painters such as John Martin in his workshop.<sup>73</sup> On 2 January 1822 two windows of enamelled glass were bought from Collins for the Lobby by the Boudoir:

A Window in the Cabinet with the Head of Flora in the Centre & a Rich wreath of Flowers, A Richly Enamelled Grecian Border on the Outside, and the Centre highly Ornamented with Stained and Enamelled Glass £31.10s.

A Metal Frame for Ditto

Glazed Compleat £2.12s.6d.

A Window with A Circular Head Onamented by a very Richly Enamelled Foliage in Various Flowers the Centre Containing 3 Landscapes by Martin, Set in pannelled borders of Stained and Enamelled Glass £52.10s.<sup>74</sup>

In 1832 he supplied 'An enamelled Landscape by Martin in place of broken one and a piece of Border [flowers]' for £7.7s.<sup>75</sup> None of these works of art on glass survive in the collection today, although particular note is made of the 'painted window in the lobby by the boudoir'<sup>76</sup> in the schedule of fixtures which the Sixth Duke had the right to remove before the demolition of Northumberland House in 1874. However, on 1 May 1828 Collins' billed the Duke for 'Cash paid Mr Hughes for Screen for Glass Picture of Belshazars Feast'.<sup>77</sup> This painting on glass, also by John Martin, survives at Syon House and it is likely that Collins may have been the source for this purchase. The Ante Room, Saloon and Drawing Rooms were each lit by a central chandelier, supplied by William Collins, *ensuite* with that of the Grand Staircase. These were supplied 23 May 1823: '4 Superb Chandeliers executed in Grecian Metal in the Drawing Room, Saloon Anti Room and Grand Staircase' £2700.0.0 and a further cost of £168.10s. for 'various alterations to the branches bearing the Lamps the heads of the Chandeliers, Suspending Chain, Husk in the Ceiling &c &c'.<sup>78</sup> The term

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<sup>73</sup> Feaver, William, *The Art of John Martin*, Oxford, 1975, p.13

<sup>74</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(2)

<sup>75</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.o

<sup>76</sup> Duke of Northumberland's MSS, uncatalogued papers

<sup>77</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.j

<sup>78</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d

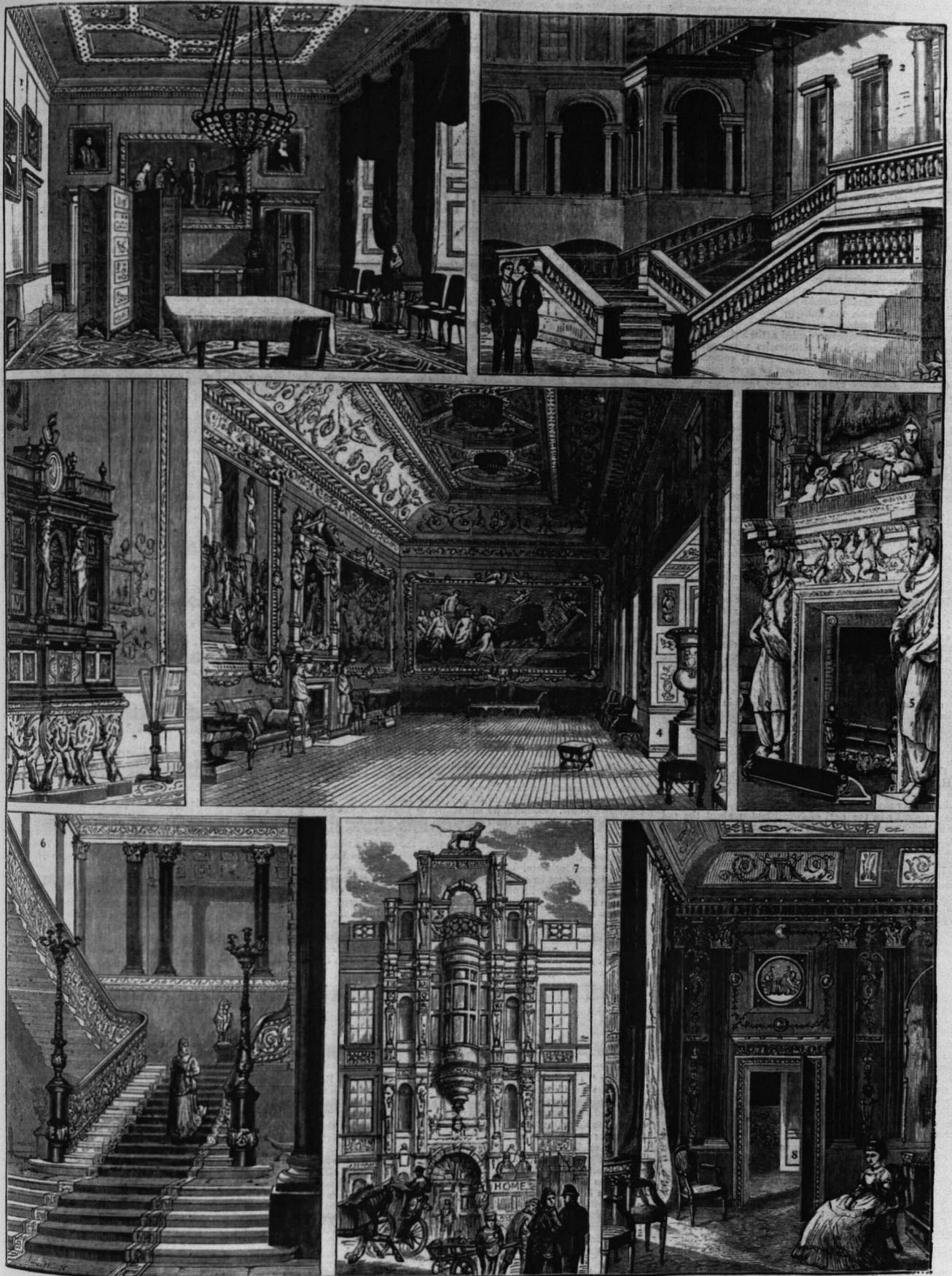
'Grecian metal' seemingly describes a special tinted lacquered finish to the bronze instead of gilding, which gave an 'antique' patina.<sup>79</sup> Each chandelier had a massive tazza-shaped bowl, decorated with foliage, from which were suspended a number of scrolling foliate branches for lights (eight in the Ante Room, ten to each of the Saloon and Drawing Room and twelve for the Grand Staircase) decorated above with large lions rampant, an armorial device of the Percy family. To complete the restoration of the Glass Drawing Room Collins manufactured 'A very superb 18 light Chandelier...A Group of Dolphins in centre...the whole enriched with large shells &c in cut glass and ornamented with very brilliant cut glass...And a Piece of rich suspending chain for Do'<sup>80</sup> for £400.0.0. This now hangs at Syon House. Throughout the passages and rooms used by the servants in the execution of their duties, gilt-brass hexagonal lanterns were provided, all connected for gas. Collins' accounts, which continue until 1840, are full of entries for workmen cleaning out lamps and repairing the gas piping system which was obviously temperamental and in need of constant maintenance.

During the period of building works at Northumberland House and Syon, the Third Duke gave his collection of pictures a complete overhaul by the conservation and restoration of canvases and frames and a major re-hang. Restoration of pictures in the Duke's collection was undertaken by William Day, who had a room, or number of rooms, at Northumberland House, over a period of years. Day kept the Duke closely informed of the status of various works and managed a major reorganisation of pictures, not only within Northumberland House and Syon House but also from Northumberland House to Syon House. Thomas Ponsonby's men were responsible for the physical movement of the paintings, including

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<sup>79</sup> Christie's catalogue, *Important English Furniture*, 17 November 1988, lots 102 & 103

<sup>80</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8



1. Dining Room.—2. Garden Front.—3. Cabinet in Saloon.—4. Ball Room.—5. Chimney Piece in Ball Room.—6. Staircase.—7. Strand Front.—8. Glass Drawing Room.

THE DEMOLITION OF NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE—VIEWS OF THE BUILDING

Plate XVIII External and internal views of Northumberland House prior to its demolition in 1874.

removing them from their frames when necessary. To move paintings between houses, Ponsonby's men packed them into 'spring vans' for their journey.<sup>81</sup> Ponsonby's accounts show that decisions with regard to hanging of paintings were made by the Duke and Duchess themselves who were often in attendance to direct proceedings. As carvers and gilders, Ponsonby's workshop repaired a large number of picture frames, added embellishments to existing frames and supplied new ones along with brass picture tube rods, fixings and brass hooks.

Building works at Syon had continued on a smaller scale while works at Northumberland House were undertaken but, by 1824 and 1825, as they drew to an end, refurbishment at Syon intensified. There Ponsonby's skills in the restoration of Robert Adam's interiors figured as prominently as they had at Northumberland House. In February 1830 Ponsonby and four men took down the gilded figures from the entablature of the Ante Room, Syon House, and the two large pier glasses which were put away 'very carefully with flannel & various materials'<sup>82</sup> in the Dining Room in preparation for re-gilding. In 1831 every piece of decoration in the Ante Room was re-gilded; the bill totalled £2983.4s.11d.<sup>83</sup> In that same year William Croggon laid the scagliola floor in the Ante Room. In March 1833 in the South East Closet of Adam's Long Gallery, Ponsonby proceeded with 'Works executed as per Design approved' with the creation of new gilded decorative mouldings 'on French white ground to match the room' and '134 ft of new and fully enriched Borders to go round her graces drawing on satin for panelling of room'.<sup>84</sup> On 23 April 1824 Ponsonby and men removed one hundred prints and their printed borders from the Print Room (the room still

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<sup>81</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.k

<sup>82</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.l

<sup>83</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.m

<sup>84</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.o

retains that name today) at Syon. Large quantities of pictures were removed from Northumberland House to Syon House in 1828-1830. Ponsonby and his men had the responsibility of providing their safe carriage and re-hanging them, usually at the direction of the Duke and Duchess. Despite these commitments Ponsonby's work at Northumberland House did not end. An important feature of the household accounts, which run uninterrupted during this period, is the continued employment of certain tradesmen, namely Thomas Ponsonby, William Collins, Morel and Hughes and, after 1826, Robert Hughes, in the maintenance of the interiors at both houses. Some new pieces were supplied but, more frequently, the accounts record repair work. This was either because there were problems with the product supplied, as with William Collins' gas lighting at Northumberland House or, for the repair and maintenance of items. In 1828 Ponsonby cleaned and repaired the gilding throughout the apartments at Northumberland House 'at the same time repairing & restoring injuries in the various Articles of Furnishing pictures and splendid decoration of Walls of Gallery Glass Draw<sup>s</sup> Tapestry & Dining rooms as originally executed'<sup>85</sup> by himself; in 1832 all decorative features and furniture of the state apartments were repaired; in 1838, all the rooms were dusted and cleaned; in 1839 repairs to furniture, picture frame cleaning and major movement of paintings was undertaken. In 1834 the firm had to remove all of the tapestry hangings in the Tapestry Room in order to get rid of 'the vermin'<sup>86</sup> thoroughly and, on one occasion at least, Ponsonby had to undertake repairs following a rout at the house.

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<sup>85</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.k

<sup>86</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.q

Furniture by Morel and Bachelier, 1823-1825

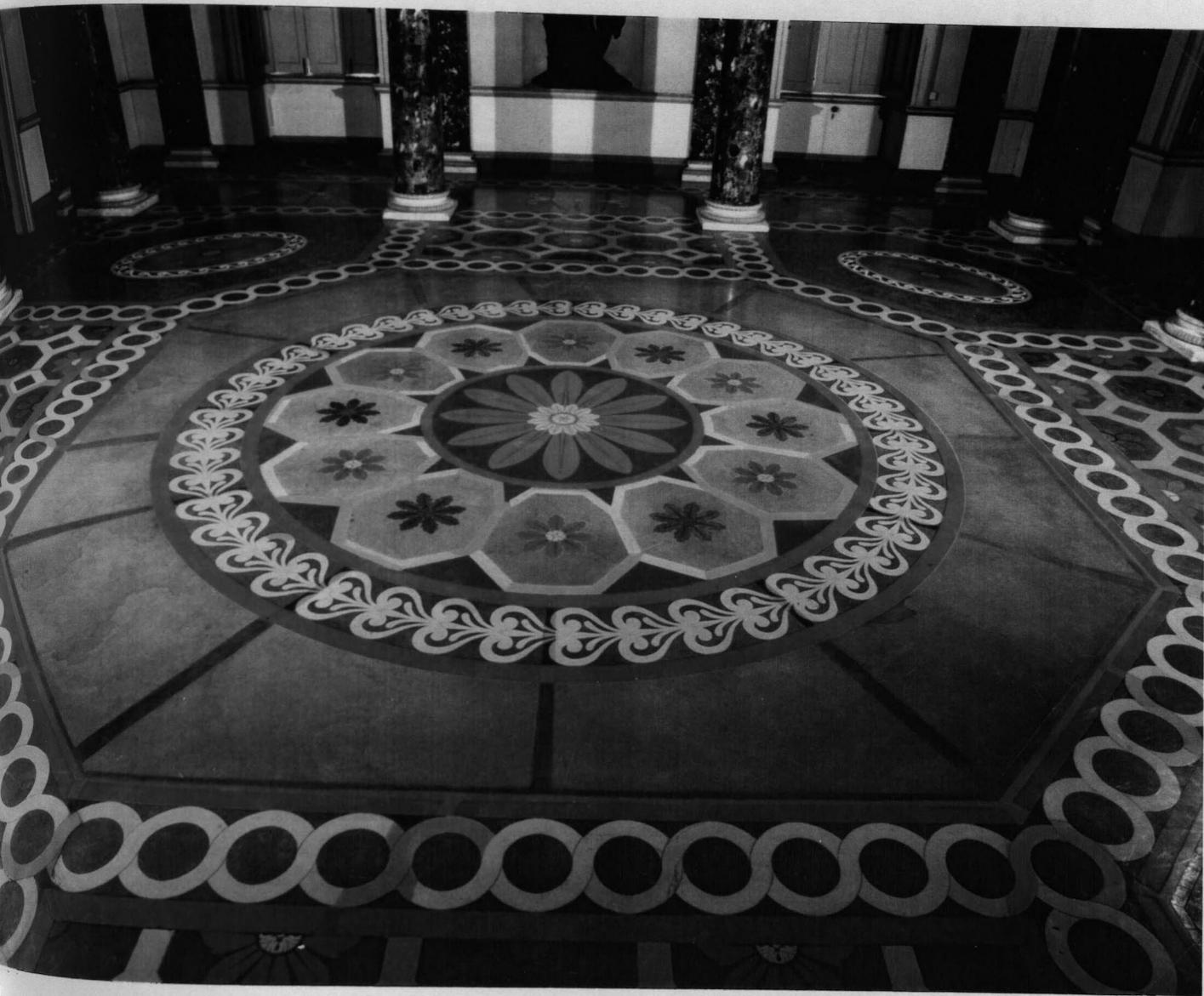


Plate XIX Scagliola floor in the Ante Room at Syon House, laid by William Croggon in 1831.

## Chapter Four

### Furniture by Morel and Hughes, 1822-1825

The enfilade of state rooms on the first floor of Northumberland House: Ante Room, Saloon, Drawing Room and Boudoir, was the place in which Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes could best display their talents as interior designers, upholsterers, furniture designers and makers. Cundy's structural alterations had created a blank canvas allowing the creation of highly fashionable interiors without the restriction of trying to combine the old with the new. Painted in white with gold enrichments throughout the suite of state apartments, the lightness, which was a hallmark of the style of Percier and Fontaine,<sup>87</sup> was enhanced by the rich colours of the upholstery, carpets and furniture designed by Morel and Hughes for each room.

#### Ante Room

The Ante Room, twenty-one feet square and eighteen feet six inches high, with its grey silk walls divided into stripes of the same colour rosettes, was complimented by a carpet of maroon and gold and completed by a suite of furniture of aburra wood carved in late neo-classical style with use of such typical motifs as acanthus and paterae. Gilded rosette paterae ornamented the rails of all the seat furniture. Two ottomans were made to stand either side of the door leading from the Grand Staircase and another two for the right and left of the window. Two bergeres, 'from the antique, of your Graces aburra wood, highly polished and richly carved & gilt with ornamental trusses, foliage leaves, scroll sides, &C. The tablet backs, & seats stuffed with the best horse hair in canvas, standing on brass socket

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<sup>87</sup> Gere, C. *Nineteenth Century Decoration*, London, 1989, p.138

castors' were supplied at a cost of £225.16s for the pair.<sup>88</sup> The shape of the bergeres is of similar form to those illustrated in two plates by Percier and Fontaine<sup>89</sup> except with sabre legs to the rear only. The rosette patera, on Percier and Fontaine's bergeres, is used by Morel and Hughes although more extensively and applied to different parts of the chairs. The scrolling feature under the extreme edges of the tablet back of the bergere (also in plate 15 of Percier and Fontaine) is reiterated in Morel and Hughes's furniture but by using acanthus instead of rosettes. The rosette patera used on the seat rails of the ottomans, side chairs, stools, rails and at the top of the tablet back of the bergeres is illustrated in P. and M.A. Nicholson's *The Practical Cabinet Maker* (1826), in their specimens of 'Greek Pateras'.<sup>90</sup> Paterae of rosette form feature on the rails of Thomas Hope's seat furniture.<sup>91</sup> Eight 'light' chairs at £23.14s. each<sup>92</sup> and eight stools 'enriched with carved capitals stretchers & rosettes, gilt in mat and burnished gold'<sup>93</sup> at £22.0.0 each completed the suite of seat furniture. Chairs of a similar design are illustrated by P. and M.A. Nicholson in two plates of 'Drawing Room Chairs'.<sup>94</sup> The illustration on the left of plate 72 in particular recalls the shape of the Morel and Hughes side chairs with the elegant line of the scrolling stile from the seat rail terminating in a rosette at the top, the padded stuffed back, and the decorative features on the seat rails. The legs too are turned and tapering to the front and sabre to the rear. Originally the stools which Morel and Hughes supplied had stuffed seats. They were altered at a later date to create four tables. These alterations had been made by *circa* 1874 when one of the tables can be seen in a

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<sup>88</sup> Syon MSS, U.I.64, p.2

<sup>89</sup> Percier and Fontaine, *op.cit.*, plates 13 & 15

<sup>90</sup> Nicholson, P. and M.A., *The Practical Cabinet Maker*, 'Greek Pateras', plate 68, figure 1

<sup>91</sup> Hope, Thomas, *op.cit.*, plate 17, no. 4 and plate 22, nos. 5 and 6

<sup>92</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.2

<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Nicholson, P. and M.A., *op.cit.*, 'Drawing Room Chairs', plates 52 and 72

photograph of the Boudoir (see plate XXIII). The tables and two of the side chairs remain in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland at Syon House.<sup>95</sup>

Other furniture in the Ante Room, made of 'your Grace's Aburra wood', comprised a pair of firescreens with silk-covered sliding panels (£198.12s) and a large circular table 'the top inlaid with a rich border of Canary wood, & the edge carved the center supported by a saxagon column with 3 carved and gilt chimerical paws, & the frieze by 3 circular columns, with carved and gilt capitals and bases standing on a triangular plinth, relieved with gilt mouldings, & large wrought brass scroll claws, highly chased & strong castors' (£249.16s.).<sup>96</sup>

The following year, two new pieces of furniture made by Morel and Hughes were added to the contents of the room. One was a flower-stand of aburra wood, also with carved and gilt ornaments, on 'carved scroll legs, and strong brass castors' (£88.16s.)<sup>97</sup>, the other a cabinet specifically designed to house a collection of carved ivories depicting genre scenes after Teniers, Wouvermans and Ostade. These ivories were collected *circa* 1765-1775 by the Third Duke's grandmother, Elizabeth, First Duchess of Northumberland, while travelling on the Continent. They were fitted into the upper part of the cabinet 'made partly of ebony, highly polished,...with carved and gilt mouldings' around the ivory carvings which were enclosed by a glazed front 'enriched with carved & gilt foliage leaf in the cornice, and a

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<sup>95</sup> The two *bergeres* and the six other side chairs were sold at the sale of the property of David Style, Watringbury Place, Kent, by Christie's in 1978 by which date they had been reupholstered in red silk. Simon Redburn Fine Arts was then in ownership of these chairs: one *bergere* and two chairs were bought from him by Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museum, Burnley, in 1979 because of the association of Sir Jeffrey Wyattville. Morel and Hughes were known to have supplied furniture for some of Wyattville's other commissions at Longleat and Chatsworth and, later, Nicholas Morel at Windsor. (Letter from Susan Bourne, Curator at Towneley Hall to Clare Baxter dated 23 February 1999) The other *bergere* is at the Victoria and Albert Museum and is illustrated in F. Collard's *Regency Furniture*, p.111, plate 12

<sup>96</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.2

<sup>97</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64(1), p.5

handsome brass gallery...of columns, on the top; the lower part composed of thermes in front and pilasters at the back, with richly carved and gilt capitals, bases, and other ornaments, resting on a plinth...' (£516.12s.).<sup>98</sup> The reference to the wood in the accounts as 'your Grace's aburra', is interesting since the Duke obviously supplied it to Morel and Hughes. This must be the same wood as the amboyna, or wood which came with the same consignment, which is known to have been given to the Second Duke of Northumberland by the Regent of Portugal. At the Regent's request the Second Duke sent a full-scale copy of Robert Adam's stone screen and iron gates to Syon Park for the exiled royal family's palace in Brazil at the beginning of the nineteenth century; the consignment of wood was a gift in return. The wood was in England by May 1814 when the Second Duke mentioned to his correspondent at the Regent's court the arrival in England of 'the beautiful planks of wood'. Thomas Williams in his manuscript history of Syon House<sup>99</sup> records the gift of 'unsawed timber called Lingoa or Amboyna Wood' which was used to make 'the Tables, Chairs and Settees in the Anti Drawing Room at Northumberland House in 1822'.<sup>100</sup> Williams also writes that 'this wood is exceedingly hard, and there was much difficulty and great labor in making these articles of furniture with it'.<sup>101</sup>

### **Saloon and Drawing Room**

The Saloon and Drawing Room, forty-seven feet by twenty-six feet and thirty-five feet by twenty-six feet respectively, and with ceilings at eighteen feet six inches high, were decorated with wall hangings of red geranium-coloured silk which also covered the large

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<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Williams, T. *op.cit.*, 1872

<sup>100</sup> *ibid.*, p.43-44

<sup>101</sup> *ibid.*, p.43-44



**Plate XX** View of the Saloon looking toward the Ante Room at the east of the house, *circa* 1874. One of the pair of Cucci cabinets can be seen on the fireplace wall (see page 62).

suite of Empire-style giltwood seat furniture. The sofas, elbow chairs, side chairs and stools provided for these rooms were carved with similar decorative motifs (see plates XXXIV and XXXV). The arms of the sofas and elbow chairs are supported on swept carved acanthus terminating in a scroll beneath the arm. Capping the legs of all of the seat furniture is a stylised leaf motif enclosed by two rope-twist bands and, at the top of the legs, at the corners of the seatrail, are stylised flowerhead paterae. On some of the suite the panels to the top rails and seat rails are of satinwood, to others reeded giltwood. Two sofas, eight armchairs, thirteen side chairs, four 'window' stools and two footstools were supplied for the Saloon with two angular ottomans, two straight ottomans (for each side of the fireplace) another pair of ottomans (for the right and left of the windows) and the central 'woolsack'. Two sofas, ten armchairs, six side chairs, three 'window' stools and two footstools fitted into the Drawing Room with a large 'Turkish divan'. The sofas, chairs and stools survive in the collection and now furnish the State Rooms at Alnwick Castle. The 'window' stools are X-frame, a form probably derived from Percier and Fontaine who illustrate a '*Tabouret en X*'.<sup>102</sup> This design is reiterated by Thomas Hope in his *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration*, 1807.<sup>103</sup> A similar design is illustrated in Ackermann's *Repository*, 1809.<sup>104</sup> The stools are of similar form to the pair which were supplied with the suite of Boudoir furniture.

Furniture of more massive proportions was made, much *ensuite*, for the two rooms which were intended to be opened up as one room to provide accommodation for large numbers of guests. The east end of the Saloon had a central door which led from the Ante Room; at its west end a single large door in the centre of the wall opened through to the Drawing Room. Opposite this door leading from the Saloon to the Drawing Room was:

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<sup>102</sup> Percier and Fontaine, *op.cit.*, plate 39, no.5

<sup>103</sup> Hope, Thomas, *op.cit.*, plate 6, and plate 12, nos. 3 and 4

<sup>104</sup> Ackermann, *op.cit.*, Vol.I, series 1, plate 26, 'Drawing Room Tabouret', p. 400, June 1809

...a very large handsome glass frame, composed of 2 pilasters, & traverse top, with double scroll ornament foliage leaves, rosettes, & egg and tongue moulding, the top surmounted by a large bold cornice, with richly carved foliage leaf & other ornaments, the lower parts terminated by scroll trusses, & the whole highly gilt in mat and burnished gold...[above]...a very large table of fine rose wood highly polished, with handsome carved & gilt ornaments in the frieze supported by 4 fluted columns in front with carved capitals & bases, the whole richly gilt, semi-columns & pilasters at the back, resting on a rose wood plinth, relieved with carved & gilt Raphael leaf mouldings...<sup>105</sup>

The frames of the overmantel mirrors in both rooms were decorated in the same way as this pier glass but without the scroll trusses.

Three rosewood pier tables 'highly polished with richly carved ornaments in the friezes, gilt, in mat & burnished gold, the [marble] tops supported by fluted columns in front with highly carved & gilt capitals & bases [with] 2 richly ornamented pilasters',<sup>106</sup> carved in the same pattern as the pier glass frame which fitted above, were also supplied in 1823. The tables and mirrors stood in the piers of the four windows of the Saloon; two tables and glasses of the same type stood in the piers of the Drawing Room. Morel and Hughes ordered the British plate glass from Thomas Ponsonby.<sup>107</sup> In addition, both rooms were supplied with large circular rosewood tables, the tops inlaid with a canarywood border of scrolling arabesque, reminiscent of William Collins and Edmund Thomas Parris's balustrade for Cundy's Grand Staircase. The top had 'carved antique moulding round the edge, supported by a rosewood column & triangular plinth, relieved with carved enrichments, gilt in mat & burnished gold & three bold handsome lion's paws & castors in brass with richly chased ornament'.<sup>108</sup> The 'carved antique moulding' refers to the gadrooned edge of the top. Each room was lit with one of William Collins's gas candelabra, elaborately decorated with scrolling branches for the lights and the heraldic device of the Percy family of lions rampant. At the end of the

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<sup>105</sup> Syon MSS, U.I.64, p.16

<sup>106</sup> *ibid.*, p.10

<sup>107</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(5)

<sup>108</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.9

Drawing Room, between either side of the pier table and the two doors, each side of the door  
at the opposite side of the room leading to the Boudoir and the staircase of the door, were



display cabinets (see plate XX). These display cabinets were designed by Domenico Cucci in 1683 at the Gobelin's Factory in Paris and were made by Yamaglia

**Plate XXI** View of the Drawing Room and the west wall leading to the Boudoir, *circa* 1874. One of the display cabinets can be seen flanking the fireplace (see page 64).

Drawing Room, between either side of the pier table and the two doors, each side of the door at the opposite side of the room leading to the Saloon and on both sides of that door, were pairs of triangular pedestals to support 'Very rich Candelabra...highly chased and finished to bear 7 branches each' supplied by William Collins on 3 May 1824 for £600.0.0.<sup>109</sup> The pedestals 'of fine yew tree highly polished with pilasters and sunk panels' were supplied by Morel and Hughes in the same year and the description in their accounts makes much of the elaborate arabesque ornament: 'richly carved scroll trusses on the plinths, foliage leaf in the angles, honeysuckles, myrtle leaves, scrolls, mouldings, &C. in the panels and friezes, very highly gilt in mat and burnished gold'.<sup>110</sup> The six pedestals cost £1947.0.0; they are now at Syon House.

Furniture individual to each of these rooms was also supplied. In the Saloon Morel and Hughes provided a pair of rosewood sofa tables, again with inlaid canarywood borders of a scrolling arabesque motif which echoed that of the circular table and mirror frames, gadroon edging to the top and two frieze drawers 'each with good locks & key & ormolu knobs', the whole 'supported by highly carved [gilded] scroll standards...with plinths & brass lion's claws & castors'. The stretcher rail, with giltwood gadroon border, had a cushion to the centre 'stuffed with horse hair, covered with geranium silk damask [to match the upholstery in the room] & finished with gold colour silk gimp & cord' (£450.0.0).<sup>111</sup> A pair of giltwood firescreens with silk-covered sliding mounts completed the new furniture which Morel and Hughes supplied for the room. The crowning glory in the Saloon was a pair of *pietra dura* cabinets (see plate XX). These magnificent examples of baroque decorative art were made by Domenico Cucci in 1683 at the Gobelins Factory for Louis XIV's palace at Versailles.

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<sup>109</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8

<sup>110</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64(1), p.8

<sup>111</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.9

Their purchase was totally in keeping with the revival of the Louis Quatorze style which was one of the dominant fashions of the Regency period after the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy.<sup>112</sup> The cabinets were bought from Robert Fogg, 'Chinaman to his Majesty' of 150, Regent Street, London in June 1822 for £2100.0.0.<sup>113</sup> Fogg worked extensively for King George IV and, like his father, was an important dealer and middleman who did not restrict his business to the buying and selling of porcelain.<sup>114</sup> Morel and Hughes regilded the carved stands of these cabinets, 'rebronzing the chimerical legs and adding 2 new plinths of wood as ebony highly polished & relieved with richly carved and gilt Raphael leaf moulding' at a cost of £135.12s.<sup>115</sup>

In the Drawing Room two smaller seventeenth century *pietra dura* cabinets were extensively repaired and polished. The drawers were lined with red sarcenet and new gilt mouldings added to the fronts, new locks and key put in and ormolu galleries of column balustrades added to the tops of the cabinets. For each a new stand was made<sup>116</sup> 'as black ebony highly polished with a drawer in the frieze & carved & gilt mouldings round do, 2 black columns in front & pilasters at the back, with carved & gilt capitals & bases to correspond with pier tables, the plinth enriched with Raphael leaf moulding'.<sup>117</sup> Two large glazed cases of polished rosewood 'enriched with carved & gilt laurel leaf...the tops finished with carved & gilt honeysuckle galleries the backs of interior lined with Mazarine blue silk velvet, a platform of 4 steps and 2 brass rods with screws & nuts covered in suit, the lower parts with

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<sup>112</sup> Collard, F. *op.cit.*, p.132

<sup>113</sup> Duke of Northumberland's MSS uncatalogued and Percy Letters and Papers Vol. 79, f.128

<sup>114</sup> Anonymous, *Carlton House- The Past Glories of George IV's Palace*, exhibition catalogue, Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, 1991-1992, pp.65, 71, 74, 78, 80

<sup>115</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64(2), p.10

<sup>116</sup> There are three of these individual *pietra dura* cabinets with matching stands still in the Northumberland Collection, inv. nos. 02040, 02041, 02042.

<sup>117</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.16 & 17

columns and plinths finished with carved & gilt mouldings'<sup>118</sup> cost £750.10s. and stood either side of the Drawing Room fireplace (see plate XXI). These cabinets were used to display a fine collection of works of art including miniatures of Sir Walter Raleigh by Nicholas Hilliard, of the Duke of Wellington and the Third Duchess of Northumberland by William Essex; ivory carvings of figures such as Martin Luther and Calvin and rustic scenes such as the 'Boys with Goat and Sheep'; snuff boxes of gold set with semi-precious stones; porcelain, including figurines, cups and saucers by Chelsea, Sevres and Meissen; a silver nautilus cup and a coral figure of 'The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian'.<sup>119</sup> These cabinets are now at Alnwick, although their interiors have been altered, probably during the 1960s, to house two glass shelves.

In 1825, two tables were made to house pieces of decorative art in the collection of the Duke. One was made of aburra wood for the mosaic panel depicting the head of Bacchus by Jacques Raffaelli of Rome; the other of rosewood, with a brass gallery, for a porcelain plaque depicting Charles II after the Battle of Worcester.

## **Boudoir**

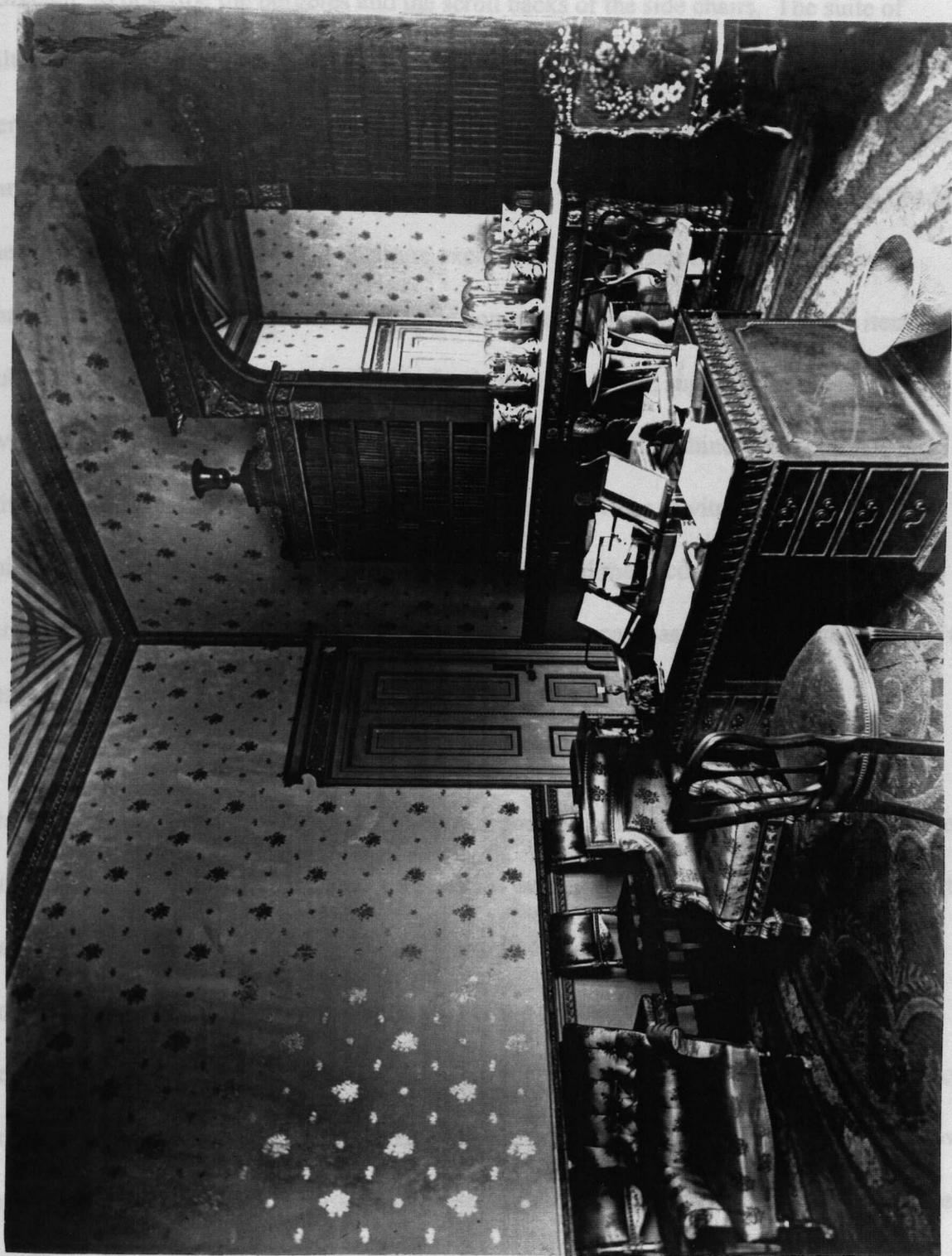
Beyond the Drawing Room was the Boudoir which Williams describes as 'a perfect *bijou* of an apartment, in size 20 feet square and 15 feet 6 inches high'.<sup>120</sup> The colour scheme was of blue and gold silk walls and upholstery, the silk decorated with a repeating pattern of a small sprig of flowers and foliage, with a highly patterned Axminster carpet of varying shades of gold on a mazarine blue ground. Furniture supplied for this room was very much influenced by the fashion of Greek Revival. This is exhibited in the shape and form of the various

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<sup>118</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.17

<sup>119</sup> Syon MSS H.VIII.1.b, pp.73-78

<sup>120</sup> Williams, T. *op.cit.*, 1875, p.12



**Plate XXII** View of the Boudoir and the east wall with the cabinet containing sham books which concealed the door leading from the Drawing Room, circa 1874.

pieces and the decorative motifs employed by Morel and Hughes who actually use the term 'Grecian' to describe the bergeres and the scroll backs of the side chairs. The suite of giltwood seat furniture made for the Boudoir consisted of a pair of chaise-longues, a pair of bergeres, six side chairs, two X-frame stools and one large window stool. Vitruvian scroll carving, intersected with anthemion, on the seat rails with flowerhead paterae to the heads of the legs decorated all of the seat furniture except the window stool. The form of the chaise-longues and the window stool can be compared to a plate illustrating these items published by Ackermann in 1809.<sup>121</sup> The bookcase, or cabinet, supplied for the Boudoir (which remains in the collection at Syon House), and the piano cabinet were embellished with decorative carved giltwood 'Grecian' ornamental devices of vitruvian scroll, griffins, animal-like legs, lion paw feet. These ornaments echoed the decoration of the vitruvian scroll on the rails of the seat furniture and the use of lion paws as supports for the arms of the bergeres and terminating the three-quarter scroll back of the chaise longues.

The bookcase cabinet 'of your Grace's aburra wood' was divided into three sections: the left hand side had shelving for books with a panelled door to the lower part; the right hand part was fitted with dummy books, again over a panelled door, which formed the door leading from/to the Drawing Room. The central part of the cabinet was made 'to receive your Grace's plates of glass at the back', which were supplied by Thomas Ponsonby,<sup>122</sup> 'the whole enriched with the following carved ornaments, viz: mouldings & trusses in the pediment over center, Vitruvian scrolls in the friezes of center and wings capitals and bases for the pilasters, 2 griffins with rich foliage in the spandril, Vitruvian scroll in lower frieze supported by bold handsome chimerical legs with lion's claws, the whole gilt in mat and burnished gold in the

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<sup>121</sup> Ackermann, *op.cit.*, 'Chaise Longue and Window-Seat', Vol. I, series 1, plate 3, p.54, January 1809

<sup>122</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(5)

best manner' (£682.16s).<sup>129</sup> On raised pediments above the left and right-hand sections of the cabinet were porphyry urns.



<sup>129</sup> Syon MSS U.L.64, p.24, 25

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p.25

Plate XXIII View of the west wall of the Boudoir, *circa* 1874.

best manner' (£682.16s.).<sup>123</sup> On raised pediments above the left and right-hand sections of the cabinet were porphyry urns.

The original intention for a cabinet to stand facing opposite the Boudoir window was rejected in place of the making of one to enclose a pianoforte. Morel and Hughes used as much of the material as possible in accommodating this change of mind but still had to charge £23.18s for the work which had already been partly undertaken. The pianoforte cabinet, also of the Duke's aburra wood, imitated the decoration of the bookcase cabinet, 'the upper part with cornice and carved Vitruvian scroll, capitals and bases for the pilasters, a panelled door fitted with plaited silk curtain and richly carved and gilt rosette in the center, the lower part with cylinder front to enclose the keys, the ends finished with carved scroll ornaments and supported by chimerical legs with lion's claws the whole of the enrichment gilt to correspond with the preceding cabinet' (£465.10s).<sup>124</sup> The music stool was made *ensuite* in the same wood 'with carved chimerical legs & lion's paws, a carved column in the center, & vitruvian scroll border in the frieze'<sup>125</sup> enhanced by gilding and with a stuffed seat upholstered in the same blue and gold silk as the other seat furniture in the room.

A sofa table of aburra wood with carved giltwood enrichments, similar to those supplied for the Saloon, and later for the Glass Drawing Room, was made, (now at Syon House) along with '2 fancy tables...highly polished supported by carved pillars and triangular plinths with scroll claws, richly carved and gilt in mat and burnished gold'.<sup>126</sup> These 'fancy tables' must be those which are now at Alnwick Castle: the circular lid tops have an inlaid border of

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<sup>123</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.24, 25

<sup>124</sup> *ibid.*, p.25

<sup>125</sup> *ibid.*, p.24

<sup>126</sup> *ibid.*, p.25

clover leaf, probably in canarywood as on other larger pieces of furniture supplied for the state rooms at Northumberland House by Morel and Hughes, which are fixed to the concave frieze by a hinge. The tops are fixed on pillars with triangular plinths supported by three lion paw feet, the whole with carved giltwood stylised foliate decoration. A pair of giltwood pole firescreens on scroll legs had panels of blue satin 'enriched with gold colour silk fringe silk rope & tassels suspended from carved and gilt antique bows'<sup>127</sup> and cost £148.10s. A flower stand and music canterbury of aburra wood completed the suite of furniture. Morel and Hughes French polished and repaired three other items of furniture for this room, the descriptions of which suggest that they were perhaps earlier Regency pieces. One was a small mahogany pillar and claw table, decorated with brasswork, with a drawer containing writing implements; another a satinwood work table for which they provided a new blue silk bag 'fringed with silk Parisian fringe'<sup>128</sup> and a tulipwood 'Parisian writing cabinet' with brass ornaments, drawers and a writing fall.

### **Glass Drawing Room, Tapestry Room and Ball Room and Dining Rooms**

Morel and Hughes were also employed in the refurbishment of the eighteenth century rooms which other craftsmen, such as Thomas Ponsonby and Robert Jones, had worked to restore: the Glass Drawing Room, Tapestry Room and the Ball Room. The extensive re-upholstery and provision of a 'Turkish divan' for the Glass Drawing Room is discussed in the following chapter. Morel and Hughes also supplied some new pieces of furniture for this room: two giltwood cheval screens and two footstools in 1823 and a sofa table, similar in design to those supplied for the Saloon and Boudoir, of aburra wood, 'the top inlaid with a handsome border of canary wood...supported by scroll standards richly carved and gilt...the foot rail

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<sup>127</sup> *ibid.*, p.26

<sup>128</sup> *ibid.*

stuffed in the center & covered with green silk velvet & gold colour cord'<sup>129</sup> in 1824. Two pieces of furniture made for the room in the eighteenth century were a pair of semi-circular pier tables designed by Robert Adam. Morel and Hughes's accounts record a payment of £7.14s. for 'thoroughly repairing & strengthening the frames...& making good the deficiencies, also bleaching & polishing the statuary marble tops inlaid with scagliola & repairing & water gilding the ormolu mouldings, the additional carving by Mr Ponsonby'.<sup>130</sup> Cheval firescreens were also supplied for the Tapestry Room (see page ) while a satinwood secretaire, two commodes and an inlaid table were repaired and French polished. Two candelabra were repaired and strengthened as well as 'regilding the carved parts in mat and burnished gold & japanning the ground a drab to match the furniture of the room'.<sup>131</sup> In 1824, Morel and Hughes supplied three large 'woolsacks'; repaired and regilded four pier tables; repaired, re-stuffed and reupholstered one very long sofa, four large sofas and fourteen large window stools and made nine new window stools *ensuite* at £53.16s. each for the Ball Room.<sup>132</sup>

In collaboration with William Collins and Thomas Ponsonby, Nicholas Morel and his partner improved the two dining rooms by such additions as new carpets, curtains and draperies, the supply of new furniture and the repair of existing pieces. In the Large Dining Room, the three tables in the window piers were repaired by Thomas Ponsonby's workshop by 'discharging thoroughly clean off to the wood all the old preparation & reparing also recarving in preparation gilding & finishing in best Burnish double Gold'<sup>133</sup> while Morel and Hughes's workshop made new plinths with ovolo mouldings to support the legs.

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<sup>129</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64(1), p.10

<sup>130</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.38

<sup>131</sup> *ibid.*, p.44

<sup>132</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64(1), p.3

<sup>133</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(5)



Plate XXIV View of the Large Dining Room, circa 1874. Note the pedestals and candelabra flanking the giltwood side table (see page 72).

Two sets of Spanish mahogany dining tables, with sliding frames on reeded legs and castors (£174.12s.) and fifty-four Spanish mahogany chairs ‘with carved rosettes over the front & back legs, the backs & seats stuffed with the best horse hair, covered with green Morocco leather, & finished with brass mouldings’<sup>134</sup> at 7 ½ guineas each were supplied by Morel and Hughes in 1823. Four mahogany pedestal cupboards with carved giltwood ornaments, two fitted as pot cupboards and two with heating equipment for plate warmers, cost £559.12s.<sup>135</sup> The parcel-gilt carved feature of interlaced ogee arches centred with flowerhead motifs on the frieze of these pedestals is exactly the same decoration as on the frieze of a set of four giltwood side tables, believed to date from *circa* 1770, which are now in the Great Dining Room of Syon House. In 1823, one of these large side tables and the two smaller ones *ensuite* stood in the Large Dining Room of Northumberland House.<sup>136</sup> Morel and Hughes made two new scroll legs for the back of each of the smaller tables which stood either side of the fireplace. At the same time a second large table was made: ‘...to suit one of your Grace’s in every respect, carved and gilt by M<sup>r</sup> Ponsonby’ £12.6s.<sup>137</sup> All the evidence would seem to indicate that this was made as a pair to the eighteenth century side table. A photograph of the interior of the Large Dining Room, *circa* 1874, (see plate XXIV) shows a side table at one end of the room flanked by two of the pedestal cupboards. Chased ‘Grecian metal’ (lacquered brass) candelabra with three lamps to each, the bases decorated with Percy lions, were supplied by William Collins in May 1823 at a cost of £800.0.0.<sup>138</sup> to stand on the cupboards. In May 1824 Collins supplied ‘A Superb Iris Lamp with 12 Burners highly Chased & finished...’ for £36.10s.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.31

<sup>135</sup> *ibid.*, p.32

<sup>136</sup> Syon MSS H.VI.2.d Inventory of effects at Northumberland House, 1786

<sup>137</sup> *ibid.*, p.31

<sup>138</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8

<sup>139</sup> *ibid.*

Morel and Hughes made 'a stand covered with rich crimson Genoa velvet to receive 3 large pieces of plate & placed on the sideboard' as well as a cover of the same material 'fringed with gold twined fringe' for the sideboard top.<sup>140</sup> The provision of a deal box lined with green cloth to contain this cover and the supply of a polished mahogany cover for the stand with plate glass indicates the use of silver and silver-gilt during this period, to be stored and then brought out for prominent display or use as the occasion warranted. It was during the Regency period that the Northumberland Collection of silver was greatly enhanced by the Third Duke. Paul Storr, John Bridge and Philip Rundell supplied literally hundreds of items for the Duke in silver and silver-gilt. The vast collection, which included wine coolers, ice pails, ewers, salvers, stands, candelabra and flatware, was contained in twenty-nine cases. It was taken to France by the Duke when he represented King George IV at the coronation of Charles X there in 1825 and to Ireland when the Duke was Lord Lieutenant, 1829-1830. The stand and cover made by Morel and Hughes would most likely have displayed the pair of Bacchus and Ariadne dishes<sup>141</sup> and the sideboard dish depicting the 'Fall of the Giants'<sup>142</sup> bought by Rundell, Bridge and Rundell on behalf of the Duke at the Wanstead Sale in June 1822.<sup>143</sup> One of four models of Flaxman's 'Shield of Achilles'<sup>144</sup> was made for the Duke by Rundell, Bridge and Rundell at the same time, a year after the original made for King George IV was displayed at his Coronation Banquet in July 1821.<sup>145</sup> For this dish, the silversmiths provided the mahogany stand 'with brass Apparatus, and a large convex glass Cover for d<sup>o</sup>'<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.32

<sup>141</sup> Sold by Sotheby's, May 1984

<sup>142</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> Duke of Northumberland's MSS, uncatalogued MSS, account of Rundell, Bridge and Rundell, silversmiths, 1822.

<sup>144</sup> Sold by Sotheby's, May 1984

<sup>145</sup> Carlton House exhib.cat., *op.cit.*, p.206

<sup>146</sup> Duke of Northumberland's uncatalogued MSS, *op.cit.*, 1822

Elsewhere in the house, repairs to an oak library table provided a good opportunity to alter an existing piece of furniture in order to make it more fashionable by 'adding new carved ornamental rosettes & Greek fret...'.<sup>147</sup> Otherwise Morel and Hughes supplied more conventional pattern furniture such as two mahogany portfolio stands for the Library for £24.0.0; a dressing table for the Duchess's Dressing Room of 'fine mahogany on turned legs, and castors, 2 drawers in the frieze with brass knob handles, a high mahogany board at the back with a shelf and scroll ends, top finished with turned rims, to receive your Grace's china basins &C'<sup>148</sup> at £11.18s and a set of twelve Spanish mahogany hall chairs for £6.16s. each. Chairs of a similar design are illustrated by P. and M.A. Nicholson,<sup>149</sup> with carved foliate scrolls and waisted backs painted with the crest of the owner. The only reference in the accounts of Morel and Hughes for work at Northumberland House which gives any indication of the gothic taste is for 'a square table with carved Gothic legs and mouldings japanned by Mr Wilson; the top to receive your Graces slab'<sup>150</sup> (£24.18s.) supplied for the Waiting Hall in 1824.

### **Other work by Morel and Hughes**

The gothic taste was important, however, in the design of some pieces of furniture supplied by Morel and Hughes for Alnwick Castle. The First Duke and Duchess of Northumberland had been responsible for making the castle habitable after 200 years of the family living in the south of England. Using a number of architects, including Daniel Garrett, James Paine and, latterly, Robert Adam, the castle was made into a palace decorated with an interior of high *gothick* taste. In July 1823 Morel and Hughes supplied '...a Gothic table of oak, very

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<sup>147</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.47

<sup>148</sup> *ibid.*, p.52

<sup>149</sup> Nicholson, *op.cit.*, plate 48 'A Hall Chair'

<sup>150</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64(1), p.12

highly polished, on 4 legs, as clustered columns, with capitals and bases to a design approved'<sup>151</sup> (£10.18s.) and, in July 1824, '...2 Tables of oak supported by Gothic legs of clustered columns, mouldings &C. the whole highly polished' for £21.16s. and '...4 Chairs of oak with carved ornaments and mouldings to a Gothic design - highly polished at 6 G<sup>s</sup>'<sup>152</sup>

Supply and repair of furniture for Alnwick Castle took place intermittently from 1822-1825 when Morel and Hughes were heavily involved with their main work at Northumberland House and the accounts show that it was merely an appendage to their primary concern. Numerous pieces of furniture were repaired by the firm, although it is not always clear whether the objects were removed from Alnwick to London for repair, or were pieces in the collection brought north. Items repaired included mahogany elbow and side chairs, mahogany screens, a tulipwood fancy table, a mahogany pillar and claw table, a square mahogany table, a cheval glass, folding screens, a buhl cabinet, a buhl table and a billiard table.

Other new furniture supplied consisted of mahogany utility furniture such as four chests of drawers (£8.10s. each), two dumb waiters (£11.16s.), a large dressing table (£17.17s.) and mirror (£10.16s). Fancy pieces such as '...2 pair of 3 height Bedsteps of rose wood highly polished with carved legs gilt in part & carved & gilt rosettes over D<sup>o</sup> the steps covered with green silk velvet & finished with gold colour silk gimp & the inside of one fitted up with a night convenience'<sup>153</sup> cost £52.10s in 1822. Another fashionable and expensive piece was a rosewood chiffoniere '...inlaid with satin wood, the upper part open with shelves for books, surmounted by a statuary marble slab; and a balustre gallery of satin & rose woods, the lower

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<sup>151</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(6)

<sup>152</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.f

<sup>153</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64(3)

part enclosed with statuary marble top, paneled doors, lock & key...'(£59.10s)<sup>154</sup> which was altered to increase the shelf space in 1824 'to receive small books'.<sup>155</sup> All of the furniture was packed in deal crates and transported to the wharf for shipping from London by sea to the port of Alnmouth, three miles from Alnwick.

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<sup>154</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.d(6)

<sup>155</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.f

## Chapter Five

### Fabrics and upholstery by Morel and Hughes, 1822-1825

The importance of textiles in Regency England in the decorative schemes conceived for rooms in any of the eclectic fashions then in vogue is well known.<sup>156</sup> The importance of the upholsterer is reflected in the large number of these tradesmen who appear in trade directories and the attention given to upholstery by pattern books of the day, particularly plates published by Percier and Fontaine (1801-1812), Thomas Hope (1807), George Smith (1808) and Ackermann (1809-1828). A successful complimentary relationship between the material used for covering an item of furniture or furnishing a window and those trimmings used to embellish them was the aim of the upholsterer in Regency England. The accounts of Morel and Hughes give a clear indication of the prominent role textiles played in the interior design of the suite of State Rooms at Northumberland House: floor covering, wall hangings, window drapery and curtains, upholstery and *passementerie*. Descriptions reveal the type and colour of fabrics chosen, the trimmings of fringes, tassels, gimp, bullion and galloon which were added to ornament the window furnishings and upholstery and the scale by which these were utilised.

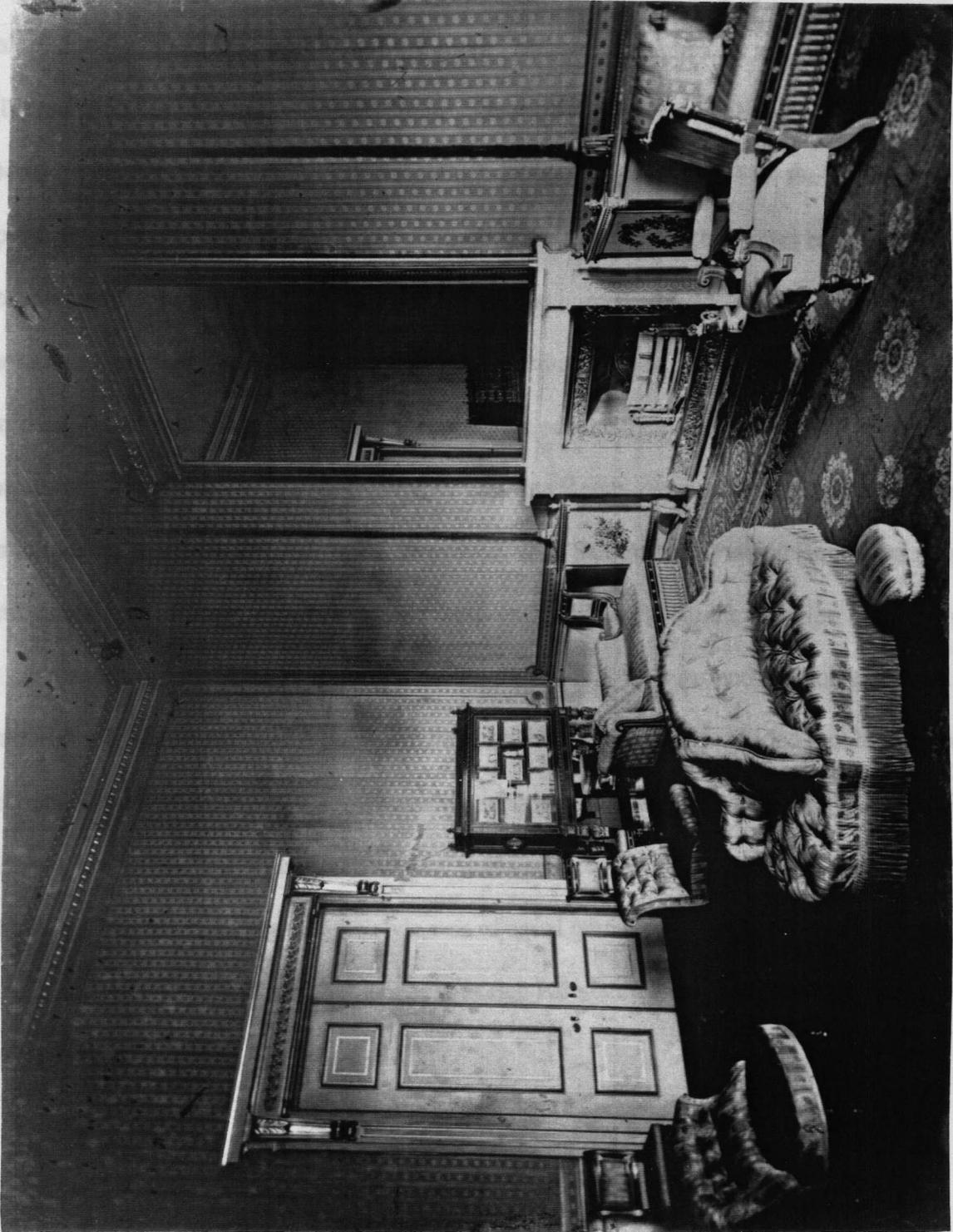
#### Wall hangings

Sufficient quantities of material for the four principal rooms was supplied for all wall hangings, window curtains and draperies and upholstery so that the entire design was *ensuite*, similar to a number of interiors created at Carlton House as depicted in a series of

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<sup>156</sup> Collard, F., *op.cit.*, p.274

watercolours by Charles Wild which were reproduced in W.H. Prynne's *The History of Royal Residences* (1819). At Northumberland House, still for the wall hangings were of the same



The curtains and drapery are defined in Morel and Hughes' accounts in the same way as contemporary publications. The term 'curtains' refers to the main lengths of cloth which

MS. MSS. U. 1. 64. p. 3  
**Plate XXV** View of the Ante Room, *circa* 1874. The pattern of the wall hangings and carpet can be seen quite clearly.

watercolours by Charles Wild which were reproduced in W.H. Pyne's *The History of Royal Residences* (1819). At Northumberland House silks for the wall hangings were of the same colour and design as the curtains for each room. Morel and Hughes cut and hung the wall silks and also designed and executed the mouldings to surround the hangings. For each of the rooms a selection of patterns for the mouldings were carved and gilded for the Duke's approval. In the Ante Room the grey coloured silk with stripes with rosettes between was bordered with a broad moulding 'finished in mat and burnished gold...with a smaller moulding fixed within do. forming panels, with quadrant angles and carved rosettes to do. finished in mat and burnished gold'.<sup>157</sup> This design echoed the pattern on the rails of the seat furniture and can be seen in a photograph of the Ante Room, *circa* 1874, where the rosettes on the carpet complete the scheme of decoration. The Saloon and Drawing Room had rich ornamental gilded borders with 'a double moulding of the same for the 4 angles, terminated at top and bottom with blocks & carved patras gilt in suit'<sup>158</sup> to surround the rich geranium coloured silk. Blue and gold figured silk hung on the Boudoir walls. Gilded mouldings cost between £200 and £300 per room. Brown Holland hangings were made for use as covers for the wall hangings. Bell pulls were supplied in the same colour silk as the wall-hangings, Morel and Hughes ensuring that the style was of equal grandeur. The pair of bell pulls in the Ante Room of grey silk was embellished 'with rich Parisian tassels, vellum bows and rosettes'<sup>159</sup> and cost £23.14s.

### **Window curtains, drapery and blinds**

The curtains and drapery are defined in Morel and Hughes' accounts in the same way as contemporary publications. The term 'curtains' refers to the main lengths of cloth which

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<sup>157</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.3

<sup>158</sup> *ibid.*, p.11

<sup>159</sup> *ibid.*, p.3

usually hung to floor level and were intended to be drawn at night. The term 'drapery' meant the lengths of cloth which were literally draped above the curtains, often suspended from a decorative pole. The style used by Morel and Hughes for the curtains in the Ante Room, Saloon, Drawing Room, Boudoir, Large Dining Room, Small Dining Room and Glass Drawing Room was the fashionable 'French draw'. Festoon curtains of the previous century had been manipulated by pulling on a cord connected to the lines which were strung vertically through the material. By the end of the 18th century these were completely out of fashion, although Sheraton (1803) wrote that this type of curtain was still in use in bedrooms. The term 'French draw' refers to the type of rods, believed to have originated in France,<sup>160</sup> which were employed in the new technique which allowed the two curtains to overlap when drawn. Sheraton, in his *Cabinet Dictionary* (1803) describes the system:

'At present the most approved way of managing window curtains is to make them draw from the centre to each side of the window by drawing a line which is fixed to a pulley rack and communicates to the rod fixed to the under side of the window lath with hooks; and that the curtains may lap over each other in the centre, the rod is made in two parts, shooting past each other about two or three inches. These rods are frequently made of satin wood, and secured with brass hoops at each end having in each rod three pullies'.<sup>161</sup>

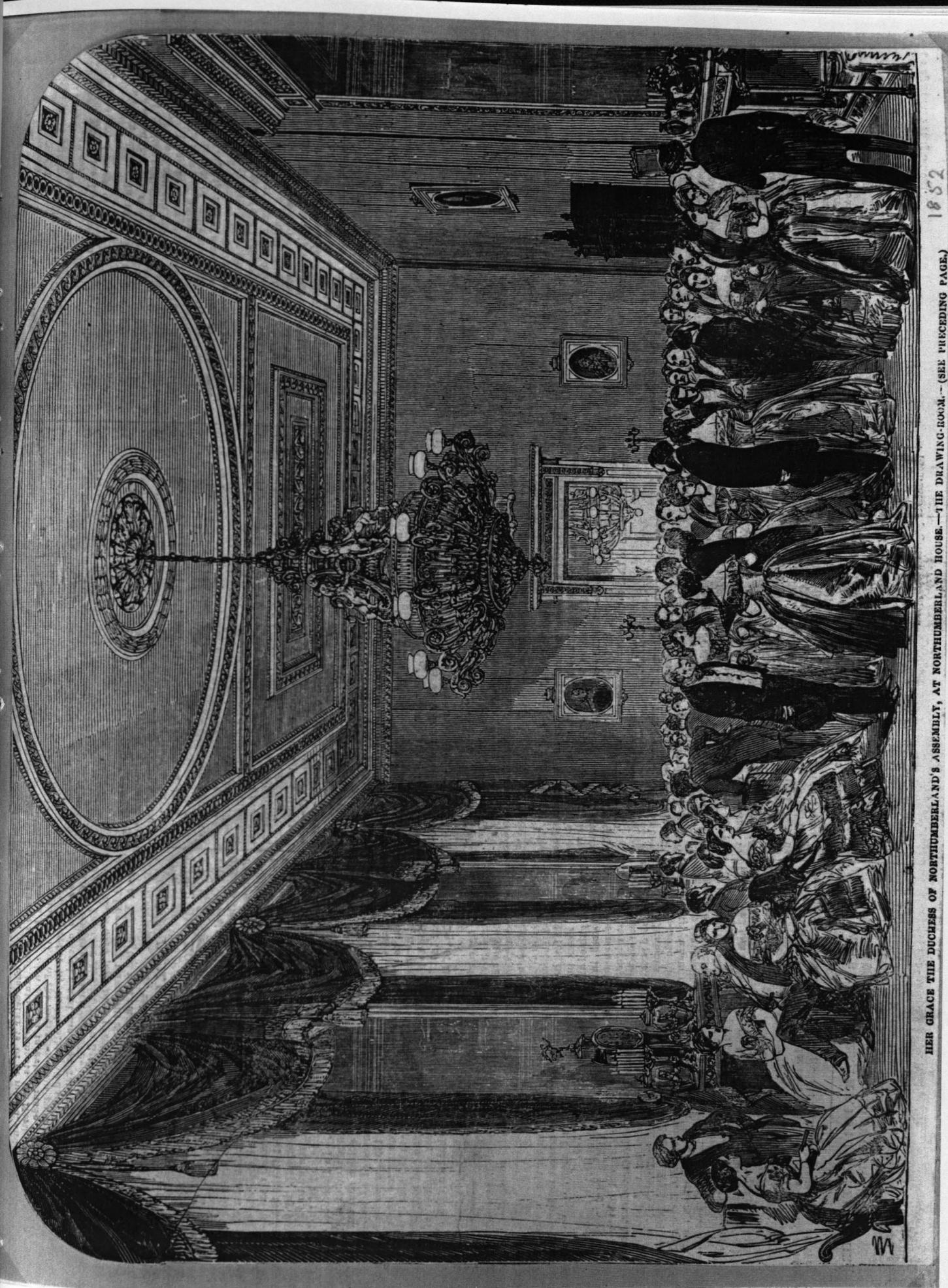
Rods supplied and fixed by Morel and Hughes were in fact always brass. The pair of curtains, lined and interlined, at a particular window could be drawn back from the centre by use of cords and were then restrained by looping the curtain over the carved wood cloak pin. Morel and Hughes supplied carved and gilt cloak pins in stylised flowerheads, sometimes defining the flower type, as in the Saloon and Drawing Room which were sunflowers.

Material for the curtains and draperies made for the suite of State Rooms was of the highest quality figured silk, lined with tammy and, for the Ante Room, Saloon and Drawing Room, lined with appropriately coloured sarcenet as well. The Dining Rooms were furnished with

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<sup>160</sup> Agius, P., *Ackermann's Regency Furniture & Interiors*, 1984, p.24

<sup>161</sup> *ibid.*



HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S ASSEMBLY, AT NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE. — THE DRAWING-ROOM. — (SEE PRECEDING PAGE.) 1852

Plate XXVI Entertainment at Northumberland House in the Saloon, 1852. Note the window treatment by Morel and Hughes (see pages 82-83).

striped watered tabouret lined with tammy and faced with sarcenet. There were no pelmets in any of the rooms except the Ante Room. In each room lengths of fabric, embellished with a rich complimentary-coloured silk fringe, were looped over thyrses (decorative rods, often with carved and gilt finials) leaving tails hanging down in an arranged manner at either end. In the Saloon and Drawing Room the fabric lengths extended across all of the windows and intersecting piers in a newly fashionable technique known as 'continued drapery'. In these rooms, high over each of the windows, fixed to the rod, the fabric was raised over a patera, or cloak-pin, carved in a stylised flowerhead. The continued drapery then dropped in a swag before being looped over the pole above the centre of the pier (and pier glass) where the quantity of material meant that a 'hammercloth' effect was achieved. At each point where the drapery was lifted in either of these ways, a large ornamental tassel hung below the extent of the fabric to complete the scheme. All of the draperies were counterlined with waddings.

The account for the curtains in the Saloon, supplied in 1823, records:

To making 2 large & 4 smaller window curtains, and a continued drapery extending over the 4 windows and 3 piers, of rich geranium colour figured silk damask lined with gold colour sarcenet & tammy, enriched with broad gold colour, circle silk gimp & broad feather do. the drapery counterlined, and fringed, with very rich deep twined silk fringe, with bullion ornaments & gimp head, to a new design; including a very long reeded thyrse gilt in mat gold with 2 carved end ornaments & 4 handsome carved patras, the whole gilt in mat and burnished gold, to suspend the above, including 8 brass polished pulley rods, deal laths, strong japanned iron brackets, brass side pullies, hooks, screws & c. Also 8 richly carved sun-flower ornaments as embraces to loop back the window curtains, gilt in mat and burnished gold with brass tube stems and plates<sup>162</sup>

These cost £267.16s to which were added '2 very large & 4 smaller window curtains of fine figured leno, enriched with gold colour silk gimp'<sup>163</sup> for £7.12s, the sun-curtains which were common during this period. These are clearly illustrated in use in an engraving of the interior of the Saloon, *circa* 1852. (see plate XXVI)<sup>164</sup> The cost did not include the price of

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<sup>162</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.7

<sup>163</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> Pamela Clabburn notes that in the 19th century this fabric was used for shawls and other such accessories and rarely for furniture. Clabburn quotes an example of it being used for

material, which was added to the account following the summary of works undertaken in a particular room. The geranium silk for the window curtains and draperies, wall-hangings and sufficient to cover the seat furniture totalled £1582.10s for the Saloon alone. The curtains and draperies in the Drawing Room were made for the three windows 'to match in every respect the Saloon'.<sup>165</sup>

All the state apartments were supplied with new silk curtains and leno sun curtains. All were of an elaborate design to a greater or lesser degree, the Saloon and Drawing Room being the most luxurious. Only the Ante Room had a window pelmet conceived as part of the overall design of the room. The curtains and drapery were of grey figured silk with 'a very rich deep Parisian fringe in colours to suit; the whole finished to a new design; including a very large window cornice of 'your Grace's aburra wood...highly polished and relieved with carved & gilt mouldings'.<sup>166</sup> This arrangement for one window cost £188.16s.

In the Boudoir the continued drapery of blue and gold colour silk 'enriched with broad silk gimp...& fringed with deep gold colour Parisian silk fringe with gimp head'<sup>167</sup> was arranged on a brass thyrse with carved and gilt water lilies and patras to ornament the drapery. There was also an under valance, it too finished with a silk Parisian fringe. The Glass Drawing Room was refurbished en suite with the other drawing rooms and new curtains and draperies of green and red rosette silk lined with sarcenet furnished the windows which had been reduced in number to three by Thomas Cundy's extensive structural alterations to the south side of the house. The dining rooms, large and small, were supplied with curtains and

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sun-curtains by one upholsterer in 1827 expressing surprise that such an open-weave fabric was selected.

<sup>165</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.15

<sup>166</sup> *ibid.*, p.1

<sup>167</sup> *ibid.*, p.23

draperies of 'green striped watered tabaret, lined with tammy & faced with sarcenet, enriched with broad & narrow gold colour silk laces, the draperies counterlined & fringed with rich deep gold colour twined silk fringe'.<sup>168</sup> Appropriately the carved gilt reeded thyrses were decorated at each end with finials in the form of pineapples. No sun curtains were fitted for the dining rooms. Evidence from the accounts shows that little was altered in the bedrooms by Morel and Hughes although there is mention of supplying brass pulley rods and all the necessary equipment for the window curtains in both the Duke and Duchess's dressing rooms. In Lord Prudhoe's sitting room and dressing room window cornices 'japanned as oak'<sup>169</sup> with brass pulley rods, side pullies, hooks and brackets were supplied.

Morel and Hughes provided spring blinds for all of the windows of rooms which they list in the accounts. These served the dual purpose of ensuring privacy in the town house and blocking out the harmful sunlight. Concerns for preservation were far more important than one may have supposed; the vast sums of money involved in such schemes was not to be taken lightly, however wealthy the home owner. The blinds in the better rooms were mounted with white holland and housed in mahogany boxes. The Ante Room, Boudoir, Glass Drawing Room, Tapestry Room and both Dining Rooms were also provided with draught or 'snob' screens, which were fashionable at the beginning of the nineteenth century. These blinds, of fine gauze wire painted in imitation muslin (flowered muslin for the Boudoir) and mounted in polished mahogany frames, were fixed to the lower level glass pane. Spring blinds were also provided for the servants' living and work quarters, though not cased in mahogany boxes.

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<sup>168</sup> *ibid.*, p.31

<sup>169</sup> *ibid.*, p.57 & 58

## Upholstery and passementerie

Fringes and tassels appear frequently in plates by Percier and Fontaine<sup>170</sup> and with regularity in those of Thomas Hope<sup>171</sup> and Ackermann's *Repository*. They not only hang from draperies but also from the fronts, backs and sides of chairs and stools. A colour plate in Ackermann's *Repository* of March 1825 illustrates a design for three chairs. The central one is of an upholstered armchair with scrolled, Grecian back, padded arms supported by winged sphinxes, the seat rail carved with scrolling acanthus on turned stub legs, sabre to rear, with fringe to underside of seat rail and highly decorative upholstery of an arabesque design in gold on a light blue ground. Evidently, according to the annotation, this particular chair reminded the reader of 'the splendid furniture lately executed for his Grace the Duke of Northumberland by Messrs Morell and Hughes'.<sup>172</sup> This chair is very similar to Percier and Fontaine's illustration of a *Fauteuil et Siege*, 1812.<sup>173</sup> Although such trimmings, as fringes and tassels were used to a great extent by Morel and Hughes, the only seat furniture commissioned for Northumberland House upholstered with fringes were the ottomans of the Ante Room, Saloon and Drawing Room. In the Ante Room the four ottomans (two to stand right and left of the window, two either side of the fireplace) were covered with grey silk and, for each, cases made 'for the squabs, back cushions & pillows, lining do. with white calico, & ornamenting with double & single silk gimps, cord & tassels to the pillows, the fronts finished with deep silk Parisian fringe to correspond'.<sup>174</sup> A photograph of the Ante Room, circa 1874, shows these fringes still intact on the ottomans. Although the definition in the

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<sup>170</sup> Percier, C. and Fontaine, P., *op.cit.*, for example: plate 7; plate 15, no. 9; plate 19; plate 29; plate 39, nos. 3 & 5; plate 48; plate 50

<sup>171</sup> Hope, T. *op.cit.*, for example: plate 10; plate 12, no. 4; plate 17, no.3; plate 18, no.3; plate 20, no.5; plate 22, nos. 5 & 6

<sup>172</sup> Ackermann, R., *Repository of the Arts, Literature, Fashions, Manufactures & c.*, Vol V, 3rd series, March 1825, plate 17

<sup>173</sup> Percier, C. and Fontaine, P., *op.cit.*, plate 29

<sup>174</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.1

photograph is not very clear the tassel seems to consist of a hanger of one small ball above an elongated drop, terminating in a large ball. This fringe is similar to that in a plate published in Ackermann's *Repository* illustrating a Drawing Room window curtain with a Grecian sofa and window stool upholstered *en suite* and all 'beautifully ornamented with French fringe'<sup>175</sup> and to that on the plate referred to above.

In the Saloon of Northumberland House, two angular ottomans for each end corner of the fireplace wall of the room; two straight ottomans for each side of the fireplace and two further ottomans for the right and left of the windows were ornamented 'with double & single gold colour silk gimps and cord, tassels to the pillows and rich deep gold colour silk fringe, with gimp head & bullion ornaments for the fronts and ends'.<sup>176</sup> Both the Saloon and Drawing Room had central ottomans, referred to as 'woolsacks' or Turkish divans. Sheraton illustrates a Turkey Sofa in his *Drawing Book* describing them as 'genteel seats introduced in the most fashionable houses, and are an imitation of the Turkish mode of seating...'.<sup>177</sup> Indeed, as Morley points out,<sup>178</sup> the importance of ottomans in the fashion of seat furniture during this period is often overlooked simply because they are pieces which have not generally survived. It is accepted that they were furniture often made to measure for specific locations, as in the case of rooms at Chatsworth and Chiswick,<sup>179</sup> as Morel and Hughes's ottomans did for state rooms of Northumberland House. None of the ottomans survives in the Duke of Northumberland's collection today. Constructed only of a wooden frame with canvas webbing to support the upholstery, the 'Turkish divan' was particularly fragile.

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<sup>175</sup> Ackermann, R., *op. cit.*, Vol I, series 8, plate 17, September 1812

<sup>176</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.8

<sup>177</sup> Sheraton, Thomas, *The Cabinet-Makers' and Upholsterers' Drawing Book*, 1791-4, plate LII, p.412 and quoted by Collard, F., *op.cit.*, p.297

<sup>178</sup> Morley, J., *op.cit.*, p.281

<sup>179</sup> Collard, F., *op.cit.*, p.297



Plate XXVII View of the Saloon, *circa* 1874, looking through the centre doors to the Drawing Room. Note the 'woolsack' and corner ottomans.

Morel and Hughes's accounts record: 'To a large woolsack or Turkish divan for the center of the room stuffed very thick with the best horse hair in canvas standing on strong castors £33.18s'.<sup>180</sup> This was covered with embroidery of silver with flowers of coloured silks made by Queen Caroline, wife of George II, and her Ladies in Waiting. Tradition states that it was presented to the Countess of Northumberland (later First Duchess) as a cradle quilt for her eldest son.<sup>181</sup> It was ornamented 'with large handsome gold tassels, with bows & tufts at the angles, broad gold lace round the bottom, thick gold cord on the edge & small gold tassels for the pillows'.<sup>182</sup> A photograph of the Saloon, *circa* 1874 (see plate XXVII), illustrates these trimmings well, particularly where the bows connected to the tassels pull the fringe up at each corner.

The centre ottoman of the Drawing Room was covered with the Duke's own Indian gold brocade and the top ornamented 'with broad and narrow gold laces & cord, the 4 sides covered with geranium silk velvet, with gold laces & fringe with bullions & rich gold tassels & cord at the four angles' at a cost of £118.16s.<sup>183</sup> George Smith in his *Household Furniture* comments that 'Ottomans are particularly useful in Picture Galleries, their projection from the wall preventing the pictures being fingered, which is too often practised'.<sup>184</sup> Three very large 'woolsacks' were made for the Picture Gallery or Ball Room of Northumberland House in 1824 at a cost of £154.12s, two covered with 'your Graces figured silk, and gold tissue King Caub on the tops, ornamenting with gold laces of different widths, gold fringe with gimp head and bullion ornaments, cord, and rich gold tassels with bows for the angles'

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<sup>180</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.9

<sup>181</sup> Williams, T., *op.cit.*, 1875, p.11

<sup>182</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64(1), p.7

<sup>183</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.18

<sup>184</sup> Smith, G., *A Collection of Designs for Household Furniture and Interior Decoration*, London 1808, p.12, plates 67 & 68



INTERIOR OF NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE.—THE GRAND GALLERY.

Plate XXVIII View of the Ball Room showing one of the central 'woolsacks' being used, probably in 1851 when the house was opened for the Great Exhibition.

(£31.6s) and the third with 'your Graces figured silk, and ornamenting with gold laces, fringe, cord, &c. as above, and your Graces gold tassels at the corners' (£15.10s.).<sup>185</sup>

A large amount of the fabrics used in the upholstery, particularly of the ottomans, was material referred to as 'your Grace's'. Charlotte Florentia, Third Duchess, was the granddaughter of Clive of India and it is possible that this may have been the source of such materials as the Indian damask and 'King Caub', the latter being a brocade known as Kin Cob imported from India.<sup>186</sup> In addition, the Duke's brother, Algernon, Lord Prudhoe, travelled extensively and, having rooms at Northumberland House, may have had significant involvement in the re-build and refurbishment that was taking place as well as being an additional possible source for the supply of such materials.

Embellishment to the upholstery of the other seat furniture was in the form of silk gimps and cord with additional tassels to the corners of the stools. The rich crimson of the geranium silk covering the extensive suite of seat furniture in the Saloon and Drawing Room was enhanced by finishing off with silk gold colour cord and gold colour half circle silk gimp, broad for the sofas and narrower for the arm and side chairs. The window stools had 'handsome gold colour silk tassels with bullion ornaments & bows'<sup>187</sup> at each corner; smaller ones of the same type were used for the pillows of the sofas and even smaller ones for the corners of the footstools. In the Boudoir gold colour silk cord, gimp and tassels was also used to complete the upholstery of the suite of furniture. The horse-hair stuffed tablet back and seats of the pair of bergeres in Grecian style were finished with double and single gold colour silk gimps, 'festoon gimp' and cord. The three 'antique Grecian' stools, two X-frame

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<sup>185</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64(1), p.2

<sup>186</sup> Montgomery, F., *Textiles in America 1650-1870*, 1984, p.273

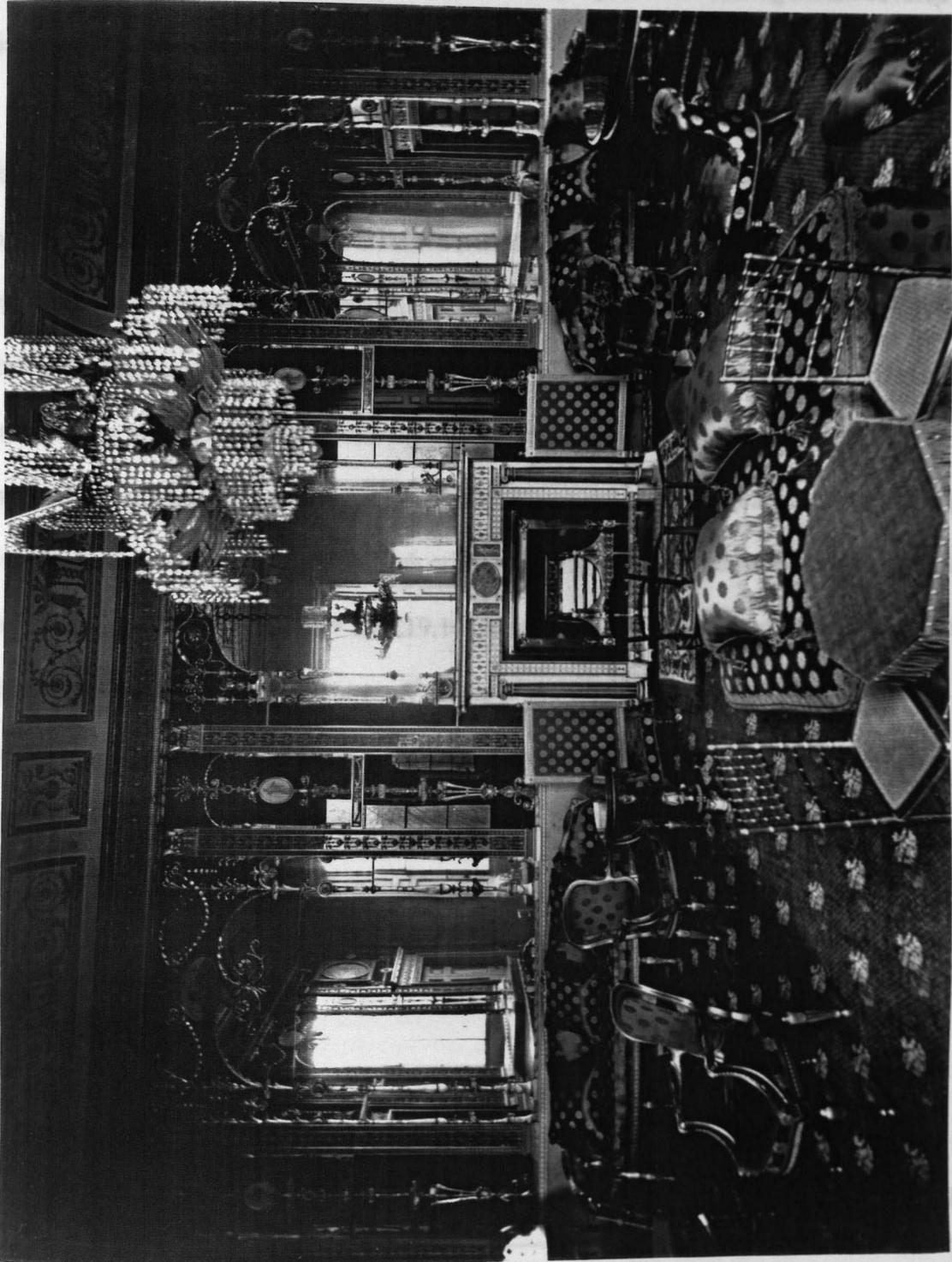
<sup>187</sup> *ibid.*, p.18)

and one large window seat, *ensuite* were all finished using the same cord with tassels to each corner.

In the Glass Drawing Room, Morel and Hughes' refurbished existing furniture. *Ensuite* with the new silk curtains of green and red rosette silk, the firm reupholstered the James Cullen furniture<sup>188</sup> which was contemporary with the room's original decoration of the 1770s. The two sofas, two *confidantes* and set of four armchairs underwent a complete overhaul with the frames being repaired and the entire pieces re-stuffed and new squabs and cushions made. A sofa, *confidante* and the four armchairs remain in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland at Syon House with some of the Morel and Hughes silk still intact, although this early 19th century style of reupholstery has altered the look of the furniture considerably. A Turkish divan made for the Glass Drawing Room was of simpler form to those in the Saloon and Drawing Room with the edges finished with broad half circle gold silk gimp. A pair of firescreens supplied by Morel and Hughes for the room had panels upholstered in green and red rosette silk finished with gold gimp edging. The firescreens are now at Syon House although the silk on the external panels is extremely perished. The Tapestry Room was another room which had survived from the eighteenth century in its decorative form but was refurbished by Morel and Hughes. In this room the pair of sofas was repaired, the stuffing completely renewed with horsehair and re-covered with new canvaswork covers. The covers of twelve cabriole armchairs *ensuite* were re-used, after being cleaned by the Duke's dyer, with new brass nails and green sarcenet for the backs. The sofas and chairs are now at Syon House. Two cheval screens were made 'richly carved and gilt in mat and

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<sup>188</sup> Their authorship accepted by the signature of Cullen on the back seat rail of one of the chairs and discussed by David Owsley and William Rieder in *The Glass Drawing Room from Northumberland House*, 1974. Cullen was an upholsterer and cabinet maker recorded as working at 56 Greek Street, Soho, London from 1765 to 1779.



**Plate XXIX** View of the Glass Drawing Room, *circa* 1874, where the extent of the re-upholstery is evident.

burnished gold, & picked in fawn colour to suit the sofas, the fronts covered with your Grace's needlework surrounded by plaited green silk gimp, a center sliding mount covered with silk'.<sup>189</sup>

Chairs in the library and dining room at this period were considered best stuffed with horsehair and covered with leather fastened with decorative brass nails around the seat.<sup>190</sup>

Green leather for mahogany dining chairs was supplied at Chiswick in 1811<sup>191</sup>

Northumberland House was no different. Morel and Hughes had 54 mahogany chairs made for the dining rooms, all 'stuffed with the best horse hair, covered with green Morocco leather, & finished with brass mouldings',<sup>192</sup> at 7 ½ guineas each. They also supplied a large cover for the top of the sideboard of 'rich crimson Genoa velvet, lined with crimson cloth, & fringed with gold twined fringe'<sup>193</sup> for £19.16s to go beneath a stand, covered with the same velvet, which had been made to show off pieces of plate belonging to the Duke. Fourteen yards of 'very wide superfine green cloth'<sup>194</sup> was used to cover the dining tables of both the large and small rooms. In the Library little was done by the partners but the fashion of 'tufting' is mentioned with regard to the cushion which was made for the Duke's library step ladder 'of the best horse hair in fine canvas covered with Morocco leather, tufted with green silk'.<sup>195</sup>

In the Duke's bedroom curtains of geranium colour plaited sarcenet were provided for the doors of existing pieces of furniture: two low bookcases and a rosewood cabinet. New thick

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<sup>189</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.43

<sup>190</sup> Collard, F. *op.cit.*, p.289

<sup>191</sup> *ibid.*, p.289

<sup>192</sup> Syon MSS U.I.64, p.31

<sup>193</sup> *ibid.*, p.32

<sup>194</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>195</sup> *ibid.*, p.47

mattresses 'of the best horse hair' in cases of white *jian* were made tied down with tufts. Two cases of white Marseille quilting with white cottoned twined fringe were made for the newly-repaired bed chair. In some rooms Morel and Hughes either re-vamped old coverings or used material which was already in the Duke's possession. Two sofas and two *bergeres* in the Duke's bedroom were re-covered with crimson striped silk; four elbow chairs and four light chairs in the Supper Rooms were covered with crimson lustring and ornamented with new silk gimp and twelve mahogany chairs in the same rooms had their frames French polished and the seats newly covered with red morocco leather. In the Steward's Room thirteen mahogany chairs were repaired. The account records 'ripping the stuffed seats, opening the horse hair & restuffing with new fine canvas, hessian, & c. also covering them with new satin hair cloth & brass nails'<sup>196</sup> at 28s. each. A large sofa in the Housekeeper's Room was recovered with existing worsted damask and finished with new green cord and nails.

In the *enfilade* of state apartments: Ante Room, Saloon, Drawing Room, Boudoir as well as the two dining rooms, Glass Drawing Room, Tapestry Room and Picture Gallery, Morel and Hughes supplied loose protective covers as was the practice of the day. Loose cases of pink Stormont lined with white calico were made for every single piece of seat furniture in the Ante Room, Saloon, Drawing Room and Glass Drawing Room and of blue Stormont for the Boudoir. Stormont covers were also made for the tassels of the bell pulls as they would also be in frequent use. In many houses such case covers were often only removed on special occasions such as a special entertainment or royal visit. In addition to the case cover, Morel and Hughes provided each item with a chamois leather cover and a brown Holland cover for when the house was closed. Every piece of furniture, including the chimney glass frame, the

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<sup>196</sup> *ibid.*, p.60

carved and gilt embraces and paterae of the window curtains, chandelier and chain, in all of the rooms was provided with a chamois leather cover and Holland cover. Even each squab, pillow and back cushion had its own individual brown Holland cover lined with white calico. Large bags were made for each room to contain the window curtains and draperies when they were taken down. Brown Holland covers to lay on the carpets when the house was unused or closed were also supplied. When the house was being used, and there was no special occasion, druggets were provided to lay over all of the carpets; for the Grand Staircase nearly 78 yards of scarlet drugget were supplied to lay on the centre of the carpet between the borders.<sup>197</sup>

### **Floor coverings**

Morel and Hughes provided every type of floor covering, from richly-coloured Empire-style designed luxury carpets in the State Room to India matting in the Hall and oil cloths. Their accounts record payments to the weavers for altering their looms, such as in making the 'rich antique figured borders & medallions in gold colours'<sup>198</sup> for the scarlet carpet of the Grand Staircase. In the Saloon and Drawing Room an additional charge of £40.8s.6d was for 'cash paid for drawings of patterns of the [carpet] and preparing do. for the looms; also drawing on ruled paper'.<sup>199</sup> An entry in the accounts records eighteen pieces of 'Superfine Wilton' which had been produced as trial pieces and were now to be used as bedside carpets.<sup>200</sup> The Ante Room was furnished with 'a double superfine Terre Carpet in marone & gold colours with a rich border' and hearth rug to match. A photograph of the room (see plate XXV) shows the

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<sup>197</sup> *ibid.*, p.59

<sup>198</sup> *ibid.*, p.59

<sup>199</sup> *ibid.*, p.20

<sup>200</sup> *ibid.*, p.65

music motif of the carpet which is the dominant feature of the room in the wall hangings and their mouldings, the window dressing, upholstery and decoration of the tails of the furniture.

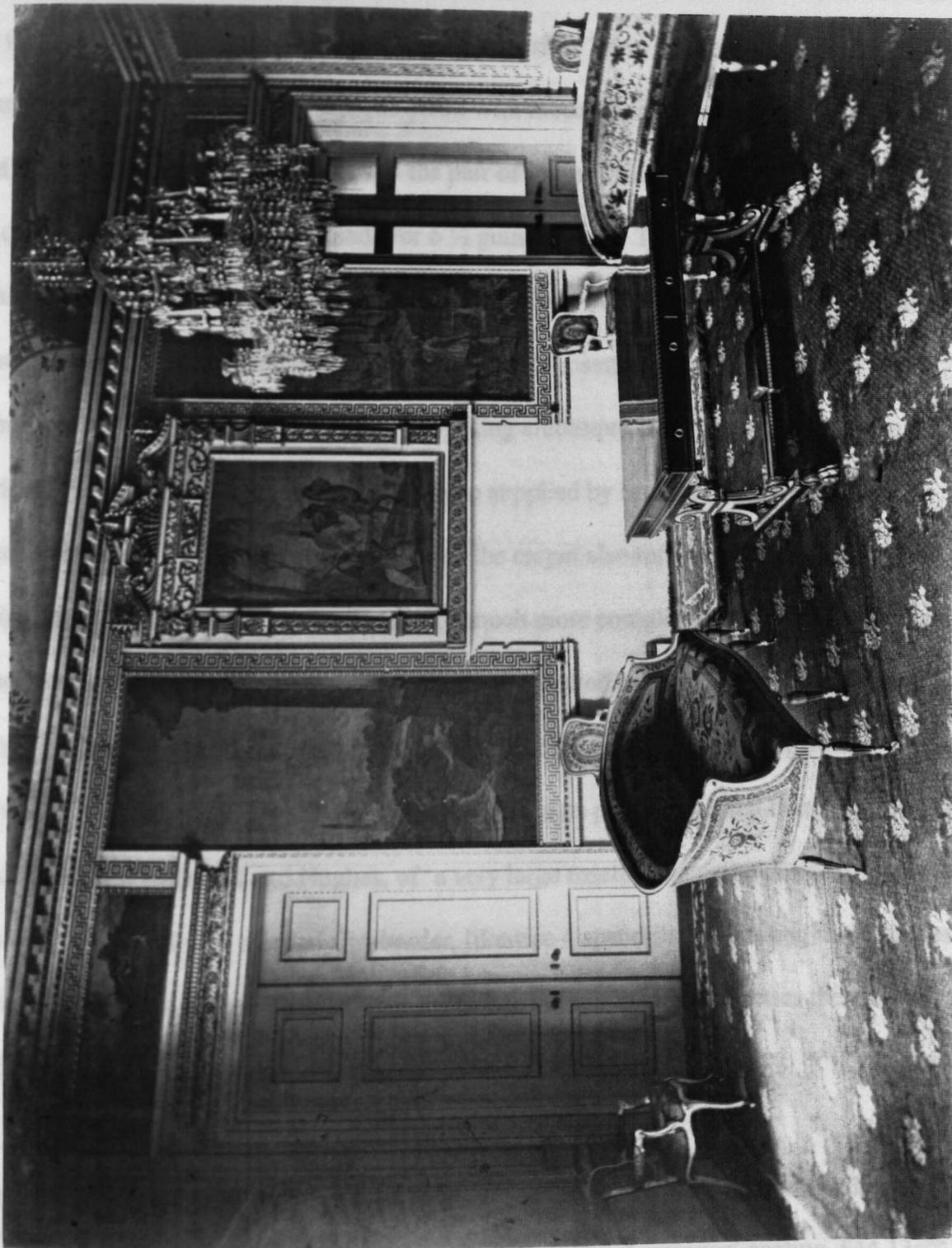


Plate XXX View of the Tapestry Room, circa 1874. A small section of Robert Jones's painted ceiling (see p.40) can be seen at the top of the photograph.

rosette motif of the carpet which is the dominant feature of the room in the wall hangings and their mouldings, the window dressing, upholstery and decoration of the rails of the furniture. For the Saloon and Drawing Room the 'double superfine Terre Carpet with elegant center figure and rich broad borders of antique scroll with medallions to correspond, in green and gold'<sup>201</sup> cost £432 and extended through the pair of rooms. Hearth rugs to correspond with the carpet with fine fringes were made for 6 ½ guineas each. The design of the carpet continued from the Ante Room with the same rosette motif. In both the Saloon and Drawing Room the carpet was centred by a large flowerhead or rosette, the petals of stylised anthemion and surrounded by a border of scrolling arabesque, a pattern taken up in the border of the two circular rosewood tables, also supplied by Morel and Hughes for these rooms at the same date. The central rosette of the carpet also reflected the circular central ceiling feature of the rooms. In the Boudoir a much more complicated design of swags and arabesques in the style of Percier and Fontaine was selected in an Axminster carpet 'with rich center figure in shades of gold colour on a Mazarine blue ground, & circle of flowers in extra finework with a broad border to correspond'.<sup>202</sup> Again its pattern imitated that of the ceiling enrichment, also by Morel and Hughes, of 'a very large rosette, & smaller do radiating from the center, encircled with a broad rich border, likewise 4 spandrels terminating in the angles of the room, & the 4 arches filled in with any rich scrolls in foliage & rosettes the whole painted in *Rehausse D'Or* on a pearl ground'.<sup>203</sup>

A large Turkey carpet (£99.4s.6d) was supplied for the Large Dining Room with a hearth rug to match. In the Glass Drawing Room '19 yards of superfine Axminster' costing £44.13s<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> *ibid.*, p.20

<sup>202</sup> *ibid.*, p.30

<sup>203</sup> *ibid.*, p.27

<sup>204</sup> *ibid.*, p.41

was used to provide a border to the existing carpet after patterns had been drawn and approved. A Brussels carpet (£33.11s.7 ½ d.) of green, drab and white colours to tone with the canvaswork chair covers and buff figured silk window curtains and drapery was laid in the Tapestry Room, also with a hearth rug *ensuite*. Forty-four yards of India matting, which ran the entire length of the hall from the door of the Grand Staircase to the door opposite and across the hall to the back staircase and from entrance door to dining room door, cost £11.14s.8d.: 'Joining do. & binding the ends, cutting and fitting Do on the spot, also lead weights at the corners'<sup>205</sup> was an additional £4.16s. Brass plugs with screws were used to fix the matting to the marble floor. In the Duke's Dressing Room 6 1/8 yards of oil cloth 'of a Persia pattern' was used to lay in front of the wash-hand stand and on the floor of the adjoining lobby. In the Steward's Room, 'a Brussels carpet of a Turkey pattern' was fitted and 8 yards of floorcloth, also of 'a Turkey pattern' was laid in front of the sideboard. Similar floor cloth was utilised in a number of servant's offices and on the staircases used by house staff. Floor cloths were made of a thick coarse fabric painted or stencilled; oil cloth of similar coarse material, treated with oil and added gum lac or resin, and painted.<sup>206</sup> Consideration was given to everything: '41 red embossed leather mats, lined with flanel, and bound with gold leather'<sup>207</sup> were made for ornamental objects or clocks to rest on and 'a large square green drugget lined with red basil leather, & bound with green binding',<sup>208</sup> later altered to make two pieces, was supplied to protect the carpet when lighting the chandeliers.

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<sup>205</sup> *ibid.*, p.59

<sup>206</sup> Clabburn, P., *op.cit.*, p.203

<sup>207</sup> *ibid.*, p.64

<sup>208</sup> *ibid.*

## Chapter Six

### Work by Robert Hughes, 1826-1842

After the large-scale commission of work for Hugh, Third Duke of Northumberland had ended, Nicholas Morel joined forces with George Seddon and began working for King George IV at Windsor Castle.<sup>209</sup> The last bill from the Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes partnership for the Third Duke is dated 30 June 1825 with a receipt attached dated 17 January 1826 which was signed by Robert Hughes on behalf of Morel and himself. The first account from Robert Hughes alone dates from 31 January of the same year by which time he was working from 115, Piccadilly opposite Green Park. From 1827 until 1832 Hughes used a printed bill head which described him as 'Upholsterer & Cabinet Maker, To their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge'; thereafter, until 1842, accounts were presented on a hand-written bill head simply recording 'Robert Hughes Upholsterer and Cabinet Maker, 115 Piccadilly'. Robert Hughes continued to work at Northumberland House, supplying some new pieces of furniture, but mainly maintaining and repairing existing pieces, and opening and closing the house each season. For Alnwick Castle, the practice established by Morel and Hughes of repairing and refurbishing pieces and supplying some new items continued. However, at Syon, Hughes undertook a substantial commission, particularly in the years 1827 and 1832, which saw the repairs, alterations and reupholstery of existing pieces, the provision of a large quantity of new furniture and the supply of new window and bed hangings. A representative, but not exhaustive, analysis of Robert Hughes's accounts for this period follows.

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<sup>209</sup> De Bellaigue, G. And Kirkham, P., 'George IV and the Furnishing of Windsor Castle', *Furniture History Society Journal*, Vol. VIII, 1972, p.4

One of the first independent commissions Robert Hughes undertook for the Third Duke at Northumberland House early in 1826 was the manufacture of a rail to protect the massive Sevres vase displayed in the Ball Room there. This had been presented to the Duke by King Charles X of France when the Duke attended his coronation as the personal representative of King George IV in 1825. Hughes made a vase out of deal to the exact dimensions as the original in order to make an assessment of the proportions of the new *scagliola* pedestal so that a model of the guard rail could be made. The gilt-brass rail, which was made as the barrier around the vase, was decorated at each end with cast palm fronds which were fixed with screw threads to one side of four highly chased columns. The leaf-carved embellishment around the base of the *verde antique scagliola* pedestal was oil gilded at the same time.<sup>210</sup> The vase and rail are now situated in the well of the main staircase at Syon. Each winter, from about February to March, Hughes brought in cabinet makers, upholsterers, gilders, french polishers and various women to undertake a thorough cleaning of the principal rooms at Northumberland House. Every brown Holland and chamois leather cover was taken off the furniture and chandeliers which were dusted and polished if necessary; all the wall hangings were dusted and the curtains and draperies re-hung in order to prepare the house for receiving the family. Each summer the process was reversed as the house was closed for the season. This was a practice which was undertaken by Robert Hughes at least twice a year at Northumberland House until 1840. A typical entry recording the works done in the Saloon early in 1827 to close up the house clearly reveals the thoroughness and care taken:

Taking down the silk window curtains and Draperies also the Muslin Curtains and the holland and gauze wire Blinds, moving the furniture and taking up the Carpet, thoroughly dusting the Cornice and Gilt Mouldings, cleaning the Silk on the walls with flannel and Cloths and fixing the brown holland hangings over the same, taking off the Stormont cases of Ottomans, Sofas, Chairs &c, cleaning the Silk of Do, thoroughly dusting the whole of the furniture and putting all the Chamois and brown holland cases on the same, likewise

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<sup>210</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.g

on the Chandelier and Chain, covering the knobs of Doors and Shutters with chamois Leather, taking down the Bell pulls &c &c

Carrying the whole of the silk Window Curtains and Draperies into the Stewards room, and assisting to clean the same, afterwards taking them into the Store room & packing them in their respective Presses.

Unfolding the carpets belonging to all the principal rooms, after being beat, putting cedar shavings into them and folding them up again

Washing and glazing on both sides the brown holland cases lined with white calico... repairing [these] cases after being cleaned & putting new strings to D° where necessary

To painting plain white 4 large gauze wire Blinds for the top of Windows in this room, likewise repairing & painting the frames of the same 4.8s.

To painting 4 D° with figured borders for the bottom of Windows, likewise repairing, Scraping & french Polishing the Mahogany frames of the same 9.16s.<sup>211</sup>

The closing up of the house also involved the cleaning, re-glazing and repair of the Holland cases and the cleaning and repair of the chamois cases, replacing the leather where necessary.

In September 1837 there is an entry for 'Also fitting all the Chamois Cases which had shrunk very much after being cleaned'.<sup>212</sup> Other regular work by Hughes's people was assistance before, during and after a rout or entertainment at either Northumberland or Syon House.

This involved moving furniture where necessary, organising cloak hanging facilities, hiring out rout chairs, inferior and superior at different hiring costs, and providing 'men in attendance' throughout the evening, 'Rout seating' was brought to Syon by horse and caravan supplied by Hughes. In May 1833, at the directions of the Duchess, Hughes's men, erected a platform in three parts, altogether 31 feet long and 4 feet 6 inches wide, covered with crimson drugget, in the Ball Room of Northumberland House for the use of the musicians.

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<sup>211</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.h

<sup>212</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.s

## Upholstery

In 1827 a vast amount of work was executed by Robert Hughes who supplied new bed furniture, window curtains and draperies and a number of new pieces of furniture, particularly seat furniture, for Syon House. The four-post beds in the Duke's bedroom, Blue Room and Pink Room all underwent a complete overhaul with new carving, french polishing and setting them on 'new French castors'.<sup>213</sup> The beds were supplied with new 'furniture', window curtains and drapery *ensuite* and each of the respective dressing rooms improved to match. A representative example from the accounts is the record of repair of the bed in the Pink Bedroom which included 'repairing a set of Antique cornices...Japaning them handsome in colours to suit the Chintz & highly varnishing the same, adding a set of new Laths and new tined rods to D<sup>o</sup>'.<sup>214</sup> Soft furnishing for this Bedstead of 'light ground bordered Chintz lined with green Calico' consisted of '4 large Curtains with full inside & outside Drapery and a set of Bases, bound with green silk ferret and fringed with a handsome silk Fringe in colours to suit the Chintz and finished with green silk gimp, the head and tester cloths of green Calico, plaited and lined with brown holland'<sup>215</sup> which cost £27.14s. with the repairs. The window cornices were altered and japanned *ensuite* with the bed, brass pulley rods and laths installed and four 'handsome brass patras for embraces'. Included in the price of £15.18s. was two pairs of window curtains and draperies 'of light ground bordered Chintz lined with green Calico, bound & fringed en suite with Bed furniture'.<sup>216</sup> The chintz was glazed (at 1 ½ s. per yard), as was the calico lining, and finished with a 'Parisian' silk fringe with a green gimp head. A Brussels carpet of 'drab ground with pink and gold rosettes' was also supplied with

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<sup>213</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.h

<sup>214</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>216</sup> *ibid.*

a double border to surround it and a hearth rug. The Pink Dressing Room was finished *ensuite* with matching window cornice, curtains and carpet.

A '4ft french Bedstead' was made for Lord Prudhoe's bedroom with 'Scroll ends stuffed with the best horse hair in fine canvas, Lath bottom and french castors, turned legs stained and varnished, including a large shaped Skeleton head frame and 3 Iron supports for the furniture with turned ornamental ends to D<sup>o</sup> japanned in colours to suit the Chintz' (£16.12s.).<sup>217</sup> French beds had been fashionable since the middle of the eighteenth century<sup>218</sup> and differed in that the posts were fixed to the wall over which the bed 'furniture' was draped. Their popularity in the Regency period is clearly indicated by their inclusion in contemporary pattern books by Percier and Fontaine,<sup>219</sup> Ackermann,<sup>220</sup> George Smith<sup>221</sup> P. and M.A. Nicholson.<sup>222</sup> Dressing of beds afforded an opportunity for the upholsterer to demonstrate their ability in the complicated arrangement of draperies and hangings. For Lord Prudhoe's French bed a case was made 'of light ground bordered chintz lined with white Calico and bound with blue silk galloon, likewise a furniture for the same in suite, consisting of a very large double curtain lined with blue calico and bound with silk ferret, a valance for the top fringed with a handsome silk fringe, head cloth of blue Calico plaited and lined with brown holland'<sup>223</sup> (£6.18s.). Each individual bed had three mattresses: the lower one of straw, the second of horsehair or wool and the top layer, known as the bed rather than a mattress, filled with 'chicken, turkey, goose feathers and down for the higher classes'.<sup>224</sup> For every bed in the

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<sup>217</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.h

<sup>218</sup> Clabburn, P., *op.cit.*, London, 1989, p.111

<sup>219</sup> Percier and Fontaine, *op.cit.*, plates 19 & 30

<sup>220</sup> Agius, P., *op.cit.*, for example: plates 1, 26, 71, 83, 96 & 137

<sup>221</sup> Smith, G., *The Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Guide*, 1826, plate LX.

<sup>222</sup> Nicolson, P. and M.A., *op.cit.*, plate 11

<sup>223</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.h

<sup>224</sup> Anonymous, *Workwoman's Guide* (second ed. 1840), reprinted and restored by Bloomfield Books and Publications, 1975, quoted by Clabburn, P. *op.cit.*, p.103

refurbished rooms at Syon a straw palliass in a 'ticken' case; hair mattress in a 'fine white Irish case, bordered and bound'; feather bed and bolster 'in fine Linen tick cases'; two down pillows 'in white *jian* cases', three 'superfine' Witney blankets and a Marseilles quilt were supplied.<sup>225</sup> Extra yards of the fabric of the same pattern used for each bedroom was delivered to the Housekeeper.

The rich decorative effect achieved by the drapery and curtains was just as significant on the inside of the bed as well as the outside, particularly if it was a bed of some importance such as those in the Duchess of Kent's rooms at Syon in April 1832. The Duchess of Kent was the mother of Princess Victoria, heir apparent. Charlotte Florentia, Third Duchess was appointed governess to the young princess in 1831 until she became queen in 1837 and the princess made use of accommodation at Syon until that day. The four post bed in the Duchess of Kent's room was altered to add 'a foot board...a new set of laths with a new inside raised tester forming an oval in the center & a cornice all round for the inside drapery' as well as 'a new outside tester forming a doom very thickly ribbed & covered w<sup>h</sup> canvas So that the blue Silk Should Keep its form' and a set of new cornices 'of Antique form' and 'sweept mouldings to form the divisions of doom'.<sup>226</sup> The back posts were repaired and strengthened with iron brackets and the whole bed was gilded including the front posts, cornices, dome and oval of interior and the basket of flowers which surmounted the dome. The furnishings were made of blue silk tabouret 'consisting of four curtains lined & finished with a rich gimp Surmounted by handsome festoon draperies and inside d<sup>o</sup> to correspond ornamented with fringes, gimps &c' and '4 P<sup>r</sup> of embraces composed of 2 rich Silk tassels each...' retained the curtain at each post.<sup>227</sup> Inside the bed, the dome was finished with fluted yellow silk. This

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<sup>225</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.h

<sup>226</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.m

<sup>227</sup> *ibid.*

bed is still in the collection at Syon House (see plates LXIII and LXIV). A photograph of the bed taken in 1930 shows the bed 'furniture' in good order and corresponds to the description given in the accounts, particularly with the 'festoon' drapery and the wide 'rich gimp' which finishes the curtain edges.

At the same time a similar bed, also still in the collection at Syon House, (see plate LXV) was supplied by Robert Hughes for the use of Princess Victoria. It is described as a 'Polonese Bedstead with lath bottom, on strong french castors, 4 columns Springing from head and foot boards Supporting 4 swept brass rods & 2 straight d<sup>o</sup> & a canopy made to receive flower basket'.<sup>228</sup> The interior of the dome was covered with yellow fluted silk and the hangings were made of the same material and finished in the same manner so as to correspond with the larger bed. On the smaller bedstead the four large curtains were suspended from the dome where the tops were enhanced with four swags edged with 'very deep worsted fringe enriched with silk hangers 10<sup>in</sup> deep' (£3.7s.6d.), and the inside valance finished with 'silk fringe'.<sup>229</sup> The curtains were arranged over the four brass upright posts and two end rails, each tied back by tassels. On both beds, the head and foot boards were stuffed with hair, covered with blue tabouret and finished with a narrower gimp and silk cord and each had lined valances made of the same silk hanging from the bed bases. The 'Polonese' bedstead, also referred to as a 'French bed' in the accounts, is reminiscent of the style of 'French' bed in the form of the domed tester with drapery hanging down so as to form a canopy and also that of the 'tent' bed or 'field' bed where the posts 'were united by curved rods which were then covered by drapery to form a tent...with draped curtains around the posts'.<sup>230</sup> As was customary, the window curtains were made in material to match that of

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<sup>228</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>229</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>230</sup> Collard, F., *op.cit.*, p.304

the bed furniture and the seat furniture was also reupholstered in the same material. For the Duchess of Kent's Bedroom two pairs of window curtains of the same blue tabouret supplied by the Duke embellished with broad gold gimp *ensuite* with the bed cost £10.6s plus £12.7s for the gimp. They hung on two brass poles with '24 brass rings with a Sliding pulley to each' and silk line to draw the curtains with '4 brass handsome Lotus embraces & stems'<sup>231</sup> to loop them back (£19.6s.). Five yards of 'very rich worsted fringe enriched w<sup>h</sup> hangers of Silk 20 inches deep ... w<sup>h</sup> a rich gimp head'<sup>232</sup> were fixed as valances to the windows. In January 1832 a chaise longue, four elbow chairs and four side chairs were covered with 'your Grace's blue Tabaret' and Hughes supplied '2 dressing stools stained as rose wood & stuffed with the best hair & covered in Suit with the chairs and finished with a gimp the wood work varnished'<sup>233</sup> for £1.19s. Eighteenth century elbow chairs and side chairs covered in the same material as the two beds survive at Syon. Continuing care for the furnishings of the bedrooms is also evident in the accounts as the example of the Duchess of Northumberland's bedroom at Syon indicates, the entire 'furniture' of the bed was dismantled, the silk curtains and draperies dry cleaned and the chintz curtains and draperies, foot and head board covers and that of the dome cleaned and re-glazed. Such cleaning meant that any fringes or gimps were removed first and had to be re-sewn afterwards.<sup>234</sup>

Two French beds 'with french castors, latte bottom and japaned a buff ground with brown line Also wood work to support the poles covered with marone calico' cost £16.14s for an unspecified room at Northumberland House. Each was provided with 'furniture' of chintz lined with maroon calico and bound with silk binding (£3.18s.) '2 Paliasses with ticken

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<sup>231</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.m

<sup>232</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>233</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>234</sup> *ibid.*

borders cost £2.6s; two 'thick bordered Mattresses filled with the best wool and hair as ticken cases', £6.6s; two 'white bordered Mattresses filled with the best wool and hair', 63s. each; two pairs of 'Superfine Witney blankets' and two pairs of under blankets, £5.4s.; two bolsters of 'best cotton filled with the best white seasoned feathers' £2.10s and two 'fine white jain pillows filled with the best down' £2.0.0.<sup>235</sup> A more splendid french bedstead 'with mahogany scroll ends and turned legs shewing mah<sup>ny</sup> all round base french polished and on the best french castors, also lath bottom The ends stuffed inside and out with best horse hair in fine canvas [with] A tester lath with iron tinned rods and studs supported by 2 long posts attached to the stuffed ends and strengthened with iron plates all the way up back' (£26.10s.)<sup>236</sup> was supplied for Alnwick Castle in October 1838. The description of its 'furniture' sounds stunning:

...of your Grace's green India damask composing 2 curtains lined with amber sarnet [sarcent?] and finished on the edge with a gold color silk gimp

The head cloth, tester and inside vallen[ce] of amber sarnet lined with amber calico

The outside drapery of your India damask and lined with amber sarnet finished with a gold color silk gimp and rich fringe

The base of your damask finished with a gimp and lined with calico

Also covering the 2 stuffed ends of bedstead with gallon calico and your damask, finished with a gold color gimp

Likewise making 2 large and 2 small muslin curtains for d<sup>o</sup> 16.16s.<sup>237</sup>

'Gold color silk loops for curtains', a straw paliass, a mattress filled with wool and hair, a feather bolster and pillow, three 'superfine blankets' and a 'Superfine white cotton Counterpane'<sup>238</sup> were also packed in crates and shipped to Alnwick.

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<sup>235</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>236</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.t

<sup>237</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>238</sup> *ibid.*

In 1827, in the Ante Dining Room, Dining Room and Drawing Room at Syon (now the suite of rooms known as the Upper Pantry, Private Dining Room and Private Drawing Room) Robert Hughes supplied window curtains and draperies and a large amount of furniture. The Ante Dining Room and Dining Room had curtains and draperies of green silk tabouret, for one window and three windows for the respective rooms, lined with sarcenet and ‘ornamented with wide and narrow gold colour Silk Laces, the Drapery lined with green tammy also counterlined and fringed with a gold colour [Parisian] Fringe of silk and worsted and ornamented with silk Laces as on the Curtains’.<sup>239</sup> French polished mahogany cornices ‘ornamented with a large enriched ovolo and 2 null Mouldings gilt in the best manner in Mat and Burnish’ and brass rods and pulley system were installed for the curtains which were looped back over ‘carved & gilt Patras with brass stems and Plates for embraces’.<sup>240</sup> In the Drawing Room, ‘figured blue silk Tabaret’ curtains were lined with blue sarcenet while the draperies were lined with tammy and faced with sarcenet. The draperies were finished with a very broad silk gimp at the head and fringed with a ‘deep gold colour Parisian fringe of Silk and worsted, with a silk gimp head to D<sup>o</sup>’ and ‘handsome’ tassels of silk and worsted and worsted rope. In the Drawing Room six pairs of ‘fine figured and bordered Muslin’<sup>241</sup> curtains were also made for the windows. The Dining Room was supplied with a large Turkey carpet of 28ft 7ins. by 19ft. with a hearth rug *ensuite*; the Drawing Room with a Brussels carpet ‘in drab and gold colours’ (£24.9s.1d.)<sup>242</sup> with a ‘handsome wide border to surround Do, made to a Drawing’ (£7.6s.3d.),<sup>243</sup> also with a hearth rug *ensuite*.

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<sup>239</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.h

<sup>240</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>241</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>242</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>243</sup> *ibid.*

## Furniture

In the Ante Dining Room at Syon a 14ft 6" mahogany sideboard on eight turned octagonal legs with a shelf fitted to them was made to stand along the south wall of the room by the door leading into the Dining Room. Two late eighteenth century mahogany pedestals were repaired and cleaned with 'entirely new Mouldings' added with '2 new carved Patras on the fronts'. The interior of one pedestal was lined for a plate warmer and the other lined with lead 'for washing Glasses &c.' (£12.16s.).<sup>244</sup> Two mahogany urns standing on the pedestals were also restored and french polished with one being given a new lead lining and both spouts being silvered (£12.8s). Twelve 'old Mahogany Chairs' were repaired, new carving undertaken and french polished, all the seats were ripped, re-stuffed with new hair and covered with green morocco leather at £2.16s each. These must have been the source for Hughes to copy in order to supply '48 Mahogany Cabriole Chairs...en suite with your Grace's old ones'.<sup>245</sup> These copies, and some of the old chairs, survive in the collection. The older late eighteenth century chairs can be distinguished from the later copies by the slightly wider back and seat, an additional reeded mould to the centre of the seat rail, more slender tapering front legs and refined reeding and the back leg which finishes with a block toe whereas the legs of the copy chairs terminate abruptly. The forty-eight chairs were made for the main Dining Room for which Hughes also supplied a pair of massive Spanish mahogany breakfront sideboards supported on four turned columns and a plinth base (£153.18s.); two mahogany side tables for marble slabs provided by the Duke, also with fluted column supports and on a plinth base (£57.14s.). Two lead-lined mahogany wine coolers 'of a Sarcophagus shape'<sup>246</sup> (£37.10s.) were made to stand under the sideboards. All of this dining furniture survives in its original intended location at Syon. The dining table for the room had

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<sup>244</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>245</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>246</sup> *ibid.*

been brought from Northumberland House where Robert Hughes supplied a new one in December 1826.<sup>247</sup> Hughes altered the table by 'adding 5 more flaps to D° to make them 40<sup>ft</sup> in extent, altering the 2 sets of sliding frames by making them extend further, adding various new rails and 8 fly brackets to D°, new turning and reeding the Legs, lackering the castors and adding larger new wheels to D°, new jointing the whole of the tops, entirely new working them over on both sides & highly oil polishing the same, altering 2 of the ends by making them circular, part new fasteners & moving all the old ones &c &c' (£94.12s.).<sup>248</sup> This is probably the dining table in the Private Dining Room at Syon. Cases of mahogany lined with green drugget were made for the extra leaves of the table.

Furniture supplied for the Drawing Room comprised two rosewood sofas (£125.12s.), two rosewood chaise-longues (£86.10s.) and eighteen rosewood side chairs (£136.16s.), all 'of fine wood richly carved and french polished' and upholstered in 'figured blue silk Tabaret'.<sup>249</sup> In what is described as the Music Room (now reverted to its eighteenth century name of the Print Room) two pairs of window curtains ensuite with those of the Drawing Room with rosewood cornices were supplied. The cornices survive in this room today. Two rosewood chaise longues and twelve chairs to correspond with those in the Drawing Room were also made. Four massive rosewood bookcases were supplied for this room, the first, and largest, with six doors 'with ornamented brass trellis panels, paneled pilasters fixed on the Doors and blocks with carved null Patras on the frieze, of fine wood and the whole french polished, the interior containing 24 Shelves made to move & supported on 96 brass Pins with

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<sup>247</sup> *ibid.*: 'To 2 sets of Dining Tables of fine Spanish Mahogany with strong sliding frames to draw out or contract occasionally standing on 12 very stout turned and reeded Legs & large Socket Castors, patent brass fasteners &c, made to replace those sent to Sion, with the exception of being 7<sup>ft</sup> wide, the former being but 6<sup>ft</sup> wide'. £181.16s.

<sup>248</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>249</sup> *ibid.*

strong brass plates for D° let into the ends of the Shelves and 1344 brass sockets for D° let into the ends, also 144 brass framed rollers let into the top sides of the shelves for Portfolios to move on, the whole of the interior made of oak, stained black and varnished. &c’ cost £268.18s. Blue sarcenet was used for the curtains to the doors. A year later, in November 1828, three more bookcases, of the same design but with two doors to each, were supplied to stand to the left and right of the fireplace and in the pier of the room.<sup>250</sup> The large bookcase and two of the smaller ones survive at Syon.

Following the reckoning for new work in these rooms, the 1827 account then describes the extensive restoration of existing items in the collection. Examples of restored furniture include two ‘large old Japan cabinets...removing all the brasswork cleaning and relacquering and refixing, making new locks and keys, and two new stands with looking glass backs’; ‘an Oriental Japaned Trunk inlaid with Pearls, upwards of 800 new pieces of new Pearl let in, the Japan entirely new done...’ with new lock, new ornamental hasp and new stand; the repair of ‘a very old Riesner cabinet and completely restoring the work as originally’;<sup>251</sup> an inlaid serpentine-fronted commode, inlaid dressing table and two small inlaid toilet tables being ‘well cleaned, french polished’<sup>252</sup> and provided with new locks and keys and the re-upholstery of various chairs. Cabinets, dating from the seventeenth century, were restored and new stands, each very similar, made for their display. The treatment of the cabinets and the design of the stands is comparable to that work undertaken for the small *pietra dura* cabinets at Northumberland House by Morel and Hughes in 1826. Robert Hughes put in thorough repair the cabinets, such as a Flemish tortoiseshell cabinet which had:

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<sup>250</sup> Syon MSS U.I.90

<sup>251</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.h

<sup>252</sup> *ibid.*

a new Cornice..., new top & back and the principal part of the interior being decayed, cut out and replaced with new, the Drawers all repaired and part remade, part new Mouldings to form panels round D° and all the partition edges veneered with new Ebony, a new panel of fine Tortoiseshell to the Door in the center of Cabinet and a new pediment over D°, the whole highly polished and varnished, 10 new Locks made for the Drawers and Door with fancy bow key to D°, 2 new vases and all the old brass work taken off, lackered and put on again as before &c, likewise remaking of new materials the top part of this cabinet forming 2 steps with looking Glass panels for ornaments &c. Including an entire new stand for this cabinet the same pattern as the preceding, the whole Ebonised and highly varnished, preparing for looking Glasses & fixing in &c.<sup>253</sup>

The stands each had 'a carved moulding round the top, standing on 4 turned ornamental ball columns and a plinth supported on 4 carved scroll feet'.<sup>254</sup> All of the mirror plates were supplied by Thomas Ponsonby. Three restored cabinets on stands, including the one described above, survive at Syon House. Cases of chamois leather were made for each individual piece of furniture, newly made or restored, as well as additional cases of brown Holland lined with white calico. However, there is no reference to linen case covers being made for the seat furniture except ones of Stormont for the chairs of the Long Gallery in 1829. At that date the existing eighteenth century furniture of the Long Gallery was repaired and there are detailed descriptions of an enormous amount of restoration work. In addition '2 handsome Sofas 9ft long each richly carved & Gilt in mat & burnished gold the seat back and seats Stuff'd with the best horse hair in fine canvas' were supplied with six feather pillows to each, the whole upholstered with 'figured damask' and 'finished with double gimp's cord on the edge & 48 rich tassels on the pillows'<sup>255</sup> for £587.12s.<sup>256</sup> 272 ¾ yards of

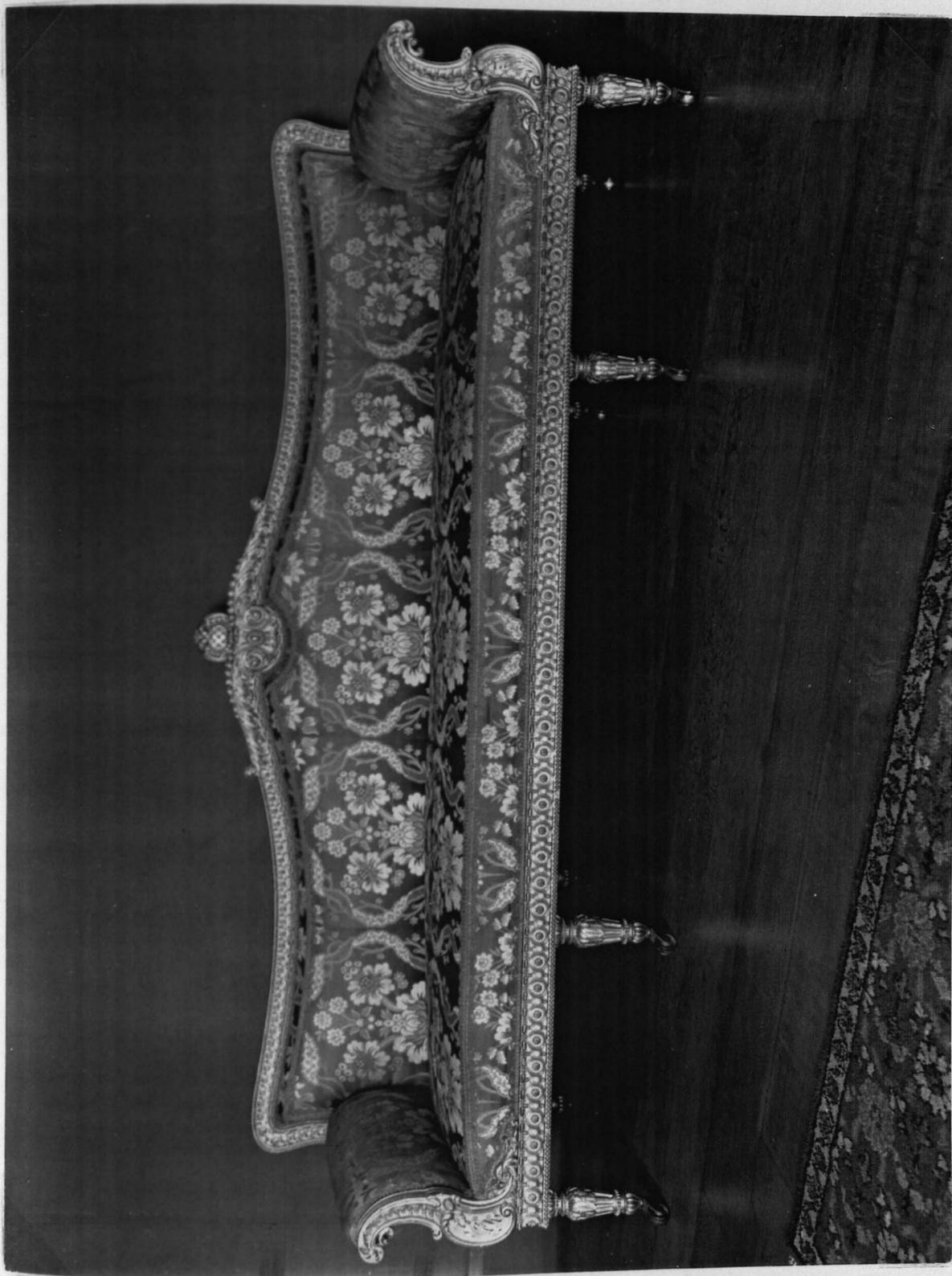
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<sup>253</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>254</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>255</sup> Syon MSS, U.I.90

<sup>256</sup> These are probably the pair of sofas of a late neo-classical design made to correspond with the room for which they were made and correspond with the other furniture there. Sold at Sotheby's 11 April 1975, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.



**Plate XXXI** One of a pair of sofas supplied by Robert Hughes for the Long Gallery at Syon House in 1829. Now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The upholstery is a later Spitalfields copy of the eighteenth century silk wall hangings of the Red Drawing Room (see page 112).

Brussels carpet, with another 103 yards of border (at a total cost of £107.11s. including making up), was made for the Long Gallery to a pattern selected by the Duke. Cash paid for drawings for the alteration of colours and the working of a border cost £7.15s.<sup>257</sup>

Utility furniture was supplied for all the houses, for example five french polished Spanish mahogany wash-hand stands with a pair of frieze drawers and 'reeded legs & the best brass Castors' (£6.18s. each); four Spanish mahogany dressing table mirrors (at £6.10s. each); two wainscot hat and umbrella stands with brass 'hat arms' (the larger one £4.16s., the smaller one, £4.10s.) for Syon House in 1831,<sup>258</sup> '6 light Chairs stained as rose wood french polished and with willow seats'<sup>259</sup> (at 23s. each) for Alwick Castle in 1836; two mahogany french polished chests of drawers 'with 3 long and 2 short drawers standing on 4 turned feet and good locks and keys' (£9.0.0. each) for the Lady's Maid's Room and two mahogany wardrobes for dresses 'with cornices, plinth and panelled doors, good locks and keys...also a brass rod and vase(?) hooks in each...and 6 double brass dress hooks with mah<sup>ny</sup> handles in each' at £14.6s. a piece for Miss Louisa Percy and Miss Wynne's rooms at Northumberland House in 1840.<sup>260</sup> Of increasing significance by the early 1830s was the provision of wheelchairs for the Duke, who suffered from gout. In 1832 Hughes was paid £27.17s. for:

an Oak wheel Chair for the garden [at Syon House] french polished the wheels 2<sup>m</sup> broad, cased with strong iron rims, the back & sides caned Sliding foot board hinged to drop down with sash lines & brass Knobs to Keep it up fitting on the Axle tree and steerage wheel The Elbows stuffed & covered with black morocco, A loose seat stuffed wh the best hair & covered in black morocco Another loose seat caned & covered with a very thick P<sup>r</sup> of leather & morocco leather over d<sup>o</sup> Altering the above chair taking away foot board & reducing the wheels, rails &c & painting the iron work as oak <sup>261</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Syon MSS, U.I.90

<sup>258</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.m

<sup>259</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.q

<sup>260</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.v

<sup>261</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.o

Similar wheelchairs were supplied for Northumberland House and Alnwick Castle with poles provided to attach to the side of certain chairs when the occupant required to be carried sedan style. A wheelchair was also made for the Duke's use at Cambridge<sup>262</sup> as he was Chancellor of the University there from 1834. All the axles and brass fittings for the steering wheels were supplied by Mr Collinge, of the carriage trade. By December of 1834, models were being provided in order to achieve a design satisfactory to the Duke and alterations were made to his wheelchairs so that 'the supports should fall by the side of cushion & the elbows turn over to the back...'.<sup>263</sup> Adaptations to the chairs are fairly frequent in the accounts and, in 1835, both wheelchairs at Northumberland House were altered with a new steering wheel being put on the lighter chair and the iron work painted as oak; on the large chair the legs were raised by 2 inches and a 'new forged wrought iron axis with brass carriages & boxes'<sup>264</sup> added as well as a new steering wheel. After June 1842 there are no further bills for Robert Hughes in the series of household vouchers.

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<sup>262</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.p

<sup>263</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.o

<sup>264</sup> Syon MSS U.III.8.p

Documentary evidence indicates that the refurbishment of Northumberland House undertaken by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes 1823-1824 remained virtually as originally planned until the demolition of the property in 1874. The inventory of effects of the house compiled in 1847 after the Third Duke's death shows that all the window blinds, sun curtains, silk curtains and draperies remained *in situ* as did the wall coverings and carpets. Essentially the furniture in the suite of state apartments remained unchanged, the lights supplied by William Collins still in evidence as well as mention of all the linen, chamois leather and Holland coverings for the furniture. An important addition was three marble sculptures by John Graham Lough: *Venus and Cupid*, *A Child with Lyre riding the Hydra* and *Young Neptune riding on a Dolphin*.<sup>1</sup> These were added to the Grand Staircase in the 1830s by the Third Duke who was a great patron of Lough.

In chests in the Store Room adjoining the Housekeeper's Bedroom were remnants of original extra material supplied by Morel and Hughes for the purpose of repair including:

52 yds Grey striped Satin damask same as Anti Room  
43 yds Geranium Satin damask same as Saloon and Drawing Room  
54 ¼ yds Blue and Gold satin damask, same as Boudoir  
13 ¾ ditto  
...The Satin from ottoman in Gallery  
...The Muslin Cover for Chandelier in Glass Drawing Room  
...20 lined holland wrappers for best room Curtains  
1 Leather Cover for Ottoman<sup>2</sup>

In the Butler's Pantry was 'The Crimson Silk Velvet Sideboard Cover, with Gold bullion fringe in a Wainscot case'<sup>3</sup> supplied by Morel and Hughes for the display of the finest silver and silver-gilt on one of the sideboard tables in the main Dining Room of the house.

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<sup>1</sup> Syon MSS H.VIII.1.b Inventory of effects at Northumberland House, 1847, p.61

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p.27

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p.124

The printed guide to Northumberland House which accompanied the opening of the house for the Great Exhibition in 1851 describes the rooms. By this date the Glass Drawing Room was considered to be ‘...a very antique and seemingly old looking chamber...’<sup>4</sup> and the Tapestry Room still more antique in appearance, although the Picture Gallery is described as ‘magnificent’. Thomas Cundy’s staircase receives the greatest compliment and the decoration of the suite of state apartments conceived by Morel and Hughes is highly praised, in particular the effect of the Drawing Room where the visitor is struck by the ‘rich splendour of the chamber, which is a mass of crimson, of the most brilliant description; walls, couches, ottomans and chairs, being all equally covered with richly damasked red satin, productive, however, of no monotony in appearance’. The Duchess’s Boudoir is reported to be ‘a perfect gem of its kind...decorated in the richest style of blue and gold satin furniture, after the fashion of Louis XV’.<sup>5</sup> A final comment is made on how visitors should not sit down as the ‘magnificent decorations’<sup>6</sup> would quickly be destroyed by the crowds. Good housekeeping had preserved the rooms and their contents for twenty-eight years and continued to do so for the next twenty-two.

The Fourth Duke had commissioned Charles Barry to produce a set of proposals for alterations to Northumberland House in 1854 but these were never undertaken, the Duke’s energies being concentrated on the restoration of Alwick Castle by this time. The inventory made after the Fourth Duke’s death in 1865 reveals little change at Northumberland House. Indeed, the inventory produced records additions to that made after his brother’s death eighteen years earlier rather than a completely new listing.

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<sup>4</sup> Clarke, H.G. (pub.), *Northumberland House: Its Saloons and Picture Gallery*, London, 1851

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

Photographs of the interior taken just prior to the demolition of Northumberland House show a number of pieces of furniture removed from their original location, probably as a result of a last minute decision to make some photographic record is debatable. The greatest change seems to have been the addition of typical Victorian chairs and occasional tables throughout the rooms, shown most obviously in the Glass Drawing Room; see Plate XXIX for example. So, until the demolition of Northumberland House in 1874 forced the dispersal of the contents, very little altered in the rooms which had been transformed by Morel and Hughes half a century earlier.

## Epilogue

A bill for embanking the Thames was brought into the House of Commons in 1862 but the Fourth Duke of Northumberland was able to come to an agreement which preserved the integrity of Northumberland House and its gardens stretching to the banks of the river. However, the idea was not completely dismissed and, by 1869, a Select Committee of the House of Commons reconsidered the proposition of a road to the Embankment from Charing Cross through Northumberland House or by a curved line of road to circumvent the house and gardens. By 1872 the Metropolitan Board of Works applied to the Sixth Duke for consent to build a road through Northumberland House which was considered to be in the best public interest. The Duke, believing that 'he would not be justified in withstanding any longer a measure declared to be imperatively necessary by such authorities..' <sup>265</sup> and knowing that the alternative would 'render [the house] as a residence utterly untenable, and its value greatly deteriorated for any other purpose' <sup>266</sup>, agreed to the proposal. Northumberland House was sold by compulsory purchase order in 1874 to the Metropolitan Board of Works. A schedule of fittings and fixtures which the Duke was entitled to remove from the house was drawn up. This included all of the principal fireplaces; all pier glasses; the decorative features of the Glass Drawing Room; tapestry panels and fixed decoration in the Tapestry Room; candelabra at the foot of the Grand Staircase; door locks and keys marked with the ducal coronet; fixed cooking apparatus in the Kitchen and Scullery; the gates at the Strand front and the lion above the front entrance. <sup>267</sup> The fabric of the house, including Cundy's Grand Staircase, was then sold at auction by the Government.

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<sup>265</sup> Duke of Northumberland's uncatalogued MSS, 'The Charing Cross and Victoria Embankment Approach Bill, 1873 Explanatory Statement'.

<sup>266</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>267</sup> Duke of Northumberland's uncatalogued MSS, 'Charing Cross and Victoria Embankment Approach, Second Schedule', n.d. 1873(?)

Plates XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV and XXVII show the interior of the house not long before its demolition. Already the curtains have gone and the rooms look forlorn and soulless. Sadly these are the only interior views of the suite of apartments furnished and decorated by Morel and Hughes and cannot do justice to their work. Much of the furniture has been removed to rooms other than those for which it was originally intended and one feels as if the photographs were taken as a last minute thought amidst the clearing of the house, thus scattering remaining pieces in an attempt to furnish it. Many of the pieces of furniture were accommodated at the family's next London residence of 2, Grosvenor Square. This had only recently been built and the fireplaces from the suite of state rooms were moved to that leasehold property. However, many fittings and furnishings surplus to requirements were stored at Syon House well into the middle of the twentieth century. Important fireplaces were installed at Syon, such as those from the Glass Drawing Room, Large Dining Room and one from the Ball Room. Crates of panelling from the Glass Drawing Room walls were stored for many years before sale in the 1950s but enough pieces have been saved and restored at the Victoria and Albert Museum to give a taste of its former glory.

The survival of so much of the furniture by Morel and Hughes in the Northumberland Collection today must have much to do with its enduring appeal to successive family heirs through the versatility of its style, which has allowed it to fit without incongruity into eighteenth century Robert Adam neo-classical interiors at Syon House and mid-nineteenth century Italian Renaissance-style state rooms at Alwick Castle. Meanwhile the analysis of the work of Robert Hughes at Syon House has provided answers and increased awareness about the nature and style of the furnishings which survive at Syon today and serves to raise the profile of the lesser-known associate in the partnership of Morel and Hughes.

# **Catalogue of the furniture by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes, 1822-1825, and Robert Hughes, 1826-1835, in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland**

## **Explanations**

### **Arrangement and numbering**

Furniture is arranged into two groups: pieces made by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes, 1822-1825 and those pieces supplied by Robert Hughes, 1826-1833. Within these groupings, the items have been arranged in alphabetical order.

The inventory number appears at the beginning of each catalogue entry. Each item has an individual record or one record if representing a large a set, for example, suites of chairs.

### **Measurements**

These are given in inches. Sizes are the maximum at each point and recorded in L (length), D (depth), H (height), Diam. (diameter) where appropriate. Width (termed length) and depth of chairs are measured at seat rail level.

### **Provenance**

Descriptions and cost of the objects from the relevant accounts are cited in full. The property and specific room for which each piece was supplied is given where known.

### **Documentation**

This gives the archival reference to the relevant accounts cited from the manuscript collection of the Duke of Northumberland.

01438  
cabinet  
bookcase cabinet  
by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes  
1823  
aburra; gilt beech; gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

Parcel-gilt aburra bookcase in three sections, the central section with an arched mirror surrounded by a giltwood egg and dart border, the pediment above with giltwood scrolling acanthus cavetto frieze over a lower frieze of Vitruvian scroll, below, in each corner of the arch, is a winged griffin in rampant attitude surrounded by scrolling acanthus. The central section is flanked to either side by glazed cases, each surmounted by a small central pedestal, decorated in imitation of the pediment, and with carved giltwood scrolling foliate trusses centred by a flowerhead to each side, the pedestals supporting a pair of dark red porphyry urns. Below the pedestals, a giltwood gadroon edge features above a frieze of giltwood Vitruvian scroll finished at each side of the central mirror by pilasters and at each end of the cabinet with giltwood capitals and bases in imitation of the Greek architectural order with flowerhead paterae to the top of each. At the top of the cabinet, above the pilasters at the extreme right and left, are two semi-circular pieces of wood decorated at the front end with a gilded segmental fan. There is a central white marble shelf above the lower part of the bookcase, with giltwood bead moulding above a frieze of Vitruvian scroll. The central projecting marble shelf is supported by a pair of carved giltwood monopodia terminating in lion claw feet with pilasters behind flanking the mirrored back panel and imitating those above. To the right hand and left hand sides are a pair of doors, each with a recessed panel with a giltwood egg and dart border and a giltwood radiating flowerhead paterae to the centre. The whole is on a plinth base with a giltwood gadrooned edge. The left-hand cupboard contains two shelves of aburra wood and adjustable brass brackets. The opening mechanism for the right-hand cupboard is unknown.

L.153ins. D.19ins. H.131 ½ ins.

Morel and Hughes fitted the right-hand section of the cabinet with sham books to disguise a door leading from the Boudoir to the Drawing Room. There is no evidence of this: the upper right-hand side of the cabinet is glazed as is the left-hand side and the lower part cannot be opened. Scrolling monopodia with lion paw feet are illustrated by Percier and Fontaine, *Recueil de Decorations Interieures*, 1812, plates 13 and 16, supporting a pier table on a breakfront plinth base. Griffins also feature, although not in exactly the same attitude, for example, plates 13, 14, 26, 31, 32 and 33. The Vitruvian scroll frieze, with intersecting anthemion, is identical to that on the suite of seat furniture which was also made for the Boudoir: pair of chaise-longues, two bergeres, six side chairs and two stools (see 01382).

### PROVENANCE

Made for the Boudoir, Northumberland House. Supplied by Morel and Hughes, 1823, at a cost of £682.16.0.

‘To a very large cabinet of your Grace’s aburra wood, very highly polished in three compartments, the left hand wing fitted up to receive books, & the lower part enclosed by a panelled door; the right hand wing fitted up with sham books to form a door leading to Drawing room; the center part made to receive your Grace’s plates of glass at the back; the whole enriched with the following carved ornaments, viz: mouldings & trusses in the pediment over center, Vitruvian scrolls in the frieze of center and wings, capitals and bases for the pilasters, 2 griffins with rich foliage in the spandrels, Vitruvian scroll in lower frieze supported by bold handsome chimerical legs with lion’s claws, the whole gilt in mat and burnished gold in the best manner.’

### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (2)



Plate XXXII 01438

00225

cabinet

display cabinets, vitrines (one of a pair)

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

rosewood, gilt pine, gilt-brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Of rectangular form, the giltwood leaf-carved cornice has a gilt-brass gallery of fleur-de-lys cresting over glazed front and sides contained by panelled pilasters with applied carved and gilt laurel leaves. The two sections are joined together at a white marble top. The glazed sides are hinged to the upper part and removable from each side of the lower section. The whole cabinet is set on a leaf-carved plinth base with mirrored back. (This is the same style as cabinet 00229.) The interior now has three glass shelves supported at each corner by height-adjustable brackets. Modern fluorescent strip lighting has been added to the upper and lower sections of the cabinet. A piece of blue silk velvet that originally lined the interior is retained at the base of the upper section.

L. 51 ½ ins D. 26.5 ins H. 75 ins

Morel and Hughes use the term 'honeysuckle' to describe the decorative gallery to the top of the cabinet. The original arrangement of the interior made provision for the display of small cabinet pictures or miniatures as well as objects of vertu. This interior was removed some time after the cabinets were taken from Northumberland House as it can be clearly seen in the photographs of the interior taken in 1874, just prior to demolition (see plate XXI).

#### PROVENANCE

Morel and Hughes supplied these cabinets for the Drawing Room of Northumberland House 1823 at a cost of £750.10s for the pair. 'To 2 large glass cases of fine polished rose wood, the upper parts composed of 4 square columns, with sunk panels, enriched with carved & gilt laurel leaf, the ends enclosed by doors filled with Your Graces' plate glass, the tops finished with carved & gilt honeysuckle gallerys the backs of interiors lined with Mazarine blue silk velvet, a platform of 4 steps, & 2 brass rods with screws & nuts, covered in suit, the lower parts with columns and plinths finished with carved & gilt mouldings'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64(2)

00229  
cabinet  
display cabinet  
by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes, London  
1824  
ebony, gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

Of similar style and form to cabinets 00225. The gilt-brass balustrade gallery with turned finial to each corner, surmounts the cornice with giltwood leaf-carved border. Panelled pilasters contain the glazed front which houses eleven rectangular 18<sup>th</sup> century ivory reliefs of scenes after Teniers, Ostade and Wouvermans and, in an alcove to either side of the central plaque, a pair of 18<sup>th</sup> century ivory figures of an old man and woman. Each of the oblong ivories is set in a gilt frame. To each end of the upper part of the cabinet in a panel containing an oval ivory relief of a mythological scene. The upper part is set on a panelled frieze with giltwood leaf paterae screwed to each corner (missing from one), the screw being covered by the addition of a circular flowerhead to the centre (missing from three). The cabinet is supported on four massive square tapering legs headed by large carved giltwood acanthus leaves on a giltwood leaf-carved plinth base with mirrored back.  
L.56ins D.19ins H.77ins

#### PROVENANCE

Cabinet supplied for the Ante Room of Northumberland House, June 1824, at a cost of £516.12.0. 'To a large cabinet made partly from ebony, highly polished, the upper part to receive your Grace's carved ivory subjects, with carved and gilt mouldings round do. the ends fitted up with drawers, enclosed by doors panelled, and gilt mouldings; the front enriched with carved & gilt foliage leafs in the cornice, and a handsome brass gallery composed of thermes in front and pilasters at the back, with richly carved and gilt capitals, bases, and other ornaments, resting on a plinth with carved and gilt Raphael leaf round do.'

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64(1)



Plate XXXIII

00229

00276

suite of seat furniture

set of six armchairs, eight side chairs, three stools and one sofa

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

gilt beech; satinwood; gilding on white gesso with red bole

#### DESCRIPTION

The giltwood armchairs have scrolled stiles, the joining top rail with a central panel of rope-twist border enclosing satinwood panel. The whole of the back is enclosed by an oblong stuffed panel which is fixed between the upper and lower rail, each with approximately one inch inner border and the stiles with a one inch inner border applied by two screws to each side. At the base of the stiles is a collar of stylised leaf carving above carved reeded columns enclosed within rope-twist borders set on an oblong block which is fixed to the seat rail and serves as the spacer between the back and seat. The padded arms are united with the stiles by ornate scrolls, the rail beneath the stuffed panel carved with guilloche terminating in a square rosehead patera, the whole on acanthus-carved scrolling supports. The stuffed seat is fixed to the seat rails, which are carved as the top rail, that is, a central panel with satinwood panel enclosed by a rope-twist border. A stylised flowerhead patera is at each of the corners with the design continuing around the entire seat rail of the chair. The seat rails have a strengthening rail across each corner. The legs have rope twist collars enclosing a leaf-carved section, the lower part tapering and of sabre form, more raked at the rear than to the front. The side chairs are of identical design, but, obviously, without arms. The sofa is also basically identical in design except for the absence of an open gap between the seat and back. The stools are of the same design but are on x-frame curved legs, centred with a circular boss flanked by anthemion, terminating in leaf-carving with circular pad feet screwed to the base of the legs. A leaf-carved stretcher joins the two x-frame legs, front and back. The carving enriching the frame of the stools is both external and internal so there is effectively no front or back to these. Some pieces have had castors added.

armchair: L.24ins. D.22ins. H.36ins.

side chair: L.19ins. D.17ins. H.33 ½ ins.

sofa: L.77ins. D.36ins. H.39ins.

stool: L.21ins. D.17ins. H.16ins.

The sofa was re-upholstered in modern blue damask, *circa* 1990. At that time a note on the calico cover was discovered: 'Restuffed by Duncan Fraser 1875 August 18th'; and the initials 'DP' and 'AMC' with an additional note that the sofa had been shortened from 9' to 6'6".

This set should be compared to 00814, the distinguishing characteristic being the panel on the top rail and seat rails: reeded in some pieces or of satinwood in others. For the Saloon and Drawing Room a total of eighteen armchairs; nineteen side chairs; seven window stools; four footstools and four sofas were supplied. Morel and Hughes's accounts do not distinguish between the variations in design and the total number of pieces of each type do not correspond exactly with what was supplied for each room so must have been mixed within the two.

## PROVENANCE

Made for the Drawing Room and Saloon of Northumberland House by Morel and Hughes in 1823:

Eighteen armchairs 'richly carved & gilt in mat & burnished gold, the backs & seats French stuffed with the best horsehair in fine canvas... at £65.10 [each]' 'To covering the backs, seats & elbows of the preceding chairs with damask and white calico, & enriching do. with double and single silk gimps, & cord in suit with sofas'.

Nineteen side chairs 'carved & gilt... with stuffed backs and seats in suit with elbow chairs at £32.12 [each]'

Seven window stools all 'carved & gilt in suit [with chairs and sofas], stuffed with horse hair in fine canvas at £40.10 [each]'. The window stools were covered with calico and crimson damask and enriched with gimp and 'handsome gold colour silk tassels with bullion ornaments and bows' at each corner.

Four sofas 'large handsome... very richly carved & gilt in mat & burnished gold with stuffed backs, & thick squabs for the seats, 3 back cushions & 2 bolsters to each of the best horse hair in fine canvas & 2 down pillows in white jian cases'

[£288.8s. each] and covered 'with geranium damask, & making separate cases for the squabs, back cushions, bolsters & pillows, lining do. With white calico, ornamenting with rich gold colour silk double and single gimps & cord & handsome silk tassels to the pillows'.

Four footstools 'carved & gilt... stuffed with horse hair in canvas, & covered with damask, gimps, cord & tassels at the corners' [£5.13s. each].

## DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (2)

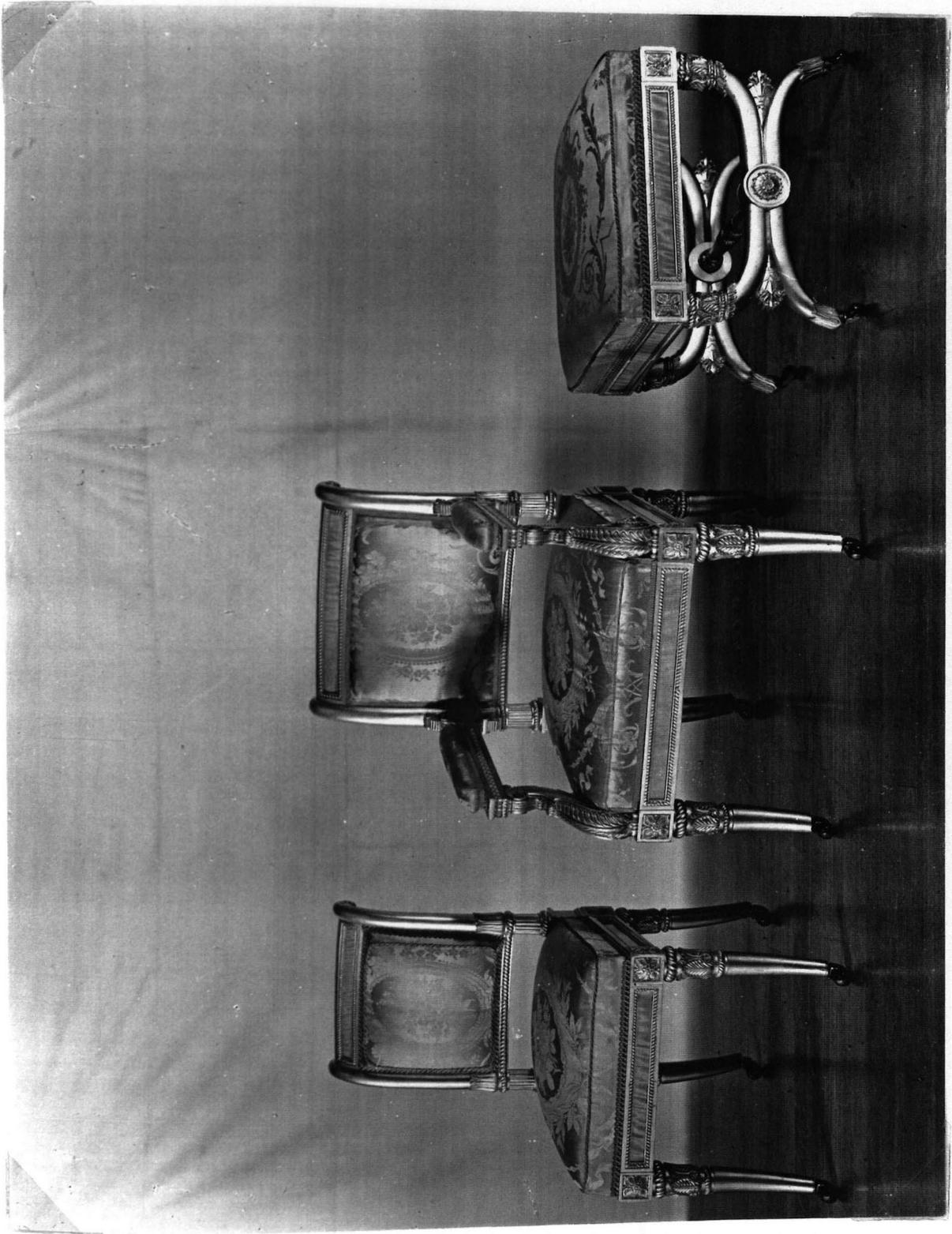




Plate XXXV 00276

00814

suite of seat furniture

set of twelve armchairs; eleven side chairs; three stools; three footstools and three sofas

by Nicolas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

gilt beech; gilding on white gesso with red bole

#### DESCRIPTION

The giltwood armchairs have scrolled stiles, the joining top rail with central panel of rope-twist border enclosing reeded section, the whole of the back enclosing an oblong stuffed panel. This is fixed between the upper and lower rail, each with approximately one inch inner border and the stiles with a one inch inner border applied by two screws to each side. At the base of the stiles is a collar of stylised leaf carving above carved reeded columns enclosed within rope-twist borders set on an oblong block that is fixed to the seat rail. The padded arms are united with the stiles by ornate scrolls, the rail beneath the stuffed panel carved with guilloché terminating in a square rosehead patera, the whole on acanthus-carved scrolling supports. The stuffed seat is fixed to the seat rails, which are carved as the top rail, that is, a central panel with reeded section enclosed by a rope-twist border. A stylised flowerhead patera is at each of the corners with the design continuing around the entire seat rail of the chair. The seat rails have a strengthening rail across each corner. The legs have rope twist collars enclosing a leaf-carved section, the lower part tapering and of sabre form, more raked at the rear than to the front. The side chairs are of identical design, but, obviously, without arms. The sofa is also basically identical in design except for the absence of an open gap between the seat and back. The stools are of the same design but are on x-frame curved legs, centred with a circular boss flanked by anthemion, terminating in leaf-carving with circular pad feet screwed to the base of the legs. A leaf-carved stretcher joins the two x-frame legs, front and back. The carving enriching the frame of the stools is both external and internal so there is effectively no front or back to these. Some pieces have had castors added. The stuffed tops of the footstools are fixed to a frame with strengthening rails to each of the four corners. Two screws to each of the longest sides screw the frame onto giltwood rails. Four giltwood gadrooned bun feet are fixed to the corners of the rails with dowel rods.

armchairs: L.24ins D.22ins H.36ins

side chairs: L.19ins. D.17ins. H.16ins.

stools: L.21ins. D.17ins. H.16ins.

footstools: L.13 ¾ ins. D.12ins. H.8ins.

sofas: L.91ins. D.30ins. H.38 ¾ ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Made for the Drawing Room and Saloon of Northumberland House by Morel and Hughes in 1823:

Eighteen armchairs 'richly carved & gilt in mat & burnished gold, the backs & seats French stuffed with the best horsehair in fine canvas... at £65.10 [each]' 'To covering the backs, seats & elbows of the preceding chairs with damask and white calico, & enriching do. with double and single silk gimps, & cord in suit with sofas'.

Nineteen side chairs 'carved & gilt... with stuffed backs and seats in suit with elbow chairs at £32.12 [each]'

Seven window stools all 'carved & gilt in suit [with chairs and sofas], stuffed with horse hair in fine canvas at £40.10 [each]'. The window stools were covered with calico and crimson damask and enriched with gimp and 'handsome gold colour silk tassels with bullion ornaments and bows' at each corner.

Four sofas 'large handsome... very richly carved & gilt in mat & burnished gold with stuffed backs, & thick squabs for the seats, 3 back cushions & 2 bolsters to each of the best horse hair in fine canvas & 2 down pillows in white jian cases' [£288.8s. each] and covered 'with geranium damask, & making separate cases for the squabs, back cushions, bolsters & pillows, lining do. With white calico, ornamenting with rich gold colour silk double and single gimps & cord & handsome silk tassels to the pillows'.

Four footstools 'carved & gilt... stuffed with horse hair in canvas, & covered with damask, gimps, cord & tassels at the corners' [£5.13s. each].

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.1.64(2)



Plate XXXVI  
00814 Side chair which retains remnants of its original silk covering and the original  
gimp.



Plate XXXVII 00814



PROVENANCE

The chair was made for the Board of Northumberland House in 1823. It is a handsome chair with a high back and a seat with a decorative border. The woodwork is in the best manner, the whole finished in oak & burnished gold in the best manner. The seat & bolster of the best horse hair in fine curves & a

Plate XXXVIII 00814

01382

suite of seat furniture

set comprising pair of chaise-longues, two bergeres, six side chairs, two stools and one window seat

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

gilt beech; cane

#### DESCRIPTION

The chaise-longues are of rectangular form with scrolled ends and upholstered back, the right-hand scroll end with leaf-carved collar, the support terminating in scrolling acanthus centred by a flowerhead, the left-hand scroll end terminating in palmette fronds. The frieze of the seat rail is decorated with Vitruvian scroll intersected by anthemion. The short sabre legs are carved to the top like a Greek capital and are set on brass castors. The armrest to the rear of the seat is carved with scrolling acanthus centred by a flowerhead and terminating in a lion paw. The seat rails and legs of the bergeres and side chairs are of identical design, the arms of the bergeres also terminating in paw feet. The cushion of the side chairs is loose and tied to a cane seat. The pair of stools have the same Vitruvian scroll design to the rail which is supported on x-frame legs carved to the top with elaborate scrolls and centred by a circular flowerhead patera and leaf clasps, the leaf-capped feet terminating on small pads. The window seat has scrolled ends, padded and panelled and divided with bead moulding, the reeded frame with leaf clasps centred by a circular patera with leaf-capped feet terminating on small pads. All have modern upholstery and webbing.

chaise-longues: L.76 ½ins. D.26 ½ins. H.33 ½ins.

bergeres: L.25ins. D.21ins. H.35ins.

side chairs: L.19ins. D.17ins. H.33 ½ ins.

stools: L.20 ½ ins. D.16ins. H.17 ½ ins.

window seat: L.42ins. D.16 ½ ins. H.26ins.

The frieze of Vitruvian scroll and anthemion is exactly the same pattern as that on the cabinet, inventory number 01438, as is the scrolling acanthus to the top of the legs which imitates the decoration at the top of the pilasters of the cabinet. The lion paw on the arms of the chaise-longues and bergeres echoes the use of the lion paw on the monopodia supporting the central marble shelf of the same cabinet.

The form of the chaise-longue and window stool is very similar to that illustrated in Rudolph Ackermann's *Repository* 'Chaise Longue and Window-Seat', Vol.I, series 1, plate 3, p.54, 1809.

Photographs by Country Life in 1930 of one of the chaise-longues, one of the stools and the window seat show the original upholstery still in good order and the pattern of the material can be clearly seen. The stool also retains its original tassels. Two pieces are illustrated by Margaret Jourdain *Regency Furniture*, Country Life, 1934, figs. 79 & 83.

#### PROVENANCE

Suite of seat furniture made for the Boudoir of Northumberland House in 1823:

'To 2 very handsome chaiselongues with richly carved Grecian scroll ends & Vitruvian scroll ornaments in the seat rails, standing on massive legs with leaf, null, & other enrichments, the whole finished in mat & burnished gold in the best manner, the backs & ends stuffed a squab & bolster of the best horse hair in fine canvas & a

down pillow for the seat of each'. [£218.0.0 for the pair]

'To covering the foregoing chaiselongues with blue & gold figured silk, & making separate cases for the squabs, bolsters, & pillows, lining do with white calico, & ornamenting with rich gold colour double silk gimp, & festoon do. Silk cord, & tassels to the pillows'.

'To 2 large Grecian bergeres, with broad tablet backs, the elbows formed into scrolls, terminated with lion's claws the Seat rails filled with a vitruvian scroll, standing on legs in suit with chaiselongues, the whole richly carved & gilt in mat & burnished gold, the backs stuffed & squabs for the seats of the best horse hair in fine canvas.' [£258.16.0 for the pair.]

'To covering the stuffed parts of the preceding bergeres & making cases for the seat cushions of blue & gold silk, lining do. with white calico & finishing with double & single gold colour silk gimps and cord.'

'To 6 chairs with Grecian scroll backs, the vitruvian scrolls in the rails, & the remaining ornaments designed & richly carved & gilt in suit with chaiselongues, the seats caned, & the backs & seat cushions, stuffed and finished in fine canvas at £36' [each]

'To covering the stuffed backs & making cases for the cushions of blue and gold silk, lined and finished with silk gimps & cord to correspond.'

'To 2 stools of the antique form with carved scroll legs & vitruvian scroll & rosettes in the rails & richly carved stretchers & finished in mat & burnished gold, in suit with preceding, the seats stuffed with the best materials in fine canvas.' [£92.16.0 for the pair]

'To a large window stool, with carved enrichments, finished in mat & burnished gold to correspond with preceding stuffed with best hair in canvas'. [£46.13.0]

'To covering the preceding 3 stools with silk, cord, & tassels at the corners in suit'.

## DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64(2)

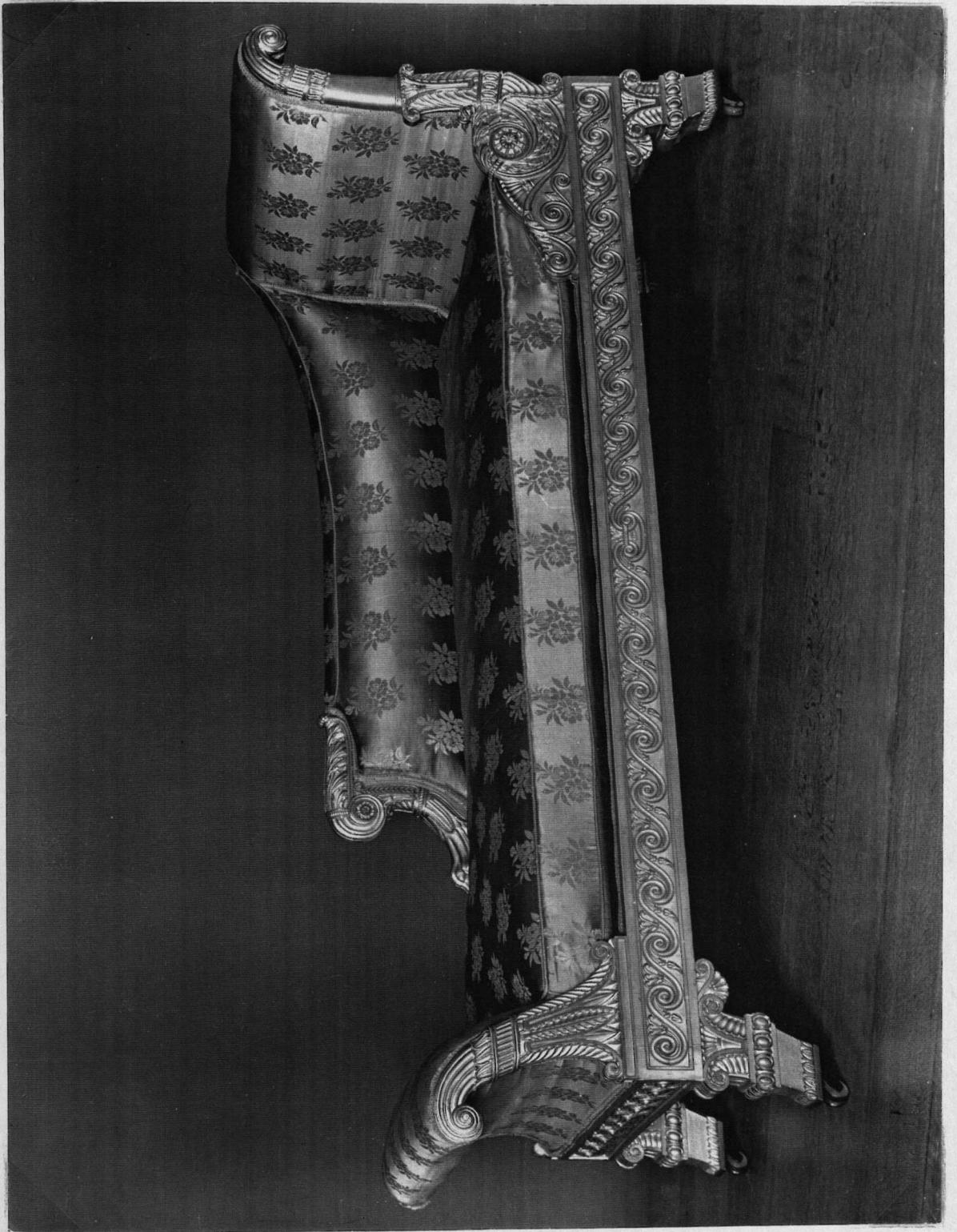


Plate XXXIX 013 01382



Plate XL 01382



Plate XLI 01382

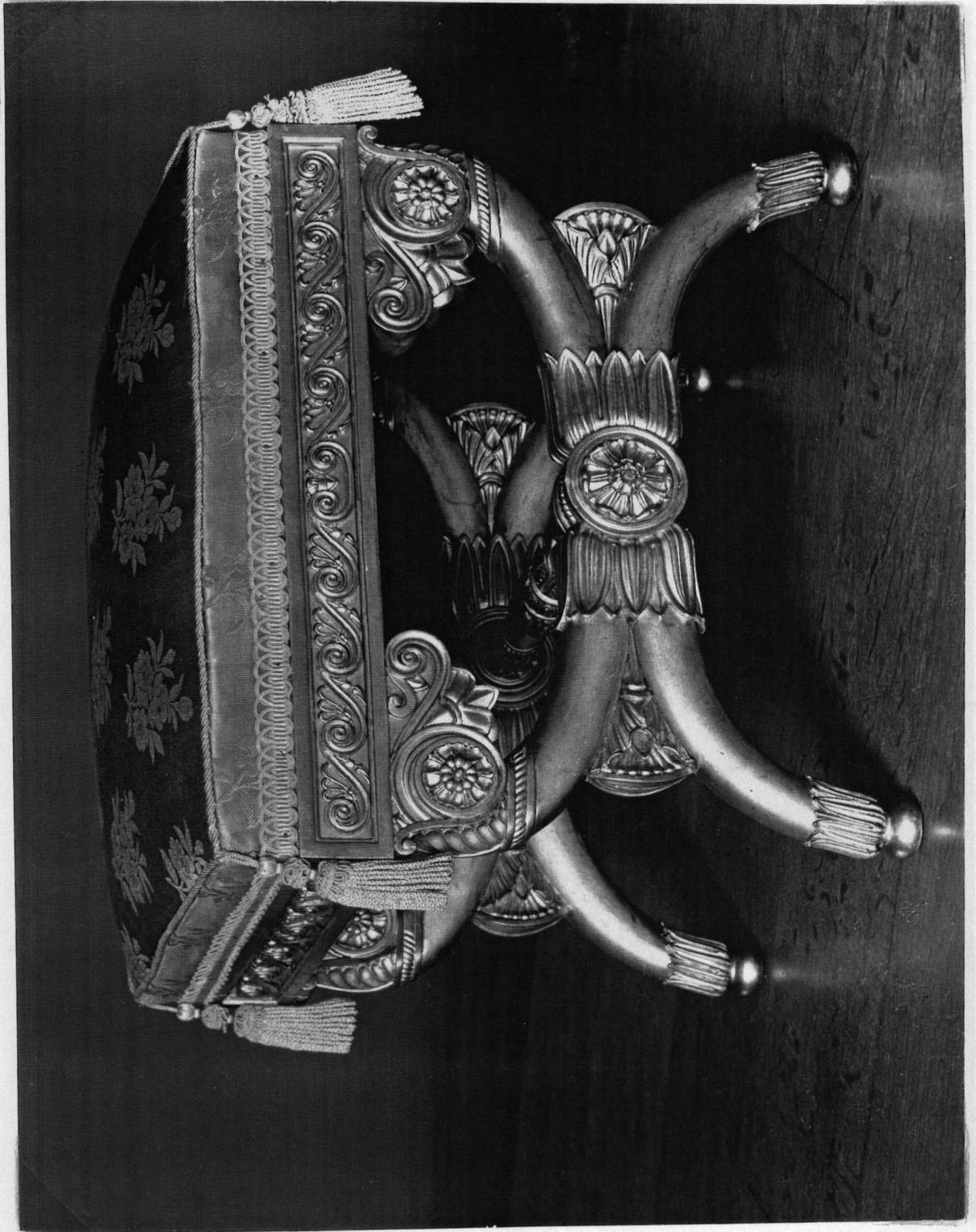


Plate XLII

01382

Plate XLIII

01382

01164

chair (one of a pair)



DOCUMENTATION  
Syon MSS U L 64 (2)

Plate XLIII

01382

01164  
chair (one of a pair)  
by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes  
1823  
rosewood/aburra; gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

The curved stiles are scrolled at the top and terminate with giltwood circular flowerhead paterae. The outer sides of the stiles are panelled and inset with giltwood rope twist border. The separate top rail has a panel bordered with giltwood rope twist border and inset with three giltwood flowerhead paterae. The oblong back panel has central gilded fluting surrounding the stuffed panel, the whole fixed to the stiles and rails with giltwood bellflowers at each of the corners. The separate lower rail is panelled with giltwood rope twist border. The stiles have a gilded central fluting, which runs from the top to joining the seat. Parcel-gilt scrolling foliage is attached to the top rear of the seat. The seat rails are rounded at the front corners and the panelling continues around all the chair rails with giltwood rope twist borders enclosing nineteen inset giltwood flowerhead paterae (as top rail). The cane seat has a squab cushion. A carved giltwood collar of leaves heads the rear sabre legs and there is a giltwood reeded panel section at the lower part of the legs, about 2" from the end. The turned tapering front legs are headed by rope twist giltwood collars terminating with giltwood reeded panel sections about 2" from the end. Brass-capped *Copes Patent* castors are now fitted to the front legs.

L.19ins D.17.5ins H.34ins

#### PROVENANCE

Made for the Ante Room, Northumberland House in 1823:

'To 8 light chairs of your Grace's aburra wood, polished and enriched with carved and gilt ornaments, the backs stuffed with the best materials, the seats caned & a seat cushion to each of horse hair in canvas.'

'To making cases for the cushions of the foregoing chairs of grey silk, lining do. with white calico, & ornamenting with silk gimps & cord, also covering the stuffed backs with silk finished in suit at 22s'.

Only two of the original eight chairs survive in the Northumberland Collection. Two bergeres and six side chairs left the collection at an unknown date and were sold at the sale of the property of David Style, Wateringbury Place, Kent by Christie's in 1978. One bergere and two chairs were bought from Simon Redburn Fine Arts by Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museum, Burnley in 1979. The other bergere is at the Victoria and Albert Museum and is illustrated in F.Collard's *Regency Furniture*, 1985, p.111, plate 12.

The eight stools, also *ensuite*, survive in the collection but have been made into four two-tier tables (see 01166).

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.1.64 (2)

01748

chair

(one of thirty-one)

by the artist and Robert [?]

of the artist

DESCRIPTION

The chair is made of dark wood

with a high back and a seat

covered with a striped fabric

with a small floral pattern

and a decorative border

around the seat and back

rests. The chair is in good

condition and is a fine

example of the artist's

work. The name of the

artist is [?]

and the name of the

owner is [?]

of the artist



01748  
chair  
dining chair (one of thirty-one)  
by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes  
1823  
mahogany; leather

#### DESCRIPTION

The leather upholstered back has moulded oblong top rails and uprights, the stuffed leather seat on reeded turned tapering legs headed by flowerhead paterae. The leather of the seat is finished with brass beading pinned to the chair frame.  
L.20ins. D.19ins. H.34 ½ ins.

Of the thirty-one chairs, eight seat rails bear the signature (partially legible) 'G.D.....'. Of those, two also have the date 'Nov 9<sup>th</sup> 1822(?)'. One chair rail has an ink stamped signature of 'J.B. Cullen' and another a pencil signature of 'B.W. Reed/Reece(?)'. Three of the seat rails of the chairs are stamped 'CS'. Presumably these are the names of some of the craftsmen employed by Morel and Hughes.

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied by Morel and Hughes for the Large Dining Room, Northumberland House in 1823 at a cost of 7 ½ guineas per chair. Originally fifty-four were supplied at a total cost of £425.5.0.

'To 54 chairs of very fine Spanish mahogany highly polished with carved rosettes over the front & back legs, the backs & seats stuffed with the best horsehair, covered with green Morocco leather, & finished with brass mouldings'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (2)

01122  
chair  
hall chair (one of twelve)  
by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes  
1823  
mahogany

#### DESCRIPTION

The waisted panelled back is carved with anthemion, the solid seat over plain panelled seat rails. Pairs of screws to the front and sides fix the seat to the rails. The centre of the back panel is painted in colour with the ducal coronet over the garter motto enclosing the Percy crescent and fetterlocks. Sabre legs to the rear with circular tapering front legs with gadrooned collars.

L.18.5ins D.15ins H.35ins

Chairs of a similar design are illustrated by P. and M.A. Nicholson, *The Practical Maker*, 1826, plate 48.

#### PROVENANCE

Made for the Waiting Hall of Northumberland House at a cost of £6.16.0 each (£81.12.0 total).

‘To 12 hall chairs of fine Spanish mahogany highly polished, with carved ornaments in the backs & legs and your Grace’s coronet & garter painted in the backs.’

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (2)



Plate XLV      01122

01372

firescreen (one of a pair)

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

gilt beech; gilt-brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Gilt beech cheval firescreen, the oblong silk-lined panel sides fitted with a sliding adjustable screen between with a leaf-cast gilt-brass handle to the top. The square moulded framed sides are carved with husks and beads within a continuous looped border, with flowerhead patera to each corner headed by lobed panels and with pineapple finials to the tops of the uprights. The scrolled panelled legs are carved with husks to correspond with the frame and the square toes are finished with flowerhead paterae and are set on small elongated finial-like feet. Both firescreens retain the original silk to all panels, although the outside ones are badly light-damaged.

L.27ins. D.12.5ins. H.44ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied by Morel and Hughes for the Glass Drawing Room of Northumberland House, 1823, at a cost of £127.10s. for the pair.

'To 2 cheval screens with carved & gilt enrichments to suit the ornaments of room, the mounts covered with green & red rosette silk and finished with silk gimp'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64(2)



01381

firescreen (one of a pair)

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

gilt beech; brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Giltwood pole firescreen, the rectangular padded damask-covered banner supported on leaf-carved scrolls, the brass column headed by a carved and fluted pineapple finial, on fluted tripod stem, scrolled and overlaid with carved leaves beneath a triangular section supported by acanthus, the tricorn base on leaf-carved scrolled feet. L. 19ins. D.17ins. H.33 ½ ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied by Morel and Hughes for the Boudoir of Northumberland House, 1823 at a cost of £148.10.0 for the pair.

'To a pair of pole fire screens, very richly carved and gilt in mat and burnished gold, each with 3 handsome scroll legs, a triangular plinth and 3 carved claws, the mounts of blue satin enriched with gold colour silk fringe silk rope & tassels suspended from carved and gilt antique bows'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (2)

01091

Grescreen



Plate XLVII

01381

01091  
firescreen  
by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes(?)  
1823  
mahogany; rosewood

#### DESCRIPTION

Of rectangular form, with a chased ormolu handle to the top to pull up the central sliding oblong panel. Semi-circular rosewood(?) decorative features at each end of the top rail are highly carved with central rope-twist border and scrolling foliage. A pair of dowels to each fixes these to the top. The main frame has reeded panels to each of the four sides with flowerhead paterae to each corner. From each side a sliding screen can be pulled out with the small circular turned knob (missing from one side). The frame has a carved inner rope twist border that surrounds the fabric-covered panel. Each of the sliding panels is covered with fabric (not original). The whole terminates on a semi-elliptical reeded section carved with half sunflowerhead to the side and is mounted onto a pair of sledge plinths with scroll features at each end. Each sledge plinth is mounted onto a pair of short sabre feet decorated at the top with a collar of leaf carving.

L. 31 1/2ins D. 4ins H. 45ins

#### PROVENANCE

A firescreen, similar in description apart from the 'scroll claw feet' was made for the Large Dining Room of Northumberland House, supplied by Morel and Hughes in 1823 at a cost of £53.16.0:

'To a cheval screen of Spanish mahogany highly polished with square reeded columns at the sides & carved ornaments over do. standing on scroll claw feet, the front and back covered with green tabaret, & 2 rows of gold silk lace, 3 sliding mounts covered with tabaret in suit & a chased ormolu handle on the top'

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (2)

01432

pedestal and candelabrum (one of a set of four)

pedestal by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

candelabrum by William Collins

1823

mahogany; gilt pine

lacquered brass

#### DESCRIPTION

A solid square upper tier is attached to the pedestal top over a giltwood scrolling acanthus frieze above a band of giltwood interlaced ogee arches each centred with alternating flowerhead motifs above a rope twist giltwood border. Acanthus-carved giltwood scrolls decorate the canted edges, the panelled door and sides have a giltwood egg-and-dart decorative border. The whole is set on a mahogany plinth base decorated with giltwood leaf-carving. Two pedestals have a tin-plated interior with slatted shelf; two have an interior fitted with a single wooden shelf. On top is set a lacquered brass candelabrum, the cistern with anthemion and topped with a leaf-cast finial above a triangular section of three lights its underside decorated with scrolling foliage and flowerheads and supported on a baluster stem cast with scrolls, scrolling acanthus, flowerheads, anthemion and a scale pattern with a lower band of guilloche above massive acanthus leaves scrolling upwards and acanthus intersected by palmettes scrolling downwards on the top of the circular base. The base has a gadrooned edge and is supported by three lions rampant, each with their right paw on a large scrolling acanthus leaf, the base finished with a palmette border and set on three leaf cast scrolling feet.

L.25 ½ ins. D.25 ½ ins. H.39ins.

The decorative parcel-gilt feature of interlaced ogee arches centred with flowerhead motifs on the frieze of the pedestal is a copy of the decoration on an eighteenth century giltwood side table which stood in the Large Dining Room of Northumberland House (now in the Great Dining Room, Syon House). The pedestals were made to stand either side of two of these side tables at each end of the room. Evidence in the Morel and Hughes accounts suggests that a second table was made to correspond with that already in existence. In 1823 Morel and Hughes supplied 'a sideboard table to suit one of your Grace's in every respect, carved and gilt by M<sup>r</sup> Ponsonby' for £12.6.0. They also repaired and carved '2 tables for each side of fire place, making 2 new scroll legs for the back of each, and continuing the mouldings of the friezes to correspond'. These may be the pair of smaller tables *ensuite* with the large side table (inventory nos. 01374/1-4) The 1786 inventory of Northumberland House lists in the Great Dining Room: 'A large Marble Sideboard on a carved & gilt frame 78 by 38.2' and '2 Pier Marble Tables on carved & gilt frames - 48 by 28'. The large tables measure 84ins. long and are 38ins. deep and, the smaller tables, 48ins. long by 24ins deep.

### PROVENANCE

Pedestals made for the Large Dining Room, Northumberland House. Supplied by Morel and Hughes at a cost of £559.12.0 for the set of four.

'To 4 mahogany pedestals of very beautiful wood highly polished, with carved & gilt ornaments in the friezes & plinths, scroll trusses on the angles, & egg & bead moulding round the panels, 2 of them fitted up as plate warmers with heating apparatus lined with tin, & the other 2 as pot cupboards'.

William Collins supplied the lacquered brass lights which stood on top of the pedestals on 31 May 1823: '4 Large Candelabra for the Dining Room very highly chased & finished in Grecian Metal bearing 3 Lamps each 800.0.0'.

### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (2); Syon MSS U.III.8





Plate L  
Frieze of one of the large eighteenth century giltwood side tables from which Morel  
Plate XLIX copied 01432 decorative motif (see 01432).

01368

pedestal and candelabrum (one of a set of six)  
pedestal by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes  
candelabrum by William Collins



#### PROVENANCE

Pedestals supplied by Morel and Hughes by  
Northumberland House, 30 June 1814, at 200

To 6 Triangular pedestals of fine yew tree

panels, richly carved scroll trusses on the ph

honey-suckles, myrtle leaves, scrolls, mouldings, &c. in the panels and friezes, very

highly gilt in mat and burnished gold.

Candelabra supplied by William Collins, May 1824: '6 Very rich Candelabra for the

Saloon and Drawing Room highly chased and finished to bear 7 branches each

1800 0/6'

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (1), Syon MSS U.III.8

#### Plate L

Frieze of one of the large eighteenth century giltwood side tables from which Morel and Hughes copied the decorative motif (see 01432).

01368

pedestal and candelabrum (one of a set of six)  
pedestal by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes  
candelabrum by William Collins

1823

amboyna; gilt pine  
lacquered brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Amboyna-veneered parcel-gilt pedestal of triangular form, the top with solid triangular tier decorated at the frieze with giltwood reeding, the upper frieze of the pedestal of carved giltwood acanthus leaf scrolling upward above giltwood scrolling arabesques radiating from a central anthemion enclosed by a giltwood rope-twist border. This decoration does not feature at the back of the pedestal. At each canted edge of the triangle is a giltwood flowerhead patera with a giltwood gadroon frieze above veneered side panels, each main side decorated with giltwood anthemion and trailing foliage at each corner (except for the back panel), each of the narrow panels decorated with leaf and berry (myrtle leaves in the accounts) enclosed by a giltwood rope-twist border. The base of the pedestal is decorated with a carved giltwood leaf border intersected with circular flower paterae and bellflower-type flower over gadrooning and scale pattern. At each corner of the base is a giltwood scroll 'truss' carved with acanthus, the whole resting on a plinth base decorated at the edge with giltwood acanthus leaf. The lacquered brass candelabrum has seven scrolling arms with leaf-cast drip pans overlaid with acanthus and ivy and issuing from a tapering fluted column with leaf-carved collars and baluster lower section, the upper part decorated with natural flowerheads, the lower part with anthemion and resting on a tricorn base with acanthus and leaf mouldings, the lion paw feet headed by leaves and with scrolled brackets.

pedestal: L.27ins. D.27ins. H.89ins.

candelabrum: 18ins. D.13ins. H.40 ½ ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Pedestals supplied by Morel and Hughes for the Saloon and Drawing Room of Northumberland House, 30 June 1824, at a cost of £324.10.0 each [£1947.0.0 for six]. 'To 6 Triangular pedestals of fine yew tree highly polished with pilasters and sunk panels, richly carved scroll trusses on the plinths, foliage leaf in the angles, honeysuckles, myrtle leaves, scrolls, mouldings, &C. in the panels and friezes, very highly gilt in mat and burnished gold.'

Candelabra supplied by William Collins, May 1824: '6 Very rich Candelabra for the Saloon and Drawing Room highly chased and finished to bear 7 branches each £600.0.0'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (1); Syon MSS U.III.8

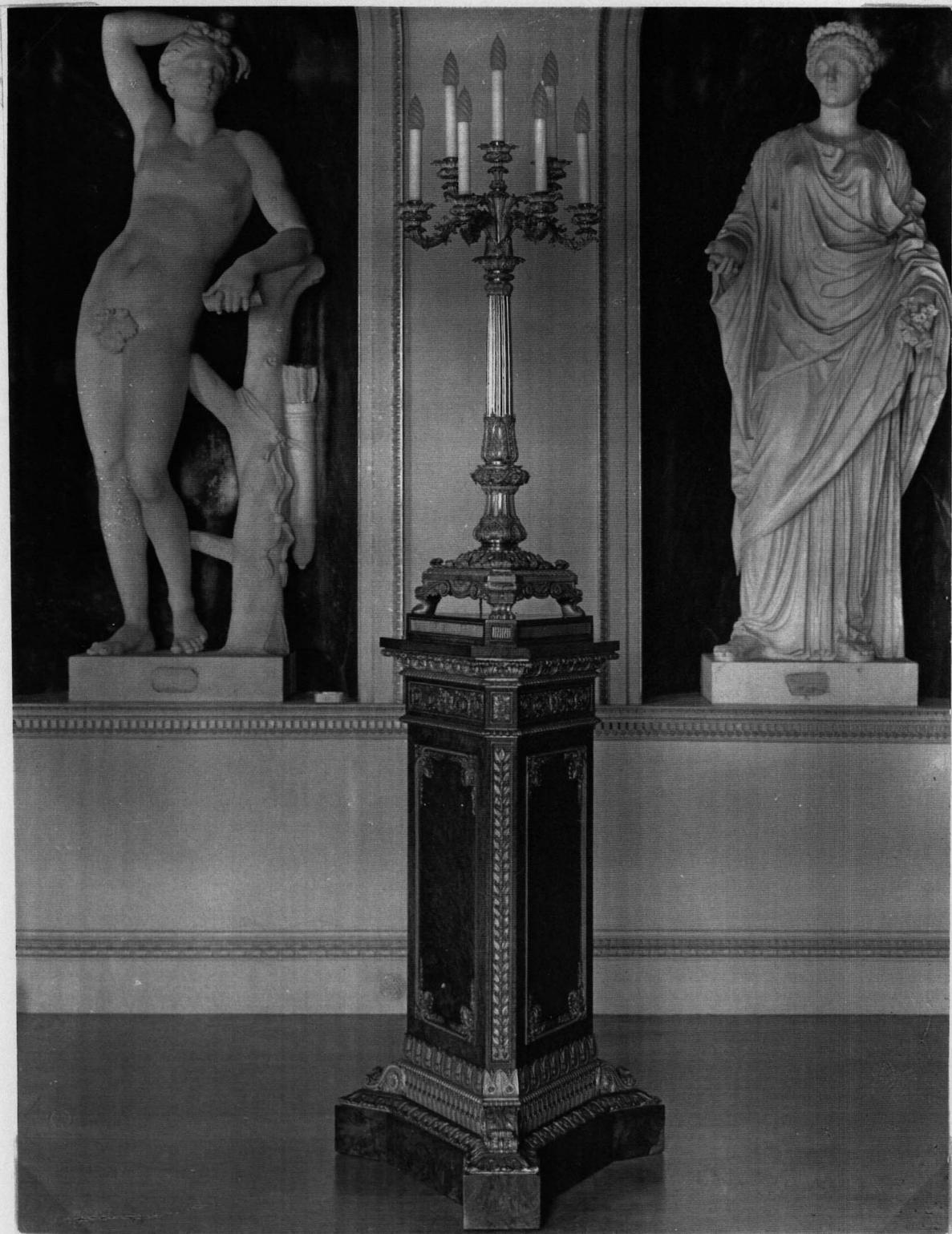




Plate LII      01368

00208

table (one of a pair)

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes, London

1823

rosewood; canarywood; gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

The oblong rosewood-veneered tops are inlaid with a continuous canarywood band of scrolling leaves centring in flowerhead paterae with stylised 'bellflower' drops between three plain bands (two narrow and one wider in centre) to each side and an internal band of swags of 'bellflower' motif. This is the same pattern as that on the pair of circular library tables (00314). Inlaid square paterae of a large stylised flower arrangement are at each corner. The top edge has a gadrooned border. A plain giltwood band runs below the top, above the frieze, over two true and two dummy panelled drawers, with a border of rope-twist giltwood beading, and gilt-brass circular cast knob handles centred by a small rosehead. On one of the tables (00208/1) the drawers no longer retain their original handles. The top is supported on a pair of end standards, each double scrolled fitted with wide giltwood match-striker and rope-twist carving, the lower scrolls centred with flowerhead patera; these joined by a central stretcher with giltwood gadroon edging centred by an upholstered footrest. The standards rest on chamfered base rails with giltwood gadroon carving to edges and are mounted with gilt-brass hairy lion paw feet, concealing the castors, with large acanthus scroll to front.

L. 60.5ins D.33.5ins H.30ins

The pattern of the canarywood band seems to be derived from C.Percier and P.Fontaine's *Recueil de Decorations Interieures*, 1812 where it is used repeatedly in similar, or slight variation of, form (see plates 12, 22, 25, 35, and, most notably, 42 and 56).

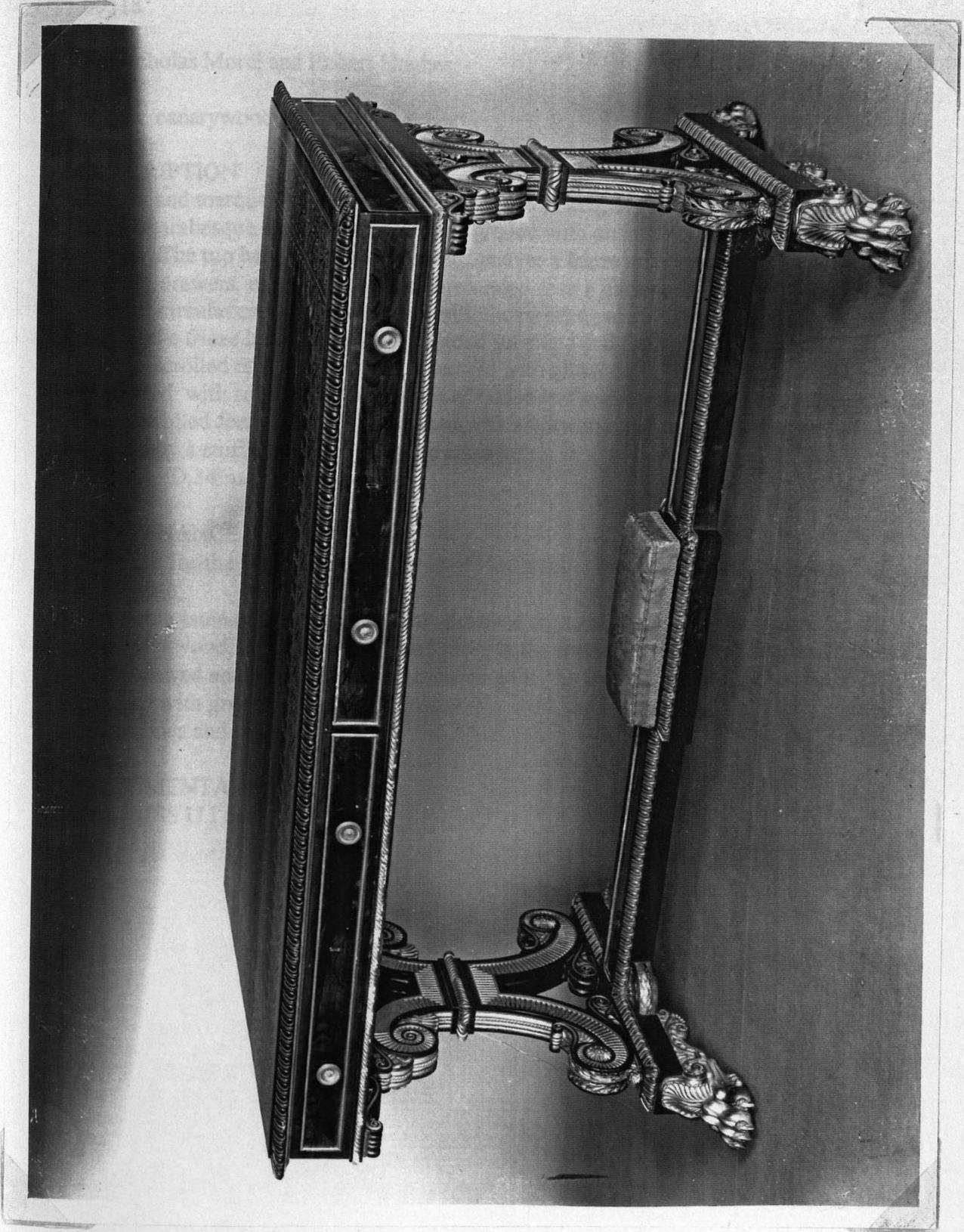
#### PROVENANCE

Tables supplied by Morel and Hughes in 1823 to Saloon and Drawing Room of Northumberland House at a cost of £450.0.0 each:

'To 2 rose wood sofa tables richly inlaid with borders of Canary wood, and carved antique mouldings round the tops, 2 drawers in the frieze of each with good locks & key & ormolu knobs, supported by highly carved scroll standards, gilt in part in mat & burnished gold, with plinths & brass lion's claws & castors a stretching rail between with carved & gilt mouldings & the center part stuffed with horse hair, covered with geranium silk damask & finished with gold colour silk gimp & cord'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I 64 (2)



00318

table

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1824

aburra; canarywood; gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

Aburra and marquetry parcel-gilt sofa table, the oblong top inlaid with canarywood band of arabesque scrolling on an ebony ground with an internal border of stylised leaves. The top has a wide gadrooned edge over a frieze with two drawers and two dummy drawers, each panelled and surrounded with a giltwood rope-twist border and pairs of circular ormolu handles cast with flowerhead patera to the centre. The lower part of the frieze has a rope-twist giltwood surround and the whole is supported on double-scrolled end standards, each centred with giltwood flowerhead patera and decorated with rope mouldings set on giltwood leaf-carved cross-bars set on cast gilt-brass scrolled feet. A stretcher finished with a giltwood leaf-carved border and centred by a stuffed cushion joins the cross-bars,  
L.61ins. D.34ins. H.30ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied for the Glass Drawing Room of Northumberland House in 1824 at a cost of £221.16s.:

'To a sofa table of abura wood highly polished the top inlaid with a handsome border of canary wood, 2 drawers with good locks in the frieze, supported by scroll standards richly carved and gilt in mat and burnished gold, the foot rail stuffed in the center & covered with green silk velvet & gold colour cord, the whole resting on highly chased brass claws and castors'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64(1)

01194

table

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

aburra; satinwood; ebony; gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

Parcel-gilt aburra wood sofa table, the oblong top with an ebony border inlaid with satinwood vine leaves surrounded by a continuous scroll border over a panelled frieze, each panel surrounded by a plain giltwood border. Two real and two dummy drawers with pairs of gilt-brass handles are in the frieze. The trestle supports are decorated with elaborate giltwood anthemion scroll-work joined by a stretcher with a cushion in the centre with brass claw feet.

L.54ins. D.30ins. H.30ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied for the Boudoir of Northumberland House in 1823 at a cost of £198.16s.:

'To a sofa table of your Graces Aburra wood, very highly polished, the top with broad handsome inlaid borders supported by standards ornamented with richly carved foliage honeysuckle scrolls, patras, & other enrichments, on the 4 sides, finished in mat and burnished gold, a stretching rail, stuffed in the center, covered with blue velvet and silk gimp, terminated by caned and gilt scroll trusses, resting on highly chased brass lions claws and castors'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64(2)

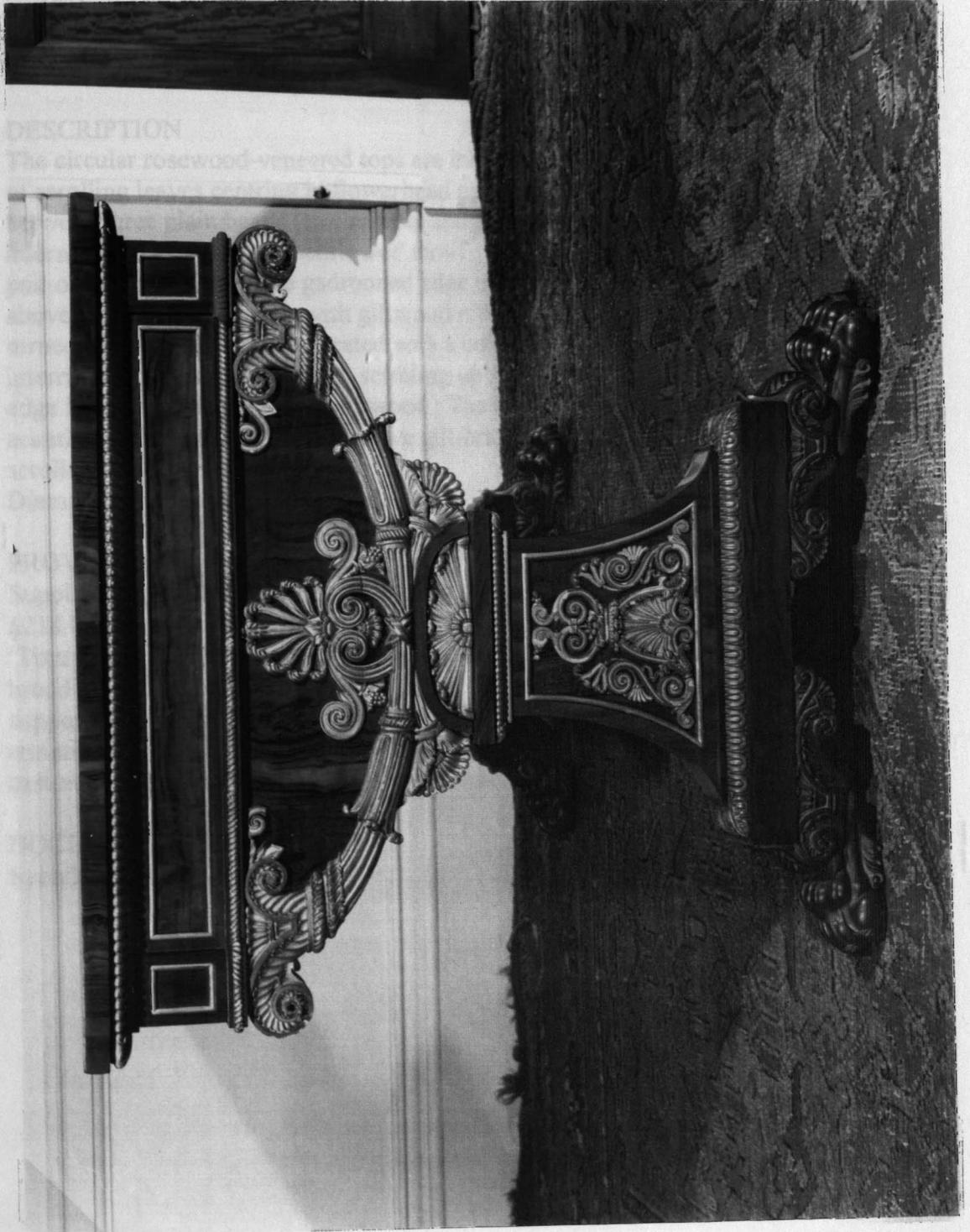


00314<sup>e</sup>

table (one of a pair)

DESCRIPTION

The circular rosewood-veneered top, set



00314

table (one of a pair)

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

rosewood, canarywood, gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

The circular rosewood-veneered tops are inlaid with a continuous canarywood band of scrolling leaves centring in flowerhead paterae with stylised 'bellflower' drops between three plain bands (two narrow and one wider in centre) to each side and an internal band of swags of 'bellflower' motif. This is the same pattern as that on the pair of tables (00208). The gadrooned edge of the top has a plain giltwood band above and below the frieze with giltwood rope-twist carving. The top is on a large turned rosewood column decorated with a collar of stylised giltwood acanthus, interrupted by rosehead paterae, scrolling up the pillar. The gadroon pattern from the edge is repeated below this in giltwood. The triangular base, with carved giltwood acanthus and palmettes, is on massive gilt-brass hairy lion paw feet decorated with scrolls and acanthus to front.

Diam.62ins H.29.5ins

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied for the Drawing Room and Saloon, Northumberland House at a cost of £218.0 each.

'To a very large circular table of fine rose wood, highly polished, the top inlaid with a broad handsome border of Canary wood & carved antique moulding round the edge, supported by a rose wood column & triangular plinth, relieved with carved enrichments, gilt in mat & burnished gold & three bold handsome lion's paws & castors in brass, with richly chased ornaments'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.1.64(2)

01165  
table (one of four)



DOCUMENTATION  
3/20/88 MSS U.I.64 (2)

Plate LVI 00314

01166

table (one of four)

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

rosewood; aburra; gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

The rosewood moulded top with gilded edging on two-tier supports. The top rails have a panelled section bordered with giltwood rope twist carving and featuring giltwood flowerheads (four to the front long side and three to each short side and a half flowerhead at each of the corners). The design of the rails matches with that of the pair of chairs (see 01164) in every way. Four pillars carved at the head with giltwood Ionic capitals over panelled sections over circular giltwood flowerhead support these rails, each terminating with carved giltwood leaf 'cups'. Aburra X-shaped spindles join these supports with leaf-carved giltwood adornment centred by a circular giltwood boss of flowerhead patera; below is a horizontal stretcher carved *ensuite* with the spindles. This is repeated for the lower tier, which has been mounted on castors at a later date.

L.22 ½ ins. D.18ins. H.29ins.

The carving features only at the front and sides of these tables, although the gilded areas are gilded front and back but not carved. The tops of the tables must have been added later and seem to be of rosewood. These are all severely sunbleached. There is a gap of approximately 1" between the top rail/frieze and the top tier. The rosewood top and giltwood moulded beading could easily have been added although, on the lower tier the tops of the rails are all well finished.

Eight stools were supplied by Morel and Hughes. At some date after 1847 (when they are listed in the inventory of Northumberland House at the death of the Third Duke (Syon MSS H. VIII.1 b)) these stools were converted into tables: they appear as tables in photographs of the interior of Northumberland House taken just prior to its demolition in 1874.

#### PROVENANCE

Made for the Ante Room of Northumberland House in 1823 at a cost of £59.12.0 each (£476.16.0 total).

'To 8 handsome stools of your Graces polished aburra wood, from the antique, enriched with carved capitals stretchers & rosettes, gilt in mat & burnished gold, the seats French stuffed with the best horse hair in fine canvas at £59.12.'

'To covering the stuffed seats of do. with grey silk, lined with calico, & finished with double & single silk gimps cord & Parisian silk tassels a the corners at 23s'.  
(£9.4.0 total)

The stools were *ensuite* with eight light chairs (see 01164); a pair of bergeres and four ottomans.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.I.64 (2)

00257

table (one of a pair)

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823(?)

rosewood(?); gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

Circular rosewood top, with cross-banded border and gadrooned edge, hinged as a lid (hinge broken on 00257/1) opening to reveal a well lined with red-pink silk(?), the top fixed from falling by two silk-covered cords screwed into the top and base, with lock (no key). The rosewood-veneered cavetto frieze is fixed to the stained pine base by four screws around the outer part of the underside; a rope-twist gilded collar decorates the base of the frieze. Four more screws fix a collar to the turned tapering column support which is decorated with giltwood leaf-carved collars to top and bottom with a giltwood rope twist collar between, the turned base of the stem joined to the triangular base at a giltwood gadroon collar and fixed by a screw thread and square nut. Each rosewood scroll foot, with parcel-gilt rope twist to the front and stylised leaf and anthemion to the sides, is fixed to the base by three screws and set on a small 360 degree swivel brass castor.

Diam. 16ins H. 30ins

#### PROVENANCE

Possibly the tables supplied for the Boudoir of Northumberland House in 1823 at a cost of £82. 16s. for the pair:

'To 2 fancy tables of your Graces wood highly polished supported by carved pillars and triangular plinths with scroll claws, richly carved and gilt in mat and burnished gold'. (See also 00324/01179.)

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.1.64(2)

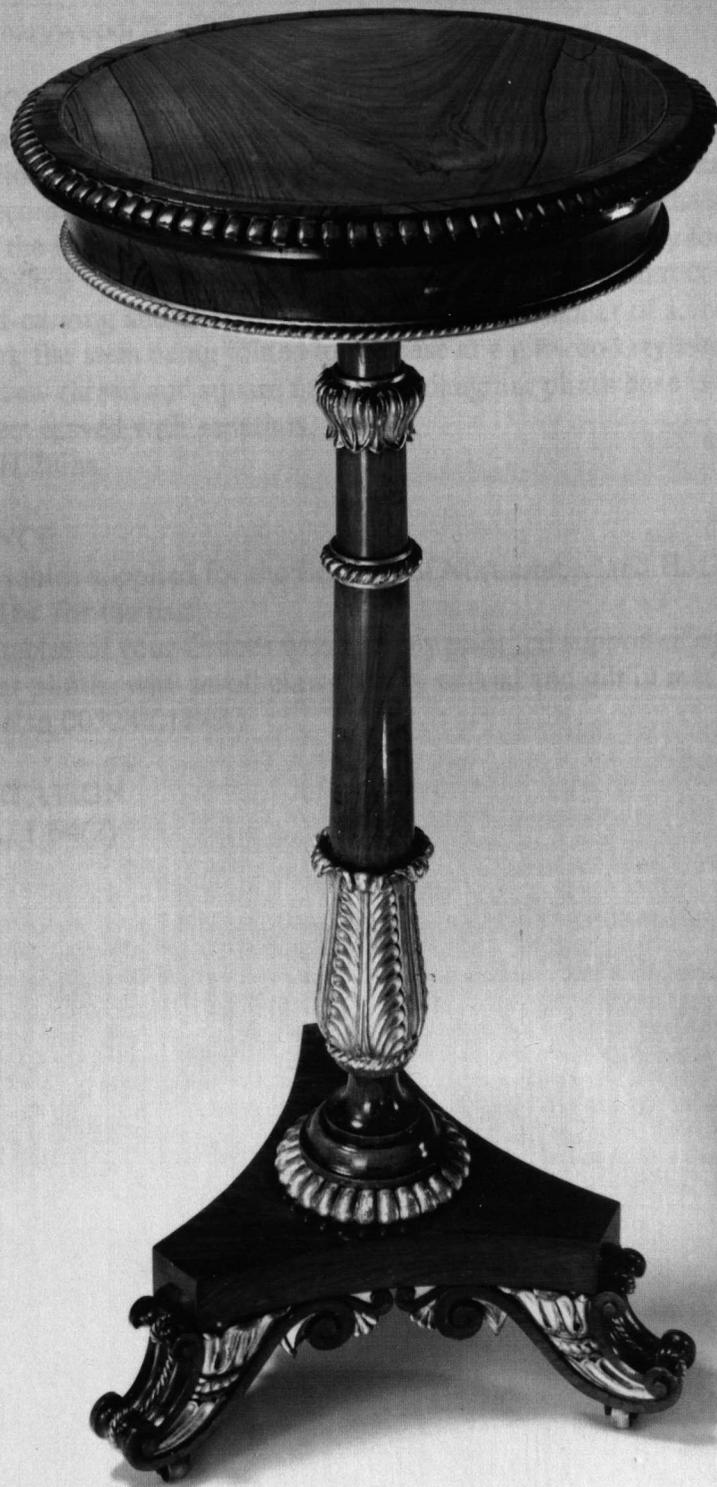


Plate LVII 00257

00324 and 01179  
table (one of a pair)  
by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes  
1823(?)  
aburra(?); canarywood(?); gilt pine

#### DESCRIPTION

Circular occasional table, the aburra(?) top inlaid with a border of canarywood(?) in the form of clover, the edge with a gadrooned rim over a cavetto frieze with gilded rope twist decoration below carved from a piece of pine fixed to the lower part of the underside of the frieze. The top is fixed to the pedestal support by four radials, each screwed to the top. The baluster stem has a giltwood egg and dart collar over giltwood leaf-carving and another giltwood leaf-carved collar of scrolling acanthus to the lower part, the stem being joined to the base at a giltwood stylised leaf border and fixed by a screw thread and square nut. The triangular plinth base is set on three gilt pine scroll feet carved with acanthus.

Diam.20ins H.28ins

#### PROVENANCE

Possibly the tables supplied for the Boudoir of Northumberland House in 1823 at a cost of £82.16s. for the pair:

'To 2 fancy tables of your Graces wood highly polished supported by carved pillars and triangular plinths with scroll claws, richly carved and gilt in mat and burnished gold'. (See also 00324/01179.)

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.1.64(2)



01279

table

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes, London and Jacques Raffaelli, Rome

1825

rosewood(?); gilt pine; gilt brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Rosewood(?) and parcel-gilt table with circular micro-mosaic top centred by a mask of Bacchus within a band of oak leaves and acorns and stylised three-dimensional Greek key pattern border, the guilloche-moulded brass band with moulded giltwood leaf-carved edge over a rosewood cavetto frieze with giltwood rope moulding, set on turned legs with acanthus leaf capitals and triangular platform with gilt-brass lion paw feet. The mosaic panel bears the label 'JAQUES RAFFAELLI/Etade de M[osa]iques/et de traveur... genre de marbres/a ROME/Rue du Babuino N° 92,/pres da Theatre di Mibert' to the underside.

Diam. 29ins H. 33ins

A pair of marble centre tables at Temple Newsam (cat no. 857) has decorative mosaic tops by Giacomo Raffaelli. Christopher Gilbert (Volume III 1998) notes that 'Raffaelli (1743-1836) was the most celebrated marble inlayer and mosaicist in Rome. A table top at Syon House bears his label addressed 'Rue due Babuino N.92' and the Gilbert collection of mosaics includes several objects by this craftsman'.

#### PROVENANCE

Table made by Morel and Hughes to receive the mosaic panel which was already in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland. Supplied for the Drawing Room of Northumberland House in 1825 at a cost of £106.16.0:

'To a handsome circular Table to receive Your Grace's Mosaic marble Slab made of your Aburra wood formed into a coved frieze supported by 3 columns with very richly carved capitals and bases, standing on a triangular plinth and 3 massive brass lion's claws very rich carved & brass mouldings encircling the slab the whole of the Carving richly gilt in mat and burnished gold, and the Aburra wood highly polished'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.f (bill dated 28 February 1825; receipt dated 17 January 1826)

01355  
table and stand



Plate LIX

01279

01355

table and stand

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1825

rosewood; gilt pine; gilt brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Rectangular top inset with a porcelain panel depicting the reception of Charles II on the return of his flight from the Battle of Worcester, within a gilt-metal egg and dart moulding to outer edge and highly stylised leaf to inner border within a pierced gilt-brass gallery of anthemion surrounded by a wide carved giltwood gadrooned border attached to the top of the rosewood cavetto frieze with giltwood rope-twist moulding below. Set on turned rosewood legs with giltwood palm leaf collars surmounted by flowers at the top and leaf collars and flowers below divided by two small giltwood collars of rope-twist and leaves. The legs are joined by four giltwood cross rails, each centred with a flowerhead, attached to the legs with pins at each circular terminus, extending to a platform stretcher (severely bleached) with giltwood reeded border on four gilt-brass scroll feet.

L. 21ins D.18ins H.34ins

#### PROVENANCE

Table made by Morel and Hughes to house the porcelain panel in the Duke's collection. Supplied for the Drawing Room, Northumberland House at a cost of £110.0.0:

'To a square Table of fine rose wood highly polished made to receive Your Grace's Porcelaine, a coved frieze supported by 4 columns with capitals, bases and other ornaments richly carved, standing on a square plinth & 4 brass claws, a very rich brass gallery and carved moulding round the top, the whole of the carved work richly gilt in mat and burnished gold'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.f (bill dated 28<sup>th</sup> February 1825; receipt dated 13 July 1825)



Plate LX 01355



Plate LXI 01355

21956/1-6

textiles

tassel (one of six)

by Morel and Hughes (?)

1823

beech; wire; silk; cotton

mould and skirt: 16cm ; cord: 22cm

#### DESCRIPTION

Tassel with complex top, the perle, bouflette, migret, boulle and large mould covered with green and pink-red silk; the green and pink-red silk skirt formed by a fringe with pink-red silk-covered coiled wire hangers. Tassel attached to a green and pink-red silk covered cotton cord.

The tassels and cords are of exactly the same colours as those used by Morel and Hughes in the re-upholstery of furniture in the Glass Drawing Room of Northumberland House. Their colours can be compared to a silk sample (see next entry, uncat.) and also to the upholstery of four armchairs, sofa and *sofa a confidente* by James Cullen, formerly in the Glass Drawing Room.

Uncat.

textiles

silk remnants (9 pieces)

by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes

1823

silk

#### DESCRIPTION

Nine pieces of silk of assorted sizes, twill weave, green ground with pink-red rosette motif repeated pattern. All of the pieces are either sewn or cut in such a manner that suggests they have been used for upholstery. Two pieces are very faded, the other pieces retain vibrancy of colour.

sizes all approximate: 52 x 9 1/2cm; 47 x 10cm; 57 x 41cm; 75 x 20cm;

111 1/2 x 12cm; 55 x 31cm; 26 1/2 x 31 1/2cm; 45 x 26cm; 94 1/2 x 38cm

These are remnants of the silk that was used by Morel and Hughes for the furniture, window curtains and draperies in the Glass Drawing Room of Northumberland House (see plates XVI and XXIX). This silk is described in the accounts of Morel and Hughes as 'rich green & red rosette silk'. (Syon MSS U.I.64)



Plate LXII

21956 and uncat. silk remnant

Uncat.  
textiles  
silk remnants (6 pieces)  
by Nicholas Morel and Robert Hughes  
1823  
silk

#### DESCRIPTION

Six small pieces of silk of assorted sizes, twill weave, crimson in colour with same colour pattern of large flower and foliage surrounded by rosehead paterae spaced at regular intervals. All of the pieces are either sewn or cut in such a manner that suggests they may have been previously used. Two remnants have labels pinned to them: 'The quality that Was on the Walls at Northumberland House' and 'Best quality this quality the furniture is covered with', possibly in the hand of Edith, Seventh Duchess of Northumberland (b.1849 d.1913)  
sizes all approximate: 8 x 25cm; 12 x 10 1/2cm; 43 x 18 1/2cm; 17 1/2 x 8cm; 22 x 11 1/2cm; 15 1/2 x 14cm pattern repeat: 48cm.

The silk is described in the accounts of Morel and Hughes as 'rich geranium figured silk damask'. (Syon MSS U.I.64)

The silk remnants were contained in an envelope annotated by the hand of Edith, Seventh Duchess: 'Old Rose Coloured Brocade from Walls and Furniture at Northumberland House. It is said that the Set of furniture in large Drawing room at North. House came from the Tuilleries. (now in large Front Drawingroom at 2. Grosvenor Place). Order given to Hampton for more -1902 - made at Braintree probably by Warner.' Hamptons Decorators and Furnishers of Pall Mall East, Trafalgar Square, London SW, advertised themselves on their headed paper as being able to provide everything one could desire associated with the home including 'Designers and Manufacturers of Furniture, Carpets, Furnishing Fabrics, Household Linens, Bedsteads, Bedding, China & Glass, Ironmongery' as well as offering services as antiques dealers, removals and warehousing, builders, sanitary and electrical engineers, estate agents, surveyors and auctioneers. A memorandum, also in the hand of the Seventh Duchess, and letters, from the Director of the company, record that Hamptons made copies of the Morel and Hughes silk at Braintree, Essex, at 63ins wide and charged 50s. a yard. The cost of the cutting cards, which would be retained exclusively for the use of the Duchess, was £6.6s. The silk was dyed using vegetable dyes and sent to the Duchess for approval: 52 1/4 yards were ordered.

01526

bed

hangings by Robert Hughes

1832

gilt beech; silk; worsted

#### DESCRIPTION

Giltwood four-post bed, *circa* 1790, with an ogee-domed serpentine tester topped by a carved basket of flowers, the reeded baluster end-posts joined to a serpentine footboard. The dome is covered with blue watered silk and the interior with yellow fluted silk. The hangings are of the same blue watered silk with a curtain, edged with wide half-circle gold-coloured silk gimp, each corner retained by tie-back ropes and pairs of blue and gold-coloured silk tassels to each. The bed furnishing is *ensuite* with 01570.

L.72ins. D.87ins. H.109ins.

The hangings and curtains have been heavily 'restored' in the 1960's by Lady Mead Featherstonehaugh. The draped swags (evident in the 1930 photograph) have been cut out to leave only a plain serpentine hanging to the top. Equally, sections of the curtains (presumably the most damaged) have been cut out so that they are much reduced in width. There is extensive couching over the pelmet and curtains.

#### PROVENANCE

This bed was refurbished for the Duchess of Kent, mother of Princess Victoria, when apartments were prepared for their stay at Syon House during April 1832. Robert Hughes added the footboard and new tester as well as supplying new hangings, mattresses and bedding:

'To making a foot board to Your Graces four post bedstead & new set of laths with a new inside raised tester forming an Oval in the center & a cornice all round for the inside drapery

Also a new outside raised tester forming a doom very thickly ribbed & covered w<sup>h</sup> canvas So that the blue silk Should Keep its form

A Set of new Cornices of an Antique form and swept mouldings to form the division of doom Repairing &c the back posts & strengthening d<sup>o</sup> with 2 strong iron brackets & Scraping the front posts

Also to gilding in mat & burnish<sup>d</sup> gold various parts of the Bedstead viz the 2 front posts, Cornices & mouldings of doom & oval of interior d<sup>o</sup> Including a basket of finely carved flowers the whole in mat & burnished gold £79.16s.

To making up the furniture of the preceding Bedstead of your Grace's blue silk taberet consisting of 4 Curtains lined & finished with a rich gimp Surmounted by handsome festoon draperies and inside d<sup>o</sup> to correspond ornamented with fringes gimp &c &c

The interior of the doom fluted w<sup>h</sup> yellow silk & the outside covered with your Grace's taberet including bases of the same materials

Also stuffing & covering the foot board with silk and enriched with gimp & £29.18s.

To a deep bordered Stripe mattress filled with the best hair £5.8s.

To a large white jian pillow filled with the best down £2.4s.

To 44 ¾ yd<sup>s</sup> of rich Silk fringe for the draperies of bed 7/3 £16.4s.5 ¼d.

To 100 yd<sup>s</sup> of rich broad Silk gimp for curtains & head of fringe 4/4 £21.13s.4d.

To 8 ½ yd<sup>s</sup> of gold colour d<sup>o</sup> for the bases 1/10 £1.7s.6d.

To 4 Pr of embraces composed of 2 rich Silk tassels each 6 yd<sup>s</sup> of rich Silk line & 4 Slides 26/- £5.4s.

To 15 yd<sup>s</sup> of Silk rope for draperies 4/4 £3.5s.

To 3 ½ yd<sup>s</sup> of silk cord for the foot board @ 6d. £0.1s.9d.

To 27 yd<sup>s</sup> of rich Sarcenet 22in wide in addition to your Grace's for linings 3/- £4.1s.

To 64 yd<sup>s</sup> of yd wide yellow Calico for d<sup>o</sup> 8<sup>d</sup> £2.2s.

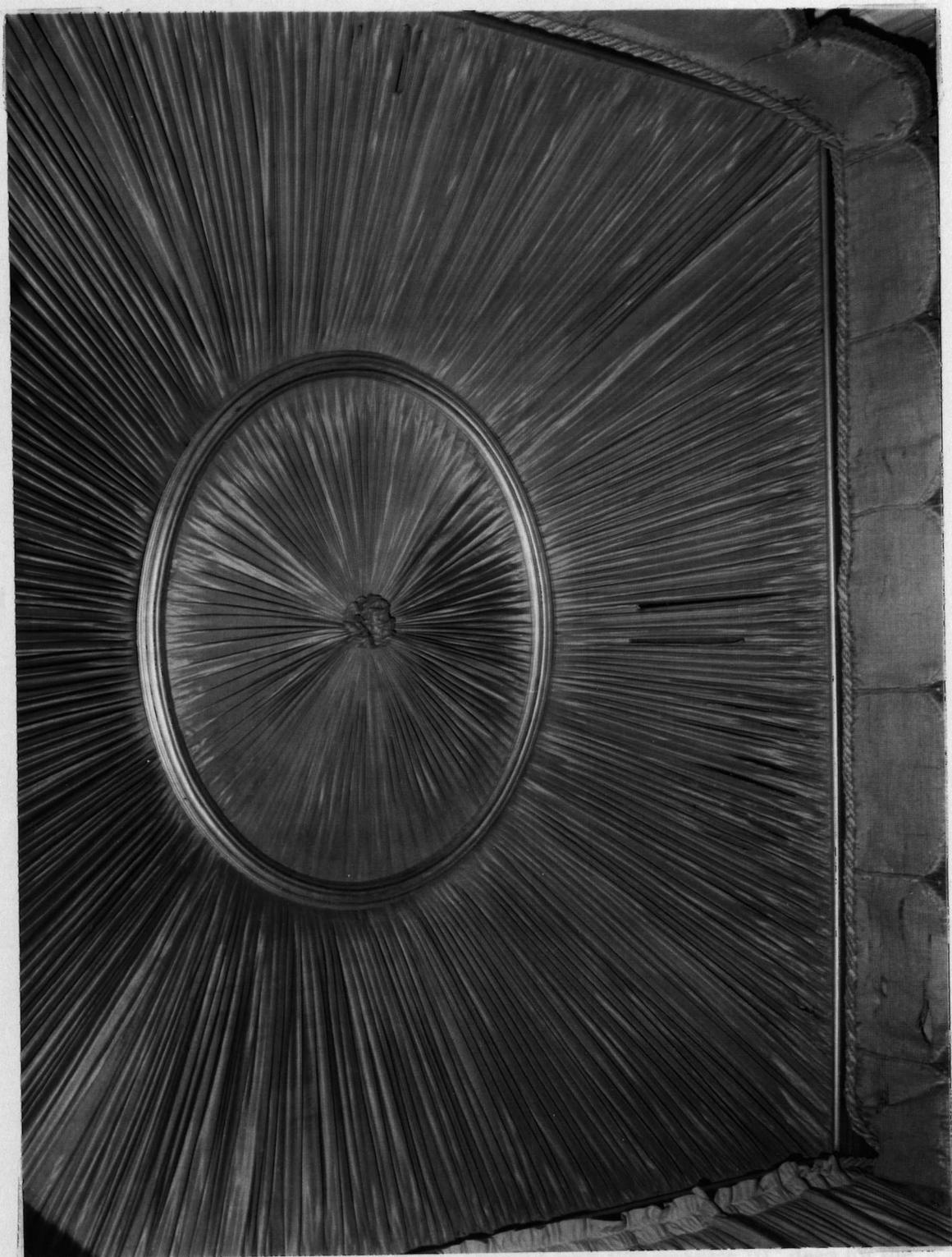
To 64 yd<sup>s</sup> glazing 1<sup>d</sup> £0.5s.4d.'

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.m (bill dated April 1832, total balance £781.14s. 10 ¾ d.)



Plate LXIII 01526



To 27 yd<sup>s</sup> of very deep water silk for the  
 inside 30/- £3.7s.6d.  
 To 46 yd<sup>s</sup> of very rich ging for curtains and head of fringe 4/- £2.17s.4d.  
 To 10 yd<sup>s</sup> of blue Silk Rope 3/- £1.10s.  
 To 8 rich tassels to loop-up Curtain 2/6 £1.2s.  
 To 6 1/2 yd<sup>s</sup> of small ging for the Purses 1/6 £1.13s.4d.  
 To 16 yd<sup>s</sup> of d<sup>s</sup> for the head & foot boards 1/1 £1.8s.  
 To 27 yd<sup>s</sup> of gold colour Rope 2/- £4.1s.  
 To order the Bed Mattress filled with the best hair 25.10s.

Plate LXIV 01526

01570

bed

by Robert Hughes

1832

gilt beech; brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Gilt beech bed with circular tester supporting a bowl of flowers carved of giltwood and raised on four swept brass rods which are connected to two horizontal brass rods supporting the drapery at the head and foot of the bed. These rods are connected to the panelled head and end-boards with gilt pillars and the whole bed stands on four giltwood legs. The head and end-boards are covered with blue watered silk, the same material as the curtains which are edged with wide half-circle gold-coloured gimp. The curtains are arranged from the circular tester over each of the four posts and headed by swags of drapery finished with gold-coloured silk fringe and tassels. The curtains are retained at each post by a tie-back with a pair silk blue and gold-coloured tassels. The bed furnishing whole of the hangings are *ensuite* with 01526. L.81ins. D.24 ins. H.approx. 100ins.

The 1930 photograph shows the bed furnishings in their complete state. The curtains have been heavily 'restored' in the 1960's by Lady Mead Featherstonehaugh. Sections (presumably the most damaged) have been cut out so that they are much reduced in width and there is extensive couching.

#### PROVENANCE

The bed was made by Robert Hughes for Princess Victoria when rooms were prepared for her and her mother to stay at Syon in April 1832:

'To a Polonese Bedstead with lath bottom, on strong french castors, 4 columns springing from head and foot boards supporting 4 swept brass rods & 2 straight d<sup>o</sup> & a canopy made to receive flower basket

The canopy in suit with large Bed, the interior of d<sup>o</sup> prepared for fluted silk including 2 small brass rods & a Set of Case laths

Also to gilding in mat and burnished gold various parts of the preceding bedstead viz the 4 posts head & foot board & cornice of Canopy including a basket of finely carved flowers in mat & burnished gold £77.18s.

To making up the furniture for the preceding Bedstead of your Grace's blue tabaret Composed of large curtains suspended from doom the whole lined with yellow Silk & enriched w<sup>h</sup> gimp & the interior of the doom finished with fluted silk the outside covered with tabaret The head & foot board stuffed with the best hair & covered with silk enriched with gimps including Cases of blue tabaret with pipes gimps &c £19.6s.

To 3 ½ yd<sup>s</sup> of Silk fringe for the inside valance with a gimp head 8/6 £1.9s.9d.

To 2 ¼ yd<sup>s</sup> of very deep worsted fringe enriched with Silk hangers 10<sup>in</sup> deep for the outside 30/- £3.7s.6d.

To 46 yd<sup>s</sup> of very rich gimp for curtains and head of fringe 4/4 £9.19s.4d.

To 10 yd<sup>s</sup> of blue Silk Rope 3/- £1.10s.

To 8 rich tassels to loop up Curtains 10/3 £4.2s.

To 6 ¾ yd<sup>s</sup> of small gimp for the Bases 1/10 £0.12s.4 ½

To 16 yd<sup>s</sup> of d<sup>o</sup> for the head & foot boards 1/3 £1.0.0.

To 27 yd<sup>s</sup> of gold colour Rope 3/- £4.1s.

To a deep bordered Stripe Mattress filled with the best hair £5.16s.

To a do in a white holland Case & filled with the best wool & hair £3.18s.  
To a horse hair bolster in a white jian case £0.16s.6d.  
To a white jian pillow filled with the best wool £0.13s.6d.  
To a Superfine Whitney Blanket £0.19s.6d.  
To a Superfine Cotton d° £1.19s.  
To a Superfine Marseilles Quilt £1.4s.  
To 80 yd<sup>s</sup> of gold colour Sarcenet 22 inches wide for the lining of french bed  
£12.0.0'

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.m (bill dated October 1831, January 1832; receipt dated 29 March  
1832 for £292.12s.)



Plate LXV 01570



Plate LXVI 01570



Plate LXVII

01570



01388  
cabinet  
by Robert Hughes  
1827  
rosewood; oak

#### DESCRIPTION

Of rectangular breakfront form, the stained oak top has a rosewood-veneered edge over a deep rosewood frieze over a central pair of rosewood doors with two doors to either side. The doors are panelled with imitation pilasters fixed to the outer edges, headed by a gadroon flowerhead patera on the frieze. The centre of each panel is fitted with a brass diamond-shaped trellis, each intersection with a small flowerhead patera. Inside is a large quantity of round holes drilled to the outer edges of the sides in close proximity to allow for the greatest variation in shelving. The oak interior of the cabinets is stained dark as are the oak shelves which are finished with rosewood veneer to the front edge. The shelves are fixed to the sides by way of brass plugs and each shelf is fitted with three brass rollers towards the front and three towards the rear to facilitate the movement of portfolios. The whole cabinet is set on a large moulded plinth base.

The largest cabinet has paper labels inside each door numbered 1 to 5, the external trellis retains the leather labels '3', '4' and '5'. Two smaller cabinets are of the same form and description with shelves extending across the length of each. One cabinet (01382/2) has leather labels of '11' to each door and a paper label '11' pasted inside the right-hand door; the other (01382/3) leather labels of '10' to the left-hand door and a paper label '10' to the inside of the right-hand door. All have remnants of red silk hangings behind the brass trellis.

Largest cabinet: L.235ins. D.35ins. H.54ins.

Smallest cabinets: L.54 ½ ins. D.29ins. H.54ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied for the Music Room (now Print Room) of Syon House by Robert Hughes in 1827:

'... a very large handsome Rosewood Bookcase enclosed by 6 Doors with ornamented brass trellis panels, paneled pilasters fixed on the Doors and blocks with carved null Patras on the frieze, of fine wood and the whole french polished, the interior containing 24 Shelves made to move & supported on 96 brass Pins with strong brass plates for Do let into the ends of the Shelves and 1344 brass sockets for Do let into the ends, also 144 brass framed rollers let into the top sides of the shelves for Portfolios to move on, the whole of the interior made of oak, stained black and varnished & c & c' £268.18s.

Blue sarcenet was used for the curtains for the doors.

On 18 November 1828 three more bookcases were provided 'enclosed by 2 doors each with ornamental brass trellis pannels paneled pilasters fixed on the doors & blocks wth carved null'd patras on the frieze over do...including pleated silk Curtains to each door & placed right & left of fire place and the pier' £217.10s.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827, drafts of £2000 paid on 11 January and

£1000 on 5 April, balance of account of £878.15s.3d. paid on 3 July 1827)  
Syon MSS U.I.90 (Syon House Bill Book) 1828

made by Robert Hughes

1827

ebony, ivory,

#### DESCRIPTION

Decorated with a brickwork design and set with engraved ivory panels of allegorical scenes, the front with a pair of doors. The cabinet is set on an ebonised stand, the decoration painted in imitation of ivory, with gilded edge above carved brass on four decorative bobbin-turned legs, with mirrored back board, a shelf and stair



01124

cabinet, Milanese, circa 1650, on stand  
stand by Robert Hughes

1827

ebony, ivory,

#### DESCRIPTION

Decorated with a brickwork design and set with engraved ivory panels of allegorical scenes, the front with a pair of doors. The cabinet is set on an ebonised stand, the decoration painted in imitation of ivory, with gadrooned edge above cavetto frieze on four decorated bobbin-turned legs with mirrored back board, a shelf and four decorated scroll feet.

cabinet: L.39ins. D.14ins. H.14ins.

stand: L.42 ½ ins. D.17ins. H.32ins.

#### PROVENANCE

'To putting in thorough repair a Cabinet of coromandel wood Inlaid with Ivory, the interior fitted with Drawers & enclosed by folding Doors, restoring the colour of the Ivory and re-engraving the whole of the subjects on the Top, Ends, Doors on both sides and Drawer fronts, the whole highly polished a new Lock with fancy bow key and new bolts to the Doors, the old brass work taken off, lackered & refixed & c. & c. Including an entire new stand for this Cabinet, the same pattern as the preceding one described to Trunk[see below], handsomely Japaned to suit the Ivory & very highly varnished and polished....£67.12.0'

'[stand]... with a carved moulding round the top, standing on 4 turned ornamental ball columns and a plinth supported on 4 carved scroll feet...'

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827; drafts paid 11 January and 5 April, receipt of final balance dated 3 July)

01125

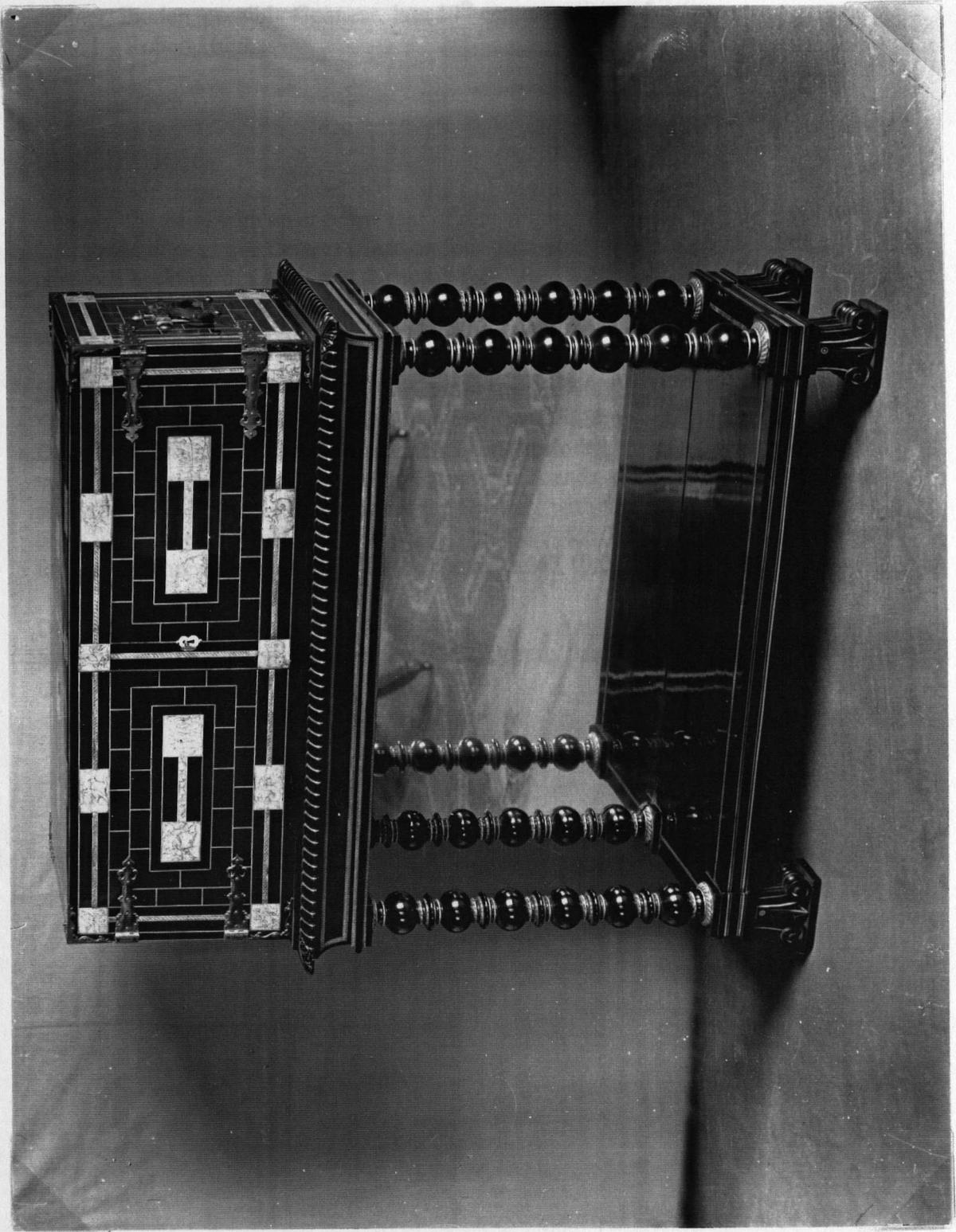


Plate LXX

01124

01125

cabinet, Iberian, possibly Goanese, late 17<sup>th</sup> century, on stand  
stand by Robert Hughes

1827

rosewood, ivory

#### DESCRIPTION

The exterior densely decorated with panels of flowers and foliage, some centred by animals, the front with an arrangement of nine drawers. On an ebonised stand with gadrooned edge above cavetto frieze on four decorated bobbin-turned legs with mirrored backboard, a shelf and for scroll feet.

cabinet: L.30ins. D.13 ½ ins. H.13ins.

stand: L.33ins. D.16 ½ ins. H.32ins.

#### PROVENANCE

'To putting in thorough repair a Cabinet composed of Ebony and Ivory containing 9 Drawers, letting in various pieces of new Ivory, restoring the colour of the old and completely re-engraving the whole on top, front & ends, the whole highly polished and varnished, 9 new Locks made for the Drawers with fancy bow key to Dos, the old brass work taken off, lackered and put on again &c. &c. Including an entire new stand for this Cabinet in every respect as the above'...£67.10.0

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827; drafts paid 11 January and 5 April, receipt of final balance dated 3 July)

01490

cabinet, Flemish, mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, on stand  
stand by Robert Hughes

1827

ebony, tortoiseshell

#### DESCRIPTION

The central cupboard enclosed and surrounded by drawers set with tortoiseshell panels and gilt-bronze mounts. On ebonised stand with gadrooned edge above cavetto frieze on four plain bobbin-turned legs with mirrored backboard, a shelf and four scroll feet.

cabinet: L.47ins. D.14ins. H.27 ½ ins.

stand: L.50ins. D.20ins. H.32ins.

#### PROVENANCE

'To putting in thorough repair a large cabinet of Drawers &c. with Tortoiseshell Panels, a new Cornice to Do, new top & back and the principal part of the interior being decayed, cut out and replaced with new, the Drawers all repaired and part remade, part new Mouldings to form panels round Do and all the partition edges veneered with new Ebony, a new panel of fine Tortoiseshell to the Door in center of Cabinet and a new pediment over Do, the whole highly polished and varnished, 10 new Locks made for the Drawers and Door with fancy bow key to Do, 2 new ??? and all the old brass work taken off, lackered and put on again as before &c., likewise remaking of new material the top part of this cabinet forming 2 steps with looking Glass panels for ornaments & c. Including an entire new stand for this cabinet the same pattern as the preceding, the whole Ebonized and highly varnished, preparing for looking Glasses & fixing in &c....£67.12.0

N.B. One large Glass and 4 small ones furnished for the above by Mr. Ponsonby.'

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827; drafts paid 11 January and 5 April, receipt of final balance dated 3 July)

01512 & 01467  
sofa (one of a pair)  
by Robert Hughes  
1827  
rosewood; brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Rosewood sofa, the reeded frame with cushioned back the stiles finished with a pair of gadrooned finials, with reeded arms, reeded seat rail and gadrooned turned legs on large gadroon-moulded brass castors. Three back cushions, three seat cushions and two bolsters survive.

L.92 ½ ins. D.30 ½ ins. H.38ins.

*Ensuite* with 01536 and 01759.

#### PROVENANCE

Two sofas were supplied by Robert Hughes for the Private Drawing Room at Syon House in 1827:

'To 2 handsome Rosewood Sofas of fine wood richly carved and french polished, standing on chased null socket Castors, the whole stuffed with the best materials in fine canvas including a separate squab, 3 back cushions, 2 Bolsters and 2 Down Pillows in Jian cases to each, likewise covering the backs and ends with blue figured silk Tabaret and making cases of the same Silk for the Squabs, back Cushions, Bolsters and Pillows, finished with gold colour Silk gimp, cord and tassels, the cases lined with white calico - at 62.16' £123.12s.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827, drafts of £2000 paid on 11 January and £1000 on 5 April, balance of account of £878.15s.3d. paid on 3 July 1827)

01536  
chaise-longue

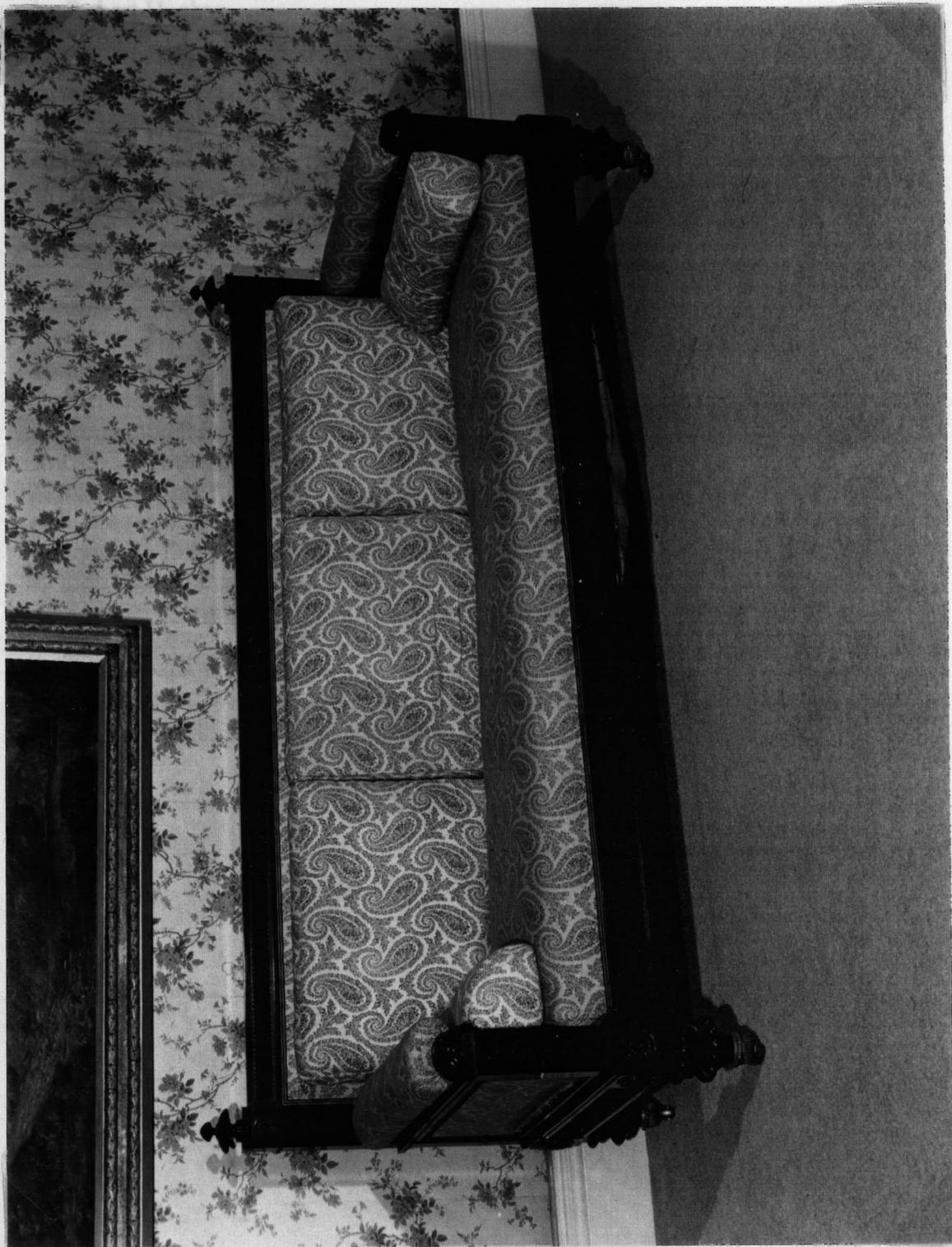


Plate LXXI

01512

01536  
chaise-longue  
by Robert Hughes  
1827  
rosewood

#### DESCRIPTION

Rosewood chaise-longue with over-scolled end and three-quarters back, the partly reeded frame carved with petal clasps and raised on short circular tapering legs carved with leaves and gadrooning set on large gadrooned brass castors.  
L.81ins. D.28ins. H.34ins.

*Ensuite* with 01512/01467 and 01759.

#### PROVENANCE

Robert Hughes supplied two chaise longues for the Private Drawing Room and two 'to correspond' for the Music Room (now known as the Print Room) at Syon House in 1827. For the Drawing Room:

'To 2 handsome Rosewood Chaise Longues of fine wood richly carved and french polished, standing on chased null Socket Castors, the whole stuffed with the best materials in fine Canvas, including Squab, Bolster and 2 Down Pillows in Jean Cases to each, likewise covering the whole with figured blue silk Tabaret and finished with gold colour silk gimp, cord and tassels in suite with Sofas --- at 43.5' £86.10s.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827, drafts of £2000 paid on 11 January and £1000 on 5 April, balance of account of £878.15s.3d. paid on 3 July 1827)

01759

chair

side chair

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Plate LXXII

01536

01759  
chair  
side chair (one of eighteen)  
by Robert Hughes  
1827  
rosewood; cane

#### DESCRIPTION

With scrolled stiles, the top rail with reeded panel. The frame encloses the stuffed padded back, the carved rail below scrolling to centre and joining the stiles at small stylised flowerhead paterae with lobed baluster below joining plain sabre rear legs. The caned seat has stuffed squab cushion. The front seat rail has a central reeded panel (as top rail); side rails and back rail are plain, each of the front legs headed (to front and sides) by circular bosses. The straight, tapering front legs are carved at the top with foliage over egg-and-dart type baluster tapering to rope twist collar above highly stylised leaf effect at foot. There are no blocks or strengthening rails.  
L.18ins. D.17 ½ ins. H.33 ½ ins.

*Ensuite* with 01512 / 01467 and 01536.

#### PROVENANCE

Robert Hughes supplied eighteen chairs for the Private Drawing Room of Syon House in 1827 and a further twelve of the same design for the Music Room (now Print Room). For the Drawing Room:

‘To 18 handsome Rosewood Chairs of fine wood richly carved and french polished, the seats caned, panels in the backs and cushions for the Seats stuffed with the best materials in fine canvas and covered with figured blue silk Tabaret finished with gold colour silk gimp and Cord, the cushion cases lined with white calico at 7.12’.  
£136.16s.

The suite of seat furniture supplied for the Private Drawing Room also included two rosewood sofas and two rosewood chaise longues.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827, drafts of £2000 paid on 11 January and £1000 on 5 April, balance of account of £878.15s.3d. paid on 3 July 1827)

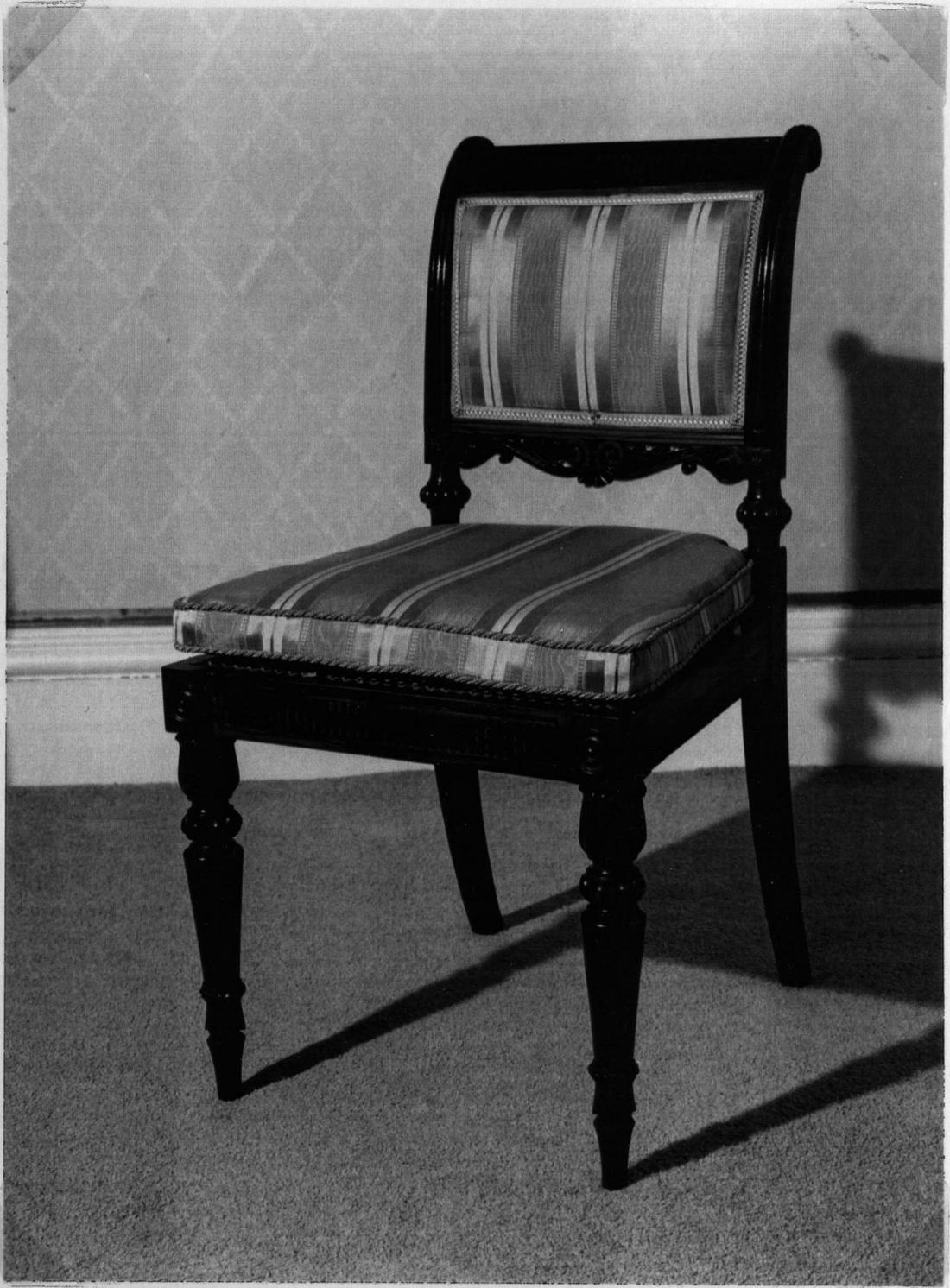


Plate LXXIII

01759

00413 and 01142

chair

dining chair (one of forty-eight)

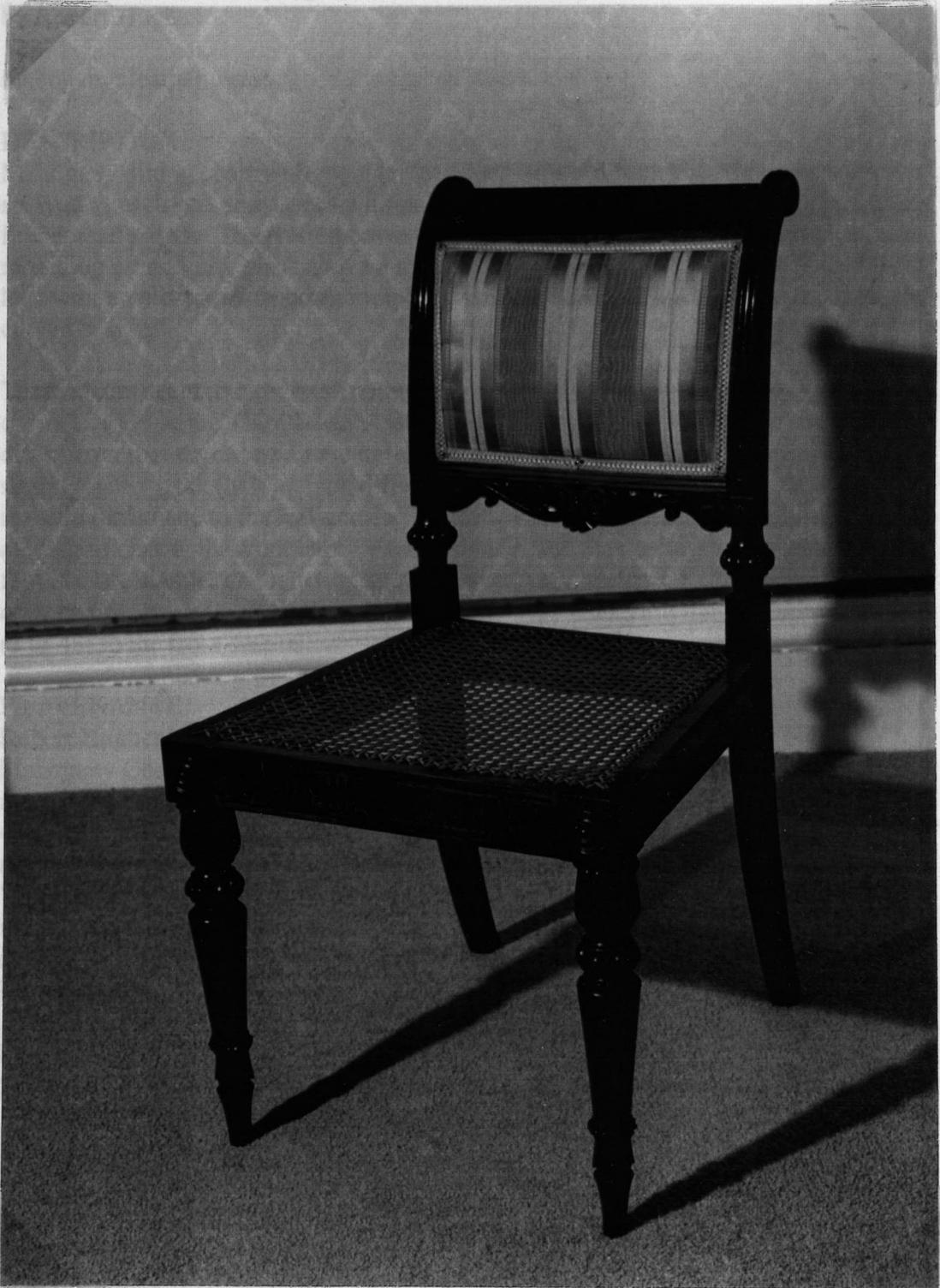


Plate LXXIV

01759

00413 and 01142  
chair  
dining chair (one of forty-eight)  
by Robert Hughes  
1827  
mahogany; leather; brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Mahogany dining chair with moulded cartouche-shaped back with three reeded splats splayed at each end and carved with palm fronds; each splat is centred with an oblong flowerhead patera. The stuffed bowed leather-covered seats are finished with a brass moulding pinned into place above a moulded seat rail on turned tapering reeded front legs with an elongated tapering foot; the chamfered splayed back legs sweep from the curved seat rail.

These chairs seem to have been copied from a set of late eighteenth century dining chairs already in the Third Duke's collection. Chairs of similar design exist which differ from that described above in the wood being a much darker mahogany; a slightly wider back (half an inch difference) and seat (an inch larger all round); slight stylistic difference to the leaf-carving on the splats; the moulded seat rail has moulded reeding to centre; the front legs are more slender and the reeding more refined; the foot is more slender and tapering and the swept back leg has a block toe whereas the copy chairs terminate abruptly at the foot. The copy chairs are stamped with a number (1 to 48) to the front seat rail.

#### PROVENANCE

Robert Hughes repaired, newly carved, cleaned and french polished '12 old Mahogany Chairs, ripping the seats and restuffing the same with entirely new material covered in green Morocco and finished with a brass moulding' at £2.16s. each, £33.12s total, in the Ante Dining Room at Syon in 1827. At the same time he supplied for the Private Dining Room of Syon House in 1827:

'... 48 Mahogany Cabriole Chairs with carved backs, reeded front Legs & moulded rails en suite with your Graces old ones, of fine wood and french polished, the seats stuffed with the best materials covered in green Morocco and finished with a brass Moulding at £4.18s £235.4s.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827, drafts of £2000 paid on 11 January and £1000 on 5 April, balance of account of £878.15s.3d. paid on 3 July 1827)



copies.  
Plate LXXV

01142/01143

205  
204



**Plate LXXVI**

**Late eighteenth century dining chair from which Robert Hughes made forty-eight copies.**

01386  
chair  
hall chair (one of a set of eight)  
by Robert Hughes  
1833  
oak

#### DESCRIPTION

The unpolished oak moulded shaped back with shell and leaf-carved top rail has the Percy crescent and fetherlocks surrounded by the garter belt bearing the motto 'Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense' painted to the centre. The outward curving arms are carved with acanthus with leaf-carved scrolled handles and moulded supports with leaf-carved scrolled terminals. The panelled seats have dished roundels and fluted serpentine seat rails centred by an oval cartouche painted with the Percy lion statant on a cap of maintenance within a leaf-carved frame and are fixed to panelled cabriole legs headed by swagged scrolls, with square block toes.  
L.27ins. D.22ins. H.41ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Eight hall chairs, copied from an old chair, supplied by Robert Hughes for Syon House, 16 December 1833; total cost £118.8.0:  
'To 8 Hall Chairs in Oak highly Varnished, the various parts carved to match the old chair with the exception of the husks-  
Painting in the garter & crescent in the back also the  
Lion on the front rail  
at £14.16'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Uncatalogued papers. Bill of Robert Hughes, 115 Piccadilly (bill dated 16 December 1833; receipt attached dated 23 January 1834).



01571

cupboard

pot cupboard (one of a pair)

by Robert Hughes

1835

mahogany

#### DESCRIPTION

Mahogany pot cupboard formed so as to look like a table, with dummy flaps lowered to either side and with two pairs of dummy drawers with turned knob handles to front and rear. One of the flaps drops on brass hinges and bracket to reveal a cupboard for a bedside convenience pot. The whole is supported on baluster column with reeded collar on four hipped sabre legs with brass square-capped castors.

L.15ins. D.13 ½ ins. H.29ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied by Robert Hughes for Syon House, room unspecified, 2 June 1835:

'To Mahy tables de nuit on pillars & claws french polished & on good castors made to resemble a table with drawers & 2 leaves, 1 side falling down supported by quadrant & Retch(?) forming the table de nuit at 5.10' £11.0.0

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.p (bill dated May 1835, total balance £41.12s.)

01128  
firescreen  
by Robert Hughes  
1832  
rosewood; canvas

#### DESCRIPTION

Rosewood cheval firescreen, the frame enclosing a canvas painted with exotic birds in a tree and lotus leaves mounted as a sliding panel, the top with a leaf-cast gilt-brass handle. The screen is fixed on to scroll supports with sabre legs, scrolling trusses joining the legs to uprights and connected by a padded bar stretcher.  
L.27 ½ins. D.16 ½ ins. H.45ins.

The paintings were already in the Duke's collection and Robert Hughes made the frames as a pair of firescreens. The 1930 furniture catalogue for Syon House states that the paintings are probably the work of Charlotte Florentia, Third Duchess. Charlotte Florentia was an amateur artist who painted the silk panels in the south-east closet turret room of the Long Gallery at Syon and whose numerous pieces of embroidery or needlework were incorporated into various pieces of furniture and furnishing, such as blotter books, firescreens and cushions, by Robert Hughes.

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied for the Gallery of Syon House by Robert Hughes in 1832:  
'To mountings your Graces 2 Paintings of birds as Screens in Rose wood, made to slide up & down One Side of d<sup>o</sup> finished with fluted silk & foot boards covered with d<sup>o</sup> the whole highly polished' £17.12s.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.m (bill dated April 1832)



Plate LXXVIII

01128

01046  
hall stand (one of a pair)  
by Robert Hughes  
1832  
mahogany

#### DESCRIPTION

Mahogany stand with turned finial at the top of a mahogany tapering column with two tiers of three ogee brass hooks and a brass spiral umbrella holder set on a broad dished foot lined with lead, the circular wooden base on three bun feet. The second hall stand is slightly taller (66ins.) and has three tiers of hooks.  
Diam. 19 ½ ins. H. 64ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Robert Hughes supplied two such stands for 'Sundry Rooms' in 1832:  
'To a wainscot hat & Umbrella Stand with pan, brass hat arms, the whole highly polished 4.16s.  
To a d° d° en Suit with the above only shorter 4.10s.'

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.m (bill dated October 1831, January 1832; receipt dated 29 March 1832 for £292.12s.)

20760  
pillar and rail  
by Robert Hughes  
1826  
gilt-brass

#### DESCRIPTION

Four gilt-brass pillars, each with small circular stylised leaf finial to the top over a larger gadrooned one, above a square block decorated to three sides with flowerhead paterae, supported on a baluster stem with acanthus leaf capital, a central collar of leaves and lower collar of palm leaf terminating with a reeded and gadrooned edge, on large square block finished with a moulded edge. The pieces are screwed together in six separate parts. At the square block to the top one side has a screw thread to receive the rails. The rails are of a simple form cast with palm leaves to each end. All four pillars are now fixed to large square mahogany bases.  
H.45 ½ ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Supplied by Robert Hughes for the Ball Room Northumberland House to form a protective barrier around the great Sevres vase presented to the Third Duke of Northumberland by Charles X of France when the Duke attended his coronation as the representative of King George IV in 1825:

‘To making a Deal Pedestal, also a Vase of the same dimensions as the China one for the purpose of judging the proportions of the new Pedestal and likewise making a Model for a Guard rail to fix around the same ....£14.18’

‘To Gilding in oil Gold the enrichments around the Base of Verde Antique Scagliola Pedestal for large China Vase ....£5.8’

‘To a Brass rail to guard the large china Vase supported by 4 massive & richly chased columns fixed at the Angles, the whole finished in Mat & Burnish ....£87.16’

#### ‘Jobbing

To various Workmen, Women and Gilders time, at Northumberland House, doing the following Work at different times from March 25<sup>th</sup> to June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1826-Gallery. Attending the fixing of Marble Pedestal and large china Vase and afterwards fitting and fixing the 4 brass columns and rail to guard the same-‘

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.g (bill dated January 1826; receipt dated 29 June 1826)

01132

table

sideboard table (one of a pair)

by Robert Hughes

1827

mahogany

#### DESCRIPTION

Of rectangular form, with slightly inverted breakfront top which is reflected in the shape of the backboard. The top is supported by two pairs of circular fluted pillars, tapering to a wider section at the base, the pillars echoed on the panelled backboard with shallow column effect, the whole on massive moulded plinth base.

L.110ins. D.35ins. H.50ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Made for the Private Dining Room of Syon House. Supplied by Robert Hughes in 1827 at a cost of £153.18.0 for the pair:

'To 2 handsome Mahogany Sideboards, each supported by 4 turned & fluted Columns in front standing on 2 massive Plinths, pilasters at back and paneled framing enclosing the whole, a Gallery along the back of the tops &c. – the whole of fine Spanish wood highly polished'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827, drafts of £2000 paid on 11 January and £1000 on 5 April, balance of account of £878.15s.3d. paid on 3 July 1827)



Plate LXXIX

01132

01134

table

side table (one of a pair)

by Robert Hughes

1827

mahogany, marble

#### DESCRIPTION

Of rectangular form, with oblong mottled white marble top (01134/2 has much more grey in the marble top) over a cavetto frieze with pair of fluted pillars tapering out at lower part, the panelled backboard reflecting the front pillars in shallow carved pillar-effect, the whole on large plinth base.

L.66ins. D.28ins. H.38ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Made for the Private Dining Room of Syon House. Supplied by Robert Hughes in 1827 at a cost of £57.14.0 for the pair:

'To 2 handsome Mahogany Side Tables for the Piers, the tops prepared to receive your Grace's Marble Slabs, supported by fluted columns standing on massive Plinths and enclosed at back by paneled framing as the sideboards, the whole of fine wood and highly polished'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827, drafts of £2000 paid on 11 January and £1000 on 5 April, balance of account of £878.15s.3d. paid on 3 July 1827)

01027  
table

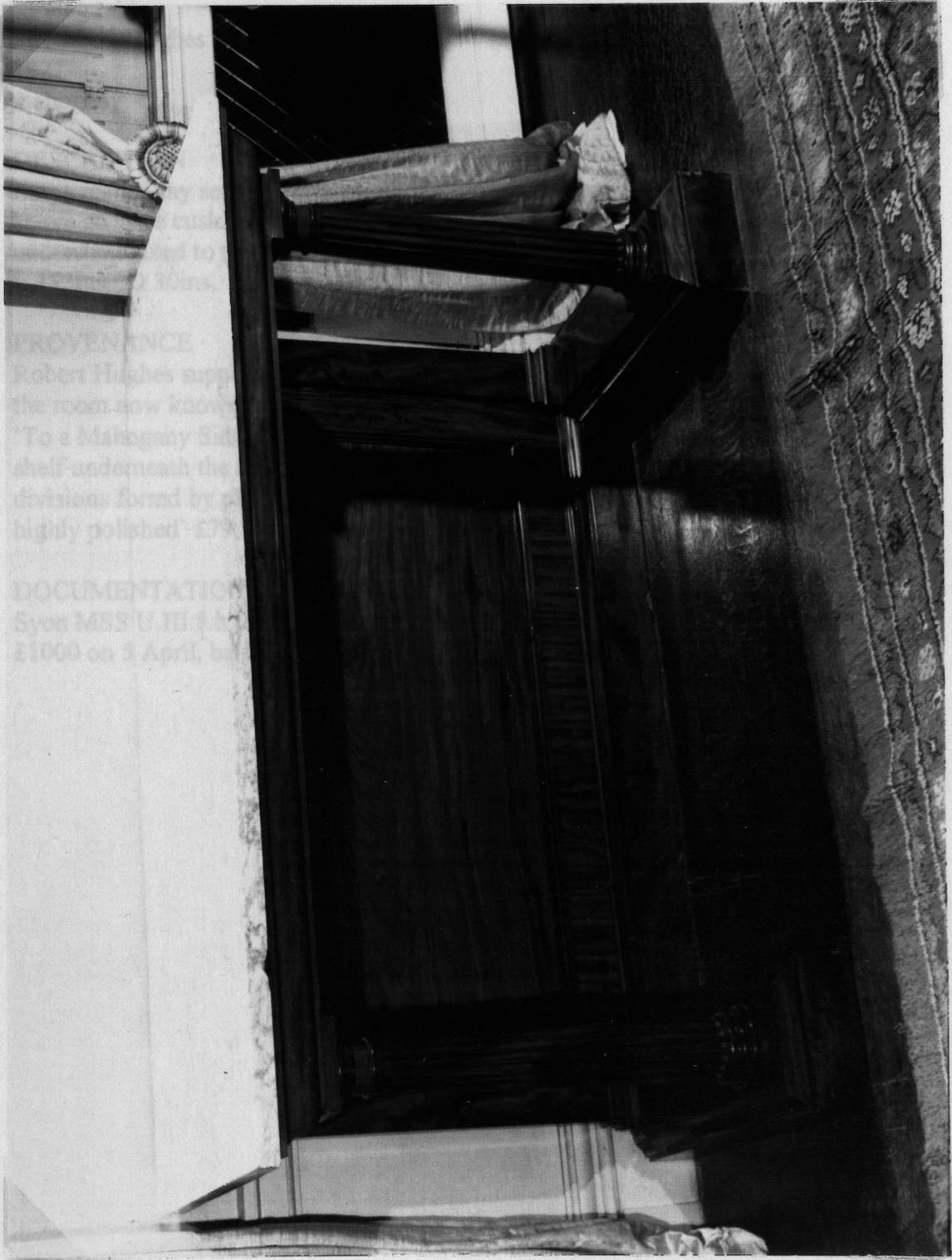


Plate LXXX

01134

01027  
table  
serving table  
by Robert Hughes  
1827  
mahogany

#### DESCRIPTION

Large mahogany serving table of oblong form with a panelled and moulded back above an ogee cushion frieze, on eight hexagonal turned tapering legs with an undershelf fixed to the legs.

L.173ins. D.30ins. H.46ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Robert Hughes supplied the serving table for the Ante Dining Room at Syon House, the room now known as the Upper Pantry, in 1827:

'To a Mahogany Sideboard 14ft6 long standing on 8 turned and octagonal Legs, a shelf underneath the full size fitted into the Legs, a Gallery along the back of top in 3 divisions formed by pilasters standing over the Legs &c &c – fine wood and the whole highly polished' £79.12s.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827, drafts of £2000 paid on 11 January and £1000 on 5 April, balance of account of £878.15s.3d. paid on 3 July 1827)

01133

wine cooler (one of a pair)

by Robert Hughes

1827

mahogany

#### DESCRIPTION

The oblong moulded top edge over a cavetto frieze is fixed to the tapering sarcophagus-shaped body. The lower half of the interior is lined with lead. The whole is on four short square fluted legs fixed to a massive moulded plinth set on four brass castors.

L.31ins. D.21 ½ ins. H.22ins.

#### PROVENANCE

Made for the Private Dining Room of Syon House. Supplied by Robert Hughes in 1827 at a cost of £37.10.0 for the pair:

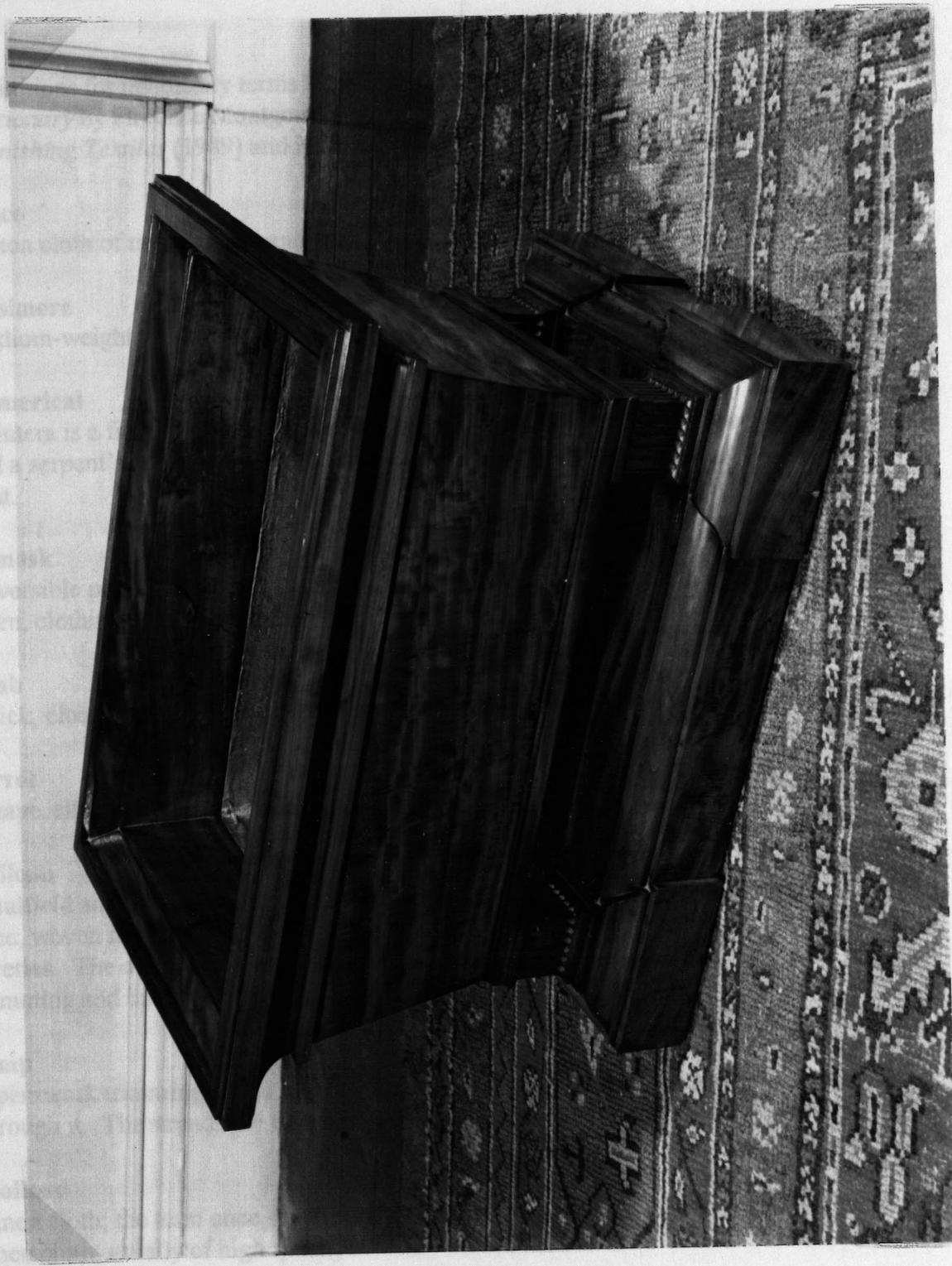
'To 2 handsome Mahogany Wine Coolers of a Sarcophagus shape standing on massive Plinths &c., the sides paneled, the whole of fine spanish wood highly polished the insides lined with Lead...£18.15'.

#### DOCUMENTATION

Syon MSS U.III.8.h (bill dated January 1827, drafts of £2000 paid on 11 January and £1000 on 5 April, balance of account of £878.15s.3d. paid on 3 July 1827)

# Glossary

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Furnish  
calico  
Cotton  
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King Caub  
Known as Kiscook; an Eastern damask or brocade. The fabric was imported from India.

## Glossary

Definitions for upholstery terms have been derived from *Textiles in America, 1650-1870, A Dictionary* by Florence Montgomery (1984); Pamela Clabburn's *National Trust Book of Furnishing Textiles* (1989) and Frances Collard's *Regency Furniture* (1985).

### **calico**

Cotton cloth of many grades and varieties, first made in India, later in the West.

### **cassimere**

Medium-weight twilled woollen cloth of soft texture, developed in the late 18th century.

### **chimerical**

Chimera is a fire-breathing monster in Greek mythology with a lion's head, a goat's body, and a serpent's tail. The legs of the Louis XIV *pietra-dura* cabinets have cloven feet like a goat.

### **damask**

Reversible patterned fabric made from several fibres, or combination of fibres, used as table linen, clothing and furnishings.

### **drab**

Thick, closely woven overcoating but also an undyed cloth of grey-beige colour.

### **ferret**

A tape, ribbon or binding, of cotton or silk.

### **galloon**

Caulfield and Seward's 19th century define two types of galloon: one is strong, thick gold lace, woven in a pattern in threads of gold or silver on silk or worsted used in uniform liveries. The other is of wool, silk or cotton, combined with silk or worsted, used for trimming and binding articles of costume, shoes and furniture.

### **gimp**

Open-work trimming, made of silk, worsted or cotton twist with a cord or wire running through it. The strands are twisted to form a pattern.

### **Holland**

Linen cloth; the term once specified the country of origin but came to be generic name for linen cloth, usually of high quality.

### **King Caub**

Known as Kincob; an Eastern damask or brocade. The fabric was imported from India.

**leno**

Originally a silk fabric but can be made from cotton; a light open fabric where the warp threads are twisted round each other so that the weft is picked through to bind them.

**lustring (lutestring)**

Light silk, tabby woven like taffeta, the surface dressed to give it a glossy sheen.

**Marseilles quilting**

Marcella. In the eighteenth century quilts made from two layers of cloth closely stitched by hand with pattern areas raised by being stuffed through the coarser backing; by the end of the century this was imitated by the loom.

**nulled**

gadroned, thumb moulded

**orris**

Lace woven from gold and silver thread.

**passementerie**

fancy edging or trimming made of braid, beading, metallic thread etc.

**patra**

patera is the more usual form of this word, meaning, any flat round ornament in bas-relief.

**Raphael leaf**

Raffle leaf - rococo acanthus scroll

**Rehausse d'Or**

Heightened with gold.

**sarcenet**

Plain, tabby-weave thin silk, which could also be twilled, and was always soft and supple.

**spandrils**

spandrel: architectural term referring to the almost triangular space between one side of the outer curve of an arch and the rectangle formed by the mouldings enclosed in it, frequently filled in with ornamental work.

**Stormont**

Linen cloth made in Stormont, Ireland.

**superfine cloth**

Smooth faced woollen fabric.

**tabouret or tabarey**

Silk, or silk and linen mixture, with alternate satin and watered silk stripes.

**tammy**

Strong, lightweight worsted of plain weave and open texture.

**tissue**

Rich silk weave which often included gold or silver thread and floral patterns.

**Witney**

A heavy, loose woollen cloth, or coating, with a nap made at Witney, Oxfordshire. Famous for its blankets.

**worsted**

Light-weight cloth made of long-staple combed wool yarn.

# Bibliography

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