

Collections History

Temple Newsam has become celebrated for the fine collections of decorative arts, especially furniture, silver, ceramics, textiles and wallpapers, which have been built up since 1922 when the estate was bought from the Hon Edward Wood (later Earl Halifax) by the city of Leeds and developed as a country house museum. Despite the sale of many of the furnishings in 1922, the basis of the contents of Temple Newsam today is still the family collection. To this has been added over the years what now makes up one of the finest publicly owned collections of English decorative art outside London.

There are many fine paintings that have hung in the house ever since they were painted and their future here has been secured in a number of ways. In 1948 the generous gift by Lord Halifax included the Italian pictures bought by the 4th Viscount in Venice in 1705 and the family portraits commissioned from the fashionable French portraitist Philip Mercier in the 1740's. The charming portrait of a child by Paul van Somer, and the famous *Interior of the Pantheon in Oxford Road* possibly by Hodges and Zoffany were also part of this gift. The Reynolds portrait of Lady Hertford, which she probably brought to the house when she took up residence here c 1808, was bought back for Temple Newsam by the National Art Collections Fund in 1952. Three more family portraits - Sir Arthur Ingram by George Geldorp, Sir Thomas Ingram and Charles, 9th Viscount Irwin - were bought from Lord Halifax in 1983; at the same time, the two paintings commissioned in the 1740's from the Italian, Antonio Joli, for the overmantels in the Saloon, joined the permanent collection. Yet more family portraits were acquired in lieu of taxes in 1996.

Some of the Old Masters bought for Temple Newsam between 1750 and 1868, including paintings by Rembrandt, Titian, Rubens and Claude, have not remained here but pictures painted for other houses have been acquired, among them G B Pellegrini's large *Hector and Andromache* formerly at Kimbolton Castle, the splendid horse portraits of *Aleppo* and *Mother Neasham* from Aldby Hall and Henry Morland's charming painting, *The Fair Nun Unmasked*. All these, and appropriate landscapes, portraits, still-lives and genre scenes from the City Art Gallery, bring the number of paintings hanging in the house to around 350, much the same as in the inventory of 1808.

The furnishings tell a similar story. The furniture supplied for the Gallery by James Pascall in 1745 was by far the most important made for Temple Newsam in the 18th century and efforts to gather it back have been largely successful. Otherwise the house has been refurnished with objects of the highest quality, made for other country houses, often by the finest craftsmen of their day. So comprehensive is the collection now, that stylistic developments in England from the 16th to the 19th centuries can be studied in depth.

Earlier in the date is an entire early-Tudor room, constructed about 1530 for Sir Thomas Wentworth of Bretton, near Wakefield, in the same avant-garde

taste that Temple Newsam must have shown them. The 17th century is well represented with furniture, silver and pottery, London styles often contrasting with things made elsewhere. The Mostyn and Thirkleby flagons, made in London, and some of the York pieces show continental influence while towards the end of the century much of the best silver was made by Huguenot refugees, like Pierre Harache, seeking refuge from religious persecution. It was possibly another Huguenot refugee, Philip Guibert, who was commissioned by the 1st Duke of Leeds to make the early 18th-century daybed and sofa and the magnificent pair of contemporary chairs, acquired in 1984.

The second quarter of the 18th century is exemplified by furniture in the manner of the Yorkshire architect and designer William Kent, one of the leading figures in the Palladian movement: a pair of gilt tables (from Wentworth Woodhouse) and the mahogany settees in the Edwardian library, and a gilt side table and pair of wall-lights attributed to the royal cabinet-maker Benjamin Goodison are typically architectural in concept. The continuing influence of the Huguenots can be seen in the magnificent silver centrepiece made in 1731 by David Willaume and his sister Anne Tanqueray.

The rococo style of the middle years of the 18th century originated in Paris and some of its chief exponents in this country were Frenchmen: Paul de Lamerie, who made the silver tea equipage of 1735, Louis-Francois Roubiliac, who carved the bust of Pope in 1738, and James Pascall, the maker of the furniture in the Saloon, are notable examples. The style was quickly taken up in this country, as the alterations made by the 7th Viscount, fine furniture from the workshops of John Channon, Vile & Cobb and others, and the delightful Chelsea porcelain tea and coffee service all testify. Eight chairs from a large set made by Giles Grendy, together with a Chinese porcelain plate with the Irwin arms - the sole survivor examples of English pottery show the European mania for Oriental decoration. The contemporary vogue for the Gothic style is clearly seen in the library writing table made for the Earl and Countess of Pomfret around 1758.

The revival of interest in classical Roman art, which dates from the 1760's onwards, affected all the arts. It can be followed here in gold and silver by leading French and English makers; in ormolu and marble candelabra, cassolets and clocks by Matthew Boulton, Benjamin Vulliamy and J B Lepaute; in sculpture by J R Wyatt, Samuel Joseph, William Theed and Joseph Gott; and particularly in furniture: notably the masterpiece of early neo-classicism in the library writing table made for Harewood House by Thomas Chippendale around 1771. Documented examples of Chippendale furniture, lent by the Chippendale Society, make Temple Newsam an essential place of pilgrimage for all those interested in the celebrated cabinet-maker's work. There is also an outstanding suite of furniture upholstered in Gobelins tapestry and supplied to Moor Park, Hertfordshire, by Fell and Turton.

Other groups of objects have been acquired, for instance, to demonstrate regional traditions in the sort of 17th-, 18th- and 19th-century furniture, which, though not made for great houses, sometimes survives in their attics. The development of pottery in England can be followed, largely in collections given and bequeathed by Thomas Hollings in the 1940's, from the slipware of Thomas Toft and others, to the refined tablewares of factories such as Wedgwood or the Leeds Pottery. Made for the middle-class rather than aristocratic families, these have often found their way into great houses as a result of the collecting tastes of a later generation of owners.

The collections are still growing and the restoration of the interiors of Temple Newsam to their former state may provide a shift of emphasis in what is purchased.

The city's large and comprehensive collection of 19th and 20th century decorative art is displayed along with the Gascoigne Collection at Lotherton Hall, while the exceptional collections of paintings, prints, drawings and watercolours and sculptures from the Victorian period to the present day are shown at the City Art Gallery.