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History, Provenance & Discovery. The Marriage Bed of Henry VII & Elizabeth of York: Dynasty, Design & Descent

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HISTORY, PROVENANCE
& DISCOVERY

A Suggested Itinerary

HISTORY & PROVENANCE

A Suggested Itinerary



HISTORY & PROVENANCE: A SUGGESTED ITINERARY

Why not Lancashire ?

Some years ago the theory was posited that a group of late 15th century or early 16th century beds which have survived in Lancashire, and show evident stylistic similarities with the marriage bed of 1486, demonstrate that the bed must at some stage have itself been present to influence craftsmen employed by local leading families; an obvious suggestion was that the bed had been taken and left behind at Lathom House or Knowsley during the royal tour of 1495.

However, this need not have been the case, and on further examination quite unlikely.

Thomas Stanley, rapidly made 1st Earl of Derby for his part in bringing Henry Tudor to the throne, owned great swathes of Lancashire and had recently turned Lathom House into an extensive, luxurious and heavily fortified enclave; however, he had been a fixture both at the court of Edward IV where he was Lord Steward of the Household, and at that of Richard III where he kept that position despite brief imprisonment (his excuse for returning to Lancashire not long before Bosworth – and then pleading sweating sickness – was that he had been long absent). Now as husband of the King's Mother he was also frequently at court, especially for ceremonies involving the royal heir Prince Arthur to whom he was one of four godparents. As Constable of England, he also presided over heraldic disputes in the Painted Chamber.¹ His brother Sir William Stanley had been rewarded for his even more conspicuous and conclusive assistance with the position of Lord Chamberlain of the Household, and so would have been directly involved with fitting out the royal state bedchamber and day to day management of the palaces - until in February 1495 Henry found enough reason to be suspicious of his attitude towards pretender Perkin Warbeck to reluctantly have him executed. Despite generously paying for his funeral at Syon this must have cast a cloud over the royal visit to Lathom and the newly constructed royal apartments at Knowsley (Henry did rake in the 40,000 marks he found on the way there at William Stanley's Holt Castle, enough to pay an army).

The Stanley properties were by no means the main destination of the 1495 tour; they were stops 16 and 17 of a 37-stop tour, and the royal couple spent longer at Chester and Nottingham and with Margaret Beaufort herself at Collyweston, and the same number of nights with Arthur as they called at Bewdley and Ludlow. They spent only one night in the brand new bedroom at Knowsley, and a local tale recounts that Henry VII made a speedy exit from Lathom after four nights when Earl Thomas' fool, who had accompanied them up to the leads to survey the countryside, said "Tom, remember Will !"²

The family situation was in any case not exactly cosy. The marriage between Margaret Beaufort and Thomas Stanley had been one of convenience; she was wealthy, but having taken her son to dinner with Henry VI during the Readeption she needed a route of access to the restored Yorkist court. Once her son was king, she detached herself from Thomas Stanley by having herself made *femme sole* by parliament even before Elizabeth of York was made legitimate, and her documents at St John's College Cambridge reveal that after she took her vow of celibacy in 1499 she never returned to Lathom; it is unlikely that she would have left a royal family heirloom there, abandoned and forgotten. Henry Tudor was also no fool, and thought it much wiser in such unsettled times to place his heir at a manor and castle surrounded by men who depended for their livelihood on the king and not a regional magnate, as Edward IV and Richard III had done before him. When Arthur travelled north, it was not to Lathom but to the Haddon Hall of Sir Henry Vernon, father of his tutor George, where a bedroom was reserved for him.

But the Stanley brothers had ample opportunity to view the royal bed at court and have their craftsmen sketch it and copy it back in Lancashire – a county never as affluent as the south east, and where there was less jettisoning of good furniture to replace it with whatever was fashionable.

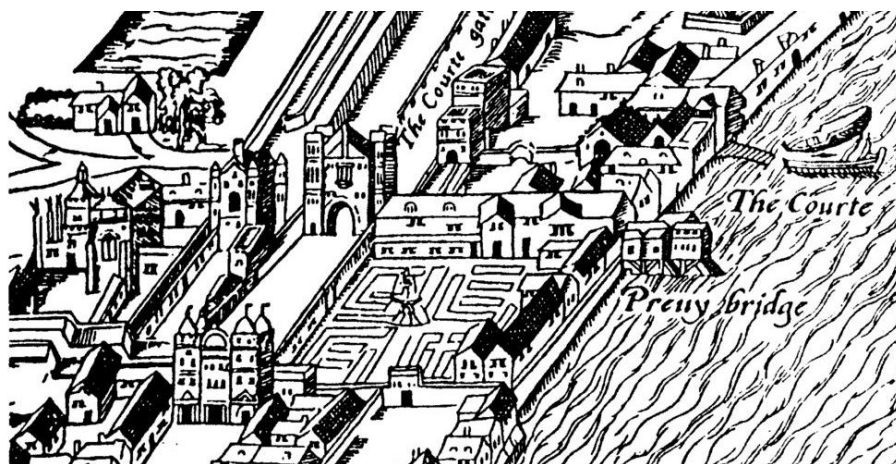
Another indication that the royal bed was not on Stanley territory in the mid sixteenth century comes from examining the character of the current earl. Edward 3rd Earl of Derby had been still a minor when his father died in 1521, and became a royal ward at court; Henry placed him with Wolsey. He was to follow the family tradition of doing whatever the king wanted – for example in supporting his request for an annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon in 1530, being cupbearer at Anne Boleyn’s coronation and suppressing the northern rebellions of 1536 and 1537. But he was confident and secure enough to protest against the new liturgy in the House of Lords in December 1548, against the destruction of the old service books in December 1549, against legalising the marriage of priests in March 1552; and refused to renounce his title to the Isle of Man. Despite all this he was still appointed lord lieutenant of Lancashire in May 1552 and so would hardly have felt compelled to change decorative details on furniture on his own territory. When Mary I came to the throne he bore the sword Curtana at her coronation and was made Lord Steward, and was later involved in the arrest and execution of Protestant martyrs John Bradford and George Marsh (he told the latter he had never approved the changes in religion). If the inscription was added before Elizabeth, he was therefore an unlikely candidate for having it cut, as he was not succeeded by his definitely Protestant son Henry (who would have used the 1560 Geneva Bible with its slightly different spelling of the verse on the banderole cut as in the 1537 Bible) until 1572. It is striking that there is no mention of a royal bed by later generations of the family in any publicly accessible remaining Stanley papers³, including those of ardent royalists James and Charlotte Stanley, 7th Earl and Countess of Derby.

LONDON

Looking for Evidence of the First Tudor State Bed

Whitehall – The New Royal Apartments

There is no documentary evidence for the marriage bed – or indeed any other royal bed – leaving the circle of the London palaces before the reign of James I. Thanks to John Stow we know that in 1512 the existing private apartments of Westminster Palace were blackened by a fire, but the Painted Chamber and Queen’s Chamber, and even some tenements like the intriguingly named Paradise, Purgatory and Hell were not much damaged⁴, and indeed with modifications some parts were to survive until 1834. Parliament was held there again in 1515 – the first presided over by Wolsey – and in 1525. In the meantime when in London the king lodged with Wolsey at his newly expanded York Place, at Lambeth Palace, Baynard’s Castle, or at the Bridewell, planned by Wolsey and built in 1512-23 between Fleet Street and the Thames, which also received the entourage of Charles V during his visit of



The Holbein Gate and the royal apartments of Whitehall Palace at the time of Elizabeth I

1522 before it was completely finished; a connecting passage was thrown over the Fleet river and through London Wall so additional rooms could be used in the Blackfriars.

However as with Hampton Court, there was nothing that Wolsey could create that Henry would not decide that he ought to possess, and he also took over and planned the remodelling of York Place with Anne Boleyn as his first omniminister fell. It was soon to be called "Whitehall". Even a gallery which Wolsey had recently constructed for his house at Esher was dismantled and re-erected at Westminster to form half the upper storey of a new row of royal apartments running from the river to King's Street, where what was to become known as the "Holbein Gate" enabled the king to cross the road to the royal sports and leisure complex without scrutiny by the vulgar throng. In the Cross House in the centre of this row a staircase led down into private royal gardens⁵; this staircase was very soon known as "the Adam and Eve stairs" because of a picture at its top. In the 1542 and 1547 inventories of Whitehall there is

*"Item oone table with the Pictures of Adam and Eve"*⁶

This seems to have been old by the reign of Charles I and yet venerated, and so restored; could it have been in the palace of the 1480s? (The well known version by Gossaert was gifted to Charles I in 1636 by the Dutch States-General, hung at Hampton Court, and not at Whitehall until 1666 when it was recovered from a purchaser after the Restoration). Simon Thurley thought that "The Adam and Eve Chamber" on the top floor of the gallery might derive its name from a mural never reproduced elsewhere⁷ (fortunately the Holbein dynastic mural lost in the 1698 Whitehall fire was copied); it is not impossible that the first state bed was now in this chamber. Whatever the explanation, the frequent use of Adam and Eve as a decorative theme throughout the new apartments designed by Henry and Anne Boleyn is suggestive. The subject was even used in 1534 to reboot the state cradle for the next Tudor heir, which Henry of course expected to be a son . . .

The Silver Cradle

"Parcels delivered by me, Cornelys Hayes, goldsmith.

*A silver cradle, price 16l. For making a silver plate, altering the images, making the roses underneath the cradle, the roses about the pillars, and new burnishing, 13s 4d. For the stones that were set in gold in the cradle, 15s ; for fringes, the gold about the cushions, tassels, white satin, cloth of gold, sypars⁸ and swadybands, 13s 6d. Total, 18l 1s.10d. The silver that went to the dressing of Adam and Eve, the making of all the apples, the gilding of the foot and setting of the currall⁹, 33s 4d. To Hance, painter, for painting the same Adam and Eve, 20s . . ."*¹⁰

"Hance" being Hans Holbein, commissioned for a small picture of the original First Couple to add to the cradle ; this pregnancy however seems to have quietly ended in a miscarriage, and there is no cradle in either inventory.

The Adam and Eve theme seems to have been carried down even as far as napery, or table linen, as the 1542 and 1547 inventories both mention an Adam and Eve coverpane - a large napkin of fine woven cambric or linen which covered the royal place setting and fresh bread until the king was about to dine ;

*"Item oone Coverpane of fyne diaper of Adam and Eve / being garnisshid rounde aboute with a narrow passamayne of venice golde and Silver / being in length oone yerde quarter / and in bredith iij quarters and oone naile of a yerde scant"*¹¹

Not far away the new gate of 1531-2 at the end of the new privy gallery at Whitehall was designed in deliberately antiquated style to match Wolsey's remaining "Tudor Gothic" chequerboard-patterned hall and chapel; here in the topmost room, the highest in the palace, Henry was to marry Anne Boleyn before dawn on 25th January 1533 in what was his private library and study, where he probably kept the bust of his father by Pietro Torrigiano; there seem faint echoes of previous court style and the 1486 bed too in Torrigiano's designs for Henry VII and Elizabeth of York's tomb and his later commission for the Lady Chapel's main altar. The touchstone tomb chest on which the gilt bronze effigies are mounted features scrolling foliage which recalls the bed's crestings and in two of the tondi St Michael and St George crush evil underfoot; the original, vanished design for the altar canopy, comparable to the tester of a bed, carried a trailing leaf and blossom motif like that used extensively on the marriage bed; thinner versions of the diapered bedposts divide the choir stalls of the Lady Chapel.

Unfortunately no royal beds are recorded early in the reign of Henry VIII, although purple taffeta curtains are ordered for one of Catherine of Aragon's lying-ins. However, in the early 1530s a haphazard collection of papers¹² contains a reference to a debt still owed by the late Cardinal Wolsey in respect of a bed he ordered to be made by the Great Wardrobe and gifted to the king which cost the enormous amount of £118, so possibly featured heavy gilding and gemstones as well as tapestry hangings; Wolsey of course had had over 220 beds for guests at Hampton Court and personal bed and tapestry collections which overshadowed the king's; Henry noticed.

As well as the massive enlargement of the royal Wardrobe after the Cardinal's demise – the king rather like the croupier of a roulette table in a form of gambling not yet invented – the collection of magnificent beds was also swelled by diplomatic gifts; as a prelude to Henry's trip to Calais with the Lady Anne Rochford Francis I gifted him with two rich beds, and in May 1530 "a varlet of the French king's" and the groom accompanying him were paid 200 crowns (£50) and 50 crowns (£12 10s.) for their carriage over the Channel to London¹³.

Actual joiner's fees - which perhaps did not include carving - were not so expensive: at the end of that year Richard Gibson was paid £21 14s 10d for actually making a bedstead; however, this was more than twice as much as the £10 Ned the king's carpenter was paid "for making a private bridge at York Place".

There is evidence of especially valued beds being refurbished for further use; in the 1530s there is a payment "to John Hethe and Harry Blankstoon, of London, paynters, for gylding and burnesshyng with fyne gold and bysse¹⁴, oon of the Kynges bed-stedes the whoche was enlarged wydder and layngger . . . 33s" The head and posts were "curiously wrought", painted and gilt, and the posts topped with "four bullyeons of timberwork gilt"¹⁵. One wonders if this was Henry and Jane Seymour's marriage bed being enlarged for her to take her chamber for the birth of their child (this bed, which she also died in, remained at Hampton Court and was shown to visitors under Elizabeth¹⁶). By 1540 beds were being enlarged to accommodate the king's ulcered leg and its dressings.



Sketch of Whitehall Stairs by Anthonis van den Wyngaerde for his London panorama, 1543; beyond the "Holbein Gate" are the turreted tennis courts on the left and the Cockpit on the right

A bill also remains for the work done on a new bed for “York Place” (Whitehall), including two pieces of walnut gifted to Henry by Sir Nicholas Carew brought from Beddington Park in June 1534¹⁷, deal boards for the bottom and wainscoting on which carved panels could be mounted; over 100 days were spent fashioning the bed, including gilding and painting by Andrew Wright (and perhaps making its hangings too) at a cost of £83 3s. in rooms hired specially for the purpose in the parish of St Laurence Poulteney. Alas no details of the carving are given, and which of the many beds in the 1547 inventory it became is impossible to tell.

But the 1542 and 1547 inventories do include a more arresting entry . .

The “Four Planets” Bed

The 1547 Inventory is replete with numerous bedsteads of various sizes, but most often six feet to nine feet wide. Few are described as oak, but most were painted a “walnut colour” even if not actually walnut, which was the fashionable wood for prestigious items of furniture by c.1530. In recording them the inventory takers nearly always describe the luxurious bedclothes on the bed rather than the actual bedstead; however at Whitehall in 1542 (but at Windsor by 1547) there is

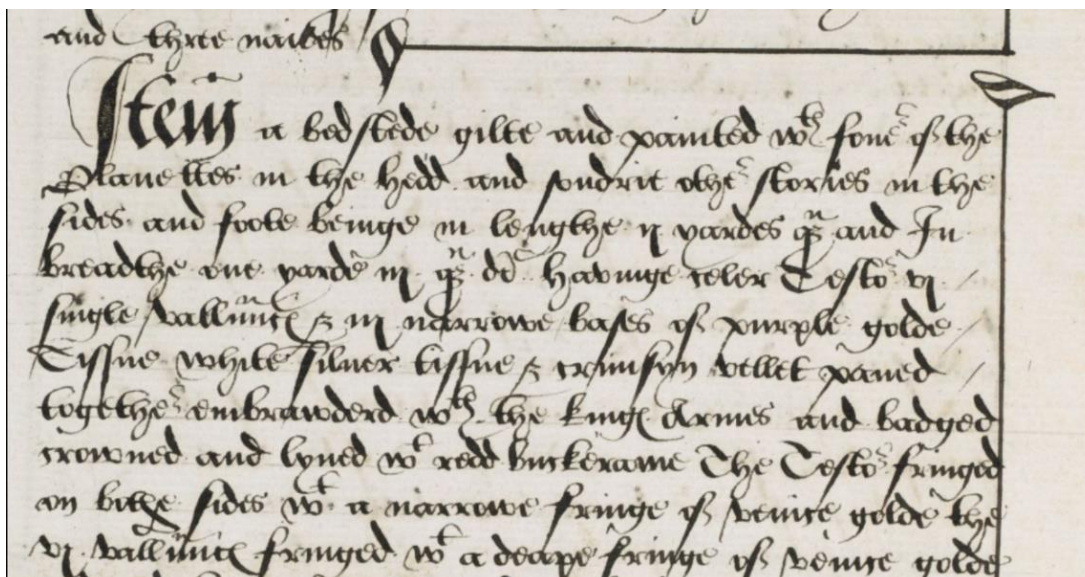
“oone bedstede gilt and painted with iiij of the planettes in the hed/and sondry other stories in the sides and foote being in length ij yerdes quarter and in bredith oone yerde iij quarters di¹⁸/having Ceeler Tester vj single Vallaunces and iiij narrowe bases of purple golde tissue white Silver tissue and crymsen vellat panel togethers / enbraudred with the kinges Armes and badges crowned and lyned with red buckeran . . .”¹⁹

. . which matches the original size of the 1486 bed almost exactly. The other five or six beds of this size in the royal inventories have no mention of a footboard²⁰, and this is one of only four beds standing made up at Windsor. It has a purple/gold silk, crimson velvet and white silk panelled fabric canopy, and curtains and tester embroidered with the royal arms and badges. The hangings are by now a little threadbare in places; pieces of the obligatory “Venice gold” fringe trim of the canopy are missing. It may seem unlikely that the inventory taker would in this case omit any mention of the figures of Adam and Eve; however, many of the beds are hung with a fabric tester of the king’s arms, and in this case this would hang down over the centre panel leaving only the most striking features of the side panels with their golden flaming stars or *estoiles* apparent, and at this time the same clematis-like design could convey planets, too.

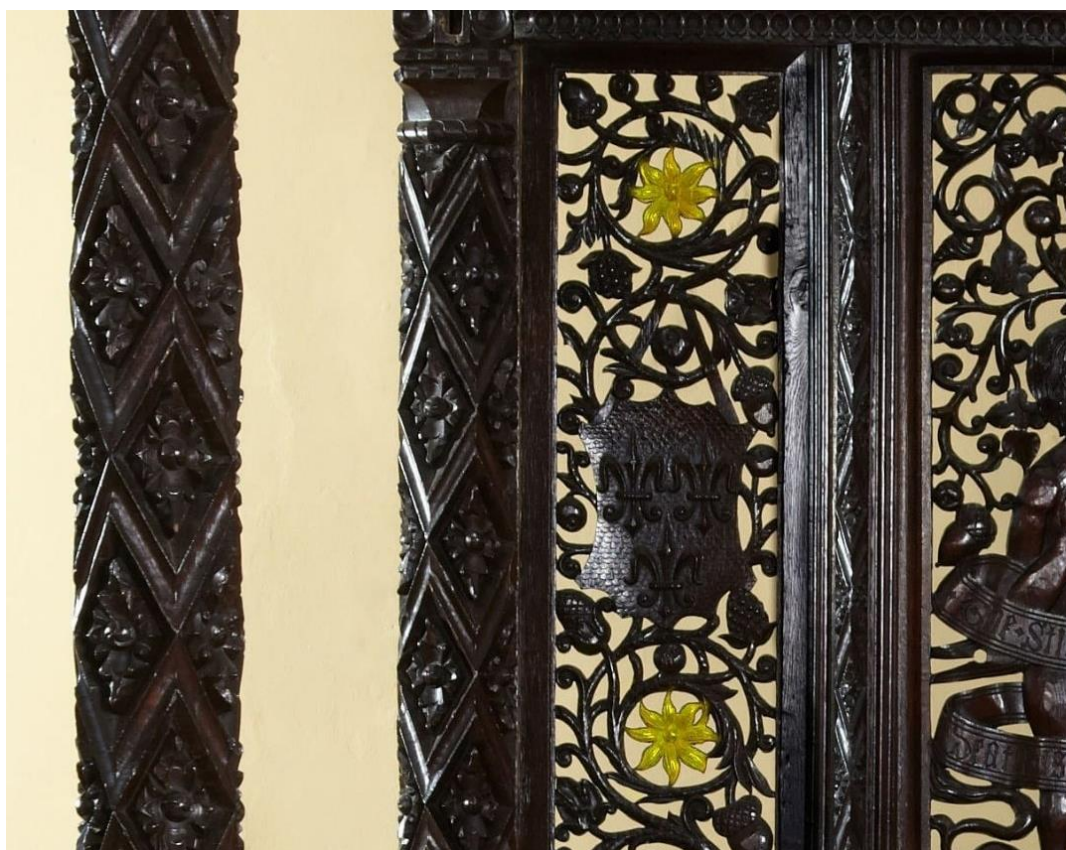
Greenwich *The Greyfriars*

At his sister Margaret’s prompting Edward IV had obtained the approval of pope Sixtus IV for a friary next to Greenwich Palace and donated land (an old ball court) and some purchased old houses, and the friars had begun building in July 1482. Henry VII confirmed the grant and founded a convent of the Observant Friars on 14th December 1485 with a warden and at least 12 brethren (he was also to bequeath them money for food and to enclose their garden in his will).

It was to play an important part in royal life as both Henry VIII-to-be and Elizabeth I would be christened there, until at last it went the way of all monastic establishments. However, some of the stained glass remained until the Restoration, and initial designs for the east window are recorded in BL Egerton MS 2341; it included both figures of the saints and members of the royal family, and progress was delayed by the difficulty of ascribing heraldry to particular saints. Although both Margarets - the king’s mother and the king’s eldest daughter - are portrayed, the central focus is on Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, carrying symbols of sovereignty such as orbs and sceptres but also repeating once more the statement of concord shown on their marriage bed of joining hands, a gesture going all the way back to the sculpture and coinage of imperial Rome. The exact date of the window is unknown at present but thought to be c.1500. This visual language was to be recalled again in the revised frontispiece to the 1550 edition of Hall’s *Union of the two noble and Illustre famelies* and so was still popularly associated with the creators of the Tudor dynasty.



The entry for the “Four Planets” bed in the 1547 Inventory of Henry VIII



The stars or planets highlighted on the headboard of the marriage bed; they would originally have been gilded and so more obvious.

And white damaske pained together quilted laced all
 with a Cordurmit of verme gold bordered round about
 with an embroderie of purple thote of gold fringed like
 with about a narrow fringe of verme gold & silke
 and lined with blew single brent beinge in breadthe
 two yards dd qz flanke and in lengthe two yards dd
 and thre nailles

Stew a bed stede giltte and painted with fone of the
 Plaine thos in the head and pundit othe stoxes in the
 sides and foote beinge in lengthe 7 yards qz and fu
 breadthe one yard in qz dd had mye velox Costo in
 single hallmit & in narrowe bases of purple gold
 Cusne white siluer tissue & richsyn wlllet pained
 together embrodered with the Kinge Armes and badged
 rered and lined with red burkexame The Costo fringed
 on bage sides with a narrowe fringe of verme gold the
 by hallmit fringed with a deape fringe of verme gold
 and red silke And at the ends with a narrowe fringe of
 like gold the by bases fringed beeth with a shorte fringe
 of verme gold & at the ends with a narrowe fringe of
 like gold One of the said bases lath a yore of narrow
 fringe at the ends and the shorte fringe at the ends with five
 tinctures of purple pained beinge of 12 breadthes
 dd of the same pained every one beinge in deapthe
 one yard thre qz and thre nailles fringed on both the
 sides and beeth with a narrowe fringe of verme gold
 lathinge a qz of a yard of the said fringe with a
 bed a bolster and two pillowes of ffustian filled with
 downe The bed beinge of thre breadthes dd of the same
 ffustian & in lengthe two yards dd & one naille The
 bolster beinge of one breadthe qz of the same ffustian
 and in lengthe two yards The two pillowes two one
 beinge of one breadthe qz of the same ffustian thome
 beinge in lengthe one yard flante And the beinge
 in lengthe one qz And thre nailles of a yard The
 quiltes of linnen rath filled with wolle every one

The full entry for the "Four Planets" Bed in the 1547-8 Inventory BL Harley MS 1419/2

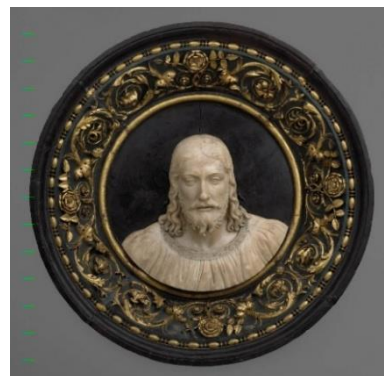
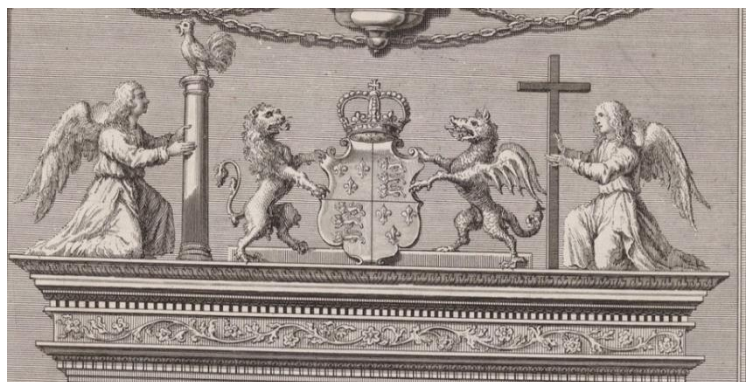


Left: a side view of the monument of Henry VII & Elizabeth of York in Westminster Abbey showing the scrolling rose briar in Torrigiano's design reminiscent of that on the crestings of the marriage bed (from an engraving by Claude du Bosc); the gilt bronze tondi feature both St Michael trampling on the Devil and St George trampling his dragon underfoot, like the bed's protagonists

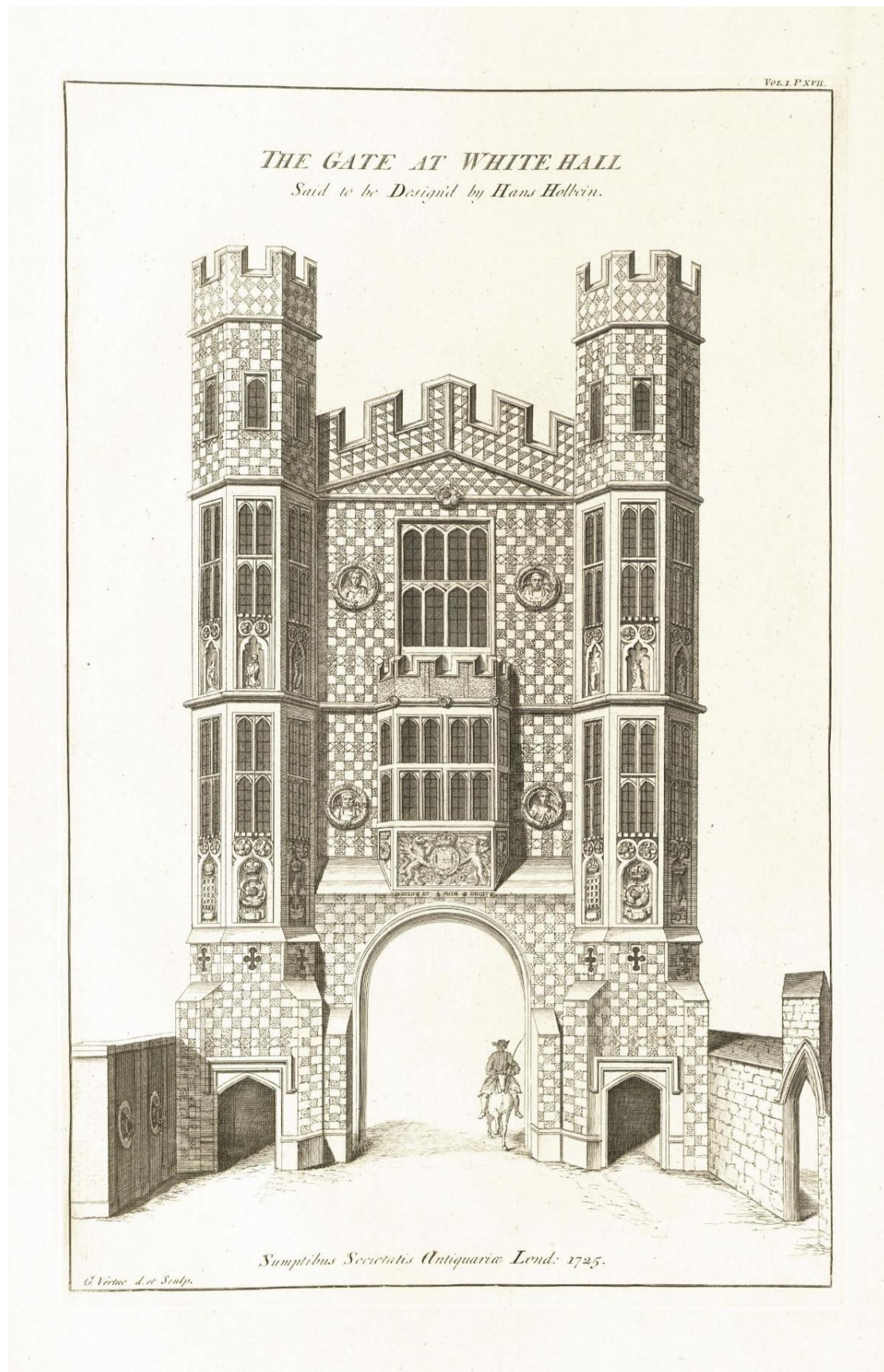
Below: roundel of Christ c.1516-20, commissioned by abbot John Islip and probably created by Pietro Torrigiano after finishing the tomb of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York but before the new altar of the Lady Chapel; again the scrolling foliage and rose briars may have drawn inspiration from the bed's crestings



Torrighiano's original design for the frieze on the canopy of the altar of the Henry VII Chapel (which later also became the monument for Edward VI) shown on this engraving by George Vertue for the 1743 edition of Rapin de Thoyras' *History of England* translated by Nicolas Tindal, right, and from Francis Sandford's *Genealogical History of the Kings of England and Monarchs of Great Britain, etc.*, 1677, above; this seems to echo the trailing hawthorn blossom which surrounds the bed



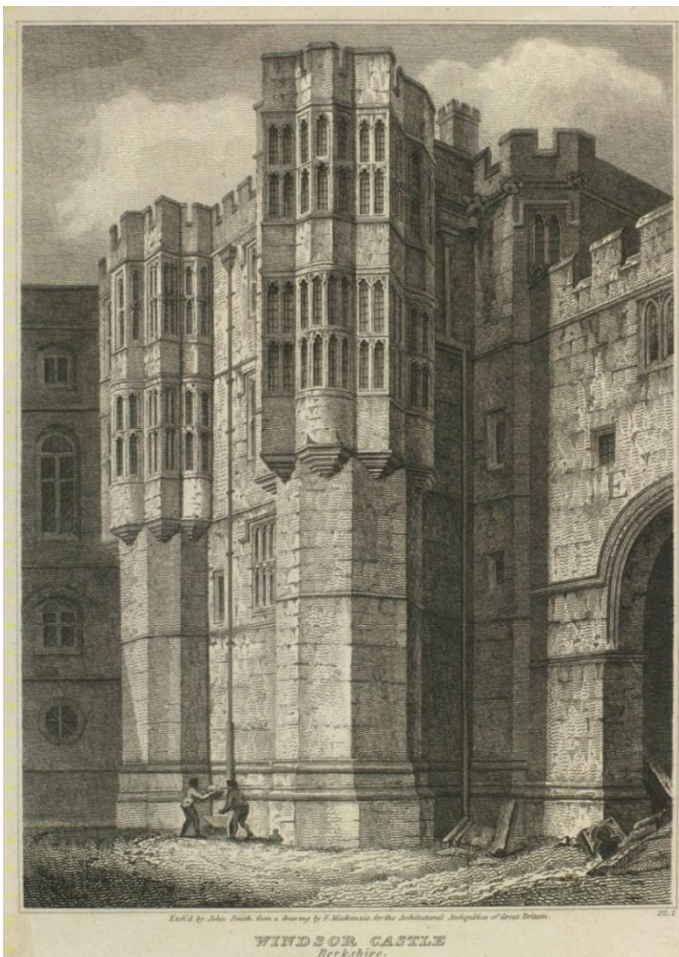
Left: the tomb of Mary, Duchess of Burgundy by Jan Borman and Renier van Thienen c.1488-90 exhibits a similar design concept to the crestings of the 1486 marriage bed, featuring heraldic escutcheons carried by branches and foliage



The “Holbein Gate”, also known as Whitehall Gate with its deliberately “antique” style for 1532; drawing made by George Vertue for the Society of Antiquaries in 1725 and published in his *Vetusta Monumenta* in 1747. The gate had been so labelled at least as early as the Greatorex map of 1670.

The design of the Whitehall, North or King's Gate, called the "Holbein" gate by at least the time of the 1670 map of the palace²¹, was deliberately antiquated to match the design concept of the existing Wolsey York Place hall and chapel, which had an "olde worlde" Arthurian theme. As the king reputedly kept the Torrigiano bust of his father in his private study in the topmost room where he also married Anne Boleyn, it was evidently personally significant for him. There is an echo of the outline of the 1486 bed about the shape of the building, and the distribution of the terracotta roundels also recalls the spacing of the seven stars/Virtues on it. No documentary evidence of Holbein designing it has yet been found and of course in 1530 he was not in England; however, he had been here, made many contacts and possibly been in the Painted Chamber (John Speed's maps by Jodocus Hondius were later to be sent from Amsterdam). Henry kept his late brother Arthur's Garter robes in his 'Secret Wardrobe' in the privy gallery, and at least one of his cloths of state at Whitehall may have been his father's as late as c.1540²².

Over in the Abbey there are signs that Pietro Torrigiano also had an acquaintance with the first state bed before designing the tomb of Henry VII (begun in 1512), followed by a new altar for the Lady Chapel. There are features both about the scrolling foliage around the tomb and the trailing rose and hawthorn blossom frieze of the original design of the altar canopy destroyed by Parliamentarians in 1644 (oddly simplistic for 1520) that might be viewed as generic in isolation but cumulatively are suggestive, especially when the treading on evil by SS George and Michael in the otherwise emphatically *all'antica* tondi on the king's side of the tomb is taken into consideration.



Tower and apartments built at Windsor Castle by Henry VII: 'Part of the North Terrace, looking up to Queen Anne's Closet'; etched by John Thomas "Antiquity" Smith (1766-1833) from a drawing by F. Mackenzie for the *Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain* (published 1 April 1809 by J. Taylor, High Holborn).

One of the partially glazed terracotta antique heads at Hampton Court which may have come from the "Holbein Gate"; the tondo surround is 19th century



By the time of Henry VIII's Psalter BL Royal MS 2 A XVI f.3 in the 1540s, royal beds were more massive with Renaissance style classically themed carving in a bedroom with Ionic columns





From the 1542 and 1547 Inventories of Henry VIII it is very evident that the current dynasty did not believe in jettisoning highly crafted furniture and luxurious bedding simply because it was old or associated with a disgraced consort, if still in serviceable condition; there are at least two associated with Anne Boleyn. The 1547 inventory mentions that among those at Hampton Court was

“One bedstead [. . .] . . . curiously wrought and carved with the late Quene Anne’s ciphers” dressed with a celure, tester, valances and three lower valances with needlework in silk and gold lined with yellow sarcenet, also displaying Anne’s ciphers, and fringed with the ubiquitous “Venice gold”. Upon both celure and tester was *“one great roundel bordered aboute [. . .] . . . with the king’s armes and the said Queen Anne’s armes”*²³. The five curtains were of green damask, fringed on both sides with Venice gold. Warmth was assured by a fustian down filled quilt then four quilts of fine linen filled with wool, covered by a great counterpoint of cloth of gold embroidered all over with Anne’s own ciphers and appliquéd shapes of green and crimson velvet, with a great embroidered central roundel featuring the arms of the king with those of *“the saide Quene Anne”*. Henry would have followed custom in leaving his own bedchamber to visit his queen in hers in a new luxurious bed which trumpeted her status, and after she was discarded it was not. In 1547 it had become safe to once again mention her name, and when her daughter finally sat on the throne even to display her former possessions.

At some stage Elizabeth I seems to have spent some thought on what she was going to use each palace for, especially when no children needed to be accommodated, and what should be done with the beds of her forbears, which she would not use but which had already become historic objects.

Elizabeth I of England in Parliament Robes

She lived mostly at Richmond and Greenwich, and used Hampton Court for grand functions and impressing ambassadors, amplifying her father’s

“Paradise Room” of royal treasures, and several rooms displayed Henry VIII’s red satin field bed from his last French campaign, the bed Jane Seymour had died in, and even one with a tester embroidered by her mother; this was probably not the one in gold, red and green described above (unless its top valances had also been embroidered by Anne and her ladies), but that now in the Burrell Collection - which is of cream silk taffeta backed with linen and decorated with black silk velvet cutwork in arabesque shapes, including an “HA” cipher for Henry and Anne surrounded by their personal emblems of the acorn and honeysuckle.

Evidence that beds much older than those of her parents were still kept by Elizabeth, and had been for over a century, is strangely provided by reports of her fluctuating courtship with Francis, Duc d’Alençon then Duc d’Anjou. She took a personal interest in selecting his chamber and its furnishings at Richmond palace, suggesting he might possibly recognise the “crimson bed” in it. This was very probably the “*bedde of allaunson*” described in the 1547 inventory as having a celure, tester and counterpoint “*richelye embrowdered upon Crimson vellat*”²⁴, which had been brought to Queen Anne’s great chamber for Elizabeth’s own birth in September 1533; “*the king*” wrote Chapuys “*has taken from his treasures one of the richest and most triumphant beds which was given for the ransom of the duke of Alencon*”.²⁵ This bed had indeed been taken home by John Duke of Bedford, brother of Henry V, as part payment for the ransom of the captured 2nd Duc d’Alençon in 1424, and kept in the royal wardrobe ever since.

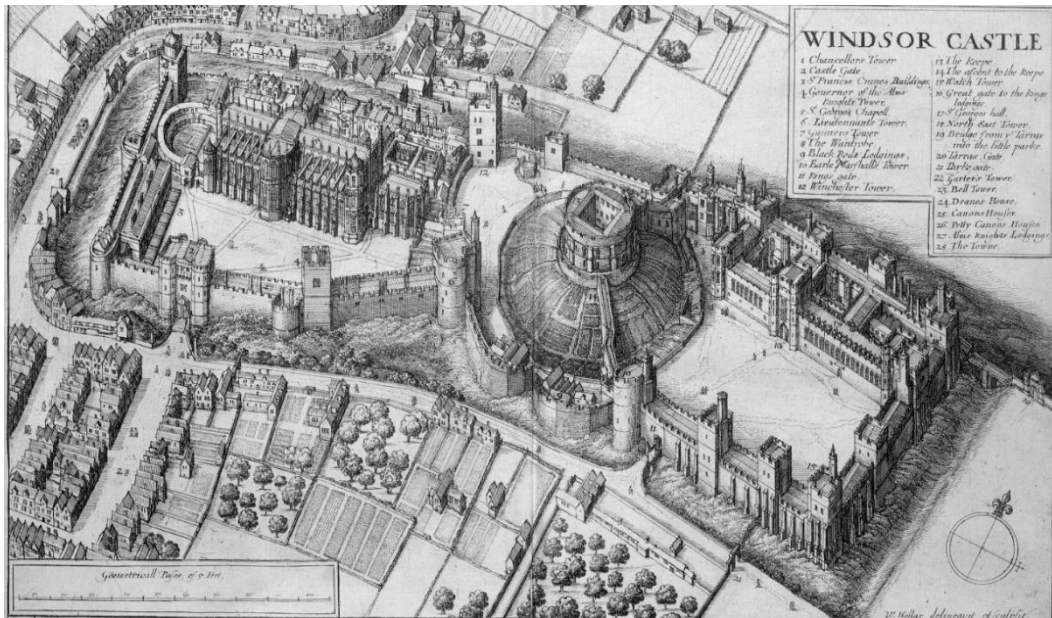
There were also several beds at the Tower of London, some on display, some in storage; when the Prince of Muscovy made his way to London after visiting Scotland a bed was taken out of storage at the Tower for him and returned afterwards.

However, the majority of the historic beds seem to have been kept at Windsor Castle in a kind of “bed museum”, which like Hampton Court was a fixture on the tourist route for the great influx of mostly Germanic travellers at the end of the sixteenth century. Among these was Paul Hentzner, a lawyer from Brandenburg, who escorted a young Silesian nobleman round France, Italy, England and Germany in 1598, recorded his experiences in rather erratic Latin and did not refrain from borrowing copiously from Camden’s *Britannia*, Polydore Vergil’s *Anglica Historia*, and especially the major atlases by Braun and Hogenberg (*Civitates Orbis Terrarum*) and Abraham Ortelius (*Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Antwerp 1570).²⁶ But though the descriptive introduction to Windsor Castle came from Camden, the details of the rooms he was conducted through are his own. Almost at the end of the tour the party is led into a museum of royal treasures and curios

“a chamber in which are the royal beds of Henry VII and his Queen, of Edward VI, of Henry VIII, and of Anne Boleyn, all of them eleven feet square, and covered with quilts shining with gold and silver; Queen Elizabeth’s bed, with curious coverings of embroidery, but not quite so long or large as the others; a piece of tapestry, in which is represented Clovis, King of France, with an angel presenting to him the FLEURS-DE-LIS . . . the horn of a unicorn, of above eight spans and a half in length, valued at above 10,000 pounds . . .”

Of course, this description prompts several questions. Is his description accurate, or mangled because he was not an English speaker and had misunderstood the guide? Was that particular early bed a larger one from say, 1506 when Henry VII entertained a shipwrecked Philip and Joanna of Burgundy and Castile at Windsor, giving them his recently built new apartment with several new magnificent state beds, not 1486 ? Or had Hentzner got the current Queen’s bed confused with that of her grandparents ? It would be somewhat strange to have one of Elizabeth I’s beds in the museum already, as her bedchamber was in use elsewhere in the castle. The bed from her coronation would by custom have gone to the Lord Great Chamberlain of 1559, once again an Earl of Oxford. It is even possible that the guide meant “Queen Elizabeth of York’s bed” as it would have been moved to the Queen’s Chamber for royal births. But it may be possible that the 1486 bed was the “four planets” bed and still at Windsor, where there are only four beds on the 1547 inventory including that one, and no others of that distinctive size. The Wardrobe records of the massive mid C14th Windsor beds of Queen Philippa indicate that there was not a linear chronological increase in royal bed sizes, but beds were created for specific palaces for specific occasions and uses. Unfortunately the best German recorder of his English visit, Lupold von Wedel, mentions royal beds at the Tower and Hampton Court but did not travel to Windsor. The Swiss Thomas Platter did, but we are none the wiser

“We then came to a large apartment full of royal beds, hung or tapestried with crimson velvet on which



Windsor Castle by Wenceslas Hollar 1659

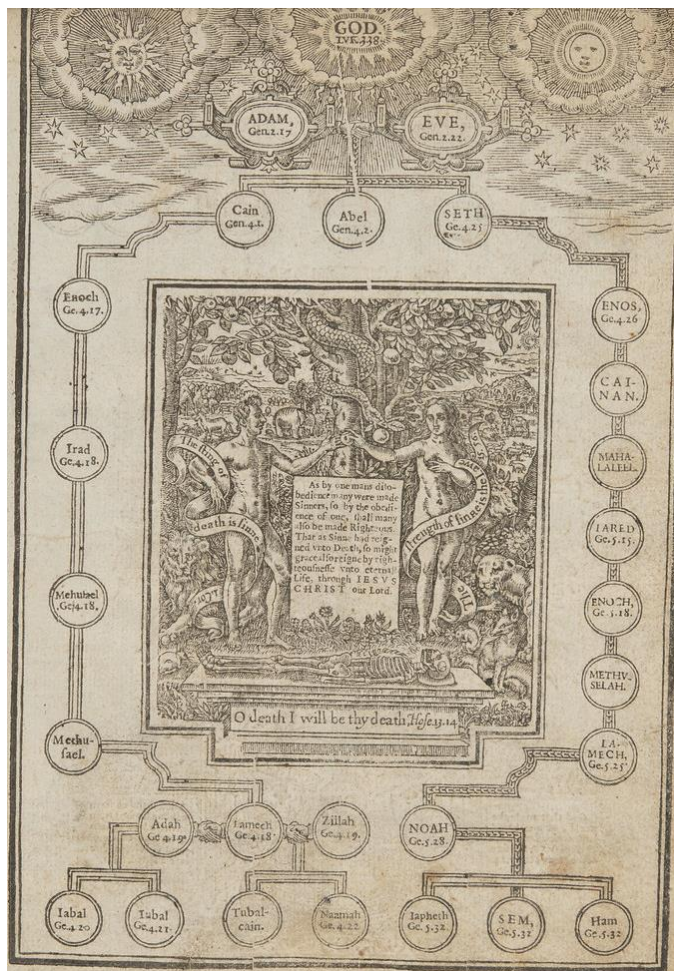
were embroidered in gold the Garter and its motto . . . There I beheld a bed of extraordinarily large proportions, very ornate, sixteen of my spans broad, and fourteen long, said to be King Henry VII's bed, and I never saw a bigger in my life. I likewise saw there King Henry VIII's bed adorned with crimson velvet embroidered with the garter . . . " . . . a very magnificent cushion embroidered in silk, gold and silver, which the queen worked herself during her captivity at Woodstock" . . . "a very ancient arras . . . which the English took from the French . . ." 27

It is evidently the same room seen by Hentzner, but his impressions are slightly different and equally frustrating. Possibly most of the beds here at Windsor were connected with Garter ceremonies; and yet Hentzner also mentioned Elizabeth of York and Anne Boleyn. Was this "Anne Boleyn bed" the one recorded as at Hampton Court in the 1547 inventory, or was this yet another ?



Adam and Eve on John Speed's *Map of Canaan* 1595 and right, on the frontispiece of his *Biblical Genealogy* bound in with the 1611 Authorised Version of the King James Bible





Left: the Biblical Genealogies frontispiece from this edition of the King James Bible places Adam & Eve in more of a zoomorphic and floral Paradise, but the flowers are generalised

A page from a 1607 version of the Geneva Bible (initially the "Breeches Bible" because of a printing error for which Robert Barker was fined). Calvin's drawing of the "rivers of Eden" has been incorporated with a heavy use of text laden banderoles, which however are distributed differently to those of the royal bed and do not swirl around Adam and Eve. This version continued to be printed (eg in 1616) with Speed's *Genealogies* also included



This 1607 copy of the Geneva Bible also has an embroidered cover of Adam and Eve in Eden set in a border of diapered lozenges (Metropolitan Museum New York)

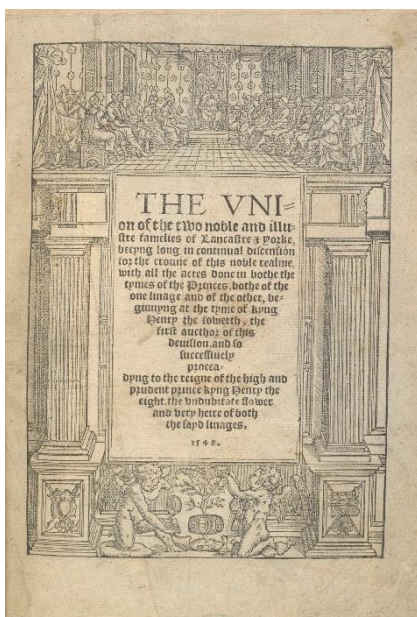


Adam and Eve in the first edition of the King James Authorised Version of the Bible to be printed in Scotland in 1633 at the time of Charles I's coronation; the rather Catholic illustrations caused some offence. The arm line is similar to the 1486 headboard but the representation is conventional; only the Fall is depicted here



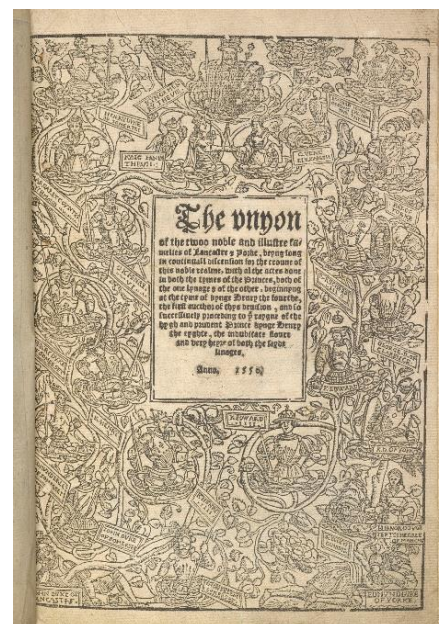
At some time after 1594 the royal marriage bed seems to have influenced John Speed in preparing the frontispiece for the Biblical genealogies²⁸ he later successfully contracted to have inserted in the 1611 King James Bible; notice the change in the depiction of Adam and Eve and the snake from his Map of Canaan published in 1595. His travels in the north seem to have been in order to survey towns such as Lancaster for the groundbreaking town plans at the corners of his county maps, which were otherwise based mostly on existing ones by Christopher Saxton, so his encounter with the 1486 bed is in any case likeliest to have happened when it was still in a London palace.

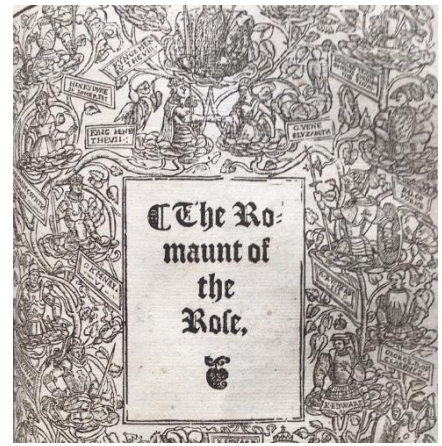
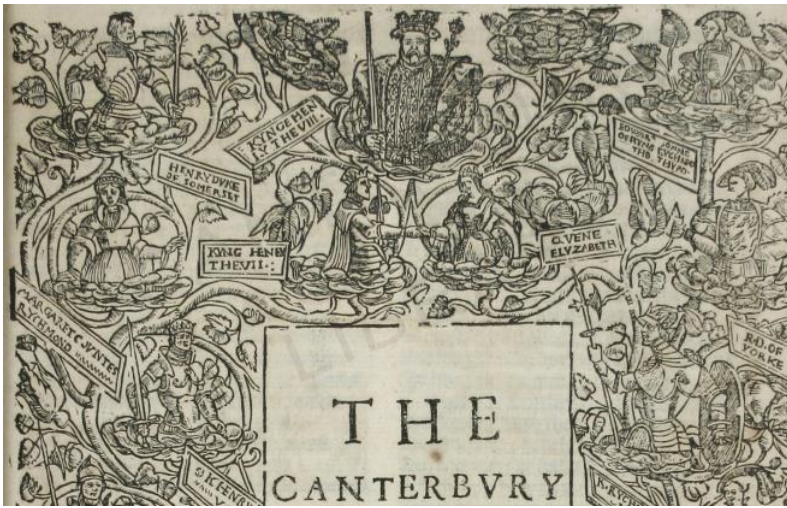
Though it is difficult to decide what exactly is meant by Hentzner's and Platter's descriptions, it is at least evident that historic royal furniture and furnishings were long kept to impress visitors with their magnificence. Whether the 1486 bed, disguised somewhat by a glittering coat of arms on a celure hung over the headboard, was amongst the collections on display in 1598-9 is uncertain, but it may have moved on from a royal palace at last in 1600 because of an extraordinary occurrence . . .



Left: the original 1548 frontispiece to Edward Hall's *Union of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancaster & Yorke*, showing Edward VI in council

Right: The royal genealogical rose bush design focusing on the compact between Henry VII and Elizabeth of York and culminating in Henry VIII, with which Richard Grafton replaced the 1548 version as the frontispiece of the 1550 edition



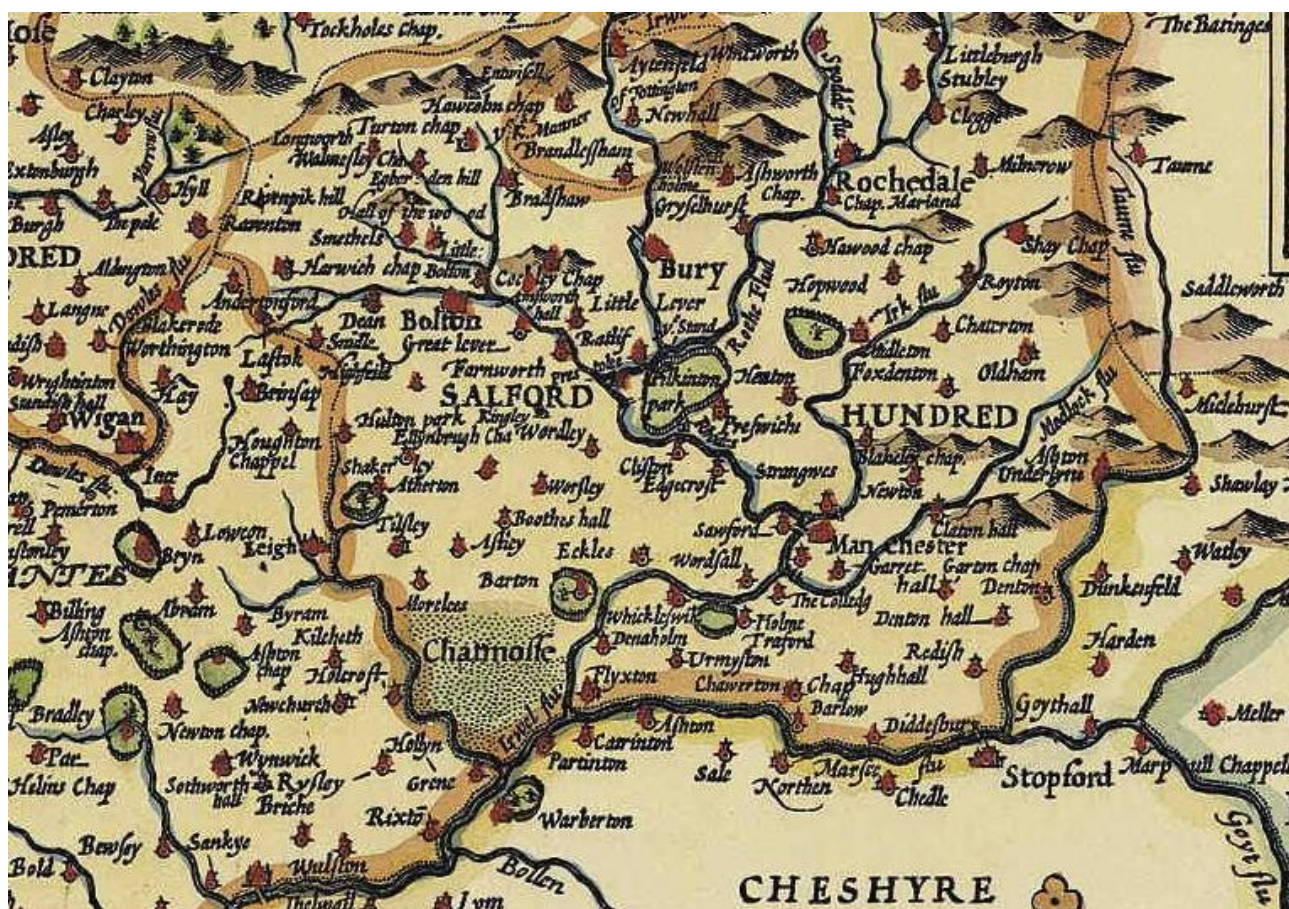


The frontispiece of John Stow's 1602 edition of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales re-uses the design from the 1550 Hall's Chronicle, as does the 1561 title page of The Romaunt of the Rose in the collected works of Chaucer



BL Harley MS 7353 c. 1461 : A Typological Life and Genealogy of Edward IV, with Biblical examples on the left as typological predictions of recent events with underneath a genealogy of the descendants of Edward III: possibly the first use of red and white roses to identify the opposing houses of York and Lancaster

HISTORY & PROVENANCE : PART II



THE QUEEN'S GIFT



The summer of 1599 was yet another when the peril of a Spanish naval onslaught hung ominously in the air. That it once more came to nothing was largely thanks to the weather, but the Queen asked for 6,000 men and sixteen ships and afterwards demonstrated her gratitude to those who had made the most effort to prepare for the threat. The Lord Mayor of London following that summer, who came to the end of his term in September 1600, was Nicholas Mosley, originally from Manchester; he had come to London to expand the markets for his and his brother Antonie's business trading woollen cloth, and indeed as he progressed from alderman to mayor its markets had extended to Russia. As an alderman in 1599 he had raised men to defend his ward, and in addition donations from members of his company the Clothworkers, and the City of London at large, to build ships to defend the port of London - and then in yet another levy for 500 men, ordnance and provisions for Essex' army in Ireland. When the London ships were not needed after all there were rumours that some money had been invested in a little profitable piracy.

The Queen showed her approval by a quite unprecedented gift; she gave Sir Nicholas not plate, or a miniature, but an elaborately carved bed and matching furniture, as she had heard he had built himself a new house – probably the first brick building in Manchester since the Romans - at Hough End in Withington, to retire to now he was, since 1596, lord of the manor of Manchester.



Nicholas Mosley (c. 1527-1612) was the son of Edward Moseley of Hough End in Withington. With his brother Antonie he went into the business of selling finished cloth, moving to London c.1550 to better supervise export abroad and eventually to import silk. He married his first wife Margaret at All Hallows, Honey Lane in 1553 and their first four children were baptised in London, but between 1560 and 1574 their other five children were baptised at St James' Didsbury. During this period Nicholas' brother Francis supervised the London end of the business, but when he died in 1570 Nicholas began to travel between both places, stopped for a while in Derby, and in 1575 returned to living in the capital²⁹. He now rose quickly, becoming alderman of Aldersgate ward in 1589, Sheriff of the City of London in 1590-91, alderman for Langbourn ward in 1594 and finally Lord Mayor in 1599-1600. He was one of the founder investors of the East India Company in 1598.

In 1596 he had meanwhile become lord of the manor of Manchester. Manchester had been held of the crown by William West, Lord de la Warr, who had taken out a loan for £3,000 from John Lacy and Nicholas Mosley using the manor of Manchester as surety. When he defaulted, John Lacy took the manor for several years but in 1596

Nicholas bought him out for a further £3,500 ; his son Rowland was to add Withington itself in 1598, and the Stanleys' Alport Park estate off Deansgate was also acquired for his youngest son Edward,

Above: Sir Nicholas Mosley, framed print from Rolleston Hall, now at Calke Abbey

Title page: The "Rainbow" Portrait of Elizabeth I at Hatfield Old Palace

making his name as a barrister at Gray's Inn (who himself later bought Rolleston Hall in Staffordshire, and as he had no offspring willed it and Alport Lodge to his nephew, also Edward). Edward Mosley became Attorney General of the Duchy of Lancaster, thrice MP for Preston between 1614 and 1625, and later donated a copy of Speed's *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* to Gray's Inn library.



Hough End Hall,
Withington

Nicholas had had the foresight to prepare for his enhanced status by acquiring a pedigree. He received a confirmation of arms and grant of crest from Robert Cooke, Clarenceux King of Arms on 17th February 1592 which provides a description of the Mosley arms, and some information regarding their rather mysterious origins;

"1 and 4 : Sable a chevron between three pick axes argent

2 and 3 : Or, a fess between three eagles displayed, sable



Crest : An eagle displayed, ermine"

The quarterings of 2 and 3 were supposedly those of an unidentified heiress married to Nicholas's grandfather James Moseley who lived at Hough End in the chapel of Didsbury as had his father Jenkyn before him, who "attained full age" (ie 21 years) in 1490. Other than this armorial grant, there is no proof of the existence of Jenkyn or even James Moseley ; the first to appear in the documentary record was Nicholas' father Edward, who was a fairly comfortably off burgess assessed at £40 in 1541. However, the rent roll of Thomas West, Lord de la Warr, 15th Baron of Manchester on 15th May in either 1473 or 1483 clearly identifies Sir Nicholas Longford as the tenant of "Whittington and Didsburie"; no Moseleys are recorded, so they must have been subtenants of the Longfords. Robert Cooke was accused of being too ready to grant arms for personal gain (over 500 grants were issued during his tenure), so it seems likely that Nicholas Mosley was just adding to the necessary accoutrements to facilitate further advancement and prestige in the City.

The Queen's gift of oak furniture featuring "a handsomely carved bedstead", according to the *Family Memoirs* written for private circulation by Sir Oswald Mosley 2nd Bt. in 1849, was bestowed when Sir Nicholas was knighted.³⁰ He was supposed to have altered the spelling of his surname from Moseley to Mosley to better fit a motto added to his new coat of arms "Mos legem regit": custom, or precedence, rules the law; this in tribute to his youngest son Edward's success as a barrister at Gray's Inn. It is tempting to wonder though if the queen was prompted to make a royal quip by the quote of *The strength of sinne is the lawe* from I Corinthians 15:56 clearly visible on a bed now stripped of its royal hangings.

There is no evident record of the gift being bestowed, but this does not mean the family tradition is dubious. There is no record of Elizabeth giving the Drake Jewel to her incorrigible privateer, but fortunately he was painted wearing it; the copy of *The Allegory of the Tudor Succession* which later travelled to Sudeley Castle and Strawberry Hill House declares in its inscription that "*the Quene to Walsingham this tablet sente, marke of her peoples and her own contente*" although its commission does not appear in the accounts.³¹

Sir Nicholas, like all Elizabethan Lord Mayors, had a celebratory pageant both through the streets and on the Thames, but unfortunately the records of all productions from 1592 to 1604 have been lost (pamphlets survive of some written earlier by playwright George Peele, and later by Anthony Munday, Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker).

He finally retired to Hough End in 1602, becoming a JP in 1603 and an unwilling High Sheriff for Lancashire in 1603/04. He became tangled in a dispute with the inhabitants of Collyhurst over enclosing land, but in his will made the customary charitable bequests to almshouses and £5 per annum for twenty years for a schoolmaster for Chorlton.

When he came to write his will Sir Nicholas was to stipulate that though his second wife Elizabeth was entitled to two good beds, this excluded "the Queen's gift", which was to be an heirloom like its accompanying furniture.³² His fine three-tier tomb in St James' Didsbury elevates him above his wives and children in his Lord Mayor's robes; according to his "Epitaph" £400 in gold was discovered secreted in the false bottom of his royal bed.³³ When the Civil War came the gift was to live a charmed life; Hough End itself was never in danger, and Cavalier Sir Edward never moved it to the Mosley townhouse Alport Lodge in Deansgate, which was burned to the ground because of his support for James Stanley, 7th Earl of Derby.³⁴ Later in 1665 the then Sir Edward left his wife Lady Elizabeth the up to date "damask bed" she presumably used with their plate and coaches in his will, but then left these items to his cousin Anne with Hough End and the manor of Manchester (rather than his sister, triggering a long court case);

*" . . my silver bason and my great grandfather Sir Nicholas Mosley, Knight., his old bed and bedstead, and the furniture in my own lodging chamber."*³⁵

The heirloom furniture always passed down the line of inheritance – thrice complicated by the succession of cousins - with the manor of Manchester, until this was finally sold to the newly formed Corporation of Manchester in 1846.

The tenure of Anne Mosley, who married Sir John Bland 4th Bt of Kippax Park, Yorkshire, is interesting in that it provides an explanation for the "Jacobite" achievement of retro Stuart royal arms with accompanying obelisks which is clearly stylistically influenced by the 1486 bed (and was later to be made use of by George Shaw, antiquary, architect, and forger over a mantelpiece in his own house, "St Chad's" in Uppermill, now the Library).

Lady Bland, like her father Sir Edward Mosley but unlike her husband, was low church ; she contributed to the building of St Ann's church, but also enjoyed dancing and a little archaeological investigation of Roman remains. She inherited Hough End, Hulme Hall and a life interest in Manchester, but based herself at Hulme.

Her son Sir John Bland 5th Bt., however, for her lifetime had access to Hough End (where the furniture remained), as well as his father's Kippax Park, and he is somewhat strangely omitted from some genealogies; this is likely to be because despite being MP for Lancashire twice, he was a Jacobite who was one of five members of the Commons arrested for treason in November 1715 (as were his near neighbours, the Catholic Barlows of Barlow Hall



Ancoats
Hall

Chorlton)³⁶. It is curiously difficult to discover the grounds for this, and all were soon released. However, Sir John also appeared on a list of reliable supporters for Yorkshire supplied to James Francis Stuart “The Old Pretender” in 1721³⁷. It would be very credible that he was having the royal gift rebooted to be occupied by the Pretender in 1715. Hough End and other Mosley properties were also managed for Lady Anne by her cousin Oswald Mosley of Ancoats Hall, who succeeded to the manor on her death in 1734; he, like Sir John, was a Tory - and a closet Jacobite. Even before he inherited Rolleston Hall there was Jacobite offspring there, as Sir Edward Mosley’s widow Katherine (who held it for her lifetime as jointure) had then married Charles, Lord North and was mother of William, 6th Baron North and 2nd Baron Grey of Rolleston, who spent some time in the Tower of London in 1721 charged with treason in connection with the Atterbury Plot.³⁸

Passing on to the 1740s during Sir Oswald’s tenure (he was ironically created 1st Bt. Of Rolleston by George I in 1720), an intriguing tale persists recorded in the Mosley *Family Memoirs* later penned by Sir Oswald 2nd Bt which not only mentions Sir Nicholas’s royal gift, but also an undercover visit in 1744 by Charles Edward Stuart - Bonnie Prince Charlie - to reconnoitre the north west and assess the level of support he would receive in the region the following year³⁹. He supposedly stayed at the Mosleys’ Ancoats Hall for a week or two while Sir Oswald, a circumspect Jacobite, remained at what was by now his main residence of Rolleston Hall, near to Derby but just over the border into Staffordshire. The royal gift may still have been at Ancoats or already at Rolleston Hall; did Sir Oswald expect to entertain Charles there the following year, with the updated Jacobite achievement over the gifted bed? The witness was the former daughter of the proprietor of The Swan, the only inn to take the London papers; she remembered the handsome, well turned out young man from Ancoats Hall who came three times a week to read them and before leaving the district tipped her half a crown; she recognised him as he led his army through Manchester the following year, only to be shushed by her complicit father. It is also noteworthy that the Jacobite forces knew to ford the Mersey at Didsbury; the main army built and crossed by the first bridge over the Mersey between Didsbury and Cheadle, while Lord Elcho and his cavalry went south and crossed at the old ford by Barlow Hall.

This story had first appeared in verse form some years before in Joseph Aston’s *Metrical Records of Manchester* (1822);

*“In the year Forty-four a Royal Visitor came,
Tho’ few knew the Prince, or his rank, or his name*, _
To sound the opinions, and gather the strength
Of the party of Stuart . .*

*Charles Edward Stuart, commonly called the Young Pretender . . .

visited Sir Oswald Mosley, Bart., of Ancoats Hall, in the year 1744 and remained with him for several weeks . . .⁴⁰

Local author and newspaper man Joseph Aston had been confided in by the girl herself, by then an old lady, who insisted her father had admitted she was quite correct once it was politically safe to do so; and he informed Sir Oswald, who included the tale in the *Memoirs* and added the footnote that Charles Edward Stuart had been spotted crossing from Calais earlier that year by a packet boat captain; Louis XV had been planning to back a Stuart rising in early 1744 to distract Britain from European affairs until the French fleet was caught in a storm in March.

This story also helps to corroborate another tradition that the bookcase bearing a plate “Tudor buffet” at Chetham’s Library, Manchester, donated by William Hulton in 1827 (and now recognised to be the late C15th bed of Adam Hulton⁴¹) is the remains of a bed reputedly slept in for two nights by Bonnie Prince Charlie at Hulton Hall. This appears to be impossible, as all the Young Pretender’s whereabouts for 1745 are now well known. However, more evidence that he was in England the year before makes it a distinct possibility that he did stay at at least two halls in the Manchester area.



Prince Charles Edward Stuart, “Bonnie Prince Charlie” by Cosmo Alexander c.1749, at Sizergh Castle

The Mosleys continued in a rather quiet way to the end of the nineteenth century, though Sir Oswald 2nd baronet of the *Memoirs* augmented his finances considerably by selling the manor of Manchester (which had cost his ancestor Sir Nicholas £3,500), to the new Corporation for £200,000; this was perhaps just as well, for he had to find dowries for six daughters (his library included an 1819 copy of the works of Byron, who was about to sell the manor of Rochdale to James Dearden, whose son, also James, was to be very well acquainted with fellow *aficionados* of “ancient” furniture the Reverend Francis Raines and George Shaw). Just after he died in 1871 there was a massive blaze at Rolleston Hall but most of the furniture and pictures were rescued, some by his grandson, and much rebuilding done. From photographs of several rooms commissioned by a decorating company in 1892 it is evident that Sir Oswald 2nd baronet had also, some years before, purchased furniture from George Shaw of Uppermill – who records at least two visits to the area in 1840 in letters to his friend the Reverend Francis Raines and another

in 1842, but he had often passed through this part of the Midlands when he first began to travel as a representative promoting the products of his father's mill business and taking orders; among his own first furniture purchases were "two very fine old chairs . . . said to have come from Tutbury Castle when it was destroyed"⁴² in Burton-on-Trent; Sir Oswald 2nd Bt. wrote a history of the castle. A letter in the Raines Collection at Chethams Library in Manchester from Sir Oswald Mosley to Canon Raines confirms their long-standing friendship; another contact may have been the largely absentee vicar of Rochdale until his death in 1839, the Reverend William Robert Hay, somewhat notorious for his part in the Peterloo massacre and yet another collector of old furniture⁴³; he had begun his legal career at the manorial court of Manchester working for Sir Oswald's grandfather John Parker Mosley, who may have brought most of the family furniture from Ancoats to Rolleston but left odds and ends behind for his grandson to accidentally rediscover. Did Raines recommend Shaw as suitable to do some remedial work on their furniture and supply some matching items? In the process he would have had access to the smaller pieces rescued by Sir Oswald and somehow managed to carry off home the bed's original front crests. Unfortunately any household bills itemising his work were lost in the 1871 fire, but the furniture was captured before disappearing once more. ...



Buffet or "hall cupboard" by George Shaw with diapered posts derived from the royal marriage bed in the entrance hall of Rolleston Hall in 1892 (SJ Waring & Sons)



From the Bedford Lemere Collection, Historic England Images



The "NM 1596" settle commemorating the year Sir Nicholas Mosley became Lord of the Manor of Manchester prominently displayed at the top of the stairs underneath the royal arms of Edward VI, which perhaps came from his London house

Note that the arms and top rear cresting of the settle are formed of serpent/basilisk creatures rather different from the typical Elizabethan type and obviously derived from the cockatrice of the 1486 bed

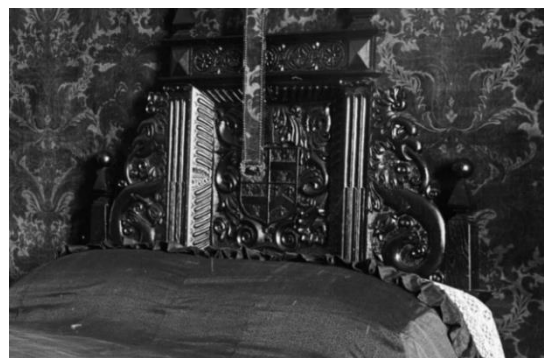




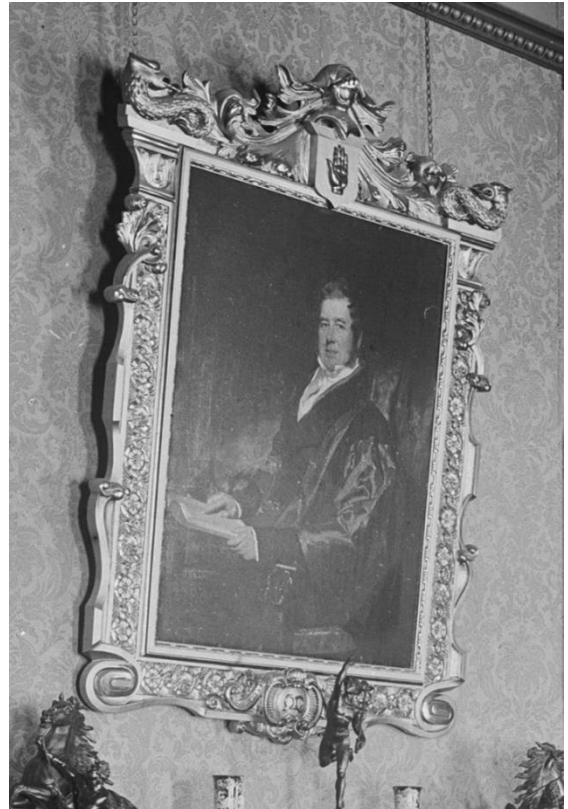
The "Oak Bedroom" with the bed of either Sir Edward Mosley d.1638, Sir Edward Mosley 1st Bt d.1657 or Sir Edward Mosley 2nd Bt d.1665; this was the model for one assembled by George Shaw for the Shuttleworths of Gawthorpe Hall, below right; and also one in his own house, 'St Chad's', below. There also seem to be pieces of another bed used as overdoor decoration

Below: a bedstead concocted by Shaw clearly modelled on Sir Edward Mosley's bed in a guest bedroom of George Shaw's house, "St Chad's", in the 1920 sale of the house contents

Below right: a bedstead at Gawthorpe Hall, where George Shaw evidently supplied furniture to the Shuttleworths prior to Barry's work at the house; assembled from both new and older elements but again modelled on the Mosley Oak Bedroom bed



Portraits of probably Sir Oswald Mosley 2nd Bt, right, and Ann Lady Bland, below, have serpent/cockatrice like creatures built into the design of their frames probably inspired by those on the “1596” settle



Whether all the cockatrice themed pieces were made to match the 1486 bed, now “The Queen’s Gift” in the 17th and 18th centuries, or more refined work than that offered to the Duke of Northumberland by George Shaw’s workshop will remain a mystery unless they are located and examined

The “hall cupboard” or buffet for displaying plate by George Shaw appears almost identical to the two he supplied to the Duke of Northumberland, except that the 5 Percy lozenges or lions on the knops and rear panel shields (this particular piece mistakenly has only 3 Percy lozenges instead of 5) are replaced by a Mosley mill-pick



Above: the original front cresting of the royal arms, probably found among the miscellaneous pieces retrieved from Ancoats Hall by Sir Oswald Mosley 2nd Bt and found by George Shaw while working at Rolleston Hall, and later taken back to his own home St Chad's where he made an over-door feature of it in his parlour. The presence of a central sawn through dowel on the top edge indicates that a crest is missing, most probably a crown

Below: the "Jacobite", or Queen Anne, achievement added to the 1486 bed at some time in the early 18th century, also purloined by Shaw and also still a feature of Saddleworth Library; the paintwork is modern, and the central shield a replacement for earlier probably carved Stuart royal arms



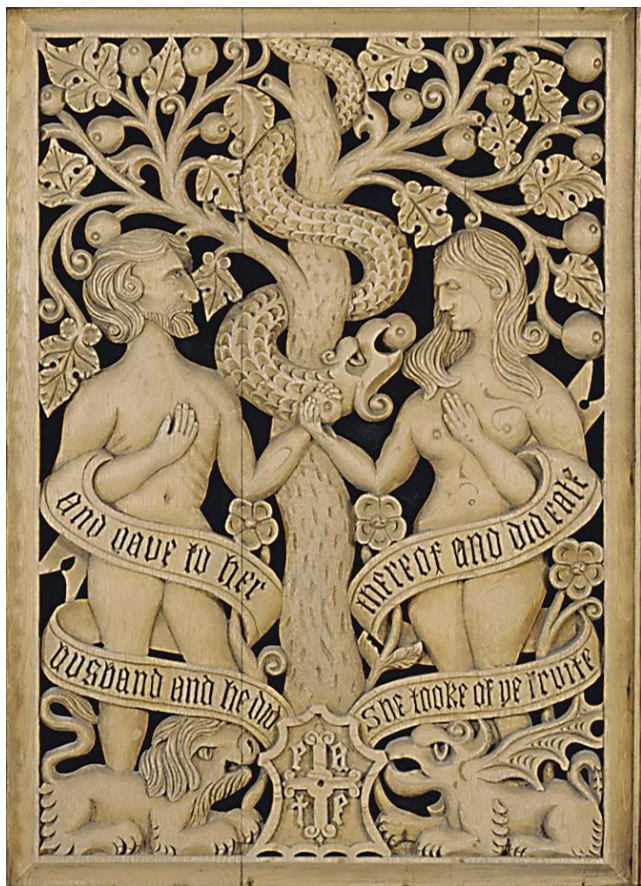


Above: the George Shaw "Percy" bed in sale catalogues by Sotheby's (left) and Christie's (right); it was placed in the Prudhoe Tower at Alnwick Castle after renovations by Anthony Salvin were completed. At some stage it was evidently stripped of George Shaw's trademark deceptive varnish and the front posts reduced

It was Lot 197 in Sotheby's Syon House Sale 14-16 May 1997 when it was bought by J. Paul Getty II, and sold again by Christie's for the estate of J. Paul Getty II (Sir Paul Getty) on 25th November 2004, Lot 142

Right: the other, rather better crafted bed possibly intended for the 13th Earl of Derby (as it carries the Beaufort portcullis and "Tudor" rose as heraldic badges) and sold at Sotheby's in *The Age of Oak and Walnut* 14th September 2005 Lot 132





The “Adam and Eve” centre panels of George Shaw’s crude medieval forgeries, above, and left, the manifestly superior 1486 original which inspired them; above left the “Percy” bed and on its right the technically superior bed sold by Sotheby’s in 2005.



The NT *Corinthians* text is replaced by an obvious quotation from Genesis, except the carver has not assessed the spacing correctly and finishes on the cross fleury, which for Shaw and his carvers is merely a decorative element.



FIRE !!

OCTOBER 19TH 1871

DISTRICT NEWS.

ROLLESTON.

ROLLESTON HALL PARTIALLY DESTROYED BY FIRE.—
 On Thursday morning last a serious fire broke out at Rolleston Hall, the old baronial mansion of the Mosley family. It appears that a young man named Jebbutt, son of the carpenter employed at the hall, when about leaving home for Burton at half-past four o'clock, observed a bright light and ultimately discovered that the hall was on fire: he aroused his parents, and presently the alarm bell at the mansion was hastily rung. The alarm soon became general throughout the village, and when the hall was reached the people found the fire raging in the housekeeper's room and north library. Successful efforts were made to remove the furniture, works of art, and curiosities collected by the late Sir Oswald Mosley, which were removed to the museum and conservatory in the grounds. The hose on the premises was not only out of order, but too short to be of any service; and it was not until between six and seven o'clock, when the engines and brigades belonging to Messrs. Allsopp and Sons, Messrs. Bass and Co., and the Town Commissioners arrived from Burton that anything could be done to check the flames. By that time the devouring element had gained firm hold upon the housekeeper's room, north library, best staircase, post-office, and drawing room, all of which were for the most part gutted, and the chief portion of the roof had fallen in. Meanwhile, a messenger had been despatched to East Lodge, to report the catastrophe to Sir Tonman Mosley and his family, and Sir Tonman and Mr. Oswald Mosley reached Rolleston between seven and eight o'clock. The greatest anxiety was manifested for the safety of the deeds and important documents relating to the estates, and also for the family and county portraits of the late Sir Oswald Mosley, all of which we are happy to say were saved without injury; but one half of the valuable collection of books in the north library were destroyed. The rooms which have been destroyed had only recently been repaired and re-decorated, so that the furniture was then stored in the back part of the premises, and was thus easily preserved from the fire; but one or two large book cases were consumed. The fire was not got under thoroughly until near twelve o'clock, and by the time it was extinguished had caused damage to the amount of upwards of £10,000, which is partly covered by insurance in the Guardian Fire Office, Manchester. Gas fittings were being laid into the hall by Mr. Crump, of Derby, and extensive alterations and additions were being made under the superintendence of Messrs. Giles and Brookhouse, architects, Derby. As no one had lived in the house since the death of Sir Oswald, except the persons in charge, and as the works of enlargement were proceeding, it was at one time thought that the disaster was caused by fires left by some of the workmen; but such apprehension has been dispelled, from the fact that the fire originated in the housekeeper's room, where it was ascertained some clothes were left airing before the fire when the servants retired to rest at ten o'clock on Wednesday night.

GREAT FIRE AT ROLLESTON HALL.

Rolleston Hall, the seat of Sir Tonman Mosley, Bart., near Burton-on-Trent, was nearly destroyed by fire on Thursday morning. Great efforts were made, and with considerable success, to remove some of the most valuable furniture, books, works of art, and curiosities collected by the late Sir Oswald Mosley; but there was little hope of saving any important part of the building. For some time nothing could be done to check the flames, which extended very rapidly. The hose at the hall was found to be out of order, and proved too short, and it was not until more was obtained from Burton, from which place help and several engines soon arrived, that the fire could be checked. At from six to seven o'clock the hall was a mass of flames, and soon the roof and floors fell in with a thundering crash. By ten o'clock the flames were got under, but three-fourths of the fine building was a mere shell, the walls smouldering under the influence of the intense heat. The lawn was strewn with pictures, furniture, and valuable articles. Sir Tonman Mosley, who had arrived from his residence, Needwood House, actively superintended the efforts to save what could be rescued from destruction, whilst numbers of people from Burton and the neighbourhood lent their ready aid. It is

feared that a large part of the exceedingly valuable library of the late Sir Oswald Mosley has been destroyed. Gas fittings were being laid in the hall by Mr. Crump, of Derby, and alterations were being proceeded with under the superintendence of Messrs. Giles and Brookhouse, architects, Derby. As no one had lived in the house since the death of the late Sir Oswald, except the persons in charge, and as extensive works of enlargement were proceeding,

PARTIAL DESTRUCTION OF ROLLESTON HALL.

A disastrous fire broke out early on Thursday morning, at Rolleston Hall, the seat of the Mosley family, which, for a time, threatened to demolish the whole of the building. The hall, has since the death of the late Sir Oswald Mosley, Bart., been undergoing considerable renovation, and a new wing was being added, previously to the present Baronet, Sir Tonman Mosley, entering upon it. A considerable number of workmen were therefore employed at the hall, but at the time the fire broke out it was only tenanted by two domestics, the butler and his wife. How the fire originated is not definitely known, and it seems likely to remain a mystery, the over-heating of the rooms, caused through airing, preparatory to their being tenanted being generally assigned as the cause. The hall is situated about four miles from Burton, and about a quarter of a mile from the village of Rolleston. It is an old baronial residence, picturesquely situated in the valley of the Dove, and surrounded by a number of fine old trees. It has an extensive frontage to the south and west, and this front comprises a suite of elegantly-furnished rooms, hung with a large number of fine old paintings, many of which are of great value. The late Sir Oswald's extensive library was also in this portion of the house, and here might be found an immense number of very rare and choice works, both scientific, historical, biographical, and religious, besides numerous miscellaneous volumes. The fire was first discovered about five o'clock, and a messenger was immediately despatched to Burton for assistance. The two town engines, and Messrs. Bass and Co.'s and Messrs. Allsopp and Sons' engines were quickly en route for the scene of the conflagration, where hundreds of willing hands from Rolleston and the neighbouring villages were busily engaged in trying to stop the progress of the flames. Fortunately, there was an excellent supply of water at hand from a neighbouring fishpond. After a few hours' hard work the progress of the flames was arrested, and the fire to a certain extent got under. The furniture, paintings, and books were, with great effort, saved, with but little injury; but the butler's pantry suffered considerably, and a quantity of plate was melted. The whole of that part of the building where the fire originated was completely gutted, owing to the walls being composed partly of timber; and so destructive were the flames, that the roof fell in with a terrible crash. The new wing which is being erected was fortunately saved, as well as the back part of the house. Supt. Oswald, with a body of police from Burton, were soon on the spot, and rendered great assistance in organizing the staff of workers. We hear that the whole of the injured property is covered by insurance.

MR. MOSLEY'S MAJORITY.

REJOICINGS AT ROLLESTON.

BALL TO FIVE HUNDRED GUESTS.

Although the festivities at Rolleston Hall were not in full progress until this week, the round of rejoicing was actually inaugurated yesterday week, when Sir Oswald and Lady Mosley gave a ball on an extensive scale. In view of the event large parties had been staying at the surrounding houses, and the demand on neighbouring hotels for accommodation was great indeed. The guests numbered nearly five hundred, and began to arrive at nine o'clock. Dancing commenced at ten, Mr. Godfrey Holbeck's band playing a capital programme. The handsome ball-room, in its decorations of ivory-white and gold, and with its fine paintings of the Mosley family, was rendered additionally attractive by the suspension from the ceiling at intervals of baskets containing the choicest floral specimens, and when the dance was at its height the scene was one of brilliant light and colour. The contrast in the charmingly-constructed conservatory, into which the ball-room opens, was of the most pleasurable description. Fairy lamps and Chinese lanterns were disposed amongst the choicest exotics or located on the architectural contours, and shed a soft luminous glow on the sombre foliage which, with the twittering of the foreign birds which daily revel here, reminded one of the scenes depicted in Moore's Eastern epics. But the guests experienced a more vivid and striking suggestion of Oriental splendour as they resorted to the suite of principal rooms. The Moorish apartment was the chief contributor to this agreeable transformation, with its dazzling picturesqueness, resulting from the combination of native media with western arts of civilisation and luxury. The Japanese room perpetuated the delightful illusion, its rich silks and hangings, its subdued gildings and quaint devices, admirably maintaining the main idea. Centred between, and directly connected with, these apartments is the drawing room proper, which serves to produce some exquisite effects of contrast—an attainment largely aided by its artistic mouldings and the prevailing colour—white, relieved by an occasional dash of gold. Rolleston, however, retains other attributes and associations of a stately English home. The principal entrance hall is remarkable for its ancient oak carvings, all sixteenth century work.

forms of domestic service. The worthy baronet secured all on which he could lay hands, and they were speedily transferred to Rolleston. Here, however, many specimens were allowed to remain stowed away—probably owing to the undignified process to which they had been subjected—for several pieces were disfigured by a daubing of white paint—and the remote chances of restitution to their former state. It was reserved for the present Sir Oswald to rescue them from their obscurity, and, piecing them together, restore them to something approaching their original magnificence. We find them, in innumerable forms, adorning various portions of the mansion. A large quantity of these valuable and interesting cuttings was in existence in Ancoat's Hall, the ancestral home of the Mosley's, and of this group there is a conspicuous piece in a sideboard of chaste proportions. It bears the Egerton and de Trafford Arms variously quartered with the Mosley's, the families having intermarried. A considerable portion of the oak was destroyed in the fire which occurred at the hall about twenty-six years ago; but, happily, much remains to link the present with past generations—to tell of a family's devotion to the duties of citizenship away back in the centuries, and to charm the eye of all with a sense of the beautiful.

THE GUESTS

included Mr. and Miss Bott, Mr. Douglas Crossman, Mr. and Mrs. Charrington, Mr. and Mrs. Chippendale, Mr. and Mrs. Morris Richardson, the Misses Thornwell (Rangecroft), Mr. and Mrs. Robert Thornwell, Rev. C. Boden, Mrs. and Miss Powles, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Boden, the Misses Fisher, Dowager Lady Gresley, Mr. and Mrs. Peach, Col. and Mrs. Delacombe, Miss Thornwell, Mr. Astley Cox, Mr. and Mrs. D'Arroy Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Kempton, Mr. and Miss Newton, Meynells, party Miss Sitwell, Mr. Bertie Crompton, Miss Lyon, Mrs. and Miss Wise and party, Dr. Livesey and party, Dr. Fraser Tytler and party, Miss Disbrowe, Mr. Edward Holden, Mr. and Mrs. Hamar Bass, Mr. Walter Lyon, Hon. George Allsopp and party, Lord and Lady Burton's party, Mr. Grotton and party, Mr. Chandos Pole and party, Mr. and Mrs. Brace and party, Mr. and Mrs. Holden, Lady Hardy and party, Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield, Mr. and Mrs. C. Bateman, Mr. and Mrs. F. P. Bateman, Mr. Arthur Obetwynd, Mr. J. W. F. and Mrs. Mosley, Mr. and Mrs. Spurrier (Marston), Mr., Mrs., and the Misses Small, Mr. Peneock, Sir P. and Lady Walker (Foston), Mr. Hugo Chadwick, Mr. Walter Boden (Doveridge), Major and Mrs. Godfrey, Mr. and Mrs. Bird and party, Mr. and Mrs. Fox, Mr. Boden, Major Meynell, Mr. Hartley and party, Col. and Mrs. Milligan, Colonel and Mrs. Farquharson, Mr. and Mrs. Cropper, Mr. and Mrs. Grosvenor Jennings, Captain Dugdale and party, Miss Theresa Mosley and party, Mr. Power, Mrs. Holland (Rolleston), Colonel and Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, Mr. and Mrs. L. Gibson, Mr. John Walker, Mr. Boden, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Newton, Mr. Wright (Alfreton), Hon. Mrs. Colville, the Misses Bott (Hastbury), Hon. Mrs. Okoover, Mr. Levett, Capt. Dawson, Mr. and Mrs. Felton, Lord and Lady Waterpark, Mr. Fort, Mr. Spilsbury and party, Mr. Meakin, Mr. E. A. Brown, Hon. W. Curzon, Mr. Arkwright, Mr. Stanier, Mr. Jervis Smith.

THE DANCE MUSIC

was as follows:—

Waltz	"Garden of Sleep."
Waltz	"Rosen aus dem Sulen."
Polka	"Tournaquet."
Waltz	"La Serenata."
Marches	"Little Christopher Columbus."
Waltz	"Marguerite."
Pas de quatre	"Alabama Coon."
Waltz	"Ange d'Amour."
Waltz	"Beauty's Eyes."
Polka	"Honey, my Honey."
Polka	"Oh, Marguerite."
Marches	"A Gaiety Girl."
Waltz	"Linger Longer, Loo."
Pas de quatre	"E. d'anno w'er's are."
Waltz	"Two little girls in line."
Waltz	"Laddy, drowsy."
Polka	"Ting-a-ling."
Waltz	"After the ball."
Galop	"John Peel."

SUPPER DANCES—

Waltz	"Tout Paris."
Polka	"Jimmy on the Clute."
Waltz	"Katdiastina."

The noble library was for the nonce converted into a tea room, and a conspicuous feature in

THE ball at Rolleston Hall in honour of the coming of age of Mr. Oswald Mosley, son of Sir Oswald Mosley, was a most sumptuous affair. The *Burton Chronicle* speaks of the scene as exceedingly effective, and dwells on the soft luminous glow of the fairy lamps and Chinese lanterns falling on the plants and flowers, and the twittering of the foreign birds which Sir Oswald has collected. The suite of principal rooms, too, were striking, the Moorish and Japanese rooms being particularly effective. "The principal entrance hall is remarkable for its ancient oak carvings, all sixteenth century work. Of this the chimney-piece affords a splendid example. Immediately above it is displayed Cromwellian relics in the shape of armour and weapons, unearthed on the estate—probably in the vicinity of Shot-at-Hills, where tradition fixes the spot which the Lord Protector chose for an attack on Tutbury Castle. Half-way up the grand stair-case there is to be seen another piece of beautiful carving in a massive settee. This is noteworthy in a sense other than the artistic, inasmuch that it carries the reflection a century or two back, when an ancestor of the family—Sir Nicholas Mosley, Knt.—was Lord Mayor of London. Above are displayed the arms of the Clothiers' Company, of which the original possessor was master in the year that he was also chief magistrate. Much of this work has a history apart from its age. The residence of the Mosleys near Manchester was vacated and a portion turned into a farm house. At the beginning of the present century, the grandfather of Sir Oswald, the squire of to-day, visited the place at a period in its history when a sale was in progress, and was not a little astonished at discovering the oaken treasures mutilated and converted into various forms of domestic service. The worthy baronet secured all on which he could lay hands, and they were speedily transferred to Rolleston. Here, however, many specimens were allowed to remain stowed away—probably owing to the undignified process to which they had been subjected—for several pieces were disfigured by a daubing of white paint—and the remote chances of restitution to their former state. It was reserved for the present Sir Oswald to rescue them from their obscurity, and, piecing them together, restore them to something approaching their original magnificence. We find them in innumerable forms adorning various portions of the mansion. A large quantity of these valuable and interesting cuttings was in existence in Ancoat's Hall, the ancestral home of the Mosley's, and of this group there is a conspicuous piece in a sideboard of chaste proportions. It bears the Egerton and de Trafford Arms variously quartered with the Mosley's, the families having intermarried. A considerable portion of the oak was destroyed in the fire which occurred at the hall about twenty-six years ago; but, happily, much remains to link the present with past generations—to tell of a family's devotion to the duties of citizenship away back in the centuries, and to charm the eye of all with a sense of the beautiful."

Reports from the *Burton Chronicle* of 24th January 1895 and the *Derby Mercury* of 23rd January 1895 of the coming of age party of Oswald, son of Oswald Mosley 4th Bt, at which the latter recalled his grandfather had rediscovered pieces of the family furniture when visiting Ancoats Hall in the early nineteenth century, and brought them to Rolleston Hall

Sir Oswald's grandson the 4th baronet is described as proudly showing the "royal present" to visitors in the *Derby Mercury*, and at his son's coming of age party in 1895 he recalled that his grandfather had described visiting Manchester in the early nineteenth century and rescuing more bits and pieces of family furniture from their old hall, Ancoats (by then let). But then ill health led to his moving to Hampshire and the hall being abandoned during the 1st World War during which his son Oswald, with whom he did not get on, was on active service. His grandson also saw some action but was invalided out. His name was also Oswald; he became 6th baronet, and he is rather better known to history.



Hough End Hall and Rolleston Hall c. 1840

APPRECIATION OF SIR OSWALD MOSLEY 4TH BARONET IN THE BURTON OBSERVER, OCTOBER 14TH 1915

Sir Oswald was born at Rolleston Hall on September 25th, 1848. The son of Sir Tonman Mosley and Catherine, daughter of then Rev. John Wood of Swanwick, he was the fourth baronet in direct succession from his grandfather, who was created baronet by King George III in 1781. He was a direct descendant of Sir Nicholas Mosley, Knt., Lord Mayor of London in 1599. This was the year in which the Spaniards were expected to attempt a second time the invasion of England and during which trouble arose in Ireland. Sir Nicholas Mosley took such far-sighted measures to protect London (as well as in raising five hundred men to serve in Ireland) that Queen Elizabeth knighted him. She also presented him with several pieces of furniture, including an elaborately carved "four-poster" bedstead of wood, which Sir Oswald was wont to show with pride to visitors to Rolleston. The original baronetcy dated from 1600, but it only reverted from father to son and had to be re-created when a cousin was the next of kin. The Mosleys were for generations the lords of the manor of Manchester; the rights accruing to the office were, however, sold half a century ago by Sir Oswald, the second baronet of the present creation, to the Manchester Corporation.

THE DERBYSHIRE ADVERTISER SEPTEMBER 29TH 1928 (ON THE DEATH OF SIR OSWALD MOSLEY 5TH BARONET)

" . . . Sir Nicholas Mosley was knighted by Queen Elizabeth, who also gave him a carved oak bedspread, a "four poster" with the arms of the Queen and the Mosleys, and several other pieces of furniture . . ."



HOUGH END HALL c.1880

AFTERLIFE : A NEW CENTURY AND A RETURN TO LONDON



Rolleston Hall was not long to survive the war and the death of the last Mosley baronet to care about it; pieces of the estate were sold off first, and eventually when no buyer could be found for the hall itself most of it was demolished, leaving only the ballroom with its fine home-grown oak floor which was converted into a house. The 5th Baronet moved to Hilton Park near Derby and, long separated from his wife, died in 1928.

But the gift had moved on.

Because he disliked his alcoholic son, Sir Oswald 4th baronet had made a family settlement in 1906 referenced in his will, transferring the family heirlooms to his next eldest brother Tonman and his offspring as well as leaving him a large amount of money. Tonman Mosley, later made Baron Anslow, lived at Bangors Park in Iver Heath which he had purchased. His two sons died, one of war wounds and one in an accident in America, leaving two daughters, Hildred and Sybil.

Baron Anslow died in 1933, leading to a curious appearance in this story by his notorious great nephew; Manchester Corporation's Arts Committee was considering making Hough End Hall into an art gallery and museum, and Oswald Mosley, no doubt hoping to raise his profile in an area in which he had made several speeches, offered them Sir Nicholas's furniture and a portrait.

They were not his to give, but he knew where they were.

The correspondence is recorded in the Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society; Sir Oswald was

*" . . . willing to give pictures, furniture, or anything associated with the family history if the Hall were turned into a museum. He specifically mentioned the carved oak bedstead presented by Queen Elizabeth I to Sir Nicholas Mosley ; a long carved oak settle marked "N.M.1596" and a carved oak sideboard marked "N.M.". Sir Oswald also offered a portrait of Sir Nicholas copied by Tonneau . . ."*⁴⁴

As things fell out, the museum never happened and we hear no more on this subject from Oswald Mosley. The incident is valuable however for documenting the continued existence of the bed-gift in 1933, as well as the settle



Above: on the upper flight of stairs from the hall are portraits of Sir Nicholas Mosley and (probably) Lord North and Katherine Lady North, formerly Lady Mosley

Below: Pulling back on this view (taken looking up from the landing next to the “1596 NM settle”); through the doorway on the ground floor below can be seen the side of George Shaw’s “hall cupboard” or buffet. If he supplied two as he did to the Duke of Northumberland the other may have been in the room with the The Queen’s Gift.



spotlit centre stage at the top of the first flight of stairs in the hall at Rolleston in the 1892 photographs, and also a sideboard. The settle appears to be of workmanship superior to any normally exhibited by George Shaw's carvers, but unless it surfaces one day whether it is from the original gift or a particularly refined piece of fakery from the Shaw workshop will remain a mystery.

The normal processes of dividing up an estate after a death had not concluded before being interrupted, once again, by war. Hildred had realised her income was not sufficient to maintain the property by herself and had looked for a buyer, but a sale fell through. Then, as with many other large houses in the vicinity, Bangors was requisitioned, in this case by the army, and most of her furniture including the heirlooms was crammed into the drawing room where it remained until the war was over, although an initial sale of household goods was effected in 1944 when the estate was sold to a local market gardener.

Then surprisingly in 1946 after the war the trail disappears, with Hildred, now in Ross-on-Wye, considering if she was going to have some heirlooms brought to Linton Hall, the large house she had bought. We know that in 1950 - perhaps having overreached herself - she sold the house and eventually moved to Aberystwyth where she died. Had she given the larger items to John Noel, younger brother of the notorious Oswald, who had shown an interest in them? He was a stockbroker in the City, and died in 1973.

In 1974 the royal marriage bed of 1486 surfaced into 20th century daylight in the most astonishing fashion and yet still remained unrecognised; as a prop in the Rank Organisation's *Carry On Dick* occupied by Sid James, no less, in his daytime role as the Reverend Flasher, brought his morning chocolate by Hattie Jacques. The interior of the vicarage was shot at Stoke Poges Manor House, close to Pinewood Studios but also very near to Bangors Park.

Further sightings include in a "hotel room" scene in *Double Sin*, a 1990 episode of Agatha Christie's *Poirot* shot at Strawberry Hill House; and at the "London Inn" where Lydia and Wickham have gone to ground in the classic 1995 BBC *Pride and Prejudice*; no doubt others remain to be discovered.

Not long after that it found its way to the antiques warehouse of Eric Davidson, who had a shop on the Grassmarket in Edinburgh. It remained there for some time before being spotted by a curator from Holyrood whose parents the Whites had just bought a hotel in Hough Green, Chester; she thought it would be ideal to lend some olde worlde charm to their bridal suite . .

And so we reach rediscovery, and Resurrection.



Portraits of Sir Nicholas Mosley and Sir Oswald 2nd Bt in "cockatrice" frames

THE 21ST CENTURY : REDISCOVERY

On 1st December 2010 a partially jetlagged Ian Coulson, antique furniture restorer, dealer, and connoisseur of historic beds, idly flipped through the latest sale catalogues online; his eye lighted on what sounded like an interesting Victorian Gothic bed, and put in what proved to be a winning bid of £2,200. The seller, Byrne's Auctioneers & Valuers of Chester St., Saltney, had retrieved it with other furniture from the Redland House Hotel which had now been sold at auction to developer Nathan Cunningham, but over-enthusiastic builders had dumped the contents in the car park outside instead of waiting for a removal firm.

Fortunately the bed had not been there long, and when Ian Coulson collected it he was astonished by the skilled and intricate craftsmanship, but also noted the areas of decay, oxidisation, worm beneath the varnish, old repairs and evident use of pre C18th tools which convinced him of a much earlier date for its creation than that assessed by the seller. The condition of the timber spoke of a long life before the 19th century, but he only deduced it could be as early as the 15th or 16th century when perusing Victor Chinnery's *Oak Furniture: The British Tradition* and noticing the photo of the "Thomas Stanley" Bed (described as early 16th century), which seemed to have some similarities of design.⁴⁵ He recognised elements of the arms of England displayed on both footboard and headboard. He felt even more gratitude that the Spanish owner of the hotel had not taken it with him to Spain (he had paid the Whites an extra £10,000 to leave the bed behind when they retired and sold the Redland House to him - which they did reluctantly, as their daughter had used it herself). He contacted architectural historian, broadcaster and antiques aficionado Jonathan Foyle for a second opinion, who was initially naturally extremely sceptical as received opinion was that no royal Tudor furniture had survived the Civil War . . . and then he went to take a look.

Ian Coulson was by this time aware not only of the similarities of decorative vocabulary with the Thomas Stanley and Lovely Hall beds but had also come across the furniture of George Shaw at Warkworth Castle; this led him to visit Uppermill, where he was astonished to find the bed's main cresting of the Plantagenet/Tudor royal arms above a doorway of Uppermill Library, once "St Chad's", Shaw's house. Somewhat later this author noticed elements of the more recent royal arms then displayed behind the library counter had obviously been inspired by the royal bed, which led to it being scientifically tested and its place in the bed's history being ascertained.

The reassembled bed as used at the hotel had only the two shield of St George crestings displayed on the front and rear top rails, and this was most likely the bed's appearance from at least 1745 onwards, when the later either Queen Anne or "Jacobite" achievement which would have replaced the original Plantagenet-Tudor arms would have been removed; both these were likely among the items rescued by Sir Oswald 2nd Bt in the early 19th century. So too the pillow boards, long suspected by those studying the marriage bed as being connected with it somehow as they were mounted on Shaw furniture, but it took some time to identify their original function. These and all the bed's crestings were most likely found by George Shaw while working at Rolleston Hall and surreptitiously removed to his own home, where he made creative use of them but sadly truncated the original main front cresting of the royal arms to put it over a doorway, where it remains to this day.

Since then the bed has been the subject of many years of research; in archives, late medieval furniture and iconography, the royal palaces of London, the halls and families of England especially in the north, and the Victorian Manchester, Lancashire and Yorkshire of self-taught architect, antiquarian, and "ancient furniture" confectioner extraordinaire George Shaw of Uppermill.

Early in 2014 an extraordinarily felicitous discovery was made of four wainscot posts of the same design and age as the bed's posts with knops bearing an "h" and "r" and fleur de lys in mantled hourglass escutcheons, unmistakably from the same workshop, and which may likewise have come from the Painted Chamber.⁴⁶

The royal bed has since featured in exhibitions at Auckland and Hever castles. On 21st January 2019 papers were presented at a Symposium on *The Bed of Roses* at the V & A, including the latest findings on the medieval paintwork and the conclusively European DNA of the timber; many more discoveries have been made since, and doubtless there will be more to come.



The Redland House Hotel, Hough Green, Chester



Right: the online auction listing for the bed by Byrne's Auctioneers


Below: the original promotional leaflet for the hotel showing the bed in use with one of the St George side crests on the front


- 574 Edwardian mahogany and inlaid double bow fronted display cabinet, with inlaid dentil cornice, satinwood crossbanded bow fronted doors opening to two fabric covered and two plate glass panel sides, open base with an undershelf, raised on tapered square legs with spade toes, width 188cm
- 575 Kashan woollen rug, circa 1910, blue field dispersed with palmettes and with a central red medallion and a red border with further trailing palmettes, size 200cm x 133cm
- 576 Victorian carved oak four poster bed, having profusely carved back centred with a panel featuring Eve beneath the Tree of Life, flanked by armorial and floral scrolled panels, the foreposts carved flowerheads surmounted with lions supporting shields, the footboard carved with five carved panels detailed with acorns and hops and two armorial shields, width 168cm, length 200cm, height 210cm

*C*hester's history stretches over 2,000 years and all the dramatic events that shaped the destiny of Britain are etched immortally into the very fabric of its heritage. The city's prosperity is mirrored in the wealth of Georgian and Victorian town houses, of which the Redland is a fine Victorian example.

Popular with both tourists and businessmen visiting this historic city, the hotel has established a reputation for providing a warm welcome and a caring, attentive service.







Sid James occupying the bed in his daytime role as the Reverend Flasher in *Carry On Dick* 1974; behind him can be seen the headboard rail below the blossom frieze, which is now missing

Below: Julia Sawalha as Lydia Bennet with the bed at “a London inn” in the 1995 BBC *Pride & Prejudice*





Hough End Hall was let by the Egertons to a succession of tenant farmers and finally suffered due to its land being increasingly reduced to nothing. It never became a museum and is currently hemmed in by nondescript office blocks and is a mosque and events venue.



Endnotes

¹ For example, in May 1496 he approved arms awarded to Sir Thomas Assheton and Sir Piers Legh “This Bill endented witnesseth that on Holy rode day in May the xith yere of King Henry the 7th the Erle of Darby then Constabell of England in the Kings Chamber at Westminster determynd that Sir Thomas of Ashton Knight should beare for his proper Armes . . .” etc. *The Visitation of Lancashire and a part of Cheshire, made in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of King Henry the Eighth, 1533 A.D.* by Thomas Benolt, Pt. II ed. William Langton (Manchester, Chetham Society, 1876), p.161.

² *Excerpta Historica: or, Illustrations of English History* ed. Samuel Bentley; no. 85: Privy Purse expenses of Henry VII from December Anno 7, 1491 to March Anno 20, 1505 (transcribed by Craven Orde from MS now lost), pp.103-105 (London, Richard Bentley, 1833).

³ Members of the Stanley family aggrandise their status (illegitimate son Thomas Stanley, Bishop of Sodor and Mann declared Lathom was “the Northern court” and John Seacombe in *The History of the House of Stanley from the Conquest to the Death of the Right Honourable Edward Earl of Derby, 1766* (Manchester, J.Gleave, 1821) exaggerates the length of the royal couple’s stay from five days to a month), so surely among several “Stanley ballads” penned by their retainers in the 15th and 16th centuries at least one would have vaunted their royal bed if it had remained there. The feisty Countess Charlotte, heroine of the Siege of Lathom House, was also a towering snob who left her son a token £5 for marrying beneath him. Her husband James 7th Earl was a direct descendant of Henry VII via his grandmother Margaret Clifford (granddaughter of Henry VIII’s sister Mary), wrote extensively, yet makes no mention of it.

⁴ The fire occurred sometime between the prorogation of parliament on 20th December 1512 and the following March (1513, but 1512 old style; see A.Hawkyard and M. Hayward ‘The Dressing and Trimming of the Parliament Chamber 1509-1558’ *Parliamentary History* XXIX (2010), p.236). The multi-storey block of old royal apartments can still be seen on Wyngaerde’s panorama of London drawn c. 1543/44 (*The Panorama of London c.1544 by Anthonis van den Wyngaerde* ed. H. Colvin and S. Foister, London Topographical Society with the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; Publication no.151, 1996, drawing 1); although materials began to be robbed for re-use for Whitehall from 1531 onwards. Henry VIII had stayed across the river at Lambeth Palace for the 3rd session of the parliament of 1512 just after the fire, but the charred lodgings not fit for occupation in 1514 were sufficiently repaired for the king to use them for several days during the first session of the parliament of 1515, and possibly also in November 1529.

⁵ Whitehall Palace: An Architectural History of the Royal Apartments 1240-1698 by Simon Thurley pp. 42-47, 62-65, 93.

⁶ 1542 Inventory of Whitehall Palace no. 790; 1547 Inventory of Henry VIII’s Goods no. 10693 f.130r. Described c.1639 in the Van der Doort Inventory “Without the door, at the head of the said Adam and Eve stairs, a defaced old picture at length being Adam and Eve, intire figures, being little less than the life, painted upon a board, in an old defaced gilded frame” and yet as recently as 1632/3 Thomas De Critz had been paid for “repairing an ould piece of painting of Adam and Eve” (*A Description of the King’s Collection of Pictures* ed. H. Walpole; TNA E 351/3266).

⁷ Simon Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England* (Yale and London, 1993), p.208.

⁸ Cypress wood.

⁹ Coral.

¹⁰ *Letters and Papers, Foreign & Domestic, Henry VIII* Vol. 7, 1534 ed. James Gairdner (HMSO, 1883): Miscellaneous pp. 599-627 no. 1668, “Goldsmith’s Work”.

¹¹ 1542 Inventory no. 645 (Maria Hayward (ed.) *The 1542 Inventory of Whitehall: The Palace and its Keeper* (London: Illuminata Publishers for the Society of Antiquaries of London, 2004), p.69; and 1547 Inventory no. 11505 (David Starkey & Philip Ward (eds.) *The Inventory of King Henry VII: The Transcript* (London: Harvey Miller for the Society of Antiquaries of London, 1998), p.317.

¹² *L&P* June 1534, no. 880 vii.

¹³ *L&P*, December 1530.

¹⁴ Rich mid blue, a little deeper than azure.

¹⁵ Thomas F. Hunt *Exemplars of Tudor Architecture Adapted to Modern Habitations, etc.*, p.190 (London, Longman etc., 1830).

¹⁶ To eg. Paul Hentzner in 1598 (see below).

¹⁷ *L&P* June 26th 1534 no. 880 xii: TNA E101/425/14.

¹⁸ di : an abbreviation for Latin *dimidium*, half.

¹⁹ 1542 Inventory no.455, 1547 Inventory no.13149 (Windsor): BL Harley MS 1419/2 ffs. 310v & 311r.

²⁰ These entries have hitherto been partially obscured by a transcription error of “feete” for “foote” in both published editions, which is clear when the now digitised original is examined; a later 1530s/1540s Renaissance style bed would have had “feete”.

²¹ Christopher Wren, now Surveyor of Works, commissioned mathematical instrument maker Ralph Greatorex and assistants at the Office of Works to make a new plan of Whitehall Palace in 1669; it took nine months (BL Maps, Crace XI.65).

²² See ‘The Family of Henry VIII’ in the ‘Haunted Gallery’ at Hampton Court Palace; the cloth of state behind Henry VIII, Jane Seymour and Prince Edward has the royal arms supported by the dragon and greyhound of Henry VII, which Henry changed to the crowned lion and dragon in the 1520s.

²³ 1547 Inventory no. 12162.

²⁴ 1547 Inventory no. 9035.

²⁵ *L&P* Vol. 6: 1533 pp. 449-466 no. 1069.

- ²⁶ Paul Hentzner's *Travels in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth*; translated by R.I. Bentley for Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford (printed for Edward Jeffrey, 1797).
- ²⁷ *Thomas Platter's Travels in England, 1599*; rendered into English from the German and with introductory matter by Clare Williams, ed. (London, Jonathan Cape, 1937).
- ²⁸ John Speed, *The genealogies of the Scriptures, according to every familie and tribe; with the lyne of our sauior Iesus Christ obserued from Adam, to the blessed virgin Mary; gathered and contriued by Iohn Speed* (London, 1610). With variations in the title it went through more than sixty printings between 1610 and 1642.
- ²⁹ Customs records for exports from the Port of London in 1588-89 and 1599 have entries for sales of finished cotton to northern France by the Mosleys (TNA E190/7/8, E190/8/1, E190/8/4 and E190/10/11); Sir Nicholas had imported raw cotton from Cyprus and sent it to his brother Anthonie in Manchester to have spun and made into cloth.
- ³⁰ "Before the termination of his year in office, the Queen was graciously pleased to mark her high approbation of the services of the lord mayor by conferring upon him the honour of knighthood, and she gave him, at the same time, a handsomely-carved oak bedstead, together with some other articles of furniture, for the new house which he had recently created at Hough End on the site of the old mansion which his ancestors had inhabited." *Family Memoirs*, p.6. Lord Mayors were customarily knighted, but the gift was for personal services to the sovereign.
- ³¹ Supposedly a reward for his successful negotiation of the Treaty of Blois in 1572.
- ³² See Appendix I; there are several extracts of Sir Nicholas' will in *Sketches of Fallowfield and the Surrounding Manors Past and Present* by Mrs. W.C. Williamson (Manchester & London, John Heywood, 1888), pp.39-43. Or see *An index to the wills and inventories now preserved in the court of probate at Chester, from A.D.1545 to 1760, [1545-1620]*, by John Parsons Earwaker, Church of England, Diocese of Chester Consistory Court (The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents: Lancashire and Cheshire, Volume II, 1879), II, 315.
- ³³ See Appendix I below; or *Family Memoirs*, Appendix II.
- ³⁴ There is extensive detail on the Mosley family in *A History of the Ancient Chapels of Didsbury and Chorlton in Manchester Parish, etc.* by the Rev. John Booker (Chethams Society Vol.42, 1857).
- ³⁵ His second will of 13th October 1665 in *The Court Records of the Manor of Manchester: From the Year 1552 to the Year 1686, and from the Year 1731 to the Year 1846*; Vol V From the Year 1662 to 1675, pp. 78-80 (Manchester, Henry Blacklock & Co., Printers, Albert Square 1887).
- ³⁶ Commons Journal xviii.328.
- ³⁷ Stuart Papers, Windsor Castle 65/16.
- ³⁸ Lord North & Grey fought under Marlborough at Blenheim but lost a hand and was soon at odds with the new government. He was made Lieutenant General, Earl North and Commander-in-Chief for London and Westminster by the Old Pretender, and in fact Lord Regent for the proposed Stuart return in 1721. He tried to escape by sea when the "Atterbury Plot" collapsed but got no further than the Isle of Wight. Astonishingly, though his agent was executed for treason no-one would testify against him. On being released he went abroad, and ended his days fighting for Philip V of Spain.
- ³⁹ *Family Memoirs*, pp. 45-48.
- ⁴⁰ *Metrical Records of Manchester* by Joseph Aston, 1822, p.13.
- ⁴¹ The Hulton bed, now a bookcase at Chetham's Library, shares the same lozenged posts which featured on the Molyneux bed drawn by Henry Shaw in *Specimens of Ancient Furniture Drawn from Existing Authorities* pl.XXXVI, p.31 (Henry Shaw and Samuel Rush Meyrick; London, William Pickering, 1836). The Molyneux bed has been thought to be a marriage bed as one of its knobs carries the letters R&I joined in a lover's knot; Adam and his cousin Alice Hulton obtained a papal dispensation for consanguinity for their approaching marriage from papal tax collector Giovanni Gigli, author of the *Epithalamium* for Elizabeth of York, on 22nd May 1489 (Lancashire Archives DDHU 53/6). This is one of only two dispensations by Gigli extant and suggests that they had close connections at court. Like the Molyneux, the family were Stanley clients.
- ⁴² Oldham Archives, Shaw Diaries Vol.2, 28th July 1830.
- ⁴³ George Shaw may have experienced his "lightbulb" moment for faking "ancient" furniture when visiting Hay's vicarage at Rochdale; "Mr. Hay's dressing room or study which is in fact another library but of much smaller dimensions . . . at one end was a beautiful oak bookcase apparently very old, but my obliging conductor [sic] told me that it was made up of various pieces of carved oak which had come into his possession. If it could not be termed an original antique, it certainly merited admiration from the very tasteful manner in which it was put together". By "ancient" Shaw of course meant late medieval to Jacobean furniture.
- ⁴⁴ Transactions of the Ancient Monument Society Vol 20, 1973, p.57.
- ⁴⁵ The late Victor Chinnery recognised that the royal bed was much older and was obviously George Shaw's model for the "Paradise" beds which he fabricated and offered to aristocratic clients, referring to the bed Shaw offered to the 4th Duke of Northumberland (in an email to Ian Coulson of Thursday 17th February 2011) as "the so-called Paradise bed which must surely have been copied from your bed . . .".
- ⁴⁶ Like the bed's tv appearances, these were spotted by antique furniture restorer Timothy Garland (in *Joanna Booth Antiques*), and purchased by Jonathan Foyle. They have the same diaper pattern as the bedposts but carry mortise slots for panelling rails; some have an apotropaic taper burn and an iron pin for a finial (the bed's lions have iron screws probably made in Nuremberg). They also have mantled knobs featuring an h, an r and a fleur de lys, and Roman numeral assembly marks eg IX.

Both the original presumably 15th century wainscoting and then the *History of Troy* tapestries bought by Henry VII in 1488 were removed from the Painted Chamber in the course of the alterations carried out from the end of the C18th; see the 1799 watercolour with extensive notes by William Capon, "Interior view of the Painted Chamber, Palace of Westminster. Looking through the doorway into the House of Lords. Depicts the Painted Chamber before alterations by Wyatt in 1800 when the tapestries were removed" (London Picture Archive no. 20733). In the far right hand corner there appears to be a vertical stack of wainscot posts.

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The mystery remains as to whether this settle prominently displayed under the arms of Edward VI (perhaps from Sir Nicholas Mosley's London house) is 1600 (celebrating the acquisition of the manor of Manchester in 1596) or 1847; or possibly, both . . .

