Mount Stewart in Co Down, the Irish home of the Vane-Tempest-Stewarts, Marquesses of Londonderry, has benefited from an £8 million restoration project, funded largely by the National Trust.

When we set out on our voyage of discovery nearly five years ago, Mount Stewart was a mostly unknown quantity to us, but we knew this much: that the house needed a complete overhaul. Every part required attention: windows, floors, walls and ceilings; electrical wiring, lighting, fire and security systems; heating and plumbing; drains and water management; structural failure in beams and joists; the removing of asbestos. The interior of the house had become a sad place, not matching the splendid and colourful gardens, a place of tattered curtains, peeling paint, water-stained ceilings and walls, and threadbare carpets. It felt lack-lustre and uninspiring, and could not do justice to the display of the collection.

It had fallen a long way from the great days of the 1920s to 1950s when it was the family home of the 7th Marquess and Marchioness of Londonderry, who invested their love and attention in it. Lady Londonderry was the chief creator of the renowned gardens which she gave to the Trust in 1956. She had imbued the house with the same spirit and love of life, which now seemed sadly lacking. Her daughter, Lady Mairi Bury, the donor of the house and of key contents in 1976, lived in the house until her death in 2009. We knew that we could put off the works no longer.

We were also faced with many unknowns: what did we know of the history of the house and its structural changes over the years? When did the various colourful paint schemes date from? And, with the settlement of Lady Mairi’s estate, what would happen to the remaining contents, including many important items on loan to us in the public show rooms? What would happen to all those rooms that had never before been open to the public, and to the 900 acres of demesne land surrounding the house and gardens?

These were questions we could not answer at the time, but we could tackle the physical condition of the house and contents. A team of experts and consultants with Dennis Wright as Project Manager drew up lists of what needed to be done and gathered estimates. Specialists, advisers, and the Arts Panel visited to look at textiles, furniture, ceramics, light fittings, paintwork and so on. I started work on a conservation plan, pulling together information on the house and its history, beginning to understand who had made the changes and when, and what their significance was. The year of preparation before work started was of vital importance and gave us a chance to formulate ideas and plans and to agree an overall philosophy of approach. We prioritised the huge list of work, and were greatly encouraged when the Trust’s Senior Management Team and Trustees agreed to fund the full proposal.

$ continued on page 2
In October 2012 the main contractor, H&J Martin, started on site. Two and a half years later it is astonishing to realise that we have achieved almost everything we set out to do. Mount Stewart has also been blessed with a series of acquisitions, donations and loans, and throughout the project we have been supported by Lady Rose Lauritzen and her husband Peter. Lady Rose is the daughter of Lady Mairi Bury, and grand-daughter of Edith and Charles, 7th Marquess and Marchioness of Londonderry. She grew up at Mount Stewart and lives there for part of each year, and has been an unflinching source of inspiration and information. She had the vision to keep the contents of the house and the demesne lands together so that the Mount Stewart of her youth would not be lost forever.

As part of the settlement of Lady Mairi’s estate, a large part of the contents of the house was accepted in lieu of inheritance tax and allocated to the Trust at Mount Stewart. We were then able to purchase a large quantity of lower value items, so that the smaller objects that make a house a home could remain on display. Many highly important books from the Mount Stewart library, part of which had been given by Lady Mairi in 1976, were also purchased with the support of Royal Oak and private donors. The money was generously given to fund a new, suitably magnificent gilded frame by John Hart for George Stubbs’s masterpiece, *Hambletonian, Rubbing Down*, painted in 1800. Royal Oak and the Lauritzen Foundation have funded the conservation and restoration of key textiles and furniture in a suite of bedrooms, formerly private spaces, soon to be opened to visitors. The demesne lands were partly purchased, with the balance being allocated in lieu of inheritance tax. Another allocation in lieu was of two important views of Mount Stewart in the 1780s by the Irish landscape artist Solomon Delane.

Following the death of the 9th Marquess of Londonderry, who had lent the Londonderry Chariot (the family’s town carriage) to Mount Stewart in 2008, the executors of his estate and his son, the 10th Marquess, offered on loan a magnificent collection of paintings, sculpture, furniture, silver, ceramics, arms, armour, and objets de vertu. Some had formerly been at Mount Stewart, but had been taken to England following the death of the 7th Marquess in 1949; the majority had formerly been at Londonderry House, London (demolished in the 1970s), or at Wynyard in Co Durham (sold in the 1980s).

This loan has hugely enriched Mount Stewart and puts it on the international stage in terms of family history and the quality of the expanded collection now on display. No fewer than eleven portraits of the family by Sir Thomas Lawrence now hang in the Drawing Room and Dining Room. The great portrait by Lawrence of Frances Anne, Marchioness of Londonderry with her son Viscount Seaham on the steps of Wynyard, painted in 1828, has been accepted in lieu of inheritance tax and allocated to Mount Stewart. The superb kneehole desk with gilt-bronze gallery, on which the Congress of Vienna treaty was signed, now stands below the full-length portrait by Lawrence of Robert Stewart, the 2nd Marquess of Londonderry, in his Garter robes, a re-creation of the pre-1949 arrangement of the Drawing Room. As Viscount Castlereagh, he was British Foreign Secretary at the end of the Napoleonic Wars and a key negotiator at the Congresses of Vienna and Paris. His portrait is greatly enhanced by other works of art and memorabilia relating to the family’s distinguished contribution to the defeat of Napoleon and the settlement of Europe.

Among them are the 22 giltwood Empire-style ‘Congress of Vienna’ chairs which have always been at Mount Stewart and which were used during the Congress in 1814-15. In the 1930s the Londonderrys had covers made, each bearing the coats of arms of Sir Thomas Lawrence, PRA (1769-1830); Frances Anne, Marchioness of Londonderry (1780-1856), wife of Charles, 3rd Marquess of Londonderry, and her son, George, Viscount Seaham, later 5th Marquess of Londonderry (1821-1884) entering Wynyard, their house in Stockton-on-Tees. Frances is wearing amethysts on her sleeve given to her by Tsar Alexander I of Russia.
a Congress plenipotentiary or official and of the country that he represented. The set needs conservation, and the necessary funds are being raised among our generous supporters.

We have been able to make significant improvements to the presentation of the house. James Finlay guided us through the plans for the interior decoration, which has had an impact on every room. The most significant change was the Central Hall, which has been returned to its pre-1960s colour scheme. The restoration of its columns and pilasters of painted wood imitating marble has been a mammoth task. New carpets were commissioned through Linney Cooper and made by Axminster for the Dining Room, a series of bedrooms, and the stairs and bedroom corridors, while many existing carpets were cleaned for re-use. A large Aubusson is back in its former location in Lord Londonderry’s Sitting Room after conservation by Tetley Workshop. Hundreds of light fittings have been cleaned and re-wired by Terry Brotheridge and fitted with LED lamps to reduce energy usage. The shutters and shutter casings of over 100 windows have been cleaned and repaired by our in-house joinery team. The old heating system is now fully controllable to conservation or comfort levels as required. The walls have been stitched and strengthened, the joists supported, the asbestos removed, and plaster repairs carried out, and the drainage has been improved. The Wolfson Foundation generously contributed towards the cost of the building conservation work.

Many pieces of furniture have been conserved and repaired, and textiles cleaned. Replica silk was woven by Richard Humphries Weaving and made into curtains by David Faulkner Interiors for Lady Londonderry’s Sitting Room. In many rooms, historic curtains were cleaned, re-lined and rehung. A new silver display has been created off the Central Hall by James Rothwell. The story of conservation at Mount Stewart is not over yet: the large collection still contains many objects that require treatment, and much of this can be carried out in the new conservation studio which is one of the project’s many legacies. Another is the training of young apprentice joiners and volunteer interns in conservation skills.

Many wonderful volunteers have helped us throughout. All the contents of the house (over 15,000 items) were stored on site, and while managing the storage and protection of it all was a massive undertaking, it gave us the opportunity to clean and conserve many items. Volunteers, managed by the Project Conservators, were indefatigable and carried out the careful vacuuming of textiles, polishing of furniture, cleaning of silver and ceramics, and packing and unpacking of thousands of books. Keeping the house open throughout the project has also demonstrated the keen public interest in conservation work. This will be strengthened by the TV documentary that is being produced by Evergreen for UTV which will be shown in June this year.

Mount Stewart is now a place transformed. As well as being structurally sound, it feels loved and cherished. Now visitors can feast the eye and fill the mind with fascinating objects and stories. The house and gardens are in harmony once more. It is perhaps not too fanciful to think that Edith and Charles, the 7th Marquess and Marchioness of Londonderry, who so loved Mount Stewart, would feel completely at home and would heartily approve of the changes and enhancements that have been made. They would also join us in applauding their descendants, who have worked so hard to ensure that Mount Stewart is now the home of so many highly important items which demonstrate the history of this extraordinary family.

Frances Bailey, Project Curator, Mount Stewart, and Regional Curator, The National Trust

Treasurer’s House in York stands to the north-east of York Minster. The house has undergone several incarnations: there is evidence of Roman remains below street level, a medieval house was built here for the Treasurers of York Minster, and what we see today is mainly a 17th-century town house.

Frank Green, a wealthy Yorkshire industrialist with a passion for collecting art and antiques, was mainly responsible for the display of the house. Between 1897 and 1914 he set about creating the arrangement of the rooms and his collections; he wrote a guide-book to explain the history of the house and his interventions. Frank even placed studs in the floors to mark out the positions of the furniture. It is said that Frank was a bit of a dandy—in later life he sported floppy bow ties, dazzling waistcoats, and natty shoes and hats.

In 1930 Frank moved to Somerset and left Treasurer’s House to the National Trust. It was the first house to be left to the National Trust complete with its contents.

When Frank gave the house and its contents to the Trust it was on the understanding that the arrangement of his collections would be unchanged, and the furniture kept within the stud marks. If changes were made he swore to return to haunt the building and those within it.

So there’s the rub! Although we have on the whole fulfilled his dying wish, ‘managing change’ has necessitated a level of rethinking. Our aim is to provide the best possible environment for each item. However, a verre églomisé mirror was at risk of further deterioration if left in its original position in the Entrance Hall. Verre églomisé (French: ‘Glomyized glass’), is glass engraved on the back that has been covered by unfired painting or, usually, gold or silver leaf. The method owes its name to Jean-Baptiste Glomy (d. 1786), a French picture framer who used the process in glass mounts.

The condition of the mirror meant that it needed some remedial conservation, and that we had to consider a new position for its redisplay. After much debate it was agreed that the mirror would be moved to the stable environment of the Blue Drawing Room. Funding was found for the project through the CCP (Collections Conservation Prioritisation) process and a generous bequest from the late Mr David John Sharples.

The verre églomisé pier-glass dates from c. 1710-20; it has a stepped arched top and two glass plates, the upper one with incised ornament. The carved and gilded frame has verre églomisé glass borders painted black with gold patterns.

The de-installation of the eleven glass verre églomisé panels was a collaborative process undertaken by the glass and furniture conservators Edge Conservation and Peter Hall & Son. It was found that approximately 50% of the verre églomisé decoration had become detached from the glass, and there were significant areas of complete loss. The treatment, which was undertaken by Lynne Edge, was a game of two halves: stabilisation, and replication of missing decoration.

Paraloid B72 in acetone was chosen as a consolidant. In this case a 5% solution gave sufficient stability for handling; the low percentage also aided minimal intervention. Two layers of a 5% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone were applied by brush on to the back of the paint decoration on the reverse of the glass. Small tabs of Japanese tissue (see photograph over page) were then applied across the split and cracked areas of paint and adhered with the 5% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone—in effect ‘facing-up’ the reverse decoration and securing it in place. Detached fragments of decoration were repositioned using this technique, which proved very effective.

After trying various methods to replicate the missing parts
of the decorative scheme it was agreed that the traditional *verre églomisé* technique should be used; however, this was to be undertaken on Melinex and not on glass. A sheet of Melinex was taped to an angled board to enable the gilding size (one gelatin capsule in 250ml of water) to flow freely over the Melinex surface, and then 23.5-carat gold leaf was applied to the size.

Although there were areas of loss of the gilding and paint, there still remained residues of the original gilding on the glass; when this was placed against a black background the design of the decoration could be easily made out (see photograph, above right). Each section of glass was placed over a black piece of paper and its design was outlined on tracing paper. Then a sheet of carbon paper was placed over a gilded sheet of Melinex and the tracing of the design placed on top. The outline of the design was then transferred to the gold. The decoration was created on the gilded Melinex by using the tip of a cocktail stick dipped in acetone, which in effect acted as an engraving tool. Using the cocktail stick the outline of the pattern was drawn and larger areas of gold were removed. Sign writer’s black enamel paint was applied over the design engraved in the gilding.

Once recreated on Melinex the decorated side was protected with another layer of Melinex just smaller in size, and this was secured in position with archival tape. The Melinex ‘unit’ was then placed behind the original glass section and held in place along the edges of the glass with archival tape; as well as recreating the decoration, it acts as a protective layer between the original decoration and the wooden backboard, which also has residues of paper that originally would have covered the glass.

These replications of the missing areas of decoration enhance the original scheme. However, the conservators were careful to ensure that it is possible to see the difference between what is original decoration and what is not; on close examination a clear distinction remains between the 18th-century gold on the glass and the modern gilding on the Melinex.

Finally, the glass panels were remounted into the frame, and the mirror was redisplayed in the Blue Drawing Room (see photograph, left). The dexterity shown by Lynne Edge allows the mirror to be fully appreciated by visitors to the house.

I do hope that Frank Green approves of the decisions we had to make over moving the mirror and the processes we used to secure its longevity. Who knows? Frank might carry out his threat. Perhaps he will come back just one more time, and glance in the mirror to admire his appearance or to adjust that floppy bow tie.

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*Sandra Howe, Conservator, Yorkshire and North-east*
MORE THAN JUST ‘SQUABBY CUPIDS’?
History and myth in Stourhead’s famous Landscape Garden

‘And now from Hyde-Park Corner come
The Gods of Athens, and of Rome.
Here squabby Cupids take their places,
With Venus, and the clumsy Graces:
Apollo there, with aim so clever,
Stretches his leaden bow for ever;
And there, without the pow’r to fly,
Stands fix’d a tip-toe Mercury.’
Robert Lloyd, The Cit’s Country Box,

Between 1745 and 1766 more than 25 statues were purchased for Henry Hoare’s gardens at Stourhead, Wiltshire. Most were 18th-century sculptures or casts, and the 2nd-century Livia Augusta as Ceres is the only one from the classical Roman age. This statue stands in the Pantheon, together with Rysbrack’s Hercules and his reduced-sized version of the Capitoline Flora. These three are the only marble statues in the garden.

The others are either of lead or plaster of Paris, depending upon whether the statue was purchased for outdoor or indoor display. The nine John Cheere lead statues that once occupied niches at the Temple of Apollo were likely to have been stock items: they are of relatively poor quality in comparison with his river god in the cave beside the Grotto. At £58 it was considerably more costly than the Temple of Apollo statues—the most expensive of these was £21. This difference seems to indicate that the river god figure was a bespoke item. The statue is possibly by John Cheere’s brother, Sir Henry Cheere, or perhaps even by Rysbrack. Kenneth Woodbridge has proposed that the statue was influenced by Salvator Rosa’s The Dream of Aeneas, which is indeed a close match in terms of its stance with arm upraised. However, the figure may also have been influenced by earlier illustrated editions of Ovid’s Metamorphoses, in which the god is also drawn in a pose and composition similar to that of the Grotto statue (see illustration, right). This hypothesis is supported by visitor accounts from 1766 which record the presence of a wooden plaque hung in front of the river god’s cavern bearing lines from Ovid’s tale of Daphne and Peneus.

Recent research has challenged the provenance of the statues and the purpose of their selection for the gardens at Stourhead. It has also established that the location of some statues has changed. As a consequence, the possible meaning of the original statue arrangements has been lost, and on occasion meaning has been created by the repositioning of statues in proximity to one another. In this article I will focus upon the context of statues in the interior chamber of the Pantheon, as well as those that occupy the exterior niches.

Until recently it has been supposed that Livia Augusta as Ceres (see above) at Stourhead was purchased from the sale of Dr Richard Mead’s collection of antiquities in 1754. However, it is more likely that the statue was sold to Henry Hoare on the
death of Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni in 1740, when Henry was visiting Rome as part of his Grand Tour. Around this time Henry also acquired the Sixtus Cabinet (see Roman Splendour: English Arcadia, by Simon Jervis and Dudley Dodd, 2014). The cabinet provided him with a grand focus for the house, and the statue offered the prospect of an equally grand cyphon for the gardens. Henry Flitcroft was probably commissioned to design a suitable edifice to house this new acquisition. Hence the first garden building at Stourhead was the Temple of Ceres. The poem Stourton Gardens clearly locates the statue in the Temple of Ceres in 1749, and Jonas Hanway writes that the statue was still to be viewed there in 1757. However, by the time of Horace Walpole's visit in 1762 the statue was placed in the Pantheon, on the left of Rysbrack’s version of the Farnese Hercules and opposite his statue of Flora. Placing Hercules between statues of Flora and Ceres is a clear indication of the intention to create meaning. Ceres is the goddess of cultivated food, symbolic of industriousness, and Flora is the goddess of flowers and wild foods. As Charlesworth has observed, placing Hercules between Ceres and Flora, with his head orientated towards Ceres, is an illustration, with different subject matter, of the popular ‘Judgment of Hercules’ theme. The Poussin painting of the same subject hangs in the house (see illustration, above).

A further pairing in the Pantheon is the lead version of the Versailles Diana with a plaster Meleager. These two subjects are linked in classical myth by the story of the Calydonian Boar, and the purchase of a pendant Meleager is therefore likely to be a specific selection. However, the use of a lead statue (the Versailles Diana) indoors is unusual; the likely explanation is that this is the Diana statue purchased as a pair to the now lost copy after the Apollo Belvedere in 1745. Apollo once stood on a mound on the south lawn, and recent research has indicated that the Diana statue originally occupied the grove at the summit of the ‘Mount of Diana’, later the site of the Turkish tent.

The remaining two Pantheon statues are John Cheere plaster copies of the Capitoline Isis and Duquesnoy's Saint Susanna. As Carlo Gastone della Torre di Rezzonico commented in 1787, it is odd to find a Christian martyr in a pagan temple, and Isis seems a similarly unusual selection. Perhaps the most economical explanation is that the choice was made in emulation of the same statues being selected for other English estates, such as Holkham Hall. The Saint Susanna and the Isis statues were also originally grouped with a Capitoline Flora and Bacchus in the saloon at Kedleston. Walpole's account of a visit to Stourhead mentions that the exterior Pantheon niches were occupied by unspecified statues. Fortunately, Gastone recorded that the left front niche featured a Venus Anadyomene and the right front niche a Bacchus, though he does not specify the particular type. The left side niche was occupied by a copy of the Faun of Florence, usually known as The Dancing Faun. (The scene described by Gastone is shown as an artist’s impression, below left). The Faun of Florence was definitely there in 1786. However, these three exterior niche statues have not survived, and we have no details of their fate. The front niches of the Pantheon are currently occupied by statues of Venus and Bacchus. However, the Venus statue is a calypgian (Greek for ‘nice bottom’) variant, rather than the anadyomene (Greek for ‘rising from the sea’) version reported by Gastone. It seems likely that the current statues are the ones that originally occupied two of the niches at the Temple of Apollo.

We would ordinarily expect statues of the muses to be found at a temple dedicated to Apollo. However, the sole muse purchased for a Temple of Apollo niche at Stourhead was Urania, the muse of astronomy. The other Cheere statues purchased with Urania for the Temple of Apollo niches were of Venus, Bacchus, Ceres, Minerva, Pomona, Mercury, and Vesta, along with an Apollino. Ceres, Minerva and Pomona currently stand on the top of the house’s front pediment. Mercury, Vesta, Urania, and the Apollino statue all adorn the west front. Pairings of Bacchus and Venus are common, as the statues are often used to symbolize wine and love. The pairing is also occasionally linked with Ceres, who as the goddess of cereal crops represents bread. As a trio these statues are an iconographic representation of the expression well-known in ancient Rome, Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus—‘Venus stays frigid without Ceres and Bacchus’. Paintings and sketches of the Temple of Apollo indicate that the front right niche nearest the...
entrance was in 1814 occupied by a statue of Bacchus, and in the next niche stood the Callipygian Venus. Unfortunately it has not so far been possible to determine the identity of the next adjacent statue. However, we know that Urania, Vesta, and the Apollino statue were placed in niches on the left side of the temple, leaving only Ceres, Mercury or Pomona as candidates for the niche adjacent to the statue of Venus.

The statues selected for display at Stourhead are typical choices for an 18th-century English landscape garden, and most feature amongst those listed in Haskell and Penny’s catalogue of popular 18th-century choices. Many of the statues are copies of those that were on public view in Rome and Florence, and it seems likely that their selection was at least in part influenced by Henry Hoare’s Grand Tour experience. A further possibility is that they reflect Flitcroft’s influence, which in turn derived from his tutelage under Lord Burlington and William Kent. Whichever is the case, it seems that the statues were selected in part according to the fashion of the day, but in some cases also with a specific iconography in mind.

Dr John Harrison CSci CPsychol AFBPS

Notes
2. To Mr. Cheere for the river god, etc. £98; 38½/4, 7th August 1751, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, Chippenham, UK. ‘Henry Hoare esq. from Mr. Cheere, to five drapery statues of a Vesta, Ceres, Pomona….’, 38½/4, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, Chippenham, UK.
EDUCATION AS TRANSFORMATION
Attingham Park and the Shropshire Adult Education College

How much impact does place and space have upon a person’s emotional, spiritual and educational experiences?

The doctoral research I am undertaking into the Adult Education College at Attingham, Shropshire, has allowed me to examine this question directly and has afforded me personal insight into the powerful impact that one’s environment can have. I have the privilege of undertaking a doctorate which is the result of a collaboration between the National Trust and the University of Nottingham’s prestigious School of Education (currently ranked third in the UK in the Research Excellence Framework 2014).

The research looks at the Shropshire Adult Education College which existed at Attingham Park between 1948 and 1976, a truly creative example of short-term post-war residential education, which acts as a lens on the wider world of adult learning and exemplifies the spirit of moral and philosophical reconstruction in this period in the UK. My first year has seen me examining a whole range of archive materials—including newspaper cuttings, photographs and course programmes—and interviewing a fascinating range of people touched by the College all those years ago, including former students and staff, academic tutors, and speakers. I have also steeped myself in Sir George Trevelyan, 4th Baronet (of Wallington Hall, Northumberland, now administered by the National Trust), charismatic Warden of the College from 1948 to 1971, and recognised as a founding father of the ‘New Age’ movement. He created courses which challenged convention, focused on the education of the spirit, and explored taboos such as death and what lies beyond; his concerns were communion with the earth and the oneness of humanity. He divided people absolutely in their response to him, but his courses were nevertheless ground-breaking, and differentiated Attingham from other short-term colleges of the period.

I began the research in January 2014. Each season has marked a different point in my research; as I have visited Attingham once or twice every couple of months, I have marked out my own journey by the changes in the physical landscape of Attingham. This March sees me at the 15-month stage of the PhD—a point of review and the setting of new directions. As I came up the drive to Attingham early in the month, I saw swathes of snowdrops at the height of their beauty in the late winter sun, but also anticipated that the daffodils and crocuses were not far away. There is spring, change and transformation in the air. I greet it with some ambivalence—seeing change both as a point of exciting renewal and as elegy and ending.

I will be coming less frequently to Attingham now that the archived materials are largely read, annotated and stored for analysis and all my interviews are complete. I realise how much I have come to love this place and the people who work here or were part of it in the past. The welcome I have received from the National Trust staff has been tremendously warm. I have loved staying in the visitors’ flat and experiencing the immersion of being a residential researcher, which I fondly imagine as being something akin to the Attingham student experience.

The College volunteers who have worked with me have made the archive journey so much easier and so much more enjoyable. They have supported the analysis of a huge range of archival material, and quickly. They have trawled through course programmes—one for every season from 1948 to 1976—and looked at emerging themes. They have researched the Attingham Summer School, which started in 1952 and attracted important American and European curators, conservators, archivists and historians with an interest in English cultural heritage (it...
continues its scholarly work to this day); analysed the College visitors’ books which span 1948 to 1957 and show student demographics; examined all the newspaper cuttings and press materials connected with the College; analysed the contents of the wonderful College scrapbooks and the detailed Board of Governors reports; and are now helping with the difficult and painstaking task of transcribing the interviews.

At the Annual Property Review meeting I attended recently—reviewing the last year at Attingham—I was struck anew by the huge commitment, energy and passion of all the staff and volunteers at Attingham. Their reference to Attingham as a ‘magical place’ resonated with me. For me, it has been like stepping out of one kind of reality and into another, and I have enjoyed the sense—in a small way—of being part of this team.

Now that all my interviews are complete I am excited by the prospect of having a chance to sit down and properly unpick the themes that are beginning to emerge. I have established the two chapters I am going to write first: a chapter on the Trevelyan family, to explore the genesis of Sir George’s thinking and ways of approaching the world, and a broader chapter about the short-term residential college, and specifically the Shropshire Adult Education College, in the context of adult education—marked, as it was, at its outset in 1948 by the ‘Spirit of ’45’ and the wider welfare changes in the country. Sir George fought until his retirement in 1971 to keep the course prices low; he was battling against a pincer movement of wider economic changes and ‘belt-tightening’ in the country, a reduction in grants and other financial support, the march of a managerial approach to education, and sliding student attendance in the face of higher fees, which inevitably came along.

The experiment of education for all in the genteel and beautiful surroundings of a stately home was starting to unravel by the time of his departure. His excursions into the New Age movement and the spiritual attracted huge audiences in the late ’60s and kept Attingham viable, but conversely were a good reason for local funding to dwindle, as more and more people came from further afield and the claim of ‘local education for local people’ looked increasingly untenable. I do see, though, that Sir George was fighting to keep something alive, whether or not he attracted the broad student base he had originally intended: a sense of education as personal and spiritual transformation, and eschewing the market and the manager.

The quotations I am unpicking from the interviews are memorable, moving and vital by turns. And, again, I have been struck by the huge generosity people have afforded me in giving up their time to offer their memories as interviewees or in the form of written memoirs. There will be a College Celebration event in September—part of a 3-week focus on the College—which will act as a thank you to all contributors; I will be giving an update on the research, and we will hear from key interviewees.

The College is now being commemorated at Attingham through exhibitions and displays, and through the College tours which are being developed so that there is an enduring memorial to the College.

Finally, we will bring together the strands of place and space and their impact on education in an academic conference to be held at Attingham in June 2016—again, a collaboration between the National Trust and the University of Nottingham—which will examine the following themes: ‘Moving, teaching, inspiring: The significance of space, place and past in the future of adult learning’.

Sharon Clancy, Doctoral Researcher

Panels in situ in the Rotunda at Attingham for Sir George’s retirement. The right-hand panel is shown in the photo above (from The Shropshire Star)
SHAW’S LIBRARY – NEW PERSPECTIVES
A brief survey, with thoughts on his books on the Irish Question

Last year, we completed the cataloguing of George Bernard Shaw’s library on CMS (Content Management System), with full bibliographical MARC (Machine-Readable Cataloguing system) records now available to the general public through COPAC (which brings together the catalogues of the UK’s major research collections: national, university and special libraries). Details of just under 3200 of Shaw’s own books and maps, in 2800 separate titles, can now be accessed in this way along with copiespecific information, such as provenance and binding descriptions, which, taken with the 1949 Sotheby’s sale catalogue of some thousand items, provide valuable insights into the man himself. Michael Holroyd provided an overview of the books left at Ayot St Lawrence in a brief article, ‘A Literary Life’ (The National Trust Magazine, 89 (Spring 2000), pp. 46-50), but our recent detailed descriptive catalogue will allow future researchers to analyse Shaw’s interests in far greater detail than was previously possible.

Shaw’s Corner, tucked away in the small village of Ayot St. Lawrence in Hertfordshire, was Bernard Shaw’s country home from 1906 until his death in 1950 at the age of 94. What survives of his library is dispersed across several rooms of the house, chiefly the Study, Drawing Room, and store. It is clearly only a remnant of what this major literary figure would once have owned; and a personal library does not, of course, encompass an individual’s entire reading. A copy of the London Library’s printed catalogue survives in the collection, and we can assume that Shaw borrowed and read books from there, since he maintained a flat in London until almost the end of his life. Nor does the library represent all that he bought. In addition to those books sold at auction, anecdotal evidence suggests that he regularly left books behind in hotel bedrooms. This could go some way towards explaining the relative lack of literature at Ayot, much of which appears to have been presented by authors and friends rather than being works necessarily chosen by Shaw himself. The small number of literary books was something of a surprise to us; the overall impression is that the library reflects Shaw’s interest in ideas rather than literature. In the broad subject interest of the collection, one can see the roots of Shaw’s diverse and polemical plays.

Shaw was famously a polymath, and he was more than willing to write and lecture on virtually any subject. This range of interests is reflected in his library: books on politics and socialism, music and art, religion and spirituality, the Irish question, philosophy, and the reform of English spelling are all present. Although a practical man who thought books were written to be read, he had an impressive collection of small press books (some sold in 1949) and these were no doubt acquired as a result of his great friendships with William Morris, Cobden Sanderson and Emery Walker. The Kelmscott Press and Doves Press are represented in the collection, but typically these items have unopened leaves. However, Shaw’s extensive cultural connections have meant that some fine treasures survive in the library in the form of gifts and presentation copies. One extraordinary item represents the high esteem in which Shaw was held by his peers internationally. Bernard Shaw zum 70. Geburtstage, 1926, is a wonderful volume of contributions dedicated to Shaw on his 70th birthday by an impressive roster of German intellectuals, writers, composers and artists, ranging from Albert Einstein to Richard Strauss. Another exceptional item is the limited edition of assorted Shaw writings collected in Shaw Gives Himself Away: An Autobiographical Miscellany, published by the private Gregynog Press in 1939: a special design made by the artist Paul Nash has been incorporated into the fine binding. Shaw’s own works are the part of the library that should be of most interest to researchers. These include proof copies and other annotated works. An outstanding example is his 1927 copy of Pygmalion with extensive revisions and
excerpts and additional manuscript insertions made for the Oscar-winning screenplay of 1938.

Unfortunately for researchers, Shaw was not a prolific annotator: his small, neat hand is occasionally to be found at the back of books, sometimes in short-hand form, highlighting particular passages, or in the text correcting a printing error, but most of the books are unmarked. The area most annotated, other than his own works, appears to be spirituality; here the annotations form a sort of index to the texts. The Sotheby's sale included some annotated books, for example facsimile reprints of Shakespeare's folio editions, and a first edition of T.E. Lawrence's Seven Pillars of Wisdom; this contains a lengthy piece on the help Shaw gave to Lawrence in writing the book—more, in fact, a brief article than true annotation. His 1900 edition of Bunyan's The Life and Death of Mr. Badman (which was bought by Apsley Cherry-Garrard) was apparently also heavily annotated.

As it is difficult to condense such a breadth of interest within the confines of a short article, we have chosen for the present to concentrate on a key topic: Shaw's interest in Ireland and the Irish Question in his day.

As the centenary of the Easter Rising in 1916 approaches, it is interesting to note the Irish publications on Shaw's library shelves. Many relate to the struggle for independence: examples are Daniel Figgis's The Historic Case for Irish Independence, Dublin, 1918 and Dan Breen's My Fight for Irish Freedom, 1926. The Trail of the Black & Tans by The Hurler on the Ditch (1921) is a fictional tale of the Royal Irish Constabulary Reserve Force, recruited largely in England to counter the IRA. Sean O'Casey's The Story of the Irish Citizen Army (1919) was published under the Gaelic form of his name: O'Cathasaigh.

Among the books at Shaw's Corner by the martyrs of the fight for independence is James Connolly's The Re-conquest of Ireland, 1915; Connolly's manner of execution in 1916 (tied to a chair and shot by firing squad despite being badly wounded in the Easter Rising) and subsequent burial in a mass grave helped to turn many towards the Republican cause. Gerald O'Connor's James Connolly: a Study of his Work and Worth, 1917, bears the stamp of an Irish bookseller, Kearney's, as does The Sinn Fein Leaders of 1916: with him. Erskine Childers, who was executed while his appeal was still pending, is represented by Military Rule in Ireland: a Series of eight Articles contributed to the Daily News, March-May 1920.

Padraic Pearse's The Murder Machine, 1916, sets out the author's educational views; these were at odds with those current at the time, which he believed to promulgate English imperialism. As a Nationalist he believed in the importance of the Irish language, and established St. Enda's school where teaching was conducted in English and Irish. Pearse was executed in 1916. Other Irish publications include The Attempt to smash the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union: a Report of the Actions in the Law Courts, with an Historical Introduction and Appendix of unpublished Documents from 1911 to 1923, published by the National Executive Council of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union in 1924. The 1918 No Conscription! Ireland's Case re-stated: Address to the President of the United States of America from the Mansion House Conference relates to the Great War. Patrick Kavanagh's long poem, The Great Hunger, is here in a Cuala Press limited edition published in 1942, and takes us back to an earlier tragic period of Irish history. There are also seven titles by Daniel Corkery (1883-1961), a politician and writer connected to the Irish language revival movement.

Shaw was famously passionate about language (his books on Basic English and simplified spelling attest to this), and there are several examples of his interest in the Irish language, whose renaissance was encouraged by the Irish nationalists. He owned Bun-chúrsa ar cheapadoireacht Gaedhilge (First course in Irish composition), 1940; The New Era Grammar of Modern Irish by the Rev. Gerald O’Nolan, 1934, and an Irish grammar, Graiméar na Gaedhilge, 1910.

These books, alongside literary titles such as those by Lady Gregory, Yeats, James Stephens, and George William Russell (also known as AE), indicate that despite his ambivalence towards the country of his birth, and in fact its towards him on occasion, his roots remained important to him. In a collection that has a fair representation of beautiful books, the intellectual focus of the library sometimes combines with the aesthetic: Shaw's copy of W.H. Maxwell's History of the Irish Rebellion in 1798, 1845, has been given a high quality binding by the French Arts & Crafts bookbinder Lucien Broca in green morocco, featuring a gold-tooled shamrock design.

Felicity Stimpson, Library Cataloguer
Harvey James, Library Cataloguer
A STORY OF LOSS AND SURVIVAL
Croome Court’s lost tapestry room and its replica

A new exhibition at Croome invites visitors to explore the various chapters in the history of the Croome Tapestry Room.

The now near-empty shell of the former Tapestry Room at Croome Court, Worcestershire reveals little at first glance of its intriguing history. The recent removal of the modern plasterboard from two of the walls has unveiled evidence of historical alterations, but the room still successfully masks the fact that with a few exceptions the room is not quite what it seems.

Today the red Veronese, white Carrara and lapis lazuli marble chimneypiece provides the only vivid colours within an otherwise neutral room. This is in stark contrast to what visitors experienced during the room’s heyday: they would have been immersed in a sea of crimson, as every inch of wall space between the chair rail and the ceiling cornice was covered with magnificent tapestries with highly colourful and decorative borders (see photograph, above).

The creator of the Tapestry Room was George William Coventry, 6th Earl of Coventry (1722-1809). He had spent many years transforming the park at Croome from a ‘morass’ and improving the house. The Tapestry Room was his pièce de résistance and he astutely employed the young Robert Adam to design it. George William had planned to have a tapestry room by the autumn of 1762; Adam’s account for January 1763 includes ‘To Design of a Ceiling for Tapestry Room.’ 1 The 6th Earl, a great admirer of the French style, set out for Paris in August 1763 in search of suitable tapestries.2 His search took him to the Royal Gobelins Manufactory, which had developed a new design concept incorporating medallions containing allegorical paintings (after the eminent French painter François Boucher) on a new crimson damask background with ornate borders of flowers, vases, and birds. Lord Coventry, perhaps swayed by the idea of being the first person to own this new design (even before Louis XV himself), ordered a set of crimson Boucher-Neilson tapestries depicting Les Amours des Dieux, together with matching tapestry covers for two settees and six armchairs.

Lord Coventry was the first to have made-to-measure tapestry used in the manner of wallpaper, an innovation that is shown in Adam’s drawing of the Tapestry Room wall elevations.3 This was probably Lord Coventry’s idea, but Adam helped to spread the trend among several other English patrons he worked for.4 In 1763-64 Adam employed some of the finest craftsmen to ready the room for the arrival of the tapestries. The plasterer Joseph Rose executed the Adam-designed ceiling, and the woodwork was a collaboration between the carpenter John Hobcraft and the carver Sefferin Alken. The Adam-designed chimneypiece (carved by John Wildsmith in 1760) seems to have been moved to the north wall in 1763.5

After nearly nine years the completed tapestries were finally installed at Croome in 1771 by Mayhew & Ince. They also provided the settee and chair frames (made by them in 1769, but the design is thought to be French), the pier glass, and the crimson silk festoon curtains and curtain cornices.6

The Tapestry Room continued to be the Coventry family’s pride and joy for the next 130 years until March 1900 when the 9th Earl sold the tapestries and matching furniture to the French collector Maurice Fenaille for £50,000.7 The Croome Tapestry Room was then redecorated in green damask and became known as the Green Room. The Parisian firm of art dealers, Wildenstein, then acquired the tapestries, and exhibited them in New York where they were the main attraction as the Boucher Room at the grand...
REMBRANDT AT BUCKLAND ABBEY

A self-portrait, previously thought to be by a follower of Rembrandt, has now been verified as being from the Dutch Old Master’s own hand.

After undergoing months of painstaking investigative work, and re-examination by the world’s leading Rembrandt expert, Professor Ernst van der Wetering, this now famous self-portrait is the first Rembrandt owned by the Trust in its collection of 13,500 paintings.

It was a bequest from the estate of the late Lady Samuel of Wych Cross. Van de Wetering, previously chair of the Rembrandt Research Project, concluded that the painting is genuine.

The National Trust’s David Taylor, Sally Palmer, and Tina Sitwell with Buckland Abbey’s Rembrandt.

You will be able to see the painting at a special exhibition: Rembrandt Revealed at Buckland Abbey, Devon until 1 November.
A BEAUTIFUL SURVIVOR AT CROOME COURT

The elegant water stand designed by Robert Adam

One small and elegant piece of furniture that was made in 1767 especially for the Tapestry Room at Croome Court, Worcestershire survives in the Croome Estate Trust Collection today. It is a water stand, designed by Robert Adam and manufactured by Mayhew & Ince, made specially to hold a beautiful and unique ewer and basin, dated 1767, from the Sèvres factory in Paris.

This water set is oval in shape and intricately painted with a 'nouvelle décoration' of dense patterns in delicate shades of purple, red, and blue with gilding on a white ground. The pattern is of almost unequalled quality—so superlative that after seeing it King Louis XV ordered a copy to be made for his own collection.

There is no record of Lord Coventry visiting Paris after 1764, so all his subsequent dealings must have been by letter. One such letter to him in March 1767 from the Directeur Artistique of Sèvres, Bachelier, begins: ‘I have delivered to Mr Foley ‘le jatte et le Broc’ you have ordered me to have made’.\(^1\) It cost the huge sum of 480 livres (£20). Mr Foley would have arranged the transport to England. The series of letters continues; Dame Rosalind Savill says that the correspondence is ‘one of the most exciting sequences of bills relating to design, purchase and display to be recorded in the history of English patronage of Sèvres’.\(^2\)

The wood chosen for the stand was padouk wood, which is bright red when freshly cut, so it would have married very well with the brilliant colours of the tapestries. The bill of September, 1767 from Mayhew & Ince describes it as ‘A very neat Carved Stand for Ewer & Basin of Redwood & Varnished, £14-17-0’.\(^3\) Sir John Soane’s Museum holds an undated preliminary sketch by Adam for a water stand for Lord Coventry\(^4\), showing a tripod piece, probably based on a French neo-classical design—and indeed, there is in the four supports, very slender and elegantly curving out to form a wide, stable base, with ram’s masks supporting an ovoid bowl. The under-tier for the ewer is square. It is probable that when Adam did his preliminary sketches he had not yet received full information about the shape of the porcelain pieces, but after learning the details, his final design was for a perfect marriage of wood and porcelain so that neither outshines the other, but rather they complement each other perfectly.

Symbolically, this beautiful ‘marriage’ is the first object to be returned to Croome Court after 65 years; it is the centrepiece of the exhibition, mounted in what is still known as the Tapestry Room. It is displayed alone, dramatically lit in the otherwise darkened room, as an icon of the Loss and Survival of the 18th-century Coventry collection. What makes the display even more pertinent is that the unveiling of the rather battered earlier 18th-century panelling reveals a previous layer of loss in this enigmatic house. Next door, in what was the Library, is the exhibition telling the story of the Loss and Survival of the Croome Tapestries.

Jill Tovey, Croome Archivist

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\(^1\) Worcestershire Record Office, 705/73/B44450
\(^3\) Worcestershire Record Office, 705/73/B44450
\(^4\) Sir John Soane’s Museum, SM Adam vol 6/177
\(^5\) Worcestershire Record Office, 705/73/B44450
FOURTEEN SHADES OF PINK
Acetylene lighting at The Argory, Armagh, and the careful restoration of one of the silk Drawing Room lampshades

The Argory, County Armagh, complete with its acetylene gas installation and light fittings, contains an exceptionally rare survivor of a form of domestic lighting that enjoyed a period of popularity from the last decade of the 19th century until the late 1920s. In this respect, the house is one of the most interesting and important of all the properties in the care of the National Trust, as it provides visitors and researchers with an opportunity to see a range of historic light fittings and a lighting installation that have remained undisturbed.

The Argory was built in 1824, and until 1906 it was lit by firelight, oil lamps and candles. The design of the Argand fittings that have survived suggests that they were installed when the house was first built, and it is highly likely that other Argand fittings (for example, bracket lamps, single-arm lamps and double-arm pillar lamps) were also used to light passageways and principal rooms in the house. The decision to adapt the surviving fittings for acetylene gas lighting and to install more was made in 1906 by Captain Shelton as being more efficient and cheaper than having either a gas works that produced coal-gas or an electricity installation. What is particularly remarkable about the acetylene fittings is that many of the original glass shades are unbroken, and this is a testimony to the care and diligence of the servants who tended them.

While many of the rooms have Art Nouveau-style fittings, the Drawing Room has a rather elegant six-arm chandelier, and four matching two-arm wall brackets, which are best described as being in a historical style, a pastiche of Regency motifs. This historical illusion is continued; the ‘candles’ in the ‘candle sockets’ are elongated acetylene gas burners with opal glass sleeves that were made to appear as if they were wax candles. The delicate shades of pink silk and glass bead drops on each of the fourteen candles could be raised or lowered by using clips on the candle sleeves.

The shades, however, are in very poor condition. The weight of the glass beads, and the previously unstable and fluctuating environments, have caused the fine silk to fade, shred, and deteriorate.

The environment within the house has been subsequently improved by investing in a Hanwell monitored and controlled heating system, which ensures the rooms sit within National Trust standards of acceptable relative humidity bands. The condition of the shades is closely monitored by house staff during their annual winter deep clean. Damage and losses are recorded, and an assessment made if further action is needed.

It became obvious that the shades were nearing the end of their natural lives. We have done as much as we can to preserve the silk. In 2013 we reached a point where we needed to make some decisions in order to preserve the other elements of the shades (the metal frame and the glass beads). We decided to investigate the costs of having the original silk replaced with new silk of the correct type, in keeping with the original.
Firstly a funding bid was submitted (in 2007 and 2011) to have the actual light fittings conserved (not the shades themselves). The Collections Conservation Prioritisation (CCP) list identifies objects throughout all the Trust’s properties that are in most need of conservation on a national scale. They are scored in relation to their fragility, their condition, and their significance. Currently the acetylene light fittings sit at number 47 on the 2014 CCP list; their rarity and fragility mean that they are a high priority. In addition, initial funding was necessary to allow for investigation into the methodology and materials for the treatment of one of the shades, as opposed to the fittings themselves, in order to provide costsing for further treatment of the remainder. A private donation allowed this investigative work to go ahead in 2014.

The shades are covered in a pleated pink silk (now faded) and lined with cream-coloured silk, the tops finished with a box-pleated silk organza ribbon, and the lower scalloped edges decorated with a metallic-lined fringe of glass beads. The fabric is stitched around a metal framework. An inner collar of mica protects the silk, with metal clips and eyelet holes for attachment to the light fitting. The design follows many that were advertised for use on inverted incandescent gas lamps in trade magazines of the period.

The investigation and treatment of one shade was carried out by Jane Smith at the Trust’s Textile Conservation Studio. The lampshade had to be deconstructed. An attempt was made first to conserve the original silk, but this quickly became unviable in terms of the longevity of the treatment, visual impact, and cost. The silk organza ribbon shattered at the slightest touch. However, the metal frame was sound, and although there were some losses, the beaded decoration was mainly intact and could be re-used.

It was important to follow the original construction as closely as possible. Some time was spent sourcing the appropriate silk and ribbon to replicate the original covering and then dyeing them various shades of pink to find an acceptable match to the un-faded parts. Silk organza ribbon could not be sourced, so Jane cleverly constructed her own version from organza fabric. The beaded fringe was swab-cleaned and losses were replaced with as close a match as possible using a combination of old and new beads. As the property staff remarked after the shade was re-instated in the Drawing Room, the end result is as different as night and day; this is an important factor in helping visitors to gain a feeling of The Argory’s original spirit of place. This preliminary project has identified the methodology and the funding required for the remaining thirteen shades of pink.

For further information on the historic lighting at The Argory, see the free downloadable PDF guide by Maureen Dillon, Adviser for Historic Lighting and Frances Bailey, Curatorial Consultant. http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/document-1355766941263

Kynia Marko ACR, Textile Conservation Adviser
Claire Magill ACR, Regional Conservator for Northern Ireland

EXHIBITION: DEATH OF A HERO AT CHARTWELL

Chartwell was the much-loved Churchill family home and the place from which Sir Winston drew inspiration from 1924 until the end of his life.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of his death. This unique exhibition commemorates the man and his achievements, exploring the final weeks of his life, his funeral, and his legacy.

Objects will be on display that have not been seen before, including the flag that flew over Washington the day Churchill died. The exhibition offers insights into the passing of one of the most-loved statesmen in history, and shows how, in the words of Clementine Churchill, ‘it wasn’t a funeral—it was a triumph’.

The painting (right), ‘Westward to Bladon’, by Wilfred Morden, was completed the year after Churchill’s funeral, and depicts the barge Havengore carrying his coffin along the Thames with the memorable lowering of the cranes in the background.

Exhibition: Death of a Hero is at Chartwell, Westerham, Kent until 1 November.