

*A French/English Dialogue in Architecture and  
Interior Decoration  
from the Mid-Eighteenth Century  
until the Years between the Great Wars*

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Paignton Council in 1946 and operates today as municipal offices.<sup>531</sup>

### The End of an Era

It is understandable that in America where expertise rarely approached the French and English standard, those whose international exposure included the world's two greatest capitals, would appreciate European *savoir-faire* in both civic and domestic architecture. To find a similar, French ethic occurring in England is somewhat of a phenomenon, when one considers the presence of its own highly talented Edwardian architects, firms like George Jackson & Sons, Melliers and a handful of other "art decorators" with their teams of domestic and foreign craftsmen. But a growing popularity of Beaux-Arts style coupled with the now widespread acceptance of retrospective French interior design, found London essentially without a resident Richard Morris Hunt, who could effectively represent the world's premier academy at the very point in history when it reached the zenith of its international appeal. This gap was largely filled not by a French architect liaising with an English firm who knew the "local territory", as was the case of Duchêne and Romaine-Walker, but by a French firm of architects, whose predominantly French-trained English partner was capable enough to bring both essentials into a single London-based *atelier*.<sup>a</sup>

### Mewès & Davis

English-born Arthur Joseph Davis (1878-1951) was educated in Brussels and entered the *École des Beaux-Arts* at the age of sixteen.<sup>532</sup> A pupil of Jules Godefroy and Garnier-trained Jean-Louis Pascal (*Premier Grand Prix*, 1866)<sup>533</sup>, Davis was a brilliant designer, completing twenty-three of his twenty-six *concours* in an astonishing fifteen months! In 1895 he won the second-class prize, gaining the first-class the following year. In 1898 he was assigned to the office of Charles-Frédéric Mewès (1860-1914 - who had also studied under Pascal) to

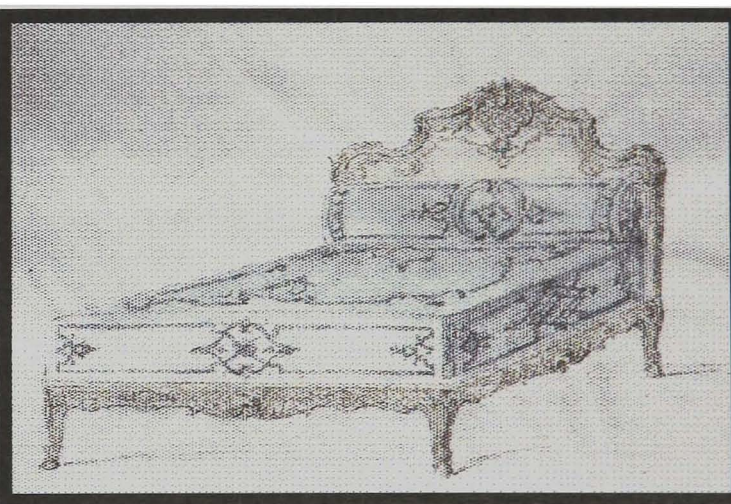
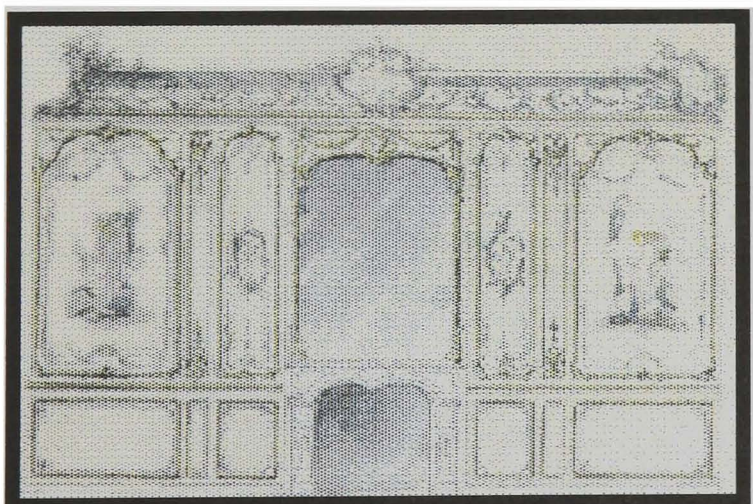
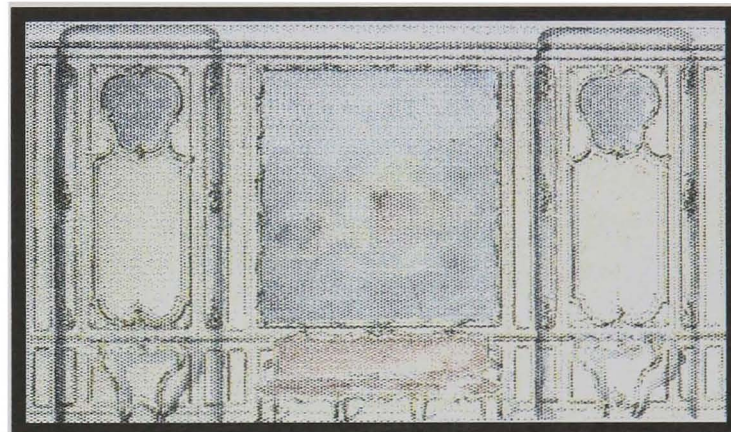
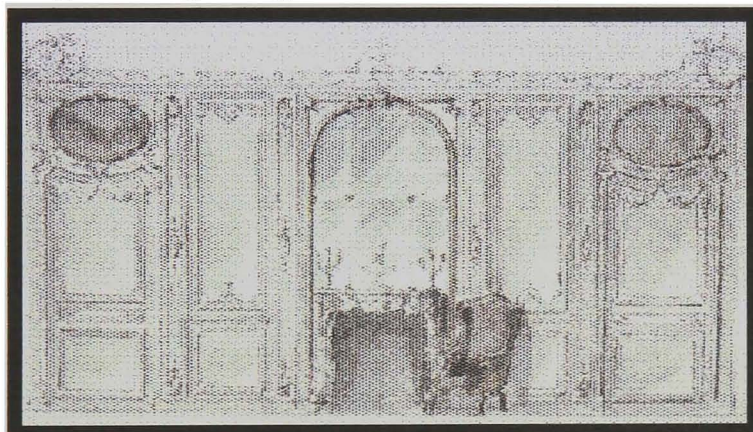


1021 - Arthur Davis sketch of Charles Mewès, Maxtone-Graham, pg.86.

<sup>a</sup> During his career, Davis received the *Légion d'Honneur* and the Belgian *Ordre de la Couronne avec palmes*, and was praised by his master, Godefroy thus; "We find the work of an old student of the Beaux-arts School, Mr. Arthur J. Davis - although an Englishman, he has so absorbed the spirit of our school that he really appears to be a living embodiment of the "Franco-British Union of Architects" (of which Davis was president in 1933). In 1913, Davis attempted to establish the *Beaux-Arts* system of architectural training in England, but unlike Hunt in the US, had limited success. Gray, p.160; *The Builder*, Sept.26, 1913, p.320.



assist the well-known architect in his *Grand* and *Petit Palais* competitions for the *Exposition Universelle* of 1900. Although Mewès came in fourth, he was impressed with the young Englishman's talent, and when Davis completed his course in 1900 at age twenty-two, he was invited to become the firm's junior partner in charge of a projected English branch.<sup>534</sup> Mewès spoke only French, and so an invitation to associate within his large international practice (Bischoff in Germany, Tempier in France, Landecho in Spain and Prentice in America)<sup>a</sup> was based as much on a sophisticated grasp of the local language, ergo an ability to attract commissions, as it was on superior architectural talent.<sup>535</sup> Prentice's addressing Mewès as *le patron* is only one indication of who presided as the firm's premier designer, and it would be accurate to say from the Carlton Hotel commission of 1897-99, until Mewès' death at age 54, Davis, for all his ability, deferred to the senior partner for much of their projects' design and decoration. An indication of this can be found in London's Victoria and Albert Museum Drawings Collection where several examples of Mewès' studies for interiors<sup>b</sup> display a deft painterly approach to what is an expert grasp of *Louis* presentation.

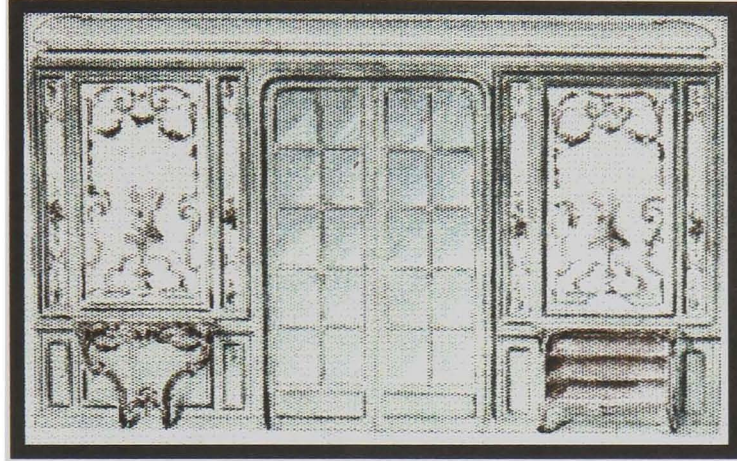
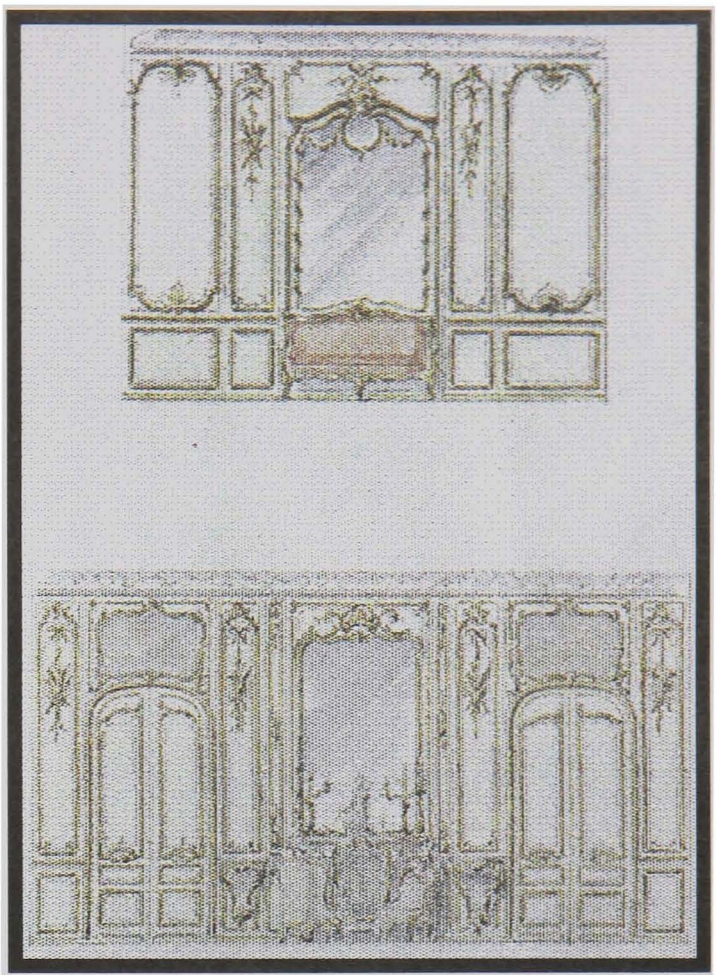
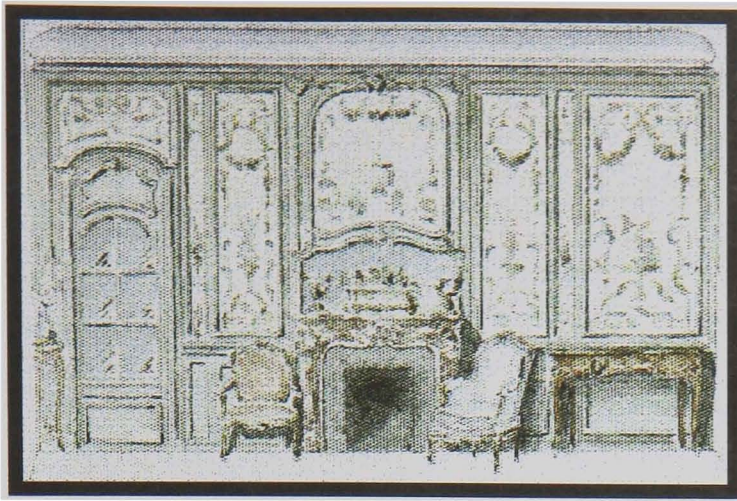


**1022 & 1023 - Charles Mewès watercolour studies for interiors (Louis XV) "Petit Salon 1er Étage, Régence", drg.27, Vol.E867-1975 & (no title) drg.30, Vol.E866-1975. 1024 & 1025 - Mewès watercolour studies (Louis XV) (no title) drg.41, Vol E866-1975 & (no title) drg.45, Vol E866-1975, V&A.**

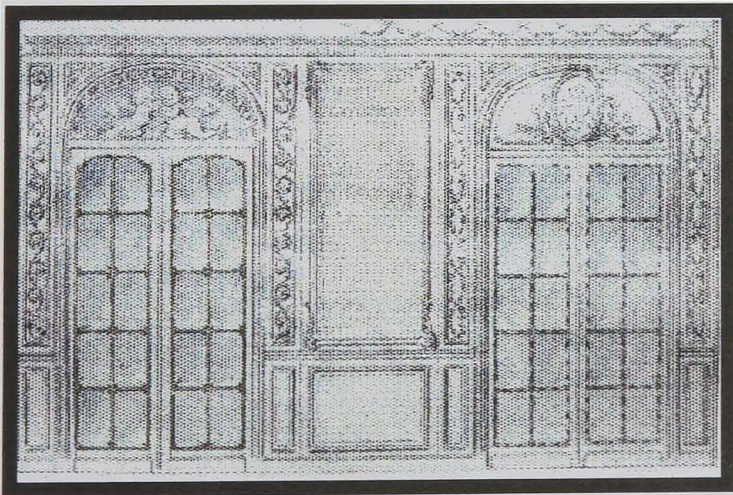
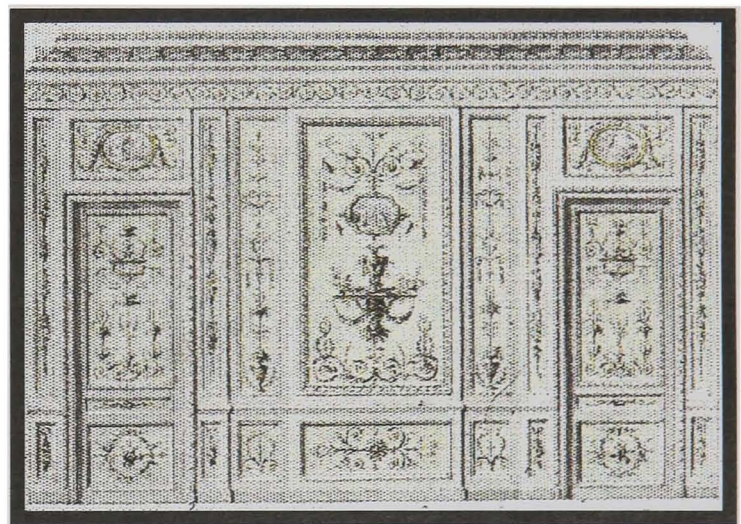
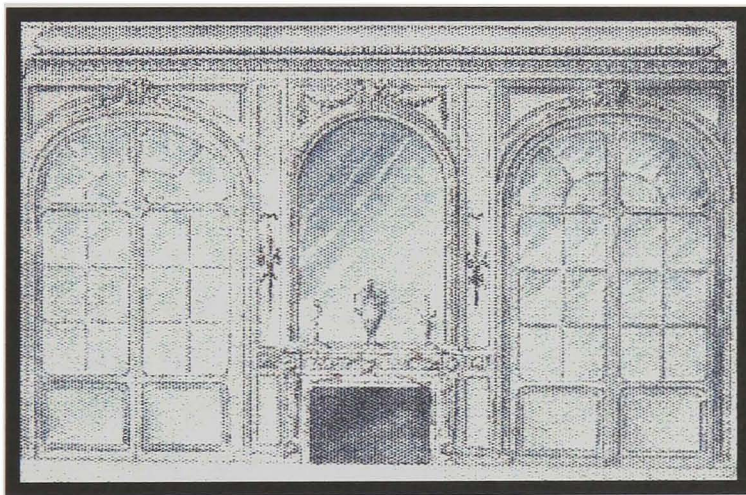
<sup>a</sup> After Mewès's death, Davis collaborated with Alphonse Bischoff in designing branches for the Westminster Bank in Antwerp and Brussels, and with A.A. Prentice for the Royal Automobile Club in Sao Paulo. The writer's research mentions only American T. Merrill Prentice who entered the *Beaux-Arts* in 1925, and has no further information on Mewès's American partner. Fleetwood-Hesketh, P., "The Royal Automobile Club", *Country Life*, Oct.14, 1971, p.968; Mewès & Davis photo albums, M&D, Architects, Derriford Business Park, Derriford, Plymouth, Devon, courtesy of Mr. N. Borne, writer's visit, 1992.

<sup>b</sup> The remaining volumes of Mewès interiors are housed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. V&A Catalogue of Drawings, MAS-MI, 11 May 1991.



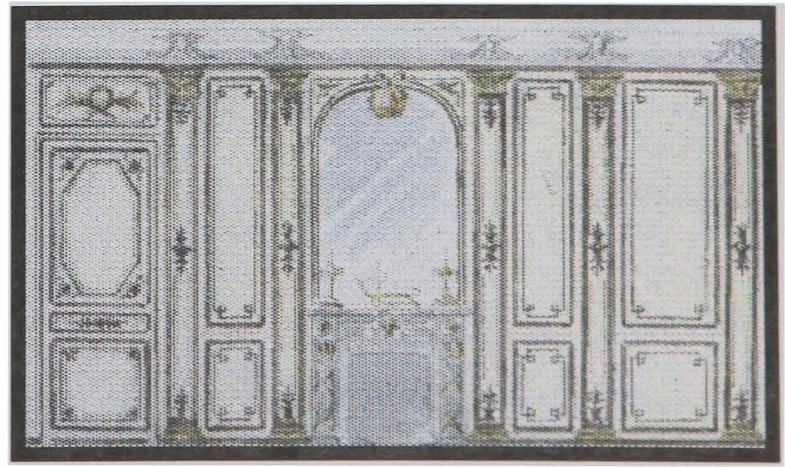
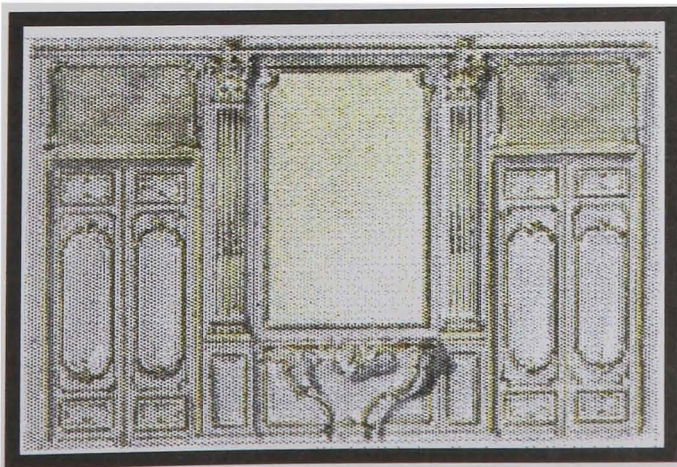


**1026, 1027 & 1028 - Mewès watercolour studies (left) "Petit Salon Louis XV", Hôtel Chatham" drgs. 35 & 36, Vol.E867-1975 & (right) "Petit Salon Louis XV, Creme et d'or", drg.6, Vol E867-1975, V&A.**

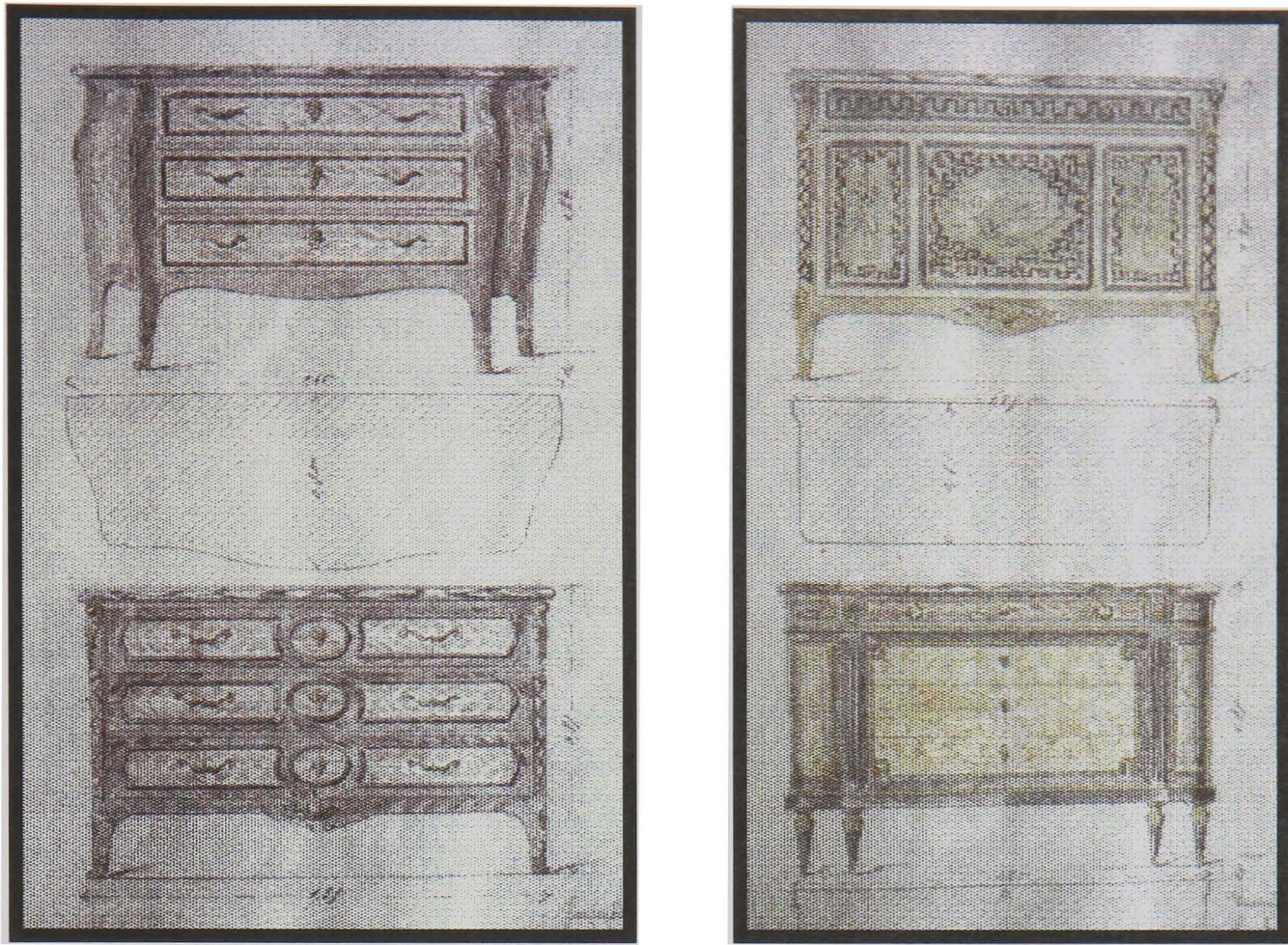


**1029, 1030 & 1031- Mewès watercolour studies (Louis XVI) "Chambre projet simple", drg.187, vol.E866-1975, (no title) Drg.23, vol.E866-1975 & (no title) drg.17, vol.E867-1975, V&A.**

**1032 & 1033 - Mewès watercolour studies (2nd Empire) "Salon face vis à vis cheminée", drg.43, vol.E867-1975 & "Petit Salon 2nd Étage Empire", vol.E.867-1975, V&A.**







1034 & 1035 - Mewès watercolour studies, "Commode Louis XV ébenisterie et bronze", drg.64, vol.E.866-1975 & "Commode chambre marqueterie et bronze, Louis XVI", drg.71, vol.E.866-1975.

The pivotal commission to launch Mewès as a leading hotel architect was his project for César Ritz<sup>a</sup> in the *Place Vendôme* establishment bearing the great hotelier's name.<sup>536</sup> Concealed behind Hardouin-Mansart's façades of 1699,<sup>537</sup> the Paris Ritz's 1898 opening attracted the stars of the little Swiss's entire world - and to Mewès's restrained, elegant interiors, which had been planned to the smallest detail. After patronizing the Hôtel Bristol for forty years, the prince of Wales immediately transferred his reservations to the new establishment.

<sup>a</sup> A Swiss of humble beginnings, Ritz (1850-1918), whose name has come to symbolize the epitome of elegance and luxury, began his career with a patron's advice: "You'll never make anything of yourself in the hotel business". From the start, Ritz was a workaholic with perfectionist attitudes, extending eventually well beyond his restaurant experience to virtually every aspect of hotel management. Ultimately his patrons did not receive value for money, but excessive value for a great deal of money. Ritz began his career in 1866 as an apprentice wine-waiter and followed the seasons to work in a succession of increasingly splendid Continental hotels. His remarkable ascension amongst the ranks was signalled by his appointment at age 23 to be restaurant manager at the Grand Hôtel, Nice, followed by *maître d'hôtel*, at the Grand Hôtel, Locarno. Two years later he became manager of the Hôtel de Nice, and at age 27 was general manager of the Grand Hôtel Nationale, Lucerne. Under Ritz's direction, the Nice hotel had doubled its receipts in a single season, and the Grand at Lucerne, became the most elegant hotel in Europe. Ritz spent his winters managing various establishments in the south of France; and in 1881, when he lost his chef at the Grand in Monte Carlo, the inimitable Auguste Escoffier was sent for as replacement. The partnership was magic. Both men shared a passion for cleanliness and precision, but Escoffier added the demand for quality china and glass to enhance his unrivalled *haut cuisine*. If joining forces with the great culinary genius were not enough to assure a glorious career, the prince of Wales added the supreme *coup de théâtre*. That very year, Wales's reservation at the Grand assured a constituency from the highest ranks of nobility, celebrity and enterprise. Amongst them appeared the (continued)



The following year Ritz, who had managed London's Savoy Hotel since its opening in 1889, transferred his talents, staff (and many of the Savoy's clientele) to the newly built Carlton Hotel - whose directors included the prince of Wales's close friend Lord de Grey. When the prince heard of the transfer, he cancelled a party at the Savoy, saying "Where Ritz goes, I go".<sup>538</sup>



1036 - Isaacs & Florence Carlton Hotel, Haymarket (1897-9) Taylor/Bush p.129.

Although the Carlton was nearing completion, Ritz was given a free hand in the design of its major interiors - meaning of course, the first London presence of Charles Mewès.<sup>539</sup> The hotel had been built (1897-99) as part of a complex including Her Majesty's Theatre, from the designs of Charles John Phipps (1835-97 - also page 126) and was completed after Phipps's death by Florence & Isaacs.<sup>a</sup> Whether Davis was involved with the interior design is not clear, but certainly it was this project which induced Mewès to consider an expansion of his practice to the English capital.

In spite of its Mansard roofs and square domes, Phipps's Carlton Hotel appeared a layered, overly articulated if not muddled design, typical of many English architects' attempts at French - if it can be so called - architecture.

(continued) Irish impresario, Richard D'Oyly Carte, who was planning to build a great new hotel in London, and wished to assure its success with the Ritz/Escoffier alliance. "The Savoy" was built (1884-9) from the designs of Thomas Edward Colcutt (1840-1924) and in the year of its completion, Ritz and his incomparable chef took over the management. In the course of his ten-year stay at the Savoy, Ritz lent his efforts to a bewildering catalogue of similar ventures in Rome, Frankfurt, Salsomaggiore, Palermo, Biarritz, Wiesbaden, Monte Carlo, Lucern and Menton, as well as projects in Cairo, Madrid and Johannesburg. Adding to these the English Development Co. projected plans for new hotels to be named after Ritz himself in Johannesburg, Madrid, New York, London, and Paris. The first of these to materialize was that of the Place Vendôme. Taylor/Bush, pp.127-9; Montgomery-Massingberd/Watkin, pp.9-22, who quote Mme. Marie-Louise Ritz's memoir, *César Ritz-Host to the World* (1938).

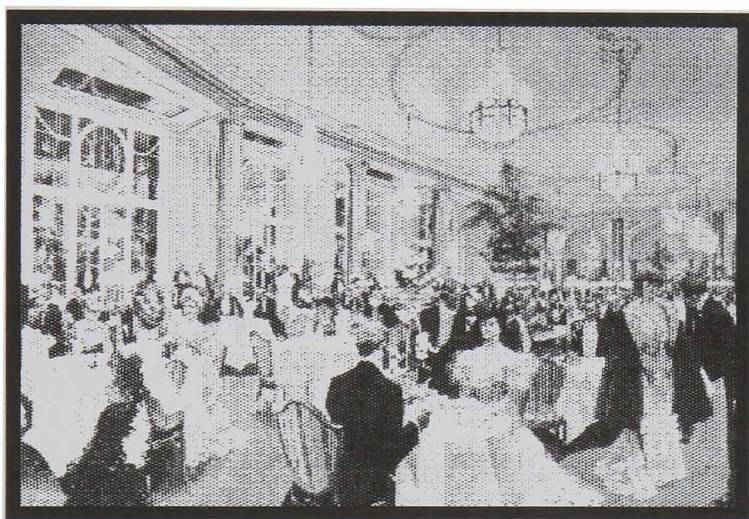
<sup>a</sup> Phipps preceded Frank Matcham as England's first theatre specialist. Although his output did not compare with Matcham's astonishing number of projects, Phipps's 71 theatres is nonetheless impressive. Most projects by Henry Louis Florence (1842-1916) were done in conjunction with Lewis Henry Isaacs (d.1908), and include the Holborn Viaduct Hotel (1874) Victoria Hotel, Northumberland Ave. (1886), the Empire Hotel, Lowestoft, Suffolk (1898) and the Coburg Hotel, Mayfair. Florence was a pupil of the ateliers Questal, Blouet, Gilbert and (as with both Mewès and Davis) Pascal whilst at the *École des Beaux-Arts* (pg.402b), received the Soane Medallion in 1869, and an RA Gold medal the following year. Walker, B.M., ed., *Frank Matcham, Theatre Architect*, Blackstaff Press (Belfast-1908) pp.1, 21, 82; *Survey of London*, Vol. XXX, p.245; Palmes, James C., *Catalogue of the RIBA Drawings Collection*, Gregg (Farnborough-1968) p.122; Boniface, *Hotels and Restaurants, 1830 to the Present Day*, Fowler, ed., Royal Commission on Historical Monuments England, HMSO (London-1981) pl.30; Gray, p.259; Montgomery-Massingberd/Watkin, pp.25-6.



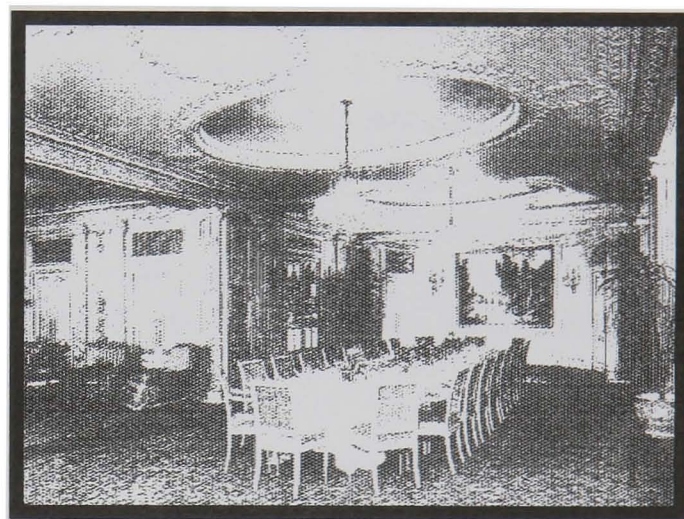
By contrast, its Mewès/Ritz interiors were an ordered, well-proportioned suite of rooms, whose elegant *Louis Seize*-style décor earned them immediate praise. The *Lady's Pictorial* described the Dining Room as a "...combination of cream and rose colour [having] mirrors surmounted with trellis-work and climbing foliage and windows behind which the electric light conveys all the effect of a lovely



1037 - Charles Mewès with Davis? - Carlton Hotel, haymarket, Palm Court, photo Bedford Lemere series 29441-52 (Feb., 1928).



1038 - Mewès - Carlton Hotel, Dining Room, M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.29.



1039 - Mewès - Carlton Hotel, Banqueting Room, Bedford Lemere series 29441-52 (Feb., 1928).

moonlit sky." The *Sketch* reported: "A very attractive feature...is the great Palm Court, which is decorated and furnished so as to have the character of an exquisite *salon* in the Louis XVI style. The liberal use of palm trees, lounges, settes, Oriental rugs, and the ordinary equipment of a first-class drawing-room give this stately apartment a most dignified effect." And the *Gentlewoman* echoed a similar sentiment with: "The spacious and stately quadrangle, which has been furnished as a sumptuous drawing room or after-dinner lounge, has no rival in Europe, for the beauty of its conception and the delicacy of taste with which that conception has been carried out. The general effect of marble pilasters, gilded cornices, cream-coloured walls, rich Oriental rugs, stately palms, and soft-hued upholstery produce in the mind of the spectator a feeling of sensuous delight." The *Daily News* referred to its "purity of style, refinement of detail, and delicately harmonious scheme of colour." The *Morning Herald* described "...the last voice of luxury...", and the *Ladies' Field* said, "It is truly a palatial addition to the high-class hotels of London".<sup>540</sup> Of all the press the Carlton's interiors received, not one article contained a derogatory criticism as the English public greeted what amounted to a revolution in English hotel presentation.<sup>541</sup>



As the creator of such celebratory dishes as *Pêche Melba*, Escoffier once confessed the secret of his art was that 'most of my dishes were created for ladies'<sup>542</sup>, Ritz gauged that the ceremony of dining out should receive equal attention; for if a lady could not resist visiting the restaurant where an offering had been named for herself, named or not, the opportunity to flaunt her newest gown might be a near parallel enticement. Hence at great expense, the floor of the Palm Court (figure 1037) was lowered to provide an airy, two-level space connected by an open staircase "so that", as Ritz explained, "the ladies entering the dining room or leaving it may do so dramatically"<sup>543</sup>. It should be borne in mind that it was only by the mid-1880s that women were even allowed to dine in hotel restaurants, and subsequently restaurants per se. By the turn of the century, London's hotels catered to an international clientele (including Americans) who began to expect grander accommodations than conventional English offerings could provide - and they were willing to pay for them.<sup>544</sup> From Ralph Nevill's contemporary commentaries, it is clear that within a very short time the capital's major hotels had been transformed to cater more to feminine standards. He singled out the Savoy, the Carlton and the *London Ritz* as the three best for by now obvious reasons.<sup>545</sup>

... Owing to frequenting the great restaurants which had sprung up since Mr. Ritz had shown what could be done at the Savoy, people who had before been satisfied with plain fare wanted what was or claimed to be French Cookery. ...<sup>546</sup>

Mr. Ritz also first introduced the principle of artistic decoration, even down to the smallest details, now a conspicuous feature in good modern hotels. It was with the opening of the Savoy Hotel in 1887 that the new era began, which introduced what may be called the restaurant life to a large section of the British public... Since then many other excellently appointed hostelries have been built, and it is evident that the palatial hotel has come to stay. ... The last of old-fashioned hostelries in this part of the west end was "The Bath", which was pulled down but a short time ago to make way for the palatial Ritz Hotel, which now spreads over the site of the rambling old building. As a matter of fact, the disappearance of the old English Hotel calls for but few regrets; dingy and in reality none too comfortable, its advantages, compared with modern resorts of the same nature, were nil.<sup>547</sup>

### **The Ritz**

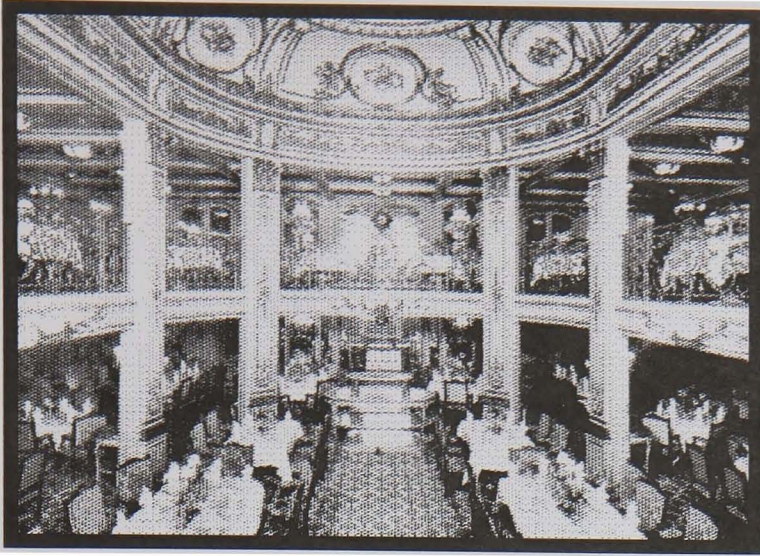
So successful had been Ritz's Carlton Hotel that in 1902 a consortium calling itself the Blackpool Building and Vendor Co. Ltd., determined to take advantage of the hotelier's



popularity with the construction of what was intended to be the finest hotel in London.<sup>548</sup> To assure success, the new establishment could be named only after Ritz himself; and for Ritz, the only possible architect - who would now design the exterior as well, and thereby achieve the quintessential declaration of the little Swiss's perfect world - was Charles Mewès. Sadly, the events of 1902, which promised the most glittering London season ever, came to an abrupt, disastrous halt with the postponement of Edward VII's coronation. Two days before the appointed date, with final rehearsals proceeding at Westminster Abbey, the king was struck with an acute attack of peritonitis, which his doctors warned would require an immediate operation to save his life.<sup>549</sup> London was bulging with dignitaries from all over the globe, and as hotelier Frederick Gordon later explained to his disappointed stockholders, "Well, I won't say that all the visitors in the hotels, but a very large proportion of them, immediately the announcement was made, left bodily".<sup>550</sup> Ritz himself, appearing perhaps as pale and stricken as his idol, gave the sad news in the Carlton's Dining Room, and shortly thereafter suffered a nervous breakdown from which he never recovered. The little Swiss, who had been working fanatically for *the* grand occasion, had received the shocking news almost as a *coup de grâce*; and although his frenetic schedule likely would have precipitated an inevitable collapse, this was the pivotal moment from which Ritz "gradually sank out of life"<sup>551</sup> to end his days in a Lucern sanatorium just before the end of the First World War.<sup>552</sup>

Consequently the great hotelier's association with the London hotel bearing his name is but a nominal one; but few can dismiss Mewès's (now formally "&" Davis with London offices at 6 Dean St. W.) definitive statement of Edwardian elegance and grace, overlooking Green Park from its spectacular Piccadilly site. Comprising what has been described as the 'shortest Rue de Rivoli in the world',<sup>553</sup> the hotel celebrated high society's *monde charmant* for anyone who could afford its luxurious services and surroundings. Two generations after Benjamin Wyatt's Stafford House had proclaimed his supreme statement of noble splendour at the opposite end of Queen's Walk, it was becoming nearly possible for a traveller (with a somewhat abstracted sense of reality) to leave his New York *château*, cross the Atlantic, be chauffeured to the heart of London, and by virtue of his various accommodations experience a sort of eighteenth-century epiphany. This illusion was certainly not shattered by a visit to the Ritz.





**1040 - decorators unidentified under Chantiers de Penhoet (shipyard) The France, First Class Restaurant (1912) Miller, p.14. 1041 - Mewès & Davis HMS Aquitania, "Palladian Lounge" (1914) Braynard/Miller, p.23. 1042 - artists unknown under Rolls Royce interior executed for wife of a French buyer (1927) Thorndike, p.116. 1043 - Worth of Paris Devonshire House Ball costume for the 9th Duke of Marlborough (1897) MacColl/Wallace, pg.221.**



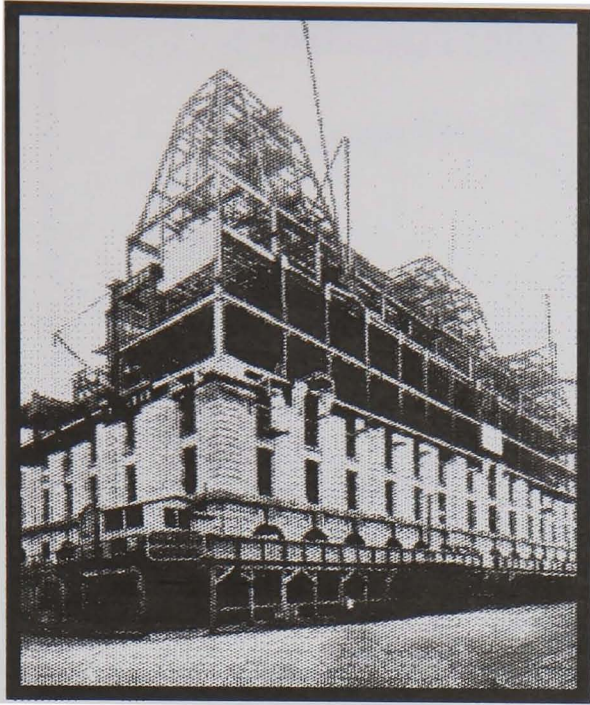
As Neville has indicated, the old Bath and Walsingham hotels, were torn down to make way for a new structure which stretched the full block from Arlington Street to Green Park. Simultaneously, the LCC took this opportunity to widen Piccadilly, compromising with the developers of the Ritz, to allow a covered gallery, supporting to the street's edge the hotel's upper floors.<sup>554</sup>

Also breaking with tradition was the hotel's steel frame construction, which employed not only American (Chicago) engineering know-how, but was erected in half the time of traditional methods with thirty-nine-foot-long



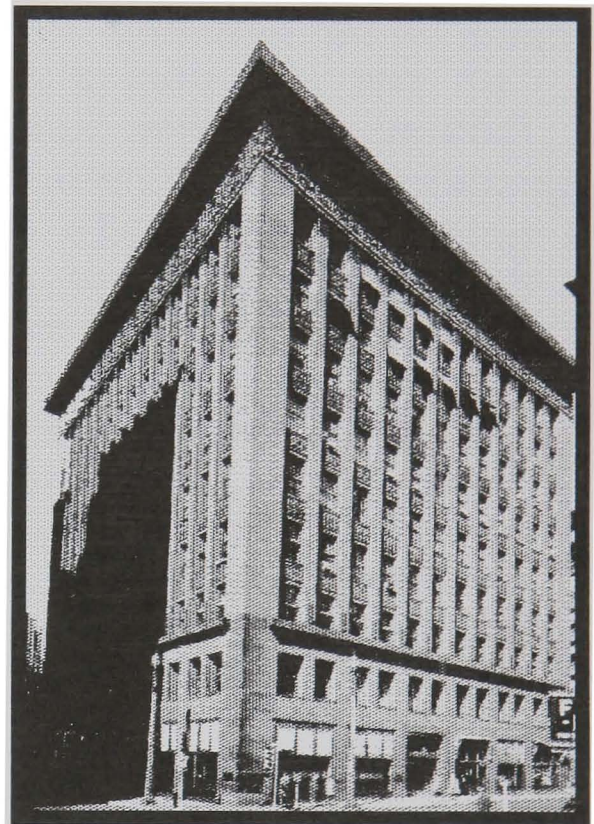
**1044 - Piccadilly Walsingham House block of service flats (centre) M-Massingberd/Watkin pg.31.**





1045 & 1046 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz Hotel under construction and as completed (1904 & 1905)* M-Masingberd/Watkin, pgs.44 & 45. 1047 - Louis Sullivan *The Wainwright Building, St. Louis (1890-1)* Bush-Brown, fig.45.

American-built derricks.<sup>a 555</sup> Heralded as London's first major structure of what was shortly to become the standard approach to commercial building fabrication,<sup>b</sup> the Ritz's steel "cage-skeleton"<sup>556</sup> construction was sheathed in Norwegian granite at the ground floor, with Portland stone above; all giving the impression of only load bearing masonry. Although French designs like Laloux's station, Quay d'Orsay, and the Grand and Petit palaces of the 1900 Paris Exposition - whose interiors celebrated the new departure (and Louis Sullivan's breakthrough design in his Wainwright Building of some ten years before - externally expressing the presence of a steel grid) - the Ritz's interiors characterized most early twentieth century buildings, in the sense that even with a significant reduction of masonry mass increasing the interior floor space, any expression of the steel supports was submerged beneath a virtuosic assembly of ersatz interior arrangement and detailing. The unwillingness of contemporary man to be thrust into a comparatively characterless world of *form following function*<sup>c</sup>

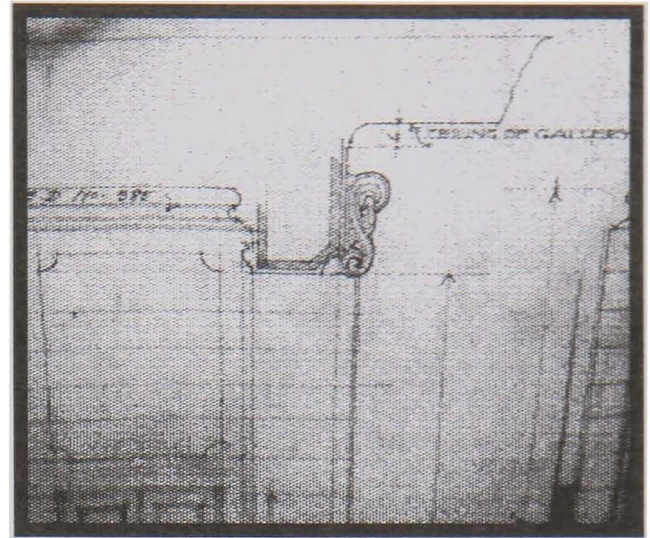
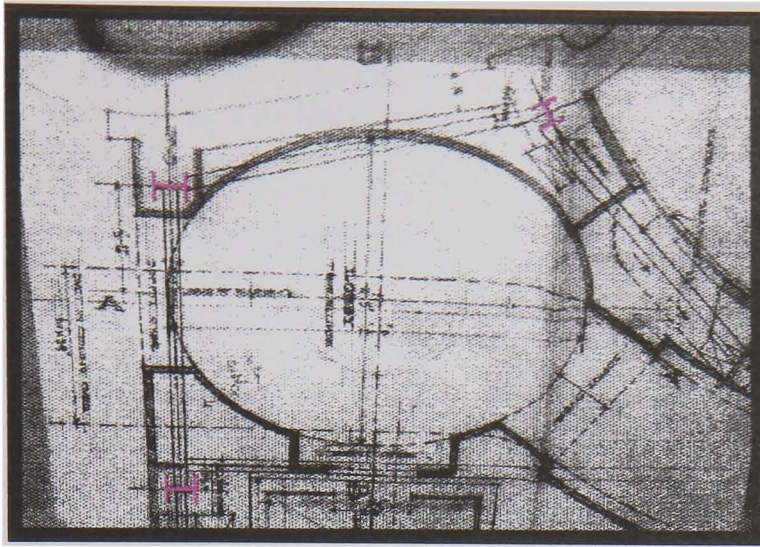


<sup>a</sup> In 1986, the Ritz Hotel was one of 16 noteworthy buildings built over an 80-year period to receive the British Steel Corporation's Structural Steel Classic Awards. Mewès & Davis correspondence file (The Ritz), M&D offices, Plymouth.

<sup>b</sup> In an age where labour costs were beginning to far outweigh that of a building's materials, speed was also an advantage of steel construction. Excavation of the Ritz began in June, 1904, and the building was complete a mere year and 4 months later. Montgomery-Massingberd/Watkin, p.44.

<sup>c</sup> This dictum of Louis Henry Sullivan (1856-1924) was first announced in 1895. Almost universally regarded as the first modern, so-called "democratic" architect, Sullivan disdained Classical architecture (continued)





1048 & 1049 - Mewès & Davis *The Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall (1908-11) onionskin studies of the elliptical Lobby, Lower Ground Floor & Gallery archway section, M&D archives.*

is illustrated in figures 1048 & 1049, where an elliptical elevator lobby of Mewès & Davis's Royal Automobile Club (1908-11) is constructed in *stuc pierre* partitions and an archway's scrolled keystone (*agraffe*) becomes merely a decorative attachment - both feigning structure, but in reality divorced entirely from the primary supports (in red).

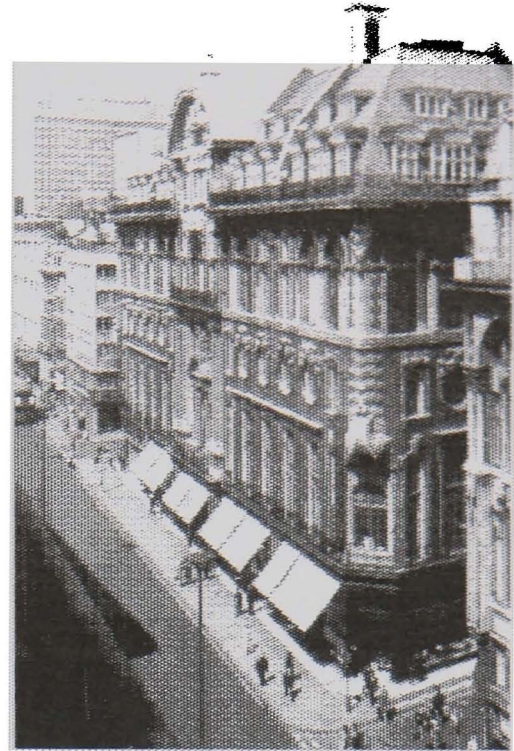
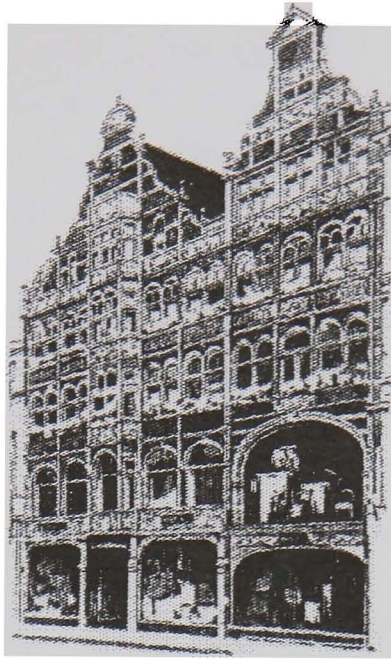
Both the construction, interior decoration and furnishing of the Ritz were carried out under the direction of Waring & Gillow, the largest firm of decorators and home furnishers to exist probably ever. Really a huge conglomerate with headquarters comprising an entire block (numbers 164-180) in Oxford Street, in just over a decade Warings had grown from a single London outlet<sup>a</sup> to incorporate several English concerns with branches in Liverpool, Manchester, Lancaster, and in the following decade at Paris, Madrid, Brussels, Montreal, Johannesburg and Buenos Aires.<sup>b</sup> Having outfitted (continued) as being aristocratic (which of course it is), and taking no small hint from Darwin and others, applied biological principle to the sphere of architecture in the sense - specific to this discussion - that it must be truthful to its structure and purpose. Sullivan's outspoken championing of his beliefs in the wake of Chicago's Columbian exhibition and the universal popularity of Beaux-Arts design largely contributed to his being professionally ostracised, eventually dying in obscurity, a broken and disillusioned man. Bush-Brown, A., *Louis Sullivan*, George Braziller (New York-1960)pp.19-20, 25, 28; Kenin/Wintle quote Hugh Morrison *Louis Sullivan (On Himself)*p.717; Hines, p.xx.

<sup>a</sup> S.J. Waring & Sons Ltd. first appeared in the POLDs in 1894, advertising themselves as "...decorators & designers, cabinet-makers & Upholsters by appt. to her Majesty the Queen, carvers & gilders, importers of carpets, silks and other fabrics, contractors to the Admiralty, specialties of the late Charles Hindley & Sons, 181 Oxford St., London W; also at Bold St., Liverpool & Deansgate & King Street, Manchester. Kelleys, POLD 1894.

<sup>b</sup> The history of Waring & Gillow actually begins with the father of Lancaster architect and furniture-maker Richard Gillow (1734-1811), the latter supplying amongst others, John Carr of York at Workington Hall, Cumbria (1777-82) and Farnley Hall near Otley, West Yorkshire (1786-90) and Samuel and Lewis Wyatt at Tatton Park, Cheshire (1780-1825 - 200 pieces; 120 on show today). Robertus Gillow (1703-1773) founded his firm in 1735 and, joined by his son 21 years later, developed a concern whose mastery of furniture craftsmanship placed them in the company of Chippendale, and the other great Georgian cabinet-makers. In 1760 the firm opened a branch in London, which was for a time supplied by the Lancaster manufactory. Any good account of English furniture will discuss this firm, whose reputation of top quality was enhanced by the designs of Sheraton, Hepplewhite, (continued)



(continued) Robert Adam and Pugin whose Gillow-manufactured designs were supplied to the New Houses of Parliament in 1846. In 1897 the firm, under the leadership of one Samuel Harris, absorbed furniture-makers Jackson & Graham and Collison & Lock (who had amalgamated 12 years previous), and in the same year were themselves fused with a group of London-based businessmen, which included Gordon Selfridge and Samuel James Waring Junr (S.J. Waring & Sons Ltd.). Waring was the son of a Norwegian immigrant who had established a

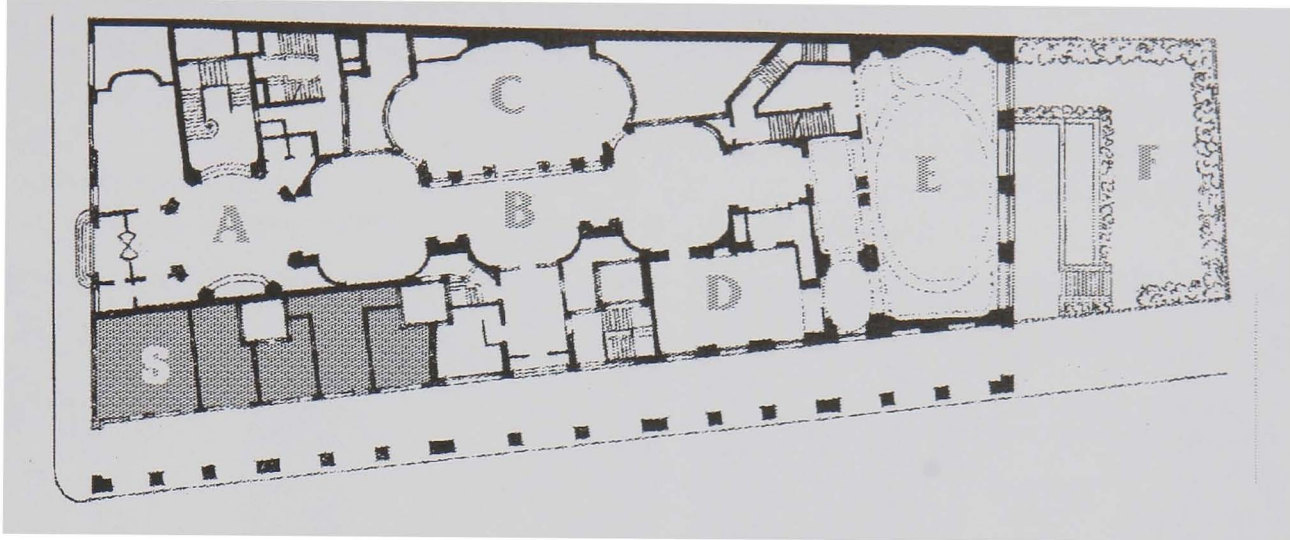


**1050 - architect unidentified - S.J. Waring's shop, Oxford St. (c.1898), Barty-King, pg.59. 1051 - R. Frank Atkinson - Waring & Gillow, Oxford St. (1901-3), Gray, pg.69.**

successful linen business in Ireland at the beginning of the 19th century. With branches in Liverpool and Manchester, Waring had expanded beyond linen to include wholesale furniture and a range of household goods when, in 1893, he moved his headquarters to Oxford Street, London, combining with Gillow's four years later. In 1906, with capital resources of one million pounds (the biggest stockholder being the prince of Wales's close friend, Sir Ernest Cassel - pgs.324a, 400a) and boasting 2½ miles of showrooms, a travel agency and post office!, Waring & Gillow Ltd. moved into a giant Oxford Street emporium designed by Atkinson (pg. 407b). Although the building was lampooned as "Hampton Court Palace on stilts in the middle of Oxford Street", the firm's immediate and continued business success was astonishing by any account (Exhibit V lists W&G's projects to 1907 (*Decorative Contracts*) but as some commissions mentioned dates preceding the merger, they were obviously done either by Gillow Ltd., or S.J. Waring & Sons). In addition to their own premises and the Ritz, by 1907 Waring's partnership with builders J.G. White & Co, had built the New War Office, the Waldorf Theatre & Hotel, The Royal Automobile Club, the Hamburg-Amerika offices and Oceanic House in Cockspur St., the Liverpool Cotton Exchange, several town halls, the Ashton Memorial in Lancaster and Selfridge's, and had or were carrying out building and/or decoration contracts all over the globe. Added to their English branches, were offices and showrooms in Glasgow, Paris, Madrid and Johannesburg, with additional outlets having been established by 1910 in Brussels, Montreal and Buenos Aires. From all these locations the firm boasted significant work in France, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Turkey, Greece, Egypt, The United States, Cape Colony, the Transvaal, Natal, Victoria, New South Wales, New Zealand, India and Japan. Waring and Gillow's heyday was short lived. By 1927 all the foreign branches had closed except for Paris and Brussels. In 1918, the company had 11 directors including 2 Warings (Samuel James, and James Elston); by 1923 there were only 4 directors - still two Warings, but James Elston had been replaced by Harold, and Samuel was now Lord Waring. The company was in financial trouble by 1930, when all if its directors, including Lord Waring were replaced either by resignation or removal. A receiver was appointed, May, 1932, and six years later the company known as Waring & Gillow Ltd. was dissolved. Harrison, P.A., *Waring and Gillow*, dissertation, V&A, 1982; Jourdain, M., "Furniture of Gillow Design", *Antiques*, Oct.1951, p.297; Shaw, B., "Gillows of Lancaster, A Great Georgian Firm of Cabinet-makers", *Country Life*, Aug.29, 1947, pp.430-31; Pevsner, N.& Hubbard, E., *The Buildings of Cheshire*, Penquin (London-1971)p.354; Cheshire County Council, *Tatton Park, The Mansion*, The National Trust guide, Lund Humphries (Bradford-1987)p.5; *Tatton Park* (continued)



the Carlton, the Ritz was Waring & Gillow's second large hotel commission with the Waring-White Building Company being responsible for the construction,<sup>557</sup> and Waring & Gillow Ltd. subcontracting aspects of the interior decoration to the inimitable Jackson & Sons (Exhibit III). The mother firm supplied the mechanical and electrical services as well as all the Mewès & Davis-designed mobile furnishings.<sup>558</sup>



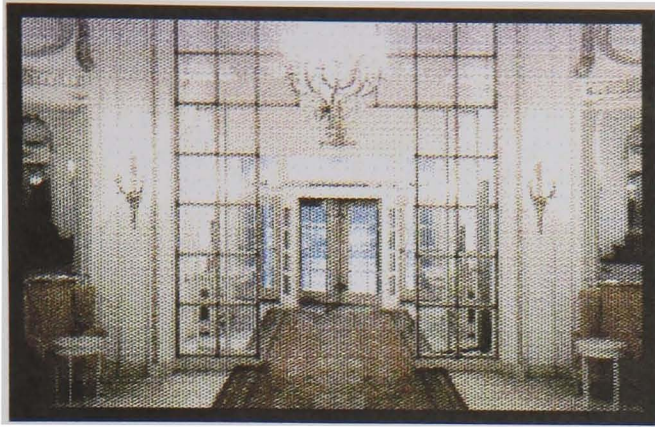
*1052 - Mewès & Davis The Ritz, Ground Floor Plan. A-Vestibule, B-Grand Gallery, C-Winter Garden, D-Marie-Antoinette Room, E-Restaurant, F-Garden at Green Park. S-shops oriented to the Arcade.*

As with Pellechet's Bowes Museum and many evidentiary French undertakings on English soil, what appeared on the exterior was rarely reinforced inside (and vice versa). The Ritz was however an all but consummate *Louis XVI* statement recast in modern terms.<sup>559</sup> Gabriel, Mique, Bélanger or any other eighteenth-century architect had never applied their art to an hostelry where the programme required domestic comfort adjunct to a well-oiled commercial machine. As such the hotel was an entirely new specie for which there existed no historical design source. Certainly a constrained Piccadilly site contributed to the Ritz's internal arrangement as its public interiors were limited to two principal areas, which were not afforded the square-footage found in most of London's grand hotels. Therefore, by circumstance and design, the Ritz accomplishes an intimacy found in much smaller establishments, where each space, excepting its dining rooms, flows into the one adjacent.

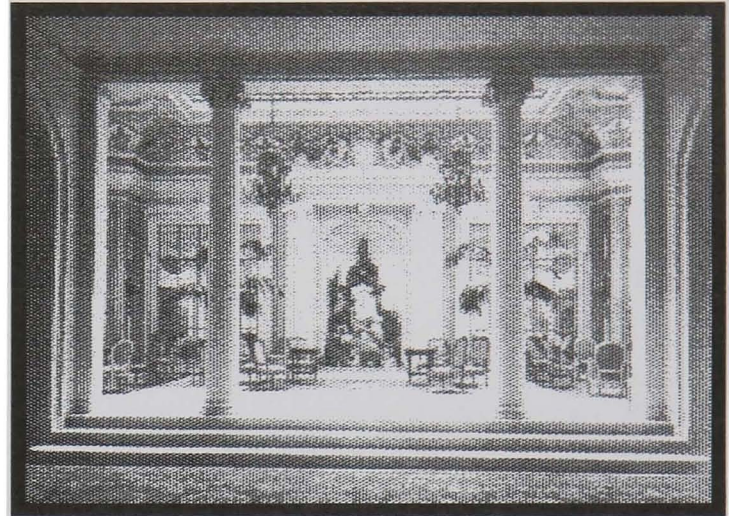
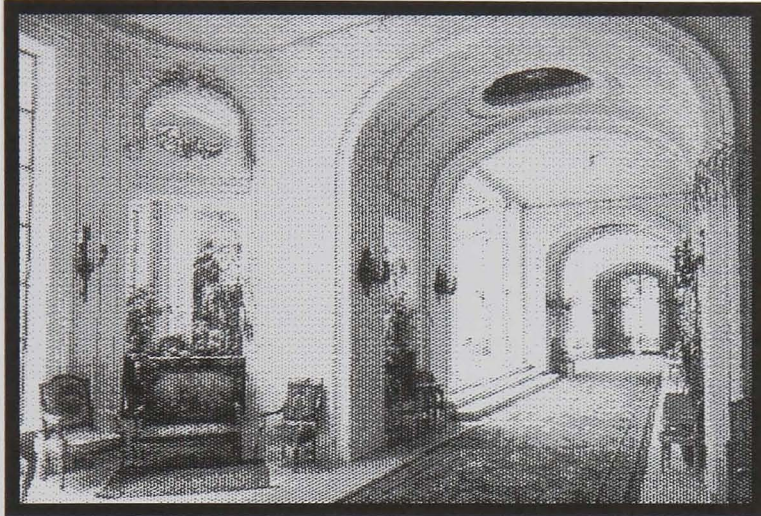
As one might expect, both the hotel's Arlington Street and Piccadilly entrances provide welcoming vestibules where the guest experiences no feeling of pause or exclusion. Passing through elegant, well-proportioned screens of glass and gilt bronze, he enters the Grand Gallery, which although

(continued) guidebook, 1978, pp.5-10; Goodison, N., & Hardy, J., "Gillows at Tatton Park", *Journal of the Furniture History Society*, Vol. VI, W.S. Maney & Son (...-1970) pp.1-5; De Falbe, Sophia, "James Schoolbred & Co., Late Victorian Department Store Furniture", MA Thesis, V&A, April, 1985, pp.113-4; Edwards & Ramsey, ed., *The Connoisseur's Complete Period Guides* (Joy, E.T., "Furniture") p.833; Barty-King, pp.159; *Examples of Decorative Woodwork by Waring & Gillow Limited*, catalogue & *Waring & Gillow Past & Present*, brochure, both at National Arts Library (V&A), no publ.; W&G, *Decorative Contracts*, p.21; Waring & Gillow, *The Artistic Evolution of the English Home*, Waterlow & Sons Ltd. (London-1901) passim, Kelley's POLD 1894, 1907, 1910, 1926, 1927; PRO B.T.31, Box 32136, Company No. 12444.





1053 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Vestibule*, M-Massingberd/Watkin, pg.33. 1054 - Mewès "Salon face vis à vis fenêtre", Drg.45, vol.E867-1975, V&A.. 1055 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Bar section of Grand Gallery with Winter Garden beyond*, M&D photo albums. 1056 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Winter Garden from Grand Gallery*, M&D photo albums, prov. M&D, Plymouth.



1057 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Winter Garden*, cover, *The Ritz*, M-Massingberd/Watkin.

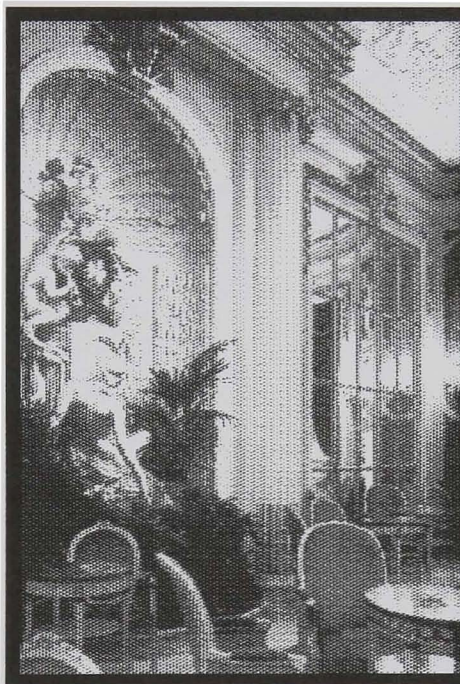
a corridor connecting all the ground floor areas, is segmented to provide a sense of place at any juncture. One section serves as an intimate bar, another as a writing room, with the central, axial segment providing an inner vestibule to the Ritz's magnificent Winter Garden (or Palm Court as it is presently called). With a great deal more panache than his





1058 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Winter Garden, M&D photo albums.*

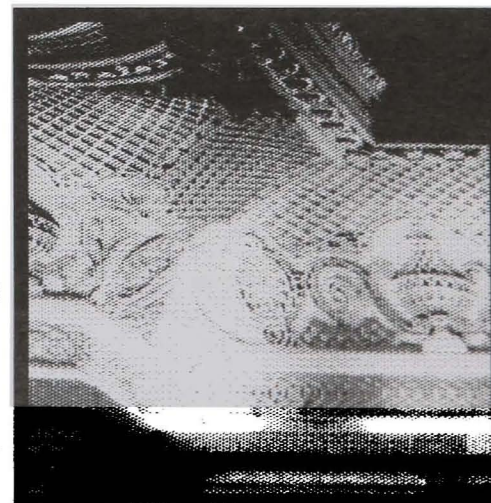
Carlton hotel design, the area's à la Grecque sky-lit ceiling demonstrates what Benjamin Wyatt could and should have done at Londonderry House (figure 195). Below this a cove and four wall panels featuring sconces - the only Louis XIV motifs in the hotel - are embellished with what



might first appear as gilded diaperwork augmented by vase and scroll designs. But the character of the Palm Court - determined by its original title - is not intended as a formal *salon* (even in the French dining room/garden adaptation) and not a conservatory, which would have been perhaps too informal for its setting and function. Rather its gilded fountain known as *La Source* - a garden feature at home in both dining room and conservatory - is in fact housed in a mutation of both. Salonesque, the cove's gilded decorations paraphrase French *treillage*<sup>a</sup> 560

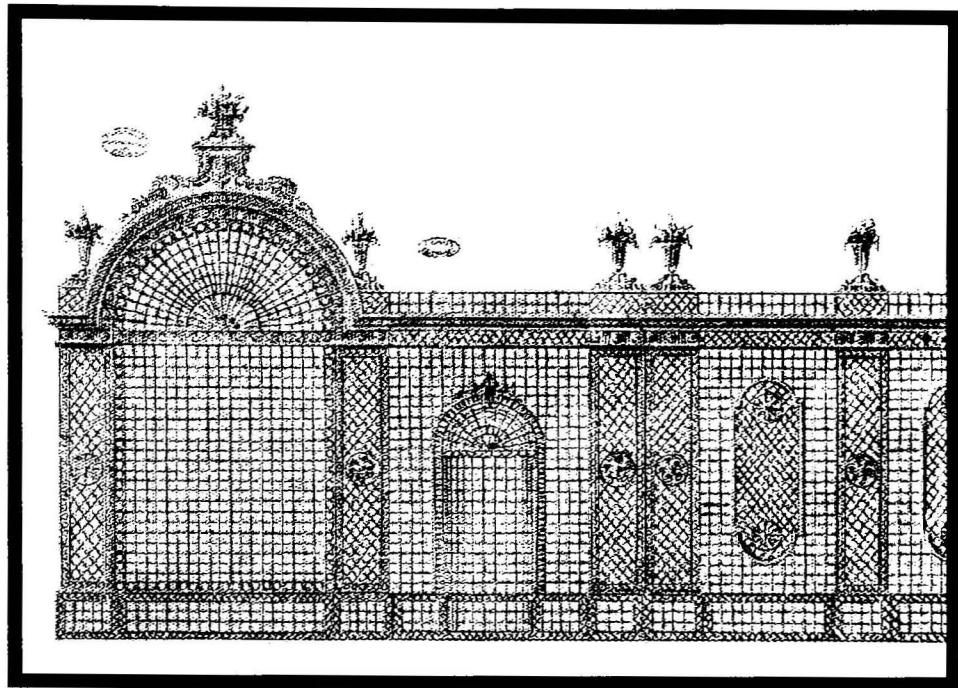
1059 & 1060 - artist unidentified under M&D *The Ritz, "La Source" fountain, Arnold, pg.76 & Mmassingberd/Watkin, pg.2.*

1061 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Winter Garden, cove detail, M-Massingberd/Watkin, pg.34.*

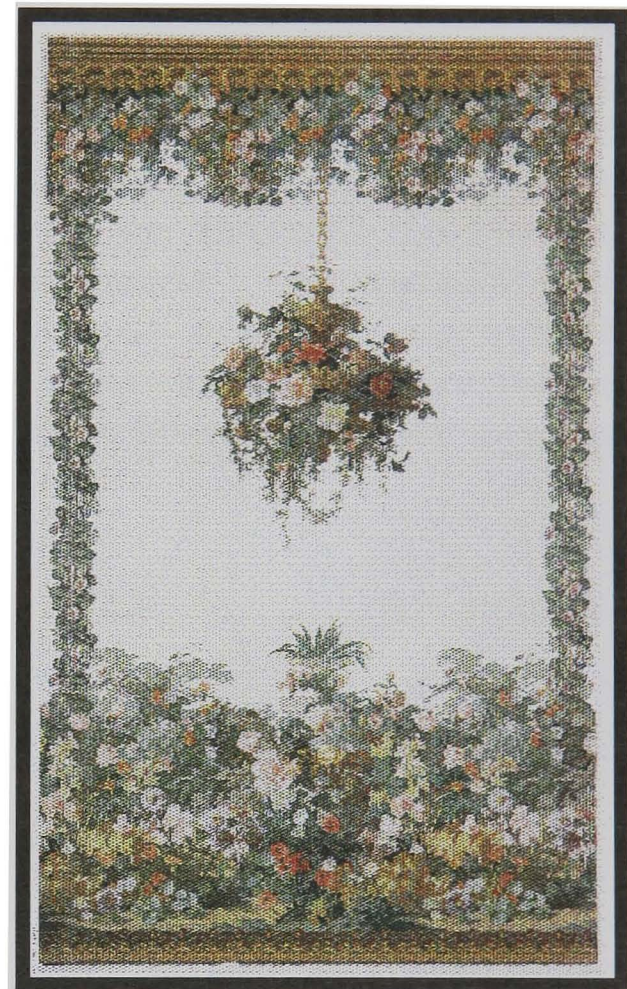


<sup>a</sup> *Treillage* was illustrated by Batty Langley in his (continued)





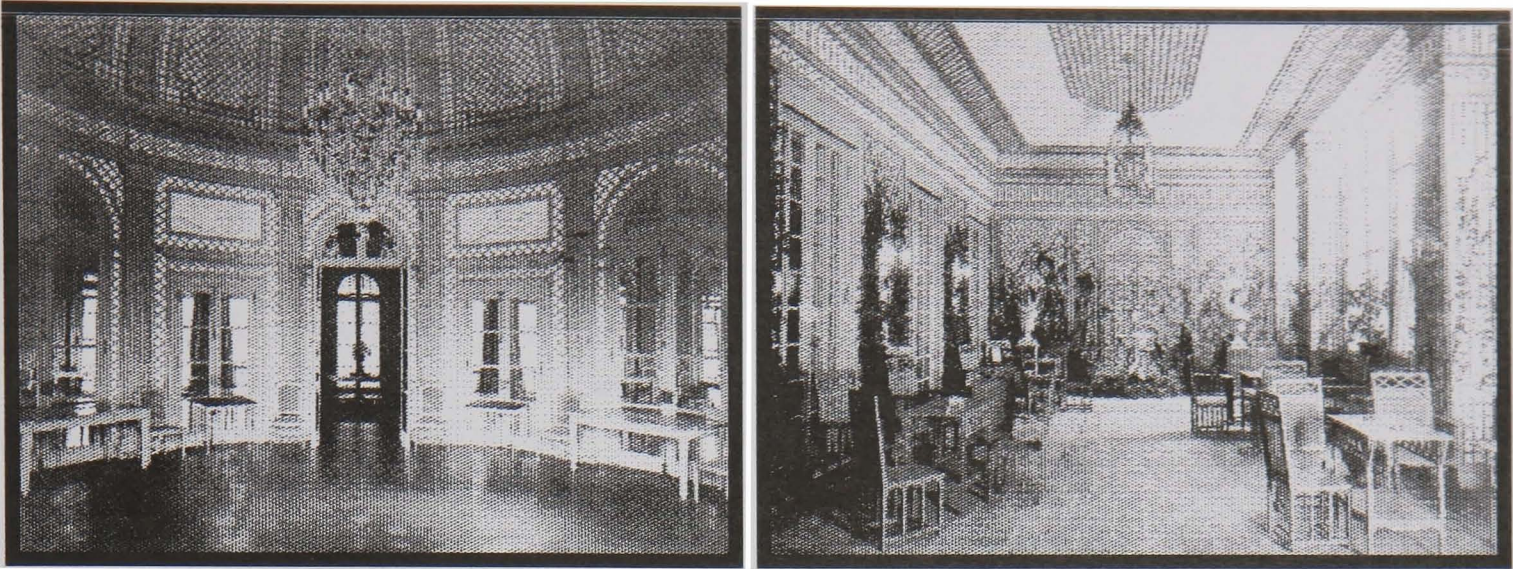
1062 - *architect unidentified* Het Loo, Apeldoorn, The Netherlands, treillage garden feature at the Narcissus Cascade (c.1714, restored c.1988), writer's photo. 1063 - *artist unknown* Versailles, 'Un Portique de Treillage pour le Portager' (c.1750) Favier, No.85, pg.68.



1064 - *Jean-François Chalgrin* Montreuil, Garden Pavilion, Round Dining Room (1784), Whitehead, pg.77. 1065 - *Edouard Muller for Desfossé & Karth* Wallpaper panel, "le Jardin d'Hiver" (1853) *Architectural Digest*, Oct.1995, pg.165.

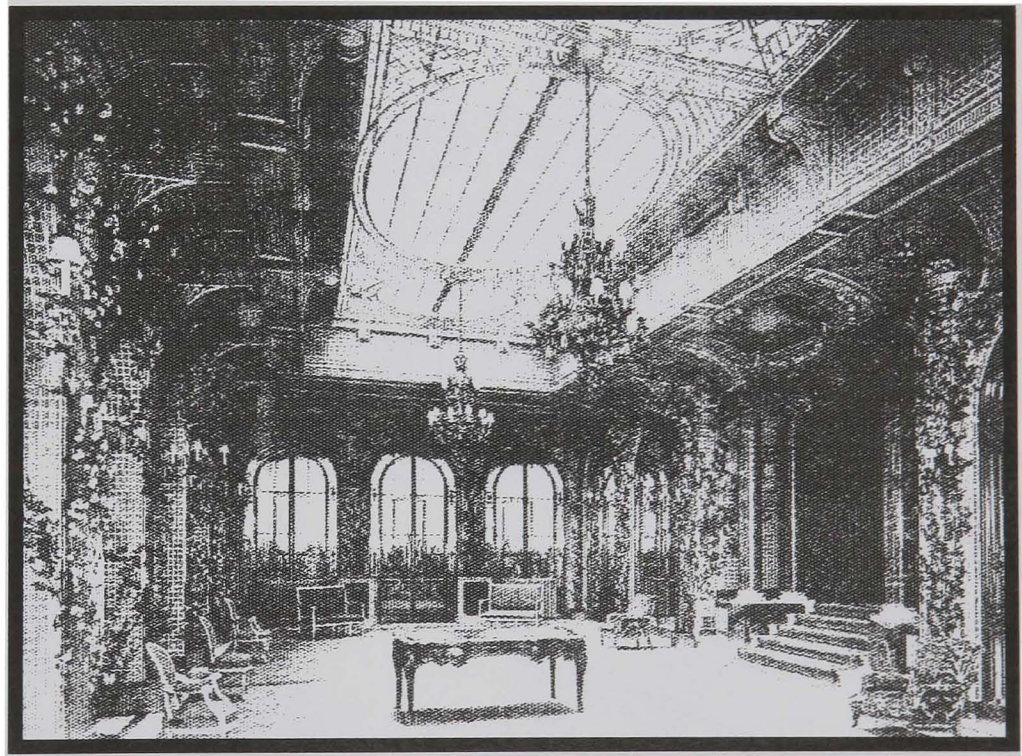
- an early eighteenth-century artifice by which common latticework was transformed into elaborate architectural features, punctuating and giving perspective to external "rooms" of *parterre* carpets and statuary. Whereas garden themes in *interior* decoration were evident from Louis XVI through Second Empire styles, a literal transposition of *treillage* as such seems to have captured the imaginations of interior decorators roughly at the turn of the nineteenth century. An early example is Ogden Codman's 1900 Ballroom (continued) *New Principles of Gardening* (1728) as "after the Grand Manner at Versailles." In addition to Het loo, other examples can be found at Sans Souci, Potsdam (c.1764), and a Chinese aviary and Tuscan doorways at Dropmore, Buckinghamshire. Lewis/Darley, p.299.





1066 - Ogden Codman *Villa Rosa, Newport, RI, Ballroom (1900), Metcalf, pg.20.* 1067 - Elsie de Wolfe under Stanford White *The Colony Club, New York, Trellis Room (1908) Calloway, fig.88, pg.87.*

for "Villa Rosa", the Newport "cottage" of E. Rollins Morse, followed eight years later by Codman protégé, Elsie de Wolfe's "Trellis Room" at New York's Colony Club.<sup>a</sup> How many such schemes appeared in the interim is probably irrelevant, but certainly by the time the Ritz's Winter Garden was created this was not a particularly innovative idea per se; but it may have been as regards the London scene; and whereas most such schemes utilized plainly painted or stained trelliswork in an attempt to replicate garden ornament, the subtlety of Mewès & Davis's hybrid scheme leans towards historic decoration with a mere hint of its surrogate source. To appreciate the sensitivity of this interior, one need only compare it to the Savoy's Winter Garden, as it appeared in 1911 with vine-covered latticework covering nearly every square inch of wall area and a clumsy overlay of its grided glass ceiling, disguising neither the grid nor an uncompromising central supporting beam.

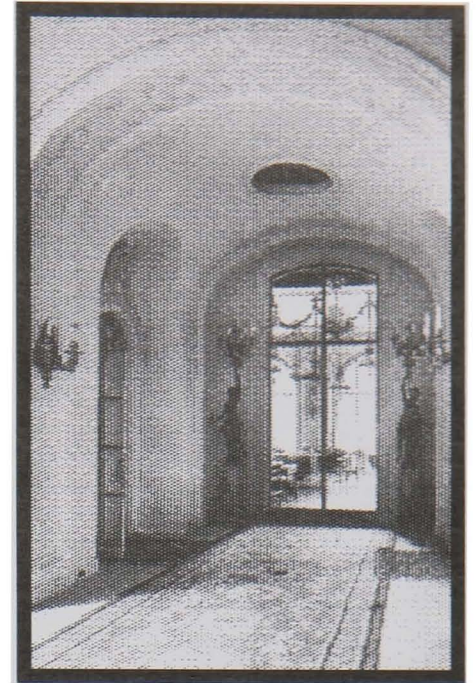


1068 - decorator unidentified - *The Savoy, Winter Garden (Dec.13, 1911) Bedford Lemere No. 21514.*

<sup>a</sup> In 1908 Codman protégé Elsie de Wolfe (later Lady Mendl), was unknown when Stanford White recommended her to decorate the Colony Club (the first women's club anywhere) with "give the order to Elsie, and let her alone. She knows more than any of us." Her trellised tearoom established her as one of America's top interior designers, which was furthered by her work for Henry Clay Frick (Frick Collection, Fifth Avenue), where the decorations including many pieces of precious furniture on which she received a finder's commission, made her a rich woman almost overnight. Chatty, gossipy and far more self-promoting than the reserved authors of *The Decoration of Houses*, de Wolfe 'penned' her own ghostwritten tome, *The House in Good Taste* (1913). Borrowing Wharton's format and illustrating her own work, the script was far less exacting, with commentaries like "the effect is the thing (continued)

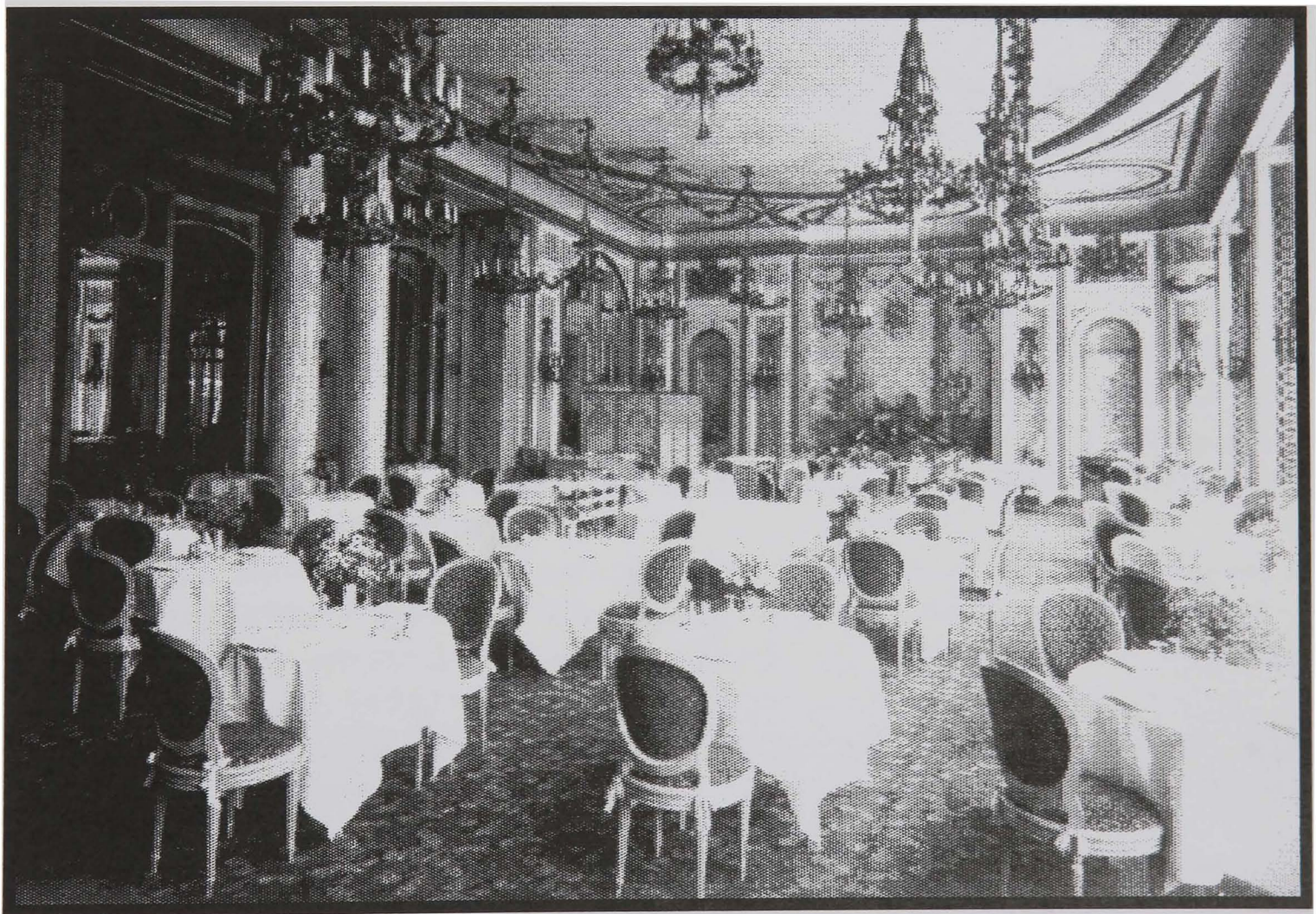


*La Source* is flanked by two huge mirrored screens of gilt bronze, one of which contains a secret door accessing a servery and pantry (and thence to the kitchens below). Reversing the arrangement at the Carlton, the Winter Garden is elevated for dramatic effect, and separated from the Grand Gallery by a screen of Ionic columns in *giallo antico scagliola*; and although it is the hotel's central<sup>a</sup> and most popular place, a few steps further along the Gallery the second of Mewès's magnificent interiors appears.



1069 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Restaurant Entrance Vestibule, M&D photo Albums, prov. M&D, Plymouth.*

The Restaurant is approached through a vestibule which, although an extension of the Grand Gallery, is compressed to increase the dramatic effect of arrival. Paired Classical female figures in bronze vert flank the entrance, each holding a lustre of six lights to welcome the diner to a chamber decorated in festive array. With an expansive view of Green Park and extending the full width of the hotel, the Restaurant is an eloquent demonstration of eighteenth-century good taste and spacial elegance. Conforming

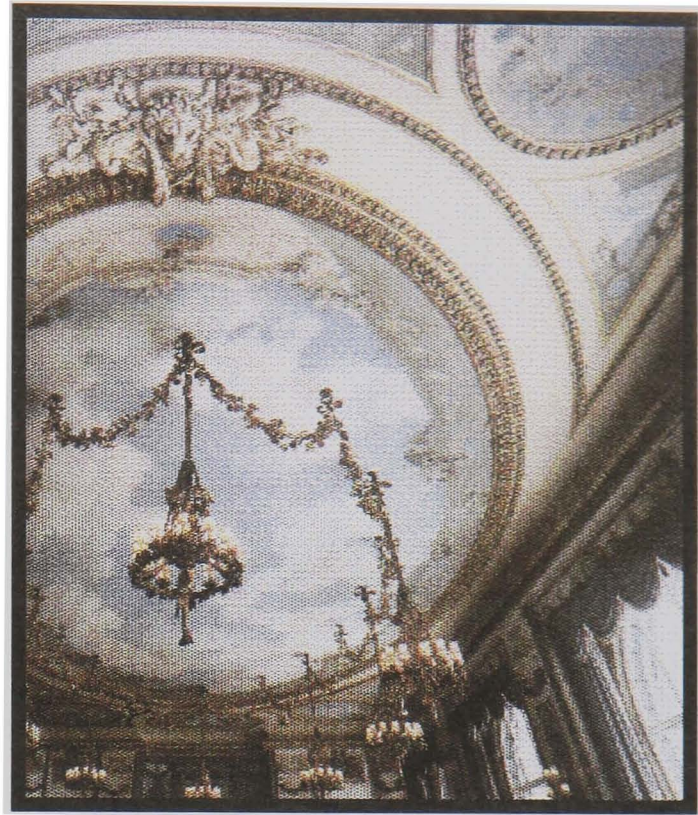


1070 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Restaurant, M&D photo albums, prov. M&D, Plymouth.*

(continued) you are after, isn't it." Although Calloway does not directly attribute the expression "Old French Look" to de Wolfe, it was probably her invention. Calloway, pp.53, 62, 87; Metcalf, preface ix, 21, 27; Roth, L., pp.170, 272.

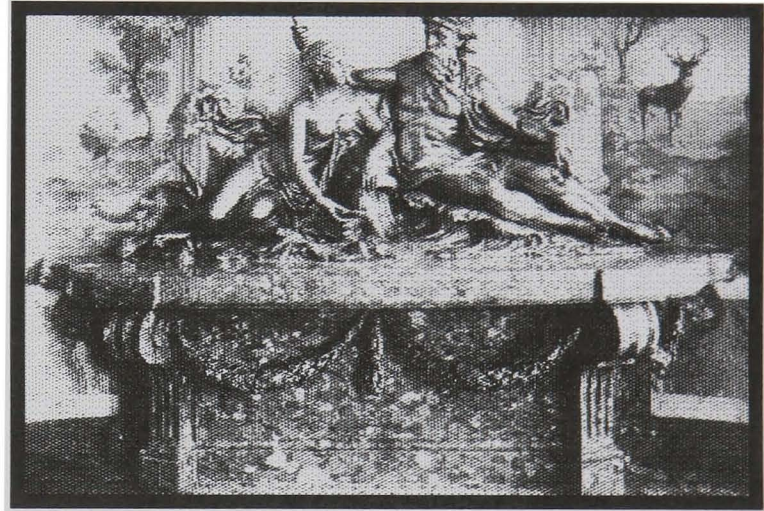
<sup>a</sup> With the Ritz's dramatic London site, one might gain the sense that the Winter Garden is London's central room, where friends meet as New Yorkers once did "under the clock at the Biltmore".





1071 & 1072 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Restaurant* general view & ceiling, M-Massingberd/Watkin, pg.36 & 157. 1073 - artist unidentified under Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Restaurant, Neptune & Nereid*, M&D photo albums, prov. M&D, Plymouth..

to historic stance, the decorative theme is one which draws the garden into a marble-panelled setting as airy as the view. A *trompe l'oeil* sky-painted ceiling carries into spandrels of a similar theme, as if perceived through a floating gallery of curvilinear frames.<sup>a</sup> The dominant oval circumvents an orchestra of gilt-bronze chandeliers linked by floral festoons; and all is presided over by a *Versaillesesque* bronze "fountain" group of Neptune with a Nereid, set in a *trompe l'oeil*-painted alcove extending the ceiling through a similarly festooned temple setting into a verdant landscape (*vis-à-vis* figure 1064).



Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd and David Watkin have indicated their belief that the scheme was inspired by an engraving entitled *Le Bal Paré et Masqué* by Augustin de Saint-Aubin (1737-1807),<sup>b</sup> presumptively because of its

<sup>a</sup> Whilst Matthew Cotes Wyatt's ceiling is painted in *quadri riportati*, the celestial theme framed in the circular motifs of Belvoir's Elizabeth Saloon stands a close comparison to Mewès's design (ref. pg.122, fig.183).

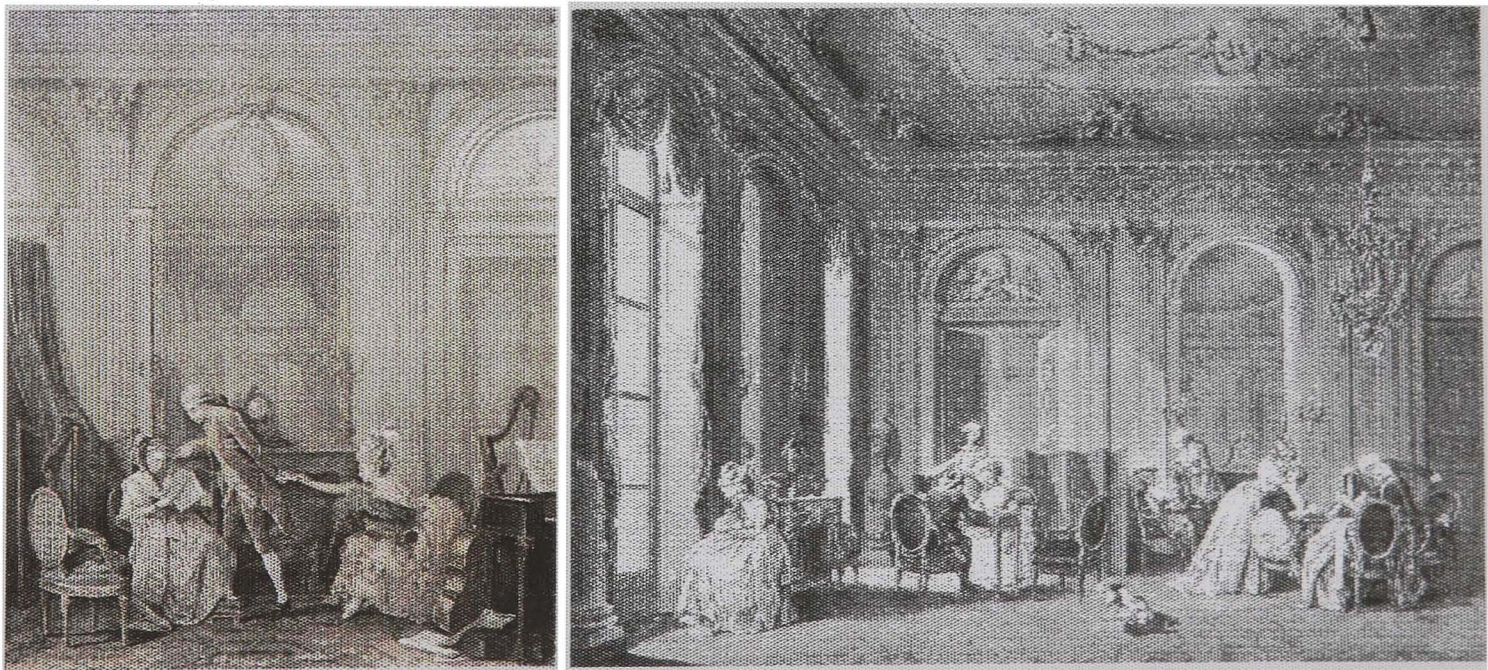
<sup>b</sup> Although the writer has no reason to doubt Massingberd/Watkin's assertion (other than the fact that they give no reference as to their source or how they ascertained this particular engraving was in Mewès's thoughts when the Restaurant was designed), he has not been able to discover an engraving after Saint-Aubin of that title. One with a similar title is Saint-Aubin's *Le Bal Paré*, engraved by A.J. Duclos and illustrated in H.W. Lawrence and Basil L. Dighton's *French Engravings of the Late XVIII Century* (Lawrence & Jellicoe (London-1910)), which shows an interior having five un-festooned chandeliers suspended from swirled ceiling roses, the centre rose being larger than those in corner locations. Except for this feature, the room's decoration is undistinguished. A folio entitled *Le Monument du* (continued)



many gilt bronze chandeliers draped 'en fête';<sup>561</sup> and it is this feature far more than any other that makes the Restaurant a unique addition to French interior decoration - as the festoons are executed in bronze as well.

Similar to most revivalist architects of any merit, Mewès was a bibliophile who, as could be expected, relied upon a stock of historical references for inspiration.<sup>a</sup> A few master drawings from his collection have made their way to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, as have some once in the possession of Waddesdon's Hippolyte Destailleur (sale, Paris, May 19-23, 1896); and whilst it is intriguing to surmise the sources for any architect's designs, Mewès, as

(continued) *Costume* was published as a series of engravings under the title *Suite d'Estampes pour servir a l'histoire des moeurs et du costumes des François dans le dix huitième siècle* (L'impr. de Barbou, Paris-1774), and this publication is mentioned by R.H. Wilenski in his excellent history of French painting (1931 - where the work is dedicated "to Harry Lawrence, whose knowledge and enthusiasm..." etc.). Wilenski indicates the contributors to *Le Monument* (as subtitled above) included Pierre-Antoine Baudoin, Augustin de Saint-Aubin, Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, Nicholas Lavrience and S. Swebach-Desfontaines. In addition to engravings by the above, all the plates from *Le Monument* are reproduced in the Lawrence/Dighton publication, as being of "three distinct series" - the 1st after designs by Sigismund Freudeberg, with the 2nd and 3rd after Jean-Michel Moreau le Jeune. One of the Moreau's is illustrated in fig.55, pg.53 (engr. Helman), and Thornton includes the same plate in *Authentic Decor*, fig.215, pg.171, as coming from a copy of *Le Monument* at the V&A. In addition to Lawrence/Dighton, Harvard University's Houghton Library archives an original *Le Monument du Costume Physique et Moral de la Fin du Dix-huitième Siècle ou Tableaux de la Vie* (1789) whose title differs from that above, but includes the identical Freudeberg/Moreau le Jeune plates. In short, if M-Massingberd/Watkin refer to *Le Bal Paré*, they are stretching. Offered here are two works by Lavrience, which of all the engravings studied are by far the most architectural. Of particular note are the engraver's depiction of festoons on a sky-painted ceiling, which as rendered appear three-dimensional - as they are of course in Mewès's Restaurant.



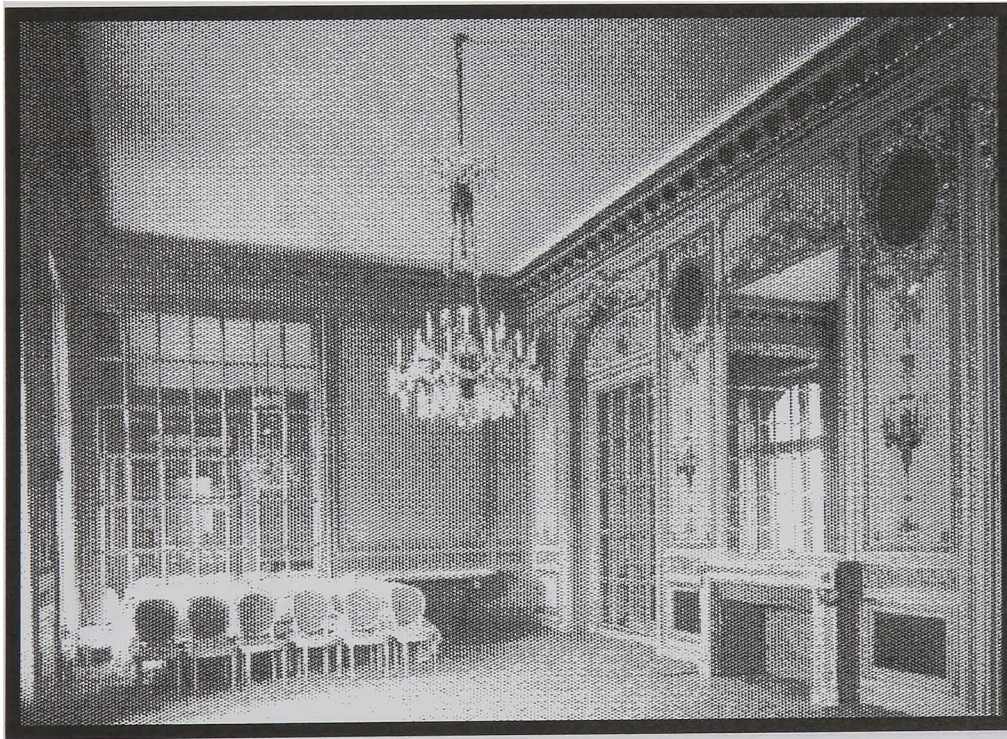
1074 & 1075 Nicolas Lavrience 'Le Billet Doux' (1778 - at Waddesdon) © National Trust & 'L'Assemblée au Salon' (c.1780 - engr. f. Dequivauiller) Lawrence/Dighton, plt.VI, pg.44.

<sup>a</sup> In his monograph on Richard Morris Hunt, Paul Baker relates Hunt pupil Henry Van Brunt's impression of the library America's premier architect had collected during his Paris days as "...by far the richest, most comprehensive and most curious collection of books on architecture and the other fine arts which at the time had been brought together in the new world." Baker, p.69.

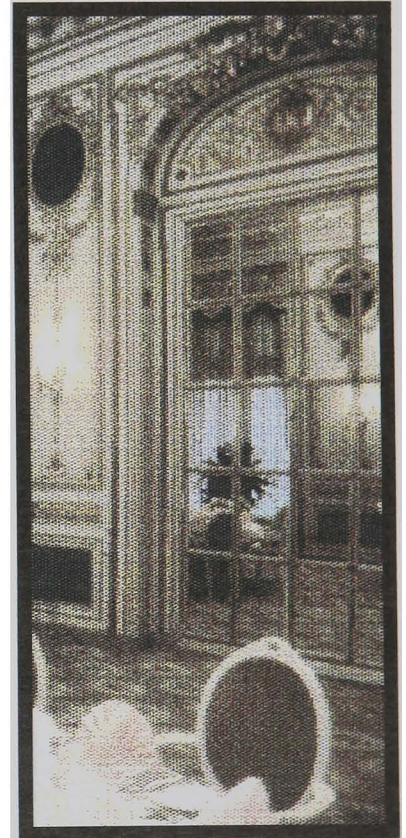


demonstrated, was one of the few to translate them with great invention and originality to the interiors of modern, unprecedented structures, such as ships, office buildings and luxury hotels.

Hotel records indicate £15,000 was paid to English decorators and just over three times that amount to the French;<sup>562</sup> and so it would be reasonable to assume that most of the hotel's purely decorative work is by the latter. During the Second World War, both the Winter Garden and Restaurant suffered bomb damage, with George Jackson & Sons being awarded the contract for repairs. *La Source's* damaged marble basin was replaced by Bellman, Ivey Carter & Co. (by 1940 a division of Jacksons),<sup>a 563</sup> and it is possible that they were the original suppliers; although the basin may have been carved in Paris by one M Benezech, as was the case with the Restaurant panelling in Brèche d'Alep, Rosé de Norvège and Verte de Suède<sup>564</sup> and that of the Ladies' Dressing Saloon.<sup>565</sup> A pair of scagliola columns matching adjacent marble pilasters had been damaged as well, and the repairs revealed the column being closest to Piccadilly had disguised a "built-up steel stanchion", with the second being a balancing "dummy" (explaining why they were scagliola in the first place).<sup>566</sup>



1076 & 1077 - *Mewès & Davis The Ritz, Marie-Antoinette Dining Room, M&D photo album & M-Massingberd/Watkin, pg.155.*



The Ritz's private Dining Room is entered either through a small oval vestibule off the Restaurant or directly

<sup>a</sup> The firm was founded by Vincent Bellman, a scagliola manufacturer who first appears in the POLDs in 1835 with locations at 41 Howland St. & 14 Buckingham St., Fitzroy Sq. By 1853 Bellman's business had expanded its services to include those of plasterer, plaster of Paris and cement mfr., with two additional London locations. In 1879, the firm was known as Bellman & Ivey, with Carter - presumably a marble worker - coming on board in 1898, when the firm added "pedestals for statuary" and "sculptors", and were now located at 157b New Bond St.W., and Linhope St, Dorset Sq.. The firm was absorbed into Jacksons c.1940-1. M&D correspondence files, letter, 15 Oct. 1948; Millar, adverts (npr), p.408; *The Builder*, March 13, 1897, p.251; Kelleys POLDs.



from the Grand Gallery. Decorated originally in pale green tints with gilded ornaments, what is also known as the "Marie-Antoinette Dining Room" is now in peach-beige and gold.<sup>567</sup> As one has come to expect from Mewès, the room is an opulent, yet restrained Louis XVI exercise, with the arrangement of its 'faces vis à vis fenêtre' and 'cheminée' in perfect balance. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the other two opposing elevations as the asymmetrically placed doors connecting the Restaurant could not be disguised without their masking glass screen covering the entire wall. Yet one can forgive *le patron*, after creating such a marvellous progression of superb interiors - all ingeniously arranged within this problematic plan - for finally 'painting himself into a corner'.

It is to the credit of the Ritz's management and a bit of clever politics by Arthur Davis, that the hotel's principal interiors remain in the grand style of Edward's days. Although government funds under the War Damage Act of 1943 were available for repair and restoration, the management under secretary, F.N. Biggs, apparently balked at the architects' estimate of £9,899.15.0., whereupon Davis offered an alternative:

In our considered opinion, any drastic alterations or redecoration...or any change in the style of the decoration, would be a grievous mistake. The Ritz, if it is not a modern character, shows the good taste and invention of the French decoration of the late Eighteenth Century [sic], which has been acknowledged ever since, as being the high water-mark of fine decoration and furniture. ...if, however, this no longer satisfies the clients of the Hotel, we suggest that the decoration of the whole Ground Floor should be scrapped altogether and replaced by something of a different character. This would be preferable to any half measures.<sup>568</sup>

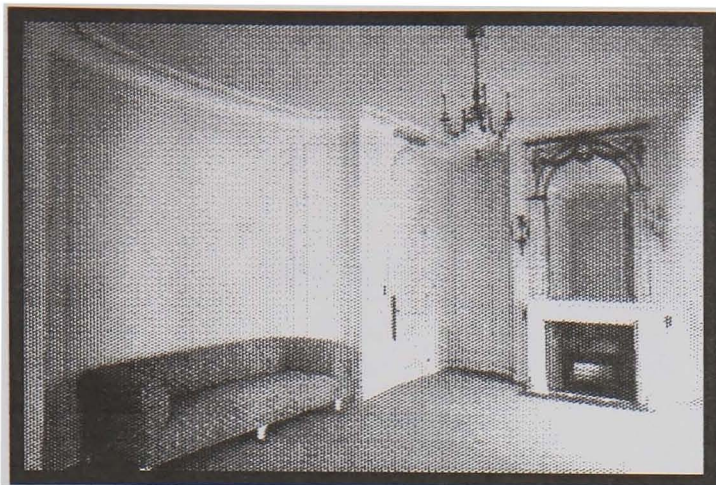
Taking a somewhat higher road than the nominal *très humble servateur*, the architect's ploy accomplished the desired effect.

Containing seventy-five suites each comprised of two bedrooms, a sitting room and adjoining bath facilities,<sup>569</sup> the Ritz set an accommodation standard which has remained to this day. The hotelier was a stickler for cleanliness and viewed wallpaper as being unsanitary;<sup>570</sup> thus in contrast to Nellie Melba's typically oppressive rooms at the Savoy, all the guest suites were plainly painted with or without



1078 - Waring & Gillow? under Collcutt The Savoy, Nellie Melba's Sitting Room, Cooper, plt.31, pg.83.

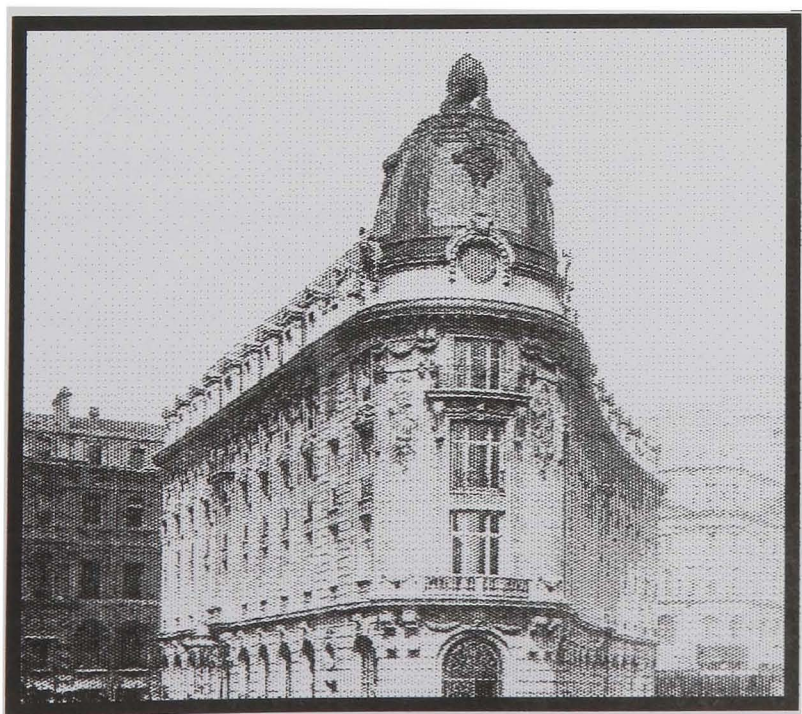




1079 & 1080 - Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Sitting Rooms*, prov. M&D, Plymouth. 1081- Mewès & Davis *The Ritz, Sitting Room*, Arnold, p.78.

gilt accents, in what was to become Mewès & Davis's hallmark twentieth-century *Louis Seize*.

Although French interiors had obviously been the vogue for many wealthy Londoners, the Ritz brought Parisian chic to centre stage in a way no private dwelling might have done. With the tremendous success of this hotel came also the success of Mewès & Davis, who produced in short succession two other prominent, steel frame buildings in the heart of London: The first of these was the Morning Post building on Piccadilly Circus (1906-7) followed by the Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall (1908-11). It is no coincidence that within two years of the Ritz's opening, 'Mellier House' included its own version of Mewès & Davis style in its new showrooms a few short blocks away (page 338 & figures 727-9), and "The Old French Look" was augmented by updated Ritz versions in several London hotels and *hôtels* - many of the latter designed by the English-French partnership. Whereas it is not a purpose here to offer a *catalogue raisonnée* of their work, No. 8 Grosvenor



1082 & 1083- Mewès & Davis *The Morning Post building (1906-7)* Service et al, fig.5, pg.436 & *The Royal Automobile Club (1908-11)* Gray, p.159.





**1084 - Architect or builder unknown - No.88 Brook Street (plan, c.1812), Survey of London Vol.XL, p.20. 1085 - C.R. Cockerell No.88 Brook St. (Plan, 1822-4) The Builder, Sept.26, 1933, face-pg.320. 1086 - Mewès & Davis - NO.88 Brook St., (Plan, 1909-10), The Builder, face-pg.320.**

Square<sup>a</sup> for the Hon. Henry Coventry is typical of Mewès & Davis's highly inventive domestic projects.

Dating from the eighteenth century, the house was altered between 1822-4 by C.R. Cockerell, who added an Ionic porch and continuous iron balcony to the front façade. A dining room with adjoining conservatory was tacked on in the area of the old Yard, with servants quarters added over an existing kitchen. By the turn of the century, a Garage and Coach House situated further back on the property replaced the old Stable, and was separated from the main house by a new Yard where the Stable once had been. The Mewès & Davis alterations of 1909-10 retained the Cockerell façade and the two front rooms - which had survived the 1822-4 remodelling. These were redecorated in Neo-Adam style - executed with such taste as to be taken for eighteenth-century work - and their ordinary, marble chimney-pieces were replaced with genuine artifacts.

<sup>a</sup> The *Survey of London* explains that prior to 1867 the house was numbered as 33 Brook Street. It was No. 88 from 1867 to 1888 after which it became No.8 Grosvenor Square until 1950, when it reverted to No.88 Brook Street again. The Cockerell plan which Mewès & Davis inherited was published, Sept. 26, 1913 (supplement to p.320), in *The Builder*. *Survey of London*, Vol.XL, p.20-1.



The remainder of the Ground Floor was almost entirely rebuilt, with an *Architectural* concept replacing what had been from the beginning an haphazard collection of rooms. Similar to the Ritz scheme, a central, marble paved Grand Gallery - here balanced and completely symmetrical in each elevation - provides an axial connector leading directly to a new Dining Room, which extends the full width of the house. For the spine to be central to the street façade, its connection to the Dining Room is asymmetrical due to a narrowing of the structure; but this is disguised with the typical French ploy of concealing the operative door as part of a paired arrangement with mirrored glass panels.<sup>a</sup> Undoubtedly doubling as

<sup>a</sup> One of the most dramatic examples of this subterfuge can be seen at No.4 Hamilton Place (1906-7), once the residence of industrialist, Leopold Albu (presently the Royal Aeronautical Society - see pgs. 351-2, fig. 753). Figs. 1087 & 1088 show the entrance door to the first-floor Drawing-Room, the stairwell side of which is panelled mahogany, with its opposite detail being part of double arrangement, where



**1087 & 1088 - French decorators under A.N. Prentice No.4 Hamilton Place, Stairwell doorways to Boudoir (ahead) and Drawing-Room (Left) & Drawing-Room door to Stairwell, writer's photos.**

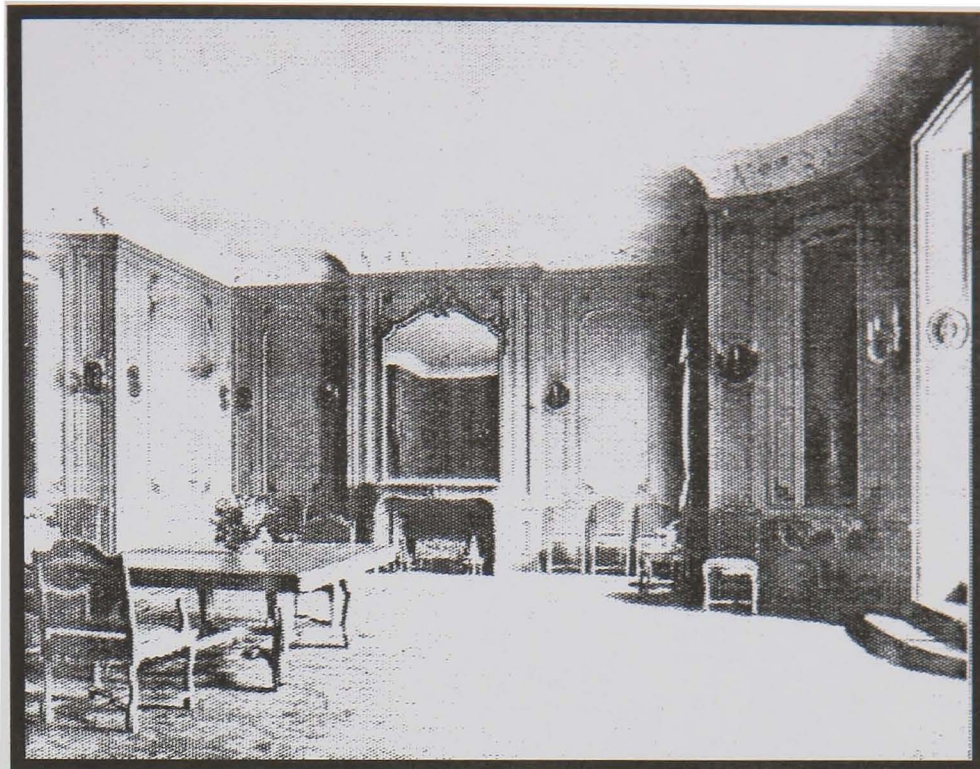


**1089, 1090 & 1091 - French decorators under A.N. Prentice No.4 Hamilton Place, stair and balustrade details, writer's photos.**

the handles and escutcheons are not located at operative edges. Albu was managing director of the Phoenix Oil and Transport Co., and followed a series of banker-tenants who had included the son-in-law of Sir Francis Baring. In 1903 he was granted a 63-year lease under the proviso that he spend at least £20,000 on improvements. He chose instead to substantially rebuild with a front façade corresponding to that of his (continued)



a Ballroom, the Dining Room is a nominal Rococo statement with enough *Louis Seize* detailing to qualify it as a mutation of the two styles. It communicates with a superbly conceived terraced garden, whose central feature - culminating the axis - is an exedra with stalactite rustication and a shell-shaped fountain. (following page)

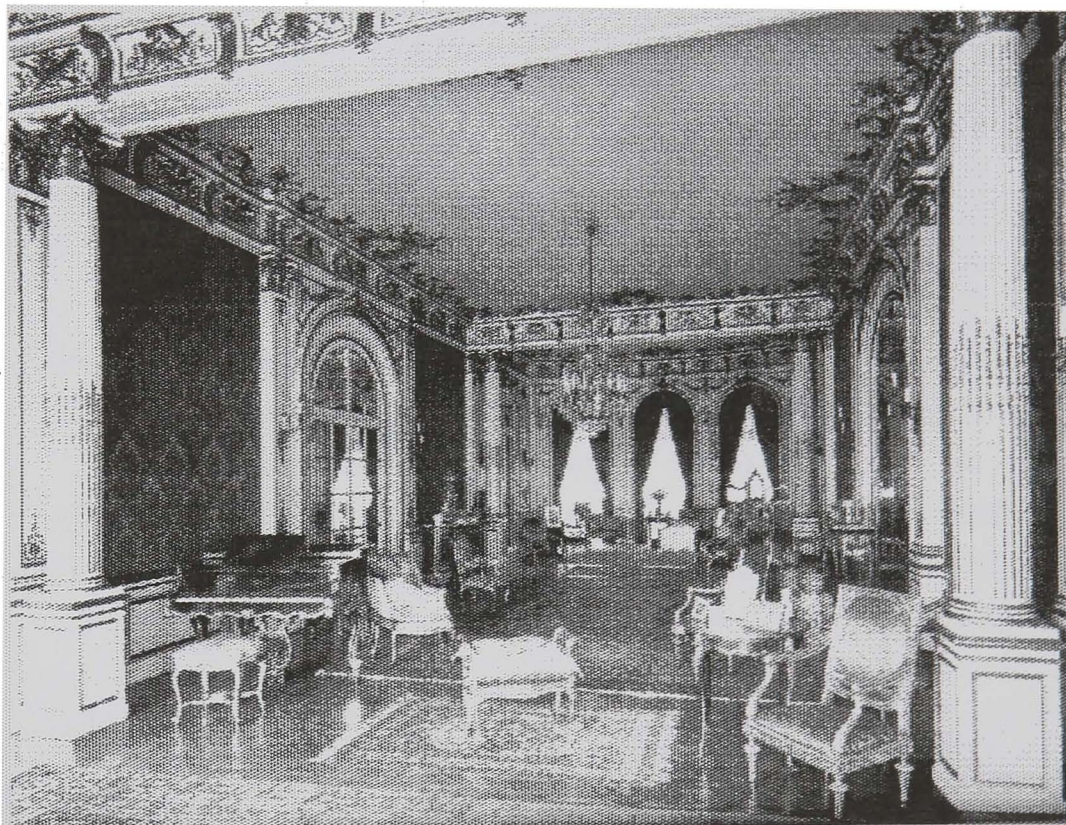


**1092 - Mewès & Davis No. 88 Brook Street, Dining Room, *The Builder*, Sept. 26, 1913, face-pg. 320.**

Midway along the Grand Gallery, an equally Grand Staircase ascends to the first-floor level. Although the Gallery itself

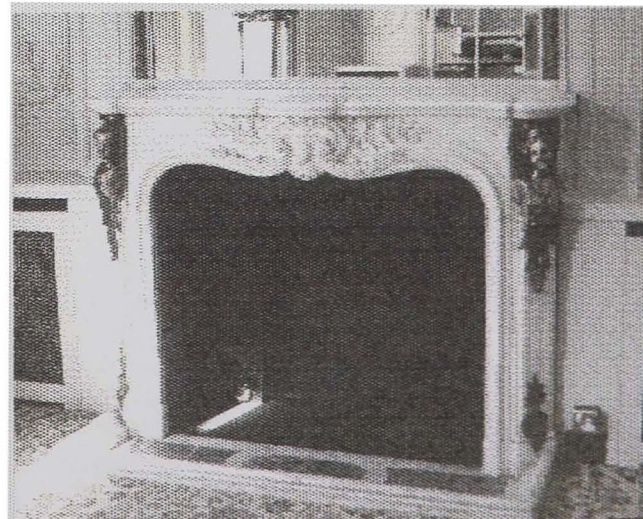
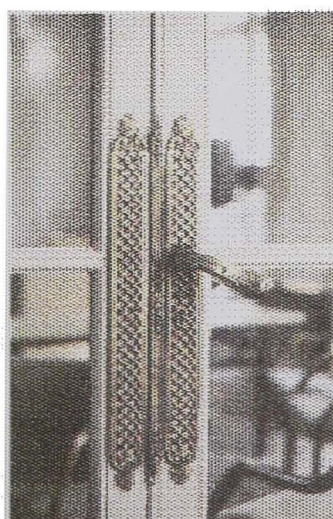
neighbour, Leopold Rothschild. A lavish Rococo staircase, whose balustrade and newel is after Héré's detail at the *Hôtel de Ville*, Nancy (fig. 957, pg. 416), except here it includes Albu's monogram. The staircase of Caen stone and *stuc pierre*

leads to two fine first-floor apartments: a *Louis Seize* Boudoir adjoining the mentioned Drawing-Room, which is a tripartite, type-Rococo statement extending the full-depth of the house. In 1909, Bedford Lemere photographed the principal rooms, and noted in his daybooks that Gillow & Co. were involved in the decoration;



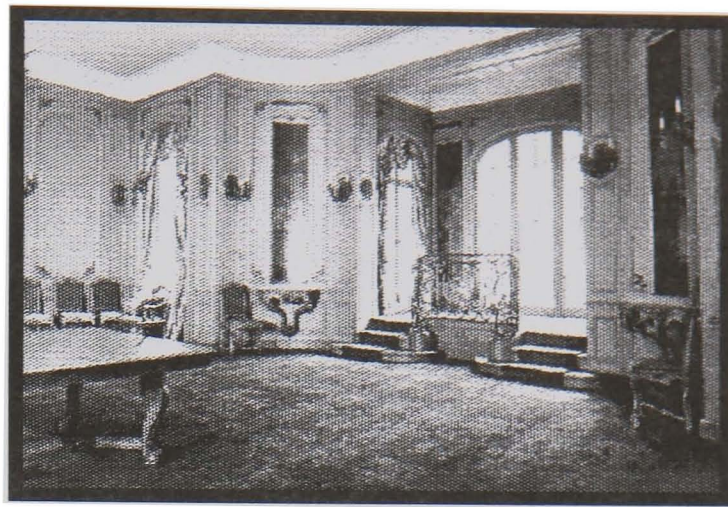
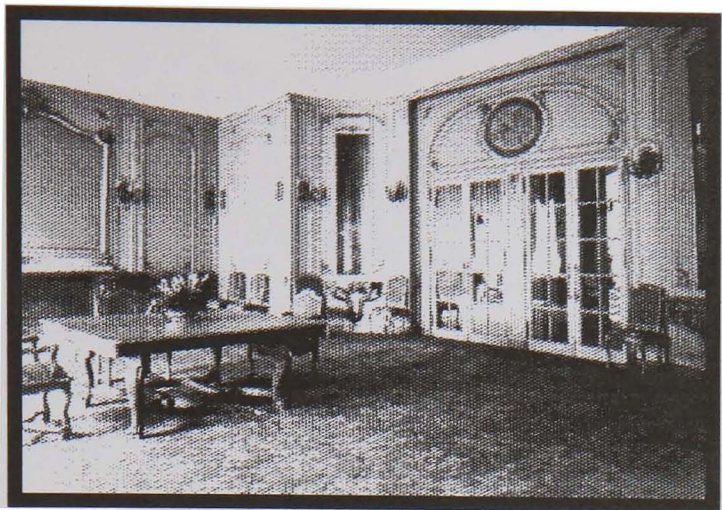
but it is clear from the staircase balustrade and wall carvings, as well as the first-floor chimney-pieces and door hardware, that much of the decoration was provided by French firms. Aslet, C., "House of Flight", *Country Life*, Vol. CLXXIII, No. 4462, Feb. 21, 1983, p. 436+; writer's visit and sincere thanks to Mrs. T. Conway-Holland, Site Mgr., Royal Aeronautical Society.

**1093 - French & English decorators & Gillow & Co. under A.N. Prentice No. 4 Hamilton Place, Drawing-Room, Bedford Lemere series 20667-70, Sept. 1909.**

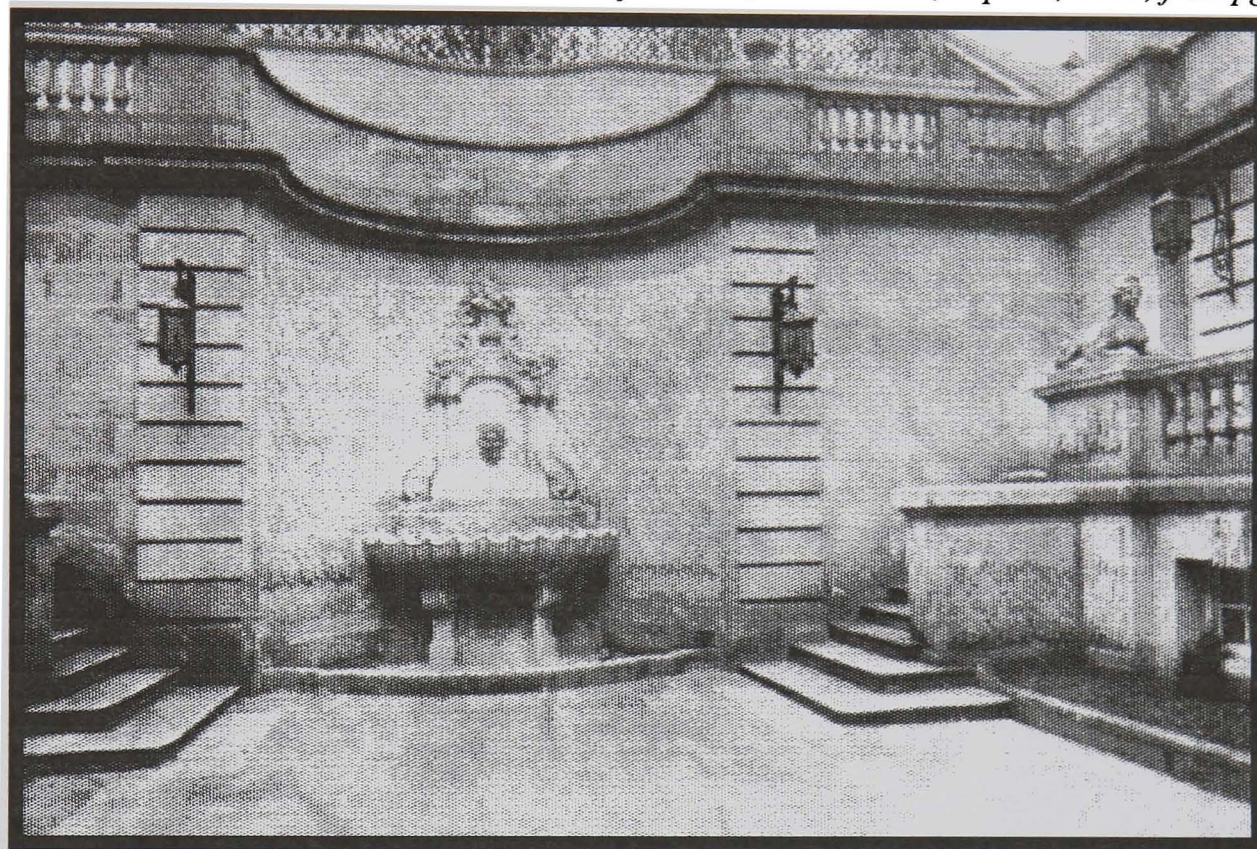


**1094 & 1095 - French bronzeurs No. 4 Hamilton Place, Drawing-Room, door & chimney-piece details, writer's photos.**





1096 & 1097 - Mewès & Davis No. 88 Brook Street, Dining Room, prov. M&D, Plymouth.  
 1098 - Mewès & Davis No. 88 Brook Street, Roof Garden, The Builder, Sept.26, 1913, face-pg.320.

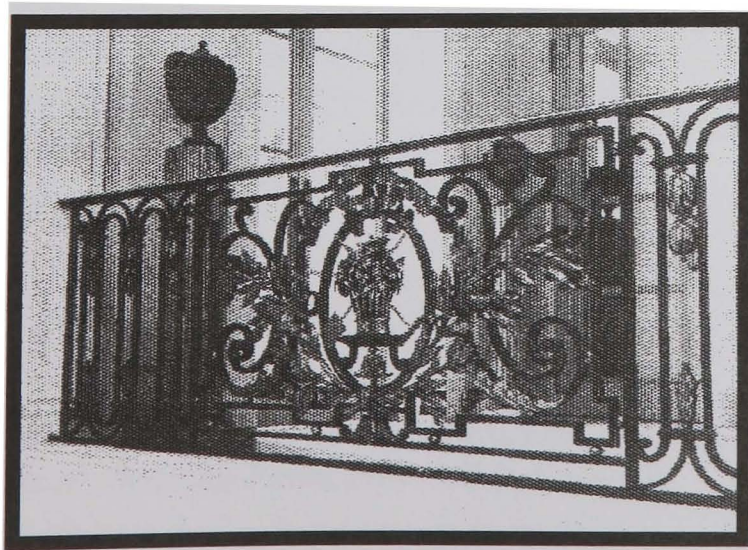
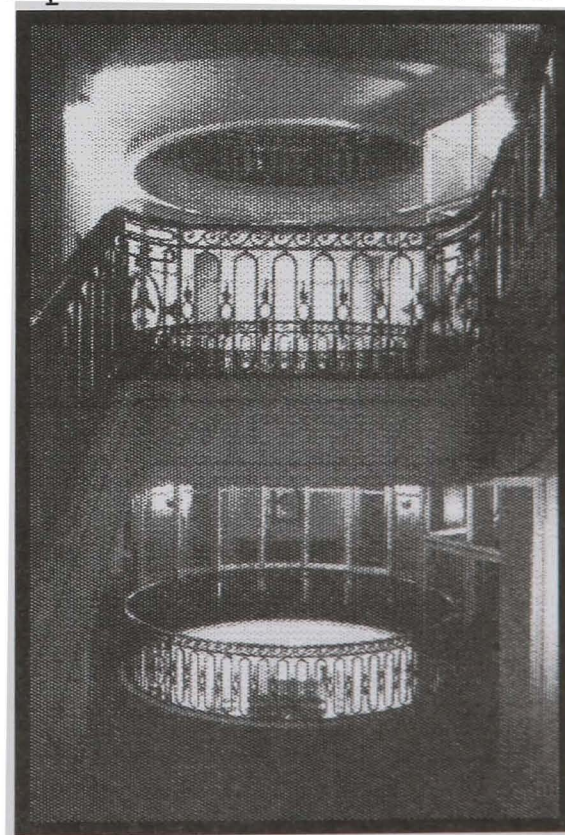


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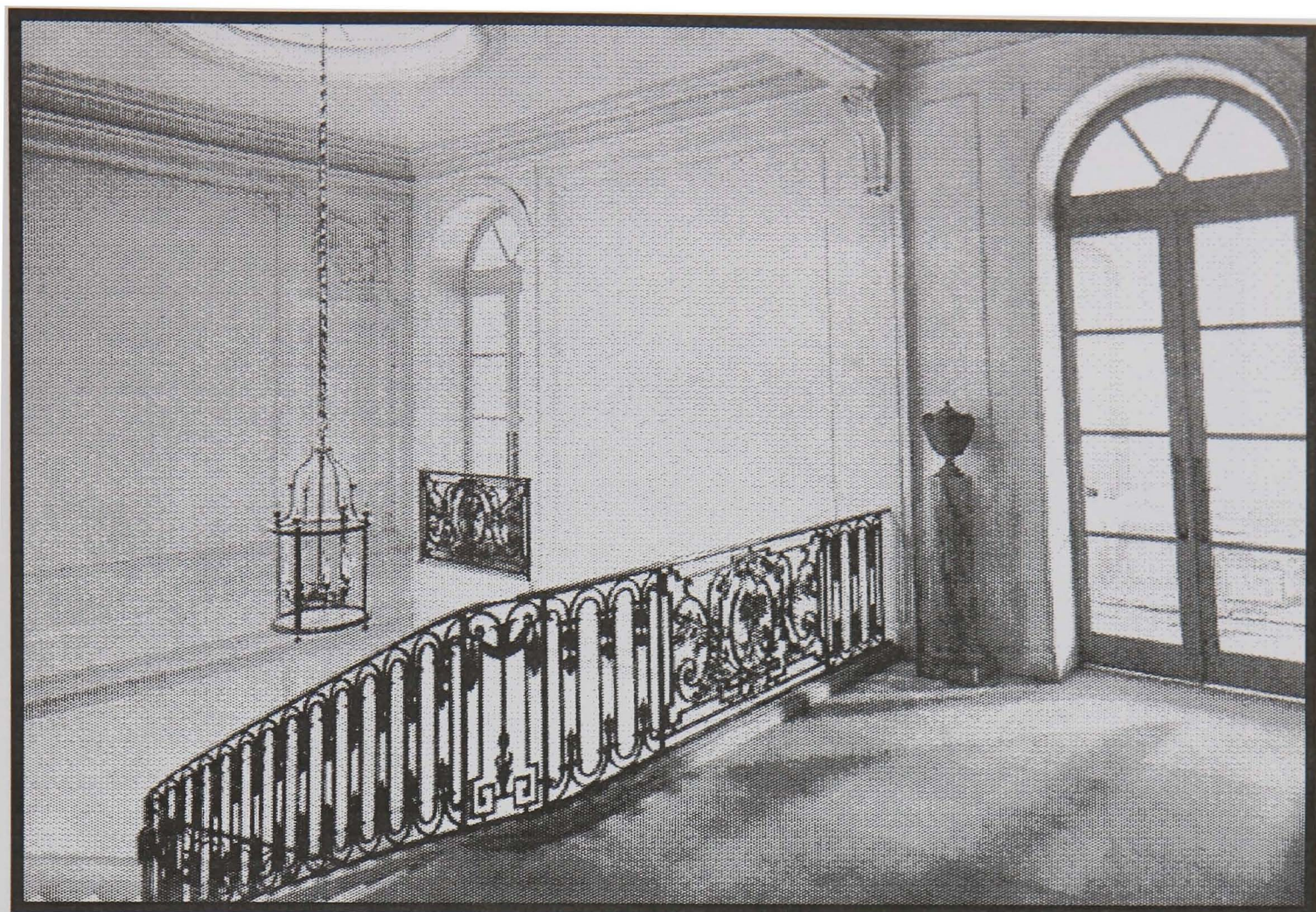
is formed in *stuc pierre*, the Stairwell is of stone with marble ramps supporting a wrought iron balustrade - a more elaborate rendition of the Ritz detail (figures 81-4), in Classic Louis XVI design. At the upper landing, the balustrade culminates in a sumptuous flower basket panel which is echoed



1099 & 1100 - Mewès & Davis No. 88 Brook Street, Grand Staircase, newel & balustrade panel, prov. M&D, Plymouth. 1101 - Mewès & Davis The Ritz, Rotunda & Staircase, M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.60.

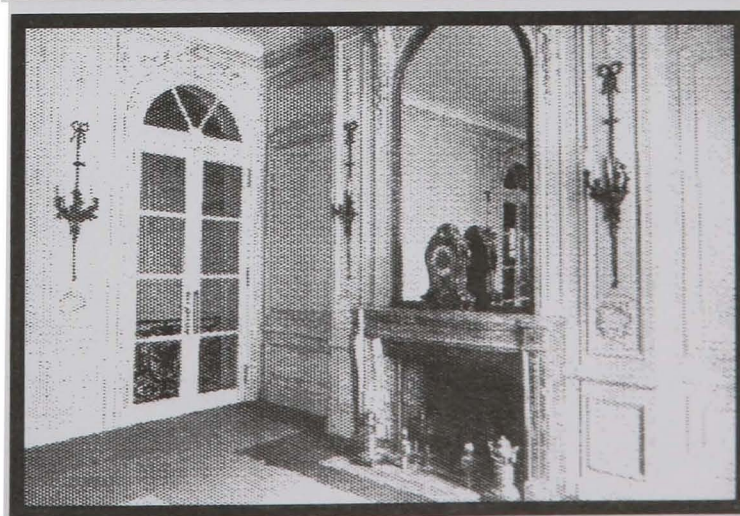
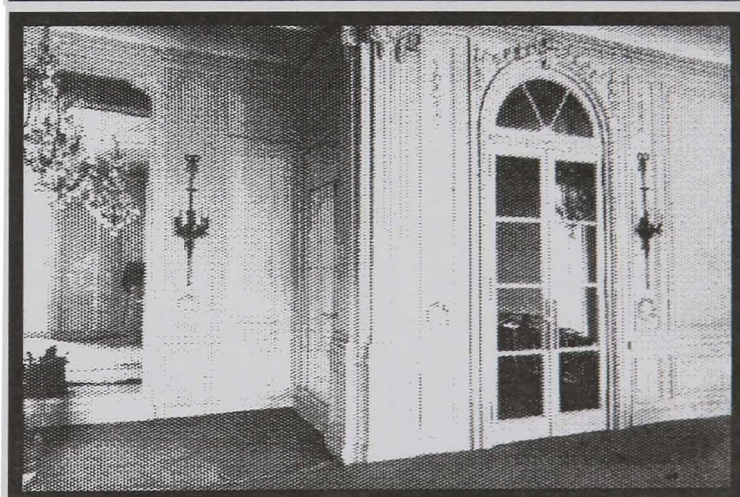
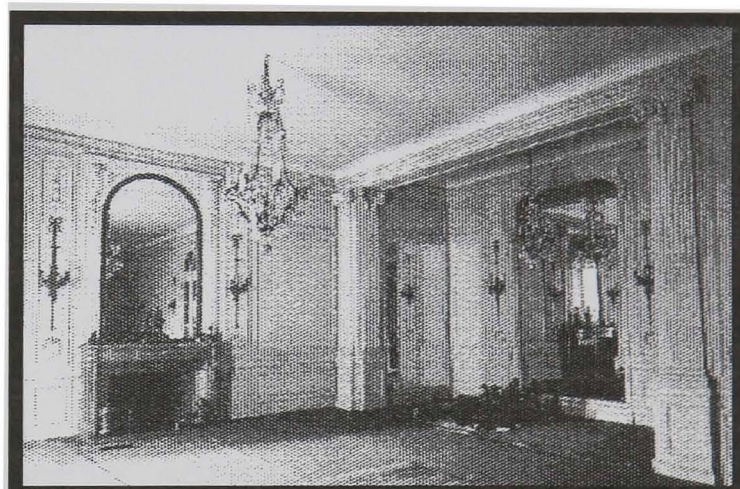






1102 - Mewès & Davis No. 88 Brook Street, Grand Staircase, upper landing, prov. M&D, Plymouth.

in the adjacent window balconet. A lantern - the design of which may have first appeared at the *Petit Trianon*, since becoming a stereotypical detail - hangs from a circular dome, whose simple spokes are reflected in the semicircular lights of the Stairwell fenestration. A finer architectural composition and statement of austere elegance would be difficult to find. The Stairwell leads to the first-floor Drawing-Room, which although a fine Louis XVI rendering, appears to have been a remodelling of areas over the Morning Room and Library, and suffers accordingly.



1103, 1104 & 1105 - Mewès & Davis No. 88 Brook Street, Drawing-Room, prov. M&D, Plymouth.





1106 - Adam, Smirke, Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, West Front, © Luton Hoo 1351.

### Luton Hoo

From its beginnings, the Ritz project provided Mewès & Davis with a coincidental patron. With the Rothschilds, the wealthiest of the "new" Englishmen were also of German derivation. They included Sir Ernest Cassel (Cologne-born financier of overseas railways and dams - Brook House (pages 324a, 400a), Sir Edgar Speyer (New York-born banker from a wealthy Frankfurt family - No.46 Grosvenor Street (page 506+)), Alfret Beit (Hamburg-born South African diamond financier - No. 26 Park Lane)<sup>571</sup> and likely the singularly richest of them all,<sup>572</sup> Beit's partner, Sir Julius Wernher. Originally from Darmstadt, Wernher was born to wealth, which increased through a self-made fortune via South Africa, the Kimberley diamond fields and Rand gold.<sup>573</sup> His London residence was Bath House, located almost directly across Piccadilly from the new hotel (figure 450, page 247). In addition to his directorship of Wernher, Beit & Co. (to become the Central Mining and Investment Corporation), he was a philanthropist, art collector, and as it happened, a member of the Ritz's board of directors at the time Mewès & Davis were involved with the project.<sup>574</sup> The year the hotel was finished, Wernher purchased a Bedfordshire country estate, which, although dating to the thirteenth century,<sup>575</sup> appeared largely as Robert Adam had designed it in the 1760s.

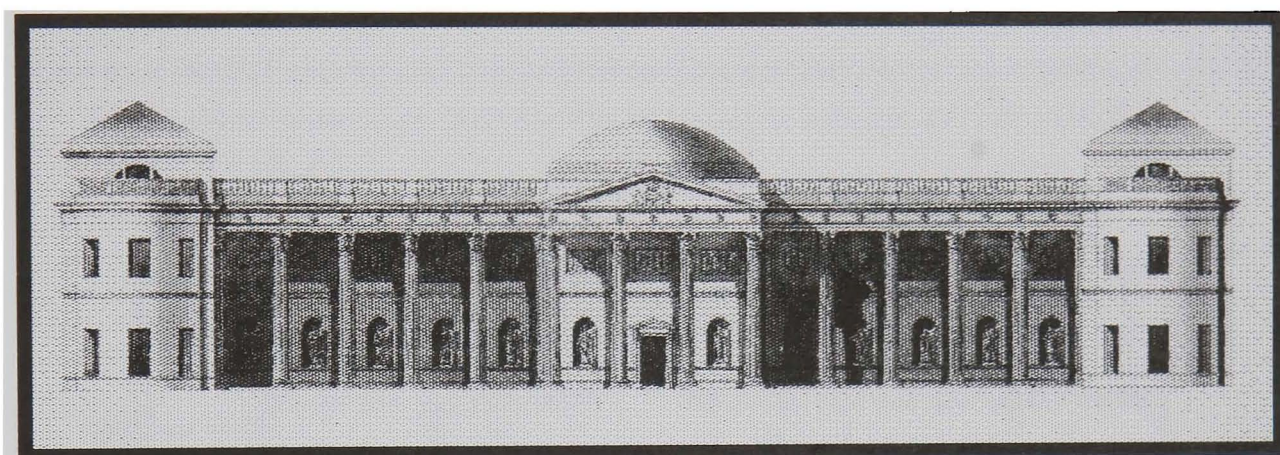
The early history of Luton Hoo (*Hoo* being a Saxon word meaning spur of a hill or "high" was taken from the family of Robert de Hoo, who resided there until the fifteenth century;<sup>576</sup> Luton comes naturally enough from the adjacent town) is interesting only inasmuch as Adam's two designs, whilst seemingly ground-up exercises, did in fact incorporate an existing structure. His commission came from then Prime Minister, John Stuart, Third Earl of Bute (1713-1792),<sup>a</sup> who had acquired the estate in 1762.

<sup>a</sup> The wealthy grandfather of Charles Stuart de Rothsay, Bute's country estate *Highcliffe* was replaced by de Rothsay's French cum (continued)



*Luton Park* was published in *Works* (Part III, 1775), where his two alternative plans are illustrated; the second being the more elaborate, with screens comprised of giant Corinthian columns alternating with stuated alcoves on the west façade, centred on a domed and pedimented Entrance Porch. The East Front featured an hexastyle portico - also Corinthian - following the contour of a central bow, which is echoed in apsidal terminations of the North and South Wings (following page).

Both plans display an "H"-shaped footprint, utilising a transverse corridor connecting the North and South Wings as it runs between a string of rooms to the east and internal courtyards to the west (the site of the original house).

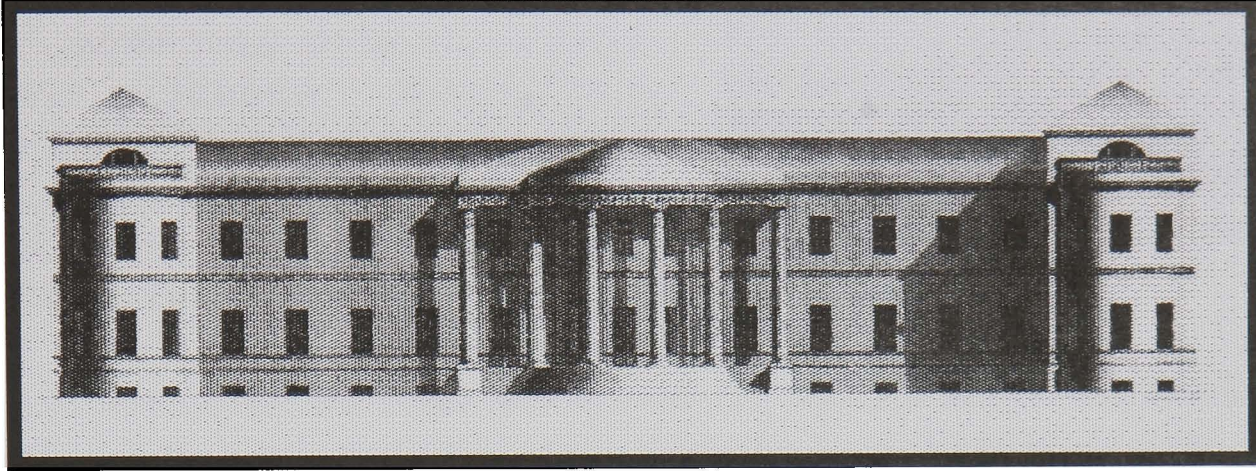


1107 - *Adam Luton Park, West Front, (corresponds to fig.1109) Works, Vol.I, Part III, plt.3.*

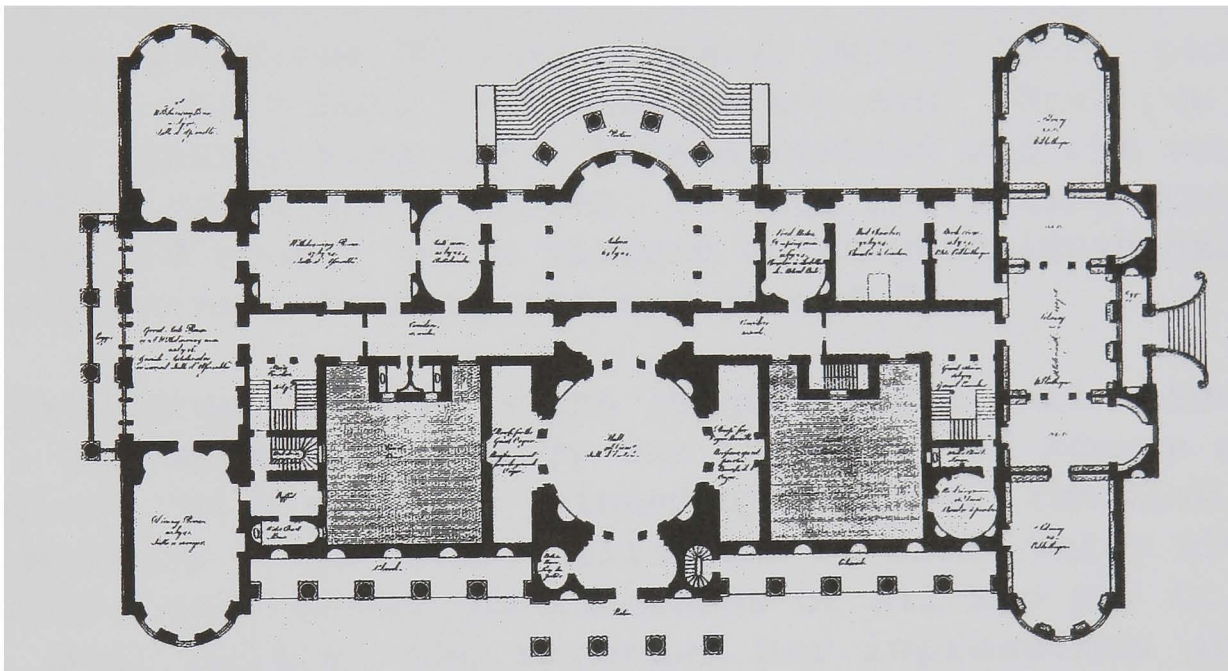
(continued) Gothic extravaganza reviewed from page 206. Bute himself is mentioned in any English history, which will record his rise to royal favour with Frederick, Prince of Wales, the princess, and their son, the future George III. William Chambers acknowledged with his dedication of *Treatise*, Bute's promotion of his own position to the royal household as architect to the princess of Wales and her son. Unlike Chambers's career, the statesman's was a short-lived episode, marked by a series of diplomatic blunders and a disastrous domestic policy which gained him the open hostility of government and people alike. Never a member of Parliament, Bute's rise in the political arena was by the sole virtue of the fact that he alone enjoyed the complete trust of the youthful king. In the year of George III's ascension, Bute became a privy councillor, groom of the stole and first gentleman of the bedchamber; the following year he succeeded Lord Holderness (pg.127c&d) as secretary of state for the northern department, and shortly thereafter, replaced Pitt as prime minister, a position he held for a scant two years, when under universal animosity, he was forced to resign. His successor, George Grenville, demanded and obtained Bute's withdrawal from the court and nearly London as well. *Luton Park*, as it was called in Bute's day, was acquired in the same year as his London mansion (Lansdowne House - pg. 23a) began construction, with Adam the architect there as well. In 1765, the unfinished mansion was sold to Lord Shelburne, with the sales price of £22,500 including Adam's services to complete the project (which as seen did not occur). Dominating Berkeley Square, Bute's imposing residence - viewed widely as the fruits of speculation and political chicanery - was somewhat of a contrast to No.75 South Audley Street, where the earl had lived from 1754, and where he continued to live until his death, March 10, 1792 (see pg. 526+). *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol.4, 1942, pp.459-60; *Survey of London*, Vol.XL, pp.311-2; McCormick, T.J., p.151; Rykwert, p.90; Chancellor, E.B., *Wanderings in Piccadilly, Mayfair and Pall Mall*, Aston Rivers Ltd. (London-1908)p.113; Chancellor, E.B. *The Private Palaces of London*, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. (London-1908)p.276; *Country Life*, May 11, 1935, p.490; Nevill, R., *Mayfair to Montmartre*, Methuen & Co., Ltd. (London-1921)p.99; *Country Life*, Vol.XCI, No.2363, May 1, 1942, p.806 & No.2364, May 8, 1942, p.904.



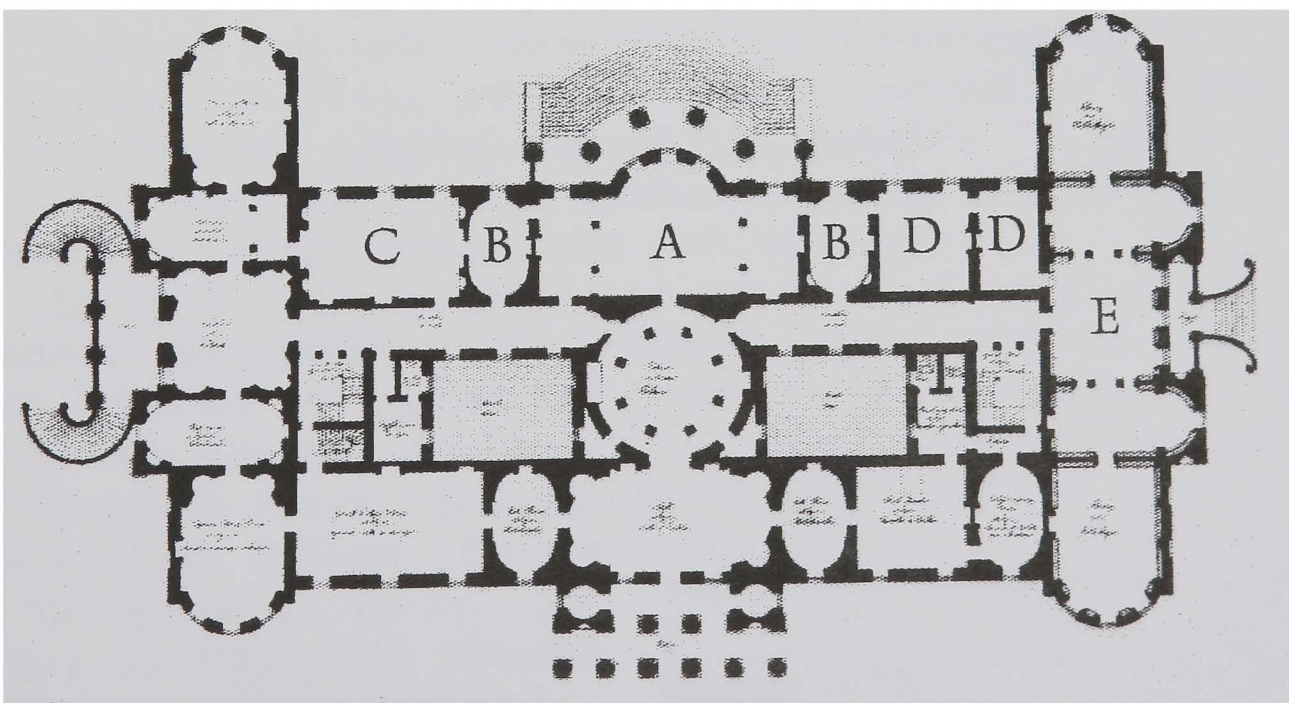
Each scheme featured a top-lit rotunda or tribune, approached via an equally ceremonious Entrance Vestibule; but internally, only the East and South wings were identical in both schemes, and only these with the bridging section appear to have been finished during Bute's lifetime. In the 1820s



1108 - Adam Luton Park, East Front (corresponds to both figs. 1109 & 1110) Works, Vol.I, Part III, plt. 4



1109 - Adam Luton Park, Second Ground Floor Plan, Works, Vol.I, Part III, plt. 2.

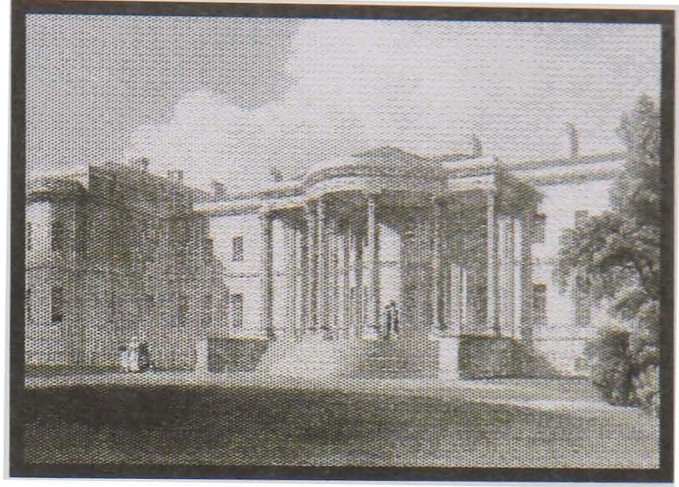


1110 - Robert Adam Luton Park, Original Ground Floor Plan, Works, Vol.I, Part III, plt. 1 (1775).

both Jones and Neale published a view of the East Façade, which concealed the fact that the West Wing remained unfinished (following page). From contemporary accounts, the Entrance



Porch of four *Ionic* columns would appear to have been constructed, but it is doubtful if either scheme for a Vestibule and Tribune beyond were ever built - certainly the foundation walls of the present structure give no evidence of their presence. The letters of the Lady Amabel Hume-Campbell, Marchioness Grey of *old* Wrest Park contain her impression of the house in 1780:

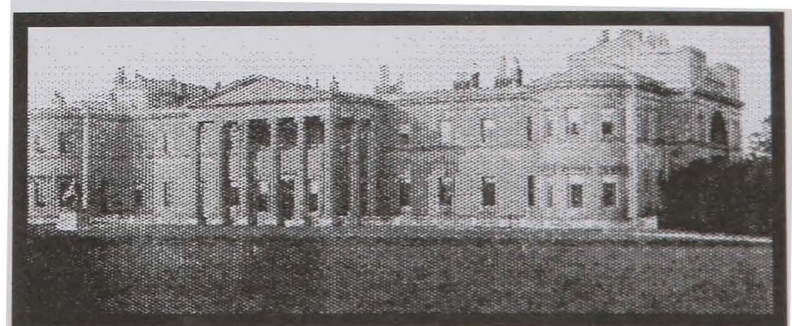


1111 - *Adam* Luton Park, East Front, Jones' *Views of Seats* (1829).

...the Huge Saloon with two of Mr. Adam's screens of pillars that support nothing [A-fig.1110]... On the left, a vestibule with pictures [B]...and beyond a drawing room with four niches [C]. On the right of the Saloon another vestibule, beyond, answering the drawing room, two rooms [D] with presses, medels [sic], pictures, etc., which Lord Bute uses as his own. Next you enter the library wing [E] - Five divisions and the two end rooms are distinct rooms. ... But the Dining Room is in the old house; and a mixture of an unfinished palace and ruinous looking offices is odd.<sup>577</sup>

Extending 146 feet - the length of the entire South Wing - the segmental library was the glory of Adam's accomplishment. With ceilings painted by Cipriani, the five areas were entirely lined with a collection of books which rivalled Blenheim's and earned the accolades of all who saw it. In 1774, Mrs. Delany, who recorded her impressions of many important houses down to the wallpaper textures, recalled: "I never saw so magnificent and pleasant a library, extremely well lighted and nobly furnished with everything that can inform and entertain men of learning and virtü",<sup>578</sup> and seven years later Dr. Johnson echoed her remarks.<sup>579</sup> Above the bookcases hung some of the larger and more important pictures of Bute's equally famous art collection.

In 1814, the second marquess of Bute (the earl's great-grandson) succeeded to the property, and roughly ten years later decided to expand the house.<sup>580</sup> The redoubtable Robert Smirke was engaged (c.1825-30)<sup>581</sup>, but aside from replacing the Entrance Porch with one strikingly similar to that of Adam's first scheme (figure 1110), he seems to have finished the footprint of Luton Hoo roughly as originally planned. Internally, Adam's string of rooms on the North Front was replaced by a large chapel to the east, with private apartments occupying the western portion of the wing.



1112 - *Adam & Robert Smirke* Luton Hoo, West Front before M&D alterations, Lees-Milne, fig.34, face-pg.27.

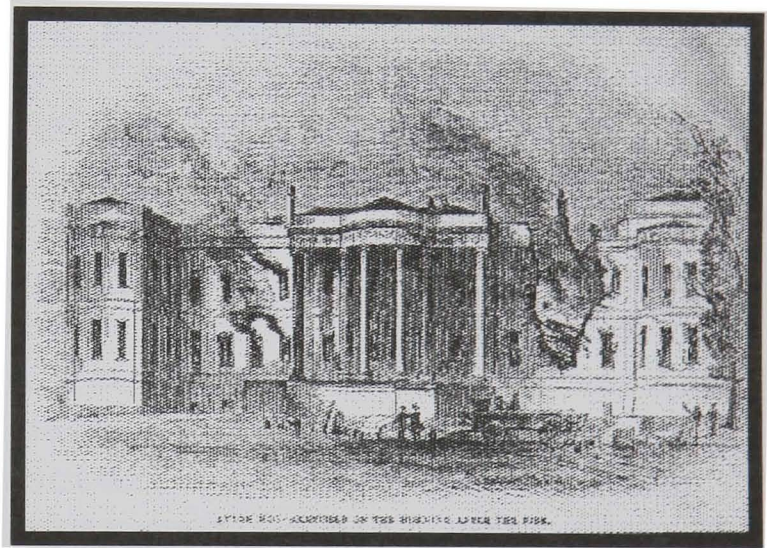


The Chapel was embellished with very fine Gothic wainscot dating from 1475-1546, which had once adorned a similar structure built in the reign of Henry VI.<sup>a</sup>

One cannot expect Smirke to have been sensitive to the noble arrangement of Adam's Entrance Vestibule and Tribune, and apparently used the area they were to occupy for the erection of one cavernous rectangular Hall running from the front door to Adam's transverse corridor. With his usual tact, G. F. Waagen described the space:

On the following morning [October 11, 1835] I drove...to Luton House, the seat of the Marquis of Bute, to see the very great collection of pictures which it contains [about four hundred pictures]. The house, situated on an eminence, is very extensive. A considerable portico of six Ionic columns, and a large hall have very lately been added. The rather bare and desolate appearance of the hall will, it is to be hoped, be soon removed by the ornament of sculptures.<sup>582</sup>

Eight years after Waagen's visit, a disastrous fire gutted nearly the entire building. The Gothic woodwork, excepting half of a "...richly carved oak door and the altar..."<sup>583</sup> and most of Bute's collection of pictures were completely destroyed as were all of Adam's interiors save part of the Library. Smirke's Hall was gutted as well, and the great



1113 - Adam Luton Hoo, East Front after the fire of 1843, *Illustrated London News*, nsd, 1843, pg.325.

Entrance Porch was left a stand of massive Ionic columns supporting only a "fragmental sheet of copper which covered the roof".<sup>584</sup> With such a catastrophe on their hands, it is little wonder that the Bute family decided to sell the estate the following year, eventually finding a buyer in 1848 for what was largely a burnt-out shell. John Shaw Leigh, a wealthy Liverpool solicitor, restored the mansion under the direction of Sydney Smirke, who from a few historical photographs presently displayed in the house, seems to have

<sup>a</sup> Lewis traces the carvings, which must have been fine enough for Horace Walpole to request a viewing (he was refused), as probably having been first installed in Luton Church before being relocated in the late 17th century to the Henry VI-era chapel. Circa 1830 they were transferred to the newly completed Chapel at Luton Park by the second marquis. Referring to the "exceedingly fine Gothic wainscot, enriched with carving intermingled with Latin sentences of Scripture in ancient characters" *The Illustrated London News*, attributed it to one Tyttenbanger, as having been first put up by Sir Thomas Pope, the founder of Trinity College, Oxon..." Lewis, W.S., ed., *Horace Walpole's Correspondence...*, Vol.35, Yale University Press (New Haven-1973)pp.332-3,n.3; *The Illustrated London News* (no date recorded) 1843, p.325; Hall, M., *Country Life*, Vol.CLXXXVI, No.4, Jan.23, 1992, p.50.



suffered from less inspiration than that usually assigned to his brother. Externally, the only alteration would seem to have been the removal of Adam's hexastyle portico on the East front, with what appears to be an integration of its columns into the bay window projection.

Desolate since the fire, the Chapel was redecorated in 1873 by George Edmund Street (1824-81) who is largely known for his churches and what is generally considered to be his finest work, the Law Courts, Strand (1874-82). Street's two-storey-high design was Romanesque in style, taking advantage of Adam's apsidal wing projection.



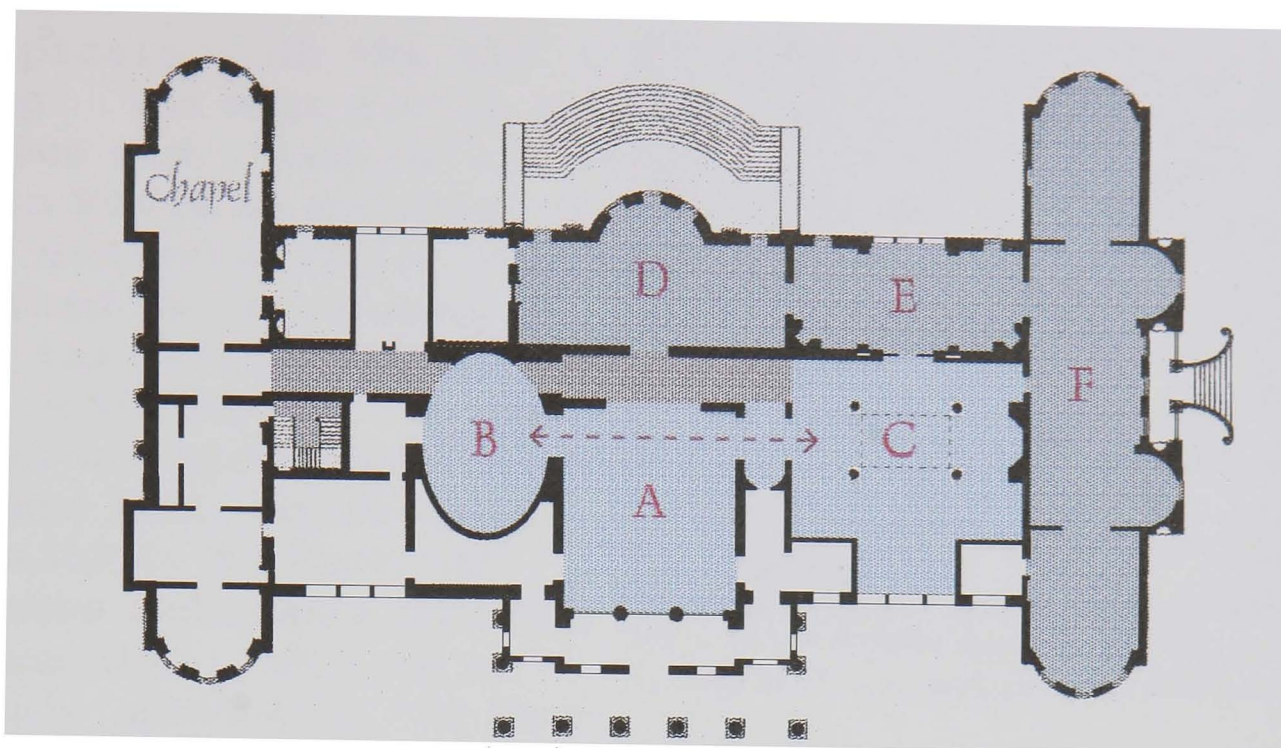
1114 - G.E. Street Luton Hoo, Chapel (1873), Wernher Collection brochure, no date.

This then was the general condition of the mansion when Wernher purchased the estate from Leigh's daughter-in-law, in 1903, and commissioned Mewès & Davis to make the Beaux-Arts remodellings seen today by many as the finest of their type in England.<sup>a</sup> Externally both the East and West façades were punctuated at ground floor level by French casements, and carved stone laurel wreaths replaced the upper storey windows at the Entrance Porch. To accommodate servants' and children's quarters, a Mansard-roofed third story was added to a still largely Adamitic mansion, which coincidentally occurred within the same time frame as the Mansard roofs of Manderston (page 331a) were being removed to reinforce its Adamitic character. Internally, however, all traces of Adam and the Smirkes were transformed into a series of spaces which relegated the architects' Ritz project to a comparatively modest expression of their art. Adam's ground-floor courtyards were filled to create an enfilade of three spectacular interiors, linked perfunctorily by Adam's redecorated transverse corridor - now designated a *Gallerie* - but also with drama by an assembly of "Ritz-styled" gilt wrought iron and glass doors which allowed a visual as well as physical connection.

From measured drawings and design schematics archived at the Plymouth office of today's Mewès & Davis Limited, it is clear the present *Grand Hall d'Entrée* follows the general dimensions of Smirke's design, with the adjacent Grand Staircase extending beyond the confines of the old north courtyard into the fabric of the existing structure. These two dramatic spaces are related in style and scale (monumental

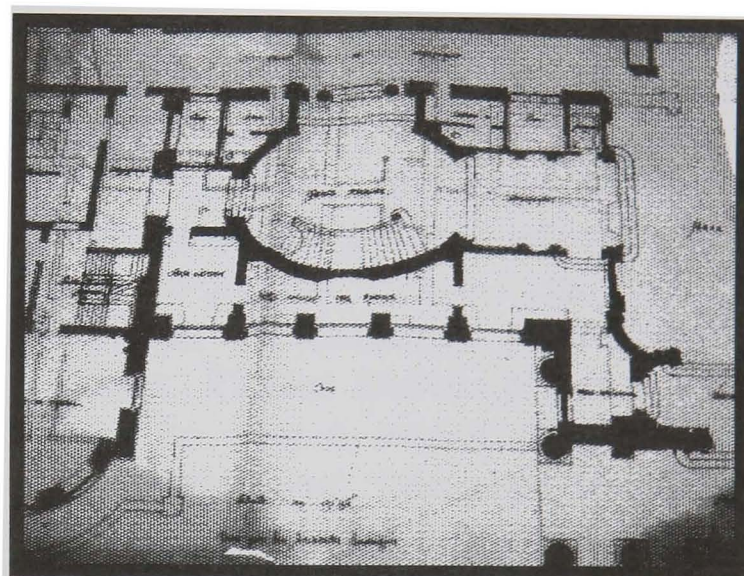
<sup>a</sup> In 1966, eminent architectural historian and author, Sir Nikolaus Pevsner wrote to Julius Wernher's son, Sir Harold, with this appraisal: "I have just returned from my journey to Bedfordshire and wanted to thank you for allowing us to see that part of your house which is not shown to the public. I am really immensely impressed by the work of Mewès. To the best of my knowledge it is really the finest work of that date and in that style anywhere in England." Luton Hoo house records, Letter 2 May 1966.





1115 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, abstract of Ground Floor Plan (c.1903) A - Grand Hall d'Entrée, B - Grand Escalier, C - Hall Louis XIV, D - Salle à Manger, E - Salle de Billard, F - Ballroom.

Louis XVI) and both were faced by Mons Germain (page 428) in stone-appearing *stuc pierre* (refer page 428, figure 991), as was the new *Gallerie*. In fact, the architects' preliminary sketches indicate these areas were originally conceived as combined into a single, sumptuous Grand Stair Hall, with the final scheme likely determined by Wernher's efforts to control costs.



1116 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, preliminary plan of Grand Hall d'Entrée & Grand Escalier, © M&D archives.

The plan settled, decorations were still being negotiated as late as May, 1904.<sup>a</sup> Yet even here, one could not think of Wernher as being miserly, in view of the opulent interiors that were done; but clearly he was obliged to restrain Mewès, in what appears to have been an ever unfolding array of designs - few of which were modestly conceived. Michael Hall quotes Wernher's December, 1903 letter written to his wife from South Africa:

"Mewès's rough estimate was £100,000. I reckoned knowing what rogues they are £150,000 & now you make it £250,000. A

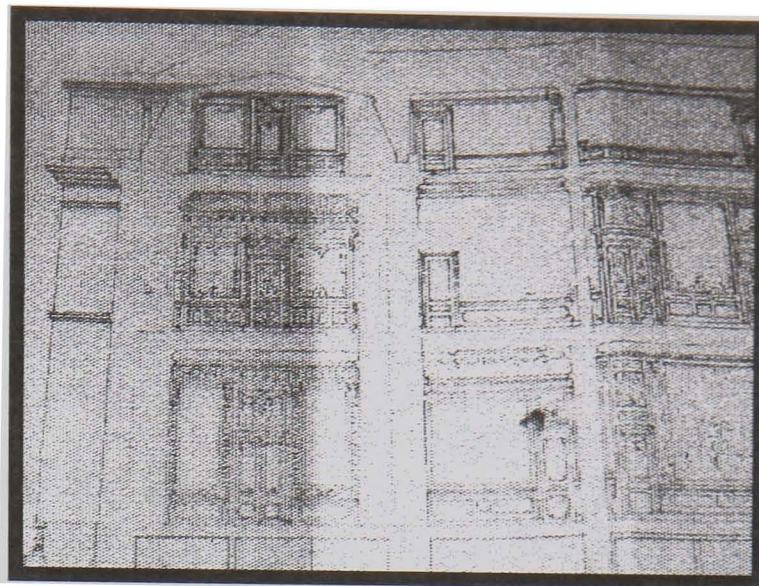
<sup>a</sup> Two letters from Mewès indicate his concern over economies made in the Dining Room and Hall Louis XIV: ...*Je réproûve absolument le mélange du stuc et marbre; je crois qu'il est regrettable, pour un économie apparente de deux-mille livres, de compromettre l'aspect final de l'ensemble.*

*Néanmoins, si vous désirez encore des simplifications, il faudra réétudier sur nouveaux frais la décoration de toutes les pièces...* [apparently the Dining Room's plaster (*staff*) embellishments were substituted for what were originally intended as gilt bronze (fig. 1149). To the degree that they have deteriorated over time, Mewès regret was warranted. Revisions to the Hall Louis XIV, which was originally to be panelled entirely with carved *boiseries* (see pg. 448) was met with less objection: *Le dessin n'est point changé; il est simplifié dans ses moyens d'exécution, et il y a surtout des suppressions. Je pense que ce résultat vous satisfera...* Luton Hoo house documents, Folio 21, letters, May 26 & 18, 1904.



fine pickle. Oh the old humbug. You must settle as best you can. Have as little done in France as possible."<sup>585</sup>

It is understandable that projected costs reaching 2½ times the original estimate would upset anyone. In addition to his spectacular Grand Entrance Hall, which opened majestically to both the Staircase and Adam's corridor (figure 1116 - showing a dramatic opening of the West



1117 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, preliminary section showing interiors to second floor, © M&D archives.

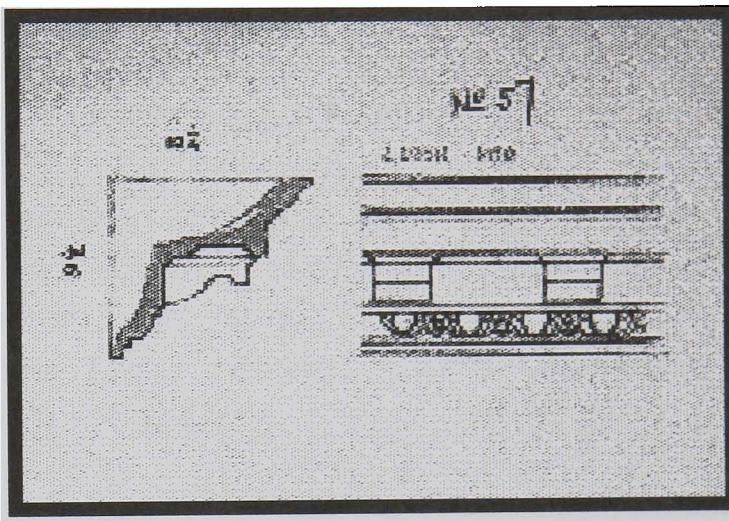
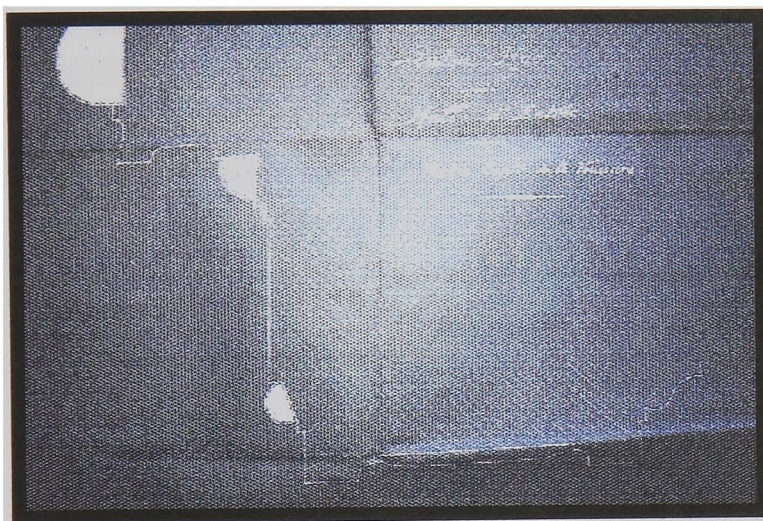
Front façade as well), it is clear when this aspect of the design had been finalised, Mewès still was envisioning magnificent interiors extending beyond the first floor to the domestic level as well.

As Wernher's letter also indicates an architectural chain of command existed similar to that of Lionel de Rothschild at No.148 Piccadilly (page 273); ergo it was the lady of the house who directed the architects and decorators. Lady Wernher did indeed require that as much of the decorative work as possible be accomplished by English firms, and to this end, the major ground floor areas (indicated in blues, figure 1115) and Lady Wernher's first floor Bedchamber suite and Boudoir were the only interiors to see a major French input. From Lady Wernher the authority went through Mewès & Davis to the Parisian firm of Maison Leys, 3, place de la Madeleine (*antiquaire* and decorator, "Georges Hoentschel,<sup>a</sup> *successeur*") and from thence to the various decorators and concerns who provided Mewès-designed bronze fittings and marble panelling as well as persian and turkish carpets, tapestries and fine furniture. (With each party taking his commission, it can be seen that by the time Wernher received the bill, three percentages on the same services and goods

<sup>a</sup> Georges Hoentschel (1855-1915) was one of the most successful Parisian decorators and dealers of his day. He not only produced revivalist interiors for the universal market, but was a respected designer in the current style most appreciated by the French avant garde: *l'Art Nouveau*. His *Salon des Bois* for the *Pavillon de l'Union Central des Arts Décoratifs*, Paris Exposition of 1900, is a virtuosic blend of the sinuous qualities championed by Horta and Gaudi, contained within a Classical vocabulary. With a quotation from E. Gallé, Pierre Kjellberg has described the décor as *...sculpté avec luxuriances. Il a pour thème un des motifs de prédilection de cet artiste: l'églantier 'qui chante discrètement le poème de la jeunesse et du printemps'*. Comprising two connecting rooms, these interiors have been reassembled in the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs*, where they can be seen today. Historian Bruno Pons illustrates a series of historical *boiseries* formerly in the Hoentschel collection, which were purchased by J. Pierpont Morgan and gifted to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Kjellberg, P., *Mobillier Français*, Tome Second, Éditions le Prat (Paris-1980)p.240; information posted at the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs*, the Louvre; Pons, Bruno, *De Paris à Versailles, 1699-1736*, Association des publications Presse les Universités de Strasbourg, 1985, pp.168, 201, 225.

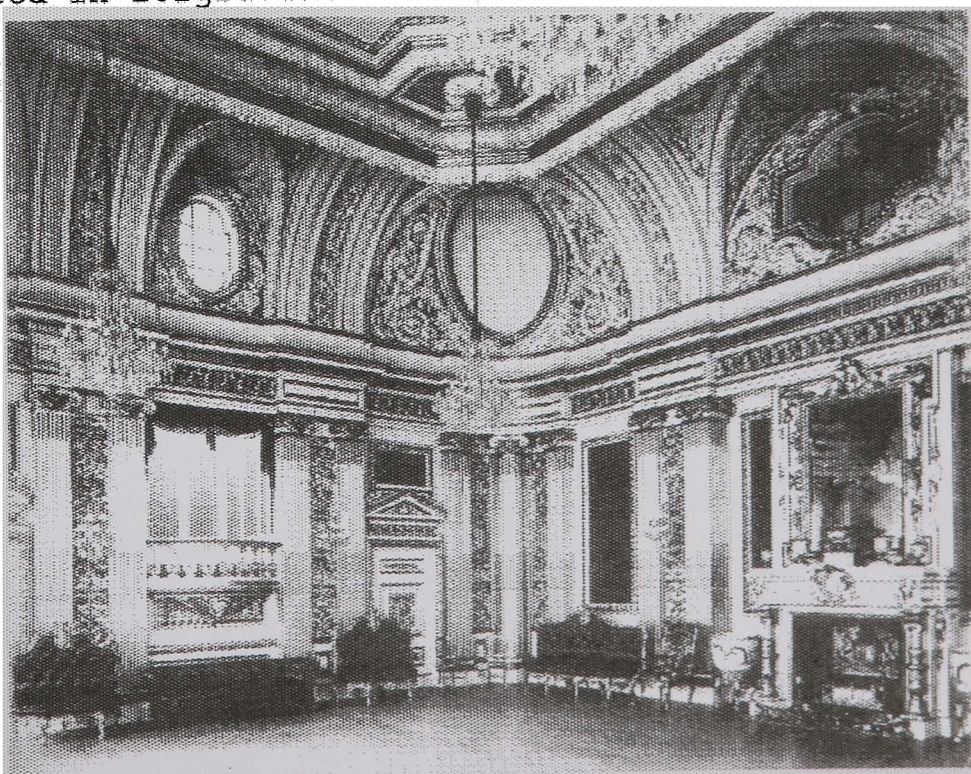


might have been charged.) Only one English decoration firm participated in the major areas, and at this juncture the reader should have no difficulty in guessing who they were. House records and construction drawings indicate "Jackson de London" were chosen to provide aspects of the decorative infill to the *Grand Hall d'Entrée* and likely the Grand Staircase Hall as well - an exceptional instance when English craftsmen were subcontracted by a French decoration firm to do some of the fine renderings. The general contractor and also decorator of the secondary spaces was George Trollope & Sons<sup>a</sup> (under Mewès & Davis) whose itemised account from 1903 to 1906 comprised two hundred and five pages and covered everything from reupholstering furniture to door and window hardware. For part of the architectural work, Battiscomb & Harris (page



**1118 - Mewès & Davis** "*Luton Hoo Hall d'Entrée, Partie Supre de la Voussure, (pencil notation - "Copy to Jackson, May/2")*", infill in 4 locations, three highlighted in white, Luton Hoo house documents. **1119 - Battiscomb & Harris** *Cornice dtls, 2 of 2, Luton Hoo detail, Westminster Publ.Lib., mss, 1571/539.542.*

<sup>a</sup> Nicholas Thompson's résumé can hardly be improved upon for purposes here: "...George Trollope and Sons, a family building firm established in 1778...had [by 1864] extended its operations to include high-class decorative work. Their new department operated from a building known as the Pantehnicon (now Sotheby's Belgravia) in West Halkin Street, and offered the very latest in fashionable furnishings. Their show rooms were modestly called "The Museum of Decorative Art". Trollopes had worked at Buckingham Palace as paperhangers in 1830, exhibited furniture at the Great and Paris Exhibitions in the 1850s, and had more recently been completing schemes which the Cubitts had started in Belgravia. Their work at 22 Arlington Street [Wimborne House, directly next door to the Ritz - so much so that one of the Ritz's chimneys actually serves this adjacent property] followed closely on their building of Her Majesty's Theatre in Haymarket (1868-9), and exhibited much of the same theatrical exuberance. The firm amalgamated with Colls and Sons in 1903, and operates today as Trollope and Colls. ..." The Second Empire-style Ballroom is illustrated as it appeared in 1888, and was only one of the many French rooms provided Wimborne House towards the (continued)



**1120 - George Trollope & Sons** *Wimborne House, Ballroom, Bedford Lemere, #8685 (1888), NMR.*



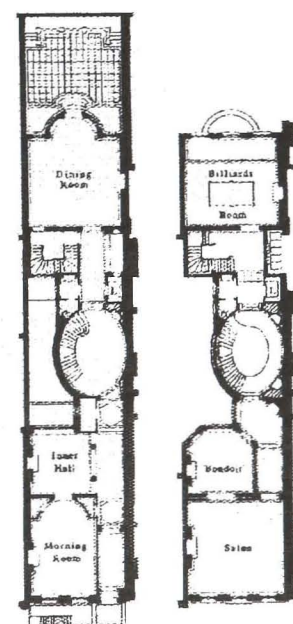
148a & Exhibit I) were subcontracted by Trollope for selected details.<sup>a</sup>

With Mewès's initial scheme for Entrance Hall and Grand Staircase scrapped, the architect's designs were largely confined to alterations and additions within the Adam cum Smirke plan - the oval Staircase Hall remaining the only space not significantly compromised by existing structure. The resulting series of truly magnificent interiors should be viewed largely within this perspective to appreciate the sensitive, often ingenious design solutions required to bring all the major areas into a cohesive scheme.

Mewès's revised design for the Vestibule and *Grand Hall d'Entrée* retained what was essentially a narrow, full-width foyer separated from the Hall by a modest rise in level and a screen of giant Ionic columns. Beyond this all traces of Smirke disappeared under a rendering of *Louis Seize* detailing, which responds to the anomaly of its English envelope with details extended beyond monumental to colossal proportions. With both flanking courtyards absorbed by the internal scheme, the Hall was lighted by a *plafond vitré*, similar to Mewès's Carlton Hotel Winter Garden, which, in order to provide the best possible light, seems to have been raised above Smirke's

(continued) turn of the century (see pg. 532a) - one of which when dismantled revealed a ceiling by William Kent. Trollopes were also the general contractors who combined Nos.69 & 71 Brook Street for William Burns (pg. 415a) and following their work for Mewès & Davis at Luton Hoo, employed the architects to design a speculative house at No.42 Upper Brook Street (1913-4). The design featured a reduced version of their Luton Hoo staircase and rear courtyard at No.8 Grosvenor Square (fig.1098, pg.467), but unfortunately was never built. In company with the firms of Jackson & Graham and Gillow, Trollope & Sons' furniture manufacture was given this accolade by Robert Edis in a series of lectures, published in 1881 as *Decoration and Furniture of Town Houses*: "...such firms...have practically spared no pains to produce the best possible work, and have brought into association with themselves a number of artists, of high repute and knowledge, and to aid them in their endeavours to give to the public furniture of thoroughly good art design, comfortable in shape, and sound and good workmanship." With a reputation of this calibre, their participation at Luton Hoo would seem consistent with the architects' expectation for an overall, superlative performance. Thompson, N., *A House in Town, 22 Arlington Street, its owners and builders*, B.T. Batsford Ltd. in assoc. with Eagle Star Holdings PLC (London-1984)pp.140-1; Edis, pp.89, 211; Aslet, C., *Country Life*, Vol.CLXX, Nov.2, 1981, p.1623; Kelley's *POLD*, 1859 describing Trollope as "...decorators to her Majesty, upholsterers, auctioneers & house agents; *Survey of London*, Vol.XL, pp.31, 217, 322.

<sup>a</sup> Mewès & Davis's summary of 3 December 1906 compiled the accounts of the major contributors, on which their supervision fees ranging (from 5% to 7½%) applied: Building Work (Trollope & Sons) - £78,746.5.0; Decorations (Trollope) - £15,460.16.7; Decorations (Hoentschel) - £43,570.6.6; and Germain's work (which was subcontracted directly by the architects) - £344.18.6. Luton Hoo house documents, Folio 2.



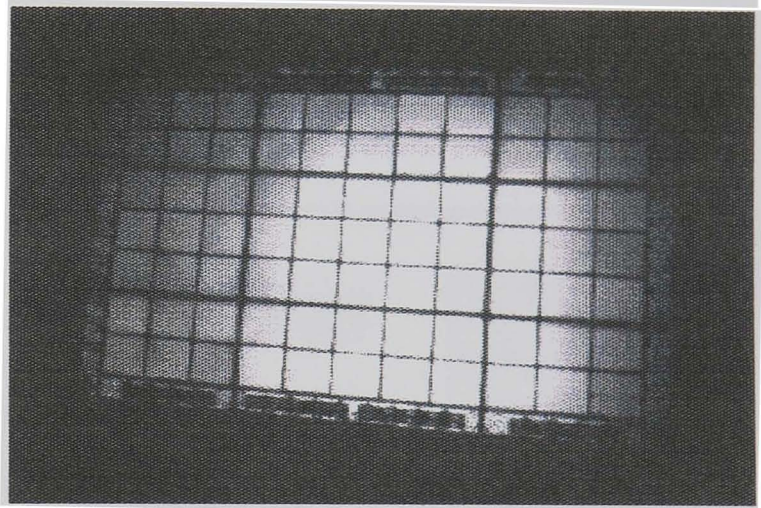
*1121 - Mewès & Davis under Trollope No.42 Upper Brook St. (1914), Survey of London, Vol. XXIX, fig.C, pg.154.*



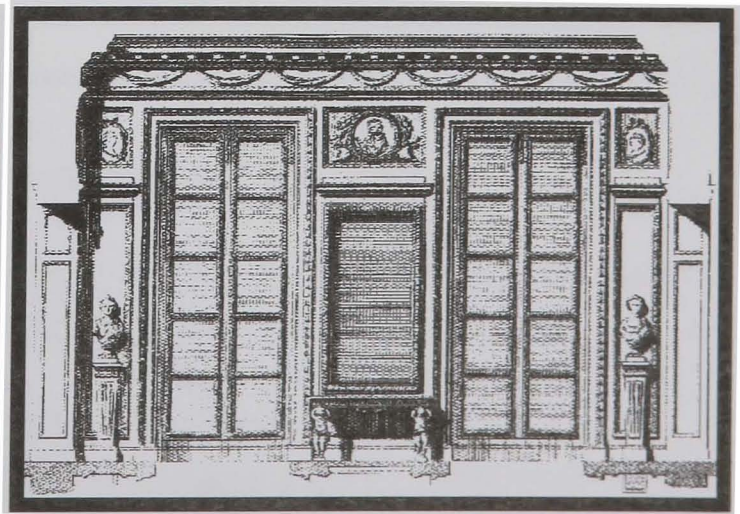
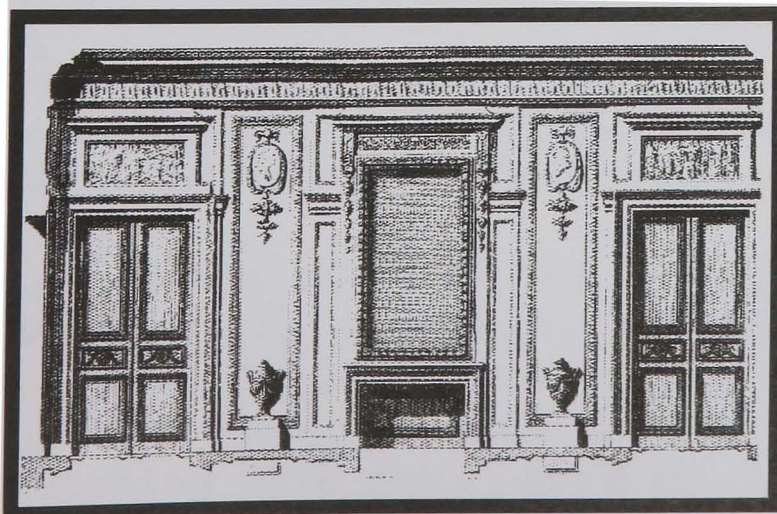


1122 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, Grand Hall d'Entrée (Grand Escalier (Left), Grand Galerie & Dining Room (Ctr.), Elevator Vestibule & Hall Louis XIV (right), writer's photo.

1123 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, plafond vitré, writer's photo.

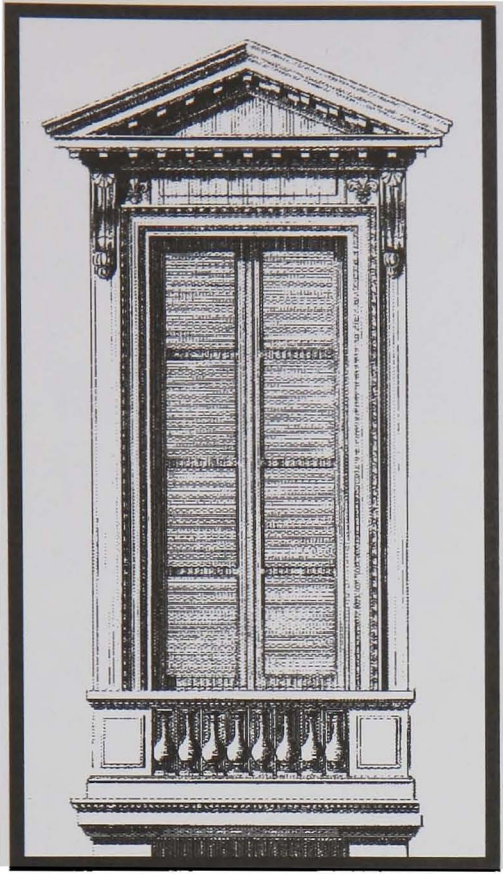


original ceiling level into the new attic area (figure 212, page 139). To accomplish this internally, the ceiling is heightened by a steeply vaulted cove - a purely *Louis Quatorze* feature which, regardless of its historical connotation, is none the less in harmony with the scale of Smirke's Ionic columns (now elaborated into the festooned French variant) and new decorations. Mewès's apparent disregard for an already established Order, is revealed in the design of his four great doorways, which are Corinthian and very much within the Neo-Classical precepts Neufforge documented in the mid-eighteenth century (below and following page).<sup>586</sup>



1124 & 1125 - Neufforge "Décoration pour un Chambre à Coucher" & "Décoration d'un petit Cabinet", Vols V-VIII, plt.4, pg.484 & plt.6, pg.486 (c.1772).

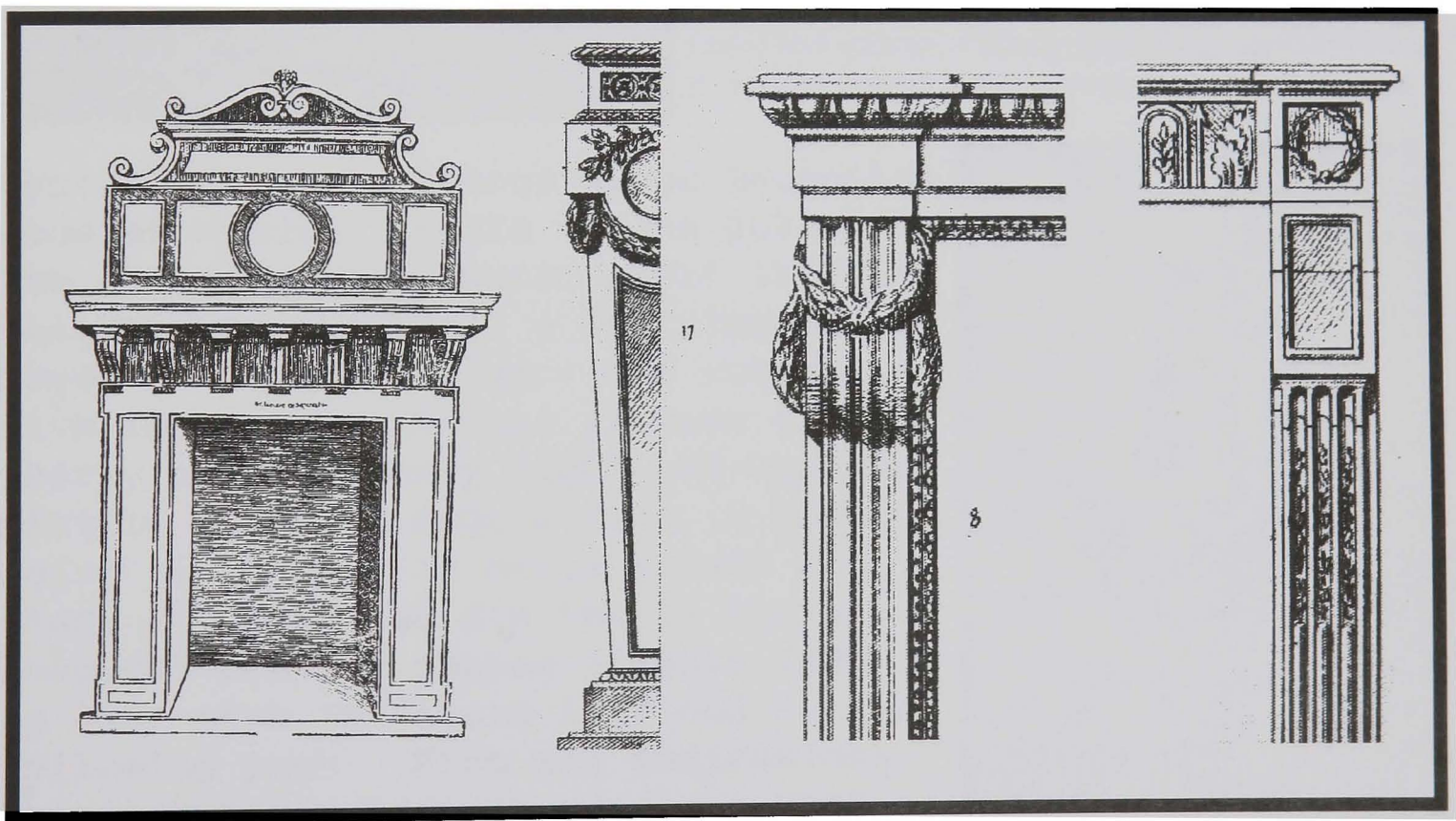




1126 - Neufforge "Développement d'une autre Fenêtre Corinthienne", Vols V-VIII, plt.5, pg.552 (c.1772).

1127 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, Grand Hall d'Entrée, Œil de Boeuf cove dtl., Luton Hoo house records.

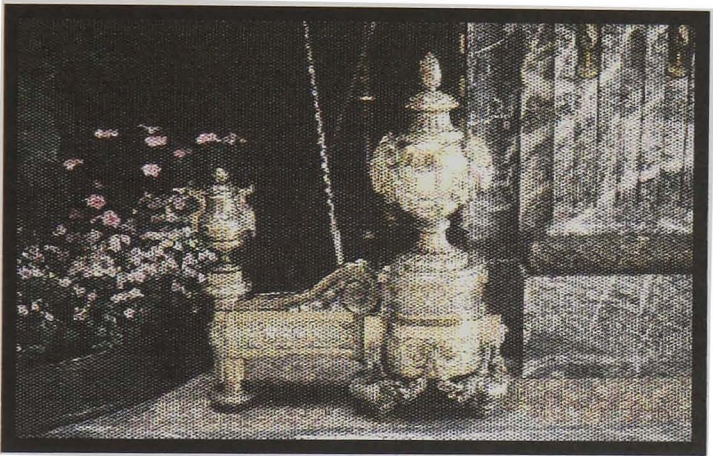
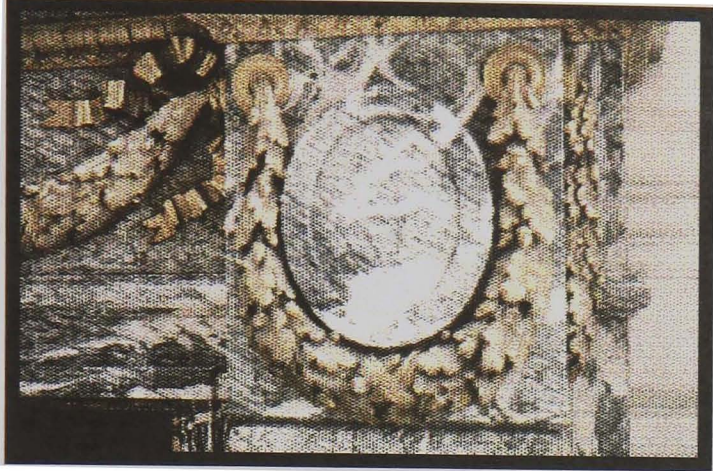
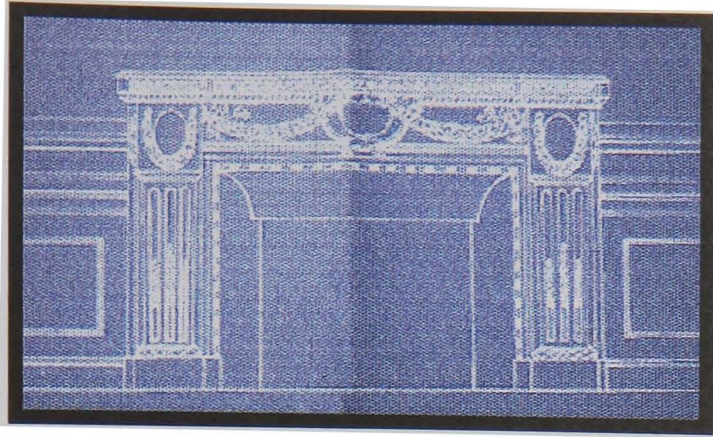
To find a Palladian/Baroque canopy, complete with blind œil de bœuf windows overhead is certainly a departure from the expected French *régularité*, but with the same mix-and-match nonchalance the architect would demonstrate again at No.8 Grosvenor Square (figure 1092, page 466), the effect suggests a largely Louis Seize aesthetic, here within a Louis Quatorze envelope - all harmonized by the warm grey of *ciment français no.2*.<sup>587</sup>



1128 - Sebastiano Serlio *The Five Books of Architecture*, Chimney-piece, 4th Book, 1st Chapter, Fol.32 (1537). 1129, 1130 & 1131 - Bajot - *Profiles et Tournages*, Louis XVI, Plt.40, figs. 17, 8 & 9.

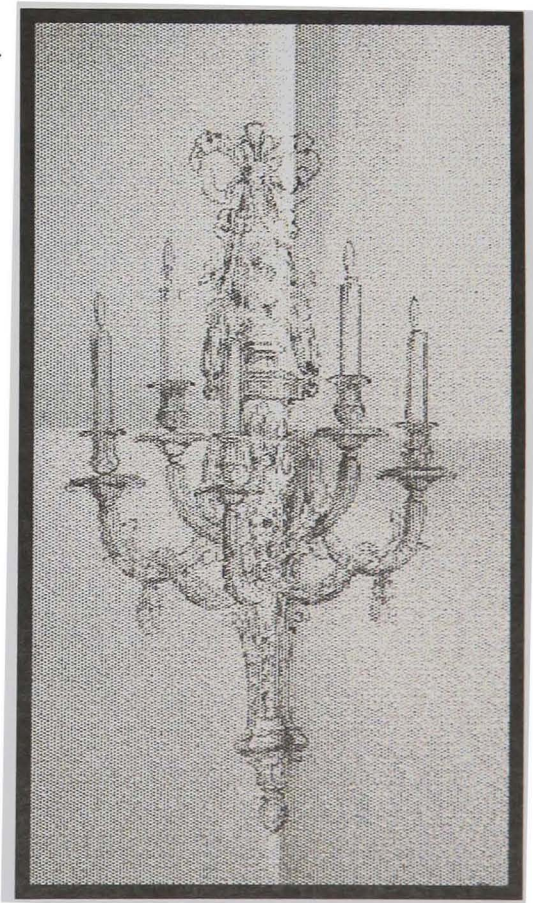
Mewès designed the furniture - both architectural and mobile - to reinforce the Neo-Classical reference. His largely Doric chimney-piece in *Campan Vert* marble with bronze doré (located in the same position as Smirke's), matching fire dogs, *trumeau*, 'Marie Antoinette' *dessus des portes* and beribboned wall sconces all evoke historical precedent, excepting that they are necessarily huge. As with





1132 - Charles Mewès Luton Hoo, Grand Hall d'Entrée, Chimney-piece, trumeau, & sconces (above right), writer's photo. 1133, 1134, 1135 & 1136 - Mewès Luton Hoo, Grand Hall d'Entrée, Chimney-piece, flange capital, fire dog & sconces (below), writer's photos & house documents.

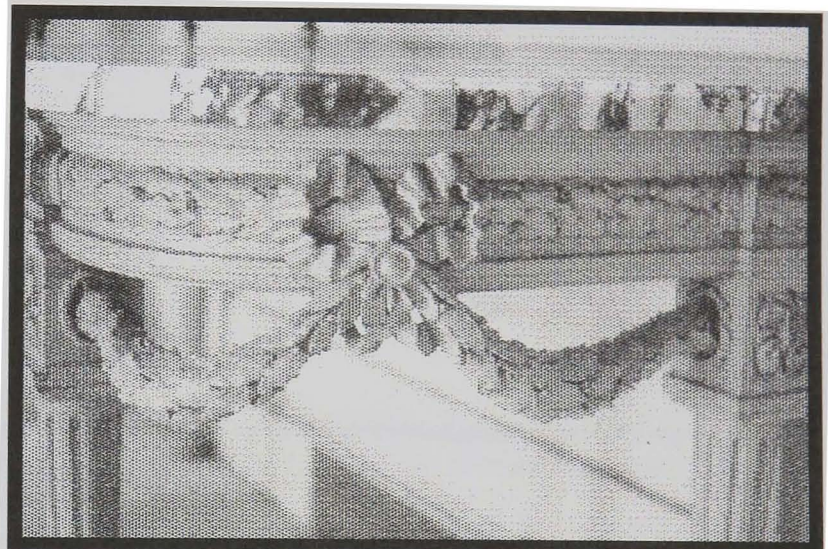
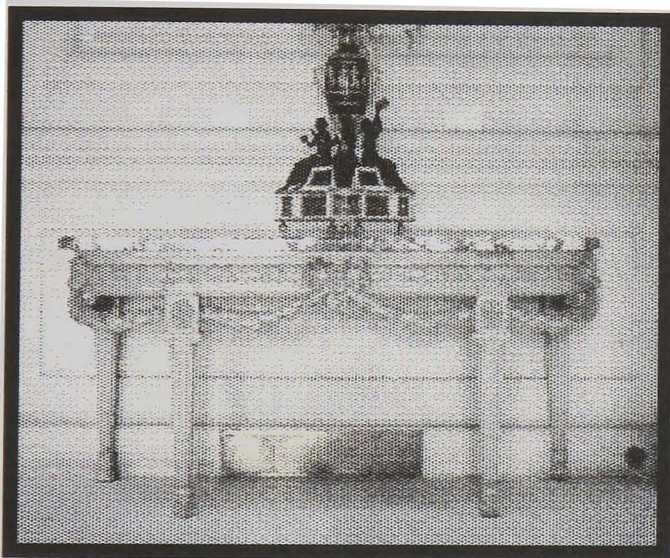
Wyatville's type-Rococo State Reception Room at Windsor Castle (pages 203-4), the chimney-piece mantel shelf is head height, the sconces - a revision of Mewès's initial design - are roughly five feet tall, and the *trumeau* is nearly a full storey high. As one can plainly see from figure 1132, a *Louis Seize* side chair is miniaturised by these elements, as are the le Lorrain-inspired console tables (figure 720, pg.339) seen in figure 1122 and on the following page. From all indications, the architects had intended the Hall to be a purely ceremonial transition to the inner apartments, whereby the spatial flow from monumental to domestic would naturally occur according to traditional sequence. But it would seem the clash of the two scales was determined early on by the clients themselves, who, discovering that the *Grand Hall d'Entrée* was in fact the brightest room in the house, decided it would serve them better as a sitting room. To accommodate this, Mewès was required to completely separate the Hall from its Vestibule







1137 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, Grand Hall d'Entrée, vignette (c.1923) © Luton Museum & Art Gallery. 1138 & 1139 - Mewès Luton Hoo, Grand Hall d'Entrée, console table, with Brèche Violet marble top, writer's photos.



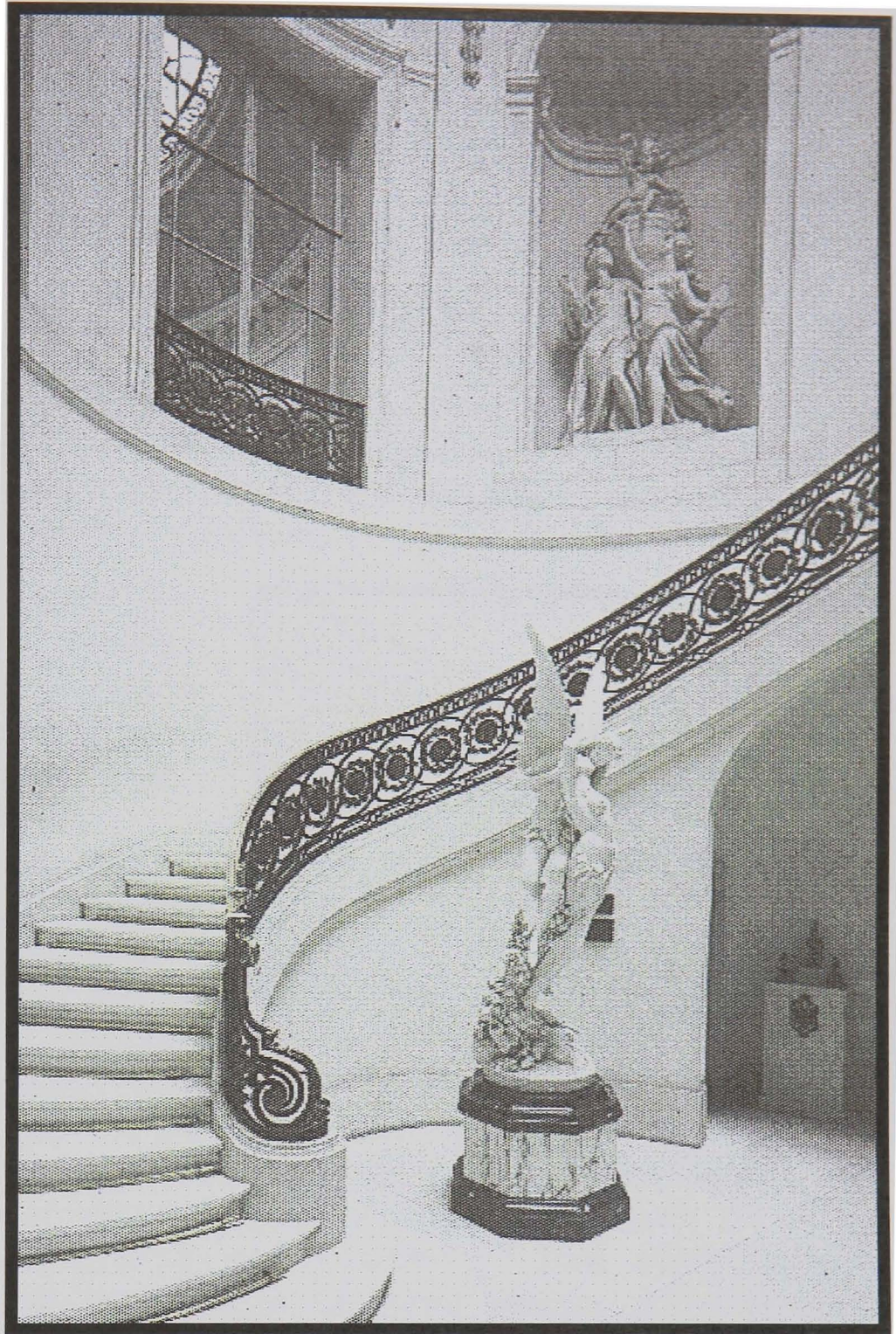
- doing so with the insertion of a full-height screen of glazed panels (refer figure 1053, page 454). An historical photograph archived at the Luton Museum insinuates an intimate vignette with 'modesty' curtains mounted on the screen to shield the family from the coming and goings just beyond. Only a careful inspection will reveal the massive soft furnishings relegated a writing desk to be seemingly just above coffee table height. With the Vestibule separated from the Hall, an arrival was now required to make an abrupt left turn and follow an indirect route to what became a second vestibule behind the Grand Staircase. From there he would enter the Hall through a pair of mirrored doors opposing an identical pair through which servants accessed the space. (Today, the Hall functions as an exhibition venue for the Wernher Collection of Art; and although much of the fine furnishings remain, the carpet and "modesty" curtains have been removed, to all but restate the architect's original intention.)

No client interference plagued Mewès's adjacent *Grand Escalier*, where it would seem the architect was allowed full

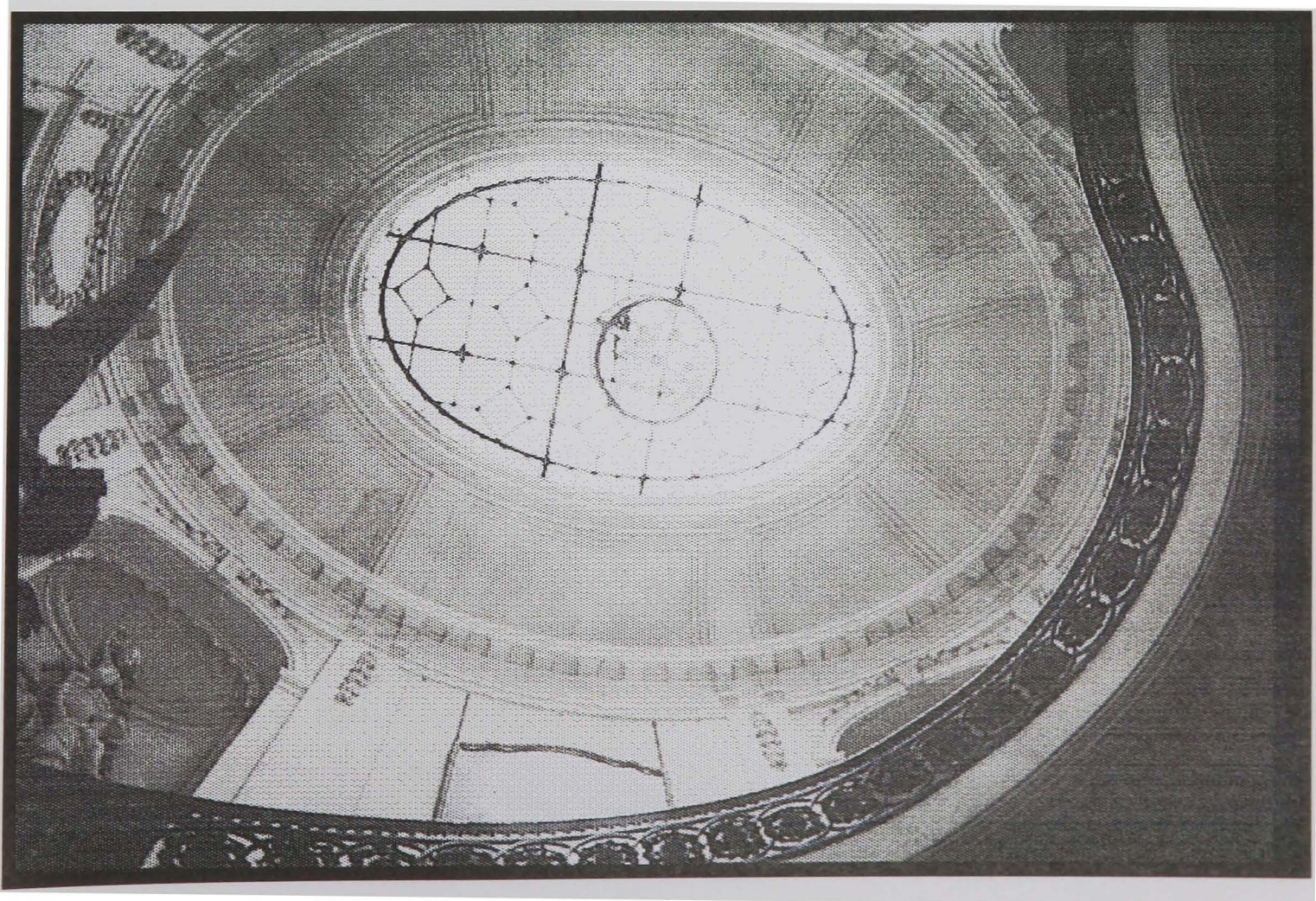


vent to create one of the most marvelous architectural expressions of any age. A virtuosic orchestration of statics and flows, few compositions equal this space for its harmonious balance and exquisite detailing. The literal embrace of Bergonzoli's *The Love of Angels* is extended metaphorically to that of a sweeping staircase, ascending in an unbroken line the perimeter of its oval drum to reverse its curve in the upper landing. If architecture can be called "frozen music",<sup>588</sup> this is a superb case in point.

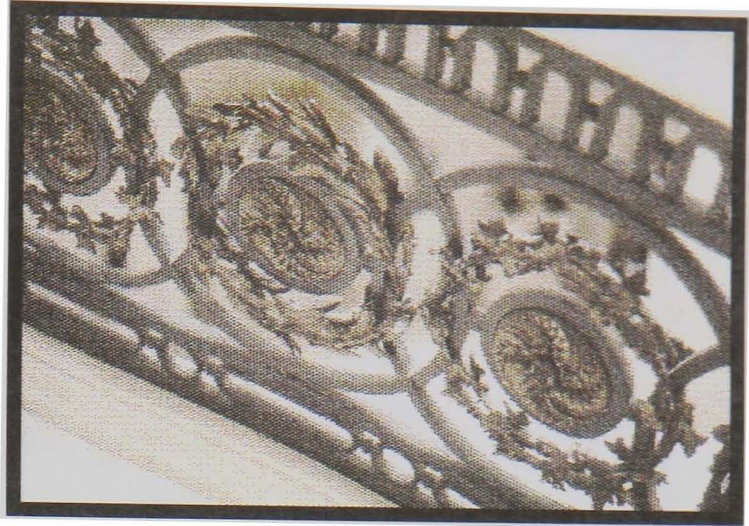
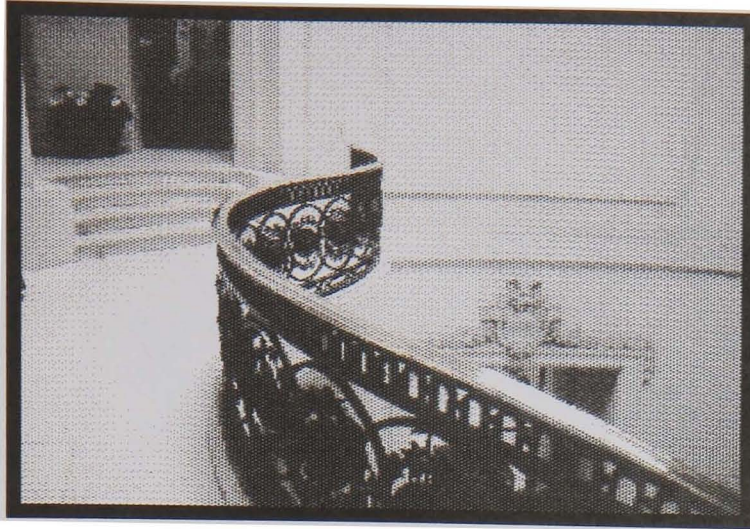
The wrought-iron balustrade motif is one of



1140 & 1141 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, Grand Escalier, © Luton Hoo #1354 & writer's photo.

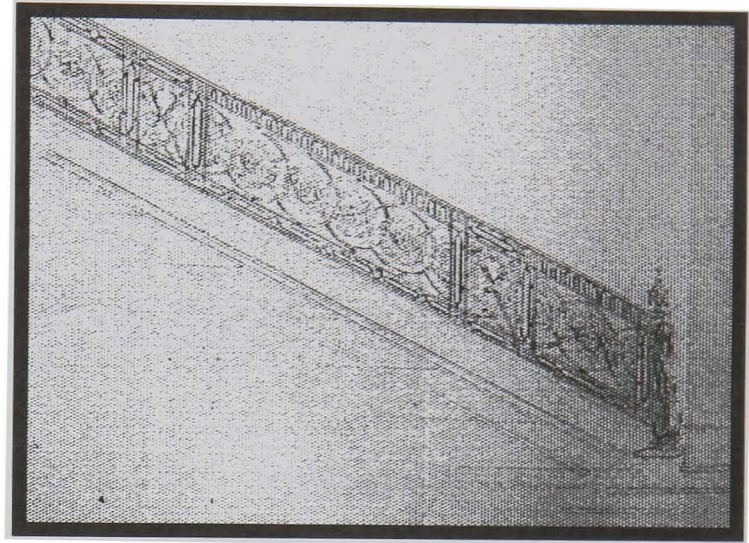






1142 & 1143 - *Bénard under Mewès* Luton Hoo, Grand Escalier, First Floor landing & balustrade dtl., writer's photos. 1144 - *Mewès* Luton Hoo, Grand Escalier, balustrade study, Luton Hoo house records.

interlocking circles, similar to that by Duchêne at Sunderland House (figure 988, page 427), yet here its density, achieved by the addition of alternating gilt-bronze wreaths of laurel and ivy, elevates it far beyond decorative embellishment, to the fulcrum of the overall design - like a giant ribbon unfurled from above.



A preliminary study indicates Mewès had originally planned to section the balustrade with upright supports; and whereas this would have been a more economical approach (clearly the unbroken motif required the balustrade to be largely fabricated and fitted in situ),<sup>a</sup> the continuous motif achieves a fluid, elemental oneness which, if composed differently, could never have elevated this single element to its compositional importance.

Like the *Grand Hall d'Entrée*, the Staircase is lighted by a *plafond vitré*, cameoed into an elliptical cove, so robustly configured as to appear a dome (see also figure 303, page 178). A wide string course divides the drum below, where only the upper section is articulated. Here a pair of shell alcoves flank mirrored fenestration, which is recessed behind a wrought iron and bronze balconet, echoing the balustrade design. The alcoves feature superb groups representing the Arts (painting, sculpture, music and Literature)<sup>589</sup> by Parisian sculptor, Ferdinand Faivre; and although little seems to have been recorded of this artist or his work (other than his tympanum for Mewès & Davis's Royal Automobile Club),<sup>590</sup> he may have been a son of the more noted Second Empire sculptor, Paul-Émile-Denis Faivre (1828-1909) who was monographed by author Émile Michel in *Notice sur la vie et les oeuvres d'Émile Faivre*, 1869. In sympathy with Bergonzoli's sculpture below, Faivre's theme

<sup>a</sup> The house accounts (folio 23) indicate the Stairhall decorations totalled Fr160,461.62 or @£6,418 with the balustrade costing more than any other entry - including the entire architectural envelope in *stuc pierre* (Fr 36,520 or @£1,461 vs. Fr28,820 or @£1,153).





1145 - *Ferdinand Faivre under Mewès* Luton Hoo, *Grand Escalier*, 1 of 2 sculpture groups after Boucher, writer's photo. 1146 - *François Boucher Grisaille* (c.1745), Wernher Collection, sold, Nov., 1946, Luton Hoo house records.



was almost certainly suggested by Lady Wernher, whose Boucher grisaille of a nearly identical subject occupied a place of honour at Bath House.<sup>a</sup> By far the most applauded of Mewès's interiors, this *Grand Escalier* is certainly his masterpiece.

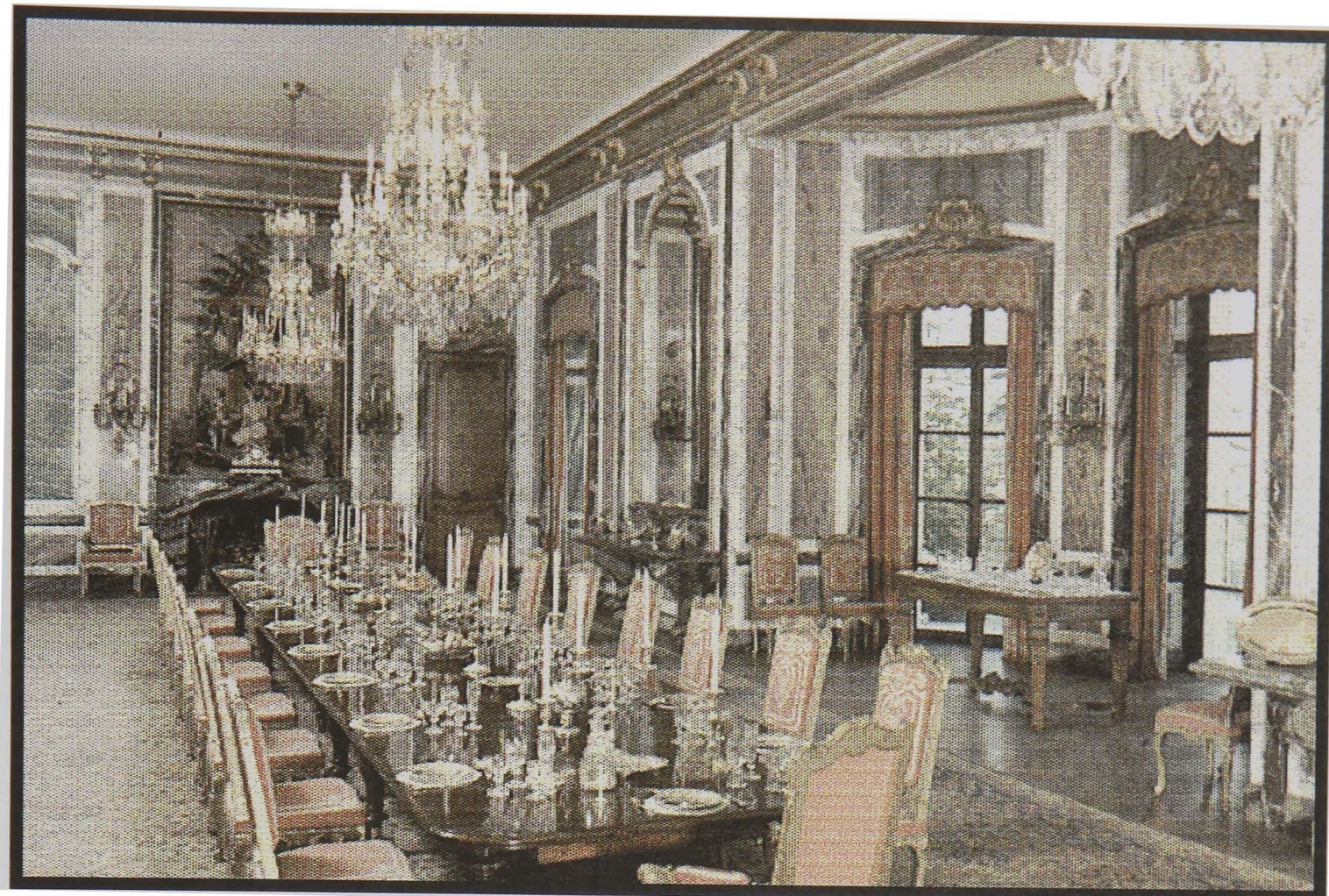
The decoration of the four major ground-floor apartments was delegated almost entirely to Georges Hoentschel, with three of these being redecorations in Adam's East and South wings, and a new *Hall Louis XIV* occupying the area of the old South Courtyard and extending into the West Front. Of these the most costly to decorate was Lord Bute's old Saloon, now transformed into a marble-panelled dining room.<sup>591</sup> Mewès & Davis's preliminary design drawings indicate that Adam's "...screens of pillars that support nothing..." had been replaced by Smirke with columns still aligned to the bow window, but located closer to the walls. To display Wernher's set of eighteenth-century Beauvais tapestries (three from an original series of six entitled, *The Story of the King of China*), Smirke's columns were removed to allow a sufficient

<sup>a</sup> The relationship is clear. The Boucher was removed from Bath House in June, 1946, to be sold at Christies the following November for an astonishingly paltry £11.11.-.!! The writer is grateful to Curator, Mrs. Oonagh Kennedy for not only this information, but also the kindness both she and Mrs. Nicholas Phillips extended to him as a measure of their extraordinary dedication to the Wernher Collection and interest in Luton Hoo itself, as a house of unique architectural significance.



1147 - *Beauvais Works Tapestry*, 1 of 6, "*The Story of the King of China*", early 18th century, MU. Smith, pg.12.





1148 - *Georges Hoentschel (Maison Leys) Luton Hoo, Dining Room*, © Luton Hoo #1355. 1149 - *Hoentschel Luton Hoo, Dining Room, overdoor dtl., writer's photo*. 1150 - *Le Brun Versailles, Salon d'Apollon (1683-1701) "Winter" overdoor, Van der Kemp, pg.62*.

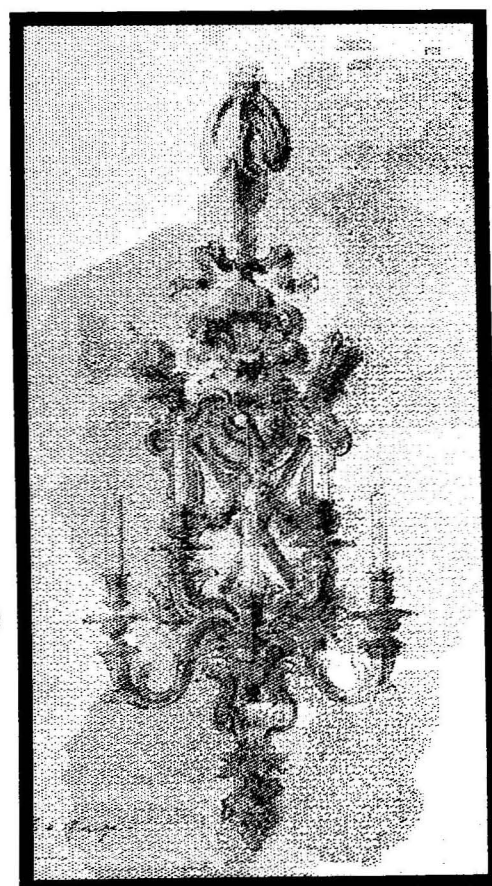


breadth of unencumbered wall space. The colours of the hangings - which were and are particularly vibrant (as they had been rolled up for decades) determined those of the panellings. *Campan Mélange* marble, whose deep reds and greens with streaks of white, was selected for the massive serving tables (*dressoirs*) below the larger two tapestries (figure 997, pg.429), as well as the north-wall chimney-piece, which companions the third. The wall panels themselves are comprised of *Campan Vert* and a jasper-like, Grigio Zonato marble of modulated warm browns with streaks of blood red, set in Sicilian marble frames.

Originally intended to be gilt bronze, the panelling embellishments were executed in *staff* (reinforced plaster) to save costs. As Mewès regretted in his correspondence (page 475a), the saving seems to have been a minor one, and



time has shown his caution doubly correct, as the French plaster has proven friable over time. With Jackson & Sons already included on the contractors' list, one might wonder why they were not invited to provide these decorations in their incomparably superior *papier-mâché*; but obviously that is a moot point now. The *Louis XIV* character of the Dining Room relates somewhat to the atmosphere of the Hall, but contrasts markedly to its monochrome rendering with a luxurious, multicoloured presentation, clearly modelled after seventeenth-century Versailles detailing. Figure 1150, illustrates a case in point, where the marbles are *Campan Vert* and *Rouge Royale* framed in Sicilian. Only the specific theme of the gilded embellishments is transformed from reminders of Louis's military might to those suggesting the hunt and banquet table. And yet, as faithful a concept as these decorations may be, one cannot avoid a pervasive sense of the Neo-Classical. The pilaster panels are punctuated mid-height with Mewès's exquisite *Louis Seize* sconces, and paired scroll consols in a shallow cove painted in faux 'jasper' above. The ceiling is entirely plain - but it is Adam's bow window, stripped of its columned extensions which seems to have baffled Hoentschel and Co., who apparently did not have a French answer for this particularly English feature. Only the architect's elevation showing three pair of unaligned consoles (figure 1152) indicates the bow is ignored, which as executed resulted in an awkward juncture of the panelling where it met the rectangular dimension, with the cove stretching unsupported for roughly one third of the room's length. Given the panelled scheme, a screen of columns at this juncture, supporting the cove and reinforcing the room's rectangularity without compromising either function or view, is perhaps what an English architect would have optioned (even Smirke had been sensitive to this), and likely would have occurred to Mewès



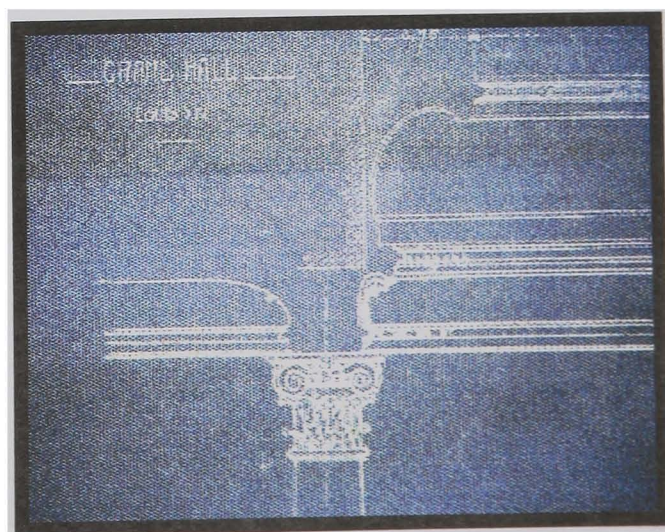
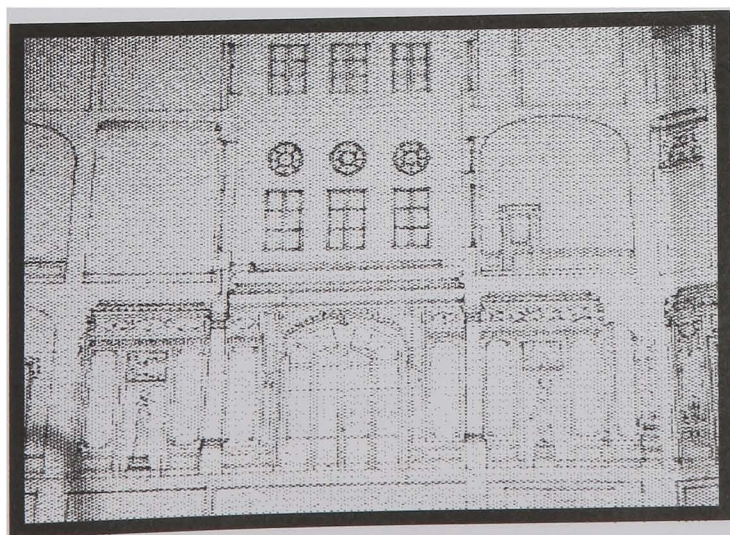
1151 - Mewès Luton Hoo, Dining Room, sconce design (above), Luton Hoo house records.  
1152 - Hoentschel Luton Hoo, Dining Room, East Elevation, Luton Hoo house records.



as well. Why this was not done is a mystery; but in the end, its exclusion proves only a minor fault in what is otherwise an exceptionally beautiful interior.

Six years after Luton Hoo was completed, Sir Julius died, leaving the estate to Lady Wernher, who remained a scant two years before the house was taken over as a First World War army headquarters, and then as a military convalescent home. During the Second World War the house was requisitioned for use as the Headquarters of the Eastern Command,<sup>592</sup> after which it returned once again to private use. Lady Wernher (now Lady Ludlow) died at the close of the War, and so it was her son, Sir Harold Wernher, who took possession of the estate. The new Lady Wernher was Anastasia (Zia) Mikhailovna Torby, paternally a great-granddaughter of Tsar Nicholas I, and through her mother's family, related similarly to Alexander Sergeivitch Pushkin, the great Russian poet. The opulent world of Edward VII had long since been shattered, and a once lavish style of country living and its seemingly endless rounds of house parties, sobered to the practicability of preserving what remained. The house was simply too big to function as a private dwelling, and so alterations were undertaken to internally divide the structure almost by half, with the second-generation Wernhers occupying the southern portion, and Mewès's *Entrance Hall and Grand Escalier*, together with Hoentschel's Dining Room serving as the major part of a museum for the Wernher Collection of art. In 1948, Keeble Ltd. (page 396), under architect Philip Tilden (page 362a) were commissioned to do revisions which among other things, destroyed entirely another of Hoentschel's interiors and truncated Mewès's grand enfilade.<sup>593</sup>

With the *Grand Escalier* and *Grand Hall d'Entrée*, the third great room on the string was the *Hall Louis XIV*. Separated from the Entrance Hall by an elevator vestibule, roughly the same width as Adam's old corridor, the *Hall Louis XIV*'s arched entrance doors corresponded in position and detail to those of the Dining Room. As the room occupies the area of Adam's South Courtyard, its only light comes from a triple bay of windows in the West or Front Façade and yet another *plafond vitré*, centrally placed above a peristyle of four *Brèche Violet* scagliola columns in the Corinthian Order.



1153 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, Longitudinal Section, M&D archives.

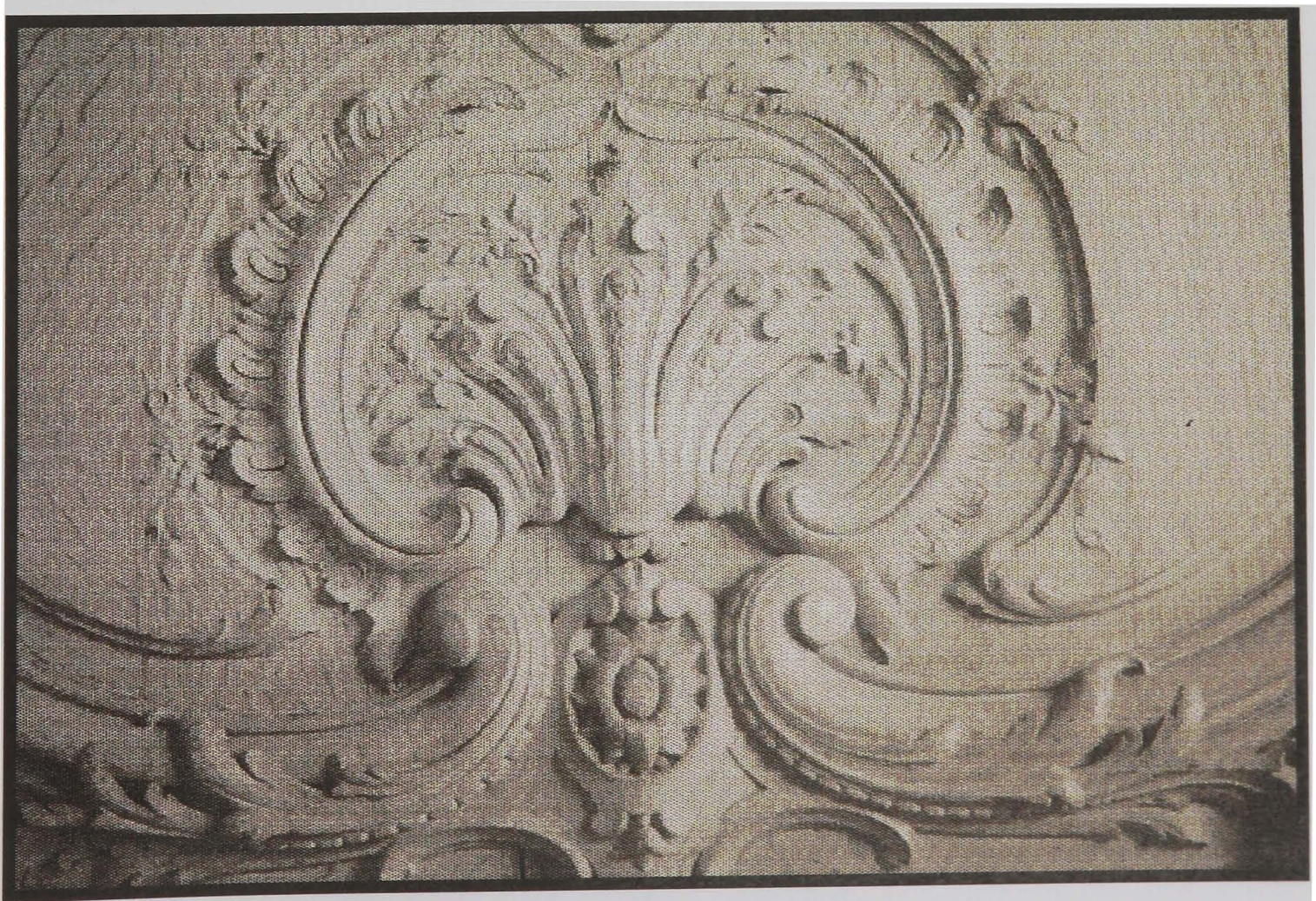
1154 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, Section at glazed ceiling, Luton Hoo house records.





1155 & 1156 - *Hoentschel under M&D Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV (c.Feb., 1923) © Luton Museum.*

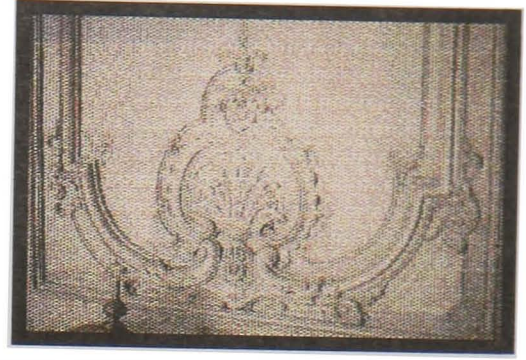
Whilst historical photographs show a room of sumptuous appointments (and in the case of figure 1155, a clear view of the enfilade), it becomes obvious why the Wernhers converted the Entrance Hall into a living space. Although the glazed ceiling approaches the area of that lighting the Stairhall, the room is single storey height with the walls of the old courtyard rising above. Even with the architects' refacing of what amounts to a two-storey well with glossy white ceramic tiles, the reflected light reaching the interior illuminates only the area directly below the glazing, leaving the perimeter of the room in relative darkness. Clearly this space was most successful in the evening, when Mewès's exquisite sconces and four glittering crystal chandeliers revealed a room lined with fine paintings and Hoentschel's superbly carved *boiseries*.



1157 - *Hoentschel under M&D Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, 'basket' panel dtl., writer's photo.*



Although Mewès has demonstrated a unique mastery of mixing historical styles into a single, unified concept, the details of his Louis XIV Hall are largely Régence in character, with panellings essentially comprised of three traditionally related motifs. The wider



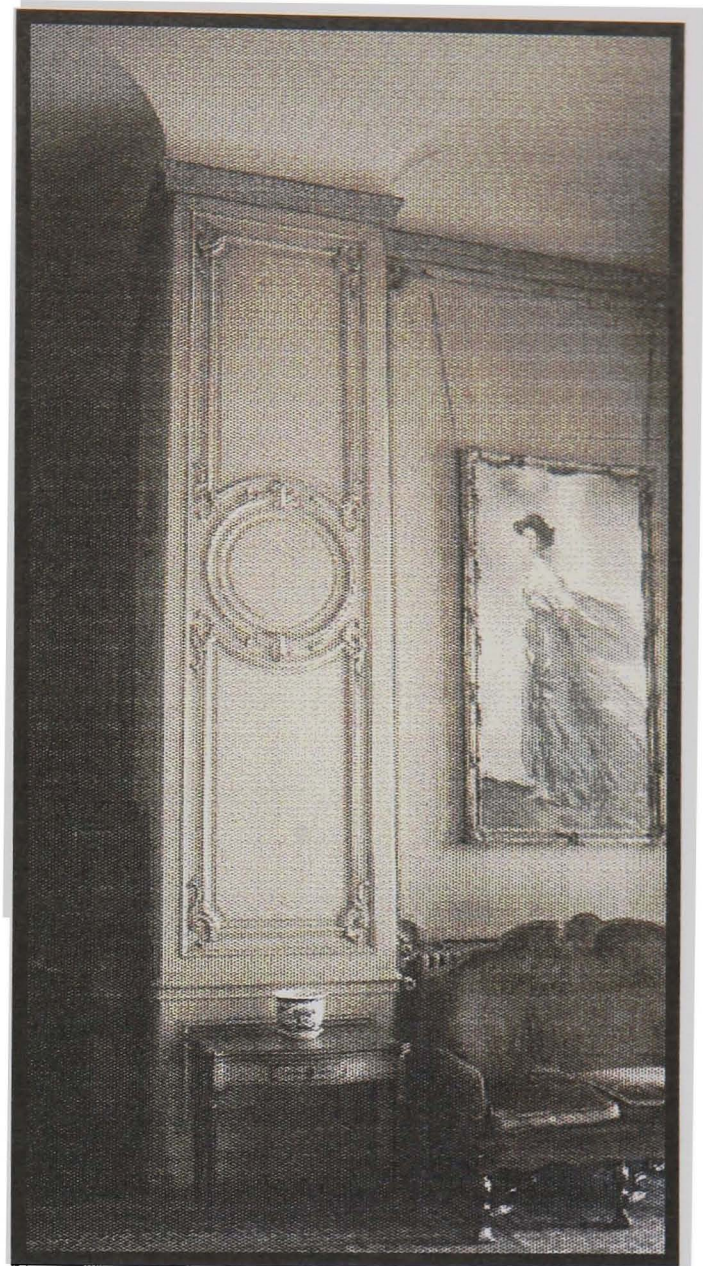
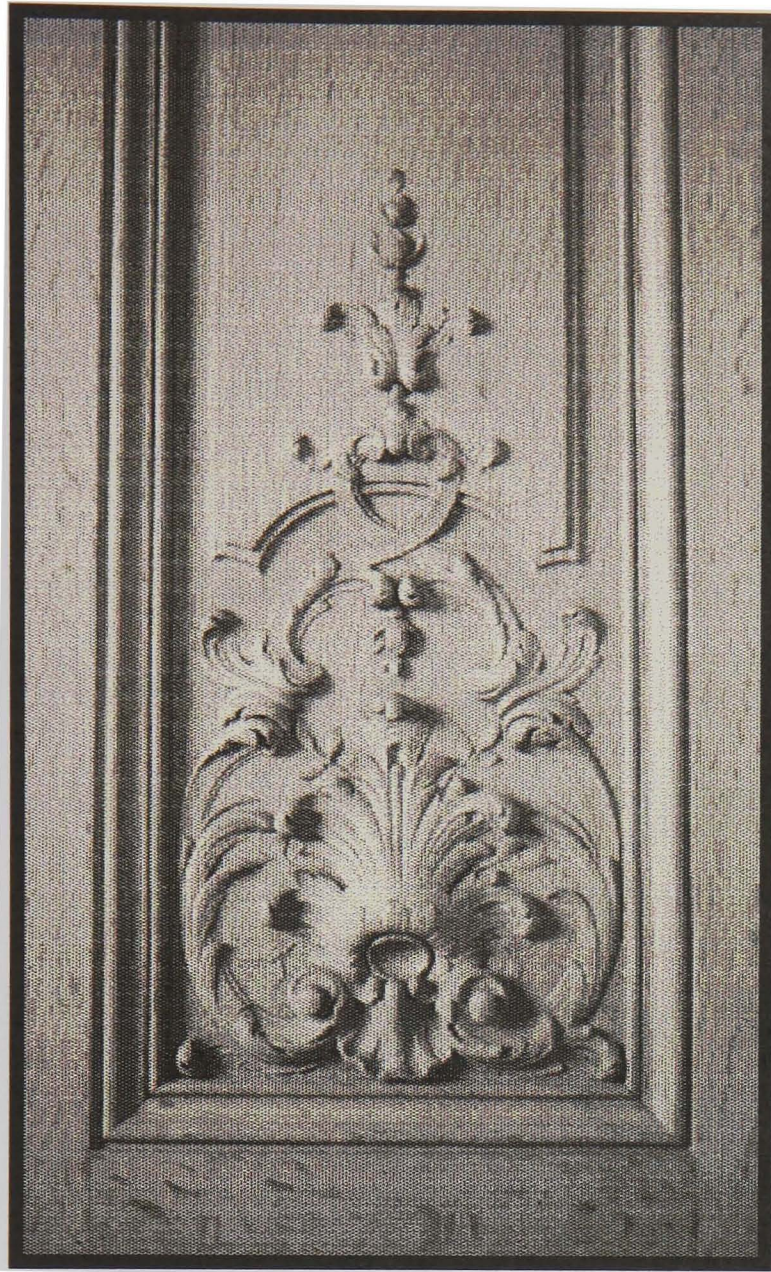
*1158, 1159 & 1160 - Hoentschel under M&D Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, 'basket' panel dtls., sections in red (above). 1161 & 1162 - Hoentschel under M&D Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, damask frame & abstract of bridge element, writer's photos (below)*



panels are carved in the Rococo "basket" with cartouche detail; the narrower having a plain, raised field terminating with acanthus; and the third were originally damask-hung within hook-

bill frames - again using an acanthus detail. (A fourth, which occurs only in the west alcove is purely Louis XIV style - figure 1164, following page). All are accomplished in the French manner of carving from a built-up slab of solid oak, excepting the narrow panels are of a single plank. As at Dartmouth House (page 323-4), only the use of mitred frames and extensive use of quarter-sawn technique (Exhibit 6) suggests contemporary work, but such is the subtlety of the carving and joinery, only a careful inspection will disclose that many acanthus details transiting the complex inner frames, are in fact integral to only one of

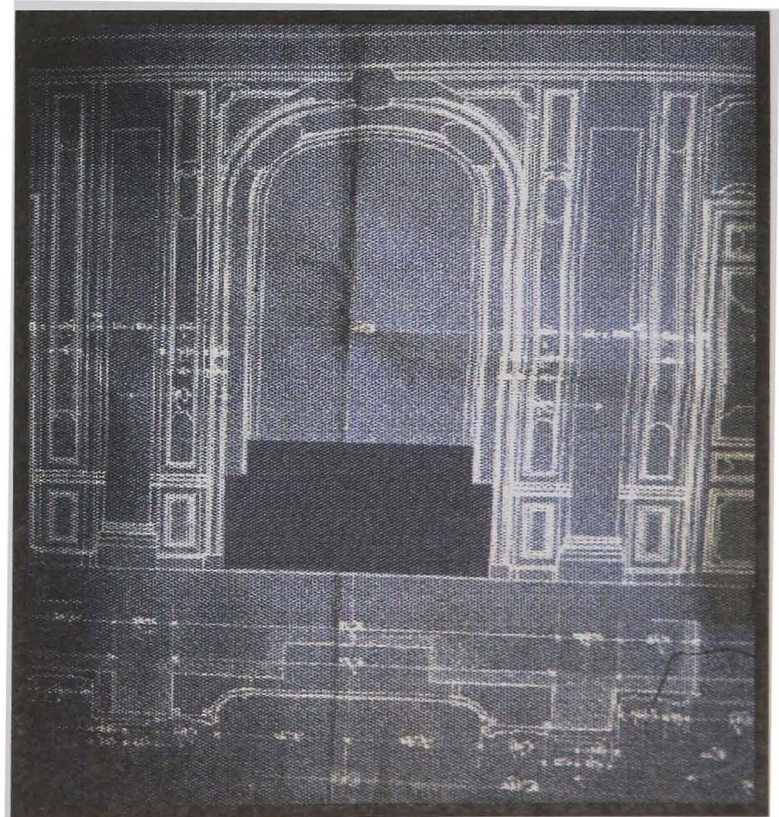




1163 & 1164 - Hoentschel under M&D Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, narrow 'pilaster' panel & bay panel, Louis XIV style, writer's photos.

them, and the hook-bill detail is comprised of three elements, with its flourishes carved with the bridge section (divisions outlined in red or abstracted).

The crowning feature of the *Hall Louis XIV* and Mewès's enfilade was a massive chimney-piece, which Hoentschel's account describes as: "...marbre blanc veiné et brocatelle rose, orné de bronzes chiselés et dorés au mercure genre anciens, frises de postes et rosacees, chapiteaux Ioniques, culots de feuillages et tors de lauriers aux colonnes molures de feuilles d'acanthé sous la tablette et encadrement de rais de coeur. Foyer en marbre blanc veiné et brocatelle rose..."<sup>594</sup> (As this particular chimney-piece is not delineated in the architect's elevation, it was likely a period piece acquired for this specific location; whether or not it still exists is unknown, for unlike many of Smirke's chimney-pieces which were reused



1165- Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, chimney-wall elevation, Luton Hoo house records.



in the private areas, no trace of it can be found elsewhere on the estate.) With Lady Zia's renovations, the wall between the two scagliola pilasters, was tapestry hung with wainscot below. But as these elements are aligned to the face of the pilasters, the recessed chimney-piece, and perhaps its coved surround may remain intact.

Tilden relocated the Hall's entrance doors to the south end of Adam's corridor to form a vestibule between the new museum and private apartments, and in their place, blocked the enfilade with a rather pedestrian bolection moulded chimney-piece in brown Ancaster stone and plain oak panelling above - a rather expensive solution to the alternative of retaining the original chimney-piece and surround, with the entrance doorway masked by the tapestry and dado treatment. But it would seem that Lady Zia, in spite of her Russian background with all its French-inspired architecture and decoration, was no fan of continental luxe and, with very little sensitivity, took considerable pains to moderate the richness of the décor. The silk damask was removed from the panels, with their backings wood-grained to match the colour and texture of the *boiseries*, and the luxurious scagliola columns, with their gilt bases and capitals, were similarly treated. The gilded embellishments of the peristyle

frieze were likewise rendered innocuous with a coat of ceiling paint. Tilden's failure to transform the space into a scene of domestic intimacy is apparent in figure 1166, where a great mirrored doorway (which corresponded to the original entrance doors) relegates his modest chimney-piece to little more than a hole in the wall.



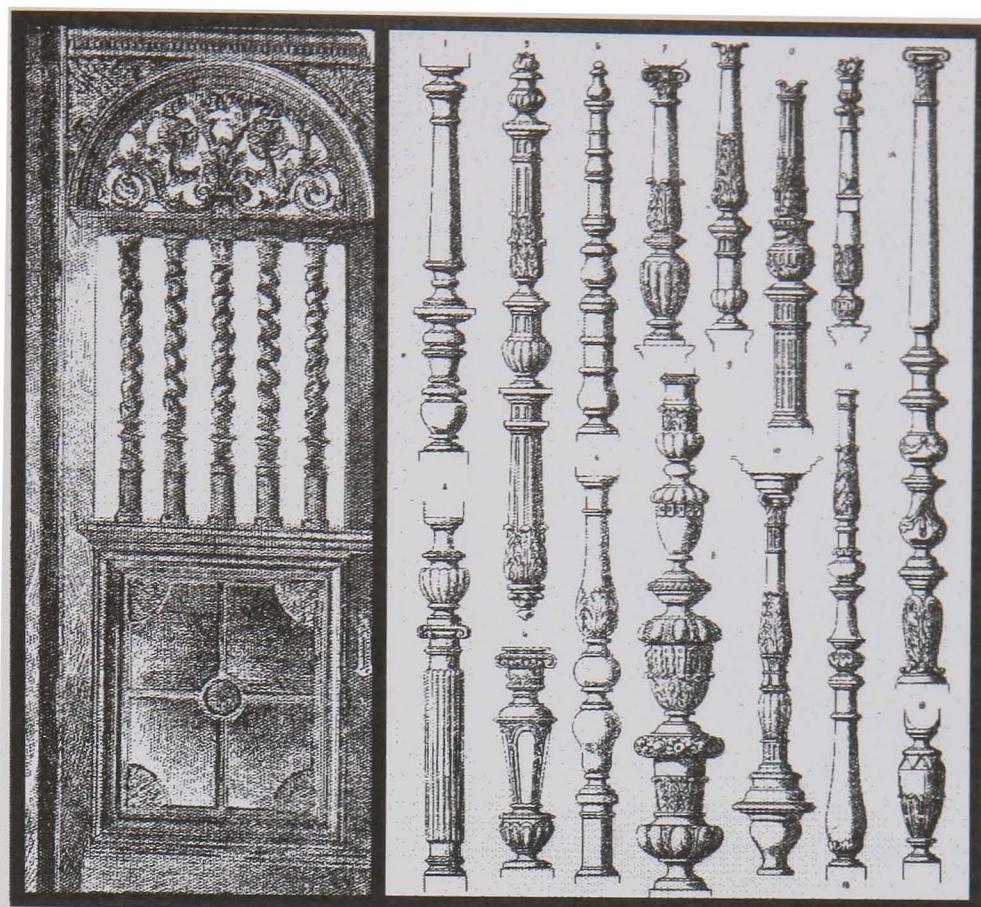
1166 - *Mewès & Davis altered by Philip Tilden Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, peristyle, Country Life, Vol.CLXXXVI, No.4, Jan23, 1992, fig.6, pg.52.*

These mirrored doors recessed into the walls (Halton - pages 365-6), to reveal a Renaissance screen of turned and carved spindles, through which one entered the *Salle de Billiard*. Sadly, the decorations of this room were totally destroyed during the Tilden alterations, as the southern third of the space was required for an internal staircase now that the *Grand Escalier* was within the museum sector. With direct access north to the Dining Room and south to the Ballroom, the space occupied the areas of Lord Bute's original Dressing Room, Bedchamber and Book Room, which combined gave a clear area of 24 by 45 feet. An aura of the early French Renaissance was chosen to decorate this strictly masculine



domain; and although it is primarily through the house documents and a few fragments of the superb carvings which remain on doorways hidden by Tilden's decorations, one may still gain an impression of the work. Historically, Renaissance interiors were dominated by a huge, monumental chimney-piece consisting of a hood (*hotte*), generally diminishing upwards with a vertical mantel (*manteau*) at its base, supported by piers or corbels.<sup>595</sup>

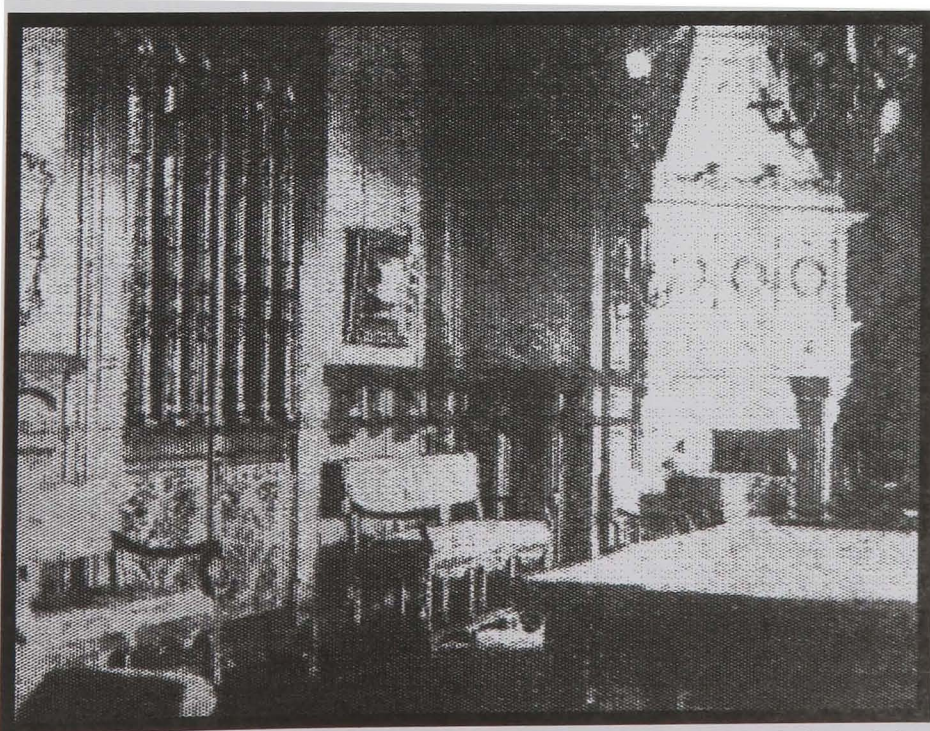
Luton Hoo's *Salle de Billiard* featured two such, positioned diagonally in corner locations and flanking the entrance screen. House documents describe them as having been carved of Savonnieres stone, "...les manteaux décorés de pilastres sculptés, arcatures, trophées, frises de rinceaux, le tout supporté par des consoles reposant sur des colonnes formant piédroits. Les cheminées surmontées de hottes ornées. Le haut en stuc imitation pierre."<sup>596</sup> This description closely follows the



1167 - Artist unknown Church Screen (Louis XIII, first half 17th century) *Strange*, pg.10. 1168 - Bajot Profiles et Tournages, XVIth century (François I - Henry II) Plt.6.



1169 - Hoentschel under M&D Luton Hoo, *Salle de Billiard*, oak door carving, writer's photo.

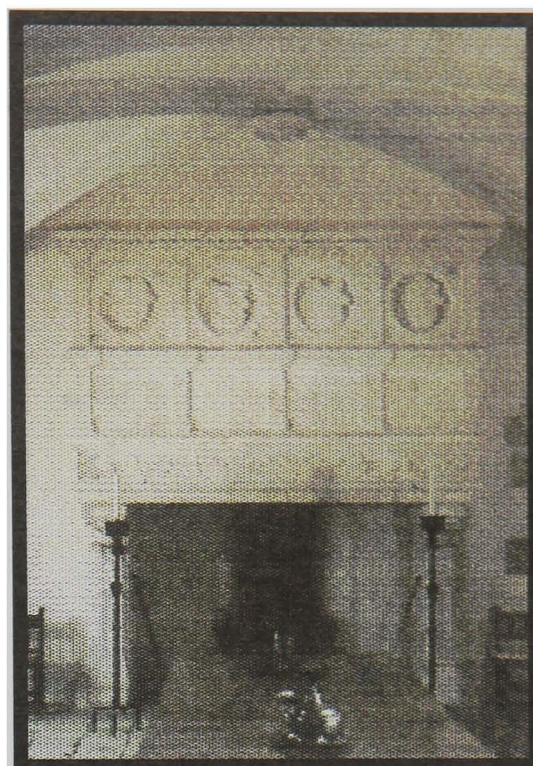


1170 - Hoentschel under M&D Luton Hoo, *Salle de Billiard* & chimney-piece elevation, Luton Hoo house records. 1171 - Artist unknown Blois, chimney-piece in the Louis XII wing (c.1505) *Ward*, fig.27, pg.31.

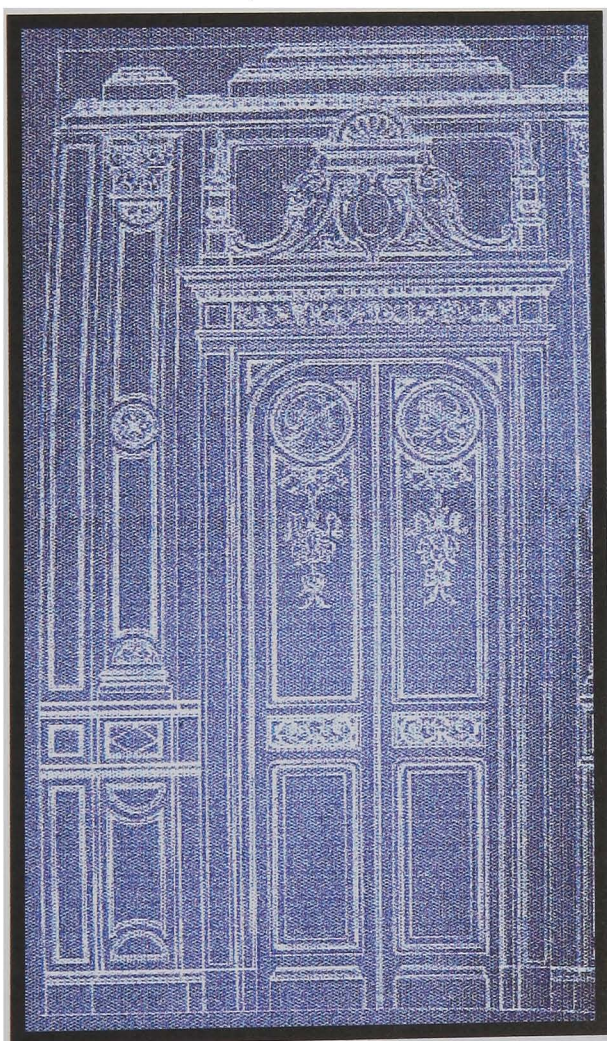


design of a superb chimney-piece in the Louis XII wing at Blois, which, allowing a medallioned manteau and rinceau frieze was not a unique concept, was still the likely source for Mewès's design.

Below an elaborately beamed ceiling, walls were largely panelled with frames of silk damask above a high dado; the rich appointments being described as "*Lambris en chêne de premier choix, composé de pilastres avec panneaux alternés les uns rectangulaires...*"; *Un grande porte couronné d'une imposte circulaire...avec couronne de feuillage et écusson, colonnettes et arcades sculptés sur les deux faces. Panneaux de la porte entièrement...sculptés sur les deux faces; Deux portes en bois sculpté, placées aux fonds des ébrasements, l'une donnant sur la Salle à Manger, l'autre sur la Salle de Bal, décorées de frises sculptés, médaillons pendatifs, dans les parts coupés.*"<sup>597</sup>



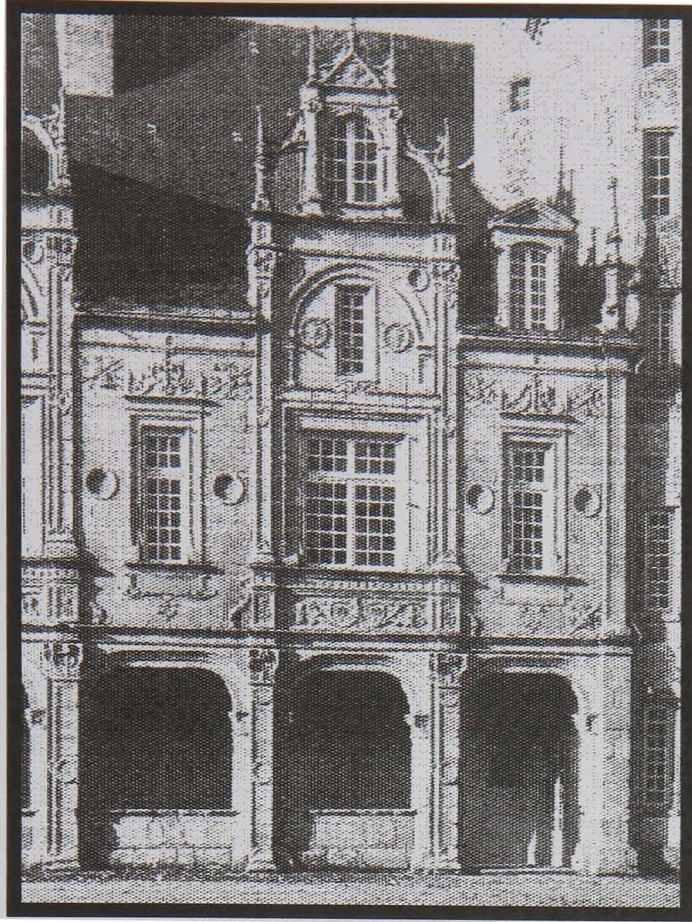
1172 - Artist unknown Château de Montal, Guyenne (1523-34), chimney-piece, Faucheux/Méline, pg.160.



1173 & 1174 - Mewès & Davis Luton Hoo, Salle de Billiard, doorway & window elevations, Luton Hoo house records. 1180 - Artist unknown Château Beaugard, Orléanais, Cabinet (1554), Frénac, pg.38.

As evidenced by the cabinet boiserie at Château Beaugard, Orléanais, the character of the Hoentschel's panelling is faithful to historical precedent, with perhaps the usual French licence whereby profile cameos, after Pineau's Cabinet for Peter the Great (figure 700, page 329), were an additional feature of the decorations. But clearly the general aesthetic evokes architectural ornament as much



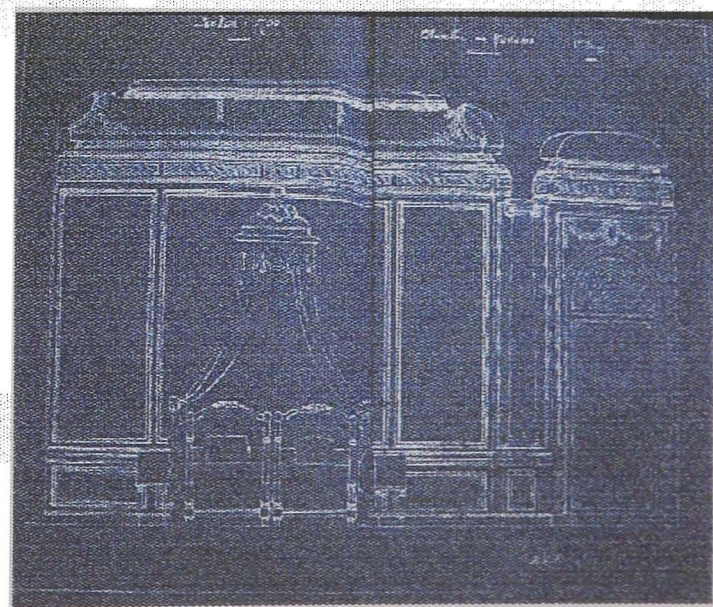


1175 - *Architect unknown* Château Le Rocher-Mézanger, Maine, Renaissance Gallery (c.1540) *Frénac*, pg.199. 1176 - *L. Buscaylet under Billerey* No.46 Grosvenor Street, Entrance Hall, door to Dining Room (1910-11), *writer's photo*.

as it does elements of traditional interior detail; and although there are certainly many examples to choose from, the *François I* façade of *Le Rocher-Mézangers*, Maine, is one case in point - another, closer to home and the Edwardian era, being the exquisite, revivalist work by one L. Buscaylet for French architect Fernand Billerey, at No.46 Grosvenor Street, London (pages 511-12), which displays the workmanship of this once remarkable interior.

Tilden swept all of this away to create a minimalist Queen Anne style private dining room, featuring two rather forlorn 'Gibbons' drops which flank another bolection moulded chimney-piece identical to his *Hall Louis XIV* addition. Fortunately this was the extent of his contribution to the principal apartments at Luton Hoo, as Lady Zia elected to retain Mewès's South Wing Ballroom with its flanking Sitting Room and Library.<sup>a</sup>

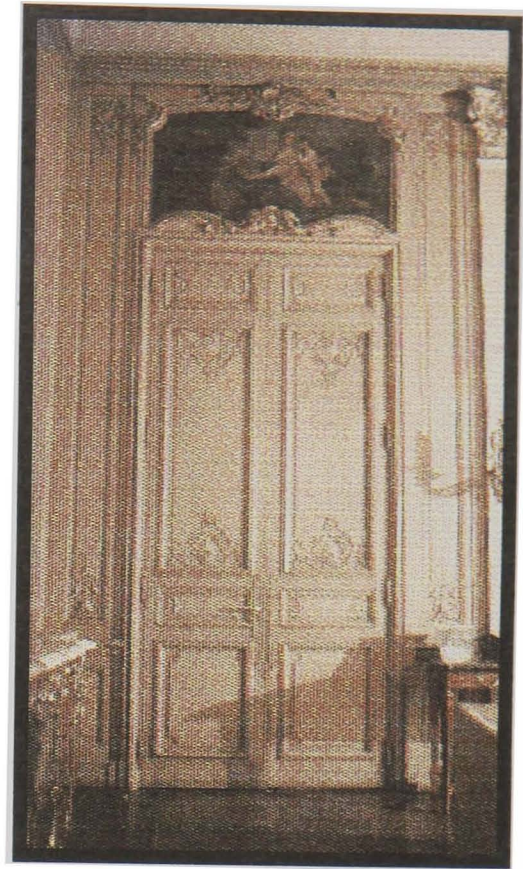
<sup>a</sup> Lady Zia also had the architect remodel her predecessor's bedroom suite into another uninspired collection of rooms. Although the oval Boudoir was retained (which, like Street's Chapel, also takes advantage of Adam's apsidal projection) this, and a magnificent green japanned bed and its canopy of green and rose silk - now stored in an attic chamber - is all that remains of what was once an exquisite arrangement. The writer is grateful to Curator Kennedy for allowing him to literally crawl into the upper ceiling area, where still exists not only Mewès's shallow dome once crowing the canopied bed (not shown in fig. 1177), but also large fragments of either Adam's or Smirke's original cornice detailing amidst which the dome had been installed.



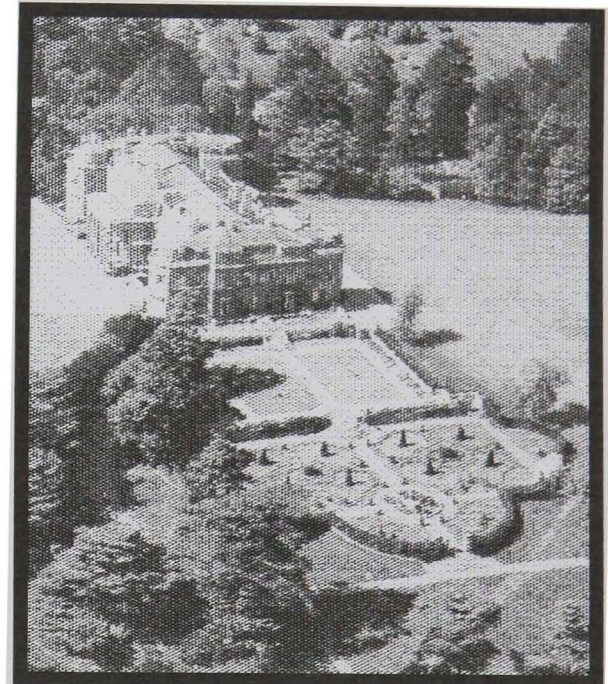
1177 - *Mewès* "Luton Hoo Chambre de Madame Ier Etage" *Luton Hoo house documents*.



A corner door in the Hall Louis XIV - but axial to Adam's old corridor - opens centrally to the Ballroom, formed from the middle three bays of Lord Bute's Library (which Smirke had sectioned with transverse arches) and the view, once overlooking the Park, was enhanced by a superb French garden worthy of Duchêne, by Romaine-Walker & Besant (page 427a),<sup>598</sup> who continued Adam's axis to culminate with a circular pool and shell fountain held by tritons. Bathed in the afternoon's golden light, the third of Hoentschel's surviving interiors forms with its flanking Library and Sitting Room a triad of the most beautifully executed Beaux Arts interiors in England today. Although the balance of all three spaces certainly owes a debt to Adam's plan, it is Mewès's sensitive design of both the architecture and its



1178 - *Hoentschel under Mewès* Luton Hoo, Hall Louis XIV, door in south-east corner (central to Ballroom), writer's photo.



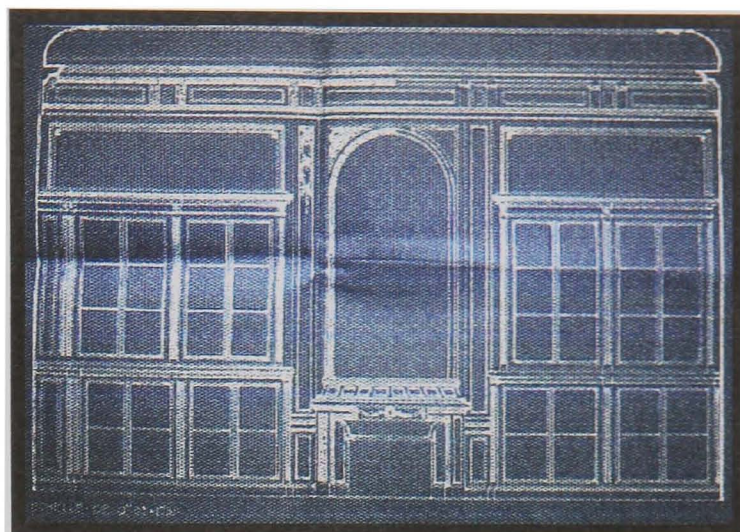
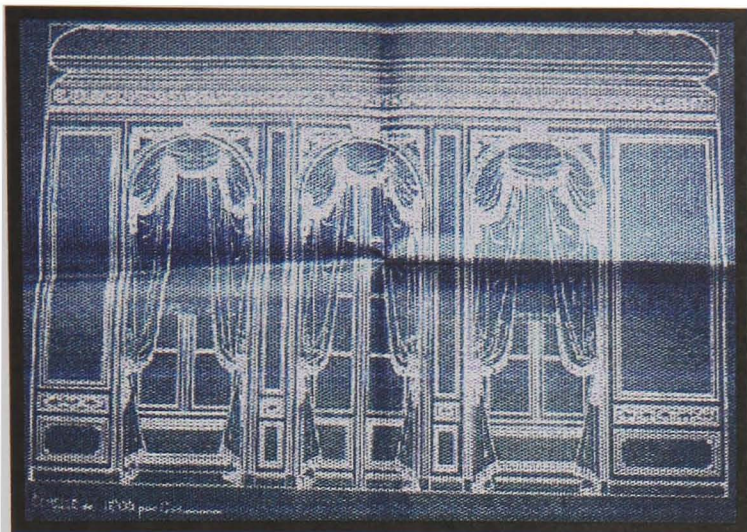
1179 & 1180 - *Romaine-Walker & Besant* Luton Hoo, South Front, garden (c.1906), M.U. Smith, pg.1 & back cover.

decoration which gives each area its own specific identity, but with the separating screens of mirrored glass fully recessed, unites all three into one contiguous interior.

As a common approach, the rectangular fenestration was overlaid with *arrière voussures* behind which were hung elaborate *portières* of figured silk damask; and in the Ballroom, where Adam's twin bays were a prominent feature of the plan, Mewès strengthened the oblong dimension by relegating these to retiring alcoves behind the *voussures* - demonstrating that the Dining Room bay window had been intentionally left as described. The walls of both the Boudoir and Library featured frames of matching silk panels,<sup>a</sup> with embellished

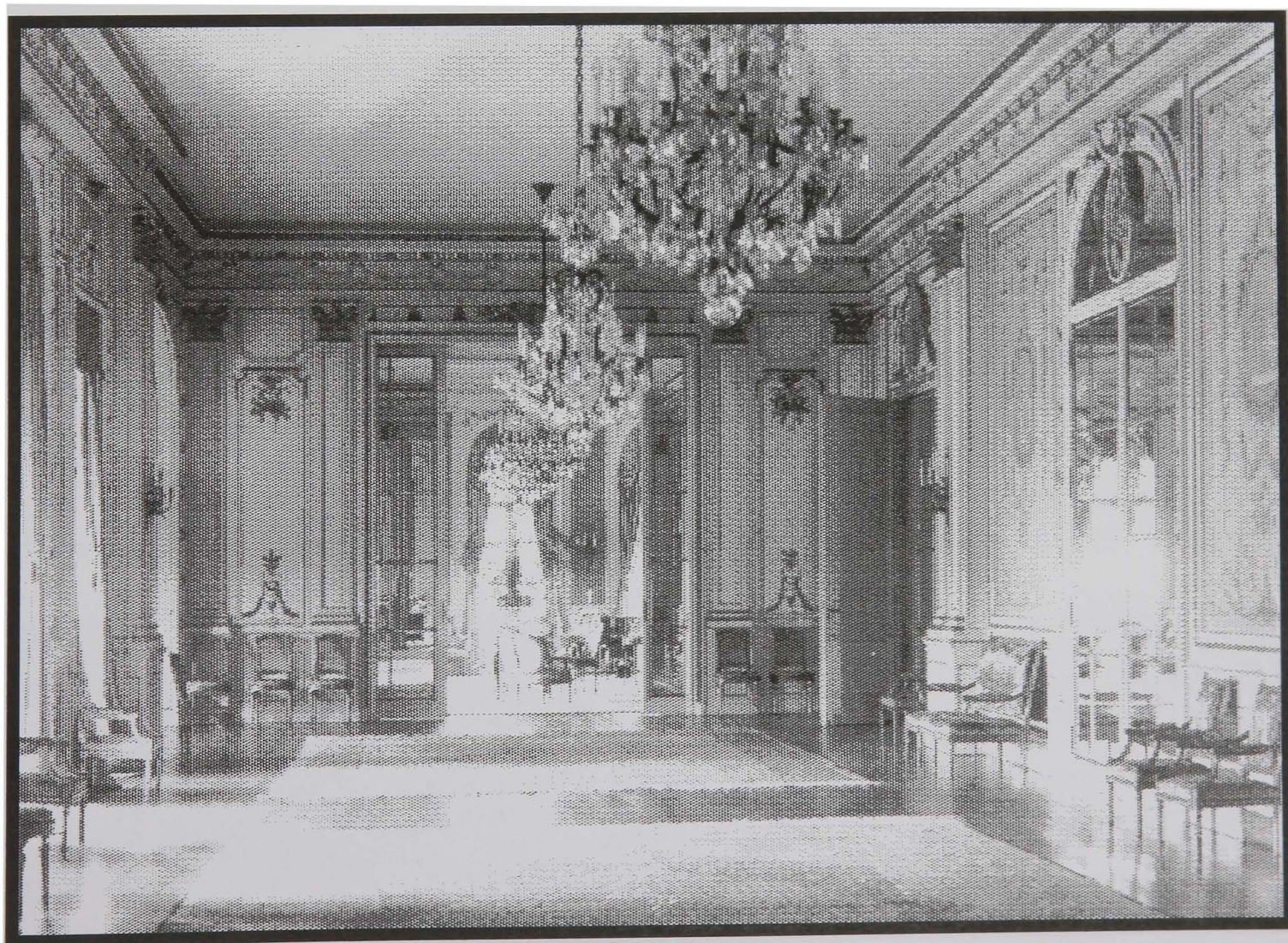
<sup>a</sup> Tilden removed the silk panels of the Library and painted over the gilding. Today this space serves as an office/conference room, and is outfitted with modern furniture and suspended lighting of an institutional nature - but all could easily be returned to its original state. Luton Hoo hse recs., Fol. 32.





**1180 & 1181 - Charles Mewès** *Luton Hoo, Boudoir, South Elevation & Library, North Elevation, Luton Hoo house documents.*

mouldings executed in *staff*, whereas the Ballroom was fitted with an assembly of exquisitely carved *boiseries*. A paradigm of restraint (which Ogden Codman would have envied), the embellishments were sparingly gilded even in the Ballroom, where a sumptuous rendering would have overwhelmed its flanking spaces. The Library was fitted with bookcases after Gabriel's scheme for Louis XVI (figure 406, page 221), and features one of Mewès's capricious chimney-pieces, which has all the elements of Louis XIV design, but is dimensioned to Neo-Classical scale. With the screens partially recessed, this space can be glimpsed in figure 1182, where its decorative conversation with the Ballroom is evident.



**1182 - Hoentschel under Mewès** *Luton Hoo, Ballroom, (c.Feb.,1923) © Luton Museum.*

Little can be added here to describe the Ballroom's *Louis XVI* design except to underscore Mewès's general adherence to Neufforge's decorative sensibilities, where a superfluity

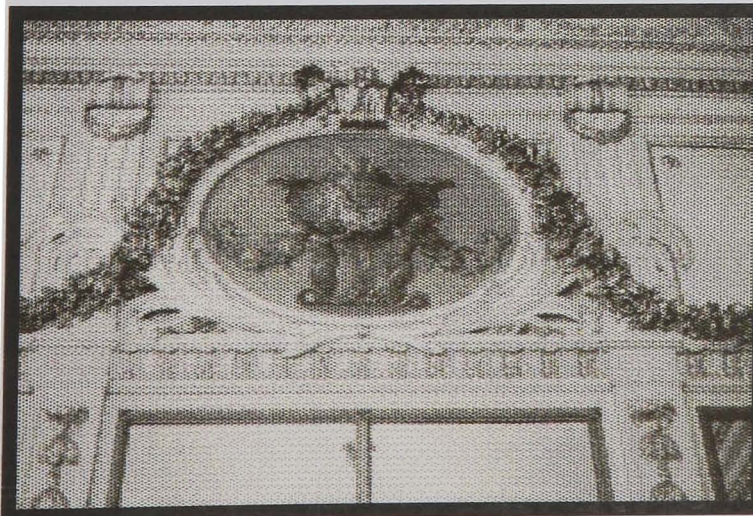
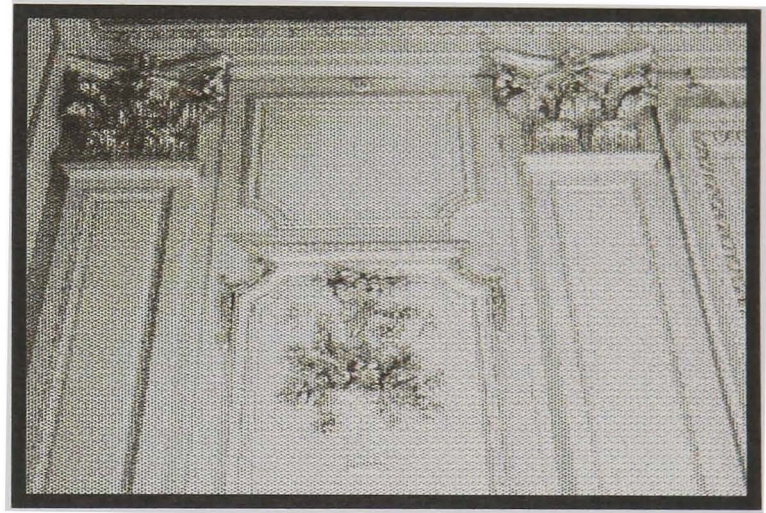




*1183 & 1183a - Hoentschel Luton Hoo, Ballroom, boiserie vase details, writer's photos.*

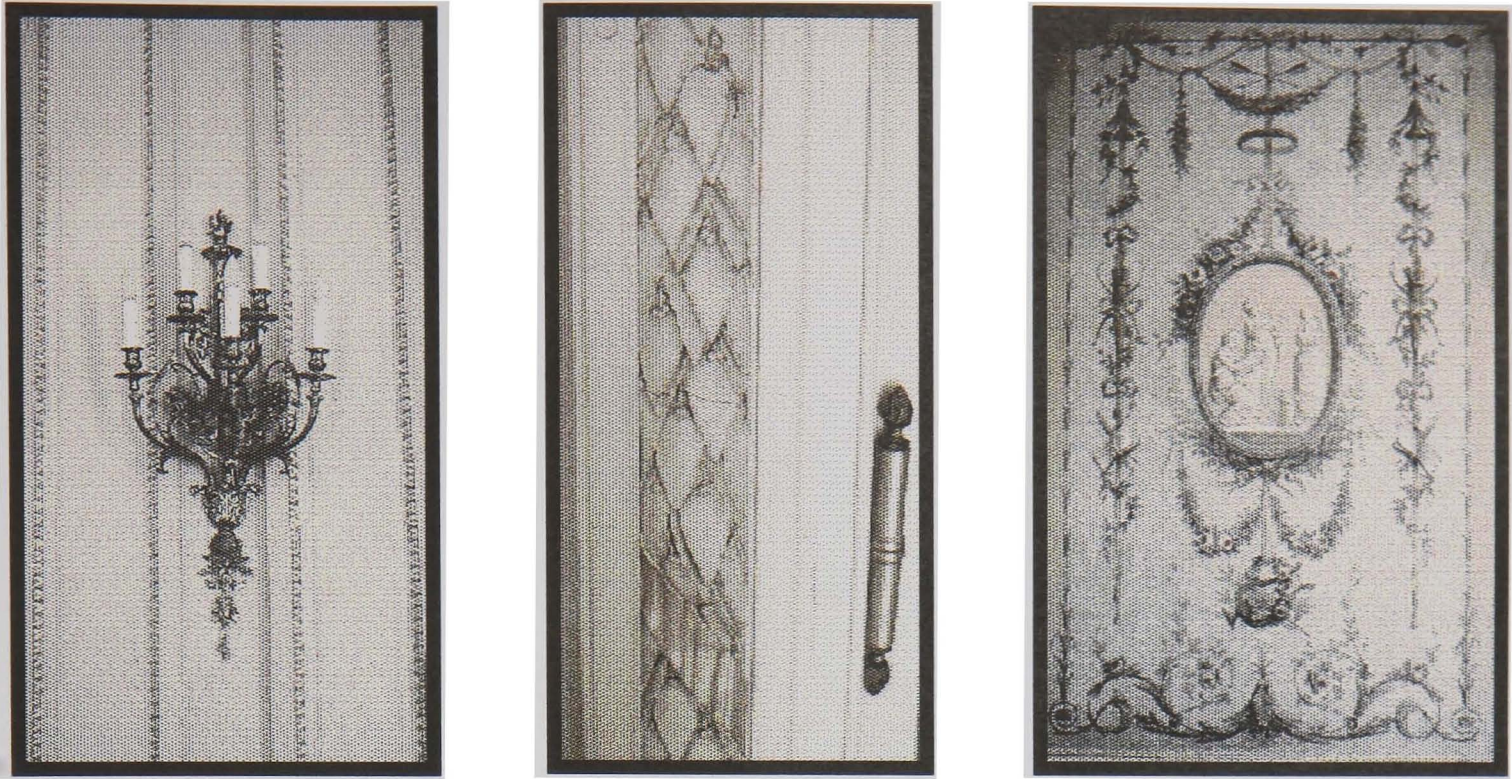
*1184 - Hoentschel Luton Hoo, Ballroom, pilaster and boiserie with basket details, writer's photo.*

of detail is strictly avoided. Where there is no real requirement for embellishment, the panels are left plain; where decoration is essential, its detail - by contrast - is necessarily exquisite. Mewès designed the large panels with a stand-alone Classical vase and flowered festoons at the base, and a suspended basket of flowers above. The over panel is unembellished as are the Corinthian pilasters. His fancy took flight in the overdoors, where painted ovals of *épergnes* are elaborately framed with palm fronds overlaid with trailing festoons of flowers (which reverse the curvature of the *épergne* festoons), and in the case of the central arched doorway, a floral cameo drop is featured (see also figure 1054, page 454).



*1185 & 1186 - Hoentschel Luton Hoo, Ballroom, overdoor details, writer's photos.*





*1187 - Mewès Luton Hoo, Ballroom, sconce. 1188 - hoentschel Luton Hoo, Ballroom, complex bound laurel moulding in 'staff'. 1189 - Mauler under Hoentschel Luton Hoo, Ballroom, tapestry painting, writer's photos.*

There is very little here that does not seem integral not only to each element but the overall balance of the general composition. Nearly every detail is carved, whether gilded or not, and all rivals the very finest eighteenth-century craftsmanship. The cameo of the central doorway is echoed in its flanking 'tapestry' panels, the artistry of which could have found a home at *Bagatelle*. Here is all the delicacy of Delabrière coupled with the added subtlety of a feigned figured damask as background.<sup>a</sup>



*1190- Mauler Luton Hoo, Ballroom, detail of tapestry painting - writer's photo*

<sup>a</sup> The writer apologises for not having mentioned that the earl de Grey had also provided painted panels on a feigned damask background to the Drawing-Room at Wrest park (compl.1839), which also may be the product of French artistry (fig.400, pg.219). Both the Drawing-Room and Luton Hoo's (continued)



Only the tiniest details reveal this to be a modern work, as one may detect Mewès's perfectionism in the mirrored escutcheons where electric light switches are arranged. Here one discovers a delicate overlay of gilded brass detail reinforcing the *Louis XVI* theme.

The reader can readily see why Nikolaus Pevsner thought so highly of the work at Luton Hoo (page 474a), and should also appreciate that with this last flowering of the French Classical school, craft had in many ways come full circle before disappearing with its architects and artisans into the historical vacuum reserved for those whose agency was no longer of any apparent value.

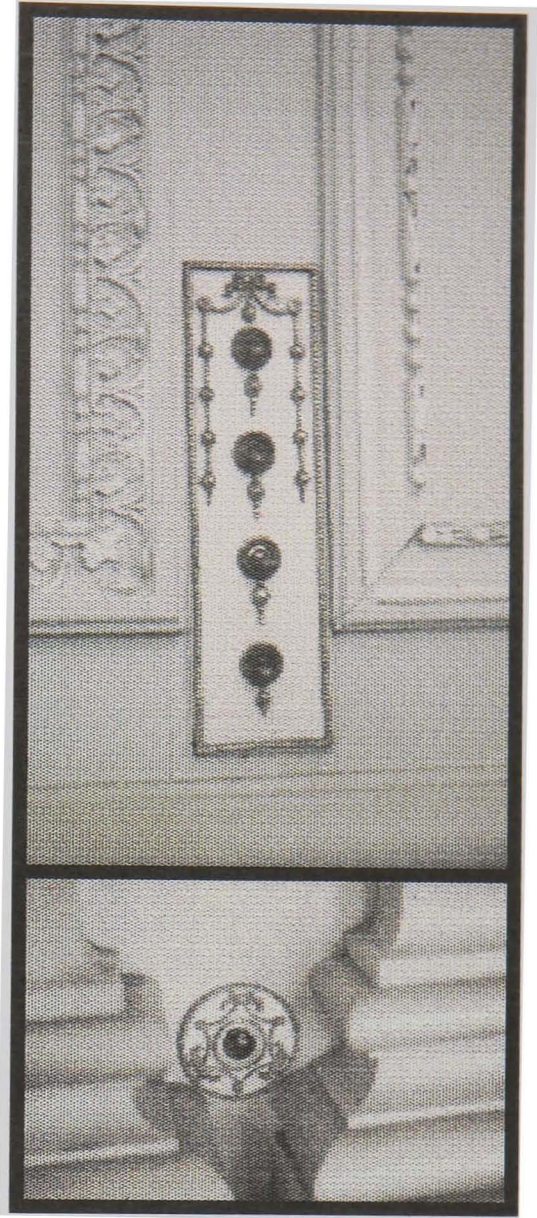
Sir Harold and Lady Zia Wernher were the last to reside at Luton Hoo. In 1977 the estate passed to their eldest grandson, Mr. Nicholas Phillips (who died suddenly in 1991),<sup>599</sup> and has been maintained principally as a museum for the Wernher Collection, with the private sector being used occasionally for various functions.

### Polesden Lacey

The year Luton Hoo was substantially complete, Mewès & Davis were commissioned to refurbish Polesden Lacey, the second of their two major English country house projects. Although a structure had existed there since the days of Charles II, it had been greatly enlarged c.1782 by one Francis Geary, a captain in the Life Guards, and in the first decade of the nineteenth century became the property of Richard Brinsley Sheridan (page 42), who two years before his death, decided to pull down the old mansion and rebuild it on a much more magnificent scale. Poor health and debt halted his plans, leaving the house an uninhabitable heap of ruins, with the grounds equally abandoned until 1818, when Sheridan's son sold the estate to one Joseph Bonsor. Bonsor restored the grounds and, with Thomas Cubitt<sup>a</sup> as architect and builder, erected the mansion as it largely appears today.<sup>600</sup>

(continued) Ballroom face south, which likely accounts for the panels being painted, as the strong afternoon light would have quickly faded genuine tapestry. Roughly 70 years older than the work discussed above, de Grey's 'tapestries' are not only as fresh today as they were when first installed, they survived a house fire in 1916, which left them covered in soot and grime. Bedfordshire Record Office, photos, L33/234 & 235.

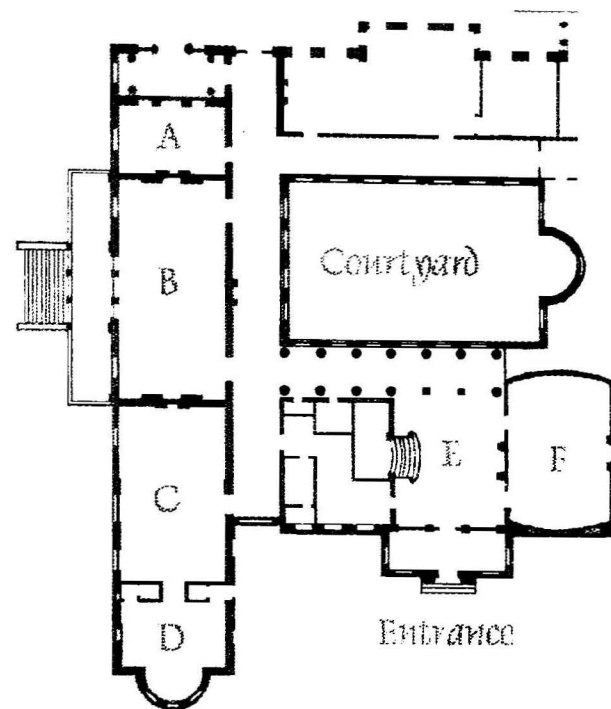
<sup>a</sup> Thomas Cubitt was the builder for Blore's wing at Buckingham Palace (pg. 214a (cont.) and is mentioned in connection with the Rothschilds on pgs. 314a, 350, 355 and Wykehurst (pg.382a).



1191 & 1192 Dian? under Mewès  
Luton Hoo, Ballroom, 'Appareils  
d'Eclairage', writer's photos.



After a series of owners, the estate was purchased in 1906 by Captain Ronald Henry Fulke Greville, whose friendship with Edward VII introduced his wealthy Scottish wife to the



*1193- Mewès & Davis Polesden Lacey, Tea-Room. 1194 - Thomas Cubitt and Mewès & Davis Polesden Lacey, Surrey (1906-10), Ground Floor Plan, A - Tea-Room, B - Drawing-Room, C - Library, D - Study, E - Entrance Hall, F - Dining Room (Billiard Room and Smoking Room not designated).*

Marlborough House set and high society.<sup>601</sup> Dying of throat cancer in 1908, Greville did not live to see the completion of what was to become one of the finest examples of Edwardian taste to exist in England.<sup>602</sup> The interiors - all representing different eras - were created with such refinement as to be taken for period work. Some did include original features such as Charles Allom's Drawing-Room with panellings illustrated on pages 148 and 158, and the Entrance Hall and Gallery, which display woodwork by Edward Pearce from Sir Christopher Wren's St. Matthew's Church, Cheapside. Holding their own with this standard of decoration are Mewès & Davis's recreations of a Georgian Dining Room, a *Louis Seize* Tea-Room, and a Neo-Classical Library,



*1195 - Mewès & Davis Polesden Lacey, Library, © National Trust.*



the latter of which parallels the work of Henry Holland at Woburn Abbey (figure 65, page 63) with the added bonus of having an architectural solution to the above-shelf areas, usually occupied by family portraits or revered worthies. Now a property of the National Trust, Polesden Lacey is open to the public.

*Note: Coda's photos by writer unless noted.*

### **Coda**

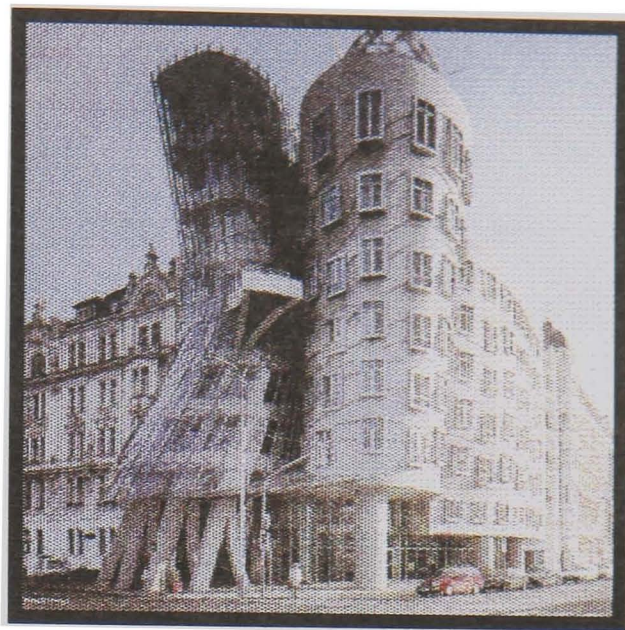
With the work of Mewès & Davis, the writer has essentially concluded his review. Although the French influence in English architecture and interior decoration continued somewhat after the First World War, despite the imposition of income tax, the great depression and even Hitler's mutilations to what for many had been a world of optimism and grace, by the end of the 1930s a new order had established new priorities which, thanks to Bauhaus luminaries such as van der Rohe and Gropius, Jeanneret and others - not to mention the Detroit manufactories - envisioned a much more elemental approach to the human environment. In an age of unheralded technological advances, what *could* often took precedence over what *should* be designed, with human needs and values critically subordinated to a proliferation of engineering innovation and mechanization. The self-appointed (and self-congratulatory) gods of a new "international" style all had perhaps their own individual visions of this brave new world, with one of America's last Arts & Crafts architects giving his own naïve belief in a sort of Darwinian theory of *régularité*:

...Given similar conditions, similar tools, similar people, similar language, I believe architects will, with proper regard for the organic nature of the thing produced arrive at greatly varied results; buildings sufficiently harmonious with each other and more and more so with great individuality. One might sweep all the Gothic architecture of the world together into a single nation, mingle it with buildings treated horizontally just as they were once treated vertically or treated diagonally; buildings and towers with flat roofs, long low buildings with square openings mingled with tall buildings with pointed ones in all the bewildering variety of that marvellous architectural manifestation and harmony in the general ensemble be inevitably the result [sic]. The common chord in all individual building being sufficient to bring building in general, unconsciously into harmonious relation throughout.<sup>603</sup>

Of course, excepting the sequestration of "all the Gothic architecture", cities had been structured over the centuries with a varied mix of building types, but with the advantage of a comparatively restrained technological capability, and by rules which everyone understood. Today an architect's professional success seems to depend much more on the



idiosyncrasies of his own personal vision of form, and what will photograph well in magazines. As with so-called abstract modern art, the selling of an architectural idea requires the prospective client be subjected to a sort of illusory sales pitch, which must be an extraordinary experience, considering the successful commissioning of some "Deconstructivist" designs appearing to have been the victims of a major earthquake, and those espousing the nearly defunct "Post-Modernism", much of which is little more than an ignorant parody of



1196 - Frank Gehry & Vladimir Milunic  
 "Fred & Ginger" tower and office block,  
 Prague ("the best design of 1996") *Time*,  
 Dec.23, 1996, pg.78.

Classical architecture springing from a seemingly cheerful belief that "anything goes". Today, true Classical principles - or any principles for that matter - of scale and proportion are rarely taught to architectural students - even those who might attend schools such as Yale and Columbia, whose curriculum is patterned after *École des Beaux-Arts* organisation. On a much broader scale than that propounded here - but with a similar attitude as to what should be preserved, adapted for contemporary use and built new, the present Prince of Wales has spoken for many in his belief, "...that it is essential we rediscover an awareness of the transforming value of the human individual, cocooned in the security of his own community, and enabled to take a personal pride in his own environment. This is only possible if architects, planners, trusts, and so on, provide what people want and not what they think people *should* want..."<sup>604</sup> In the final years of our century, an awareness of the fact that the tools of a civilization should serve its people, and "historic man is [not] dead",<sup>a</sup> seems to be an emerging concept amongst a new generation of architects and designers, who have luckily been born when the flaws as well as the virtues of Bauhaus enthusiasm are clearly apparent.

Certainly this study has concentrated largely on the buildings of the very rich and powerful, whose ability to pass social rank and financial security to their progeny is no longer assured. That particular attribute of "historic man" will likely not come again, but what remains of their works and those whom they employed, should to this writer's mind, be carefully preserved; as it often represents a sensibility for much of that which has been only recently disregarded. Three projects by the London-based architect, Fernand Billerey illustrate what can be accomplished with respect to the original fabric, and what still might be largely resurrected to its former state. Whilst they do not particularly advance the present discussion, they are offered

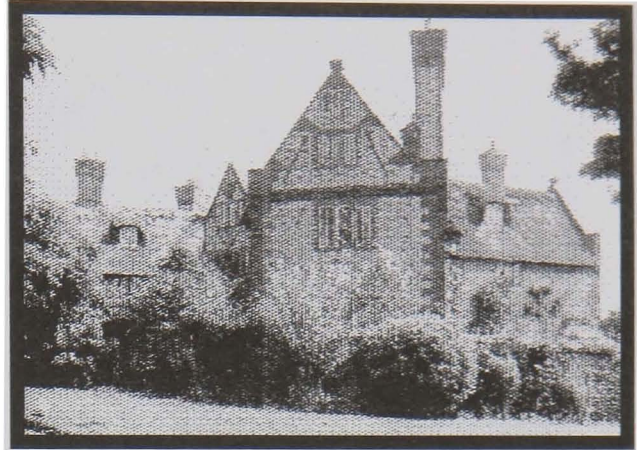
<sup>a</sup> writer's brackets inserted in a claim made by the late Professor Serge Chermeyeff in the course of a seminar at Yale University (c.1967).



here as a record of early twentieth-century craftsmanship at its very finest:

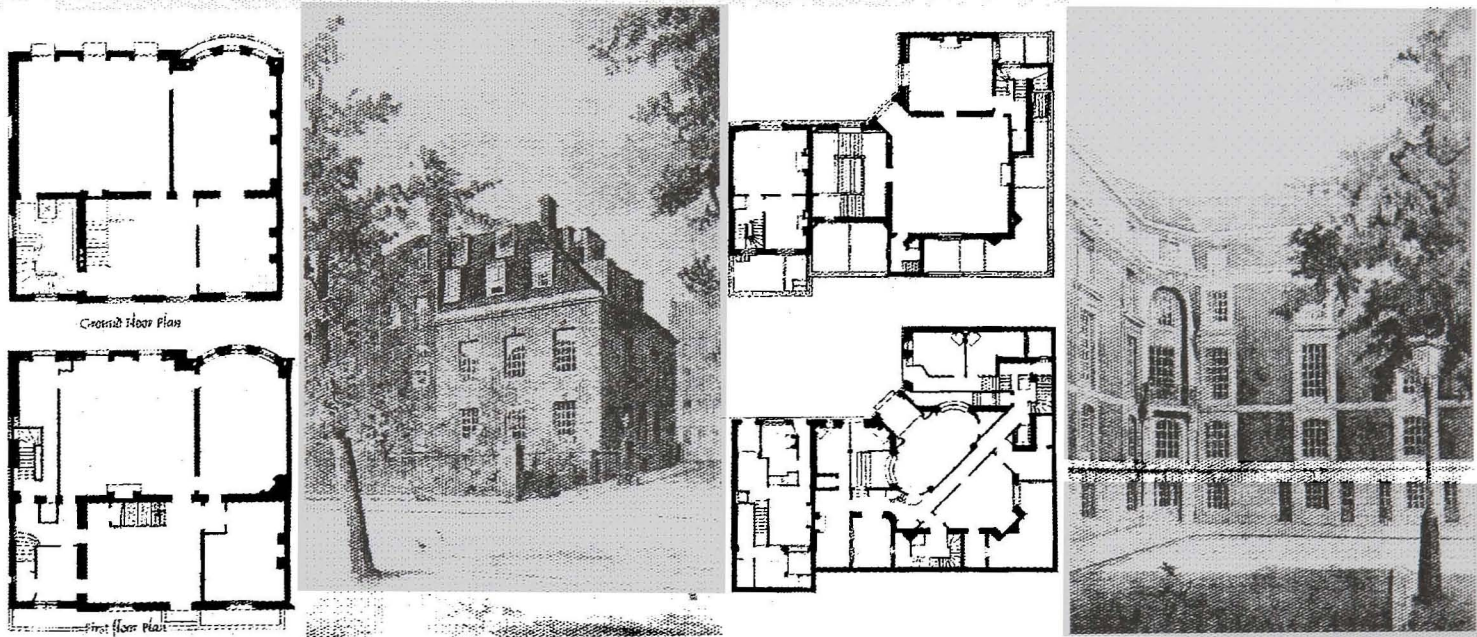
### Fernand Billerey

The Survey of London has made the greatest effort to establish the identity and works of this French architect, who in collaboration with architect Detmar Jellings Blow,<sup>a</sup> not only transformed Blow's practice from a competent but uninspiring "English Renaissance cum Arts & Crafts" idiom to one which was in the opinion of Professor Goodhart-Rendel "...French



1197 - Detmar Blow Happisburgh Manor, Norfolk (1906) Gray, pg.117.

architecture in London, architecture of the highest order, and the kind which leads an Englishman to despair".<sup>605</sup> Such was the reputation of Blow and the talent of Billerey, that in the years between the Wars, the duke of Westminster approved the latter's designs for rebuilding the north and south sides of Grosvenor Square, which had they been executed would have



1198 & 1199 Fernand Billerey (B&B) No. 34 Queen Anne's Gate, plans & rendering, *The Building News*, Aug.16, 1912, pgs. 217-18. 1200 & 1201 Fernand Billerey (B&B) Nos 10-11 Smith Square, plans & rendering, *The Building News*, May 31, 1912, pgs. 774-5.

<sup>a</sup> A. Stuart Gray gives very little space to Billerey (1878-1051) in comparison to Blow (1867-1939), whose London practice was largely supported by the Frenchman during their association from 1906 until 1933. Although Blow's professional and social credentials were impressive (in 1885 he received the Architectural Association's first prize for class of design and the silver medal travelling studentship of the RIBA; four years later travelled with John Ruskin through France & Italy; his 1910 marriage to the daughter of the Hon. Hamilton Tollemache made him lord of Hilles House, the Manor of Painswick, Gloucestershire), obituaries and even the architect's own Declaration to the RIBA, prominently list projects in which Billerey was without doubt the central figure. Amongst these include Nos 10 & 11 Smith Square house for Sir Andrew N. Agnew, No. 34 Queen Anne's Gate for Lord Glenconner (illustrated here) and the spectacular No.10 Carlton House Terrace for Viscount Ridley (to be reviewed). Gray, pp.122, 117-18; Declaration and Candidate's Statement for Fellow, RIBA, 5 Dec.1906, RIBA Library, Biog. file; *Who was Who*, 1929-1940, RIBA Lib. Biog File, p.127; *Obits, Gloucester Jnl*, 11 Feb. 1939, *The (Gloucester) Citizen*, Feb.8, 1939, *Journal of the RIBA*, 3 April 1939, p.571.





**1202 - Fernand Billerey (Blow & Billery) Nos 44-50 Park St., & Nos 37-38 Upper Grosvenor Street, London (1911-12), RIBA Drawings Col., Tube 48.**

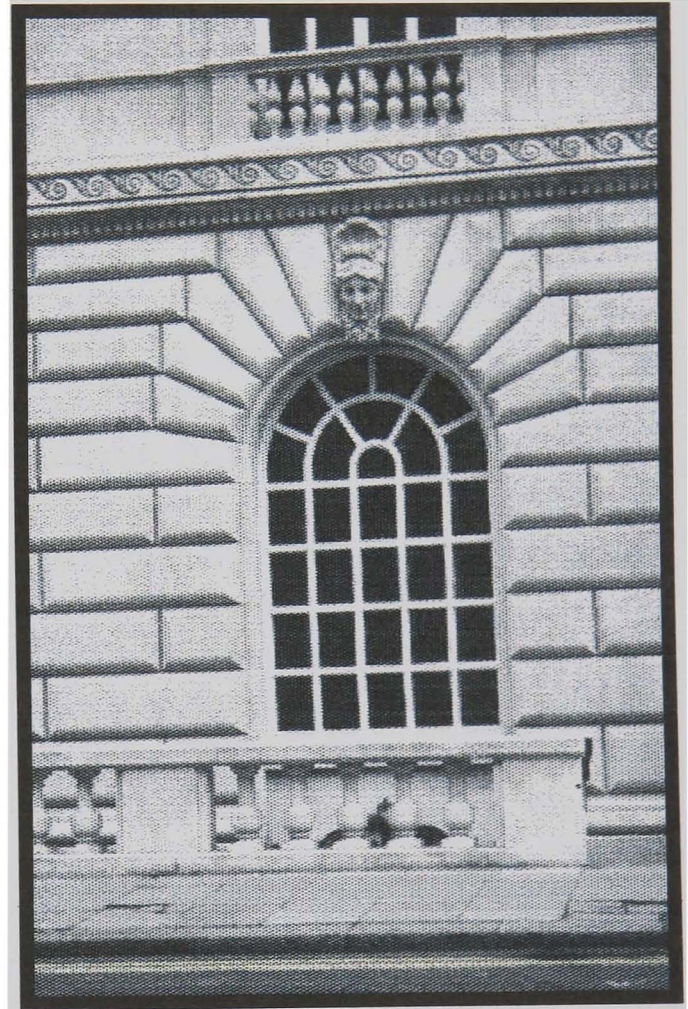
transformed this central London nucleus into a Beaux-Arts *Place de Cité*.<sup>a</sup> Still, Billerey's Park Street project of 1911-12 gives a tangible impression of what the square might have become.

In 1975, the *Survey of London* approached Mme. Billerey in an effort to gain further information about her husband beyond that which was known from his association with Detmar Blow. Her hand-written memoir has provided some insight into the architect's beginnings and early career: Billerey was born, 9 November 1878, in Eure France, the son of the architect of the *Département de l'Eure*, also called Fernand. The Billereys were good friends with one Ogden Lee, a Rochdale industrialist, whose family's frequent visits not only helped the young architect gain an excellent grasp of the English language, but following the marriage of Billerey's sister to Lee's son, provided him access to valuable commissions in northern England. Billerey entered the *École des Beaux Arts* at the age of eighteen, and also was associated with the famous sculptor, Auguste Rodin. In the course of his studies, he travelled to Greece and to Italy, where he first made the acquaintance of Detmar Blow. Billerey went into private

<sup>a</sup> The *Survey of London* gives a succinct history of Billerey's involvement with the Grosvenor Estate, beginning with Speyer's residence at No.46 Grosvenor Street (to be reviewed) and continuing through Detmar Blow's tenure as architect and surveyor to the Duke of Westminster. At the time of Blow's appointment in 1916, Edmund Wimperis had been the estate surveyor for six years, and remained so until his resignation in 1923 - indubitably caused by the duke's allowing Blow to frequently override his surveyor's prerogatives. By 1920, Blow was effectually in charge of the estate, and three years later formally succeeded Wimperis as surveyor. Not without his own rivals, following Blow's own resignation in 1933, Billerey was left without an effective champion and his plans for the rebuilding of Grosvenor Square were altered beyond recognition. The final coup de grace for what could have been a coherent architectural statement was provided by the American architect, Eero Saarinen via his scaleless, checkerboarded American Embassy (1958-61) occupying the entire north end of the square. *Survey of London*, Vol.XXIX, 73-8; Pevsner/Cherry, London I, pp.112,584.



practice in 1900, and 1903 was part of a team of French experts consulting on restoration work at the chapel of King's College, Cambridge. His partnership with Blow began this year, and although formally lasting until the end of the First World War, was effectively concluded in 1914 when Billerey joined the French army as an *officier interprète*. Although practising on his own until his death in 1951, Billerey received many commissions from Blow whilst the latter was associated with the Grosvenor Estate.<sup>a</sup> It must be said however, that the most impressive of Billerey's designs were those done before the War (the same could be said for Arthur Davis,<sup>b</sup> whose practice was largely unimpressive after Charles Mewès's death); and of course, these occurred in the giddy days of Edward VII.



*1203 & 1204 - Blow & Billerey No.46 Grosvenor Street (1910-11) front façade and detail.*

### **No. 46 Grosvenor Street**

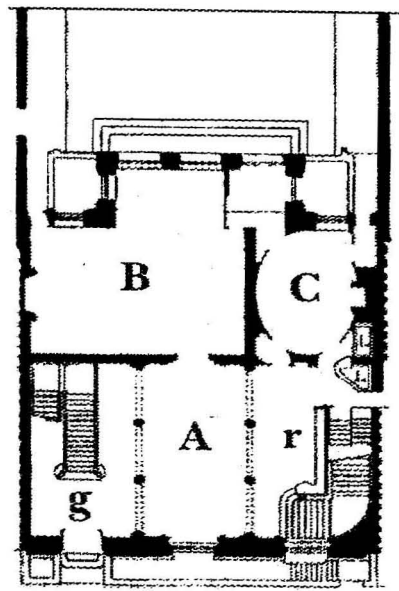
By far the most luxuriously appointed of Billerey's commissions was that done (1910-11) for New York-born financier, Sir Edgar Speyer at No.46, Grosvenor Street, who, over a span of twelve years was reputed to have expended on the project roughly a quarter of a million pounds (or nearly double the cost incurred by Wernher at Luton Hoo).<sup>606</sup> Originally a row of three narrow houses built in 1725, Nos. 45 and 46 had been rebuilt as a single residence in 1820-1 for a former Secretary-

<sup>a</sup> The writer is indebted to Ms. Hermoine Hobhouse of the Survey of London for greatly helping him in his research, and her most valuable translation of Mme. Billerey's memoir, dated April, 1975 (Survey of London offices).

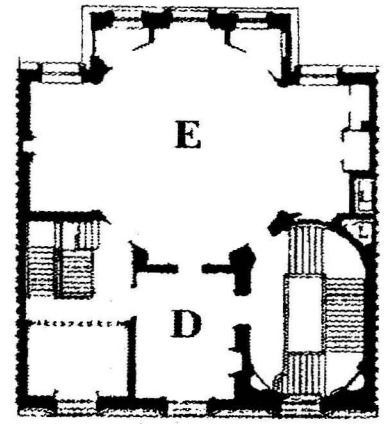
<sup>b</sup> Billerey was a member of Davis's *Beaux-Arts Atelier*, 16 Wells Street, Oxford Street W., some of whose members were listed by *The Builder* as Lord Saye and Selle and architects H.V. Lanchester, A.R. Jemmett, J.P. Chaires, R. Goulburn Lovell, Percy B. Tubbs, Leslie Wilkinson, J.S. Gibson, E. E. Mallows and Harold Sanders. See also Pg.441, *ftnt.a.*



at-War, William Dundas. Speyer purchased this house in 1899, commissioning Arthur Blomfield the younger to carry out extensive alterations and additions over a span of five years. Blomfield added an additional storey with garrets above and a stuccoed front façade, which was marked by an enclosed Doric portico, and tripartite windows asymmetrically placed on the ground and first floors. The rear facing was a multifarious assort-



Ground Floor



First Floor

*1205 - B&B No. 46 Grosvenor St., Ground & First Floor Plans. A - French Renaissance Hall, B - French Renaissance Dining Room, C - Oval Dining Room, D - Italian Renaissance Office, E - Music Room, g - Gothic Staircase, r - French Renaissance Staircase.*

ment of Venetian Gothic windows on some floors, plain rectangular openings on others and a third-floor feature of attached columns with a cornice forming an architectural frame incorporating three arched window openings. Four years later, in 1909, Speyer added No. 44, extending his property to the extent of the original triple subdivision. Likely utilizing original foundations, the equidistant party walls are still evident in the bays of Billerey's final plan.

Conditioning Speyer's incorporation of the third property, the Grosvenor Estate board stipulated that at some future date the two might be separated again; thus two principal staircases were required in anticipation of such an event (as it is, one might wonder how this could have been done without completely demolishing the three-bay structure as proposed and built). One can plainly see, with the additional staircase requirement, two of the three front bays in both the ground and first-floor plans are devoted to circulation. With builder Thomas Cubitt & Co.,<sup>607</sup> Billerey unified the two properties behind a balanced, well proportioned Beaux-Arts façade of Portland stone, which contrasts with the red brick houses adjacent, but is comfortably scaled within the wall of the street. The crisp formality of the exterior gives no hint of what lies just behind, as an arrival is immediately plunged into an astonishingly well articulated plethora of carved oak panelling adorning nearly every feasible interior surface.

For obvious reasons Speyer retained as much as possible of his Gothic staircase from Blomfield's tenure, and whilst the craftsmen of this remarkable creation are unidentified, it would appear that the scrolled newel embellishment with its carved lion may have been added to echo the French Renaissance carvings found throughout the adjoining Entrance Hall. Should this be the case, drawings describing other





1206 - *artists unknown* No.46 Grosvenor St., Gothic Staircase (c.1904) (wall coverings - new).

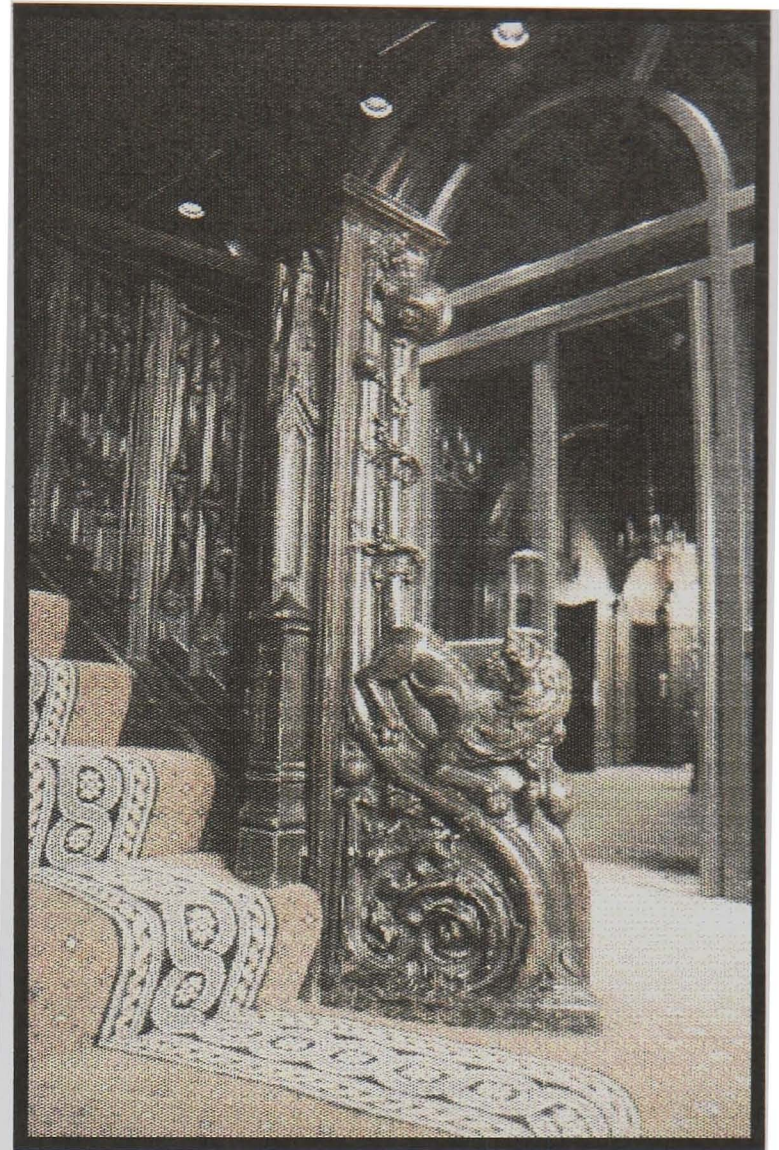
aspects of the interior would identify the work of one M. L. Buscaylet, *Meubles Sculpture et Menuiserie d'Art*, 15, rue Cler, Paris,<sup>608</sup> who followed Billerey's designs. Rather than subject the reader to a lengthy description of all the decorative intricacies, the writer, who was graciously received



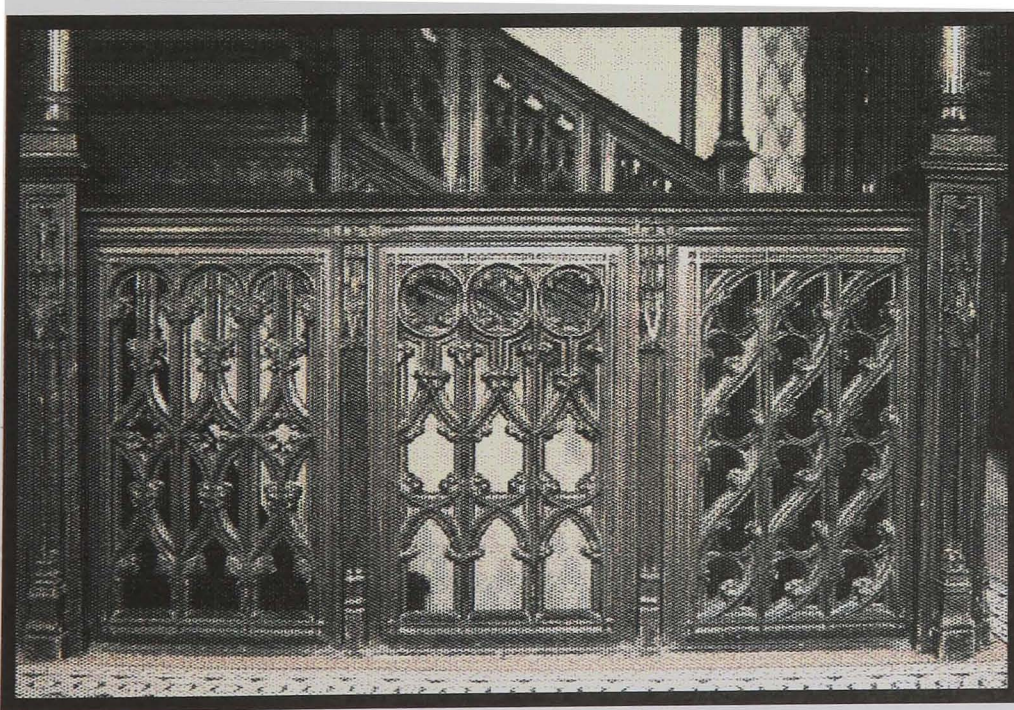
by Mr. Henry Burns of Carob Holdings - the present owners of the property - will rely on the photographs he was allowed to take when the house had been recently renovated to current codes. The conservation architects were Feilden & Mawson,<sup>a</sup> London, whose efforts to restore and retain as much as possible of the original fabric would prove an object lesson to any architect.

*The Gothic Staircase*

The Balustrade design is an adaptation of three alternating screen motifs, with the wall panelling - also of three alternating motifs - punctuated by split pinnacles. The staircase ramp soffits are faced with carved linenfold, which also adorns the ground- and first-floor ceiling. The carpets and wall coverings are new (1992). Present codes mandated the staircase be separated from the Hall, and to accomplish this, Feilden and Mawson inserted a glazed screen of bronze-anodized framing within the adjacent archways (figure 1207).



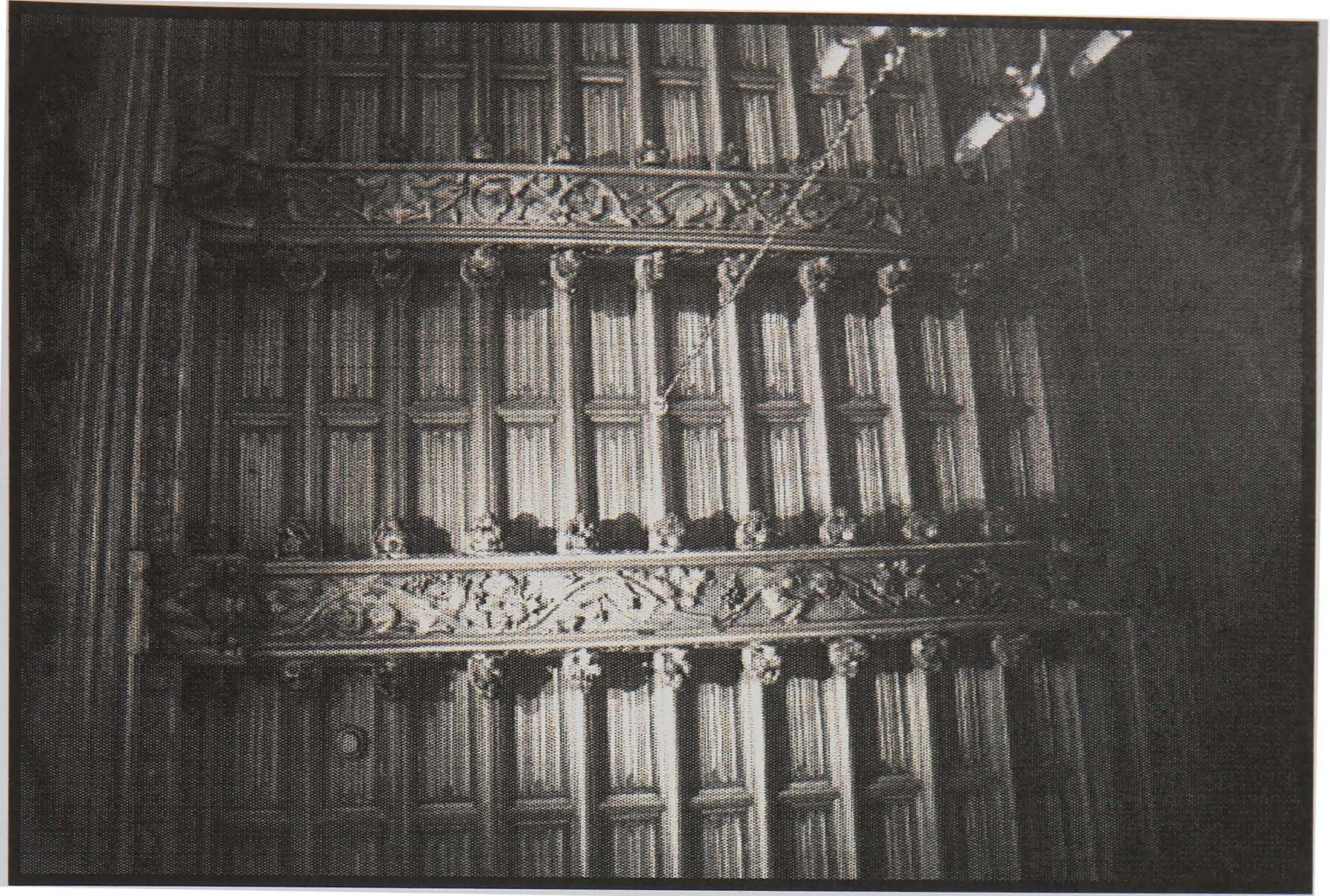
1207 - *L. Buscaylet? under Billerey No.46 Grosvenor St., Gothic Staircase, newel addition.*



1208 & 1209 - *artists unknown No. 46 Grosvenor St., Gothic Staircase, First Floor balustrade and wainscot details.*

<sup>a</sup> Amongst many notable projects, Sir Bernard M. Feilden is credited with the often innovative restoration of York Minster, and author of a bible on architectural conservation, *Conservation of Historic Buildings*, Butterworths (London, etc.- 1982, 1989).

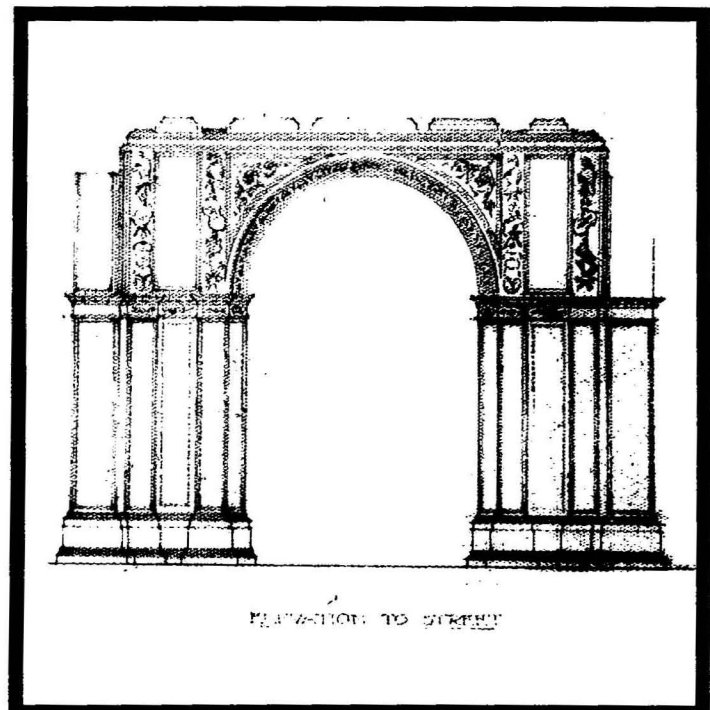
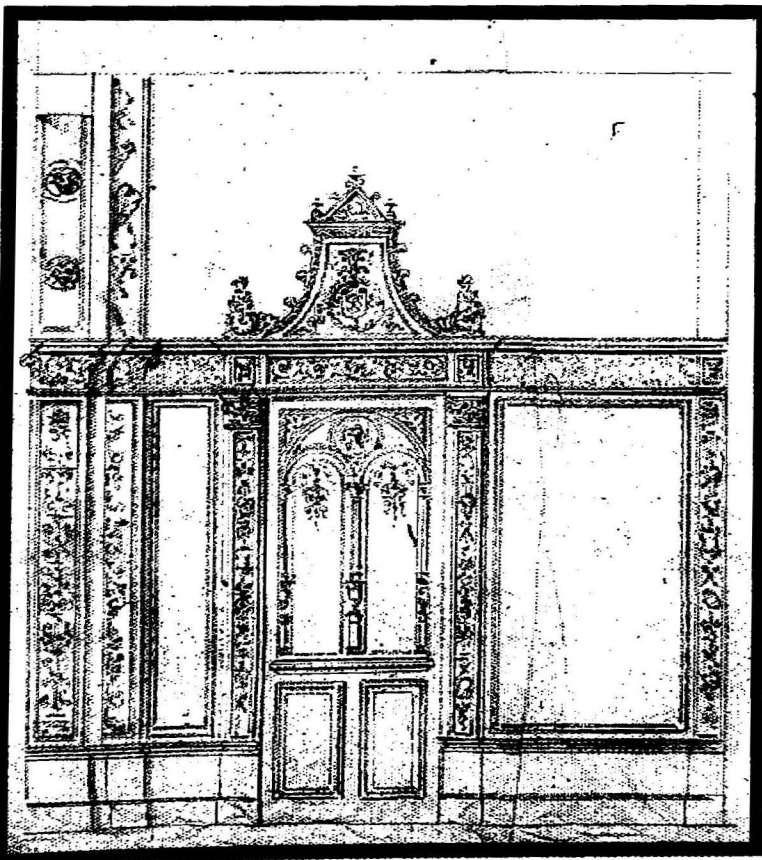




1210 & 2011 - *L. Buscaylet? and artists unknown* No. 46 Grosvenor St., Gothic Staircase, First Floor Ceiling & pendant.

*The French Renaissance Hall* (See also figure 1176, page 495)

Paralleling Charles Mewès's designs for the Billiard Room at Luton Hoo, drawings at the RIBA show Fernand Billerey's hand in the Hall's layout and design. References for the armorial drops and Corinthian pilaster capitals are exemplified by figures 165, page 115 and figure 365, pg 200.

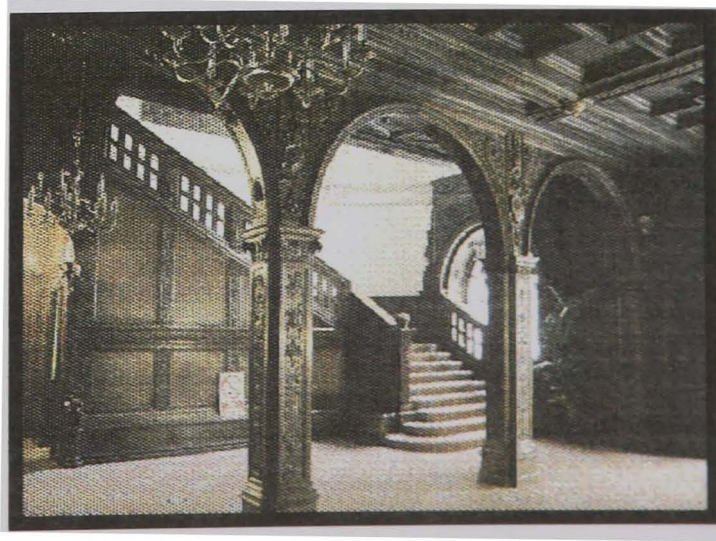
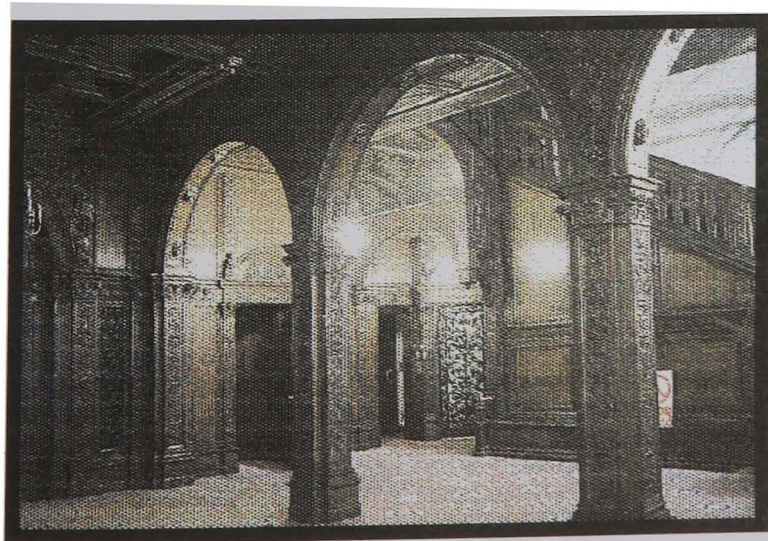


1212 & 1213 - *Billerey* French Renaissance Hall, door and panelling study & arch study, tube 48, RIBA Drawings Col.





1214 - L. Buscaylet under Billerey French Renaissance Hall, general view with door to Oval Dining Room.



1215 & 1216 - L. Buscaylet under Billerey French Renaissance Hall, general views to French Renaissance Staircase.

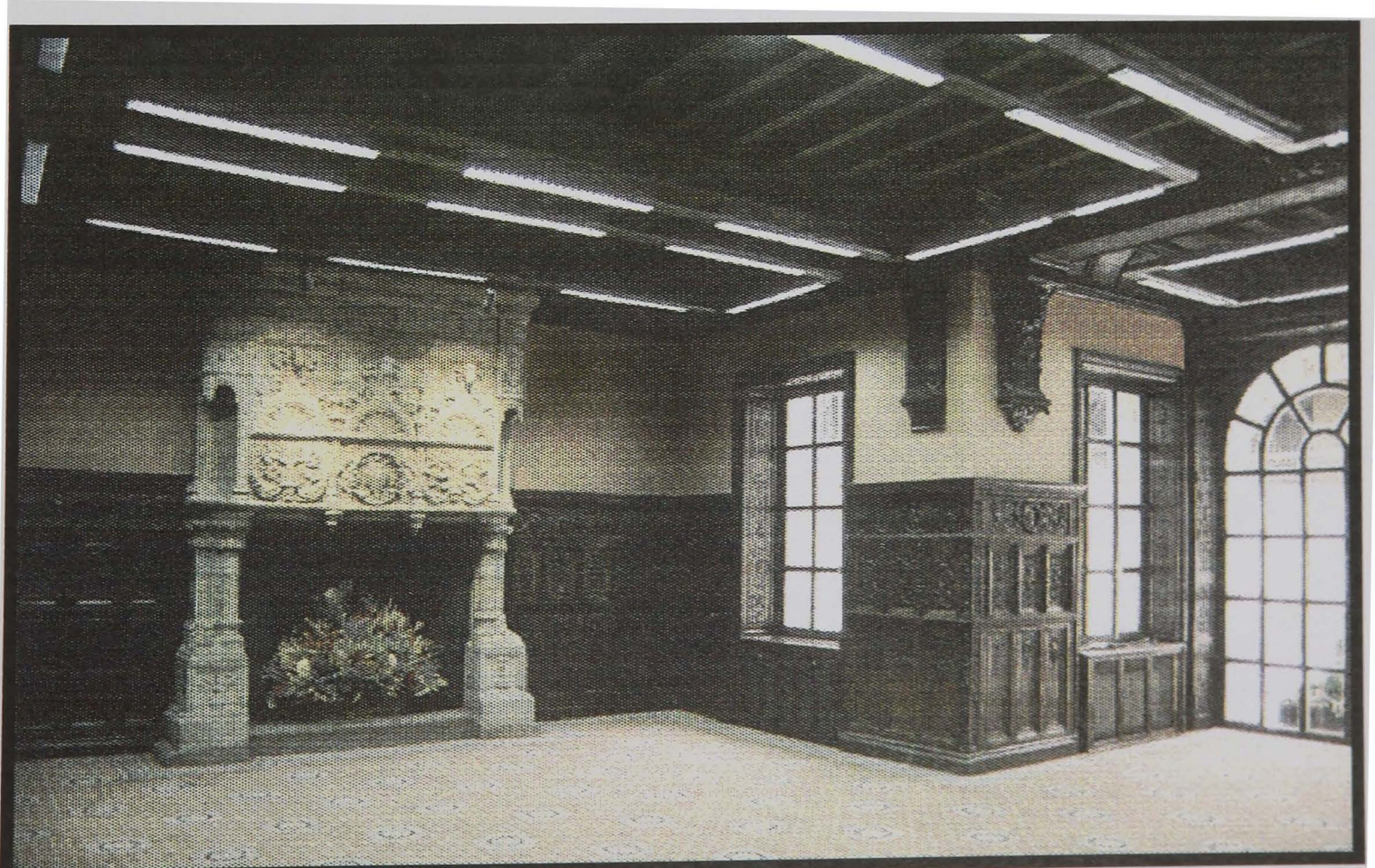
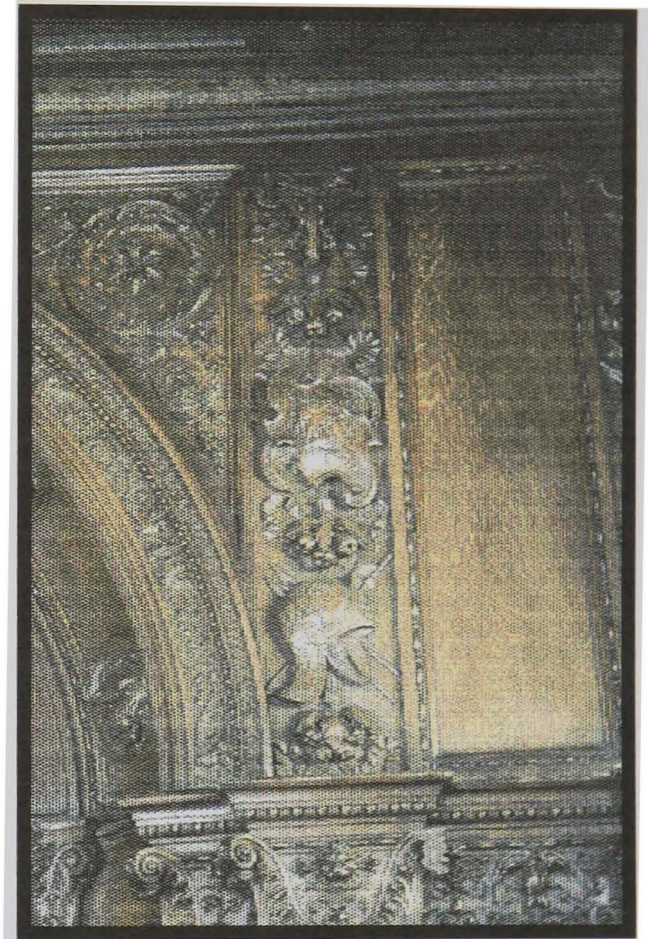




1217, 1218 & 1219 - L. Buscaylet under Billerey  
French Renaissance Hall, door and pilaster details.

*The French Renaissance  
Dining Room*

An authentic Renaissance chimney-piece establishes the theme of this beamed interior. As it is now intended for general office use, the architects have suspended strip lighting below the ceiling level, which has the advantage of giving the requisite uniform illumination without marring the original fabric. The chimney-piece is accentuated with downlighting, as it might well be. Again the



1220 - L. Buscaylet? French Renaissance Dining Room, general view.



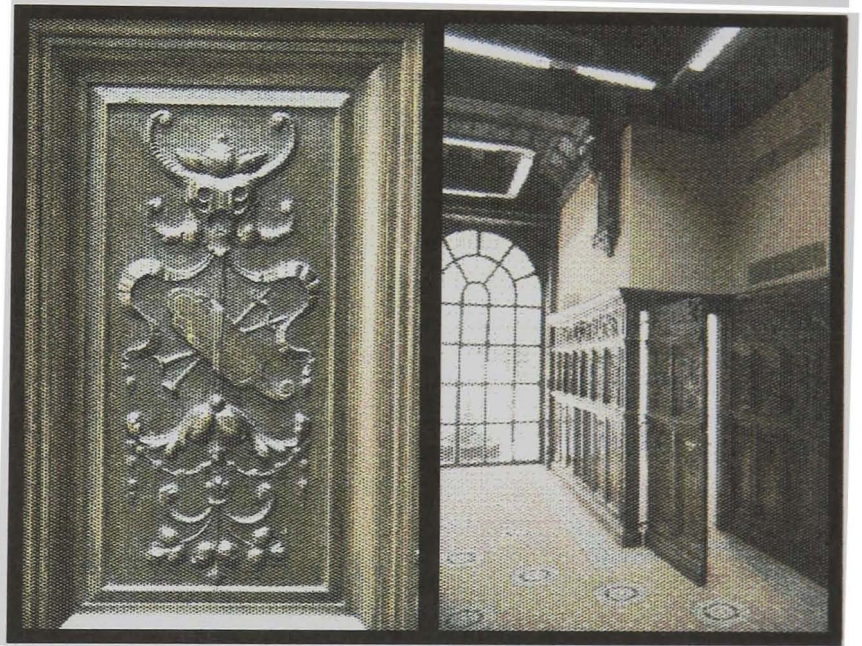


1221 - *L. Buscaylet?* French Renaissance Dining Room, wainscot.

1222 - *L. Buscaylet?* French Renaissance Dining Room, wainscot detail with Speyer monogram.

1223 - *Feilden & Mawson* French Renaissance Dining Room, Wainscot detail, mould of Speyer monogram.

superb carving of this space is true to historical precedent, and in addition to the angels with cartouche motif (see figure 176, page 121), Speyer's monogram is sanctified. As one might suspect, it was not Lady Speyer who directed the architects and craftsmen. Without furnishings, most illustrations do not accurately convey the true size of this space, but figure 1125 gives an indication with a section of the panelling - being actually a 'secret' servery door - set ajar. The writer is uncertain as to which of the past tenants it was who found it expedient to destroy a section of panelling in order to have a cafeteria-styled access to the Servery, but this has been recently reinstated with moulded plaster sections taken from impressions of existing panelling.<sup>a</sup> Figure 1223 illustrates well what can be accomplished with careful attention to detail.



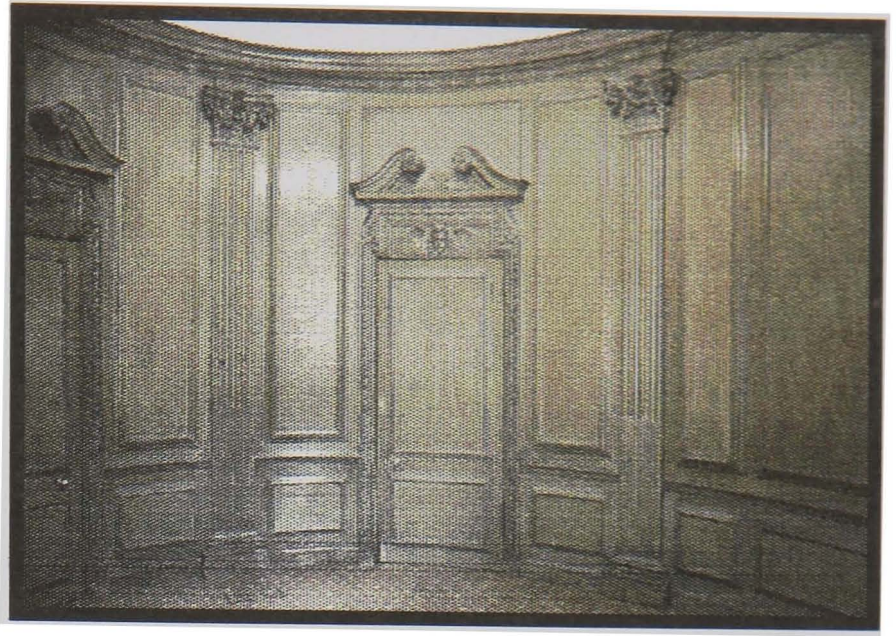
1224 & 1225 - *L. Buscaylet?* under *Billerey* French Renaissance Dining Room, bucranium wainscot panel & secret Servery door.

#### *The Oval (private) Dining Room*

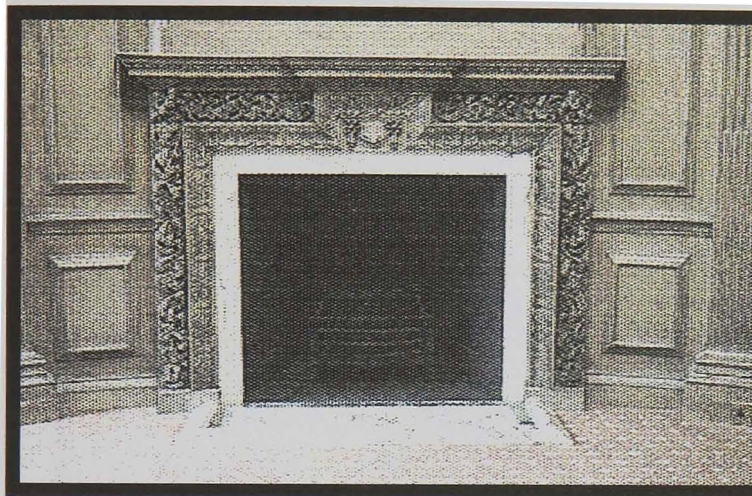
In typical Edwardian fashion, a step through a door most often meant encountering another era and style. Juxtaposed to the French Dining Room and facilitated by its servery, is a comparatively small, private dining room decorated in

<sup>a</sup> The writer is grateful to the staff of Feilden and Mawson for drawing his attention to details which are so expertly reproduced as to go unnoticed.

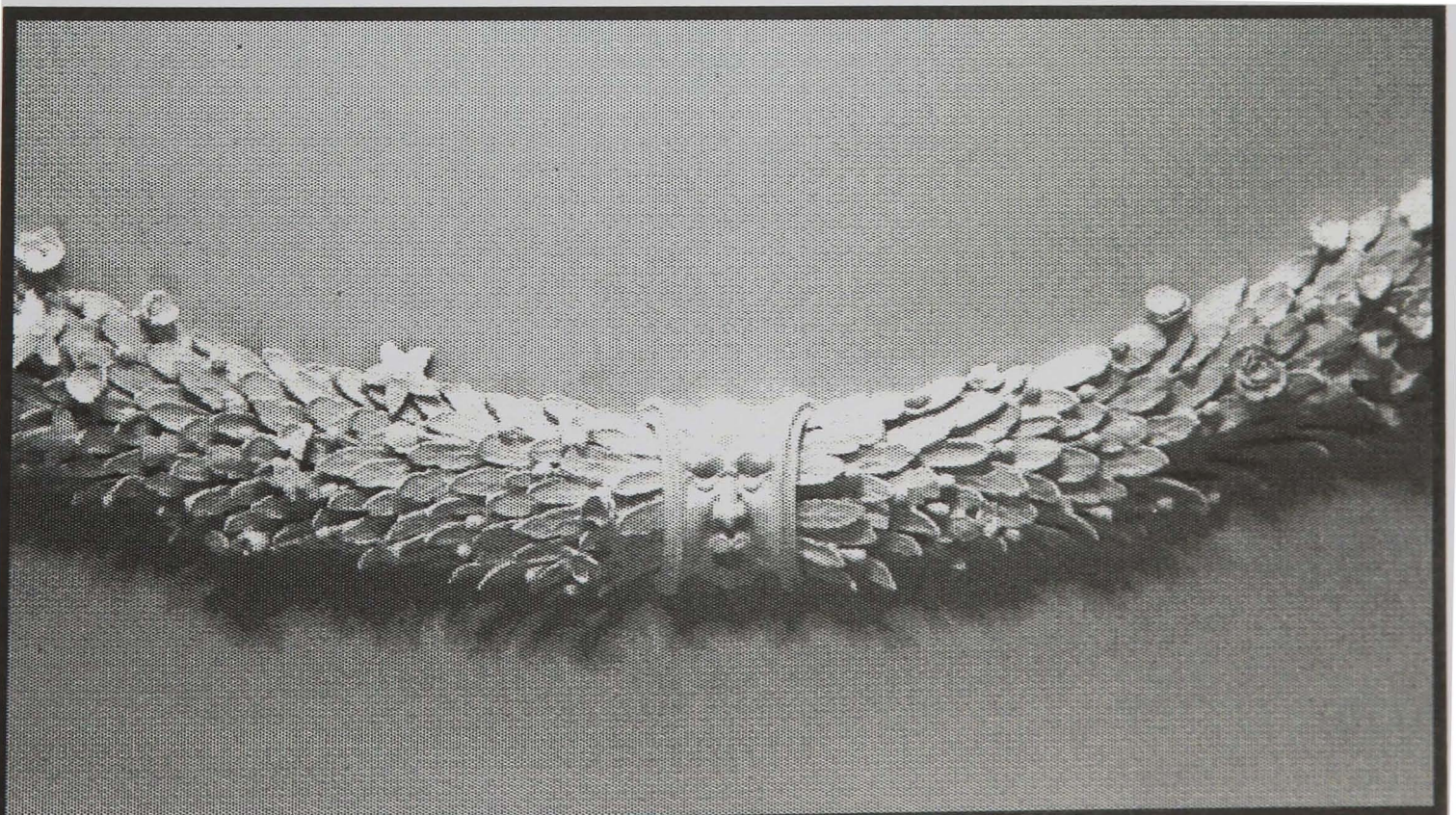




1226 - *Buscaylet & G. P. Bankart* Oval Dining Room from *Servery*. 1227, 1228 & 1229 - *Buscaylet under Billerey* Oval Dining Room panelling, chimney-piece & mantel detail.



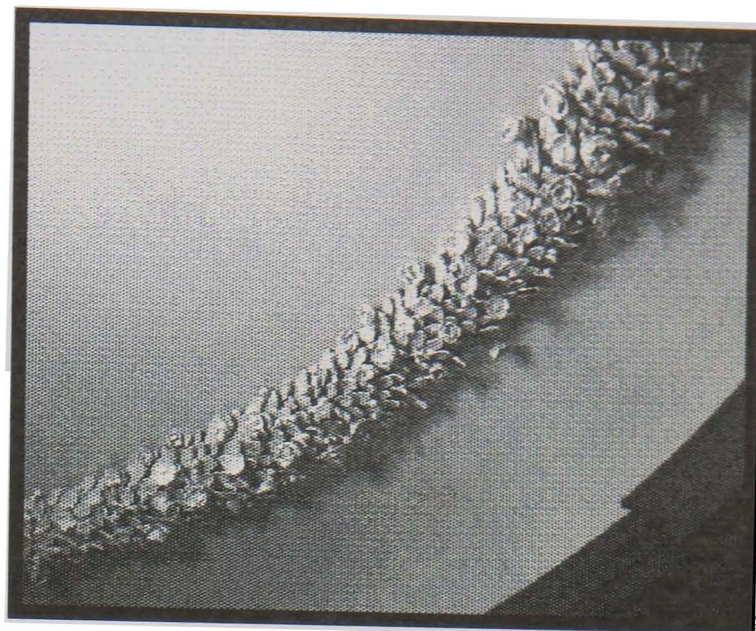
understated Henry IV-Louis XIII style, which on first impression, might be taken for Caroline (refer figure 539, page 274). In addition to its exquisite detailing, the room features a plainly plastered ceiling whose only embellishment is an exquisite unframed oval of foliage and flowers, bound with a mascarooned *agraffe*. Every leaf is individually moulded and assembled into this giant wreath, which corresponds to the chimney-piece in the refinement of its of its detail.



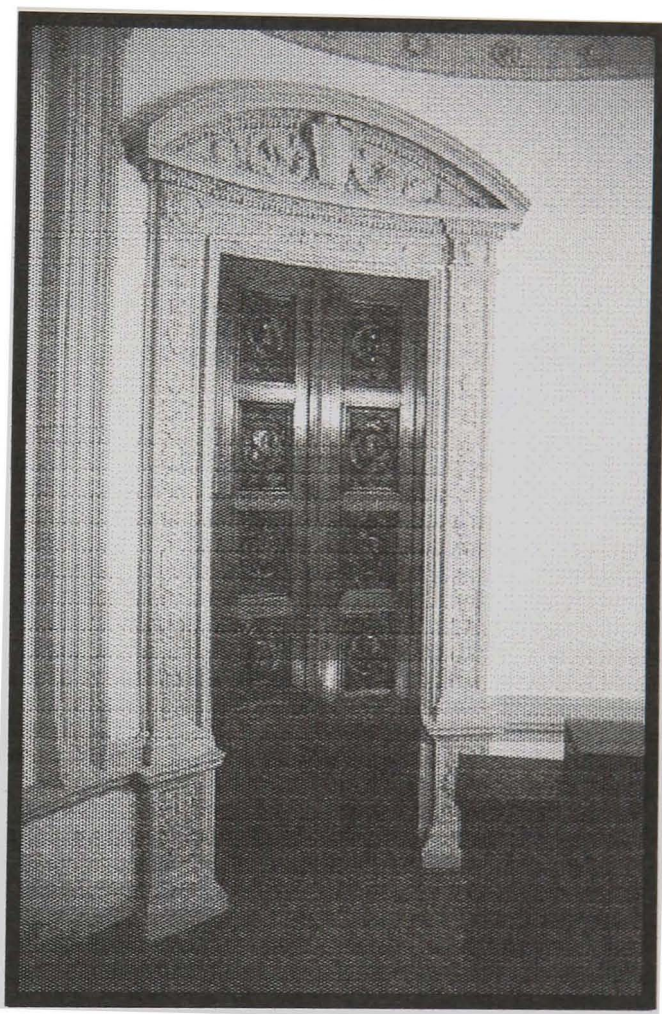
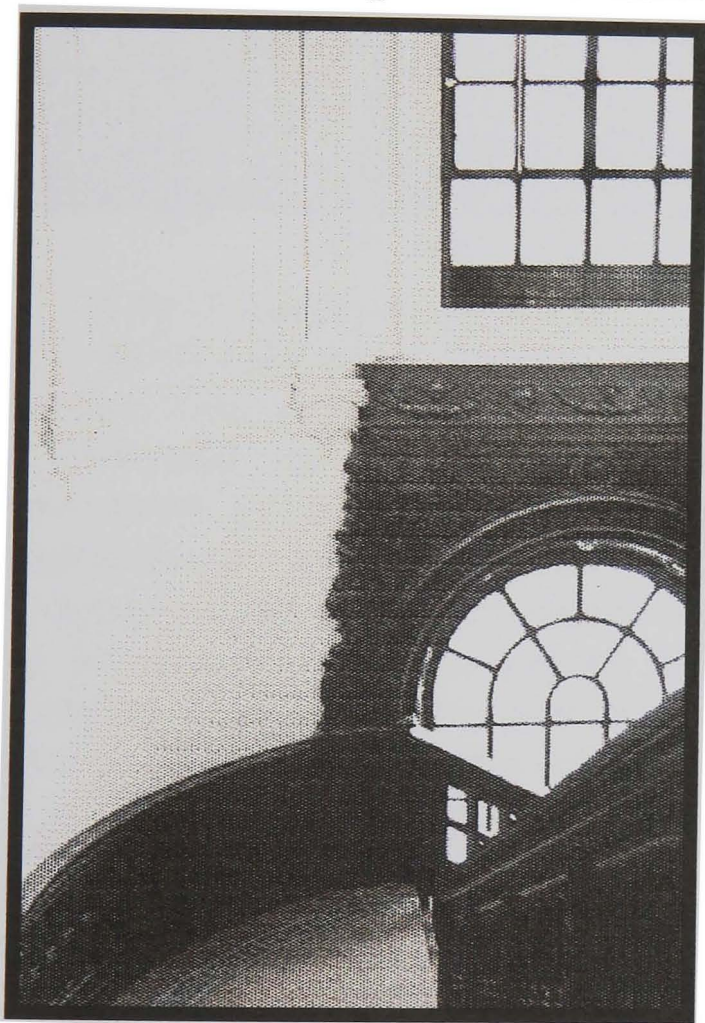
1230 - *G. P. Bankart* Oval Dining Room, ceiling wreath with *agraffe*.



What a different effect this laborious effort makes in comparison to Bielefeld's frieze and panels at Gunnersbury Park (figures 146-7, page 254). The *Survey of London* records this to be the work of George P. Bankart, whom Geoffrey Beard mentions as being the principal of a premier firm of plasterers, and author of *The Art of the Plasterer* (1908); he was a leader in late nineteenth-century revival of styles and techniques, typified by the intricate "foliage-decked ceilings of 1670-1690 period".<sup>609</sup>



1231 - G. P. Bankart Oval Dining Room, ceiling *dtl.*

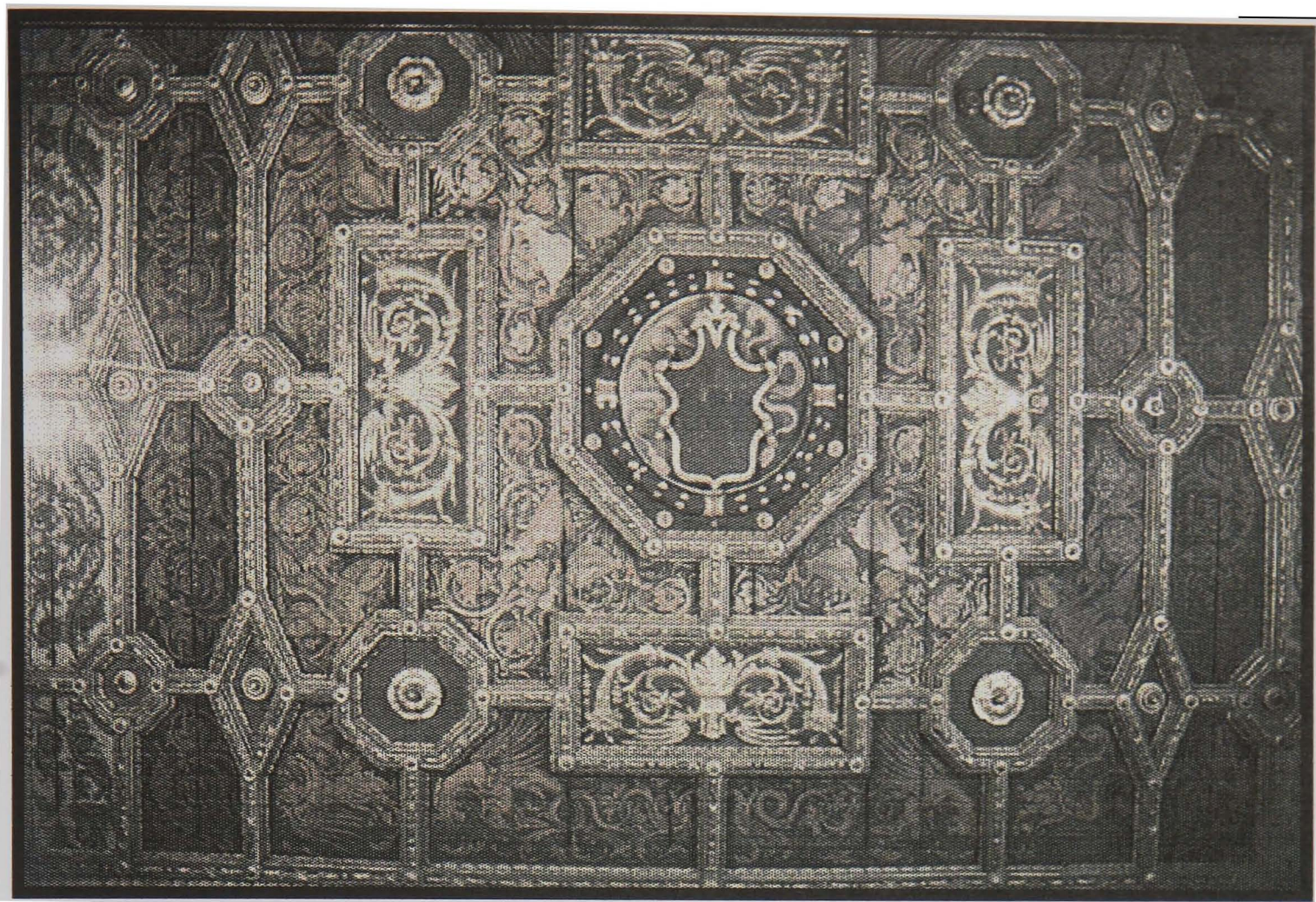


1232 & 1233 - Buscaylet under Billerey Western Staircase & elevator doorway.

#### *The Second (western) Staircase*

Although the staircase was designed by Billerey, apparently inspired by the *Scala dei Giganti* of the Doge's Palace, Venice, the stone decorations of the original - reproduced here in oak - are mysteriously interrupted at the first landing, with a cascade of superfluous carvings. Beyond this point the remainder of the staircase is French Renaissance in character, but done in plaster with niches and a carved stone architrave framing the elevator door at the first floor level. This curious truncation is an unexpected extension of the Hall below, when a continuation of its French Renaissance panellings would have resulted in a much more appropriate transition to the first floor. One might put this awkward arrangement to a whim of the client.

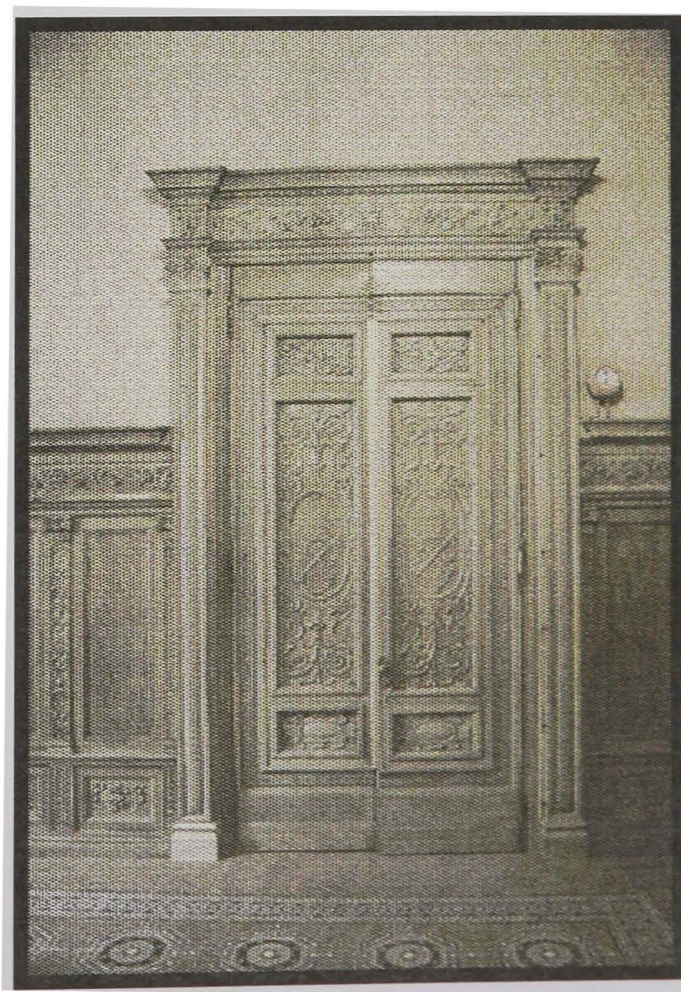




1234 - artists unknown Renaissance Room, period ceiling.

*The Renaissance Room - Speyer's office*

With the staircases absorbing two-thirds of the square footage the remaining third of the first floor's front bays is devoted to one of the simplest, yet most beautifully conceived interiors in the house. With an original Italian Renaissance chimney-piece and ceiling, the room's two pairs of doors display four magnificent carved Renaissance panels, two of which feature papal insignias. (It was into *this* pair of doors that Feilden and Mawson carefully sandwiched a steel plenum to fire-isolate the Gothic Staircase).



1235 & 1236 - artists unknown Renaissance Room, period chimney-piece and door panels.

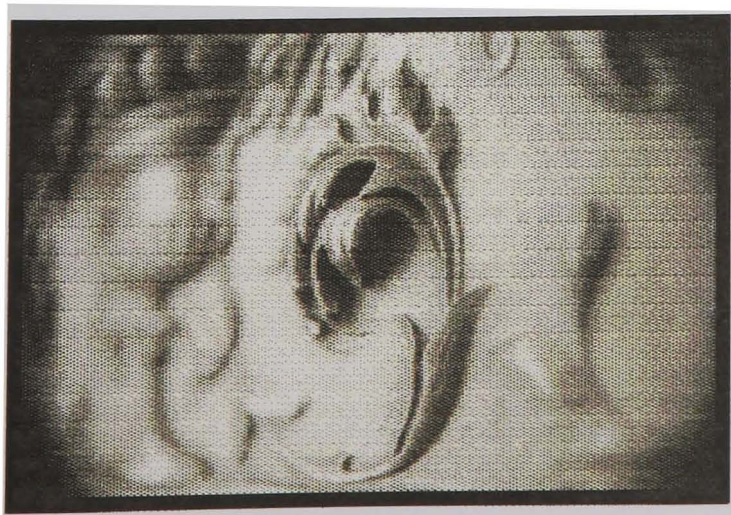
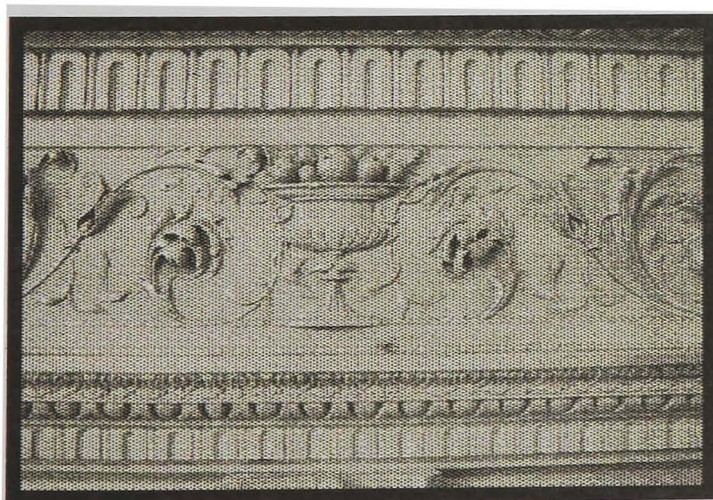
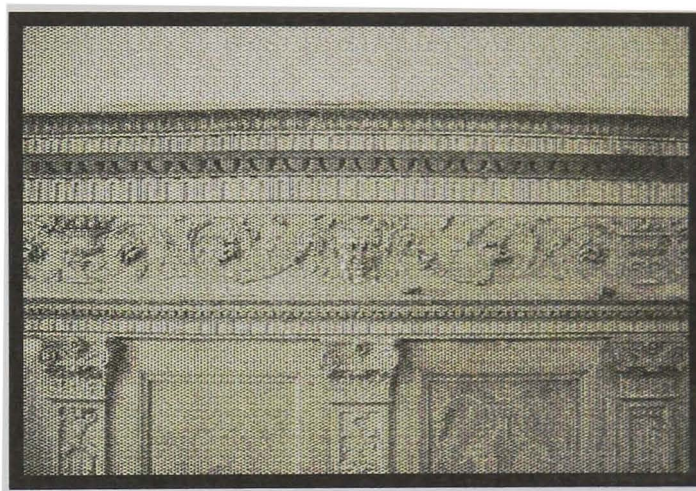




*1237 - Buscaylet? Renaissance Room dado with grifon motif. 1238 - artist unknown Renaissance Room, door panel with papal insignia.*

*1239 - artist unknown Renaissance Room, chimney-piece mantel detail.*

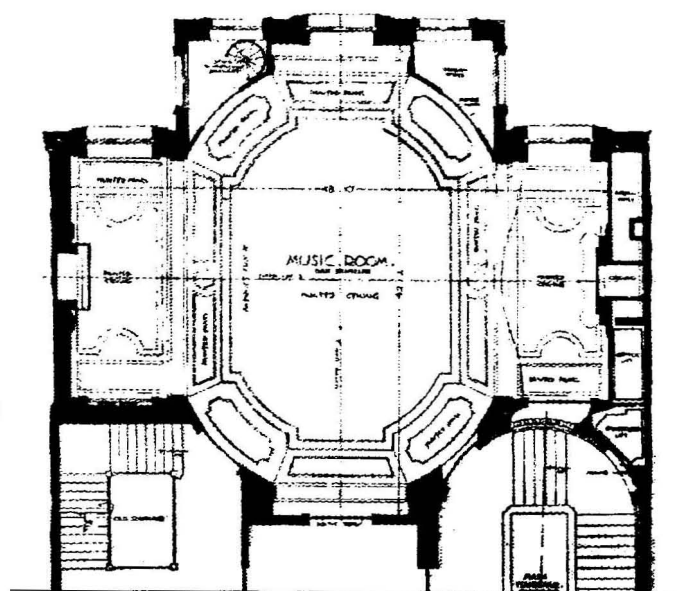
*1240 through 1245 - Buscaylet? Renaissance Room dado, frieze detail of fruit, masks and acanthus.*



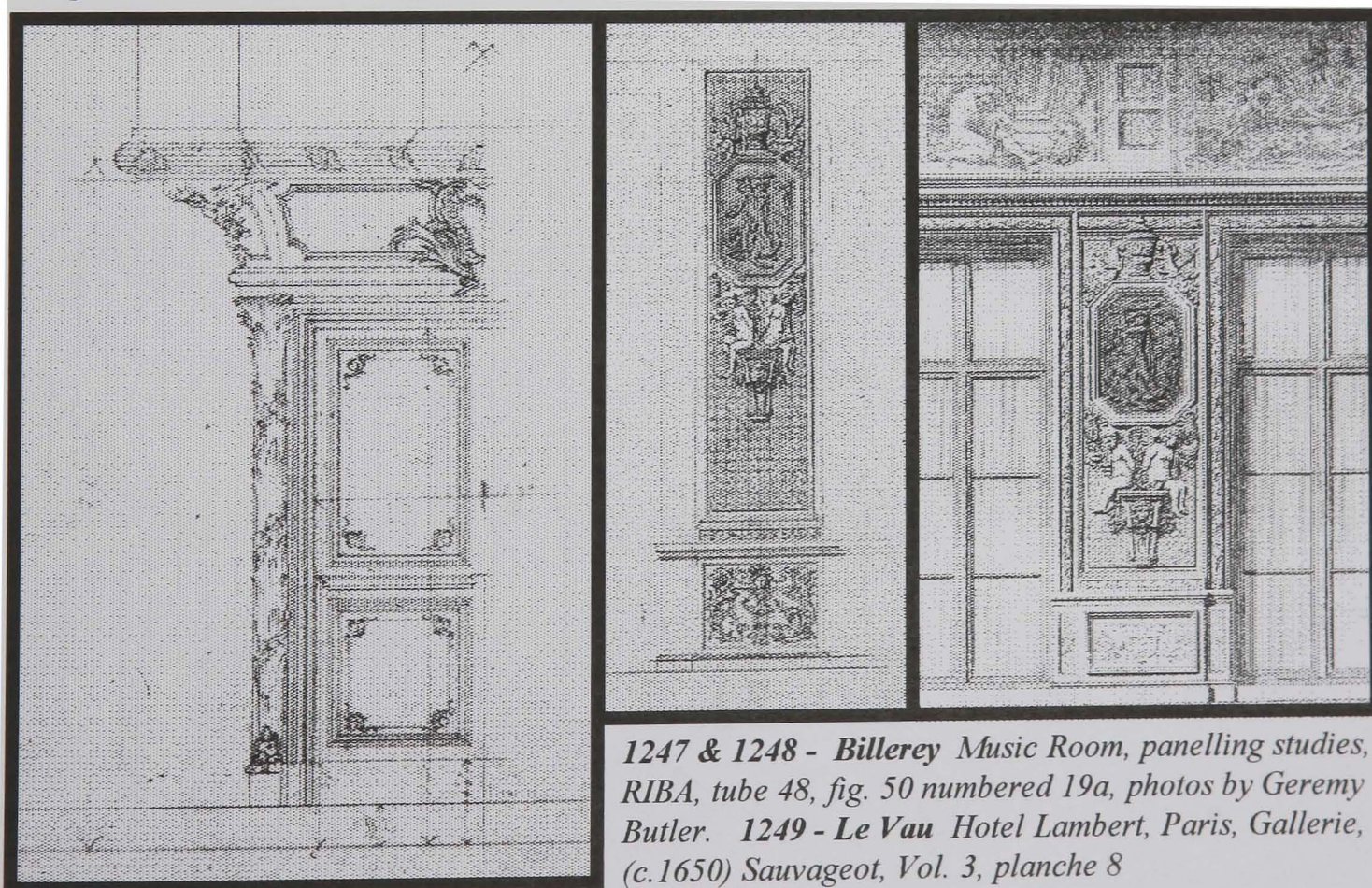


### The Music Room

Certainly the First Floor Plan, with its second staircase and private Dining Room, gives little apparent justification for the inconvenience Speyer incurred to enlarge his residence an additional bay. The prime motivator becomes obvious upstairs, where over half the building's square footage is devoted to one spectacular space hosting the *seigneur's* principal passion. This is not an intimate space for quiet soirées, but an extravagant *Louis XIV* evocation in the grand manner, which could have accommodated an original orchestration of Handel's 'Messiah'. The names of Richard Strauss (who dedicated *Salomé* to Speyer),<sup>610</sup> Claude Debussy and Sir Edward Elgar were amongst the great artists who performed in this room. Rare for a publication, *The Building News* illustrated a reflected ceiling plan depicting Maurice Tastemain's executed design for the Music Room's ceiling; and whilst Billerey's preliminary interior elevations indicate architectural aspects of the work were originally intended to be in part an extension of the panelling (figure 1247), the cove and its detailing eventually fell to



1246 - *Tastemain under Billerey Music Room Reflected Ceiling Plan, The Building News, June 21, 1912, pg.881.*

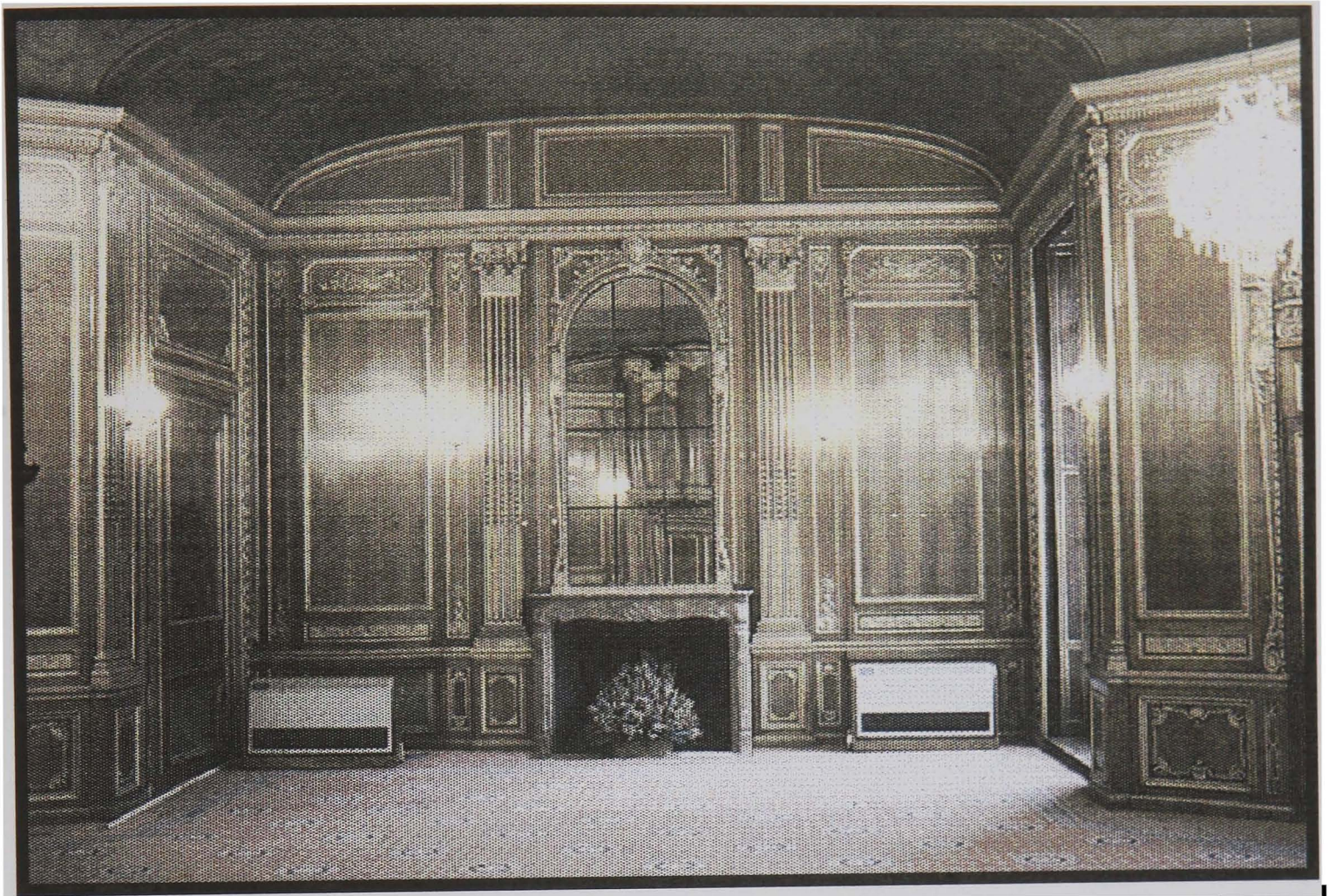


1247 & 1248 - *Billerey Music Room, panelling studies, RIBA, tube 48, fig. 50 numbered 19a, photos by Jeremy Butler. 1249 - Le Vau Hotel Lambert, Paris, Gallerie, (c.1650) Sauvageot, Vol. 3, planche 8*

Billerey's life-long friend and collaborator, whose painterly allegorical style is reminiscent of Lemoyne's work in the *Salon d'Hercule*, Versailles (figure 1254). The *boiseries* are an assembly of complex frames and embellishments augmented with gilded moulded plaster or *papier-mâché* detailing. From an early study (figure 1248), it is clear Billerey was



thinking of Le Vau's magnificent seventeenth-century *Hôtel Lambert*, and although the illustrated *Galerie* motif was not used, elements from the *hôtel's Cabinet des Muses* were either reproduced exactly or influenced the general detailing throughout. The organ was carved by the Parisian *antiquaire/*

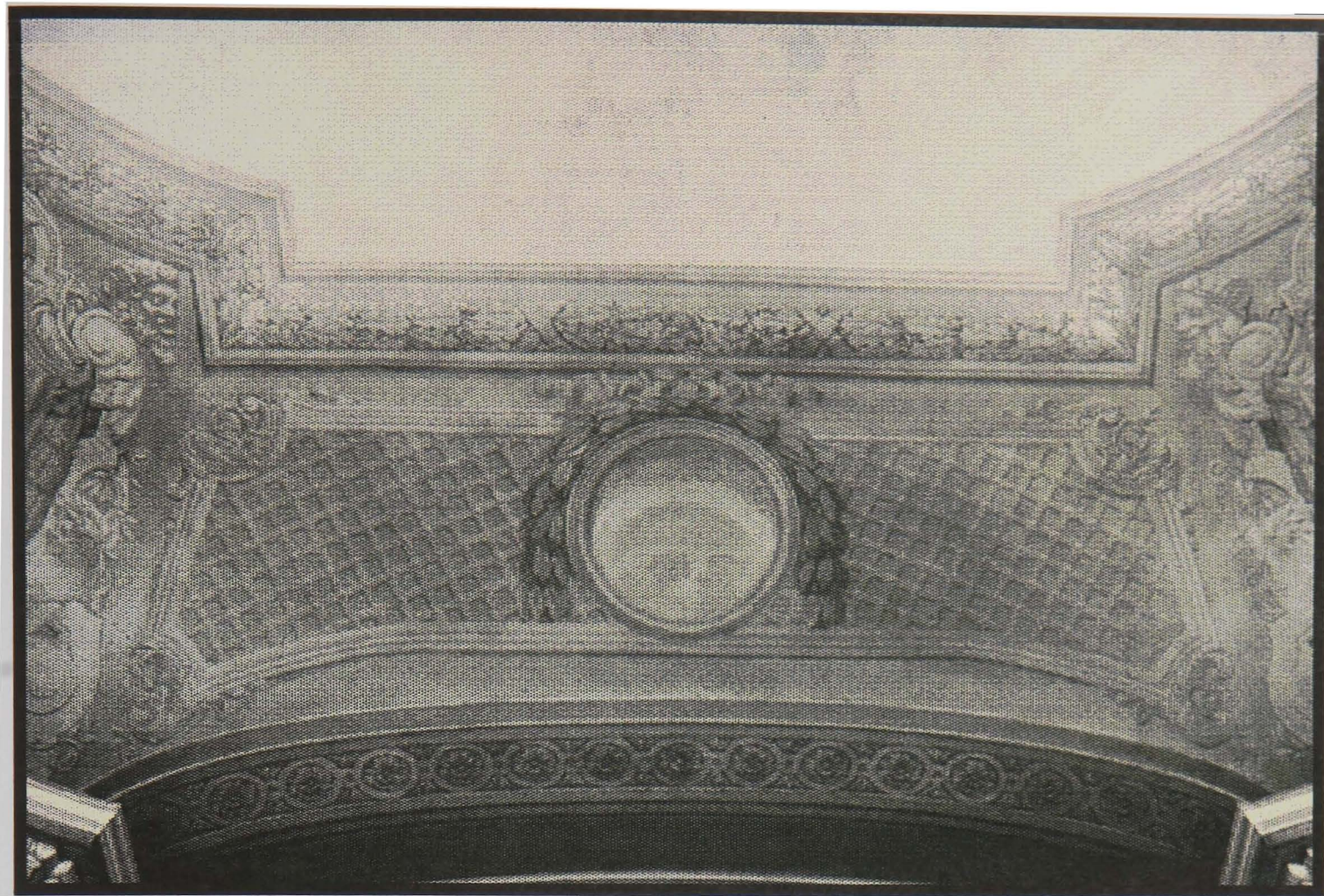


*1250 - Buscaylet under Billerey Music Room, east wall with stand-apart heat convectors.*



*1251 - Buscaylet under Billerey Music Room, west wall with organ case.*





*1252 & 1253 - Maurice Tasteman  
Music Room ceiling details.*

*1254 - François Lemoyne Salon d'  
Hercule, Versailles, "The Triumph  
of Hercules" (1710-30) detail,  
Pérouse de Montclos (Versailles)  
p.263.*







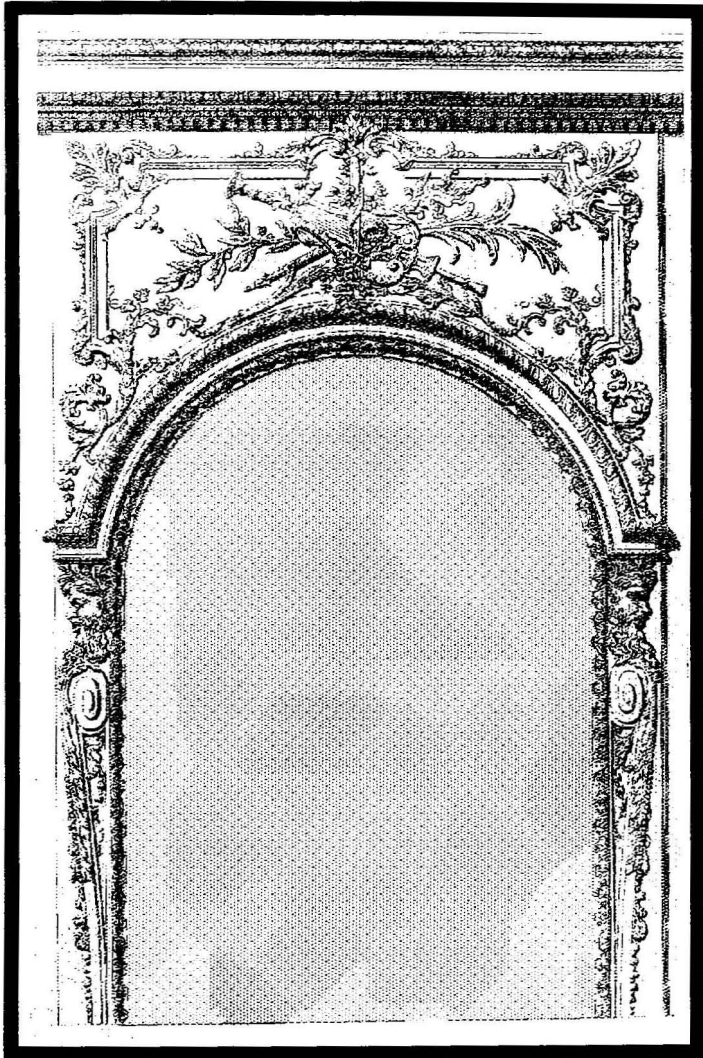
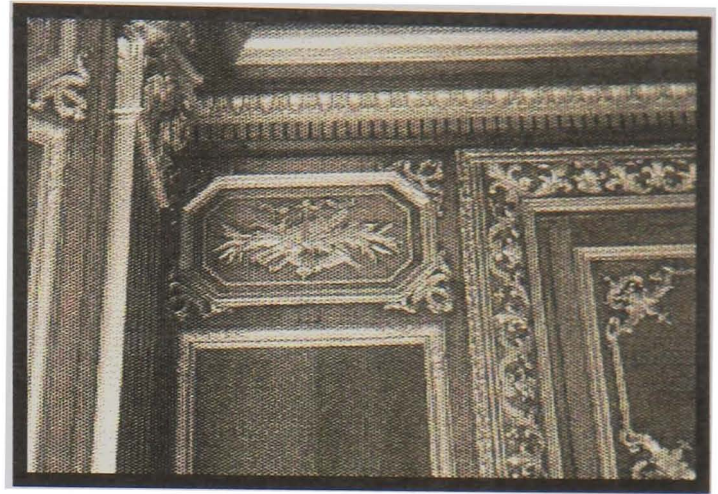
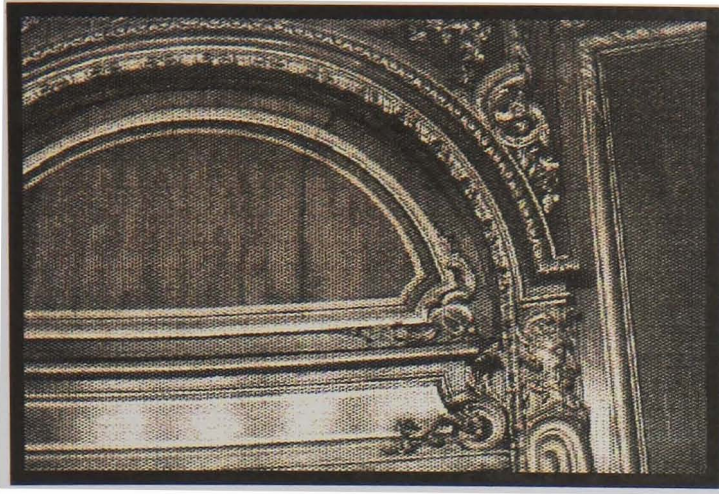
1255 - 1257 - Maurice Tasteman Music Room ceiling at organ.

decorators, Carlhian-Beaumetz,<sup>a</sup> largely from massive built-up sections of solid oak. Doubtless one of their more spectacular English commissions, the decorators featured Billerey's reprise of de Cotte's Versailles Chapel design with a full-page advertisement in *Country Life*. Although the illustration is poorly reproduced on page 522, it remains one of the few taken of the casing before the pipes were removed and replaced with panellings. (Additional pipes were originally concealed behind the organ's flanking *boiseries*, which opened to extend the instrument the entire width of the east wall.)



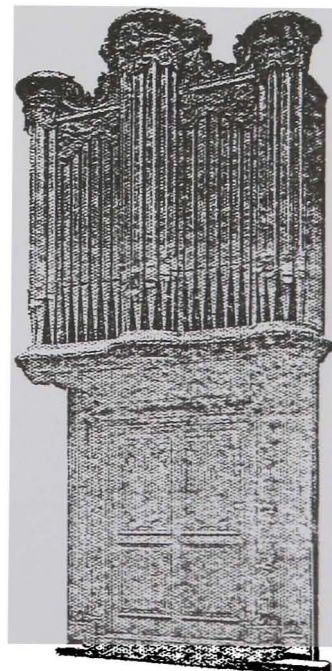
<sup>a</sup> Carlhian-Beaumetz maintained a London branch at various locations from 1885 until 1914. Although the name Beaumetz is continuously a part of the title, the directors seem to have been Anatole Carlhian, who was succeeded by his son, André. In the twentieth century, in addition to the Paris and London locations, the firm had branches in New York, Buenos Aires and Rome, with the American branch likely being the most successful. Carlhian's contributions to mansions by Horace Trumbauer, such as the *Louis XV "Miramar"*, Newport, for G.E. Widener (1913), and Georgian "*Whitemarsh Hall*", Philadelphia for E.T. Stotesbury (1917-1920), must have been, as mentioned, great enough for him to join Sir Arthur Duveen as an honorary pall bearer at the architect's funeral in 1938. Maher, p.76, *Evening Public Ledger* (Philadelphia) 9/20/38, POLDs 1884-1915; Tatman, Sandra L./ Moss Roger W., *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects*, The Athenaeum, Philadelphia, G.C. Hall & Co. (Boston-1985)pp.302-7.





1258, 1259 & 1261 - *Buscaylet under Billerey Music Room panelling details.*

1260 - *Le Vau Hôtel Lambert, Paris, Cabinet des Muses, vousure, Sauvageot, Vol.3, Planche 18.*



1262 - *Robert de Cotte with Degoullons, le Goupil & Taupin Versailles Chapel organ (1710) Pérouse de Montclose (Versailles) pg.113.*

1263 - *Carlhian-Beaumetz Music Room organ, Country Life Supplement, Oct.20, 1912, pg.xxiv.*

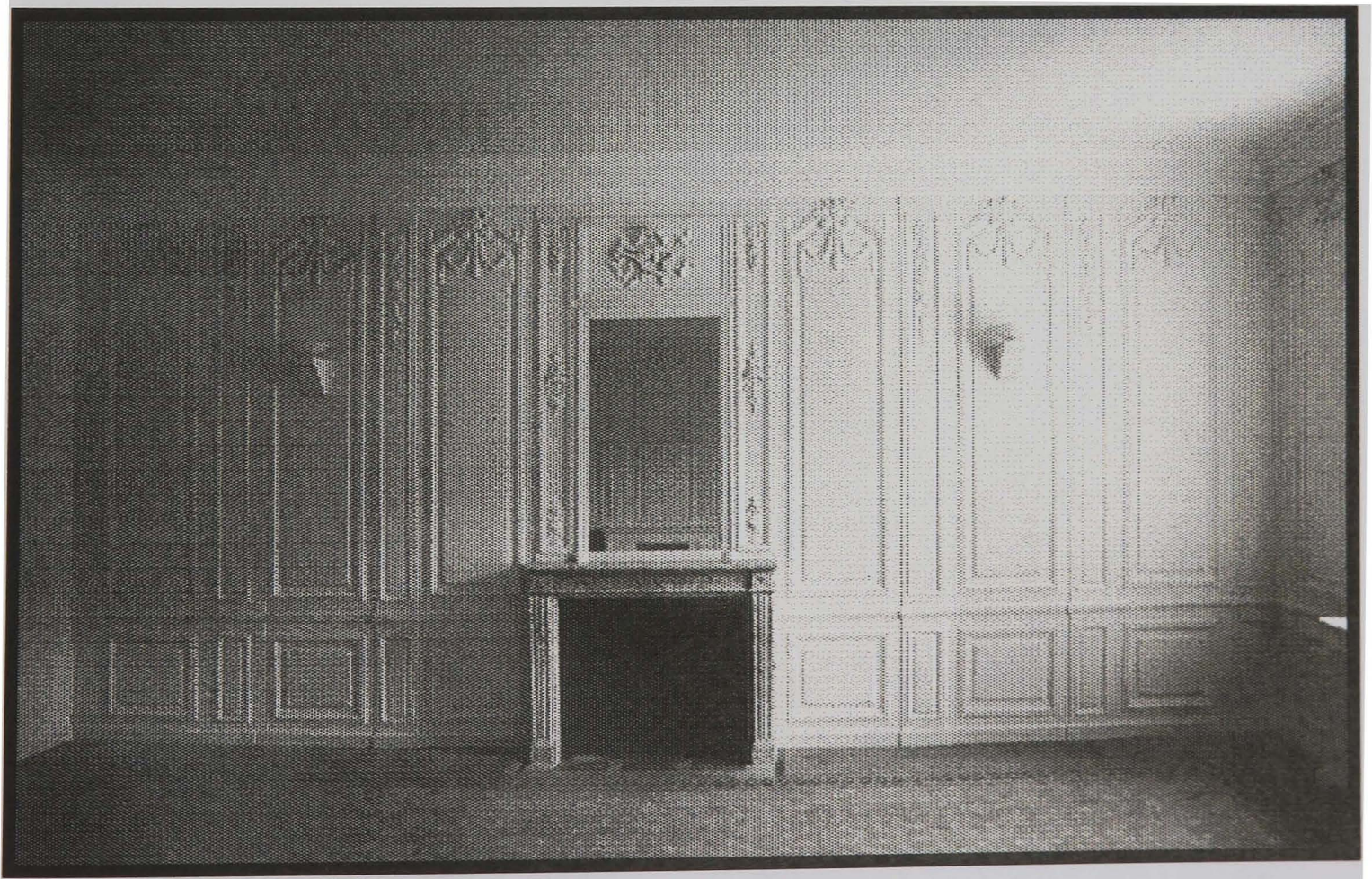




*1264 - 1266 - Carlhian-Beaumetz Music Room organ details.*

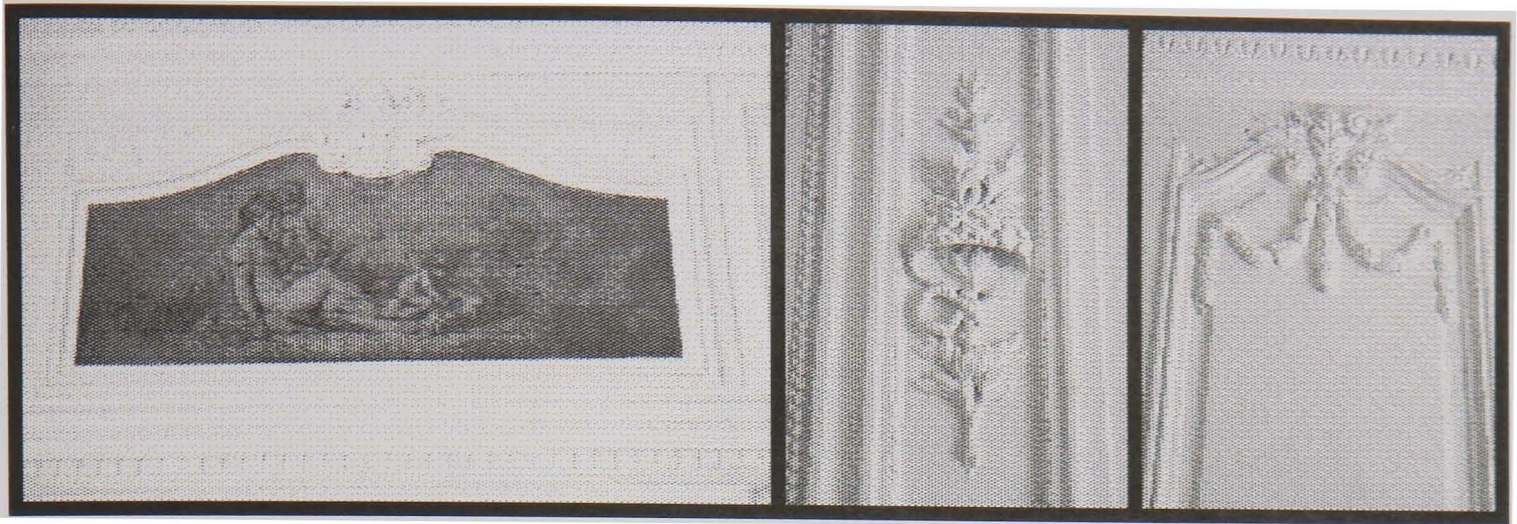
*Second Floor Bedroom Suites*

Whilst allocating the lady of the house a chaste Louis XVI environment having plainly panelled walls with embellishments in moulded plaster, Speyer provided himself a suite lined with magnificent carved boiseries, two rooms (with a music theme) being in the Louis XVI style, with the third a *piéd-à-terre* rendition of *Louis XIV*.



*1267 - decorator unknown Lady Speyer's Bedroom, western wall.*

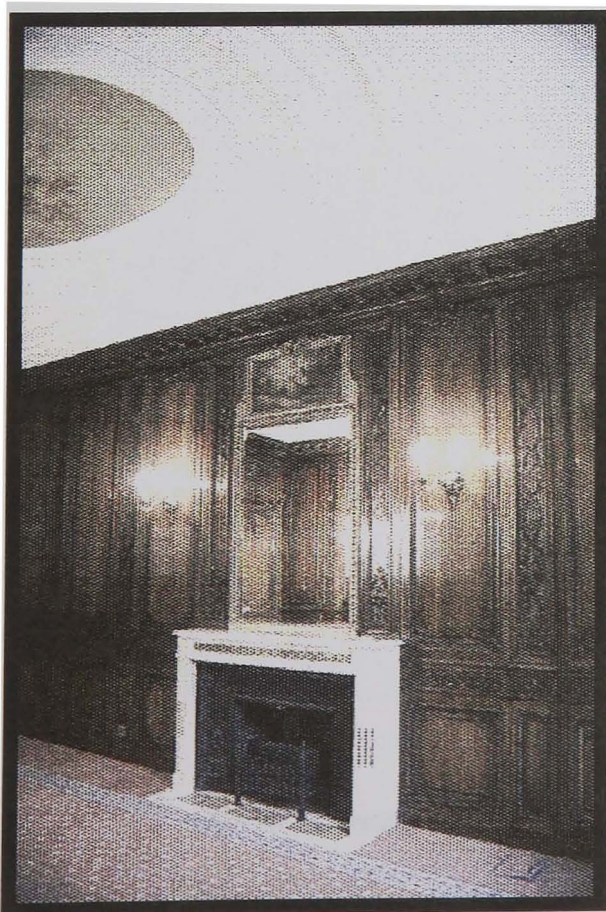




1268, 1269 & 1270 - decorator unknown Lady Speyer's Bedroom, panelling details.



1271 & 1272 - Buscaylet under Billerey Speyer's bedroom suite, western chamber.



1273 & 1274 - Buscaylet under Billerey Speyer's bedroom suite, central chamber, chimney-piece wall & ceiling painting.





*1275 & 1276 - Buscaylet under Billerey Speyer's bedroom suite, central chamber, panel & door details.*



*1277 - Buscaylet under billerey Speyer's bedroom suite, eastern chamber (Louis XIV).*



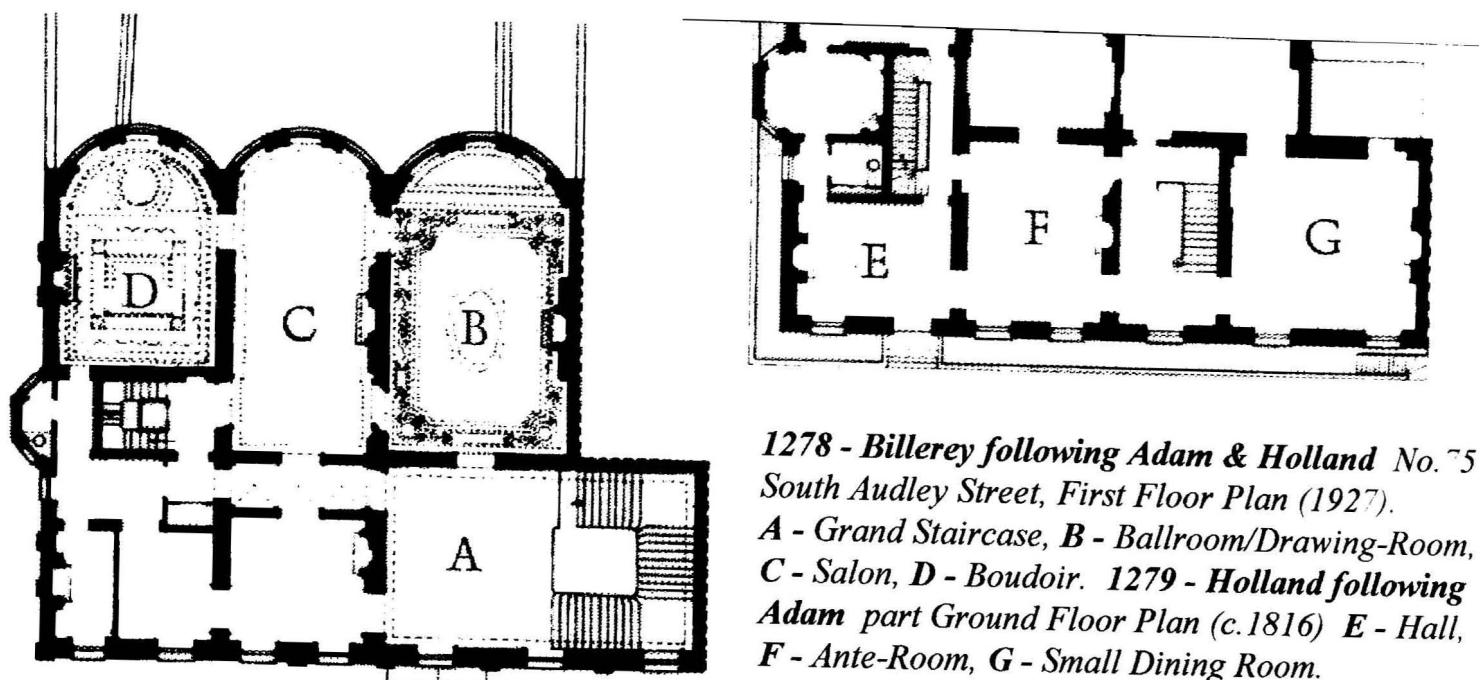
Unfortunately for Sir Edgar, his brother James, who directed the family's New York bank, was a notorious Anglophobe, and with the onset of World War I, both concerns maintained close ties with Germany. In step with the sudden resentments both the English and American factions visited on first-generation German immigrants and practically everyone else, rumours about Speyer and another prominent financier, Ernest Cassel metamorphosed to having Speyer signalling German submarines from his house at Overstrand, Norfolk. Both men being members of the Privy Council, were eventually required to defend their loyalties before the Lord Chief Justice Reading; and whereas Cassel respectfully submitted an affidavit attesting his loyalty to King and Country, an outraged Speyer wrote his friend Asquith (Prime Minister, 1908-16)<sup>a</sup> that whilst he was 'not a man who can be driven or drummed by threats or abuse into an attitude of justification', nonetheless tendered his resignation from the Privy Council and asked for his baronetcy to be revoked. Although both requests were refused, Speyer effectively told both King and Council to 'go hang', wound up his affairs, and was back in America by December of 1915.<sup>611</sup> Thus his residency at the completed No.46 Grosvenor Street would have lasted four years at best. In his absence, the house was commandeered by the Government, and subsequently served until recently as a branch of the Japanese Embassy.

### 75 South Audley Street

Often identified as Bute House, the address has served the Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt since 1926, when Billerey with builders, Holland, Hannen and Cubitt remodelled the interior. It was here John Stuart, Earl of Bute, lived whilst Lansdowne House and Luton Hoo were in progress, and where, falling from power in 1763, he remained until his death. The *Survey of London* traces the history of an original structure dating from 1736, which under Bute was first decorated by Adam, and subsequently expanded to the north (1775-6) under Henry Holland and his father-in-law, Lancelot Brown.<sup>612</sup> Surviving today are a number of Holland's ground-floor chimney-pieces, and first-floor detailing such as the Renaissance scrolled architraves seen in figures 1281 and 1285. Although subsequent redecorations were undertaken in 1812 by the fourth duke of Buccleuch, the house received a

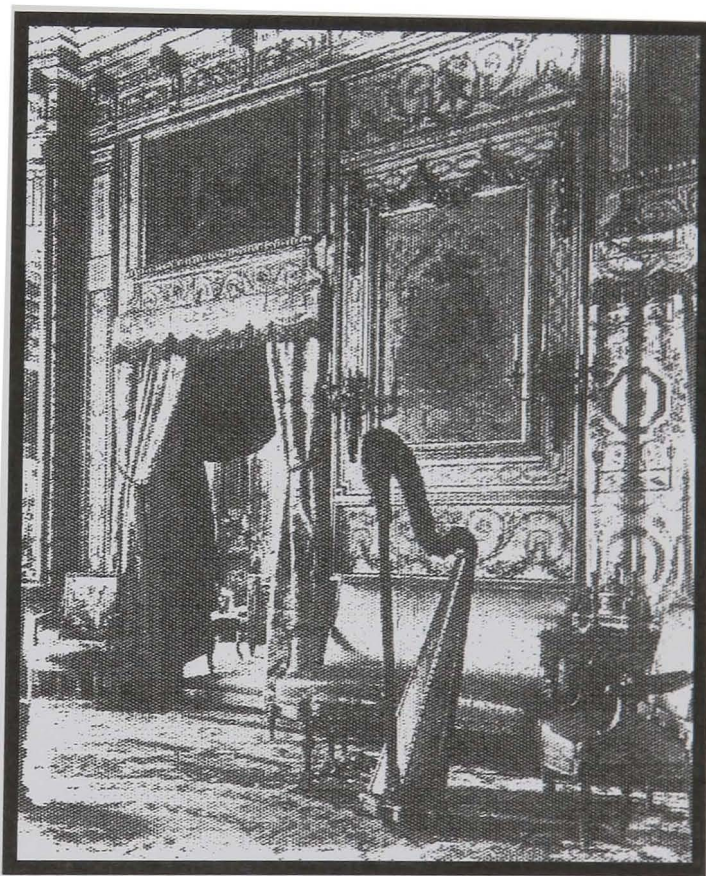
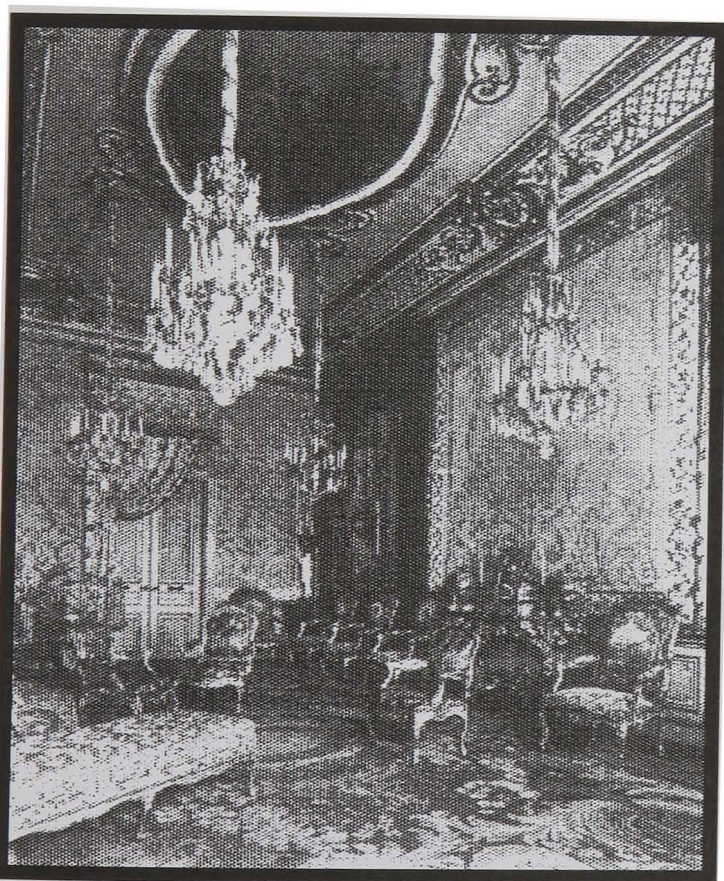
<sup>a</sup> Margot Asquith wrote of the anti-German sentiments in her autobiography: "...our thoughtful Press [sic], wishing to make money out of public hysteria...calculated that almost anything would be believed if it could be repeated often enough. And they were right: the spiteful and the silly disseminated lies about our governess from door to door with the kind of venom that belongs in equal proportions to the credulous, the cowards and the cranks. The greenhorns believed it and the funkies, who saw a plentiful crop of spies in every bush, found no difficulty in mobilising their terrors from my governess - already languishing in the Tower of London - to myself, who suddenly became a tennis-champion and an *habituée* of the German officers' camps!" Asquith, *An Autobiography*, Vol.I, George H. Doran Co (New York-1920) pp.160-1.





1278 - Billerey following Adam & Holland No. 75 South Audley Street, First Floor Plan (1927). A - Grand Staircase, B - Ballroom/Drawing-Room, C - Salon, D - Boudoir. 1279 - Holland following Adam part Ground Floor Plan (c.1816) E - Hall, F - Ante-Room, G - Small Dining Room.

lavish (if somewhat over-upholstered) makeover by banker Henri Louis Bischoffsheim, who purchased the property in 1872. By 1876, Bischoffsheim's ground-floor Drawing-Room and Boudoir were lined in delicate painted silk, which extended to the Boudoir's ceiling as well. The ceiling of the Drawing-Room featured an elaborately embellished coved with grisaille roundels and a magnificent central painting of "Venus and Time" by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo.



1280 - G.B. Tiepolo & decorators unknown No. 75 South Audley Street, Ballroom/Drawing-Room, (c.1902) Survey of London, Vol.XL, Plate 84a. 1281 - decorators unknown Boudoir, Survey of London, Vol.XL, Plate 84b.

In 1908 the house's brick façade was refaced in Portland stone; and although Bischoffsheim died the following year, the property remained in his family until purchased in 1927 by its present owners. Billerey's task was to convert the structure from private residence to embassy, and whilst this involved alterations to the ground floor Entrance and Staircase, with the main rooms being redecorated in Georgian taste, the three principal upper-level apartments remained French in character,



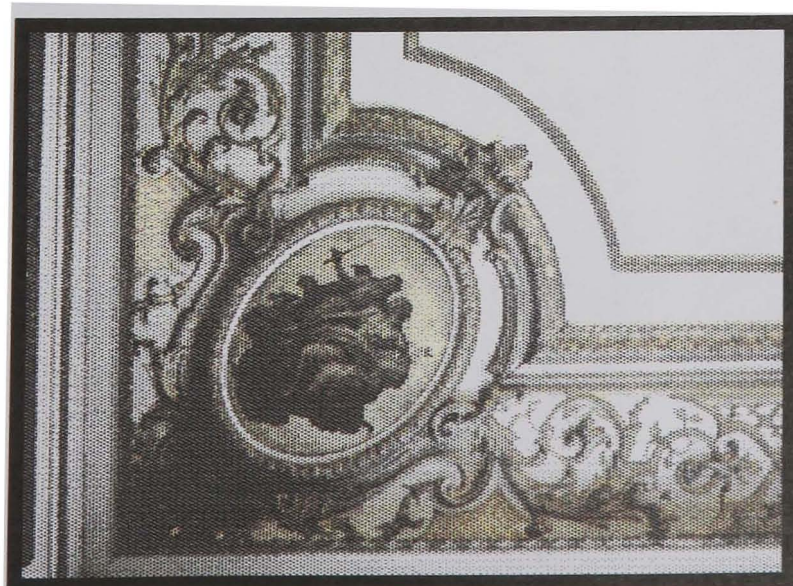
two of which (the Ballroom and so-called "State Bedroom" (now a small dining room) received whole ceilings from the rooms below.



1282 - *Billerey et al* No. 75 South Audley Street, Ballroom/Drawing-Room (1927).

*The Ballroom / Drawing-Room*

In 1927 Billerey relocated the Tiepolos and cove to their present first-floor location, and whereas the grisailles remain today, the central painting (whose frame elaborations and quartet of chandeliers did not survive the move) was purchased by the National Gallery in 1969, being replaced with a copy by artist John Lewis. This room and the adjacent *Salon* both feature Neo-Classical chimney-pieces more to Holland and Linnell's invention (pages 106 & 107, figures 153-6) than traditional French detailing, and may date to the late eighteenth-century renovations. The boiseries are sparingly detailed using beribboned laurel wreaths, the stereotypical notch with rosette corner detail, and a guilloched chair rail. From figure 1281, the doorways are identical to those of Bischoffsheim's tenancy, but probably



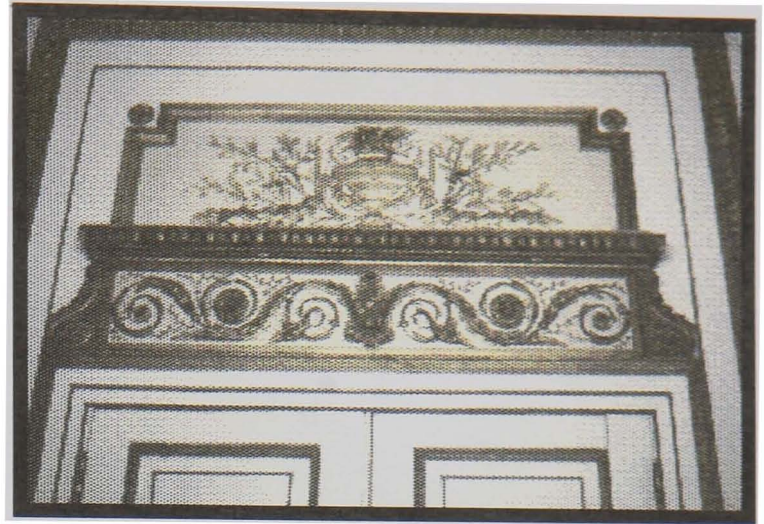
1283 - *Tiepolo & decorators unknown* No. 75 Audley Street, Ballroom/Drawing-Room (1878) cove & roundel. 1284 - *John Lewis* copy of Tiepolo's "Venus and Time" (c.1969).



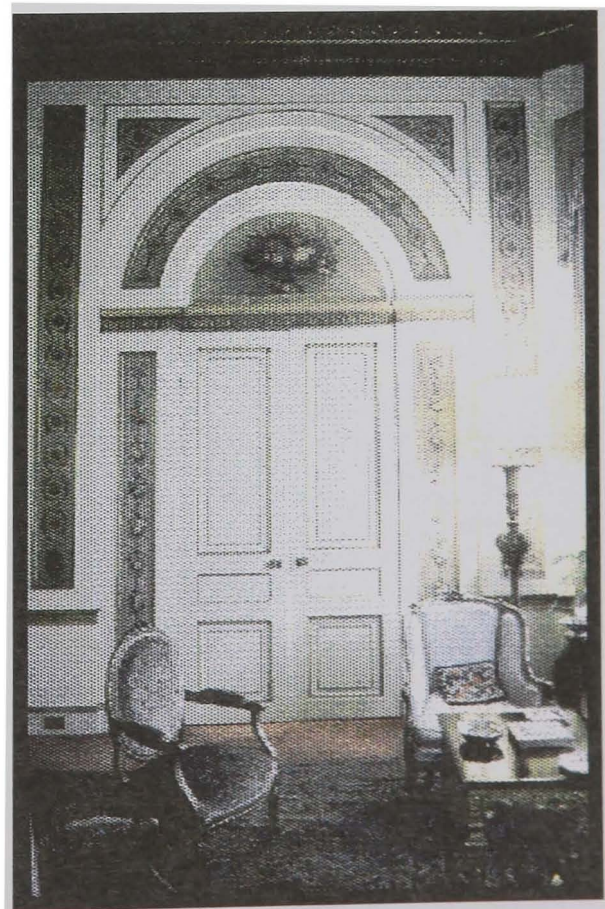
are Holland's work as well, as is the scrolled architrave. Billerey's addition of a floriated urn overdoor is consistent with the general detailing, but visually divides the combined embellishment into being neither one thing or the other. Clearly the architect has compromised his own design to preserve historic decoration.

#### *The Salon*

No historical photographs appear to exist of this room, which features what may be Holland's chimney-piece and doors. Although the Survey of London records a fire in 1835 severely damaging the three principal first-floor apartments, it further describes this particular space as a "painted drawing-room with mirrors...", being part of the duke of Buccleuch's inventories of 1812 and 1816. As it appears today, the interior decoration has been clearly arranged to accommodate a collection of extremely fine papers, painted in French Neo-Classical design; they were applied directly to the plaster walls behind moulded plaster frames. Billerey's efforts here seem to have been minimal, and may have involved the relocation of the chimney-piece from a ground-floor apartment, as it slightly overlaps the flanking wall decorations. Alternatively, as the papers appear to be eighteenth-century work, it may be possible the entire room was designed for Lord Bute by Holland, with the papers painted specifically for this space and the chimney-piece overlap being intentional.



*1285 - Holland? and Billerey No. 75 South Audley Street, Ballroom/Drawing-Room (1927) entrance door, architrave and overdoor.*



*1286 & 1287 - Holland? and/or artists unknown No. 75 South Audley Street, Salon or "painted room", chimney-piece wall and door to Boudoir.*

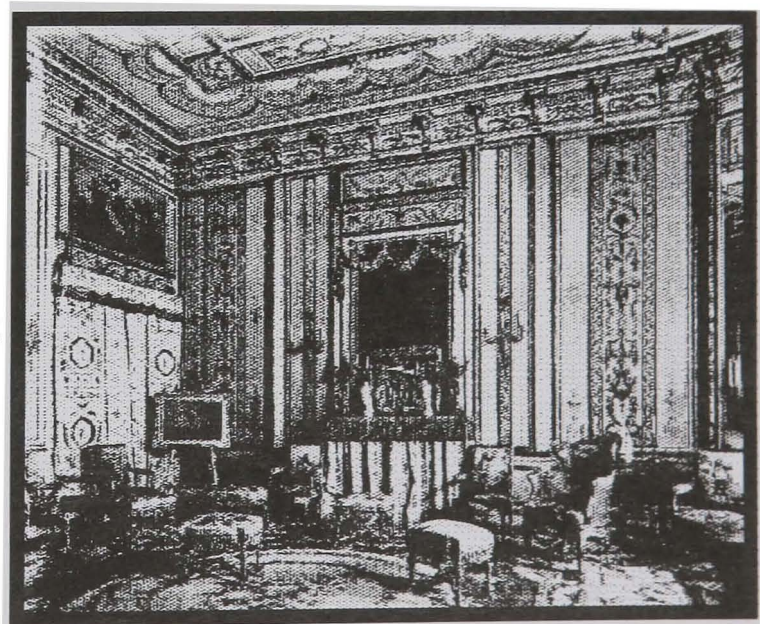
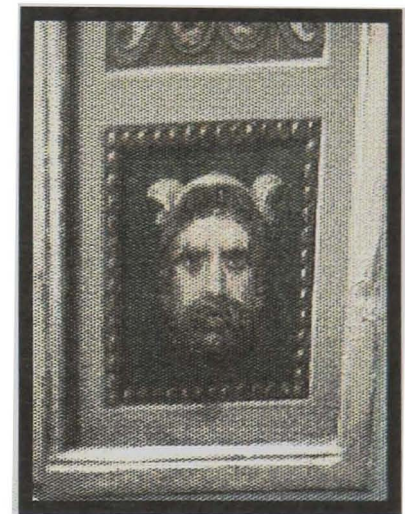




1288, 1289 & 1290 - *artists unknown* No. 75 South Audley Street, Salon, details of painted papers.

*The State Bedroom (today  
a small dining room)*

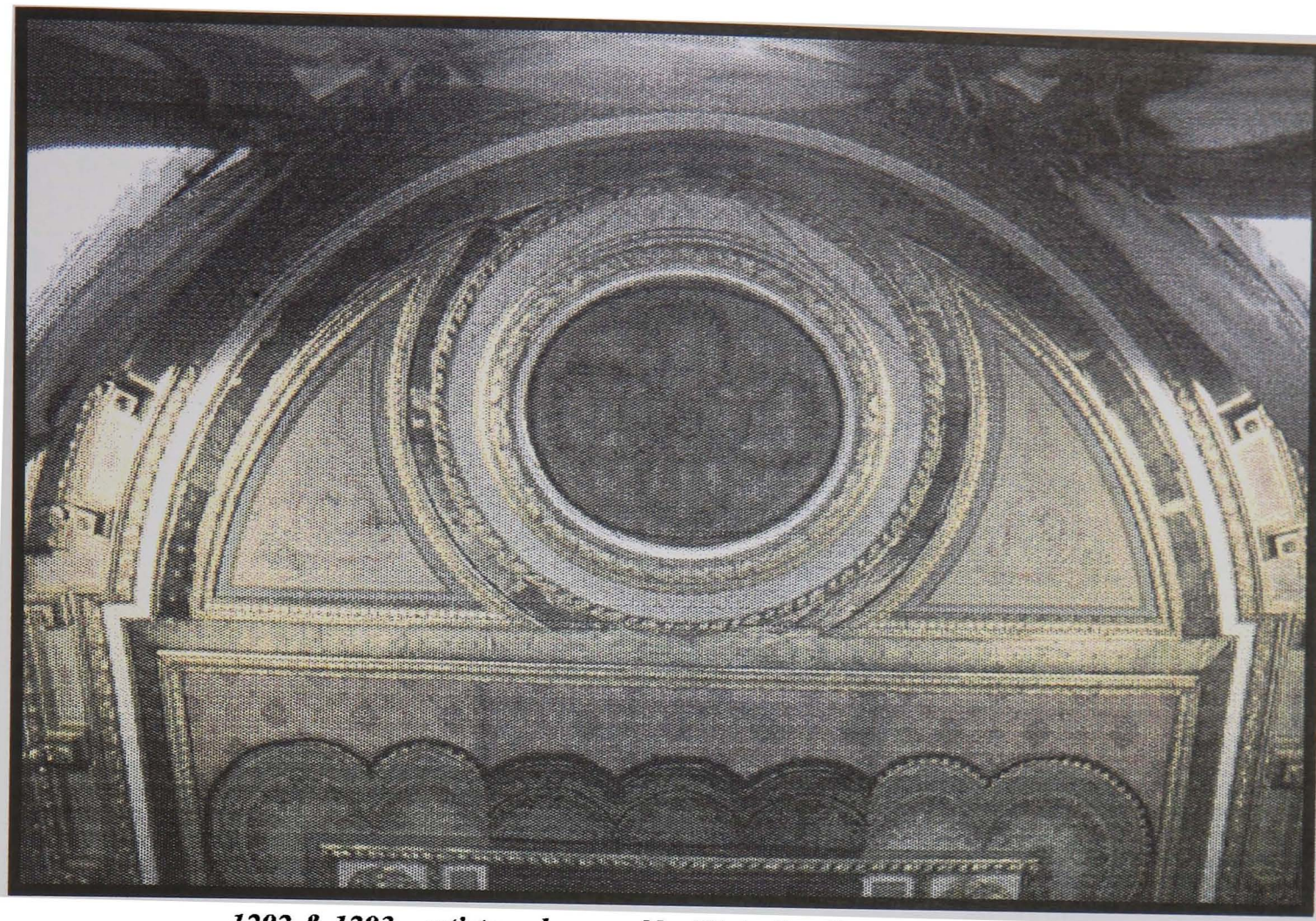
The Survey of London illustrates two views of Mrs. Bischoffsheim's ground-floor Boudoir, the second of which indicates its elaborate ceiling. As an extension of the wall hangings, the Neo-Classical arrangement is an upholstered extravaganza of painted silk bordered in velvet - all framed within elaborate gilded mouldings. By 1927, the wall hangings may have deteriorated beyond rescue as only the ceiling survived what may have been an embellishment of Holland's original scheme, in which the scrolled architraves, formerly lost in a plethora of draperies, are the principal wall decorations. The ceiling and architraves were all relocated from the room directly below. In the



1291 - *artists unknown* No. 75 Audley Street, Boudoir, *Survey of London Vol.XL, Plate 85a.*

early 1990s the Egyptian Embassy attempted to clean the ceiling fabric, but as some of the materials proved too delicate, elected to confine their conservation efforts solely to areas where it was safe to do so. Today, the ceiling shows this discrimination, where most would





1292 & 1293 - *artists unknown* No. 75 Audley Street, Boudoir ceiling.



have either replaced or entirely removed the historical materials.

#### *The Staircase*

Billerey's most recognisable contribution to the embassy's interior was his relocation and restructuring of the Entrance Hall including a ceremonial Grand Staircase in the areas of Bischoffsheim's Small Dining room and its identical area above. Evidencing French architecture continued in vogue approaching the Second World War, this chaste statement also reflects a world recently sobered from its first global catastrophe,



and contrasts to another staircase the architect had done just sixteen years before, at the time Speyer's residence was in progress.



*1294 - Billerey No. 75 Audley Street, Grand Staircase.*

### **No. 10 Carlton House Terrace**

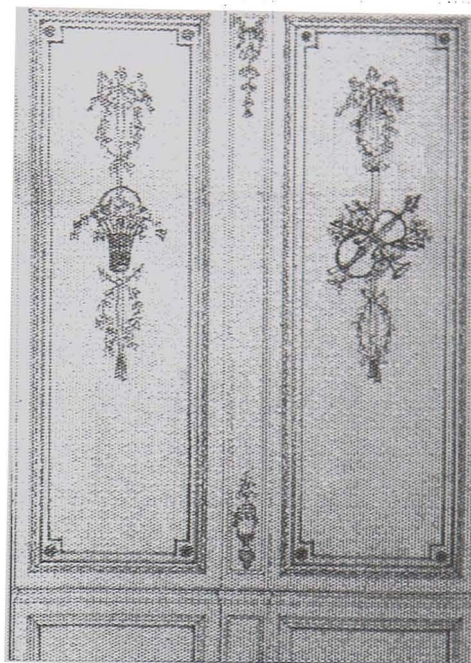
The family of the Viscounts Ridley of Durham have been the only private residents of No.10, beginning with the third baronet's purchase of the site in 1827. Although Nash prepared plans for the interior, Ridley commissioned Durham architect, Ignatius Bonomi (1787-1870 - the second surviving son of the better known, Joseph Bonomi)<sup>a</sup> - to all but completely redesign them to his own specification. Lady Ridley died in 1899 with her husband surviving another five years. In 1895, the future fourth viscount had married the Hon. Rosamund Guest, youngest daughter of Viscount Wimborne, and it may have been her appreciation of the French inspired interiors at Wimborne House which induced Blow and Billerey's commission to all but remake No. 10's interior between 1910-11.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The lives and works of both architects are chronicled by Howard Colvin, who describes Joseph ((1739-1808) as having come from Rome to work for the Adam brothers. His architecture was Neo-Classical in style and relatable to the Adams, but his interiors lacked their characteristic subtleties, and were more overtly antique in character. Likely due to his father's death, the son's education and foreign travel was curtailed at an early age, and he went into practice in Durham at the age of 21, remaining there until his retirement in 1850. A capable designer in both the Neo-Gothic and Neo-Classical styles, Ignatius designed additions to Blagdon, the Ridley's country seat the year before (1826) and again in 1830. No.10's Neo-Classical Dining Room may possibly be some of his work to survive Billerey's renovations. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary...*, 3rd ed. (1995), pp.137, 139, 141-2.

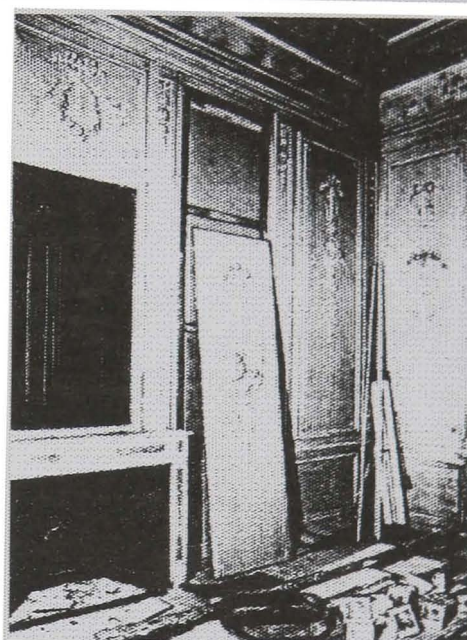
<sup>b</sup> Whether the architects' work at Wimborne House came before (continued)



Unlike their predecessors, the couple did not make their home at Blagdon, Northumberland, leaving them to concentrate their enthusiasm for building on the London address; and this they did with purpose, as Lord Ridley, was the Conservative member for Stalybridge in the House of Commons, and required the prerequisite venue for entertaining his political friends and allies.<sup>613</sup>

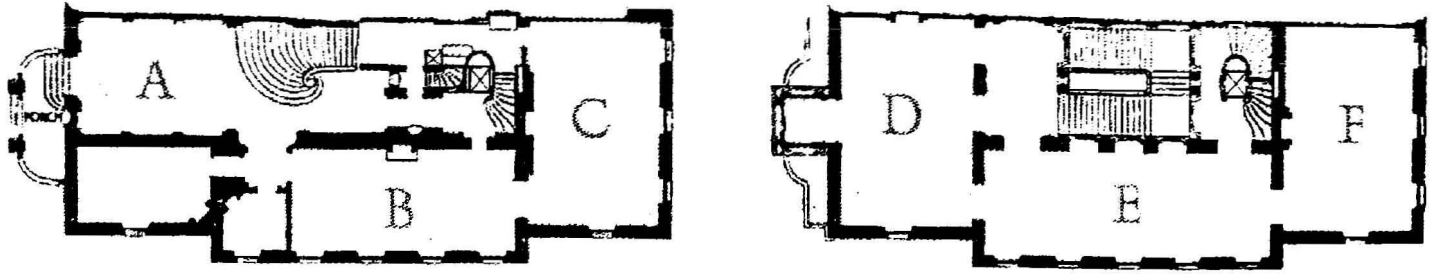


1295 - artist unknown under Billerey? Wimborne House, "Henry Pelham's Room", photo Raymond Fortt Studios, V&A Furn. & I.D, B1/1310/89. 1296 - draughtsman unidentified measured drawing of Wimborne House panelling, V&A #497, B1/1310/89. 1297 - artist unknown under Billerey? "Henry Pelham's Room" under demolition, Thompson, pg.184.



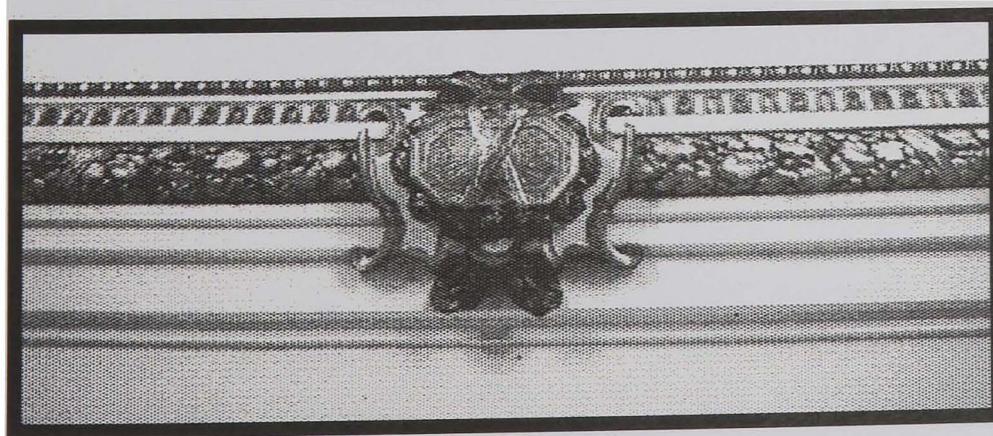
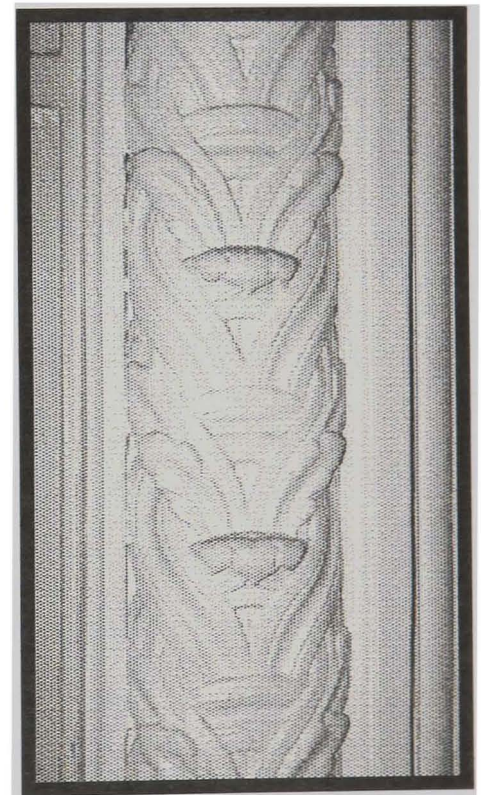
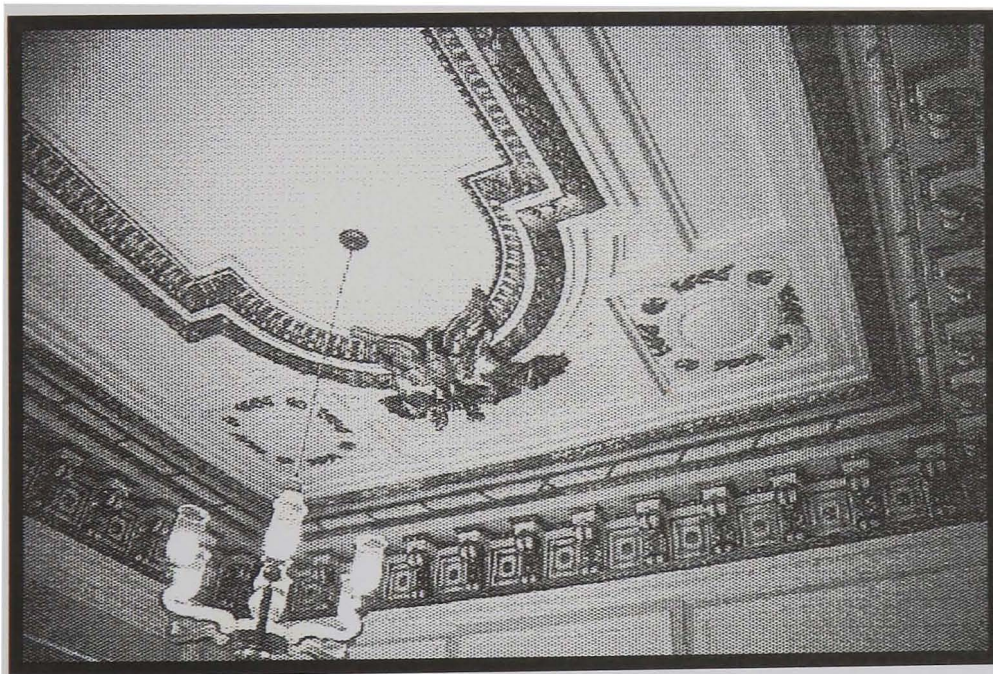
(continued) or after the Carlton House Terrace project is undetermined. An excellent history of Wimborne House has been written by Nicholas Thompson in association with Eagle Star Holdings, the present owners of what remains of the Arlington Street mansion directly abutting the Ritz Hotel. The structure appearing today was built by William Kent c.1743 for then Prime Minister Henry Pelham, and following Pelham was owned and altered by a succession of nobles until 1870, when the property was purchased by Sir Ivor Bertie Guest as a town residence for his bride, Lady Cornelia Spencer-Churchill (daughter of the 7th duke of Marlborough). In 1880 Sir Ivor was created Lord Wimborne, and thereafter the house was known by his title. It was during Lord and Lady Wimborne's tenancy that the mansion received its fashionable French interiors, amongst which appeared Trollope's Ballroom (fig.1120). At this time Kent's well known Italian Renaissance drawing-room was given a mix of Louis XIV detailing, Rococo furniture and a fumoiired French Renaissance chimney-piece. Whilst Thompson mentions the *antiquaire*/decorators Thornton Smith & Co., the RIBA Library lists alterations and additions to Wimborne House as being one of Fernand Billerey's projects; and given the exceptional quality of the *boiseries* illustrated from "Henry Pelham's Room", these may be a product of his involvement. In her response to a *Country life* article appearing 26 December 1974, entitled "Conservation in Action" (referring to Eagle Star's restoration of Wimborne House to its original Kentian state) Mabel Wimborne estimated the *boiseries* were installed "during the first war", but as most decoration firms were involved in the war effort, they probably date to the years just before. During the restoration, all Wimborne's French decorations were swept away, whereby "Henry Pelham's Room proved to disguise a perfectly preserved Kent ceiling above the twentieth-century additions (fig. 1297). Chancellor, E.B., *Private Palaces*, pp.366-366-8; (continued)





1298 - *Blow & Billerey No. 10 Carlton House Terrace, Ground and First Floor Plans. A - Vestibule and Grand Staircase, B - Library, C - Dining Room, D - Drawing-Room, E - Ballroom, F - Drawing-Room.*

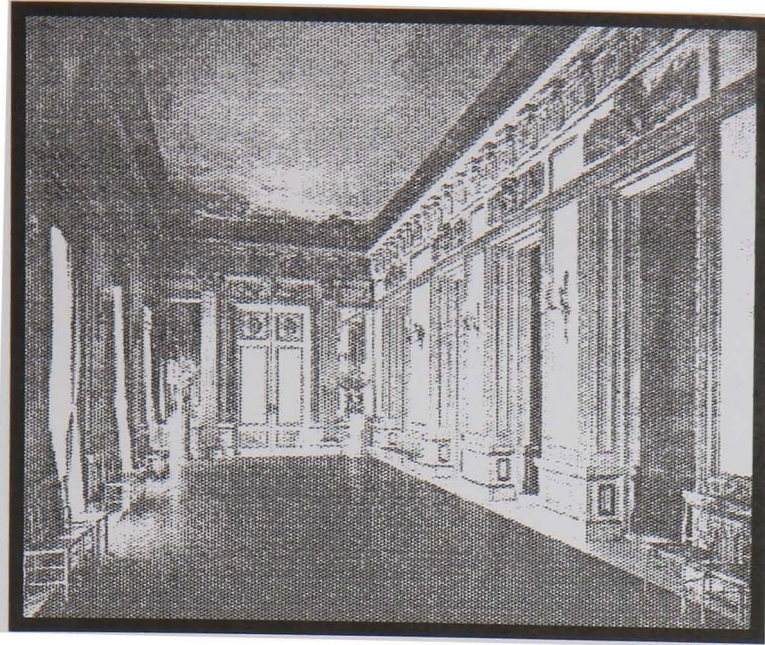
Although Detmar Blow described the alterations as having required gutting the entire interior,<sup>614</sup> the architects' work was largely confined to two first-floor apartments, and a staircase which goes well beyond being merely grand. With the exception of Maurice Tastemain's magnificent Ballroom ceiling, the closely arranged frieze consoles and massive mouldings of the two upper chambers appear as a somewhat sophisticated through-back to Sidney Smirke's Empire evocations at Gunnersbury park. Clearly the architects concentrated their inventiveness on the staircase itself, which relegates all other areas to secondary status, regardless of how well articulated they might have been executed.



1299, 1300, & 1301 - *Blow & Billerey No. 10 Carlton House Terrace, First Floor Drawing-Room, ceiling, cornice and moulding details.*

(continued) RIBA Biog. File, 92.b, June, 1938; Pearce, D., pp.206-11; Sykes, C.S., pp.280, "331-3; Thompson, *A House in Town, 22 Arlington Street, Its Owners and Builders*, B.T. Batsford (London-1984) passim.



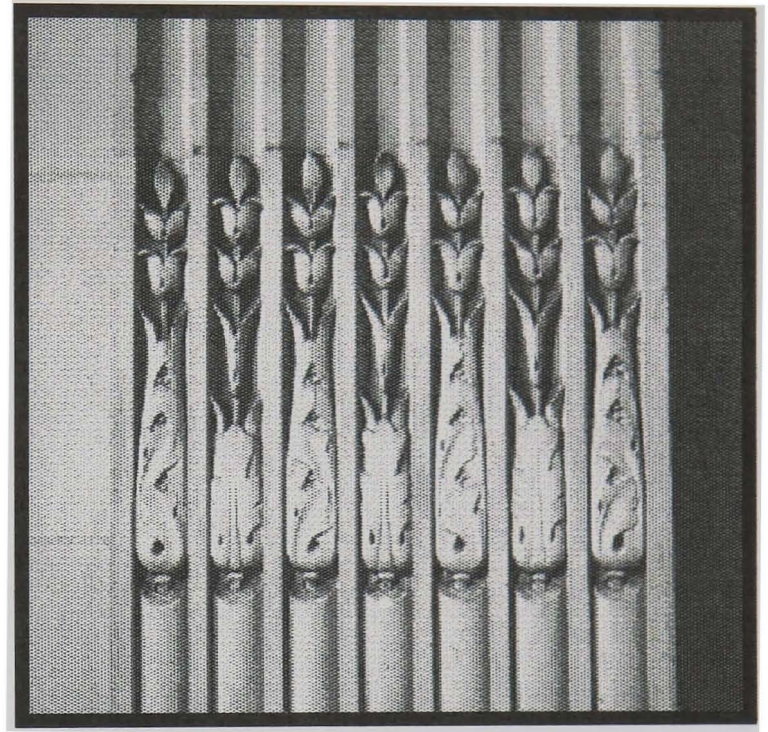
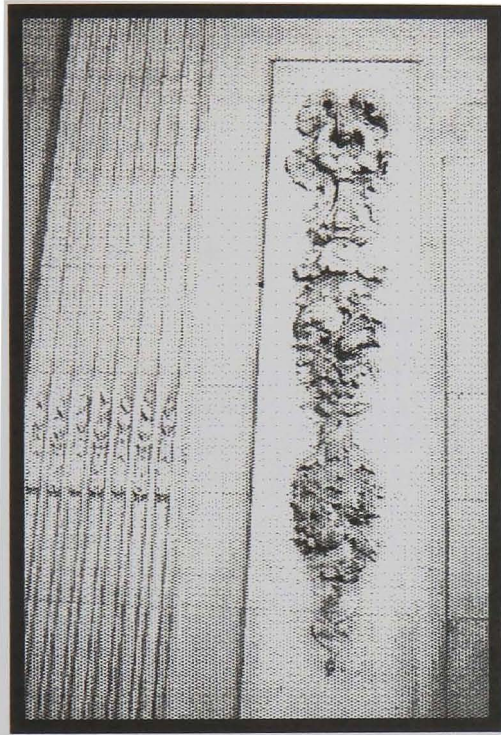
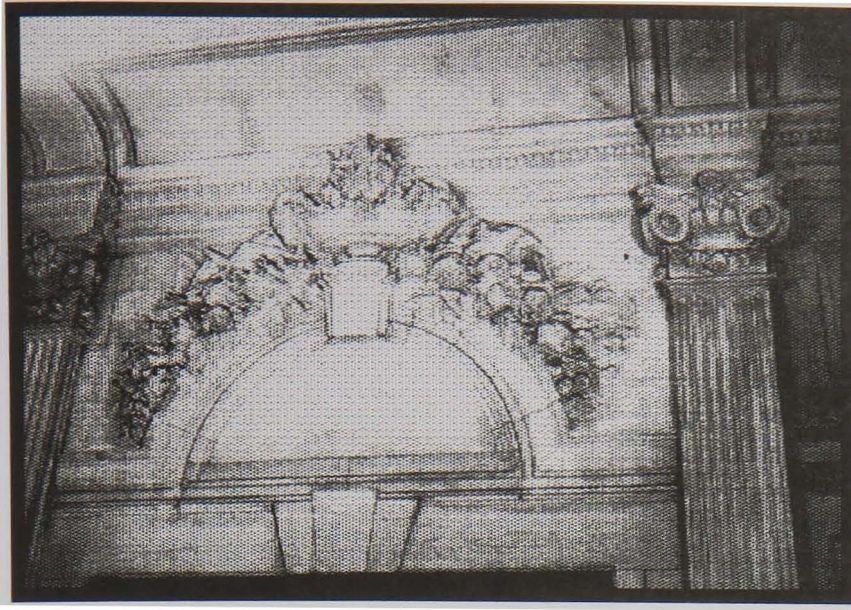


*1302 - B&B with Tastemain No. 10 CHT, Ballroom, Bedford Lemere #20224, The Builder, Oct.6, 1911, pg.391. 1303 & 1304 Maurice Tastemain No. 10 CHT, Ballroom ceiling and ceiling dtl. (chandeliers not original).*



An almost imperceptible indication of the lavish French interior within, Billerey's addition of a glazed porch distinguishes No. 10's edifice as being the only residence to depart from Nash's modulated façade. Even inside the doors, only the exquisite carved Caen-stone vestibule and its superb detailing advises one this is no ordinary domestic habitat; but approaching its staircase in black marble, a fully five storey-high domed extravagancy unfolds with the monumentality of Garnier's Paris Opera. In 1912 *Country Life* published two Bedford Lemere photographs of the Staircase and its hall: one at the first landing directed toward the vestibule - showing the Ballroom's balconets overlooking the space; the other from the top landing comprehending the enormous volume of this stupendous interior. Billerey celebrates a typically





**1305, 1306, 1307 & 1308 - carvers unidentified No. 10 CHT, Vestibule details.**



**1309 - artists unidentified No. 10 CHT, Upper Staircase Landing detail, showing Caen Stone architrave with stuc pierre overdoor and coffering.**

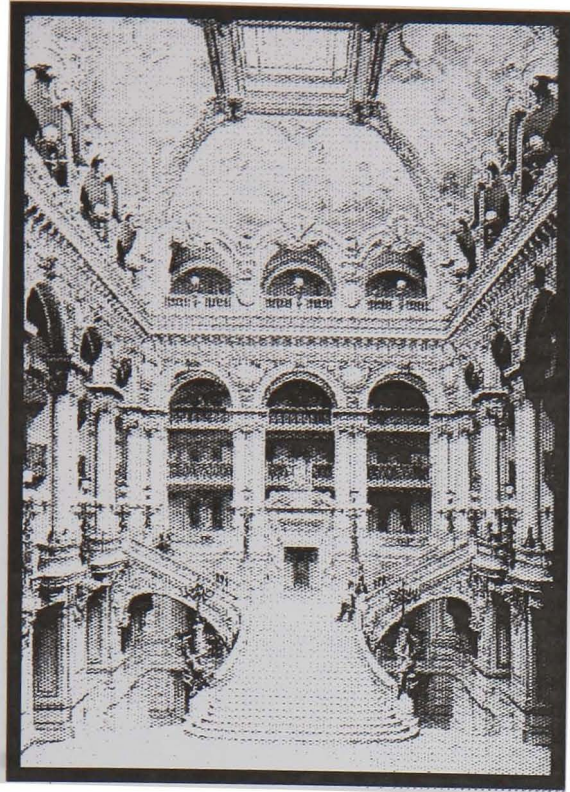




*1310 - W. Bainbridge Reynolds & M. E. Madeline  
under Billerey No. 10 CHT, Grand Staircase and  
balustrade (pictures, second rail and first landing  
doorway electronically removed).*



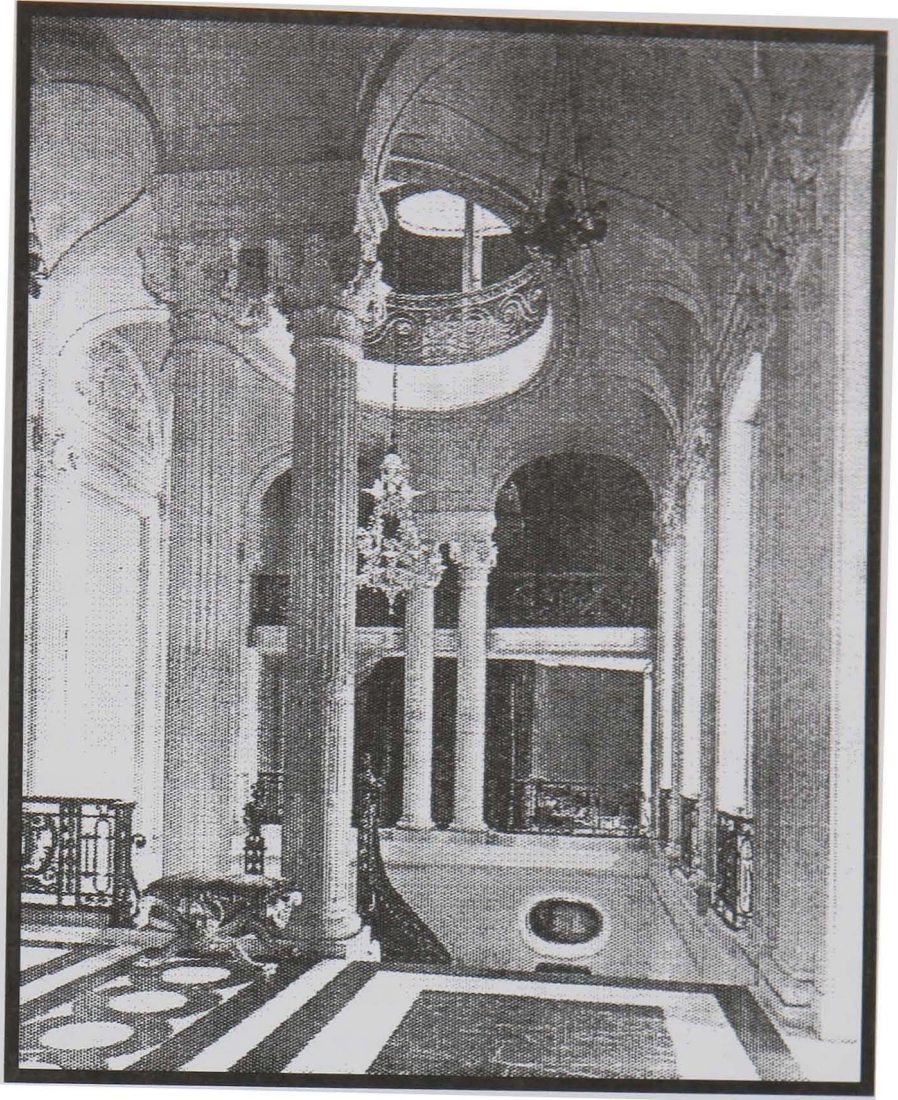




1311 - **Charles Garnier** *Paris Opera, Grand Stair Hall* from 'le Nouvel Opéra' (1878-80), Drexler, pg.274.

1312 - **Billerey** No. 10 CHT, Staircase Hall, Bedford Lemere #20223, *Country Life Supplement*, Oct.26, 1912, pg.xxviii.

1313 - **Bainbridge** under **Billerey** No. 10 CHT, Staircase looking toward Vestibule, Bedford Lemere #20222, *Country Life Supplement*, Oct.26, 1912, pg.xxxi.



nineteenth-century French fascination with mechanisation by his unabashed display of the elevator workings and its servants' staircase surround - all clothed in elaborately worked wrought iron.

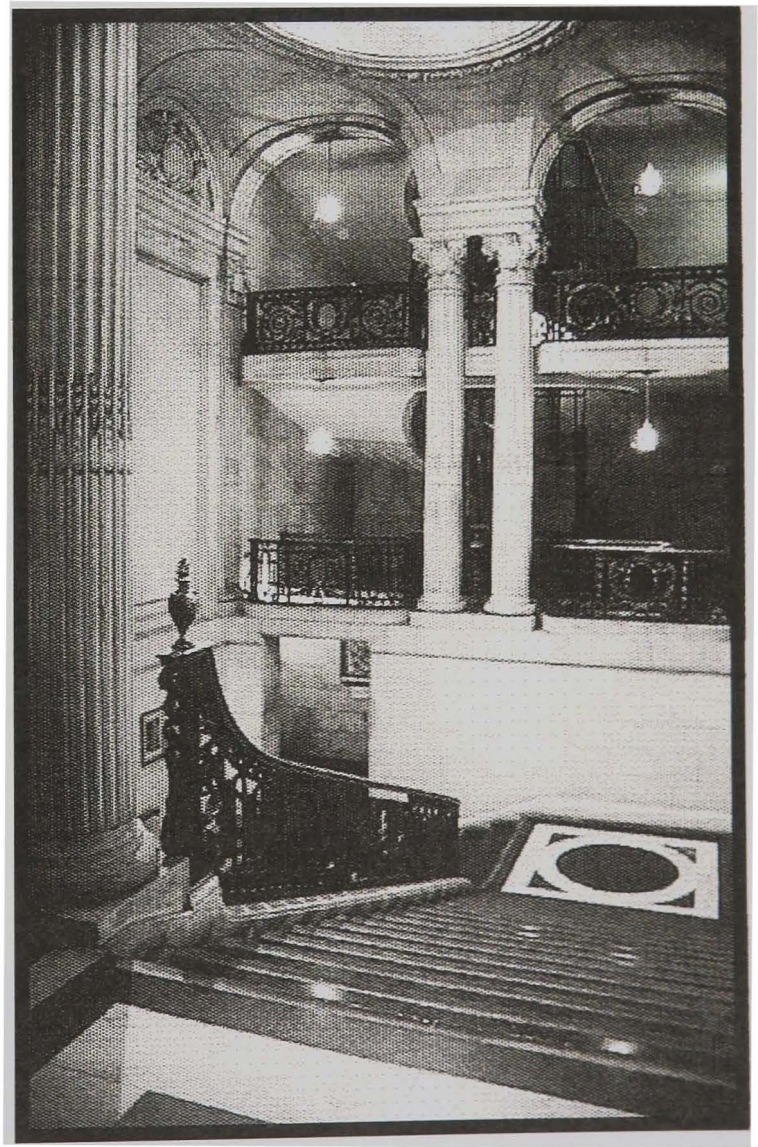
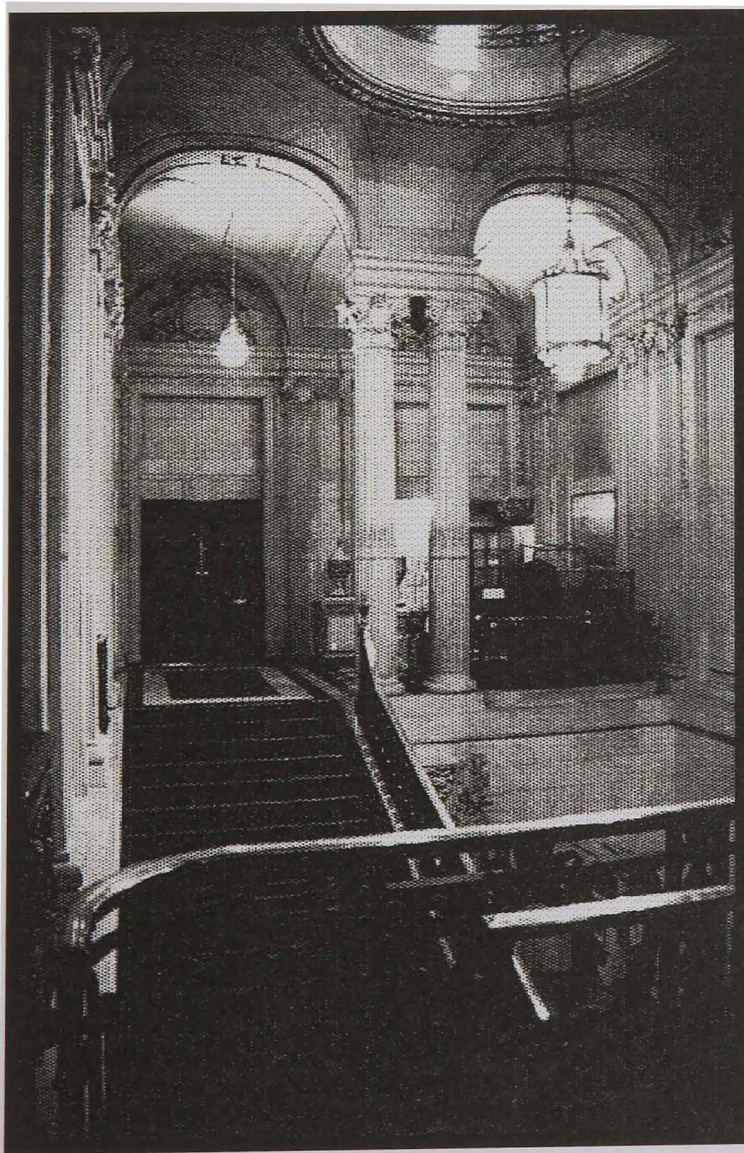
Although no records exist to identify the artists, *The Builder* singled out two as being *Englishman*, Mr. W. Bainbridge Reynolds for the wrought-iron balustrade and its bronze railing under the direction of one M.E. Madeline and Tastemain (who is identified as "Tarkman") as having executed the Ballroom ceiling with the assistance of one Bremond.<sup>615</sup> The stone carvers remain anonymous as do the highly skilled plasterers who executed the ceilings of both levels in coursed *stuc pierre*, toned so well that today only a few tiny separations reveal the subterfuge.

In addition to Blow & Billerey's efforts, the Ridleys had ambitious plans drawn up by Burns, Cackett & Dick of Newcastle, which had they been completed would have doubled the size of No. 10. Whether or not they might have been allowed to build a replica of Blagdon in the park to the north - connected over the road by a huge gallery - is





doubtful, but in any case, the War halted their plans, and No. 10 became a hospital for officers run by Lady Ridley herself. In 1916, after his second serious operation on a ruptured duodenal ulcer, Lord Ridley died at age forty-one.<sup>616</sup> Lady Ridley remained until 1923, after which the house was taken over by the now defunct Union Club. In 1929, with the lease expired, the property reverted to the Crown, and is today adjunct to the Commonwealth Secretariat Services Section, Marlborough House.<sup>617</sup> At the risk of seeming ungrateful to those who so graciously received the writer, his photographs of the Staircase are presented as a hopefully interim record of its present condition. Although the occupants have not seriously damaged the original fabric (except to pierce an access doorway at the first landing - electronically removed by the writer in figure 1310) there appears to have been little done to preserve this unique interior. One wonders if a more accommodating facility for the Economic Affairs Department could not be found, as their overcrowded condition is evident in the materials storage abounding in several areas including the Staircase itself. It would appear that without an extraordinary expense for restoration, No. 10, with its central location directly adjacent to Benjamin Wyatt's memorial to the Duke of York, might serve a purpose more appropriate to its architectural character.



*1314 & 1315 - Billeray No. 10 CHT, Upper Staircase Hall as it exists today (lamps not original, great chandelier removed).*



With this last example, the review has coincidentally returned to its place of embarkation; as Billerey's Staircase, with its *Petit Trianon*-inspired balustrade is positioned almost exactly where Holland's corresponding evocation for George, Prince of Wales, appeared when French influence in English architecture and decoration began its final and most determined presence, two hundred years ago.





## *Final Words*

Adding to an impressive domestic practice, Billerey was also responsible for several civic structures, including the Playhouse Theatre (1907 - now a BBC studio) and Harewood House office building, Hanover Square (1913); and whilst he certainly deserves a place in English architectural history - as do the remembered Blomfield, Joass, Mackenzie, Mewès & Davis, Rickards, etc. - the writer has mentioned his work, not only because of the spectacular interiors he conceived, which are particularly meaningful to this study, but also as a minor reparation to what seems to have been unmindfulness on the part of other writers of architectural history.

Should the reader be uncomfortable with the apparent nonchalance ending the narrative, it does so in the manner of many codas, which contain a thought inherent, but not directly stated in the general body of work, allowing that the speaker has concluded, but continues to speak. The culminating episode of this history was of course World War I, jolting mankind out of one hundred years' complacency, with architecture as well as so many other expressions of a suddenly vanished culture - enduring briefly in apparent disbelief that it had been dealt a mortal blow. Perhaps no student of history can avoid a sense of loss, but should be correspondingly gifted with an appreciation for that evidence which remains - perhaps sentimentally for its own sake, but hopefully too as a guide for new directions. Ultimately that must be the essence of this and any history of civilization in whatever form it takes. It is estimated that in the five years approaching the centennial, more people will be born than existed on the entire planet just five hundred years ago, and certainly that is programme enough to instruct us that our great-grandfathers' visions of the built environment will not suffice for today. Yet times even just recently past, having the privilege of a quieter distant offering greater facility for reflection and perspective, have a modern message: that *place* requires a consideration for the wholeness of human progress, and what has come before should be respected within that context and enjoined wherever possible with that which is to be. Perhaps a telling commentary on the conceptual difficulties of amalgamating the existing with the new was made in a recent lecture by Giles Worsley, where he described traditional structures in volumetric and spacial terms, whilst inadvertently referring to current buildings by their materials of steel, glass and concrete, as if modern architecture were a specie apart. Certainly semantics is a central issue for contemporary design with its seemingly relentless search for stylistic novelty combined with functional form, and whereas one might envision an entirely Palladian city for instance, one cannot imagine Frank Gehry's offering on page 503, as being a responsible



approach to any environment. One might hope that if modern practice were not to employ classical proportioning, at least an awareness of its principles might have produced a building more in sympathy with those adjacent, not to mention the city of Prague itself.

A great number of artists and craftsmen are dedicated to the conservation of existing structures, many in America and Great Britain having been identified by Brent C. Brolin and Jean Richards in *Sourcebook of Architectural Ornament* (1982) and Rebecca Smith in *A Directory of Specialist Crafts for Architects and Builders* (1990 - curiously not mentioning George Jackson & sons, whose recent investigations at Halton revealed the 'wrought-iron' staircase balustrade and first-floor balconets to be of reinforced carton *pâté*) or master carver, Dick Reid, whose studio's extremely fine renderings can be seen at the newly restored Spencer House, London, and enumerable buildings of great historical importance). Certainly the few which carry on the work of what were less than one hundred years ago teams of craftsmen, perform an invaluable service not only in the specificity of their varied contributions, but collectively as a professorship that historic man, in spite of Gehry and others, is not dead. Their efforts to perpetuate traditional technique and nineteenth-century craft innovation is evident with firms like Jacksons and J.P. Weaver Co. (figure 240), where original composition and *papier-mâché* moulds have been preserved to facilitate not only architectural conservation but to enhance entirely new projects where ornament is still regarded as a valued constituent.

The writer has devoted considerable attention to the techniques of reverse-mould decoration, as without the development of this science many glorious interiors characterising the best of nineteenth-century design would not have been physically (if not to say within economic sanity) possible to produce; and although the general focus here has been on their application to French interiors, it should be recognised that *all* nineteenth-century retrospective styles benefited from their use. Somewhat downmarket from the more lavish decorative materials discussed were a great variety of applied 'finishes' also accomplished with reverse-mould technique. Amongst these (which are discussed in detail by W.G. Sutherland in *Modern Wall Decoration* (Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., Ltd., 1893) were high-relief patterns generally produced in sheets, such as Lincrusta-Walton (which Millar also mentions), Cordelova, Anaglypta, Tynecastle Tapestry, Salamander and Lignomur, the constituencies of which were variations on *papier-mâché* (both ceramic and fibrous slab) compositions. Although the reader is certainly familiar with their appearance as dado, frieze and ceiling decorations enriching a great variety of mundane applications, what initiated as essentially an embossed surface covering, developed into sophisticated, high relief renderings



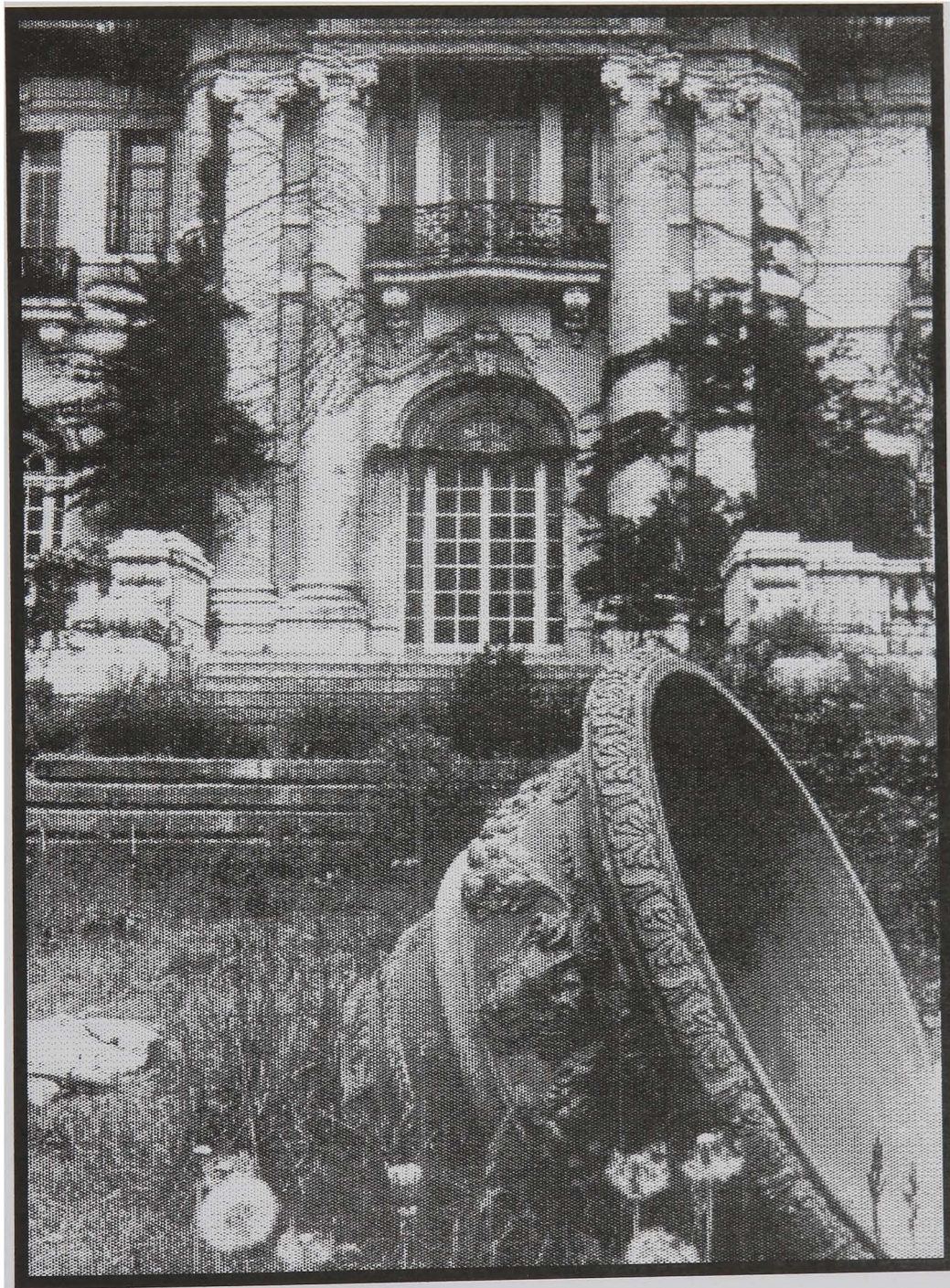
which, completing the cycle of having been first prompted by the interiors of the very rich, now qualified for a place at their inspirational beginnings. Amongst countless applications, examples can be found in the wall coverings of the State Dining Room, Bridgewater House, London, the Library frieze at Highclere Castle, Berkshire, and the highly ornamented cove of No.75 South Audley Street's Ballroom/Drawing-Room (which doubtless facilitated their removal from the ground floor apartment to their present location - page 528).

Certainly this history has concentrated on the homes of the wealthy and powerful, who were in their time our celebrities of today. Fashion in every form was their exclusive prerogative, with designers, architects and craftsmen following *their* lead, not the reverse. Careers were made (and in the case of Benjamin Dean Wyatt - broken) on their notion, and great concerns rose and fell according to their demand for product and service. The central problem in researching this study was to determine who these people were, and as wealth and social position alone did not indicate a French inclination, it became necessary to initially identify the interiors, and then discover the clients, artists and craftsmen who were involved in their creation. On the mathematician's principle that inverse deduction is the best check, the clients were further investigated to establish first if a significant any had been neglected, and then to see what connections (hence influences) - social or through agents - existed. Where they occurred the links became tangible, where they did not - whilst relevant to the general theme - these instances were seen as making no meaningful contribution to the overall composition (which at this juncture had acquired a life of its own). Paralleling this progress was an overview of the development of wealth in particular and the subsequent shift in fashion leadership from the nobility to the plutocracy. This resulted in the two, somewhat arbitrary, divisions of the narrative, which could also have been made on the four major style changes that characterised the nineteenth-century French interior in England. These were the work of the *petit maîtres* during the time of the French Revolution and the advent of Louis Quatorze style following directly afterwards; the general debasement of taste during the early and mid-Victorian period followed by the appearance of historicized design with a concurrent Beaux-Arts response to traditional interiors and those within buildings of an entirely new type, such as restaurants, hotels and ships. It seemed clearer to make the clefts as presented, as the first two stylistic approaches seemed to be promoted (barring Crockford's clubhouse) largely by the nobility, with the latter more characteristic of the plutocracy, who more often or not would have acquired a title or honorary within one or two generations. Perhaps the only author who directly refers to this client distinction is Mark Girouard in *The Victorian Country House*, where several structures studied are mentioned in his chapter entitled



"The Nouveau-Riche style"; but, as Girouard describes few interiors, better sources for developing the outline were found within the entire bound collections of *Country Life* and *The Builder*, at the RIBA Library, and the photographic collections at the National Monuments Record, Greater London Council and the Victoria and Albert Museum's Furniture and Interior Design Department.

Without question the finest resident architect to concentrate on the French interior in England was Benjamin Dean Wyatt, who like Billerey, has never received the credit due him.



*"A grand Newport mansion of the Gilded Age, fallen into decay, awaits the wrecker's ball." Quotation and photo from Thorndike, page 343.*



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- <sup>183</sup>.Summerson, (1988) p.245.
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- <sup>409</sup>.Wilson, (1988) p.169, Silver, p.8.
- <sup>410</sup>.Rothschild, (1985) p.11, Praz, p.353.
- <sup>411</sup>.Rothschild, (1985) p.9.
- <sup>412</sup>.Ibid. (1985) p.271; Wilson, (1988) p.428; Silver, p.8.
- <sup>413</sup>.Davis, p.94.
- <sup>414</sup>.Allibone, p.54; Roth, (1939) p.221.
- <sup>415</sup>.Adam, (1983) p.159; Wilson (1988) p.159.
- <sup>416</sup>.Jackson-Stops, G., "Tring Park, Hertfordshire", *Country Life*, Vol.CLXXXVII, No.47, November 25, 1993, p.63.
- <sup>417</sup>.Allibone, pp.55, 167.
- <sup>418</sup>.Roth, (1939) p.220.
- <sup>419</sup>.Pérouse de Montclos, (1989) p.311; Levallois/d'Angelis, pp.79-80.



<sup>420</sup>.Allibone, p.73.

<sup>421</sup>."An Artistic Restoration", *Traditional Homes*, December 1990, pp.29-31; writer's visit to Pallant House and thanks to Mr. David Coke. Curator.

<sup>422</sup>.Hammersmith Public Library mss, HM85/1833, HM86/302, *The Builder*, Apr.16, 1915, p.358-9; Faulkner, T., *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Hammersmith*, Nichols & Son (London-1839)pp.307-10; Armitage, F.M.A. "Extracts from Records of the London County Council, Historical Buildings section, and remarks, item HM728.3Bra, 31/12/52; *Private Eye*, Nov.15, 1985, p.11; Bird, J., Norman, P., *Survey of London*, Vol. VI, The Parish of Hammersmith, LCC, Spring Gardens (London-1915); Amery, plts 158-161.

<sup>423</sup>.*Survey of London*, Vol.XL, p.206; Forsyth, A., "The Grand Hotel Afloat", *Country Life*, Dec.26, 1985,p.2035; "A Rich Retreat", *Building Design* #1032, Supplement, April 26, 1991, p.XVI.

<sup>424</sup>.Jackson-Stops, (1978/1980) p.7.

<sup>425</sup>.McCorquodale, p.159; Cook et al, pp.121-31.

<sup>426</sup>.Rothschild, (1979) p.109.

<sup>427</sup>.Dates and locations taken from Kelley & Co.'s London Post Office Directories (Commercial), Westminster Public Library, Victoria Branch; also Thanks to H. Hobhouse, of the Survey of London.

<sup>428</sup>.Aslet, C., *Country Life*, Vol.CLXX, No.4393, Oct.29, 1981, p.1463; Aslet, p.266.

<sup>429</sup>.Allibone, p.73.

<sup>430</sup>.Dartmouth House brochure (c.1992), no page number.

<sup>431</sup>.Ibid.

<sup>432</sup>.Aslet, pp.16-28.

<sup>433</sup>.Colvin, (1995) p.1119; Aslet, C., *Country Life*, Vol. CLXX, No. 4392, Oct., 22, 1981, p.1378.

<sup>434</sup>.Forsyth, A., *Country Life*, Dec. 26, 1985, pp.2035-6.

<sup>435</sup>.Maxtone-Graham, pp.343-4; Forsyth, A., *Country Life*, Dec.26, 1985, p.2035.

<sup>436</sup>.Thornton, (1984) pp.14-5; Ward, Vol.I, p.216.



- <sup>437</sup>.Wharton/Codman, *passim*.
- <sup>438</sup>.Eastlake, *passim*.
- <sup>439</sup>.Metcalf, *passim*.
- <sup>440</sup>.Gannon, p.48; Metcalf, p.13.
- <sup>441</sup>.Behrman, (1972) p.181.
- <sup>442</sup>.Eriksen, (1974) pp.35,68,97,115; Stillman, p.39; Croft-Murray, p.49.
- <sup>443</sup>.Pegler, pg.166; Bajot, plt.43, fig.14.
- <sup>444</sup>.PRO B.T.31, box 27739, Co.187771.
- <sup>445</sup>.Millar, pp.343-379.
- <sup>446</sup>.*The Building News*, Vol. LV, July 6, 1888, p.7.
- <sup>447</sup>.Hobhouse, p.43.
- <sup>448</sup>.RIBA Library, Vulliamy folio, Vul 13/3/2.
- <sup>449</sup>.*ibid.* Vul/13/2/6-3, Vul/13/3/3 & 12.
- <sup>450</sup>.*ibid.* Vul/15/15/16
- <sup>451</sup>.*ibid.* Vul/15/15/23(ii)
- <sup>452</sup>.Kelley's Post Office London Directory (Commercial) 1887, 1889, 1890, 1900.
- <sup>453</sup>.Gere, (1989) p.38. Gere quotes Jill Franklin, *The Gentleman's Country House and its Plan*, 1981, p.246. Last line of the quotation from Roth, (1939) p.149.
- <sup>454</sup>.Roth, (1939) p.149; Cowles, p.138.
- <sup>455</sup>.Roth, (1939) p.156; Morton, (1962) p.181.
- <sup>456</sup>.Adam, (1983) p.31.
- <sup>457</sup>.Allibone, p.58; *The Building News*, May 12, 1882, p.572.
- <sup>458</sup>.Rothschild Archives I/2/24 (1880 through 1883).
- <sup>459</sup>.Pevsner/Cherry, p.629.
- <sup>460</sup>.Chancellor, E.B., *Wanderings in Piccadilly*, (1908) p.139.



- <sup>461</sup>.Aslet, C., "House of Flight", reprint from *Country Life*, Vol. CLXXIII, No. 4462, p.436, 24 Feb., 1983, courtesy of The Royal Aeronautical Society, 4 Hamilton Place, London.
- <sup>462</sup>.*The Building News*, May 12, 1882, p.572.
- <sup>463</sup>.Roth, (1939) p.150.
- <sup>464</sup>.Rothschild Archives, I/2/24 (1880 through 1883).
- <sup>465</sup>.Escott, B., manuscript, "Halton House" Rothschild Archives (1983) p.45.
- <sup>466</sup>.*ibid*, p.48.
- <sup>467</sup>.Information from Mr. H.J. Laundry, President of the Officers' Mess, RAF, Halton, 1992.
- <sup>468</sup>.Wilson, (1988) pp.258-9.
- <sup>469</sup>.Sitwell, (1948) pp.194-5.
- <sup>470</sup>.Wilson, (1988) p.343.
- <sup>471</sup>.Rothschild, (1897) p.3.
- <sup>472</sup>.*Ibid*. pp.2-3.
- <sup>473</sup>.Both quotations from Wilson, (1988) p.227.
- <sup>474</sup>.*Country Life*, Dec.20, 1902, p.808.
- <sup>475</sup>.Rothschild, (1897) pp.46-57.
- <sup>476</sup>.Chancellor, E.B., *The Private Palaces...*(1908) pp.303-5.
- <sup>477</sup>.*ibid*, p.312.
- <sup>478</sup>.Girouard, M., *The Victorian Country House* (1985) pp.320-5.
- <sup>479</sup>.Hardy, (1989) pp.108, 112, 144, 160-2, 240, 262; Hall, M., "Teesdale Romance", *Country Life*, Vol CLXXXVII, No.39, Sept.24, 1992, pp.68-71; Gayford, M., "An English Storehouse of Foreign Treasures", *Weekend Telegraph*, Nov.10, 1990, p.XIX; Girouard, *The Victorian Country House* (1985) p.296.
- <sup>480</sup>.Richardson, M., RIBA Catalogue of Drawings Col. "B", Gregg (London-1972)p.56; Dixon/Multhesius, p.253.
- <sup>481</sup>.Rothschild, (1897) p.3.
- <sup>482</sup>.*ibid*, p.3.



- <sup>483</sup>.ibid, p.7.
- <sup>484</sup>.ibid, p.9.
- <sup>485</sup>.ibid, p.10.
- <sup>486</sup>.Rothschild Archives, I/2/23.
- <sup>487</sup>.Rothschild Archives, I/2/24.
- <sup>488</sup>.Preliminary listing, "Decorative Stones of the Fireplaces, Wall Panelling and other Fittings at Waddesdon Manor, Aylesbury, Bucks. Waddesdon Ref. FGD/JBH/32/90, by Robin W. Sanderson & Francis G. Dimes, courtesy, Rosamund Griffin.
- <sup>489</sup>.Thornton, (1978) p.283; Tomlin, pp.14-5.
- <sup>490</sup>.Jackson-Stops, (1984) p.120.
- <sup>491</sup>.Waddesdon Catalogue entries on the Mozani fountain, courtesy, Rosamund Griffin, Keeper, Waddesdon Manor.
- <sup>492</sup>.Preliminary listing, "Decorative Stones of the Fireplaces, Wall Panelling and other Fittings at Waddesdon Manor, Aylesbury, Bucks. Waddesdon Ref. FGD/JBH/32/90, by Robin W. Sanderson & Francis G. Dimes, courtesy, Rosamund Griffin.
- <sup>493</sup>.Rothschild, (1897 pp.33-4.
- <sup>494</sup>.Maher, p.44. Mahler quotes Jullian Phillipe, *Edward and the Edwardians*, p.200.
- <sup>495</sup>.Cust, p.34.
- <sup>496</sup>.Bentley-Cranch, pp.111-120; Priestley, pp.43-5; Maurois, pp.61-2.
- <sup>497</sup>.Harris/de Bellaique/Millar, p.72; Nash, p.48.
- <sup>498</sup>.Original estimate, Charles Allom of Allom, White & Co., PRO. Work/19/1907.
- <sup>499</sup>.Vanderbilt, passim.
- <sup>500</sup>.Gates, pp.76, 121-3.
- <sup>501</sup>.Baker, p.286.
- <sup>502</sup>.Philip, Neil, ed., *Singing America, Poems that Define a Nation*, Penguin (New York-1995)pp.87-8; Bartlett, p.855; etc. references to Sandburg's poem, *Chicago*.



- <sup>503</sup>.Hines, p.117.
- <sup>504</sup>.both quotes: Drexler, p.470.
- <sup>505</sup>.ibid, p.472.
- <sup>506</sup>.Balsan, p.40.
- <sup>507</sup>.Gannon, p.68; Patterson, p.138.
- <sup>508</sup>.Patterson, p.140.
- <sup>509</sup>.Baker, p.358, Baker quotes the *New York Times*, April 26, 1892, p.8, which described the \$40,000 grille, fabricated by John Williams, West Twenty-Seventh Street, N.Y.C.,
- <sup>510</sup>.Baker, p.358.
- <sup>511</sup>.Balsan, p.93.
- <sup>512</sup>.writer's visit to *The Elms*, April, 1990.
- <sup>513</sup>.Patterson, p.152; Balsan, pp.44-8.
- <sup>514</sup>.Balsan, p.148.
- <sup>515</sup>.ibid p.134.
- <sup>516</sup>.Colby, p.74; Mais, S.P.B., "At the Sign of the Swan, Your Pen and Ink", brochure, no date, illustrations by Hanslip Fletcher, p.21.
- <sup>517</sup>.*The Builder*, April 28, 1911, pp.510-13.
- <sup>518</sup>.Luton Hoo house records, Folio 9, Mémoire 487,88, 1904-5, correspondence from Mewès & Davis, 6 Dean St., London, 3 December 1906.
- <sup>519</sup>.Balsan, p.134.
- <sup>520</sup>.Mais, "At the Sign of the Swan, Your Pen and Ink", brochure.
- <sup>521</sup>.Case 3278, GLRO BA: 15781, Nov.4, 1933, Nov.22, 1933, July 13, 1933, Feb. 27, 1936.
- <sup>522</sup>.Balsan, p.175.
- <sup>523</sup>.Colby, p.74.
- <sup>524</sup>.Barraclough, M., Clifford, T., and Walton, D., "Oldway Mansion and the Singer Family", brochure, Torgay Civic Society (Torquay-1988) npn; Toulson, Shirley, *The Companion Guide to*



Devon, Harper Collins (London-1991)p.223.

<sup>525</sup>.Penwill, pp.152-3.

<sup>526</sup>.ibid, p.153.

<sup>527</sup>.Hoskin, Donald F., "Paris E. Singer - Oldway House", paper based on information from Sir Reginald and Lady Leeds, Paignton, May 9, 1951.

<sup>528</sup>."Oldway Mansion: Paignton", brochure, Torbay Borough Council, ISBN 090 184 215 X, nd., p.3; Hoskin, "Paris E. Singer - Oldway House", paper, Paignton, may 9th, 1951.

<sup>529</sup>.Daily Times, London, "Motor-car in the Seine" (Paris, April 20, 1913).

<sup>530</sup>.Duncan, pp.247-52.

<sup>531</sup>.Penwill, p.148; Packe, p.21.

<sup>532</sup>.Gray, p.158; Service, (1977) p.433-4; National Archives (Paris) dossier 403.

<sup>533</sup>.Drexler, pp.236-7.

<sup>534</sup>.Aslet, C., *Country Life*, Feb.19, 1981, p.444; Gray, p.158; Ware, p.79; Fleetwood-Hesketh, *Country Life*, Oct.14, 1971, p.968; Service, (1977) p.205.

<sup>535</sup>.Aslet, C., *Country Life*, Feb.19, 1981, pp.442-4; Service et al, p.435; Fowler/Boniface, P., *Hotels and Restaurants, 1830 to the Present Day*, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments England (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London-1981) npn.

<sup>536</sup>.Service, (1977) p.205; Montgomery-Massingberd/Watkin, p.42; *Country Life*, Oct.14, 1971, p.968.

<sup>537</sup>.Originally Place Louis-le-Grand, Ward, Vol.II, p.326.

<sup>538</sup>.Montgomery-Massingberd/Watkin, p.22.

<sup>539</sup>.Ibid. p.27.

<sup>540</sup>.All quotes from Waring & Gillow Ltd, p.32.

<sup>541</sup>.ibid, pp.28.33.

<sup>542</sup>.M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.17.

<sup>543</sup>.ibid, p.27.



- <sup>544</sup>.Fowler/Boniface, npn.
- <sup>545</sup>.Nevill/Jerningham, p.98.
- <sup>546</sup>.Nevill, (1921) p.72.
- <sup>547</sup>.ibid, pp.95, 101-2.
- <sup>548</sup>.ibid, p.27.
- <sup>549</sup>.Maurois, p.145; Cust, p.114-5; Benchley-Cranch, p.126.
- <sup>550</sup>.Taylor/Bush, p.143.
- <sup>551</sup>.Montgomery-Massingberd/Watkin, quote Mme Ritz, *César Ritz - Host to the World*, p.27; Jackson, (1964) pp.48-9.
- <sup>552</sup>.Taylor/Bush, p.144.
- <sup>553</sup>.M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.43; Pevsner/Cherry, (1989) p.627.
- <sup>554</sup>.Gray, p.61.
- <sup>555</sup>.M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.43; Gray, p.158; Taylor/Bush, p.144; Waring & Gillow, Ltd., p.89; *The Architect & Contract Reporter*, Oct.19, 1906, p.260.
- <sup>556</sup>.Waring & Gillow, Ltd., p.23.
- <sup>557</sup>.ibid, p.89; Taylor/Bush, p.144.
- <sup>558</sup>.ibid (Waring & Gillow, Ltd).
- <sup>559</sup>.M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.47 and as is plainly evident.
- <sup>560</sup>.Lewis/Darley, p.299.
- <sup>561</sup>.M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.49.
- <sup>562</sup>.ibid, p.44.
- <sup>563</sup>.Mewès & Davis archives, Plymouth, Ritz Correspondence File, Letter 15. Oct.. 1948 (cost £1.575).
- <sup>564</sup>.M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.49.
- <sup>565</sup>.Mewès & Davis archives, Plymouth, M&D estimate for War Damages, Nov, 1946.
- <sup>566</sup>.Mewès & Davis archives, Ritz Correspondence file, letters, 8 & 14Oct. 1948 (cost £277.0.0).



- <sup>567</sup>.M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.49.
- <sup>568</sup>.Mewès & Davis archives, Ritz Correspondence file, letter 29 April 1948.
- <sup>569</sup>.Waring & Gillow, Ltd., p.89.
- <sup>570</sup>.M-Massingberd/Watkin, p.24; Taylor/Bush, p.129.
- <sup>571</sup>.*The Concise Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. III, Oxford University Press (Oxford-1992)p.3177; Chancellor, *The Private Palaces...* (1908) p.291; Fort, pp.155-8.
- <sup>572</sup>.Service, (1982) p.118; Cooper, p.47.
- <sup>573</sup>.Ibid. (Service) p.118.
- <sup>574</sup>.Script posted at Visitors' Entrance Corridor, the Wernher Collection, Luton Hoo; corroborated by Curator, Mrs. Oonagh Kennedy.
- <sup>575</sup>.Smith, pp.3-5.
- <sup>576</sup>.Luton Hoo house scrap book containing excerpts from the Luton Times.
- <sup>577</sup>.Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, Bedford Record Office. Vol.30. 11-13.
- <sup>578</sup>.Lees-Milne, p.30.
- <sup>579</sup>.Smith, p.5.
- <sup>580</sup>.ibid, p.5; *Country Life*, Vol.CLXXXVI, Jan. 23, 1992, p.50.
- <sup>581</sup>.Colvin, (1995) p.880.
- <sup>582</sup>.Waagen, Vol.II, p.357.
- <sup>583</sup>.The Illustrated London News, no date recorded, 1843, p.325.
- <sup>584</sup>.ibid.
- <sup>585</sup>. Hall, M., *Country Life*, vol.CLXXXVI, No.4, Jan.23, 1992, p.52.
- <sup>586</sup>.Neufforge, plts/pp: 3/543, 6/546, 3/549, 6/552, 4/484, 5/485. 6/486.
- <sup>587</sup>.Luton Hoo house documents, account labelled "9", submitted by M&D on behalf of Germain, 3 December 1906.



- <sup>588</sup>. Von Schelling, Friedrich (1775-1854), from *Philosophie der Kunst*, Cumberland, G., *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press (Oxford-1955) p.415.
- <sup>589</sup>. Luton Hoo house documents, Folio 13.
- <sup>590</sup>. Fleetwood-Hesketh, P., "The Royal Automobile Club", *Country Life*, Oct. 14, 1971, p.966; Hall, M., "Luton Hoo, Bedfordshire-II", *Country Life*, Jan. 23, 1992, p.51; Gray, pp.158-9.
- <sup>591</sup>. Luton Hoo house documents, Folio 7, (summary of the overall costs, 21 Dec., 1906).
- <sup>592</sup>. Smith, p.6.
- <sup>593</sup>. Tilden, P., *True Remembrances, The Memories of an Architect*, *Country Life* (London-1954) pp.169-70.
- <sup>594</sup>. Luton Hoo house documents, Folio 19.
- <sup>595</sup>. Ward, Vol.I, p.30.
- <sup>596</sup>. Luton Hoo house documents, Folio 12.
- <sup>597</sup>. Ibid
- <sup>598</sup>. *Country Life*, Vol.CLXXXVI, No.4, Jan.23, 1992, p.52; Gray, p.314.
- <sup>599</sup>. *Evening Standard*, 8 August 1991, pg.4.
- <sup>600</sup>. Neale, Vol. I, npns; Fedden R., *Polesden Lacey, Sussex*, booklet, *Country Life* ltd (London-1947) pp.3-4.
- <sup>601</sup>. Fedden, R., *Polesden Lacey, Surrey*, The National Trust, 1991 printing, BAS Printers, Ltd. (Over Wallop, Hampshire-1991)p.32.
- <sup>602</sup>. Aslet, C., *Country Life*, Feb.19, 1981, pp.442-4.
- <sup>603</sup>. Kaufmann, E., & Raeburn, B., *Frank Lloyd Wright, Writings and Buildings*, New American Library (New York-1960)p.98.
- <sup>604</sup>. Jencks, Charles, *The Prince, the Architects and New Wave Monarchy*, Prince Charles's speech to the Institute of Directors, Feb. 16th, 1985, Rizzoli Int. Publ (New York-1988)p.45.
- <sup>605</sup>. *Survey of London*, Vol. XXXIX, p.73.
- <sup>606</sup>. *Survey of London*, Vol. XL, p.47.



<sup>607</sup>.Tube 48, RIBA Drawings Collection, unnumbered drawing stamped "W.Cubitt & Co./recd. 22 April 1911/from Detmar Blow/Fernand Billerey/3 Pall Mall/S.W. April 1911".

<sup>608</sup>.ibid, many unnumbered drawings of the Gothic staircase, Entrance Hall and Music Room, stamped by Buscaylet as having been received from Billerey.

<sup>609</sup>.Beard, (1983) p.187.

<sup>610</sup>.Allfrey, p.273.

<sup>611</sup>.ibid, 272-3.

<sup>612</sup>.*Survey of London*, Vol. XXXIX, pp.311-15.

<sup>613</sup>.Ridley, Ursula, Ridley Mss. 4468, Northumberland Record Office (1964) & National Register of Archives (1965).

<sup>614</sup>. The Royal Institute of British Architects, "Proposer's Separate Statement" in nomination for Fellowship (Norman Stikes?), Oct.2, 1906. RIBA Library, Biog.File (Blow).

<sup>615</sup>.*The Builder*, October 6, 1911, p.391.

<sup>616</sup>.Ibid.

<sup>617</sup>.Kelley's POLDs, years, 1922 through 1930.

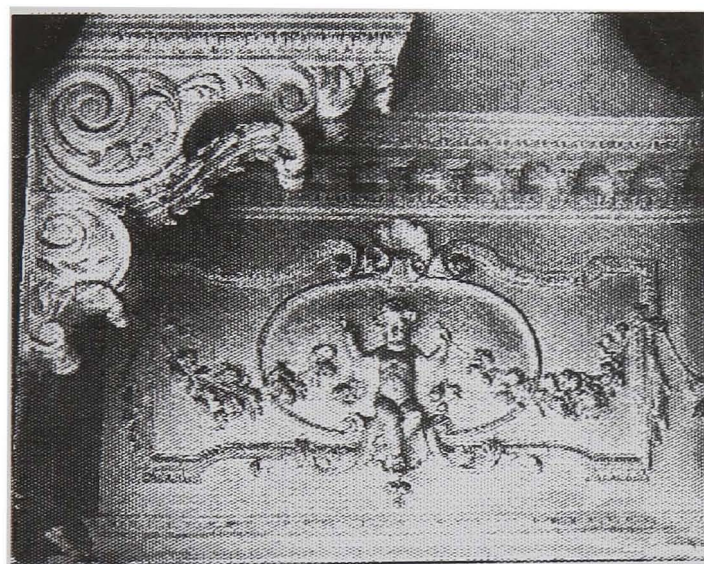


## Exhibit I

Selections of Battiscomb & Harris details,  
Westminster Library, Victoria Branch.



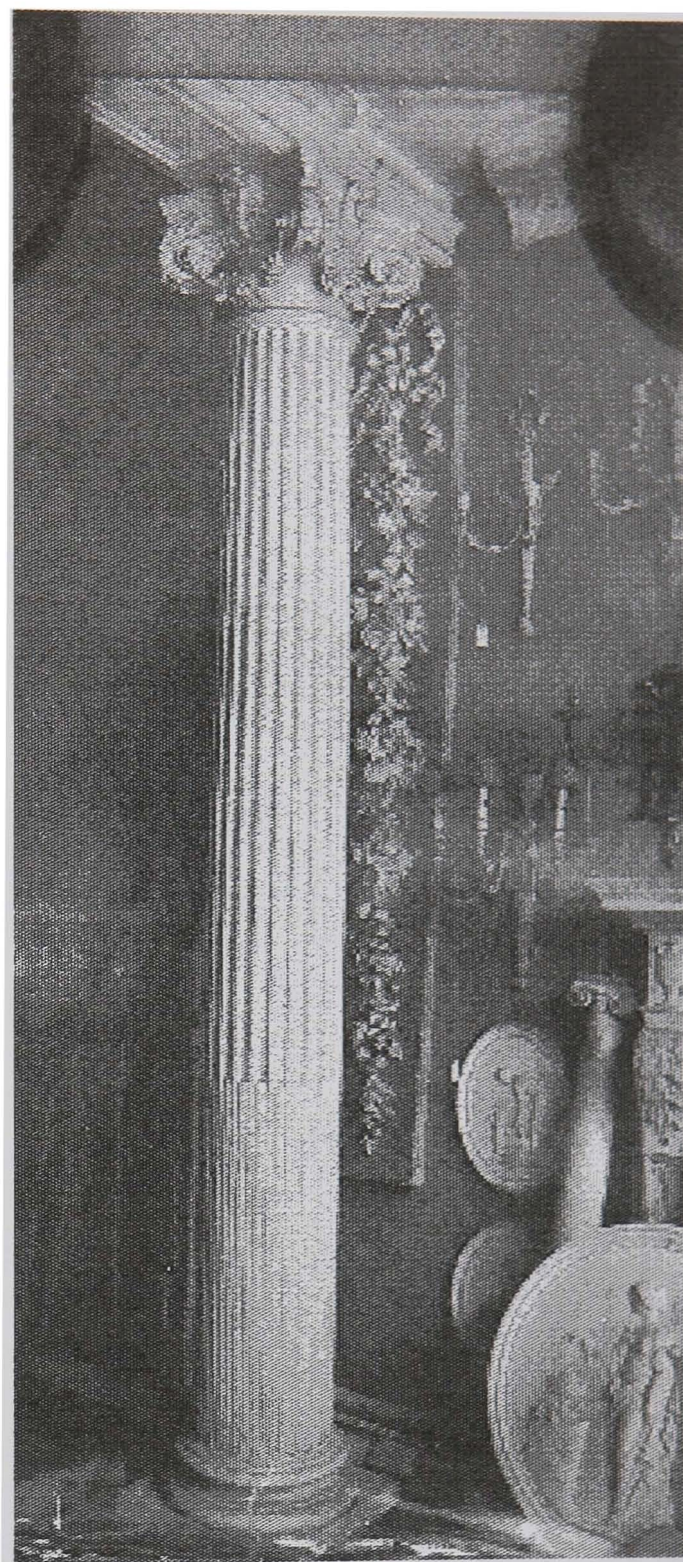
*a - Corinthian Pilaster Capital* "#141, Derby Ho[tel], mss. series #107-#119.



*b - Console & Cornice with frieze* "Queen Anne's Gate, 1909." (Blow & Billerey, architects), mss. # 9393.



*d - Oval Roundel of three putti with an Eagle*  
mss. #8758



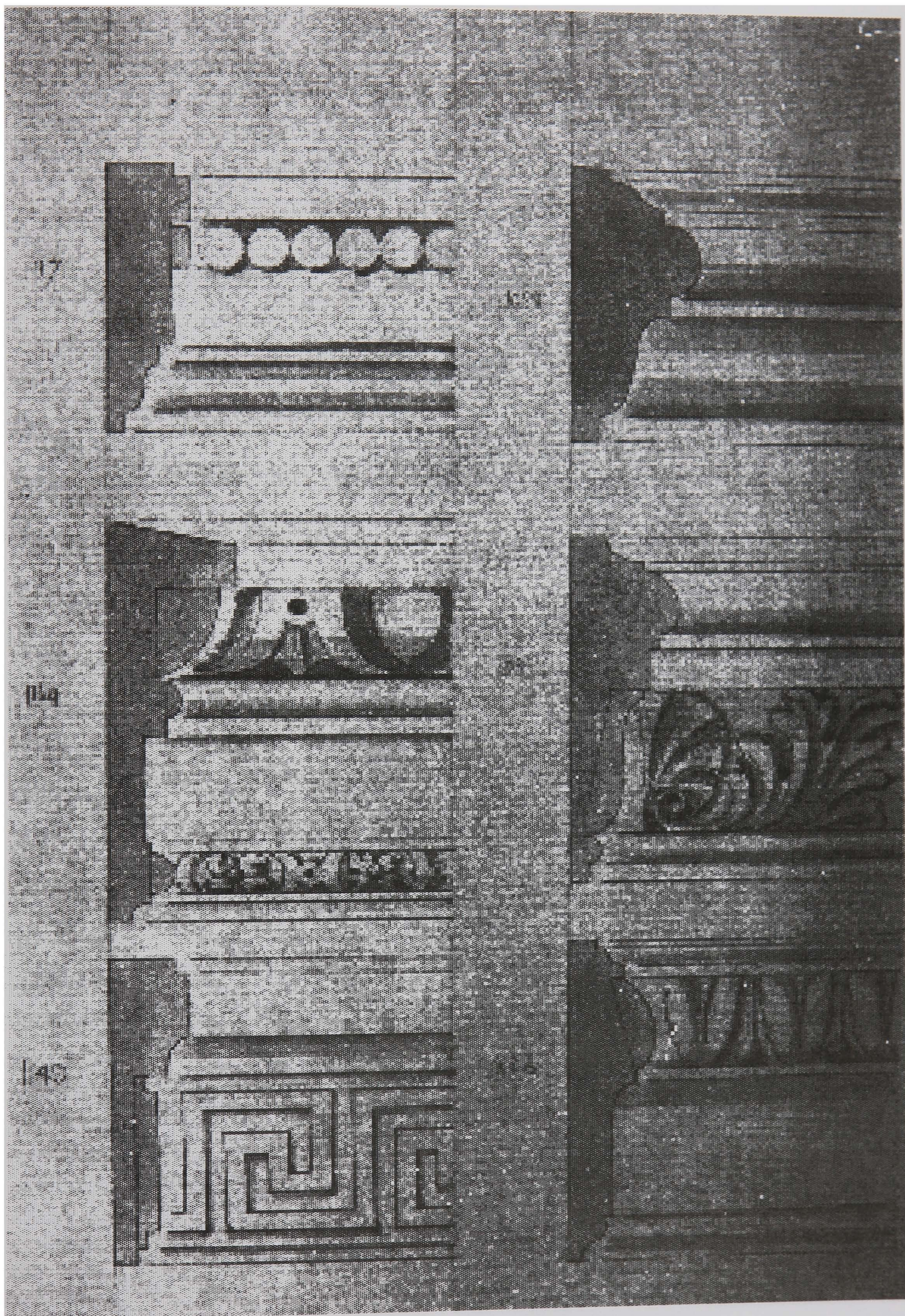
*c - Ionic Column with garlanded volutes* Photo taken at B&H premises, showing floral drop, plaques, sconces and chimney-piece details, mss. #8999.



*e - Ionic Pilaster Capital* "Photo, John Avery for The Architect, mss. #6238.



Exhibit I



*f - Moulding Designs, Page 7 of 11, mss. 571/517-527.*



## Exhibit II

Facsimile of the second of three chronological tables  
exhibited at G. Jackson & Sons, Mitcham, Surrey.

### Chronological Table of English & French Architecture

Compiled by J. Jackson & Sons Ltd

Architectural Decorators, Rathbone Works, Rathbone Road, Hammersmith. W.G.

FRENCH	ENGLISH		
Francis I 1545-1547	Fontainebleau Palace Chateau de Chambord Hotel de Ville, Paris	Henry VIII 1509-1547	Corpus Christi College, Oxford Hampton Court Palace Thame Palace, Oxon
Henry I 1547-1559	Chateau de Blois Tuilleries Palace Louvre Palace Chateau d'Anet Chateau Rambouillet	Edward VI 1547-1553 Mary 1553-1558	Gwydie Castle Canons Ashley Yarworth Hall Sizergh Hall Little Moreton Hall Checquers Court
Francis II 1559-1560			
Charles IX 1560-1574	Hotel Luxembourg	Elizabeth 1558-1600	Wraxall Manor Longleat House Hardwicke Hall Maddon Hall Brougham Castle
Henry IX 1574-1610	Palais St. Germain		
Louis XIII 1610-1643	Chantilly Palace Chateau de Richelieu	James I 1603-1625	Bromley-by-Bow Knowle, Kent Hatfield House Audley End Barnstaple, Old House
		Charles I 1625-1649	Whitehall Palace Banqueting Hall Rainham Hall Coleshill, Berkshire Ashburnham House
		Inigo Jones 1605-1652	Early Renaissance Period
Louis XIV 1643-1715	East Side of Louvre Hotel de Soubise Versailles Les Invalides	Commonwealth 1649-1660	
	J.A.Mansart, Architect Jean le Pautre " " Jean Berain " " J. Marot " "	Charles II 1660-1685 Sir Christopher Wren 1665-1710	Greenwich Palace Hampton Court Extension St. Paul's etc. Belton House
	Le Brun " "	Grinling Gibbons 1670-1715 J. Soujamore Sir John Vanbrugh 1685-1689 1690-1728	Carver, worked for Wren and others Holme Lacey Blenheim Palace Stowe House Castle Howard Chatsworth House Petworth House Britwell House
	Andre Le Notre Daniel Marot	William III 1689-1702	William Talman Charles Seymour
		Queen Anne 1702-1714	Sir James Thornhill 1695-1734 Painter on Ceilings & Walls
Louis XV 1715-1774	Additions to Versailles Hotel de Toulouse (Paris) J.F. Blondel, Architect Boucher, Artist 1725-1770 J.A. Meissonnier, Artist & Architect De la Joie, Architect Watteau, Artist Pantheon, Paris Palais de Justice, Paris	Nicholas Hawksmoor 1694-1736	Queen's College, Oxford Easton Neston House Christ Church, Spitalfield Barnsley Park, Glos.
		George I 1714-1727	William Kent 1705-1748 Houghton Hall Stowe Badminton Holkham Hall
			Early Georgian Per.
			Matthew Brettingham Norfolk House
			James Gibbs 1710-1750 Radcliffe Library, Oxford Ditchley House
			J. Leoni Moor Park, Herts.
		George II 1727-1760	Isaac Ware 1750-1760 Chesterfield House
			Colin Campbell Campion Place, Sussex Mid-Georgian Period
			Sir Robert Taylor Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn 1740-1780 Court Room, Bank of England
			Henry Flitcroft Wentworth Woodhouse John Wood 1746-1784 Royal Circus, Bath



## Exhibit II

Facsimile of the third of three chronological tables  
exhibited at G. Jackson & Sons, Mitcham, Surrey.

### Chronological Table of English & French Architecture

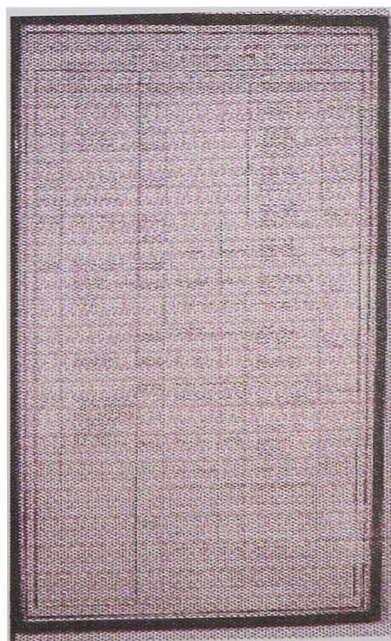
Compiled by J. Jackson & Sons Ltd

Architectural Decorators, Rathbone Works, Rathbone Road, Hammersmith. W.G.

FRENCH

ENGLISH

FRENCH		ENGLISH		Adam Period
Louis XVI	Petit Trianon, Versailles	George III	Robert Adam 1748-1792	Syon House
	Couvet, Architect	1760-1820		Kenwood House
	Fragonard, Artist			Burwood House
	Clodion, Artist			
	Soufflot, Architect		Joseph Rose 1760-1790	Plaster Worker
	Prieur, Architect		George Jackson 1780	Composition Worker
	Gabriel, Architect			
	David, Artist			
	Rousseau, Architect		Anjelica Kaufmann	Artist & Painter of
			R.A. 1763-1791	Ceilings & Wall Panels
			Antonio Zucchi 1761-1790	Painter & Designer of
				Painted & Relief Panels
			John Flaxman 1778-1800	Carver & Sculptor of
				Relief Panels
			Chippendale 1743-1785	Cabinet Maker
			Sheraton 1775-1806	Cabinet Maker
			Hepplewhite 1765-1795	Cabinet Maker
			Giovanni Cipriani	Artist & Painter
			1755-1765	
			Sir William Chambers	Somerset House
			1752-1795	Albany, Piccadilly
Louis XVII			Abraham Swan 1756-1775	Designer and Architect
1792				for Private Houses
			John Carr 1758-1807	Court House, York
				Republic
				Sledmere House
Madelene Church				
1792-1804				
Ist Empire	La Malmaison, Paris	Regency	Henry Holland 1760-1800	Carlton House, Pall Mall
1804-1814	Chateau de Compiègne	? -1820		Brooks's Club, St. James's
St.				
	Hotel de Mag...ille		James Wyatt 1770-1813	Heveningham Hall
	Berthault, Architect			Pantheon, Oxford St.
Regency Period				9 Conduit St.
			George Dance 1776-1820	Mansion House
Louis XVIII				Old Newgate City
1814-1824				
Charles X		George IV	John Nash 1783-1830	Regent Street
1824-1830		1820-1830		United Service Club
		William IV	Sir John Soane 1783-1835	Bank of England
Louis Phillippe		1830-1837		Trinity Church, Marblebone
1830-1848				Late Georgian
				Period
			C. J. Richardson	Designer & Architect
			1755-1840	for Private Houses
			C. R. Cockerell	Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
			1830-1863	Completed St. George's Hall
				Liverpool
			Sir Robert Smirke	British Museum
			1815-1848	Oxford Cambridge Club, Pall Mall
			James Paine	Nostel Priory
			1815-1860	Interior Private Houses
Republic	Hotel de Ville	Victoria	Sir Charles Barry	Bridgewater House
1848	Le Sueur, Architect.	1837-1901	1820-1865	Reform Club, Pall Mall
				Houses of Parliament
				(Gothic Revival)
				Early Victorian Period
			Decimus Burton	Athenian Club, Pall Mall
2nd Empire			1824-1872	
			H. Lonsdale Elmes	St. George's Hall, Liverpool
Republic			837-1857	
1872			John Jackson 1860	



*a - Jackson & Sons - Chronology  
beginning with the Norman Period,  
(first of three, after 1860) writer's photo*



*Selection of Contracts*  
by *George Jackson & Sons Ltd.*

<i>Kensington Palace</i>	<i>Royal Lancaster Hotel</i>
<i>Lembeth Palace</i>	<i>Berkeley Hotel</i>
<i>Howard University</i>	<i>Lowndes Hotel</i>
<i>Osterley Park</i>	<i>Woodcote Park</i>
<i>Audley End</i>	<i>National Provincial Bank</i>
<i>Sutton Place</i>	<i>Midland Bank Leeds</i>
<i>Guildhall Portsmouth</i>	<i>Howard Hotel</i>
<i>Civic Centre Southampton</i>	<i>Summer Palace, Bait al Barakat</i>
<i>100 Park Lane</i>	<i>Salalah Palace</i>
<i>Diamond Corporation Holborn</i>	<i>El Shams Club Hotel, Cairo</i>
<i>Dorchester Hotel</i>	<i>Coutts Bank, London</i>
<i>Bristol Hotel</i>	<i>Worthy Park, Winchester</i>
<i>Cadogan Hotel</i>	<i>Ritz Hotel</i>
<i>R. A. C. Club</i>	<i>Gatoil - Piccadilly</i>
<i>Old Vic Theatre</i>	<i>Woodlands - Country House</i>
<i>Courtauld's Institute</i>	<i>Madame Tussauds</i>
<i>Victoria &amp; Albert Museum</i>	<i>Sir John Soanes Museum</i>
<i>The Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith</i>	<i>&amp; Kensington Palace Gardens</i>
<i>Cornwall Terrace, London</i>	<i>Scone Palace, Scotland</i>
<i>Ash House, Devon</i>	<i>Equity &amp; Law, 10 Hertford Street</i>
<i>Crown Courts, Nottingham</i>	<i>Notel Priory</i>
<i>Heads of State Residences, Bait al Barakat</i>	<i>Irvine Residence California</i>
<i>St. James Palace</i>	<i>National Westminster Bank (Ladbury)</i>
<i>Chandos House</i>	<i>Royal Exchange</i>
<i>Bain Residence California</i>	<i>Lloyds Bank Oxford Street</i>
<i>Polesden Lacey</i>	<i>Hadlow Place</i>
<i>Claridon Park</i>	<i>Al-Husn Palace</i>
<i>American Consular Residence</i>	<i>Ambassador's Residence Lusaka</i>
<i>Brewers Hall</i>	<i>Hanover Terrace</i>
<i>Fishmongers Hall</i>	<i>Restoration Charles Street, W.1</i>
<i>Westminster Bank Cheapside</i>	<i>Cottesbrook Hall</i>
<i>Merchant Taylors</i>	<i>Cimard. South Western House</i>

*G. Jackson & Sons Ltd. London W. 6.*

*Founded in 1780*

[writer's note] A complete list of Jacksons' projects is impossible as no day books exist. It is thought the company records disappeared during their move in 1934 from Rathbone Place to Rainville Road, Fulham. For all other purposes this was fortuitous, as 49-50 Rathbone Place was bombed during the War. Toller, pg.35.





## Exhibit IV

On February 6, 1844, a presentation was made to the Royal Institute of British Architects by Thomas Ponsonby, Sole Agents for Benedetto Albano's<sup>a</sup> papier-mâché, which was called "Cannabric Composition".

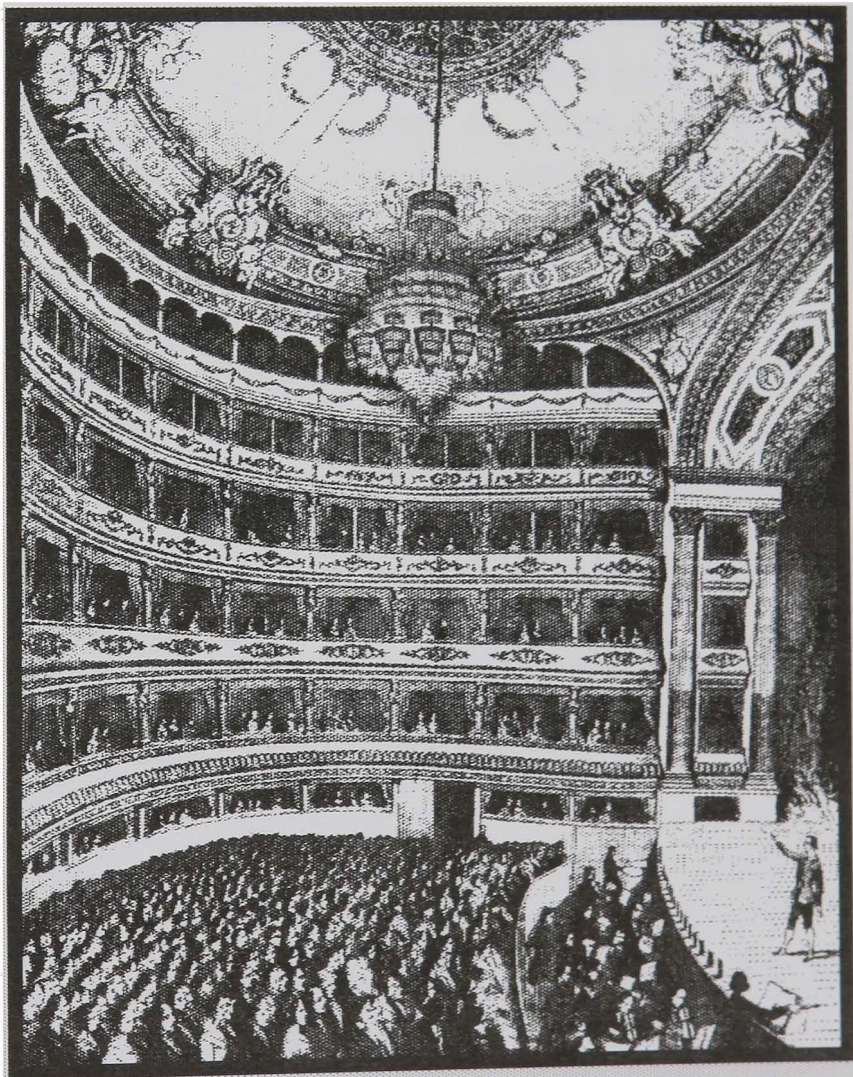
"Description of Mr. Albano's Composition for Ornamental Mouldings"

To Royal Institute of British Architects  
Mr. President and Gentlemen

In bringing before you a new material for decorators it is unnecessary to urge upon you any other than its economical merits.

Particularly as so great a demand exists in the present day for ornament and a taste so much better than its value in an artistical point of view requires no comment. At the same time the materials intended to be used for the productions of moulded patterns have not lent themselves so readily to the demand of Architects as could be desired for they either possessed too much whiting to be used in ornaments of great relief and extent or from want of consistency or the influence

<sup>a</sup> Benedetto Albano (1795/6-1881) died in London, having served on the Boards of Works of both Paris and Madrid. His major project in England seems to have been the 1847 opera house conversion of Sir Robert Smirke's 1809 Theatre Royal, Covent Garden; which had itself replaced one by Henry Holland, burnt the year previous. Coincidentally, Albano's transformation was dubbed The Royal Italian Opera, but it lasted a scant eleven years, when it too went the way of Holland's theatre. In 1858 the theatre now known as the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, replaced Albano's theatre, and remains much as its architect, Edward Middleton Barry (1830-80 - son of Sir Charles Barry) designed it. As the illustration from *The Builder* follows Albano's patent (No. 9890, 5 October 1843) and his presentation to the RIBA, it is reasonable to assume many of the decorations are executed in "Cannabric Composition". Mackintosh, I./Sell, M., eds., *Curtains, or A New Life for Old Theatres*, John Offord Ltd. (London-1982)p.155; *The Builder*, April 10, 1847, pp.165,170; March 8, 1856, p.132; Nov. 26, 1881, p.662; Woodcroft/Kelley, #9890 "Preparing materials and applying them to the manufacture of ornamental mouldings".



ia - B. Albano, "Interior of the New Opera House, Covent Garden", *The Builder*, April 10, 1847, p.170



of the atmosphere they crack and become defaced.

These circumstances have led to many attempts to substitute new materials but such endeavours if successful in attaining the artistical objects have not always been equally effective as to price.

Price indeed is a material element, for consideration as it not only influences the demand for ornaments, but greatly affects the architect in carrying out his designs conformably with the funds at his disposal, it is evident too that many means which can be found of advancing taste among the public, must at the same time extend the sphere of the Architect's duties and his emoluments [fees].

The Cannabric composition, specimens of which are now before the Institute, is an Italian Invention, which although it has been some years in existence has only lately been brought to such a degree of advancement as to justify its introduction into this country. The Patentees feeling it a duty to the profession, by whose opinion its merits must be tested, to submit it to them in the first instance, have taken the earliest opportunity of laying it before the Institute of British Architects as the most fitting representatives of the Architectural body at large. The material which is used in this composition is common hemp, which possesses great tenacity and equal pliability, at the same time that it is procured in abundance at a moderate price affords every facility for carrying out the invention.

It will be seen by the specimens lying on the table, that it admits of application to any internal architectural ornaments, as ceilings, bosses, truss mouldings, brackets, pannels [sic], capitals, pilasters & mouldings of every kind & in every style, as well as for external purposes. It has an exceedingly good surface admitting any kind of varnish, paint or finish, for gilding it surpasses every composition or material yet presented. Specimens of painting, varnishing, gilding, burnishing & bronzing, will be found on the table. It takes a beautiful bronze colour & by gilding acquires quite a metallic surface. The advantage of these properties in decorations will be well appreciated by the architect as giving new resources for carrying out his ideas. Neither are the consistency & durability of the material less observable being at the same time hard and elastic and admitting of being knocked about and falling down without injury to the substance. From these properties it is not liable to crack when put up in a room, it will be seen also that it possesses a great degree of sharpness and boldness, which it is the intention of the patentees to increase by using a greater degree of mechanical power, it is such a light material that it admits of being put up in large masses on the ceilings & in other situations in relief.

It will be observed that any kind of figure, ornament or foliage may be executed by the material which cannot be done in any other material except at a great expense. With



regard to external properties it is not at all affected by wet or the vicissitudes of the atmosphere, being waterproof, with regard to fire, although it inflames in contact it is not a good supporter of combustion. In centrepieces for ceilings, door panels & other compositions, as it admits of being executed in larger pieces it is much less troublesome than the ordinary materials.

The number of patterns for selection in the Cannabric material, at the present moment amounts to about four hundred, many of them quite new, but this number will speedily be increased, while the patentees will be most happy to afford every facility to the Members of the Institute & Architects, who may wish to have patterns executed from their own designs, by which its merits can be tested & a greater scope is opened for decoration and original design. The ornaments will also be supplied in the rough if required so that it can be finished under the direction of the Architect.

For upholstery, tables, consols &c. the new material is equally applicable as well as in all situations where painting & gilding can be applied, for Picture frames, Miniature frames & looking glasses. It is also capable of application admitting of exuberant ornament at a moderate rate.

The price ranges from about ten to twenty per cent below the prices of articles in common use & it is on these grounds that the patentees expect its extensive application, for decorations in the colonies & the East and West Indies. Great difficulties at present exist as most materials suffer rapid deterioration from the climate. The supply of a durable & cheap material will therefore be the means of extending ornamental decorations in our external possessions & cause a greater demand for the advice or designs of the Architectural profession at home.

London 6th February / 44  
Thos. Ponsonby, Sole Agent  
Regent Circus, Piccadilly

RIBA Library, London, Albano, file No. 20.



**Exhibit V**      *Selected Contracts taken from  
Decorative Contracts, Warings, 1907*

**Royal**

Royal Apartments, Windsor Castle & Buckingham  
Palace  
H.M. King Edward's Yacht  
Royal Saloon Carriages for T.M. The King &  
Queen  
Aridore Villa, Copenhagen, for H.M. Queen  
Alexandra and H.I.M. the Dowager  
Empress of Russia  
H.M.S. *Ophir* & *Renown* for the Prince &  
Princess of Wales  
H.I.M The German Emperor's Yacht  
H.H. The Khedive of Egypt's Yacht  
H.R.H. The Princess Eulalie's Palace, Madrid  
Palace for H.R.H., Prince Nicholas of Greece,  
Athens  
H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught's Residence,  
Bagshot Park  
Palace for H.H. The Maharajah of Kapurthala  
**London**  
Aldwich Theatre  
Alexandra Hotel, Hyde Park Corner  
Argyll Motor Co.'s Showrooms  
Arthur's Club, St. James's Street  
Arts Club, Hanover Square  
Bank of Tarapaca & Argentina  
Beefsteak Club  
Berkeley Hotel  
British South Africa Co.'s Offices  
Boodles Club  
Café Royal  
Caledonian Club  
Camden Theatre  
Carlton Club  
Carlton Hotel  
Carpenters' Company  
Challiss's Hotel  
City Liberal Club  
Clothworkers' Hall  
Coronet Theatre  
Daly's Theatre  
De Keyser's Hotel  
East India Club  
Fleming's Restaurant  
Frascati Restaurant  
Fuller's (Ltd.) Depots  
Garric Club  
Golden Cross Hotel  
Guildhall  
Grocers' Hall (State Dining Rooms)  
Hans Crescent Hotel  
Haymarket Theatre  
His Majesty's Theatre  
Hotel Cecil  
Houlder Bros.  
Hyde Park Hotel  
Imperial Restaurant  
Institute of Civil Engineers  
International Club, Charing Cross  
International Mercantile Marine Co.'s  
Offices  
Isthmian Club  
Junior Army & Navy Club  
Junior Athenaeum Club  
Junior Naval & Military Club  
Junior United Services Club  
Ladies' Athenaeum Club  
Langham Hotel  
Law Courts  
Law Society  
Liverpool Street Hotel  
Lyceum Music Hall  
Mansion House  
Marlborough Club  
Medieval Art & Industrial Club

Metropolitan Tramways Co.'s Offices  
Middlesex County Council Offices  
National Bank of South America Offices  
New Oxford & Cambridge Club  
New Theatre  
Norfolk Square Hotel  
Offices & Works  
Orleans Club  
Oxford & Cambridge Club  
Pall Mall Club  
Peter Robinson's Showrooms  
Prince's Restaurant  
Putney Hippodrome  
Queen Anne's Mansions  
Raleigh Club  
Reggiore Club  
Ritz Hotel  
Royal College of Surgeons  
Royal Court Theatre  
Royal Princess Theatre  
St. George's Club  
St. Geroge's Vestry Offices  
St. James's Restaurant  
S. James's Theatre  
Salisbury Club  
Savoy Hotel & Theatre  
Stock Exchange  
Tate Art Gallery  
The Admiralty Offices  
The Board of Works Offices  
Tivoli Restaurant  
Union Club  
United Club  
Vaudeville Theatre  
Waldorf Theatre  
Wellington Club  
Wesleyan Centenary Hall  
Windham Club  
**Paris**  
Théâtre Ambigu  
Théâtre Gaîté  
Théâtre Vaudeville  
Paris Big Wheel  
Restaurant Henri  
Restaurant Julien  
Théâtre de la Renaissance  
**Theatres outside London & Paris**  
Broadway Theatre - Depford  
Empire Palace Theatre - Liverpool  
Royal Artillery Theatre - Woolwich  
Royal Court theatre - Liverpool  
**Hotels & Restaurants outside  
London & Paris**  
Adelphi Hotel - Liverpool  
Bath Hotel - Matlock  
Camden Theatre - Camden Town  
Carlton Hotel - Edinburgh  
Carlton Hotel - Johannesburg  
Crescent Hotel - Filey  
Crown Hotel - Lindhurst  
Crown Hotel - Scarborough  
Deansgate Hotel - Manchester  
Exchange Station Hotel - Liverpool  
Grand Hotel - Liverpool  
Grand Hotel - Llandudno  
Grand Hotel - Lyndhurst  
Grand Hotel - St. Anne's-on-Sea  
Great Western Hotel - Cardiff  
Hotel Cumbria - Aberystwyth  
Hotel d'Angleterre - Copenhagen  
Hotel de Paris - Monte Carlo  
Hotel Metropole - Bexhill-on-Sea  
Hotel Terminus - Bordeaux  
King Arthur's Castle Hotel - Tintagel  
Kiserhof Hotel - Berlin  
Lear Hotel - Folkstone  
Luxor Hotels Co. - Egypt  
Metropole Restaurant - Birmingham  
Middleton Hotel - Ilkley



Midland Grand Hotel - Bradford  
 Midland Grand Hotel - Glasgow  
 Midland Grand Hotel - Morecambe  
 Mount Nelson Hotel - Capetown  
 North British Hotel - Edinburgh  
 Old Ship Hotel - Brighton  
 Palatine Hotel - Blackpool  
 Palmena Hotel - Westcliffe-on-Sea  
 Princess Hotel - Monte Carlo  
 Queen's Hotel - Scarborough  
 Queen's Hotel - Cardiff  
 Queen's Hotel - Leeds  
 Queen's Hotel - Southport  
 Royal Bath Hotel - Mortlock  
 Royal Exeter Hotel - Bournemouth  
 Royal Hotel & Café - Scarborough  
 Royal Hotel - Ventnor  
 St. Enoch's Hotel - Glasgow  
 Savoy Hotel - Cairo  
 Shepherds Hotel - Cairo  
 Tiley's Restaurant - Newcastle-on-Tyne  
 West Cliff Hotel - Folkstone

#### **Ships**

State Rooms - RMS "Majestic"

State Rooms - RMS "Teutonic"

#### **Steam Yachts [abridged to identified owners]**

"Branwen" - Lord Howard de Walden

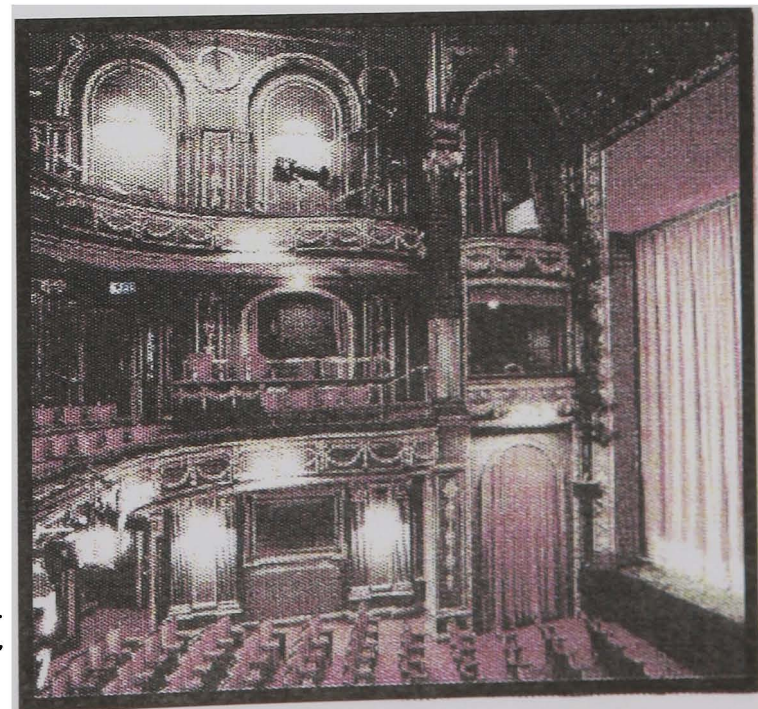
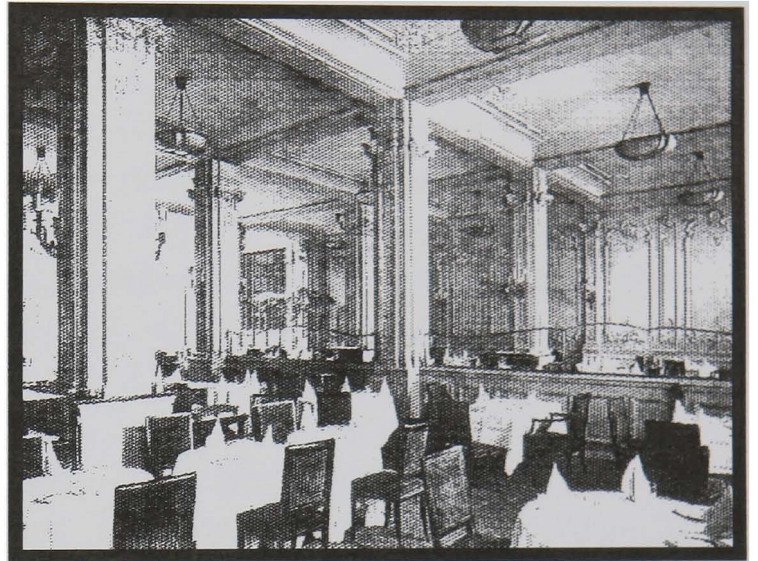
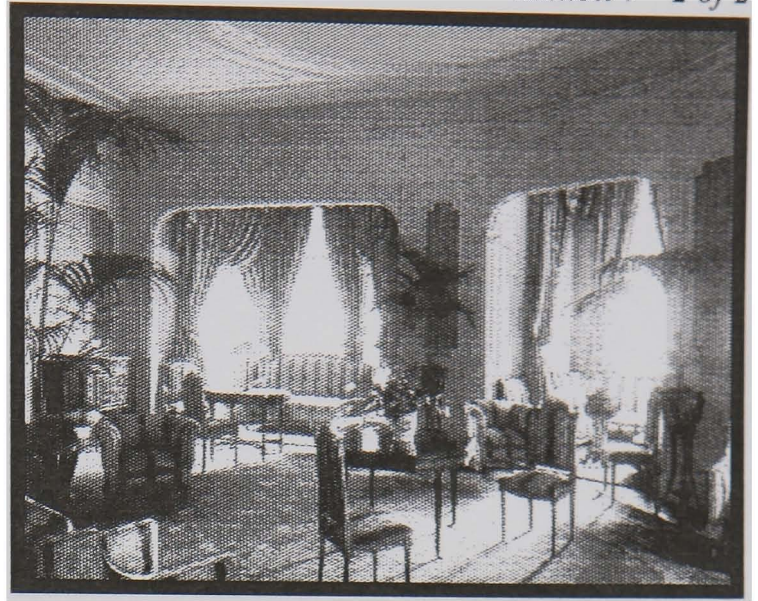
"Lividia" - H.I.M. The Emperor of Russia

"Lysistrata" - J. Gordon Bennett

"Princess Alice" - H.R.H. the Prince of Monaco

"Valient" - William K. Vanderbilt

"White Ladye" - Mrs Langtry



above

**a - Archer & Green with R. Lloyd Café Royal, Grill Room (1863+) Friedman (London)p.27.**

right

**b - Reed & MacDonald - Hans Crescent Hotel, London, Drawing Room (1896), Type-Louis XVI, Cooper, plt.78, pg.130. c - Thomas E. Colcutt The Savoy, "Café Parisian", Bedford Lemere 24139 (1918), NMR.. d - Perry & Reed Hotel Cecil (dem.1930), The Grand Restaurant, Bedford Lemere series 13570-9 (1896) NMR, Westminster Lib. E-12. e - W.G.R. Sprague Aldwych Theatre, Westminster (1905) type-Louis XVI, Glasstone, fig.156, pg.107.**



## Exhibit VI

The reader should not be led to believe quarter-sawn technique is specifically indicative of nineteenth-century work, as it is merely one of the two most common, centuries-old methods of extracting planks from felled lumber. With plain-sawn, a board cut through the middle of the whole log will show a straight grain on the outer sides, with the midsection producing a comparatively irregular figure. Quarter-sawn panelling is obtained when the log is first cut radially into quarters, then sawn into boards at approximately right angles to the concentric rings, producing a comparatively lively grain cross-sectioning the rays.<sup>1</sup> The advantage of quarter-sawn technique is that the panel has a layered thickness, whose surface is not as critically affected by normal expansion and contraction and has a comparatively harder surface. With the rings linearly exposed, plain-sawn panels are more susceptible to cracking, as movement occurs across the face. The panelling traditionally preferred for carving is composed of plain-sawn plank sections taken from the outer edges, as the grain there is finest, and does not interfere visually with the design. As the strength of the wood is perpendicular to its face, the direction of relief carving is 'with the grain', and is therefore less sensitive to damage, as would be the case in a quarter-sawn panel, where carving is against the grain and the opportunity for accidental chipping of the layered surface increases with the delicacy of detail.

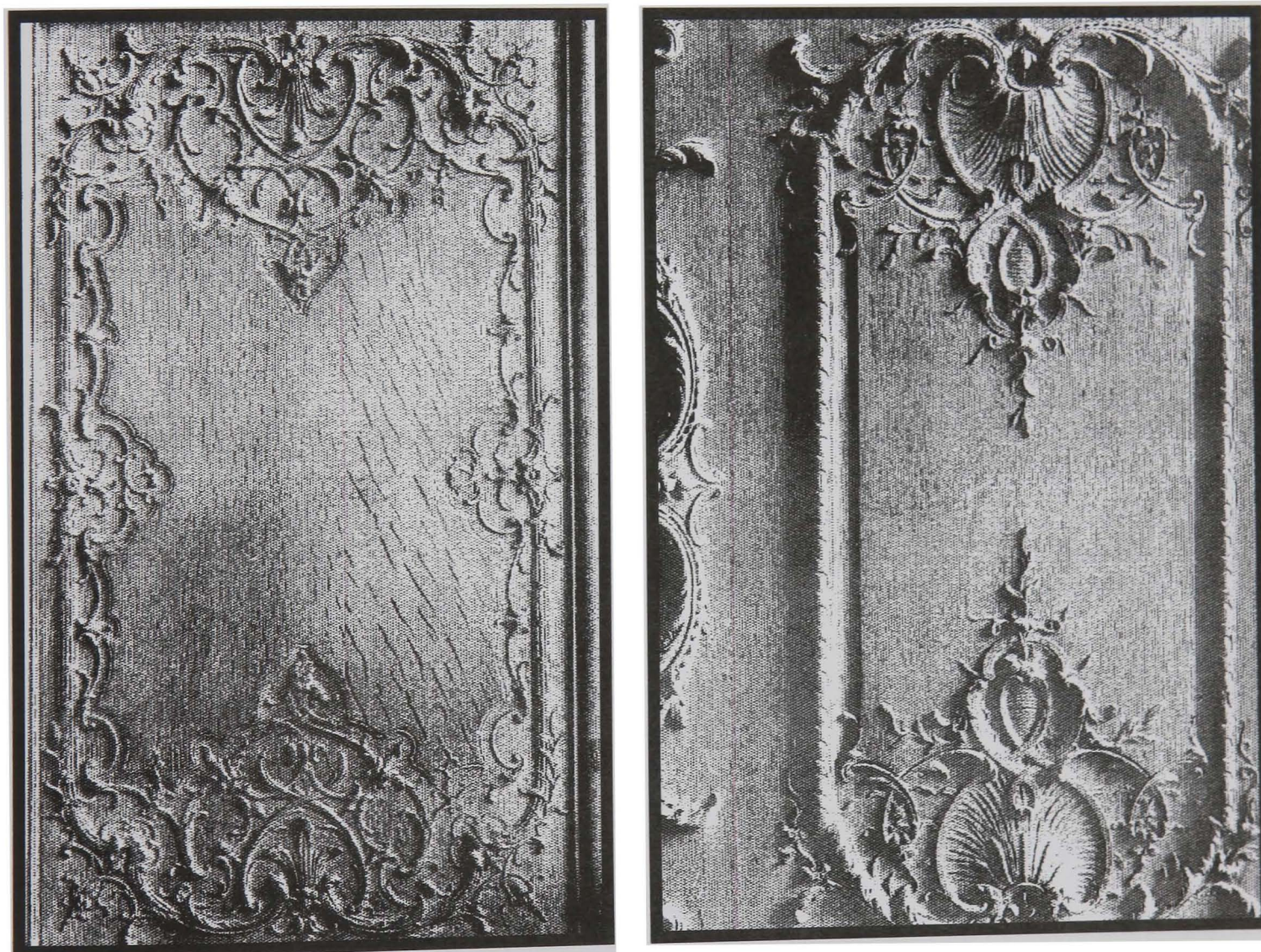
As most are aware, oak is the most durable of all the hard woods used for panelling, with European oak being the most desirable (versus the faster growing and wider grained American woods). By the middle of the eighteenth century, most "wainscot" quality oak was imported from Holland, Russia (Riga), Austria, the German States (Danzig), and America,<sup>a 2</sup> and by the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the cost of oak for decorative purposes was well beyond the reach of all but the very wealthy.<sup>3</sup> The extravagant use of plain-sawn oak, where less than half of the material available was used, became prohibitively expensive even for the eighteenth-century French. Even the labor-intensive practice of carving the complex frames and mouldings out of a single built-up plank proved equally impractical by the time revivalist work came into vogue. From the Parliamentary 'Reports from the Committees' of 1836, it would seem that the French were in advance of English practice if testimony allowing that "...moulding and ornaments might be made by saws cutting by means of steam instead of by a chisel...very much done now in Paris by machines..."<sup>4</sup> is correct; for even though

<sup>a</sup> Michel Gallet indicates the material used for eighteenth-century *boiseries* was Dutch oak..."which, in its natural state...made rooms dark. For this reason, domestic interior designers left this so-called panelling *à la capucine* to monasteries and churches, and primed the wood with light-coloured paint". Gallet, pg.124.



wood-working machines - especially the carving devices patented by Irving, Taylor, Williams and Jorday were in limited use in England, production machinery was largely limited to steam-powered circular- and band-saws, and planing and mortising machines.<sup>5</sup>

The writer's illustrations demonstrate early Rococo work (c.1735) by Jacques Verberckt at the *Château de Rambouillet*. Figure A shows a panel composed of two quarter-sawn planks, one of which (to the right) displays the typically lively grain, whilst Figure B demonstrates a plain-sawn panel in which the detail is carved from a single plank (joints indicated in red). Both the rooms from which the examples are taken featured dado and over-door and *trumeau* panels where not only is quarter-sawn technique evident, but the planks themselves are, in contrast to those of the major panelling, joined horizontally. It would seem in these instances, that even Verberckt's exquisite artistry was compromised by a seemingly haphazard approach to the joinery.



**A - Verberckt** *Château de Rambouillet, Salon, panel dtl., Guérinet, plt.28.*

**B - Verberckt** *Château de Rambouillet, "Boudoir de Marie-Antoinette", panel dtl., Guérinet, plt.54.*

<sup>1</sup>. *The Woodworker and Art Craftsman*, Vol. XXI, Nov. 1917, p. 266; Aronson, Joseph, *The Encyclopedia of Furniture*, Crown Publishers (New York-1938, 17th printing-1959) pp. 154, 198; Dizik, A. Allen, *Concise Encyclopedia of Interior Design*, Second ed., Van Nostrand Reinhold (New York-1988) p. 173; Pegler, Martin, *The Dictionary of Interior Design*, Bonanza (New York-1966) p. 359.

<sup>2</sup>. *The Woodworker and Art Craftsman*, Vol I., Nov. 1901, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup>. Eastlake, C.L., pp. 42, 52.

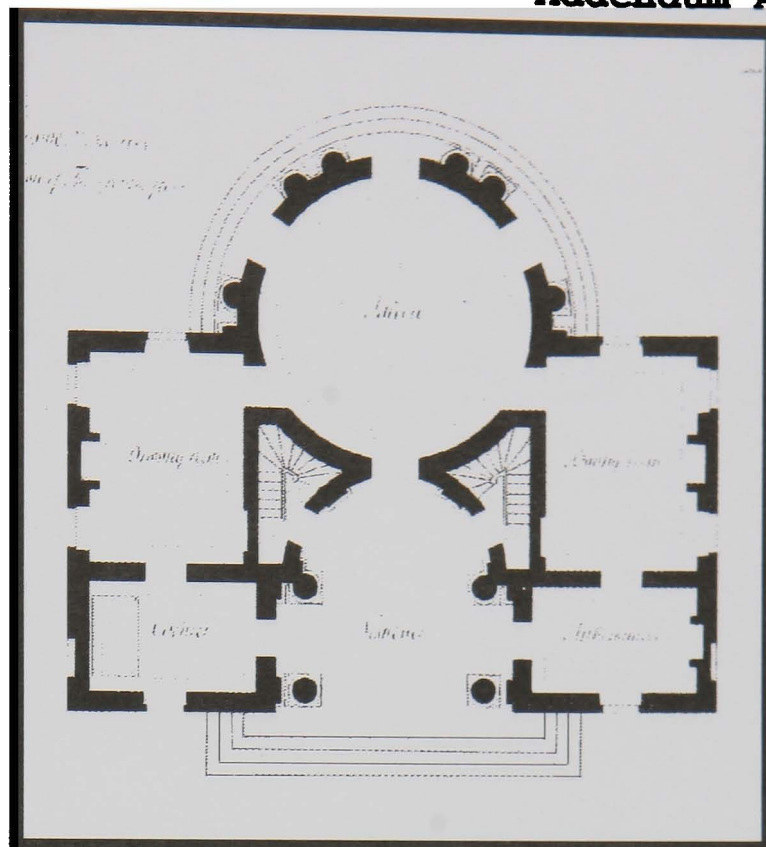
<sup>4</sup>. *Parliamentary Reports*, 1836, 15 vols, Vol. 9, p. 347.

<sup>5</sup>. Ramsey, L.C.C., p. 1323.



## Addendum to page 26

In his research on the French influence in William Chambers's work, the writer reviewed the architect's original drawings housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum's Drawings Collection, where several studies of casinos are archived as well as a few Chambers had done of French decoration. Similar studies had been viewed in the portfolios of several architects / decorators including the Wyatts, Matthew Boulton, John Dibblee Crace, etc., and at the time, no significance was attached to these other than they were evidence of an interest in French decorative detailing, which by and large was not reproduced in their built projects. All of Chambers's casino designs - delightful as thought they may be - are Palladian cum Neo-Classical in attitude and not at all French concepts. Of course they *became* French concepts once English thought appeared in the last phase of pre-Revolutionary architecture in France, but at the time of this particular visit to the V&A, the thought of a cross-cultural symbiosis had not occurred to the writer. Why the casino drawings were not revisited after Chambers's *Treatise* at the British Library was examined and the connection had indeed been made, is an embarrassment for which there is no explanation, as this should have been a natural result. As luck would have it however, the writer discovered Michael Snodin's recently published (1996)<sup>1</sup> catalogue of Chambers's drawings at the V&A, page 177 of which frankly jolted the him out of a complacency that the notion of *Bagatelle's* authorship, was in reality an utterly indisputable fact. *Bagatelle's* plan appears on page 29 of the text where the comparison with Chambers's casino illustrated here is obvious, and should the reader need further evidence: Chambers's other unpublished casino plans and elevations show many variations on this precise theme, most of which are in Box A229c, where plan drawing 750/3364 illustrates a single, elliptical staircase in the *Bagatelle* position, and elevation drawing 745/3416 shows the exact dome Bélanger used, with only the drum decoration varying from Chambers's design. The plan reproduced here is dated 1754, which is most likely the approximate date assignable to the majority of these casino studies - well before Bélanger made his visit to England.



*William Chambers Plan of a Casino (1754), V&A Drawing's Collection Cat. 739/3369/A229c.*

<sup>1</sup> Snodin, Michael, ed., *Sir William Chambers, Catalogues of Architectural Drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, V&A Publications (London-1996)