

ANTIQUÉ RECOGNITION AND RESTORATION

The evolution of furniture from 1660 to 1960

A social history of furniture for restorers

What do the terms,

RENOVATION

RESTORATION

CONSERVATION mean?

What does the term ***WORTH*** mean?

Why is **RECOGNITION** used in the same sentence as **RESTORATION**?

Differences between fine and vernacular furniture – the difference between functional and status furniture?

The course is mostly about fine furniture in the British Isles but it will touch on influences from other parts of Europe – which other countries were influential and why?

What is the relationship between English and Irish furniture?

Why are we starting with the 1660 restoration of the British Monarchy?

How and why did Europe but particularly The British Isles change in the late seventeenth century from medieval to proto-modern?

How did those changes affect furniture?

1. Tudor Dynasty; Henry VII (1470) – Elizabeth I (1603)
Decline of feudalism beginnings of world trade and empire
2. Stuart Dynasty; James I (1603) – Queen Anne (1714) includes the puritan commonwealth interregnum - The age of enlightenment.
3. House of Hanover or Georgian era; George 1 (1714) – George III (1811) The age of elegance and unprecedented wealth.
4. Greater Regency Period; French revolution – William IV (1837)
Human rights National bankruptcy and recovery.
5. Victorian Period; 1837 – 1901 Industrialisation and consumerism – the class system.
6. Edwardian (pre-1st World War) Period; 1901 – 1914 The end of the old order, egalitarianism, suffrage and revolutionary ideals
7. Post 1st World War – Art Deco - Modernist Period



Pieter Bruegel
Hunters in the
snow 1565

Why is this picture a landmark in the social history of Europe? There are no angels or saints; it doesn't have a classical or biblical theme – it's about ordinary people.



Cornelis Pietersz
Bega
The Alchemist 1631

In the age of discovery,
an unnamed scientist
works between
darkness and
enlightenment.
He sits between dark
and light surrounded
by the means of
unlocking the secrets
of nature.



Johannes
Vermeer 1668
The Astronomer

A similar theme – a scene of astronomy and navigation that was the basis of Dutch wealth in the seventeenth century. Note the contemporary domestic furnishings.

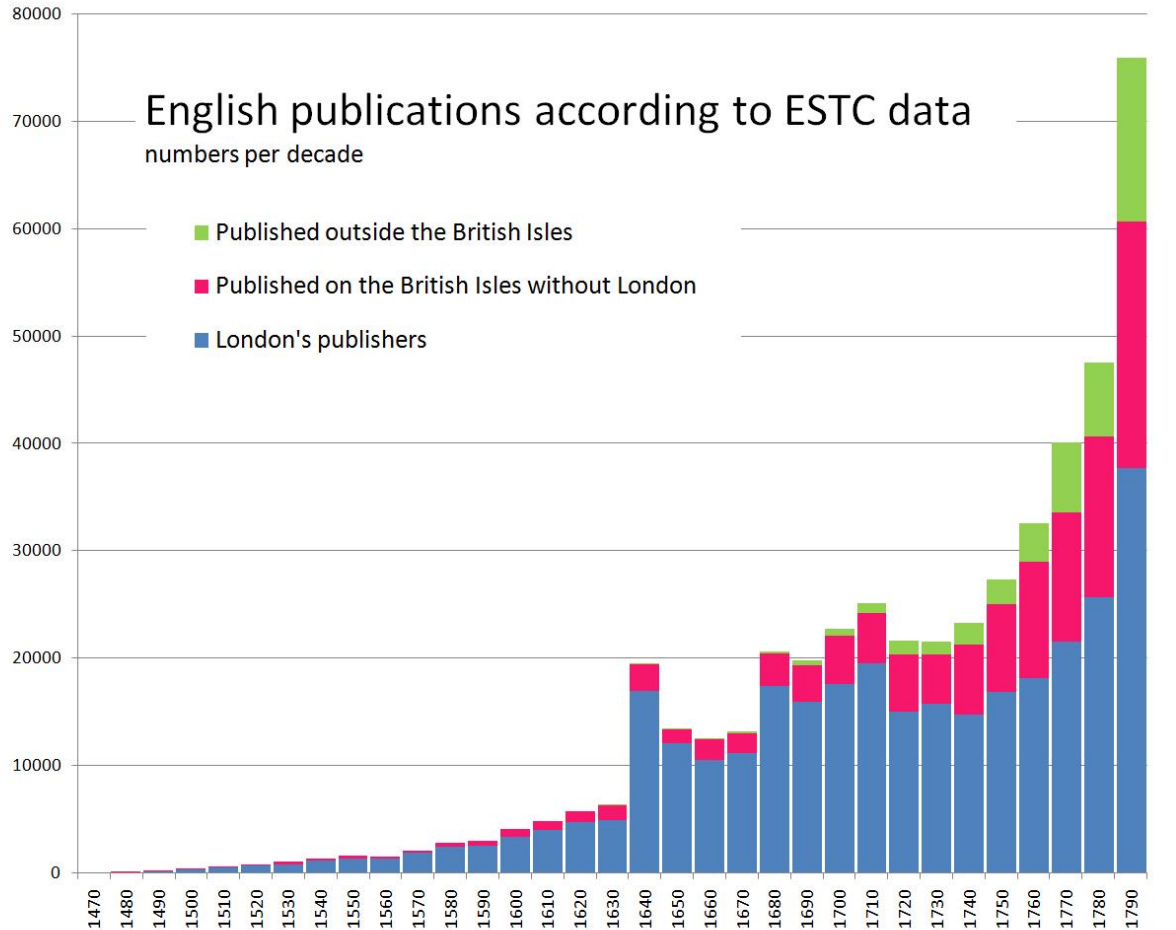
Society in the late Seventeenth Century

- Charles II was restored as monarch in a climate of optimism, stability and growth but with religious anxieties.
- Northern v Southern Europe; Aesthetic styles of the period were in transition from the geometric post-medieval to the flowing curves of renaissance.
- The age of enlightenment – political philosophy, science and refinement in art, The architectural influences of Andreas Palladio and Inigo Jones, The Dutch school of Painters, Bernini, Christopher Wren. In France the establishment of neo-classical. Science – Isaac Newton and Robert Hooke.
- International commerce and empire building – the colonies provided luxury goods and materials. East India Company.

English publications according to ESTC data

numbers per decade

- Published outside the British Isles
- Published on the British Isles without London
- London's publishers



Seventeenth Century Furniture



The overall appearance is similar to what we might now call country or vernacular furniture. The craft of cabinet-making only appeared in the seventeenth century

The simple constructions, of native European woods with pegged joints, were often embellished by turning: Chairs had straight backs.





Heavy carving in Oak with the introduction of classical design motifs: Solid boarded seats but with careful design to give an aesthetic composition



The seventeenth century court cupboard would have been the possession of the land-owning and ruling classes.

As an essential piece of the Great Hall furniture it reflects a different type of domestic arrangement.



Boards running the length of the table, tuned legs and low stretchers



Lamp tables and writing tables were introduced as articles of furniture that the maker could embellish so that the owner could show off opulence.

Monk's Bench



The formal assessment of articles of furniture that require conservation, starts with a detailed description which becomes part of the Condition Report

Object Number			
Ledger Number			
Current Location	Robing Room		
Object Category	furniture		
Object Type (Name)	table		
Title	Monk's Bench		
Description	Mid-17th century oak Monks bench on baluster turned legs with plain stretchers. The circular back hinged to form a table top supported by the arm rails. The back/top not original.		
Period	17th century		
Place of Origin			
Creator			
Dimensions	length	104	cm
	width	38	cm
	height	112	cm
Condition Notes			
Treatment Priority			

Three Tiered Oak Buffet



Object Number			
Ledger Number			
Current Location	Great Hall		
Object Category	furniture		
Object Type (Name)	buffet		
Title	Three Tiered Oak Buffet		
Description	Early 17th century Jacobean three-tiered oak buffet with heavy carved and turned supports, two drawers and friezes decorated with low relief carving. Small lock on the drawer.		
Period	17th century		
Place of Origin	Jacobean		
Creator			
Dimensions	length	165	cm
	width	63	cm
	height	270	cm
Condition Notes			
Treatment Priority			

From the Condition Report, the conservator produces a Conservation plan, which details how the piece will be preserved, and how any new parts that are introduced will be identified. Proposed glues, polishes, paints etc. will be clearly described with any documentation about appropriateness and stability.

Charles II Walnut Framed Dining chair



Object Number			
Ledger Number			
Current Location	Robing Room		
Object Category	furniture		
Object Type (Name)	chair		
Title	Charles II Walnut Framed Dining chair.		
Description	Charles II walnut framed arm Dining chair having barley twist legs and stretchers, cane seat and back surmounted by typical restoration cresting rail. Decorative front stretcher missing. Circa 1680.		
Period	17th century		
Place of Origin	England		
Creator			
Dimensions	height	118	cm
	width	60	cm
	depth	53	cm
Condition Notes			
Treatment Priority			

The Conservation Plan is presented to the owner or guardian of the piece and any other stakeholder for comment and questions.

Inevitably, there will be questions and compromises about budget to add to the conservator's difficulties with the conflict of preservation over usage.

The role of the Conservator includes enlightening the owner or guardian about current best practice.

Armada Table (Inchiquin Collection)



Object Number			
Ledger Number			
Current Location	North Solar		
Object Category	furniture		
Object Type (Name)	table		
Title	Armada Table (Inchiquin Collection)		
Description	Centrepiece table, reputedly taken from the wreck of a Spanish Armada ship.		
Period	16th century		
Place of Origin	Spain		
Creator			
Dimensions	height	84	cm
	width	245	cm
	depth	97	cm
Condition Notes			
Treatment Priority			

Once the Conservation Plan has been accepted by the owner, the conservator proceeds with the work, recording every aspect of the work including any unforeseen conditions. The Conservation Report will be kept for posterity with the piece.

How do you think a permanent record could be made?
 CD, printed on paper, up-loaded to a remote digital storage?

The most reliable method is probably still hand-written black ink on good quality paper.