

## EDITORIAL

It is not often that one finds instructions on how to make vernacular furniture, but Daniel Maudlin has found such a rare period document and plan with which this volume of *Regional Furniture* opens. Because original examples of closed beds are disappearing fast, documentary record is of particular importance and hopefully, this publication will apply a spur to box bed research. In the miscellany that follows, there are two further articles on neglected vernacular sub-groups; railway furniture and farmhouse cupboards, categories of furnishings that are again, increasingly difficult to find in their original contexts, are discussed using case studies of particular locations. Gabriel Olive has now made six original contributions on furniture from the West of England; work that, with a little addition, could be usefully gathered together to form a book on the subject. Noel Riley has made a similarly long-term study of Lake District furniture and in this number she turns her attention to a nineteenth century artist's depictions of cottage interiors in that region. This too, is a project that could be developed at a future date to include works by a range of artists, as our contributor Claudia Kinmonth did for her comprehensive study of Irish interior views and inventories in *Regional Furniture X* (1996).

It has always been the aim of this journal to emphasise the significance of inventories as essential tools for research. The current issue contains two very different inventory studies; the first of which is concerned with a sequence of early eighteenth-century inventories of Queensberry House, Edinburgh, concentrating particularly on that of 1723. This article is of significance not just because it reveals much about the type and placement of furniture in an Edinburgh 'Great Lodging', but also because it provides the last opportunity for documentary information to be studied alongside what remains of the original fabric. The building's interior is about to be radically altered to become part of the new Scottish parliamentary complex. The second study is an analytical survey of 266 household inventories from Uffculme, in Devon, dating from 1576–1762. This evaluation is comparable to the study of 229 probate inventories from the Sussex parish of Steyning, published by Janet Pennington and Joyce Sleight in the first volume of *Regional Furniture*, 1987.

Continuing with the tradition of publishing new research on colonial furniture, Robin Jones's contribution analyses the ways in which influences from the United Kingdom cross-fertilised with native traditions and materials in Sri Lanka to create distinctive new idioms. The final piece is one that draws its subject from the 1988 *Regional Furniture* article 'Scotch Chests'. In her article Mary Ann Apicella puts forward the fascinating theory that the origin of the Scottish *lum chest* configuration is to be found in Connecticut, U.S.A.

David Jones