

# Regional Furniture

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# Editorial

After last year's reprint of the 1801 Norwich Price Book, this issue of *Regional Furniture* is a return to form with a typically diverse miscellany, both in the nature of its contributors and in its subject matter. It is always pleasing when academic research into high-style research, throws up an occasional foray into regional or vernacular matters, as has happened with Peter Lindfield's work on *Georgian Gothic*. Let's not forget that Horace Walpole, a central figure in Peter's recently published book, was himself a collector (perhaps the very first) of vernacular turned chairs, which he called 'Welsh'. Following the antiquarian theme, Liz Hancock's survey of the history of the 'Durham table' illustrates how even well-known pieces of early furniture continue to present problems for the researcher, and how no object, no matter how well covered in the literature, can be taken at face value.

Aidan Harrison's late medieval triangular stool is sufficiently rare to warrant an article on its own merits, but his discussion of its origin and history raises questions about typology and design origins which, despite his wide-ranging and detailed researches, lead not to a definitive conclusion but to an intriguing, if unproveable, possibility.

Furniture from Northern Ireland has only occasionally featured in past volumes of *Regional Furniture*, despite the province having a strong and distinctive material culture which differs in so many ways from the rest of the British Isles. Fionnuala Carragher and Fergus Purdy's article persuasively argues for a peculiarly Northern Irish slant on a familiar and ubiquitous British furniture form, the slope-front desk.

Finally, we are indebted to William McCartney for bringing the notebook of his eighteenth-century ancestor to our notice. The survival of such an ephemeral, quotidian article is amazingly lucky; although in places confusing, chaotic and downright indecipherable, the notebook is, at the time of writing, a unique survival from the period, and it contains some of the earliest drawings and descriptions of a number of key eighteenth-century furniture archetypes. Most remarkable of all is the fact that it comes, not from London or some other urban centre, but from a tiny village on the Fylde of Lancashire.

ADAM BOWETT

