

## Terminology: A Further Note on The Caqueteuse Chair

During the Annual Conference we had ample opportunity to discuss the Scottish caqueteuse chair. Victor Chinnery and David Jones reminded us that the term 'caqueteuse' is a 19th century mis-application of the word 'caquetoire', used in France in the late 16th and early 17th centuries for a kind of back stool. It was Peter Thornton who first explained the true meaning of caquetoire to a British audience, in February 1974, in the pages of *The Connoisseur*. Scholarship, however, cannot yet tell us whether a chair with a trapezoidal seat, tall back and inward-curving arms obtained a special name in 17th century Scotland. It is a rare 17th century Scottish inventory that goes beyond the bland *ane chyir*.

The purpose of this short note is simply to draw attention to a phrase employed in a French inventory of 1571 listing the property of Renée de Gosbert: *chaises de bois de noyer* (ie walnut) *faites a façon de tallemouse*. The 'tallemouse' was a triangular patisserie, first referenced in 1398 (Le Grand Robert dictionary). Edmund Bonnaffé cited this Gosbert inventory in his *Le meuble en France au XVI siècle* in 1887 and French furniture historians regularly used the term (eg Guillaume Janneau, *Les Sièges*, 1967).

The author of the Gosbert inventory may have used the first analogy that came into his head. The French do not cite any other authority for the term and in 1974 Thornton was sceptical as to its currency in the context of furniture. Even if it were furniture maker's jargon we need hardly expect to see it in a British, or even Flemish, context. And yet, foreign words do enter the language in contexts which would mystify foreigners and so *if* anyone *has* seen a tallemouse chair in a British document they should contact the Newsletter Editor immediately!

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