

## A MORLEY FLUSH-DOOR CONSTRUCTION

In the autumn 2004 Newsletter I published pictures of a remarkable cabinet door construction used by David Morley of Carmarthen, c 1795 for making wardrobe doors, requesting information from members as to the use of this method generally in British cabinet-making. I have received some interesting replies, as follows:

1. Gillows. A member recalls seeing a billiard-table by Gillow of Lancaster, made in the 1760s featuring this method to make a dimensionally stable top. This is interesting, because David Morley served his apprenticeship with John Owen of Manchester from 1774-1780, and might have encountered it there.

2. Butler's trays. The large trays with folding sides were framed with cross-rails and panels in this way.

3. Marble-topped side tables. A member recalls seeing this method used for the top support to the marble slab on a grand mid-18th century side table in Dyrham Park, Gloucestershire.

4. The German clock-maker and Ebeniste, David Roetgen, apparently used it to make stable the clock movement bases while working in pre-revolutionary France.

The wardrobe illustrated in 2004, which uses a cross-rail and eight pine panels, is the second example found so far, and may have been a workshop pattern during Morley's early period, circa 1785–1805. However the press cupboard (fig. 17) with its door illustrated here has fifteen small panels (fig. 18) within a single frame, which may have been a one-off, particularly as it appears to have been made for his family and still belongs to a descendent.

Both examples were taken to a helpful local dentist, who spot-X-rayed the joints. As suspected, the doors are jointed entirely with loose tongues fitted into grooves worked on all the frame and block-panel edges. The possibility of other cabinet-makers using this method for making cabinet doors remains open to conjecture, and further examples are sought. To date however, Morley's use of it appears to be unique.

*Further contributions will be welcomed as before, by me at 11 Constitution Hill, Cowbridge, F71 7BH or by phone 01446 773528*

*Luke Millar*



Fig 17 Morley mahogany press cupboard, circa 1795



Fig 18 Inside view of the door showing block-panel construction