

## 22 Hartington Place, Carlisle

Nobody knew quite what to expect at 22 Hartington Place as no scout had been sent to do a reconnaissance, and so we set forth armed only with the rumour that it contained a serious collection. Indeed this proved to be the case, for behind the 1862 façade lay a treasure trove of objects almost exclusively associated with the Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts Movements, all exquisitely presented and thoroughly researched. Our host, Mr Tony Peart, adopting an academic approach, had amassed a considerable reference library and, furthermore, being a skilled craftsman in both wood and metal duly made what he could not afford to buy.

The Aesthetic took prominence in the Entrance Hall, dominated by a large two stage ebonised cabinet by Gillow and designed by Bruce Talbot, likewise a similar hall stand. At the rear of the hall lay a glazed cabinet by E. W. Godwin with a caned and ebonised elbow chair by the same hand nearby. On the wall was a triple bas relief figural panel in an oak frame attributable to William J. Neatty and at the base of the Talbot cabinet lay an exquisitely carved alabaster vase (?) not unlike the font we were later to encounter at Carlisle Cathedral.

On to the Sitting Room, where the theme was exclusively Arts and Crafts, the dominant piece being the George Walton designed mahogany canted display cabinet with carved and gilded floral motifs to the frieze. Opposite, a small oak mirrored sideboard by E. G. Punnett for William Birch was bedecked with Compton Pottery and the bay window contained an F. B. Goodyer oak sofa with pierced roundels, this having a matching pair of armchairs. Our host's craftsmanship manifested itself in the Gustav Stickley style oak sofa and matching armchair. A mahogany firescreen contained a fine needlework panel attributed to Annie Garnett and her Spinnery at Windermere.

Our host's handiwork again featured in the Dining Room with an oak dining table and a set of high back chairs in the style of his favourite designer C. F. A. Voysey; all resting on a Donegal wool carpet also by Voysey. A Baillie Scott oak cabinet piano with two doors featuring prominent strap hinges was complemented by two Baillie Scott style ebonised cabinets, the larger of canted form by an unknown hand, the other a product of our host's workshop and boasting a pair of doors with marquetry plant motifs embellished with faux ivory and silver. The metal light fittings in this room were by the Birmingham Guild whilst the decorative objects included Voysey designed and Dutch metalware and a large collection of Farnham sgraffito ceramics.

Gillows again featured on the Landing, this time in the form of a late 19th-century carved Arts and Crafts style

linen press. On the opposite wall hung an Aesthetic style shelving unit with Christopher Dresser designed artefacts.

The Master Bedroom was again strictly Arts and Crafts and contained a Heal's oak part St Ives suite, a Voysey designed oak armchair by our host, and, at the foot of the bed an E. G. Punnet for William Birch small oak settle with wide flat incurving arms, the arched back centred by a small padded panel. Back to the Aesthetic in the generous en-suite, with a large mirrored ebonised cabinet and near matching wall-shelving unit opposite both positively groaning under the weight of Fulham white pottery.

The adjoining Studio, which contained the Art Library was designed in a black and white colour scheme, a tribute to Josef Hoffman and the Viennese Secessionist School of c. 1900, with a deep frieze painted in a geometric Hoffman pattern over a striped wall paper and matching painted fitted cupboards. Pride of place here was a small Hoffman bentwood mirror backed dressing table, the top still retaining its original inset fabric. A walnut office chair of London manufacture engendered much discussion having wavy splats and unusual X-framed sides forming arm supports and extending down the legs, vaguely reminiscent of a Christopher Dresser design. Another office swivel chair by E. W. Godwin, this time in oak with a leather seat was tucked away in a corner. The only other chair in the room was a well preserved example of a Dryad chair designed by Benjamin Fletcher. Memorable amongst the decorative objects was a collection of woodcut portraits by Robert Bryden for Folio, all mounted in ebonised frames to fit the colour scheme.

The Small Bedroom yielded an Ernest Gimson designed child's rocking chair hidden under a collection of teddies, whilst opposite was an American Arts and Crafts side table, on X framed end supports by Kimbel & Cabus known as the 'East leg style'. The adjoining Bathroom had a display of Arts and Crafts tiles by Voysey and E.W. Godwin amongst others.

Finally back down to the Kitchen, a room dominated by a large oak cupboard with arched top over two doors boldly carved with Nordic/Icelandic mythological figures. Here our hostess who served afternoon tea with a splendid selection of home baking royally entertained us. Some of us ventured out into the garden, presented with the same artistic flair and attention to detail prevalent throughout the house.

The Society owes many thanks to Mr and Mrs Peart for allowing such a large group through their home and for their most generous hospitality.

*W. G. Coughlan*