

Simon Swynfen Jervis (ed.), *Antiquarian Gleanings in the North of England* by William Bell Scott, Society of Antiquaries, London, 2005

Scott's *Antiquarian Gleanings* (1851) is a remarkable illustrated anthology of northern antiquities, including many pieces of furniture. This specially bound off-print comprises the full text, the complete plates in colour, a new index and a lengthy introduction by the chairman of the FHS, who has also been a member of the RFS since its foundation.

Copies are available from S.S. Jervis, 45 Bedford Gardens, London W8 7EF (£6 including postage and packing). Please make cheques payable to the Society of Antiquaries of London to whom all proceeds will accrue.

Christopher Claxton Stevens (ed.), *The Frederick Parker Collection: A Selection of Chairs*, London Metropolitan University, 2006 (£10).

Frederick Parker (1845-1927) was originally apprenticed in his father's furniture business, later setting up his own chair-making company. Together with four sons he built up an enviable reputation supplying chairs for ocean liners, country houses and palaces. At first located in north east London, the company eventually moved to High Wycombe where Frederick amassed a collection of chairs of all periods which he used as source material for his own innovative designs. The firm became Parker Knoll in 1931.

In 1997 the new Parker Knoll management decided that the collection of antique chairs was surplus to requirements. Saving such a valuable resource from dispersal at auction was the heroic objective of Parker's descendants and other

specialists in the furniture world, and their contributions enabled the formation of the Frederick Parker Foundation to preserve it.

About 170 chairs were saved and are now displayed at the London Metropolitan University as an educational tool. The collection is amazingly diverse and includes chairs from the 17th to the 20th century. There are examples of late 17th century carved cane-backed chairs, 18th century upholstered seating, chairs in the Chippendale style with ornately carved and pierced splats and ball and claw feet, and fine examples from the later 18th century.

The collection naturally focuses on upholstered seating, for that is what Parker made, and chairs from the company are shown. The display embraces a rare example of an upholstered bergère of c.1780, and a mid-20th century moulded polypropylene chair with tubular legs which is now made under licence in 40 countries. The archives show details of chairs made by the firm between 1872 and 2003, along with photographs, drawings, reference books and catalogues. The accounts survive from 1901-2003. The trustees are to be congratulated in preserving this unique furniture archive.

The Parker collection is on display on weekdays, by appointment, at the Metropolitan Works, 41 Commercial Road, London E1 (tel: 0207 320 1827). The excellent colour catalogue has been produced to support the foundation and is available from the London Metropolitan University and the Geffrye Museum bookshop, or by post from Mrs M. Honey, Day's Cottage, North Stoke, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 6BL (£10.80, including postage and packing).

David Bryant



A carved yew high-backed Windsor armchair with cabriole legs and a mahogany seat, circa 1770. Its sophistication suggests that it was probably made for a gentry household and possibly by a London maker. It has undergone considerable restoration: the X-form stretcher, in particular, is a mahogany replacement, almost certainly for the curved 'crinoline' type. This is the only remaining Windsor chair in the Parker Collection.