

Visit to a House in Soho

Tuesday 26 March 2019

The owner welcomed us to his home in Soho, a narrow townhouse built in around 1740, and with many original features including its staircase and much of the panelling still in place. He has been a passionate and discerning collector of early English furniture, pottery and treen for many years, and he clearly delighted in showing us some of his favourite pieces. The kitchen walls were crowded with a wonderful array of English delftware and other pottery, carved wood panels and a couple of large oil paintings. The table was a massive elm and pine construction of around 1760–80, from a former bath house in Bath. We admired two seventeenth-century oak food cupboards which members considered were from Yorkshire and Lancashire respectively, a collection of delftware drug jars, three large Barnstable pottery jugs and a Welsh stick-back chair with three legs. On the first floor we encountered a remarkable collection of seventeenth-century slipware chargers, many dated and in wonderful condition. He opened a small treen covered cup which revealed no less than 16 nesting cups inside, incredibly thinly turned. An oak chest of drawers dated 1630 was thought to be made in Bristol, beautifully carved all over and with scribed circles on the side of the central drawer, said to be protection against witchcraft. Upstairs again, in the main bedroom, we marvelled at a collection of English delftware plates displayed on shelves; and in the attic, a former workshop now a second bedroom, there was a lovely small oak coffer with a till. Impossible to describe even a fraction of what we were shown, but this was a superb personal collection of exceptional items, cherished and proudly shared, but also very much part of a real home. Our grateful thanks to this collector for giving us such a wonderful tour and allowing us to handle any object which caught our particular interest.

David Dewing