

British and Irish Furniture Makers Online (BIFMO)

The BIFMO project recently launched a new version of our online resource and we are now in the process of publishing new biographies, sources, and archival data, enabling BIFMO to serve as a digital repository for furniture history from the turn of the sixteenth century to the onset of the Great War. It will be of special interest to members of the Regional Furniture Society that this new material includes the details of several thousand regional furniture makers across not just England, but also Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.

We are grateful to Dr John Stabler for generously donating his *A Dictionary of Norfolk Furniture Makers, 1700–1840*, published on BIFMO in October 2019. It goes without saying that his diligent scholarship makes an enormous contribution to the repository. We have also recently published two other sources, *The Dictionary of Edinburgh Furniture Makers, 1660–1840*, and transcriptions of London Upholders' Company records, 1704–72. In addition to this valuable archival source, we are extending the dates of our collection of London Joiners' Company records (currently ranging from 1650 to 1720), up to the early years of the nineteenth century. This new data, along with nearly three thousand revised and entirely new biographies, will be rolled out in the coming months.

The newly redesigned search facility makes it possible to carry out both simple and analytical queries. At the most basic level it acts as a searchable directory of furniture makers, providing access to names, occupations, dates, the locations of artisans and tradespeople, the products they supplied and the clients and patrons they served. However, BIFMO now also has the ability to carry out statistical and quantitative queries to support social and economic analysis, such as identifying where particular trades were situated at a specific date, or over a period of time, making it possible to analyse the growth of the trade and the increase or reduction in a specific type and/or style of furniture, thus indicating a change in fashion and consumer demand; or how furniture making networks operated, including subcontracting specific aspects of the manufacturing process for efficiency and cost effectiveness. This analysis, of course, is enabled through digital application, something which is impossible to achieve through a printed source.

I do hope you have had the opportunity recently to visit BIFMO: <https://bifmo.history.ac.uk/> We are constantly revising the site and encourage feedback about its usability and/or any problems you may be encountering. Furthermore, we welcome any new information you might contribute about British and Irish Furniture Makers. You can contact the BIFMO team by



British and Irish Furniture Makers Online

Faces Behind the Furniture, 1500-1914

Explore BIFMO to discover the people who worked in the British and Irish furniture trades over four hundred years.



BIFMO homepage

clicking on the 'About' tab at the top of the homepage,
then clicking on 'Contact Us' in the drop-down list.

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