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MELFORD HALL

INTRODUCTION

MELFORD HALL is fortunate in that its setting on the edge of a village, through which the main Sudbury to Bury St. Edmunds road passes, is little changed by the usual horrors of contemporary 'progress'. Apart from the thoroughly unsuitable lamp standards in concrete, which are an ill-bred affront to Long Melford, the village is remarkably unspoilt. The main street is wide and long, bordered by substantial houses, which proclaim the prosperity of their original owners. At its northern end the village thoroughfare fans out into an open green. Tall elms stand at one boundary of the green: a range of pleasant neo-Gothic almshouses—originally built and endowed by Sir William Cordell—and the tower of Long Melford church at the other. The church with its stupendous clerestoreyed nave, high windowed aisles, and triple sanctuary, is one of the great Perpendicular monuments of East Anglia. Beyond the church, and out of view is Kentwell Hall, one of the two large Tudor mansions which this extraordinarily wealthy village boasts. For Long Melford's air of wellbeing is the legacy of the wool trade, and the outward, visible symbol of a community of successful clothiers.

The Melford Hall grounds are a sort of extension of the village green. A high, buttressed, red brick wall runs along the eastern side of the road, until it comes to a full-stop in the shape of an octagonal garden house. The motorist arriving from the south, has a most tantalising glimpse over the wall of towers, cupolas, twisted chimneys, and tufted trees. A turreted gate-house in the style of, but much later than the house, is a prelude to what is to come. It is the entrance to the short drive, which leads to a circular gravel sweep before the Hall.

HISTORY OF MELFORD HALL

From the reign of Edward the Confessor until the Reformation Melford belonged to the Abbots of Bury St. Edmunds, and was one of their country retreats. It had been given to Abbot Leofstan (1044–65) by a powerful Saxon thane, called Aelfric, who held it in trust for Queen Emma, the Confessor's mother, as part of an immense fief, known as the Liberty of St. Edmund. Presumably the gift was made with the connivance, if not the consent of the Queen, who was an ambitious and covetous woman and not otherwise remarkable for charity. Doomsday Book records that the property amounted to twelve caracutes of land, which is equivalent to 1,500 to 2,000 acres. Successive abbots treated it as a hunting resort, and we are told that Abbot Sampson (1182–1211), who did not follow hounds himself, nevertheless 'lyked moche to sytte in a styлле place in ye Melford woodes to see ye Abbey dogges honte ye stagges'. The St. Edmunds pack of hounds became famous, and Abbot Sampson even exchanged a couple with King Richard I for a ring, which that frivolous monarch had been given by Pope Innocent III.

In 1534 Abbot John let Melford Hall to a certain Dame Frances Pennington on a thirty years' lease, reserving the use of one of the best chambers to himself for the annual courts. Little did he imagine that within five years he would be commanded peremptorily to surrender his abbey and all its lands to Henry VIII. Dame Frances notwithstanding continued to reside there for a time in return for a fat rent to the royal exchequer. Not, however, for long. A certain William Cordell, whose father had settled in the village, was rapidly raising a large fortune through the law. The process was a familiar one in Tudor times. Cordell became affluent and important and had an eye on Melford, and by 1547 appears to have been given a grant of both Hall and manor from Henry VIII. For a few years he had to pay a rent of £100, but in 1554 it was released. In that year a fresh grant, still preserved in the Hall, was made out to him, wherein mention was made of Cordell's 'past good, true, faithful and acceptable services' to the Crown. Queen

Mary had made him Solicitor-General, and he rose to be Speaker of the House of Commons, a knight, and in 1557 Master of the Rolls. Cordell evidently learned how to accommodate his principles to the dogmas of the old faith, as well as to the tenets of the new religion. For Queen Elizabeth, on succeeding to the throne, confirmed him in the offices he had enjoyed under her sister.

In 1578 Sir William Cordell entertained his sovereign at Melford. John Nichols in his 'Progresses of Queen Elizabeth' quotes Thomas Churchyards' contemporary account of her Suffolk visitation. 'There were', he records, '200 young gentlemen cladde alle in whyte velwet, and 300 of the graver sort apparrelled in black velwet coates and with faire chaines . . . with 1,500 servyng men all on horsebacke, well and bravelie mounted, to receive the Queen's Highnesse into Suffolke . . . and there was in Suffolke suche sumptuous feastinges and bankets as seldom in anie parte of the worlde there hath been seene afore. The Maister of the Rolles, Sir William Cordell, was the first that beganne this greate feastinge at his house of Melforde, and did lyght such a candle to the rest of the shire, that they were gladd bountifullie and francklie to followe the same example. . . ' How glad the rest of the county really were to keep this excessively costly candle alight is perhaps disputable. In any event we may be sure the older gentry would never admit to being outdone by the upstart attorney, whom they must have cursed in their hearts, while putting a brave face upon an undoubtedly crippling entertainment. Sir William Cordell died in 1581, and lies buried, with his wife Mary Clopton, under an imposing canopied monument on the south of the altar in Melford Church.

Sir William was clearly an ambitious and successful man. But he had his reverses. We may suppose the chief of these to have been the premature deaths of his four children. No son of his loins was left to succeed him in the great house which he had so lavishly rebuilt. On his wife's death the property went—since both his brothers also died without issue—to his sister Jane, widow of Sir Richard Alington. Lady Alington was succeeded in 1602 by her daughter, Mary, who was married to

Sir John Savage of Clifton in Cheshire. Their son, Sir Thomas, created Viscount Savage, inherited Melford in his turn.

During the ownership of Savage's widow, Melford entered a disturbed phase of history. Lady Savage, having come into Melford in 1635, was greatly enhanced in territorial wealth by her father's death four years later. She became possessed of Hengrave Hall, near Bury, and St. Osyth's Priory in Essex. In 1641 she was created Countess Rivers in her own right, thus enjoying the revival of her father's title. She was a staunch Catholic and royalist, with the result that she suffered cruel depredations upon her property in the Civil War. In 1642 the rabble sacked her house at St. Osyth, chased her to Melford, and sacked that too. All the furnishings were stolen, or destroyed, and the deer in the park carried off. She escaped to London, and was forced to compound for her lands to the extent of being reduced to the debtors' prison, where she died within a few weeks. That was in 1650.

By a strange trick of fate the man to whom she had mortgaged the Melford property was Sir John Cordell, mercer of London, whose father had been a first cousin of old Sir William. Sir John's son, Robert, foreclosed upon the mortgage, and went to live in the Hall. He had to refurnish it from top to bottom, and re-stock the park. Robert was made a Baronet at the Restoration, and was duly succeeded by a son and grandson. The third baronet dying in 1704 left the property to a sister, Margaret, married to Charles Firebrace. Their son, Sir Cordell Firebrace, redecorated the greater part of the house in the 1730s and 1740s. Sir Cordell died childless in 1759, and his widow continued to live, off and on, at the Hall until 1786, when it was sold for the last time.

The new owner, Sir Harry Parker, 6th Baronet, was descended from a younger branch of the Parkers of Devon, whose representative to-day is the Earl of Morley of Saltram (now National Trust property) and came from Honington Hall in Warwickshire. His father, younger brother, and nephew were called Hyde (after an ancestress, Margaret, heiress of the Lord Chancellor Clarendon's family), and all three became distinguished admirals. Sir Hyde Parker, the 5th Baronet,

was a naval officer of much celebrity. He attained the rank of Vice-Admiral of the Blue, commanded the fleet at St Lucia in 1780, was Commander-in-Chief in the memorable action against the Dutch off the Dogger Bank in 1781, and the next year was appointed to the East India Command. His ship, *Cato*, sailed in October, watered at Rio in December, left, and was never heard of again. The second Hyde Parker was also a Vice-Admiral, who was knighted for forcing the boom across the Hudson river in the attack on New York in 1776. It was to his signal that Nelson put the telescope to his blind eye. The third Hyde Parker, son of the second, likewise became a Vice-Admiral, fought in the Napoleonic Wars and finally held the office of First Sea Lord.

Sir Harry Parker, however, was content to inherit the family baronetcy, and administer the new estate he had acquired for himself. With the house he bought some of its furnishings and, stranger still, several portraits of the old Cordells and Firebraces. Sir William Parker, the 9th Baronet, became a keen antiquarian, who in 1873 published the *History of Long Melford*, which is in its way a minor classic. His great-grandson Sir Richard Hyde Parker, the 12th and present Baronet, lives in Melford Hall to-day. The house, some of the principal contents, and 130 acres of the park were accepted by the Treasury on the death of his father, Sir William, 11th Baronet (who with great courage restored the house after the war) and transferred to the National Trust for permanent preservation in 1960.

THE EXTERIOR OF THE HOUSE

It is difficult to be precise, either from documentary or stylistic evidence, about the date of the present Hall. Sir William Cordell left no record when he began to re-build the old manor house of the Abbots of St Edmunds. That he incorporated parts of the pre-existing building is fairly clear. The principal range is certainly raised on the abbatial foundations, for beneath the banqueting hall and the present dining-room in the north-west corner of the house are vaulted cellars of

mediaeval date. Furthermore, there is proof in a hidden window of the hall that its existing north wall was the external wall of the old monastic house before the north wing was added by Cordell.

There is a letter of Cordell to the Bishop of Norwich written in 1556 from Melford Hall. But that is no proof that the Knight was already installed in the existing house. He certainly had his initials carved upon the porch, and his crest, a cockatrice, imposed upon the lead rain-water heads, but he left no date. We can only surmise that building was not begun before 1554, in which year he became absolute possessor of the property, nor after 1578, when he entertained Queen Elizabeth in lavish style. The plan of the house, an imperfect E, was very general throughout the whole Tudor age, and even during the reign of James I. It is an imperfect E, because there are, besides the porch, which makes the short central stroke, two balancing projections in the angles (as at the Vyne, Hampshire, built about 1520), whence a pair of unusually long arms jut out to the east. Near their extremities are two turrets, facing one another across an open court, as at Kentwell Hall, less than a mile away. Since all the windows were altered to sashes by Sir Cordell Firebrace—and several of the sashes conjecturally restored in the Victorian era—there is no guide to precise dating in that respect either. The original windows may well have had round-headed lights like the ones at Kentwell. It is rather from the six octagonal turrets, with their distinctive ogival tops, and the chimney stacks, with their clean moulded caps and bases, that we are able to make the most reliable deductions.

The very number of the turrets suggests the middle years of the sixteenth century. An exaggerated emphasis upon verticality was characteristic of Henry VIII's reign. It was a kind of hang-over of the Perpendicular style, still so triumphant in his father's reign. It was to be found very prominently in the royal palaces of Nonesuch and Sheen, where a forest of tall octagonal towers, with onion cupolas, soared above the roof tops and the chimney shafts into the Surrey sky. It was followed at such disparate, but contemporary houses, as Hengrave Hall

and Rushbrook, both in Suffolk, Sutton Place in Surrey, and Layer Marney in Essex. In the fifteen-fifties, after Henry VIII's death, but before the accession of his younger daughter, it was found at Charlecote Park in Warwickshire—always these thin octagonal turrets, crowned with ogees, and lesser chimney shafts, like punctuation marks. Moreover, the two turrets within the forecourt at Melford almost exactly resemble their counterparts at nearby Kentwell, in that they rise on a square plan from the ground to parapet level, whence they flare out into octagons. And Kentwell House is known to have been begun about 1560.

Was then William Clopton inspired to build Kentwell by his neighbour Sir William Cordell, who was incidentally married to a cousin, Mary, daughter of Richard Clopton of Fore Hall, Melford? And did he employ the same surveyors and masons? It is quite possible. At all events he omitted in his towers a feature repeated in Sir William Cordell's towers, which has a most definitely early Renaissance flavour. I refer to those conspicuous elliptical crests, which crown the eight faces of each Melford Hall tower. Within them is carved a shell, or fan motif, also reproduced within the tympanum over the porch. The same motif is seen upon the turrets of Layer Marney Hall, built in 1520, only across the angles, instead of over the faces. It is essentially of Italian derivation.

Melford Hall, like Layer Marney, like Charlecote, Sutton Place and Hengrave belongs to that mid-Tudor period, which in decoration was affected by the Roman Renaissance, first introduced to England by Henry VII and favoured by his still Catholic son, Henry VIII, and granddaughter Mary. Great houses built under the Protestant Elizabeth and James I, such as Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire, and Blickling Hall, Norfolk, were to display decoration which tended to turn away from Italian motifs. On the contrary, their decoration turned towards patterns derived from the Netherlands and northern Germany, with which countries England's political and religious sympathies had by then become firmly united. These later houses appear in consequence to be more ornate, fussy, and pretentious than the earlier Melford type, where

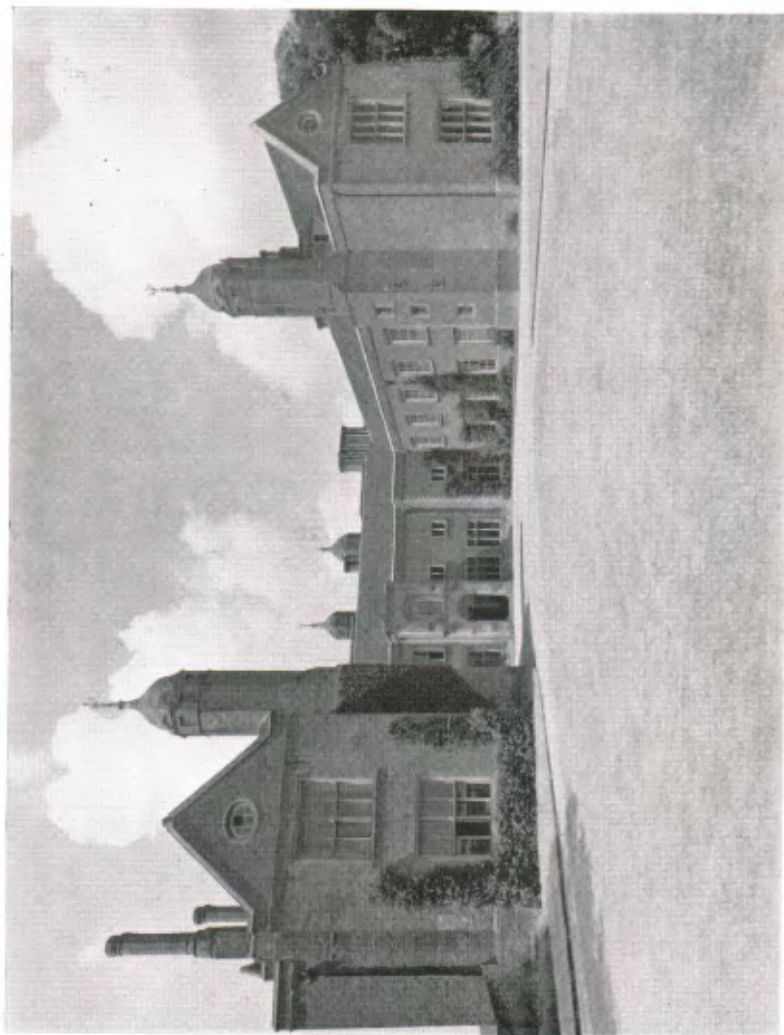
greater sparsity and purity of ornament induces a clarity of line in the whole structure.

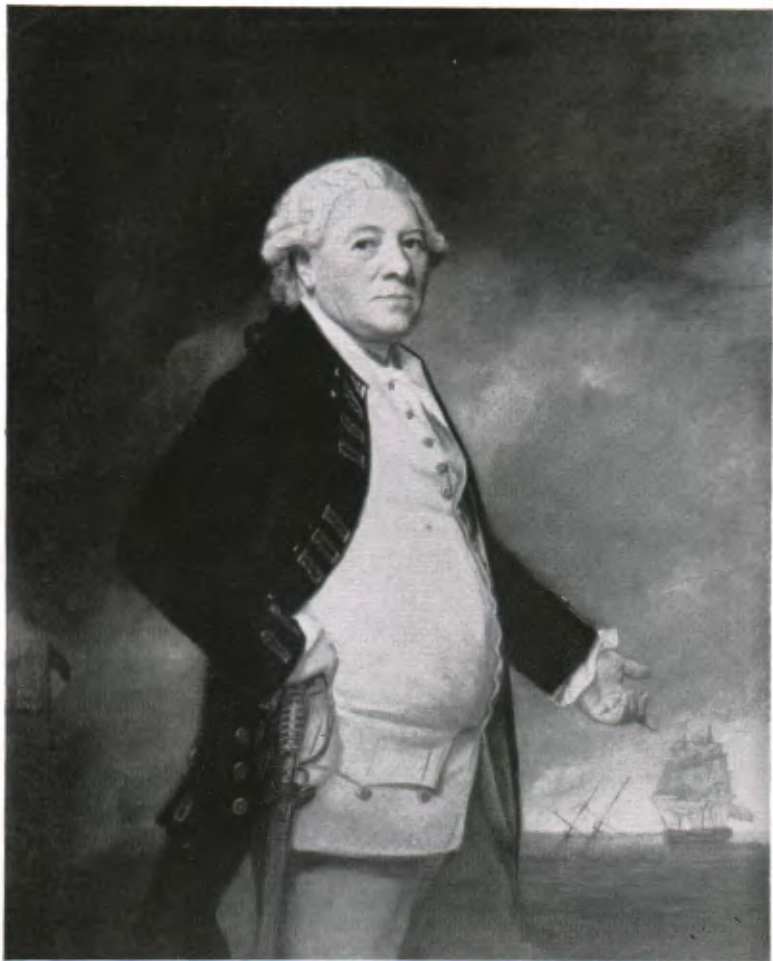
Sir William Cordell had his bricks made from what is now a pond on the east side of the village green, still known as Claypits. And he had them laid in the old English bond, that is to say of one course of stretchers, and another of headers. When in the eighteenth century the central portion between the inner turrets of the west front was filled in, the later Flemish bond of alternate stretcher and header to every course was resorted to. It is unlikely that Sir William engaged a master builder from London for his new house; but for his two-storeyed porch faced with ashlar he may well have procured an 'upright' from some foreign craftsman, or, more likely still, from some current Italian book of architectural patterns, such as Serlio's *Architectura*, with its treatise on the use of the five classical orders. The Doric and Ionic fluted pilasters and the entablatures on the porch are far too correct to be a provincial surveyor's interpretation of the orders at this date.

THE INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE

The Banqueting Hall

Originally the porch led straight into the screens passage of Sir William Cordell's new house. To the left lay the traditional offices, and to the right the great hall. Although the passage survives, the screens have disappeared in favour of a pair of stout Doric columns. A grandiose staircase has taken the place of the offices, but the hall remains. The room was altered, and the columns were set up by Sir Cordell Firebrace about 1740. The hall is of two-storey height and may never have been open-roofed, because the attic above the flat ceiling has always comprised one long gallery. The ceiling cornice, the *grisaille* pictures of mythological subjects in inset frames, the prominent wave mould running midway round the walls, and the great fireplace, all in the manner of William Kent, are Sir Cordell's improvements. The actual wainscot of small Jacobean panels may have been inserted about a hundred years ago.

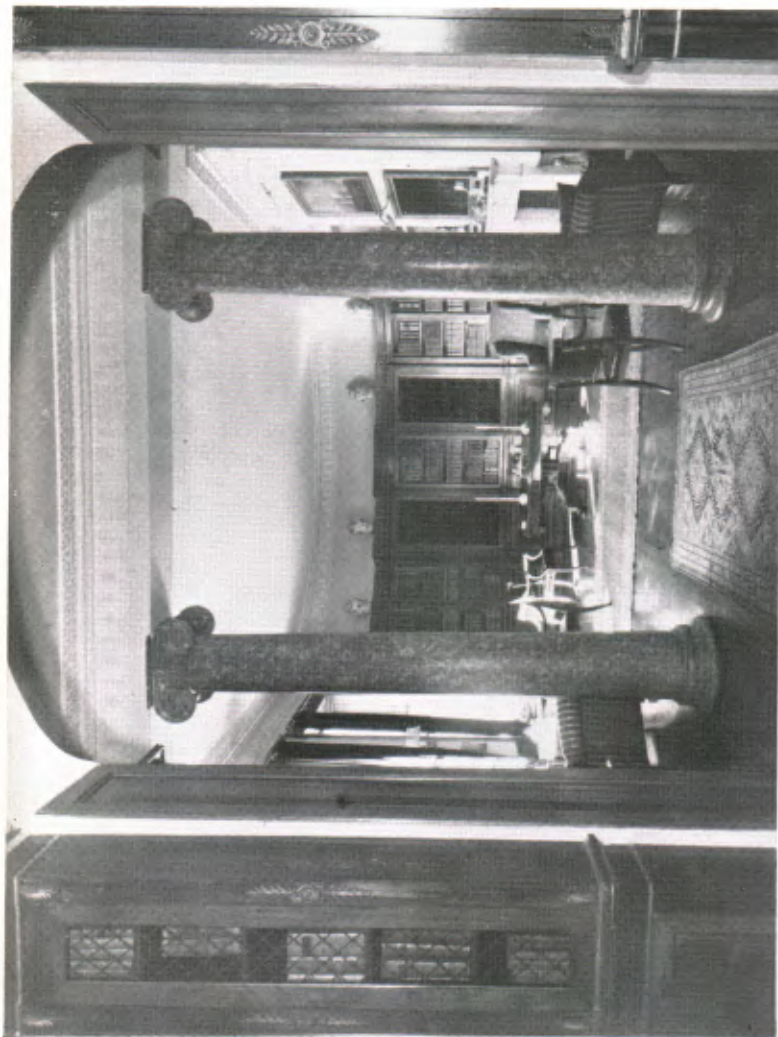




ADMIRAL SIR HYDE PARKER, BT. 1713-1783 BY
ROMNEY



THE GREAT HALL



THE LIBRARY

When Sir Harry Parker bought Melford in 1786 some of the contents of the house were included in the sale. This fact accounts for the interesting continuity of portraits of former owners of Melford. Beginning with the wall facing the entrance, and reading from left to right, the portraits are of:

(1) Sir Arthur Hyde, mid sixteenth-century, (2) Sir William Cordell (d. 1581), builder of Melford Hall, (3) Lady Cordell (Mary Clopton), wife of Sir William, (4) Lady Hyde (Elizabeth), wife of Sir Arthur, mid sixteenth-century.

On the North wall (5), Sir John Cordell, to whom Melford was mortgaged by Lady Rivers in the Civil War. (6) Sir Hugh Parker, 1st Baronet (1606-96). (7) Lady Cordell (Sarah), wife of Sir John, attributed to Cornelius Jonson. (8) Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of Clarendon (1609-74), grandfather of Queen Anne and first cousin of the second Lady Parker.

In the window embrasure (9) Lady Hyde Parker, wife of the 10th Baronet by Shannon, and, on the East wall, (10) Sir William Parker, 9th Baronet, and (11) Sir William Hyde Parker, 10th Baronet.

In the fireplace are a pair of andirons, made of bell-metal, which are probably the only things belonging to the earlier monastic house. Sir William Cordell removed the original bases, and substituted new feet, bearing his crest of a cockatrice and the date 1559. It has been suggested that the andirons belonged originally to the twelfth-century Abbot Sampson, because the highest of the four panels into which each is divided represents Samson slaying the lion over the inscription 'Sumsum'. In the second panel are the blurred figures of David and Samson carrying away the gates of Gaza: in the third Our Lord on the Cross between the figures of 'Magdalen' and 'Marie', and in the fourth Adam and Eve flanking the tree of knowledge, with their names above them.

In the hall windows are several panels mostly of German armorial glass, collected by Sir William Parker, the 9th Baronet. Other panels include a cloth mark, A. W. A., dated 1551; the shield of John Winthrop, formerly of Groton, and first Governor of Massachusetts; the kneeling figure of a man in a furred gown before a prie-dieu, and a bishop standing

behind him, dated 1551; a fifteenth-century portrait of a kneeling man with the legend, 'Sanct. Mark. Ora pro nobis'; and the coats of arms of King Henry VII and his Queen, Elizabeth of York.

Among the furniture are two Nonesuch chests (so-called because of the marquetry inlay panels of a palace, deemed to be Nonesuch, on the front of each); two Elizabethan court-cupboards on either side of the fireplace; a suite of high-back Charles II chairs, and several ivory figures, carved by Portuguese settlers in Goa. The Goanese figures, with much of the Chinese porcelain about the house, were taken from the Spanish galleon, the *Santissima Trinidad*, which Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, 5th Baronet captured laden with presents from the Emperor of Peking to the King of Spain in 1762.

The Hyde Parker Room

The banqueting hall leads into the long north wing. The first room, called the Hyde Parker room, used to be known as the Cordell room, because it was lined with the Cordell family portraits within rococo plaster frames—part of Sir Cordell Firebrace's innovations of *circa* 1740. Unfortunately, this beautiful room was partly destroyed when the north wing was burnt out while troops occupied the house during the last war. It has recently been restored with the rest of the wing, by Professor Sir Albert Richardson, P.P.R.A. The present plain walls now contain portraits of the Parker family. Among them are (beginning from the left of the fireplace):

(1) John Parker, 1st Earl of Morley (1782–1840), attributed to Northcote, (2) Sir Henry Parker, 2nd Baronet (d. 1713), who married Margaret Hyde, (3) Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, 5th Baronet (d. 1783) attributed to Reynolds, (4) Sir Harry Parker, 6th Baronet (1735–1812), possibly by Romney, (5) Bridget, wife of Sir Harry, 6th Baronet, and (6) Sir Harry Parker, 6th Baronet. Over the fireplace is a landscape, entitled 'Catwyk on the Rhine' by Abraham Beerstraeten (1662).

In this room the handsome chimney-piece with scroll supports, the pair of rococo console tables and the mirror were rescued from the fire. Among the furniture are five of a

rich suite of solid Chippendale-style chairs, with scroll-top rails and shell ears, which have always belonged to the house. The decanter tray on reeded feet is Regency. Before the fireplace is a semi-circular port table. The displayed silver dates from 1730 to 1780.

The Blue Drawing Room

This room in the north-west corner of the house was, until the fire, the dining-room. Fortunately, it escaped destruction, and the mid-Georgian decoration, ornamented ceiling, cornice, panelled walls and carved wood chimney-piece in William Kent style, have survived. The walls are painted pale blue, and the relief white.

The pictures (beginning on the left of the entrance) are:

(1) and (2) A pair of landscapes by J. C. Vollaradt (1708–69), (3) Peasants, attributed to Ostade, (4) A landscape attributed to Wouvermans, (5) The Finding of Moses, by Adriaen van Stalbeem, (6) A flowerpiece by Pieter Gallis (1633–97), (7) A landscape and (8) (over the fireplace) A girl with a lamb, being Margaret Parker, daughter of the 2nd Baronet.

The most important pieces of furniture are a Queen Anne burr walnut card-table with shell feet, an early-Georgian settee with ball and claw feet, a small Louis Quinze writing-table with Sèvres inlay plaques (it belonged to Maria Leczinska, Queen of Louis XV), and a Chippendale-style bureau with fine fret cornice (containing *famille verte* and *famille rose* porcelain). Among the Chinese porcelain in the room are a tall pair of *famille verte* vases on the chimney-piece, with gilt covers and bases, and two bowls with enamel lids mounted in ormolu. They are part of Admiral Sir Hyde Parker's booty from the captured *Santissima Trinidad*.

The Regency Library

Sir William Parker, the 7th baronet, filled in the recesses between the turrets of the west front in order to provide an extra suite of bedrooms (although he was a bachelor) upstairs, and a library and study for his own use downstairs. Having succeeded his brother in 1812 Sir William promptly began upon

his alterations, as is proved by the rainwater heads, which bear the date 1813. The library, reached by a door in the west wall of the hall, really consists of two rooms, of which the smaller occupies the lesser recess between the two inner turrets. This smaller room is treated as an octagon, separated from the larger room by a pair of scagliola columns. Both apartments are lined with Regency bookcases, which present a uniform appearance, without in fact being of indential design, or even of identical material. Whereas the bookcases of the octagon are made of rosewood, brass lined and mounted with brass honeysuckles, those of the larger apartment rely for their effect solely on the quality of their joinery. They are made of oak, but veneered with burr walnut and bands of ebony. Moreover, they are fitted to the curve of the end wall in a very masterly fashion. The dado of the unfilled walls continues the pattern of the cupboards below the bookshelves, and is of the same wood and veneer. The unknown architect whom Sir William Parker employed certainly brought about a remarkable aggregate of Regency taste. He designed the tables, settees, and chairs to be *en suite* with the decoration.

The library is in a sense as much a memorial to the 5th as to the 7th Baronet who created it. For over the fireplace in the octagon hangs a portrait by Romney of the gallant and bluff Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, 5th Baronet. The present Lady Hyde Parker has written how 'He sailed round the world with Lord Anson, and came back in the only ship that was left of the expedition. This Admiral also fought the famous action of the Dogger Bank. On the Admiral's return from this naval engagement, the unusual favour of a royal visit was paid to him on board his flagship, the *Fortitude*, by His Majesty King George III and the Prince of Wales. The King decided to reward him with a peerage, but the victorious Admiral, who was always very indignant at the condition of the ships the Admiralty sent into action, and probably because he was an outspoken and independent sailor who feared no human being and would truckle to no man, did not attempt to conceal his dissatisfaction. He said to the King that he wished His Majesty younger officers and better ships; that he had grown too old for

the services and therefore wanted none of His Majesty's titles'.

Clearly the Admiral did not mince his words with any man. But in spite of them he continued to serve his King faithfully and actually died in service only two years later. The walls of the larger room are hung with an historic series of pictures of naval actions, in which the 5th Baronet and his second son (also Admiral Sir Hyde Parker) were engaged with the Dutch and the French. The action of the Dogger Bank of 1781 is included among them. The artist, Dominique Serres, a Gascon, had been made marine painter to George III, and was sent with the fleet to record events. Comparable naval records to those at Melford are the series by Serres of Admiral Keppel's engagements, which until lately hung in Lord Albermarle's house, Quidenham, five by Serres of the 3rd Lord Bristol's naval actions, still at Ickworth and those by Thomas Luny of Admiral Rodney's battles, at Berrington Hall, in Herefordshire.

Against the wall are the large sea charts used by the 5th Baronet on board his ship during the naval engagements in which he took part.

The gilt and floral dishes with covers are Vienna porcelain, and form part of a dessert service which belonged to Napoleon. Beneath the Admiral's portrait is a small bust of Nelson, dated 1853, but originally modelled under the direction of Admiral Sir William Parker, K.C.B.

The Staircase

To the south of the banqueting hall, where in Sir William Cordell's time, the usual household offices must have been, is now the grand staircase. It rises in a straight, broad flight, broken by one landing. A double row of Ionic columns upholds a segmental coved ceiling of shallow panels over the actual stairs. On either side of the columns a gallery is formed on the first floor. The whole arrangement is audacious and very noble. The unknown architect of Sir William Parker, 7th Baronet, was presumably responsible for this drastic alteration, shortly after 1813. On the stair landing is a pair of exceptionally large—they are nearly four feet tall—Kien Lung, *famille rose* vases and covers, which are part of the *Santissima Trinidad* haul.

On the right hangs the Miser's Wedding by Peter Brueghel. Over the arch leading to the staircase is a full-length portrait of Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, the second of that name and rank, by Romney.

The Boudoir

The stairs lead straight to a pair of doors under a wide arch, opening into the boudoir. The panelled walls are painted grey and white. On open shelves are samples of Fürstenburg and Dresden dinner services, some Coalport porcelain, and old wine glasses. The rare seaweed marquetry clock (early eighteenth century) only requires winding twice a year.

The Gallery

In a window of the east gallery is a portrait in stained glass of Queen Elizabeth I. There is a portrait of Countess Rivers, the ill-fated owner of Melford, who through her loyalty to the Catholic faith and Charles I, lost her property and her great wealth. A picture of Balaam and the Ass, done by her in needlework, hangs below her portrait.

THE GROUNDS

There is a map of the manor of Melford preserved in the house. It is dated 1613, and was drawn by a certain Samuel Pearse of Maidstone. It shows the house almost exactly as it stands to-day, but with the curious addition of a wooden gallery, or bridge, precariously spanning, without any intermediate support, the great width of the forecourt from turret to turret. The blocked doorways, which once gave access to it, may still be seen at those points where the square bases of the turrets turn to octagonal shafts. The bridge was used, as we learn from a correspondent, who was tutor to Sir John Savage's children in 1619, as a platform, from which to view the hunting in the park. The park, according to Pearse's sketch, was in Jacobean times separated from the immediate purlieu of the Hall by a walled enclosure, outside which was a moat, complete except for a

stretch of the east section, where the waters passed into a culvert. To-day the west section of the moat still exists in the stream between the brick wall and the road. Traces of the north section are identifiable.

The fishponds behind the stables and the river survive. A little fishing pavilion, formerly standing on the strip of ground which separates them, has gone. So too has the gatehouse in front of the forecourt. It was pulled down by Sir Cordell Firebrace about 1740. To the north, west, and south of the house were formal beds, which have disappeared. But the terrace on the north side remains, leading, as it does, to the octagonal brick pavilion, which overlooks the village green.

The Pavilion is a somewhat rare, and beautiful example of Tudor garden architecture. Its eight faces are crowned with pointed gables. From the apex of each gable, and from eight corner shafts rise 16 octagonal finials. Stone steps lead straight to a hooded porch over the first-floor entrance. A pair of fluted columns support the hood. The mediaeval door of carved tracery antedates the building, and must therefore be a later importation.

To-day the grounds consist, for the most part, of green lawns shaded by some splendid trees in their maturity. Among them the arboriculturist will discern a rare oriental tree, the *Xanthoceras sorbifolia*. Other good specimens of their kind are: *Ilex aquifolium ferox variegata* (the variegated Hedgehog Holly), *Ailanthus altissima* (Chinese tree of heaven), *Catalpa bignonioides* (the eastern United States Indian Bean), *Cercis siliquastrum* (South European and oriental Judas tree), *Morus nigra* (West Asian mulberry), and *Platanus orientalis* (South-east European and Asia Minor oriental plane).

JAMES LEES-MILNE

The author is particularly indebted to Lady Hyde Parker's guidebook on Melford Hall.

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Its work hitherto has been made possible by many individual donors of property; by friends who have responded to a succession of public appeals; and by others who have subscribed annually to its general funds. Its work in the future can only be carried on if this generous support is steadily increased.

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THE NATIONAL TRUST

FOR PLACES OF HISTORIC INTEREST OR NATURAL BEAUTY

42 QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, LONDON, S.W.1

Being in sympathy with the work of The National Trust and desiring to be identified with its aims, I would like you to add my name to the roll of supporters.

I enclose the sum of £ : : } *Strike out words which do not apply.*

I enclose an order on my bankers.

Name (BLOCK LETTERS).....

Address

M.H.] Date.....

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Please place to the credit of The National Trust at Barclays Bank Ltd., 23 Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W.1, on receipt of this order and on the 1st..... in each year, the sum of £ : : .

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 (For N.T. Office use only)

Dato 10/12/79

Sir Richard Hyde Parker, Bart.

Nelford Hall - Long Nelford

↑ Suffolk, CO 10 9AA

England

Sudbury,

Après la révolution d'Avril 1974 les
postes au Portugal ne fonctionnent pas bien.
Ainsi, ~~je~~ j'ai reçu, presque au même temps,
~~de~~ les photos de vos ivoires avec la liste
et la lettre du 3/10, et le carton-postal
du 28/11.

J'ai fait déjà l'étude de tous ces ivoires
et, en fait, sauf la Vierge avec l'Enfant
et des reliques (n° 29) dont je réserve la clas-
sification.

Sont les images (indes-
du Nalaban (Groat peut-être), celles des photos:
1-2-3- S. Jean ~~et~~ ~~la~~ ~~Virgine~~ ~~et~~ ~~le~~ ~~Christ~~ ~~et~~ ~~le~~ ~~Calvaire~~
(avec la Vierge des Douleurs ~~ou~~ le ~~nomme~~
"les compagnons de la Croix")

~~27 de sudbury~~
~~3-4-5~~

- 4- S^t Antoine de di bonne (ou il est né, très
 fin mont à Paloue)
- 5- de Christ enfant ~~façon~~ du Sipe dit "salva-
 soe mundi (manque dans la main droite
 la sphère du monde)
- 6- de Christ mort, deux — deux Calvai
 ce
- 7- de base d'un "Bon-Pasteur" ("Shee Shepherds"
 la petite dimension)
- 8-9-10- ~~les~~ "Bon-Pasteurs" multiples, sauf
 "l'aube de la vie" et des ramagez dans les
 sens d'inscription sur le dos et dans les
 flancs. La Sainte eulocrmie est, comme
 un objet, la Nativité repensie, dans
 une position pudique
- 10- Un "Bon-pasteur" aussi, mais très
 beau pour être du Nalabar. Peut-être ten
 du Ceylan, dont j'ai déjà publié bien
 d'images avec ce travail très fin.
- 12-13 - des Vierges de la Croception du Nala-
 bar mais de ~~vari~~ différents et parobien
 différents. de première est du Sipe de
 Paroque ~~ce~~ de Seville.
- 14- S. François de Assis le modeste canonique.
 Dans cette image (avec l'exception de

la n° 10, sont très vulgaires au Portugal & du point de vue collection nous ~~peu~~ grande valeur. La plupart est du XVIII^e et une ou deux du XIX^e siècle. Les "Bons-pasteurs" font du XVII^e.

des autres images ont nettement hispano-phi ~~lippiques~~ et peu vénéral, en conséquence, faire part de

du "galeon" "Jaulis".
sique "Viridial". Note de type iconographique, la sculpture, la peinture et dorure, les yeux avec
19-20-21 - Des "Bébé Jésus", le premier de ^{d'Espagne} hauteur exceptionnelle (de moyenne est de quelques 20/30 cm.) et une belle base ^{de} baroque espagnole. Tout-à-fait la tête d'un ange serait peut-être en apparence un chérubin.

22-23-27 - Des "Bébé Jésus" de crèche ou Nativité ~~de~~ ou de petits lits q'on faisait dans le style d'Espagne. On connaît des vestes et soutiens très peu celui du 23. A en plus l'ignave de l'Indie. On trouve un individu portugais au V. & All. N'est-ce pas un petit lit de XVIII^e portugais.
Le 22 qui vous a été acheté est, aussi, hispano-phi ~~lippique~~.

14. St Joseph dans l'iconographie de la "Présentation au Temple". Il doit avoir au-dessus un grand drapeau (rouge... ou son lieu.

15-18 - Notre Dame de la Conception avec
les peintures caractéristiques de l'art hispa-
no-philippin. J'en connais beaucoup
d'exemplaires au Portugal, à l'Espagne
et au Mexique. L'icône 18 est d'une excel-
lente dimension et beauté.

16 - Ste Rosa ~~de Lima~~ très honorée ~~en~~
~~est~~ dans les Philippines et surtout au Mexique

12 - Un saint fondateur d'Ordre Omniale
~~de~~ vu dans la mosquée d'une égli-
se dans la main. Peut-être St Augustin,
évêque de Hippone, en Afrique

J'ai lu avec plaisir l'article ~~publié~~ de David
Howard publié dans la ~~revue~~ "Year-book"
de "The National Tour" concernant les précé-
dents de la Chique prise ~~par~~ le "galeón" de
Acapulco. Je pourrais en faire semblable
sur vos images, notamment ceux hispano-
philippin qui ~~étaient~~ faisaient part de
la même origine.

Si vous m'en permettez je pourrais
écrire une première étude à publier pro-
chainement (6 mois) dans votre revue pu-
blique et puis dans votre ps. public. prochain.
ou "Year Book" de N. Tour.

28.11.79.

Dear Mr Bernardo Ferreira,

I wrote to you on
3.10.79. sending a list
and photographs of items.
Have you received these?
If you have not please
write me + I will send a
copy. With best wishes
Yours sincerely
Pw. K. Punter



ENQº M. BERNARDO FERREIRA,
RUA SENHORA da LUZ 24,
FOZ de DOURO,
PORTO,
PORTUGAL.

The National
Trust



MELFORD HALL, Long Melford, Suffolk.

Stained glass window in the gallery above the staircase.
Queen Elizabeth I dressed for the service held in St. Paul's
Cathedral to return thanks for the defeat of the Spanish
Armada: after the drawing by Issac Oliver.

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. E. PUNTER

SFK 08-2

Printed by
Colin Richardson Printers Limited, Brighouse, Yorkshire





Printed by
Colin Richardson Printers Limited
Brighouse, Yorkshire

AFFIX
STAMP
HERE



MELFORD HALL, Long Melford, Suffolk.
Built by Sir William Cordell, c. 1560 and home of the
Hyde Parker family since 1786.

PHOTOGRAPH: S. E. PUNTER

SFK 08-1

*Join the National Trust and help to preserve Melford.
Information from 23 Caxton Street, London, S.W.1.*



MELFORD HALL
LONG MELFORD
SUFFOLK CO10 9AA
TEL. 078-725 267

21st June 1975.

Dear Dr. Bernardo Ferrao,

Thank you very much indeed for your letter and booklet which is extremely interesting. I am very sorry to be so late in answering you, I have many detailed questions to ask you about my ivories, but as probaly some of these questions would be answered by my understanding your booklet I have arranged for it to be translated into English. This has taken much longer than I had expected but will soon now be completed.

I am going to Ibiza for about a month for a holiday so will contact you on my return. Please write to me and confirm that you are at the same address before I send the photographs, I have 28 carvings. I have type written this letter to make it easier for you to understand.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Richard Hyde Parker.

From Sir Richard Hyde Parker Bt.

MELFORD HALL
LONG MELFORD
SUFFOLK CO10 9AA
TEL. 078-725 267

5th March 1975.

Dear Dr. Bernardo Ferrão,

You may remember in February 1968 a Mr. C.V. Wallace of the National Trust wrote to you and enclosed photographs of some of the Goanese ivories in my possession.

I have become very interested in ivories of this type and have been able over the years to add to my collection. Very little is known about them in this country, and I would therefore very much like your opinion on their date and provenance.

If this letter reaches you, and you are able to help me I can send you detailed photographs. I believe you were writing a book on the subject, is it possible to obtain a copy?

Yours sincerely,

Richard Hyde Parker.

*Respondeu em 12/3/75
mandou 100 p. limpa - 17
p. limpa e 100 p. limpa de
amarelo e pedindo
p. limpa*

Querido caro Bernardo

No domingo passado fizemos ir
a Melford Hall para encicjueramos, mas
descobrimos T a casa só após as 11.
Liro depois da Páscoa. Entretanto com

tantas coisas à falar com o dono
da casa, dando-te imediato conta
das condições "diárias". Não pode-
ria, lembrei-me, a agência da Sul-
Suecia em Londres tratar do assunto?
O problema mais sério é a prestação

EMBAIXADA DE PORTUGAL
EM
LONDRES

do teuuro fotografico, não sei como
resolver. Talvez o Wharlow (da Fundação)
pudesse resolver o caso, visto
destinar-se ao "Colóquio". A dificuldade
é deslocar um fotografo
profissional a Long Mel Prod.

que é bastante longe de Londres.
Espero esmovente de uma breve
mente. Entre tanto se hatou de alguma
crise "via" bulserkian, agradeço p
um proveenier. Nro. Saudades para
a Pequena e todos. Um abraço um
amigo do José Nam

THE NATIONAL TRUST
for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty

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Telephone WHITEHALL 0211-2

Regional Secretary:

CAREW WALLACE

CVW/GRP/2107

16th November, 1967

Eng. ^OD. Bernardo Ferrao,
Rua Senhora da Luz 24,
Foz do Douro - PORTO -
Portugal.

Dear Sir,

Melford Hall - Goanese Ivories.

Thank you for your letter of November 1st. We are trying to obtain some photographs of the Ivories, but these are not the property of the National Trust so I have written to Sir Richard Hyde Parker at Melford Hall.

Yours faithfully,

Carew Wallace

C.V. Wallace.

- carta do Sr. Manuel pedindo foto - feita em 26/2/68
- reply em 13/3, da vez a seguinte mensagem: não tem as imagens

187 NOVEMBER 1967

MESSRS.
THE NATIONAL TRUST
42 QUEEN ANNE'S GATE
LONDON S.W.1

DEAR SIRs,

ON THE 12TH. PAGE OF YOUR PAMPHLET ON
MELFORD HALL THERE ARE MENTIONED : "SEVERAL IVORY
FIGURES, CARVED BY PORTUGUESE SETTLERS IN GOA,"
WHICH ARE OF GREAT INTEREST TO HISTORIANS OF
INDO-PORTUGUESE ART.

CLEAR PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRODUCTIONS OF
EACH OF THESE FIGURES WOULD BE OF THE GREATEST
INTEREST TO ILLUSTRATE AN ARTICLE TO BE PUBLISHED
IN THE REVIEW COLOQUIO, OF THE GULBENKIAN TRUST.
IF POSSIBLE THE PHOTOGRAPHS SHOULD BE 7" X 5 1/2"
AND SHINY. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE TO SEND SUCH PHOTO-
GRAPHS TO THE ADDRESS BELOW? WILL YOU BE SO KIND
AS TO TELL ME HOW I CAN PAY FOR THEM?

I SHOULD ALSO BE VERY GRATEFUL FOR
ANY HISTORICAL INFORMATION THAT YOU CAN GIVE ME
ABOUT THESE FIGURES.

AWAITING YOUR REPLY WITH GREAT INTEREST

I REMAIN

YOURS VERY SINCERELY

ENQD. BERNARDO FERRÃO
RUA SENHORA DA LUZ 24
FOZ DO DOURO -PORTO-
-PORTUGAL-

*Caro Senhores,
Após uma espera de certa
para hoje refaço por escrito
sobre o assunto a trazer*

Caro Sr.

LANCASTER BOND



Eng^oD. Bernardo Ferrao,

Rua Snehora da Luz 24,

Foz do Douro - Porto -

Portugal











3.10.79.

Dear Dr Bernardo Ferrão,

Excuse me for being out of touch for so long.

I enclose photographs of all the ivories in my possession and an article, with notes, dealing with the capture of the Santissima Trinidad.

I am sure the original collection of ivories from the galleon has been added to, by members of my family, as it has been by myself - so it would be of great interest to decide which came from the galleon. As David Howard has tried to do with the porcelain. And could any of the pieces be of great enough quality to have been sent as gifts to the King of Spain - according to our family story?

I send photographs of all the pieces - I regret not of the highest quality being taken by myself. I have numbered each on the reverse, also the height of the ivory + the negative number.
R.H.P. means purchased by myself.

Excuse me for answering you, again, after so long -

I greatly look forward to hearing from you

Yours sincerely

Richard Hyde Parker.

List of voices numbered on the photographs. I have also put I.P. H.F. or S.T. (Santissima Trinidad) Please correct me!

I.P. - Dado-proleguessa

1. Saint (Who?) I.P.?

Some brown in hair. Green stain on forehead.

2. Saint (As above?) I.P.?

Brown hair and eyes, red lips, some gilt on robe borders, and red line between covers of book in left hand.

3. Saint (As above?) I.P.

Brown hair some gilt on robe borders. Green stain on right side (why) The whole surface of the carving is covered with a white incrustation - is this some form of paint base? It shows in the folds of the robes in the photograph.

4. Saint Anthony of Padua? I.P.

Brown hair. Some gilt in ^{robe} girdle, edge of hood with some red, gilt cuffs, sandals, globe in Christ Child's hand, edges of paper in book, and the two lines on the base. The cross has traces of gilt and so has the foliage behind the latter some red and green. Is the crown burning or is the foliage behind? This carving has the same white incrustation as No. 3.

5. Christ Child? I.P. RbHP.

Would there have been a crown in his left hand?

Gilt hair or brown, blue eyes red lips.

Left arm badly restored.

6. Recumbent Christ I.P.

Brown hair + beard, red wound and lips under beard.

Brown border of loin cloth.

7. Base of Good Shepherd (mining) I.P.

8. Good Shepherd. I.P.

I note your remarks on Page 22 of your booklet.

I agree these carvings are very common but I know little about the subject matter.

What date is the style of his coat?

Who is the figure in the cave at the base?

Am I correct in noticing that when the Good Shepherd sits on a heart shaped base as in No. 9, the figure at the base does not have a skull and cross at its head? Note the base No. 7 also, which is made to hold a similar seat.

These carvings all have a number of holes drilled vertically into the base - what are these for?

I find the Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, symbolism most interesting - is there there not also a feeling of the dream in The Revelation of St John the Divine and also the poem by St John of the Cross 'The Soul and the Bridegroom'?

But perhaps you know more.

The feet of this carving have been broken and have been restored as shoes which no doubt were sandals.

9. Good Shepherd. I.P. B&P.

10. Good Shepherd. B&P.

Hair brown with some gilt and blue belt.

Black painted wooden base (later?) lamb on shoulder missing.

This I feel is a work of very great beauty - are we looking at the first non Indo Portuguese Good Shepherd!

The carver has surely worked from a description of the traditional carving.

11. Good Shepherd. I.P. B&P.

Less freely worked than the others - later? Ivory whiter in colour.

12. The Assumption of the Virgin. I.P. RSH.

I find the iconography of these carvings rather difficult to understand - could we have here depicted the Assumption and The Immaculate Conception?

Traces of gilt on her hair, the angel's hair, serpent's head, upper edge of base and combined with a blue line on the edges of her robes. Some red on the central angel's wings and the Virgin's shoes.

Base of ebony (I think) with an oval recess in the centre with a projecting wooden pin - for what?

13. Virgin. I.P.

Some brown in hair and border of robe.

There is a hole in the base which is usual - but also another in the centre of her back. The back has been flattened was this therefore to secure the figure at a high level.

Is this therefore depicting the Assumption?

Does the Virgin Fig. 10. in your booklet have a hole in this position?

14. St. Joseph. H.F. (S.T.)

With the offering of two turtle doves, Luke 2.24.

Dark brown hair, beard + buttons. Robes originally decorated overall in gilt of which some remains.

His hat hangs at the centre of his back.

15. Virgin. H.F. (S.T.)

Hair and robes gilt. Ears pierced, fingers separate. The moons projecting from base missing.

Could the single Angel on the base represent the Annunciation, and the Clouds and Moons the Assumption and the Immaculate Conception? Perhaps too much!

16. Santa Rosa of Lima. H.F. (S.T.)

In Dominican robes decorated in gilt. Left eye missing.

17. Bishop (Who?) H.F. (S.T.)

Brown hair and beard. Gilt robes as No. 16. Both eyes missing.

18. Virgin of the Immaculate Conception. (Moons + Serpent) H.F. (S.T.)

Hair gilt and robes gilt and I think green (perhaps the gilt base having changed colour.)

Wooden base with serpent carved from it and moons retaining some gilt.

She had a gold and diamond halo, gold and ruby earrings and on her left centre finger an emerald and gold ring.

These were stolen circa 1916.

She may have had a necklace having holes drilled at each side of her neck to the back.

A very beautiful carving.

18A. Rear view.

19. Christ Child. H.F. (S.T.)

The head is painted to represent brown hair, with gilt.

Above the left ear the head has been deeply carved to form locks of hair, unfinished. The eyes are painted brown and I think gold covered. This figure had a gold and diamond halo also stolen at the same time as No. 18.

Would this Christ Child have held a cross in his left hand?

19A. The base of 19.

Stylistically this is most interesting - I would very much like your opinion. I can see Gothic, Indian and Chinese?

20. Christ Child. H.F. (S.T.)

Brown hair, red lips. Right arm missing. Would he have held a globe in the left hand? Eyes missing.

21. Christ Child. H.F. (S.T.)

Brown hair. Right arm and eyes missing. Very finely carved curly hair, ~~and~~ beautifully joyful + strong face.

21A. Side view.

22. Christ Child. H.F. ? R.W.H.P. Não é da S.T.

Brown hair, red lips, brown eyes. Later?

23. Christ Child. H.F. (S.T.)

Brown hair, red lips + painted eyes. Saddle on left foot of gold filigree, hinged at the heel.

23A. Detail of saddle.

Christ Child. H.F. (S.T.)

24. Brown hair, red lips, eyes missing.

25. Christ Child. H.F. (S.T.)

Carved hair gilt, red lips, eyes missing.

26. Christ Child. H.F. (S.T.)

Hair brown, lips red, eyes brown.

Base white marble bed, on grey marble base.

I think the same artist as Nos 24 and 27.

26A. From above.

27. Christ Child. H.F. (S.T.)

Hair brown, lips red, eyes brown.

Base as above. Although Nos. 23 and 25 also fit the base.

27A. From above.

28. Saint Francis. I.P.

No colour.

29.29 Virgin + Child.

This ivory is quite a different subject, but perhaps you can help me with its provenance.

The photograph being out of focus and twice size shows it less fine than it is. It comes from my wife's family and may be Polish - date? The reverse opens, showing I think, a relic and on vellum strips the names S. Bonifacio, S. Hild?, S. Ursula, ? Maria?

The Christ Child holds a dove why?

I hope you can read my writing - to save time I have not had it typewritten. But please tell me any words you cannot read.

I have not mentioned the numerous holes drilled mainly in the heads of the ivories - but I can explain them in detail if you wish.



4.

N/3/2

18.7cms.

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



5. RWH.P.

N/16/2

16.6 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUSBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



6

N/25/1

9.8 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



7

N/18/2

8.5 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



8

N/4/2

17.9 cms.

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUSBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



9 R.H.P.

N/13/2

22.1 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



10 RWHP.

N/7/11

16.3 cms with base.

10.8 cms without.

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



11. RWH.P.

N/12/2

18 cms.

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



12 RbHP.

N/17/2

12.9 cms with base

11.1 cms without.

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MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



13

X/11/2

8.5 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA.



14

N/8/2

11.9 cm

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



15

N/7/2

15.6 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



16

N/6/2

30 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



17

N/5/2

28.5cm

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



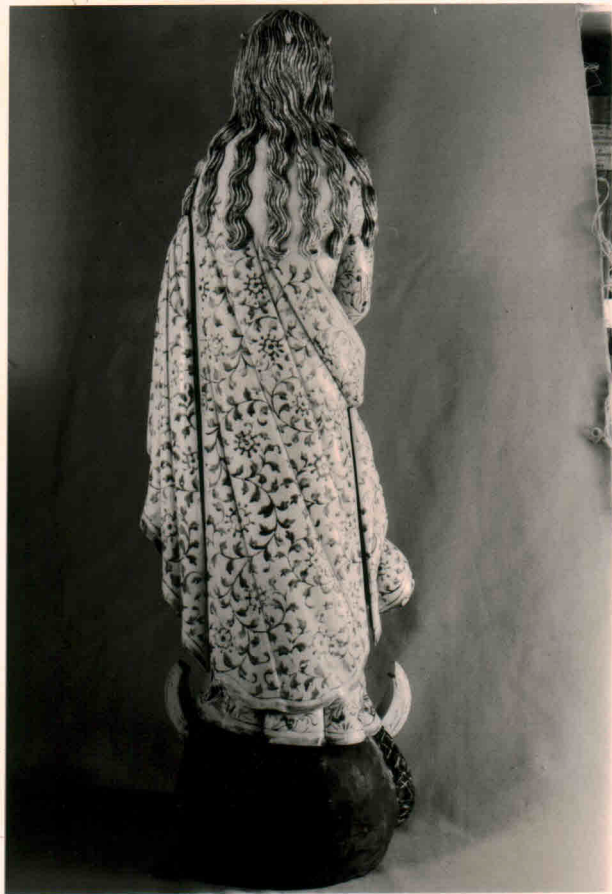
18

N/20/2

59.5 with base.

50.4 without.

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
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18 A

N/21/2

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



19

N/22/2

92 cases with base

72 cases without.

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA

9A

4/23/2

20cms base light.



SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



20

N/15/2

20.2 cms.

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



21

N/14/2

19cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA

21A

N/24/1



SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



22 Rev HP.

N/26/1

16.8 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



23

N/21/1

18.7cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA

23A

N/35/2



SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



24

N/29/1

18.9 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



25

N/28/1

20.6 cms

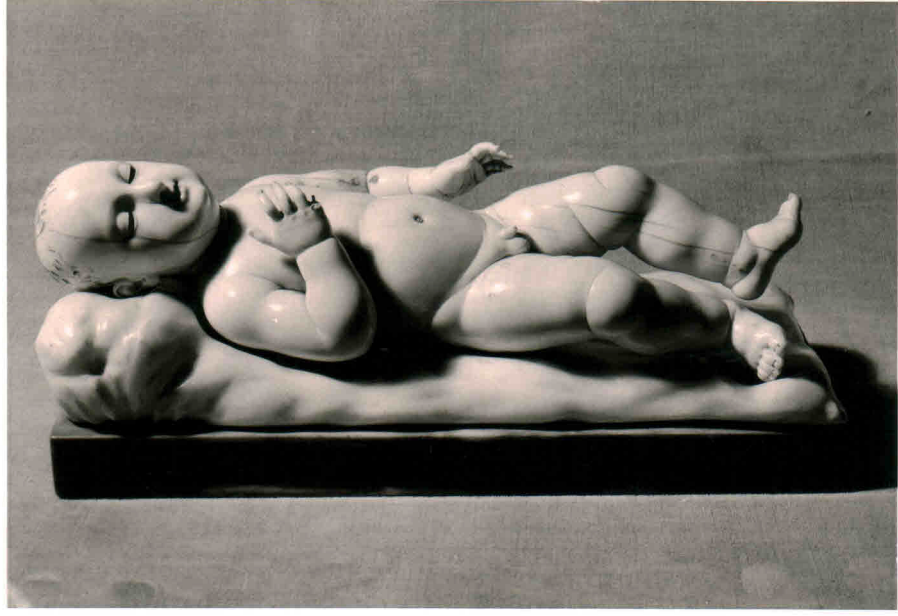
SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA

26

N/33/1

21cms

20.8cms base



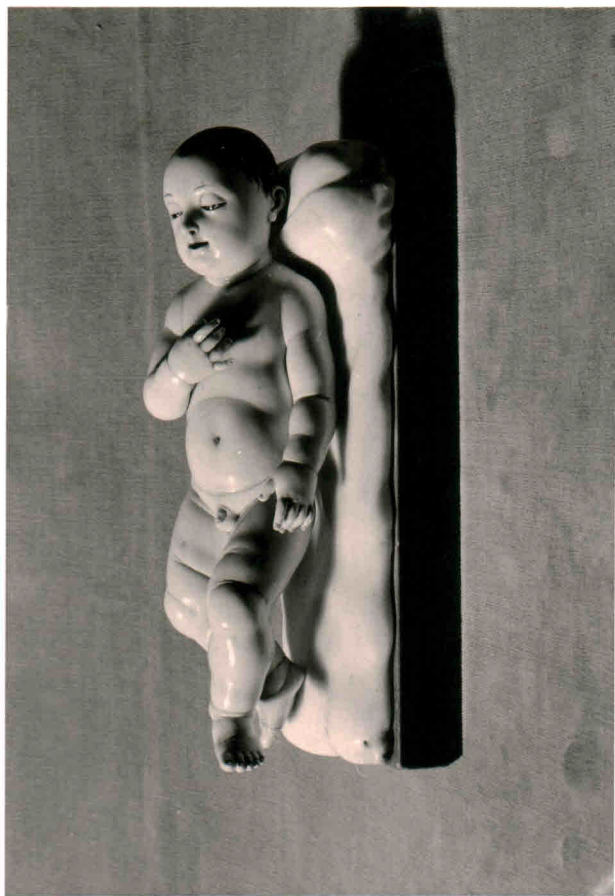
SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA

26A

N/32-11



SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



27

N/34/1

24.5 cms

26 cms base

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
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Z/A

N/30/1

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
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28

N/19/2

7.5cms



SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
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SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



29.

11-1 cons

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
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SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA

CURTIS, LANE & CO.
47 NORTH STREET
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK
TEL: (078 73) 76804

REF:



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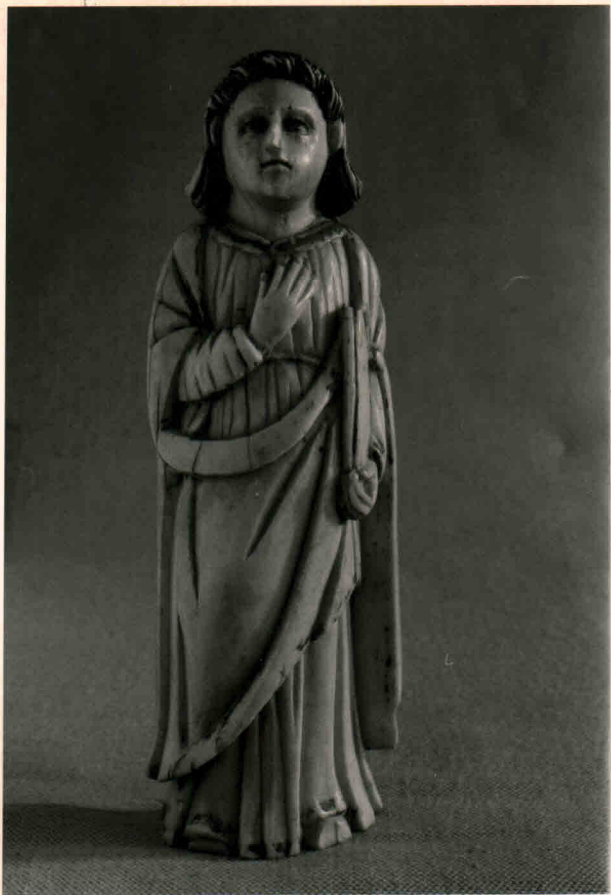


1.

N/10/2

10.4 cms.

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



2.

X/9/2

11 cms

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
MELFORD HALL, LONG MELFORD,
SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA



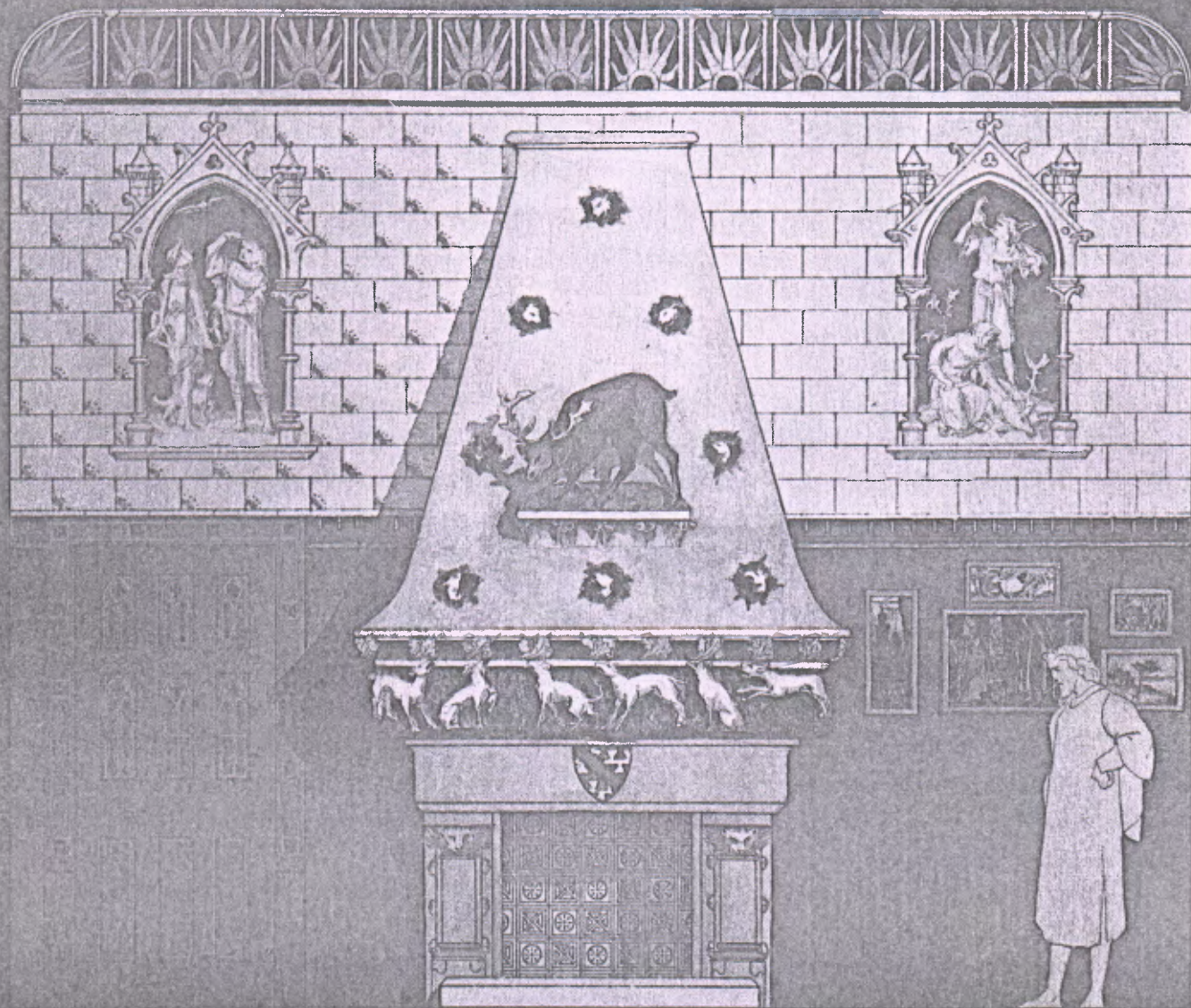
3.

N/2/2

13 cms.

SIR RICHARD HYDE PARKER, BART.
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SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 9AA

The National Trust Year Book 1975-76



Studies in Art History and Nature Conservation
relating to Properties in the care of the National Trust

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The Prize of Captain Hyde Parker

DAVID HOWARD

There is so much else which touches the senses as one visits Melford Hall in Suffolk for the first time – the feeling of agelessness as one skirts the now-dry moat, the quiet as one approaches the front door across the courtyard, and the cool air as one stands in the great hall and then passes into the eighteenth century drawing room and Regency library beyond – that even the most sensitive would not feel intimidated by the very fine Chinese Export Porcelain which meets the gaze in almost every room and hallway, and seems to call for no special explanation, so well does it blend with its surroundings.

Porcelain made for the European market in eighteenth century China looks down from above the shelves in the library; it brings to life the cabinets in the drawing room; and it stands unobtrusive watch in the great hall. Two great silent sentinels, in the form of Chinese vases of immense size, decorated in rich sepia, gold and orange, stand guard on the staircase (Fig. 1). They might have been standing today in a Spanish palace but for a long-forgotten action in the Pacific at the end of October 1762, by a naval captain who, sadly, never lived to see them in the house for which they are so well suited.

In December 1782 Admiral Sir Hyde Parker sailed from Rio de Janeiro in his flagship the *Cato* on his way to take command of the East India Squadron. Neither he, his crew nor the *Cato* were ever seen again, and it was not until 14 November 1791 that the Admiralty Gazeteer reported the story of a Captain Burns which produced the only known clue as to what happened.

Captain Burns was an Englishman commanding a ship in the service of the Nabob of Arcot. Some time in 1790 he had noticed on board a native coastal vessel a man bailing water with a bucket which he knew at once to have come from a British ship. On approaching he saw the *Cato's* name on the bucket and on going on board found the sail to have been the *Cato's* and much of the cordage and rigging. The captain admitted that his vessel was largely rigged from the plundered *Cato* which he

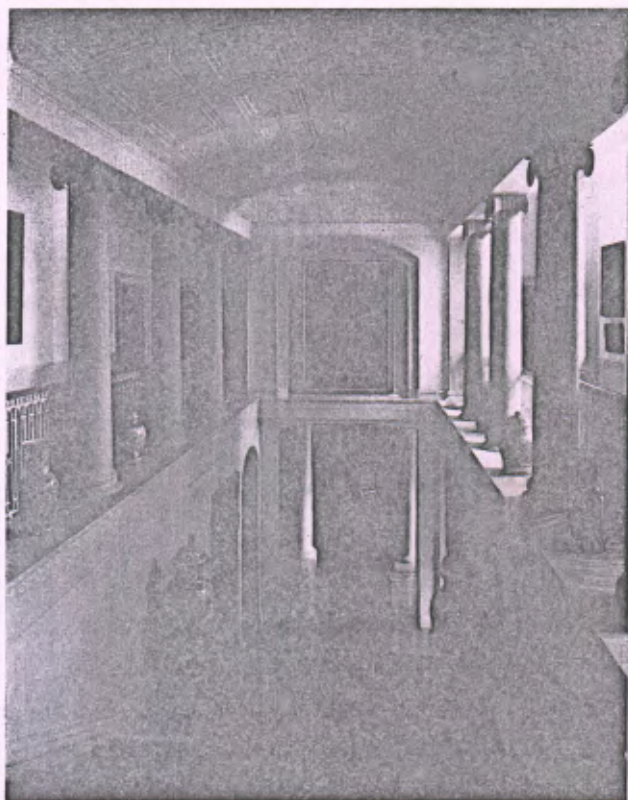
said had been wrecked a few years before on the Malabar coast. When Captain Burns returned on the following day to get more information he found the native ship had sailed for an unknown destination.

The career of Admiral Sir Hyde Parker (Fig. 2) had started in almost the same obscurity – as a cousin of Sir Henry Parker, 3rd Baronet, who was descended from the uncle of Edward Hyde, the great Earl of Clarendon. He first served as a merchant seaman before the mast but at the age of 29, in 1747, he was given his first command in the navy, having sailed as a Lieutenant with Anson on his voyage of circumnavigation.

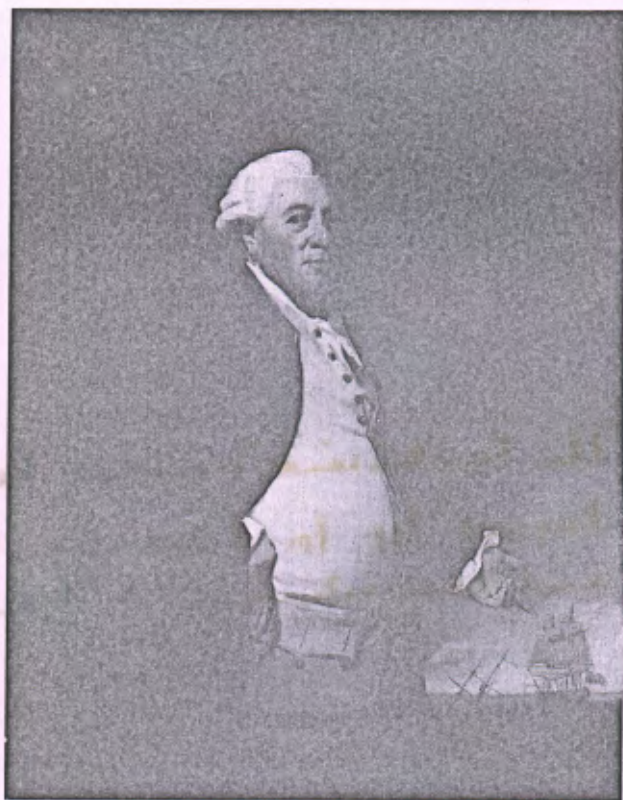
In 1760 Captain Parker was promoted to the *Norfolk*, a ship of 74 guns, and sailed for the East Indies where he was one of the Council of War convened at Pondicherry after the demand of Governor Pigot of Fort St. George, Madras, that the town should be taken over by the British East India Company. By 1762 he had transferred to the *Panther* and was serving under Admiral Cornish in his expedition against Manila.

On 6 October that year Captain Parker led the boats in the landing of the mixed force of 2,300 British troops, lascars and sepoy under the command of Col. Sir William Draper (later to be so heavily involved in the Letters of Junius). The landing was made most hazardous by heavy surf but in his despatches after the fall of the City, Sir William wrote, 'The landing of the troops was covered in beautiful style by Captain Hyde Parker.'

Manila was known to be a rich city and the capture of both ships and cities at this time lost nothing of their glamour by reason of the prize money which was later divided. In this case a ransom of two million dollars was to be fixed for the town. Undoubtedly the Naval Command must have realized that the city would fall to the Army, and so that there should be no doubts about the division of prize money a document was drawn up, almost certainly at the instigation of the Naval Command, and signed on 26 September 1762.



1. The Staircase, Melford Hall, Suffolk. The two giant Chinese vases on the half-landing formed part of the prize of the 'Santissima Trinidad', captured by Captain (later Admiral) Hyde Parker off Manila in October, 1762.



2. Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, Bt. (1713-83), by Romney, canvas, 49½ × 39½ in.

'Whereas there may be occasion during the present Expedition against Manilla to Detach Ships from the Body of His Majesty's Squadron, and also to land seamen: And as it appears just that the whole Squadron of His Majesty's Ships employed on the aforementioned Expedition, as well as the Kings Land Forces should partake equally of any Acquisitions made. We the Admiral, Commodore, Captains, Officers and the major part of the Companies of His Majesty's ships, as likewise the General, Colonels, Officers and major part of the soldiers of His Majesty's Troops, do mutually agree to make an equal Distribution of any Prizes, Booty or other Acquisitions made, or to be made, either on the Land or on the Sea, during the present expedition against Manilla agreeable to their Respective Ranks and Numbers. In witness etc. . . .'

The document was signed by 'A. Cornish', 'Wm. Draper' and the Captains of the *Norfolk*, *Grafton*, *Argo*, *Lenox*, *Falmouth*, *Weymouth*, *Sea Horse*, *Elizabeth*, *America*, *Seaford*, *Panther* and *Southsea Castle*. A list was also drawn up giving the number of shares which would be received according to rank

totalling 629½ (the eleven halves were for senior officers' servants). But, for once, the thorough attention given by the Naval Officers to this important question was to misfire, for with the ending of the Seven Years War in the following year, the city's ransom was never paid and the only great prize money was to be taken entirely at sea by the Navy alone.

Two days before the landing, news reached Admiral Cornish that a Spanish galleon called the *Sancta Philippina* bound for Manila, out of Acapulco, was then between Embocadero and Cape Spiritu Santos, and on 10 October he detached the *Panther*, and the *Argo* under Captain King. On 30 October they at last saw a very large vessel and gave chase, but the *Argo* alone came up with her for the *Panther* was swept by a very strong current among the Naranjo rocks and had she not anchored would probably have been lost.

During the night the current slackened and at about one o'clock in the morning of 31 October Captain Parker was able to engage the galleon. The defence was only passive and the Spaniards relied on the thickness of their sides which the *Panther's*

The Santissima Trinidad had sailed from Manila on August 1st for Acapulco but had become dismasted and was returning to Manila for repairs.



3. 'The action against the Dutch off the Dogger Bank, commanded by Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, 5th August, 1781,' by Dominique Serres.

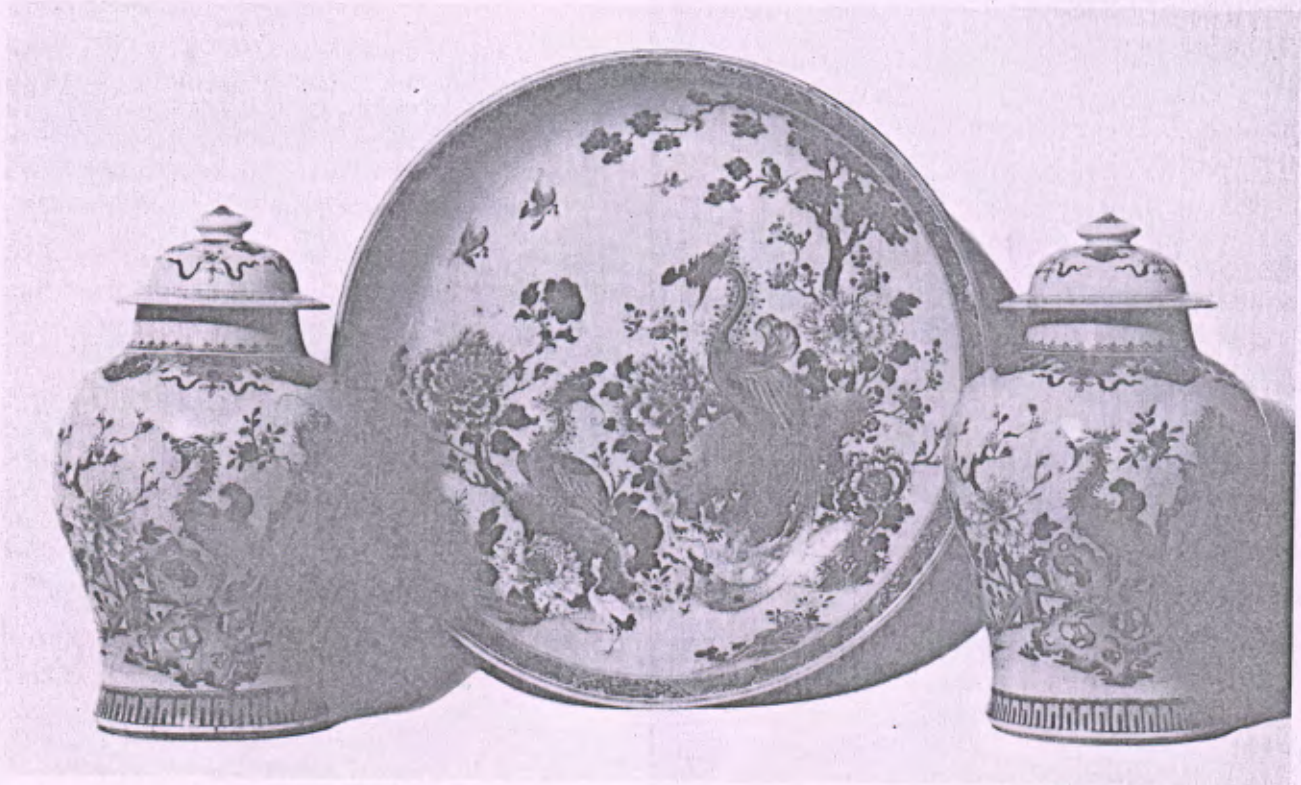


4. A vase and cover, and a shaped dish of the same design and 'palette' as the massive vases on the stairs. These were undoubtedly together in the cargo.

guns could not penetrate. After two hours, however, the galleon struck and to his great surprise Captain Parker discovered the ship to be the *Santissima Trinidad* and not the Acapulco galleon. The huge ship, known also as 'El Poderoso', lay like a mountain in the sea, pierced for sixty guns but of which only thirteen were mounted and of those seven had been hurriedly brought from the hold after the action had started. On board had been 810 men and her treasure and merchandise was

valued at about £600,000 – little short of the treasure of the expected prize.

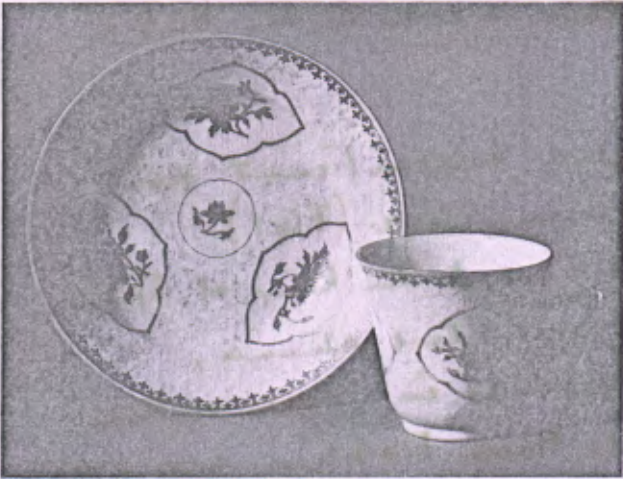
Judging from similar prize distributions family records suggest that Captain Parker had hoped for £70,000 – but the agreement signed on 26 September must have reduced this very considerably and it is thought his final official share was about



5. A pair of 'famille rose' vases and a saucer dish, of exactly the same date and of very similar design to those in Fig. 4. The use of one design in various palettes was usual in Chinese Export Porcelain of this period.



6. Four semi-eggshell beakers (all of which have saucers) from four services of c. 1750/55. From left to right painted in underglaze blue; 'famille rose' and gold; bianco-sopra-bianco and rose; and bianco-sopra-bianco, rose and gold.



7. A beaker shaped cup and its saucer of c. 1760 in bianco-sopra-bianco and gold. The handle of the cup is of a shape then only recently introduced in Chinese porcelain.

£10,000 although the records of the High Court of Admiralty in the Public Record Office do not appear to give the answer.

The French and Spanish War Assignation Books of this court for 5 October 1763 and other dates up to 14 November in the same year record Prize Court proceedings under the heading: 'La Santissima Trinidad', otherwise El Poderosso, Don Pedro Cossio Commander.

Our Sovereign Lord the King against the said ship and goods taken by His Majesties ships of War the Argo, whereof Richard King Esqre. was Commander and the Panther, whereof Hyde Parker Esqre was Comdr. & brought to & against all persons.'

There is no further court record after 14 November and this is possibly because of the complications caused by the agreement of 26 September although it is noted that eighty-four 'prayer' were heard during this period.

But all this was more than a year ahead. On

31 October 1762, as soon as a prize crew was aboard and the *Santissima Trinidad* secured, the *Panther* and the *Argo* continued the search for their original prey, spending three fruitless months in heavy monsoon weather before they had to admit her escape.

On 19 March 1763 Captain Parker wrote a twelve page letter to his son Harry in England, who besides being very close to his father was also his 'prize agent' in London (and that of a number of other officers from whom he received commission and handled the sale of captured goods). The letter contains comments on brother officers, and expresses distress at the news of Lord Anson's health, but clearly the *Santissima Trinidad* prize was very much on his mind and more than half the letter bore on it directly or indirectly:

'Dear Harry,

'... I have frequently endeavoured to prevail with the Admiral to send the prizes to England, but the deficiency of men and her heavy sailing are the difficulty at present insurmountable.

'We are now on our passage with her for the Straits of Malacca in order to proceed to Madras. If we dispose of her cargo in India it must be at a loss of three fourths of its Value in England and as to the Ship she is so large that the merchants can not be concerned in the purchase of her. . . .

'The officers and soldiers of Kings Troops claim an equal share from a useless agreement we entered into with them. It is true an instrument was signed and sealed on our part but on theirs only by the General which they say is sufficient for the whole Army and on that pretence the Companys officers and troops claim an equal share . . .

'I need not intimate to you to treat the Prisoners with civility and politeness though it is more than their due for there is not a man of honour amongst them. Old Calderon and his daughter will probably have permission to come to London, in that case I would have your mother visit his daughter and do any good offices in her power. She will probably have learned English by the time she arrives but it will cost her more time to learn a behaviour suitable to creatures of your world. I am not much afraid of your falling in love with her. I gave him and his daughter all their Jewels which were considerable and took his word of honour that he would not conceal or carry away but his own - notwithstanding the old Knave tricked me out of some belongings of others to a considerable amount.' . . .

'Your affectionate father,

'Parker

'Grafton, Straits of Malacca March 19th 1763'

Captain Hyde Parker reached England in the

In 1969 my Great Grandfather wrote in his History of our family - I quote :-

"In this galleon were found a magnificent pair of China jars of extraordinary size (Fig 1) which were intended as a present to the King of Spain and quantities of other fine oriental china, also some curious carved figures in ivory of the Virgin and other saints. All these trophies are now at Melford Hall."

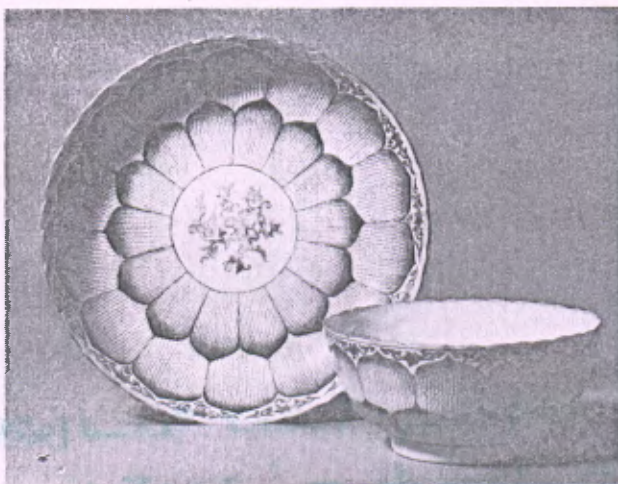
summer of 1763 and remained on shore until 1772 when he was appointed to command the *Boston*. On 23 January 1778 he was promoted Rear Admiral of the Blue after 31 years a captain and hoisted his flag as Rear Admiral in the *Royal Oak*, sailing as second in command of the fleet to the West Indies under Admiral Byron, well known in the Navy as 'Foul Weather Jack', because of the ill luck he seemed always to have with the weather. This time was no exception, for his fleet was crippled and dispersed in a hurricane. Despite Admiral Parker's success at Dogger Bank in 1781 (Fig. 3) some of Byron's foul weather luck must have clung to him and he disappeared little more than a year later, very shortly after succeeding his elder brother, a country parson, as the 5th Parker Baronet.

His son Harry, who succeeded, and had done much to consolidate the modest fortune his father had won, purchased Melford Hall in Suffolk from the widow of Sir Cordell Firebrace in 1786. In it he arranged the spoils of his father's voyages – not least a cargo of porcelain which had been taken from the *Santissima Trinidad*, and an interesting collection of ivory figures probably of both Chinese and Goan workmanship.

Later inventories of Melford do not throw any clear light on which pieces were part of the cargo but when Sir William Parker, the 9th Baronet, wrote a brief unpublished history of the family in 1867 he would have been old enough to have heard the family account of the capture at second hand and he mentions both the pair of enormous covered vases and 'other porcelain' taken from the prize, some of which was said to be destined for the Spanish King.

There is no doubt as to the identity of the great vases, but how far is it possible to identify the 'other porcelain' and can this help to add to our knowledge of mid-eighteenth century export ware?

I think there are five possible groups from among the very interesting porcelain at Long Melford. It seems that Sir Hyde, Sir Harry or their successors purchased a number of earlier pieces, although there is no record of this. There are two very fine pairs of bowls of about 1730, one pair Japanese, the other Chinese, mounted in ormolu, with painted ormolu covers – but this work must have been done in Europe and they probably came from France in about 1790. There are a number of fine dishes of Imari taste made in China and Japan – the largest with Dutch arms made about 1715. There is 'famille verte' of the first quarter of the



8. A lotus bowl and saucer dish in 'famille rose' and gold c. 1760 employing the same motif as Fig. 6.

eighteenth century (and perhaps some of the first quarter of the nineteenth) and there are a great many dishes and part services which have seen much service over two centuries. But one must look for quality of a style acceptable in Spain, and of an approximate date of 1755 to 1760.

Unfortunately it is not possible to be more accurate over the date than this, and indeed the prize may have included some earlier things. This was a special cargo, possibly despatched in the knowledge of an attack on Manila; possibly resulting from the clearing of merchants' warehouses there which had not been well supplied since the beginning of the Seven Years War in 1756. It is even possible that some export porcelain of a much earlier date was on board, being the private cargo of a retiring official but although that would account for some very fine earlier porcelain at Melford, it must remain purely a speculation.

What is certain is that besides the great vases in iron red, sepia and gold – very much to Spanish taste – decorated with fabulous peacocks in a rock garden with peonies and lotus, there are four other pairs of vases of smaller size but the same design, most now in the library, and a gigantic saucer dish and some smaller shaped dishes with shaped moulded edges all with similar pheasants (Fig. 4). There is no doubt that all had a common origin about 1755 and would have been together in the cargo.

Of considerable interest are a pair of vases and some dishes of very similar pattern and scenes – but in 'famille rose' (Fig. 5). The Chinese were always adept at translating a successful



9. A dish and two sauceboats of a dinner service of c. 1760 in 'famille rose'. Although not of a rare style this dinner service could have been in the cargo.

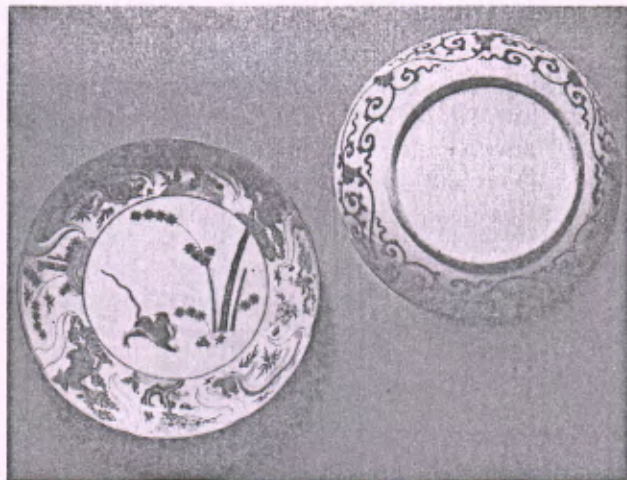
design into various *palettes*, and some border patterns were available for export in 'famille rose', 'en grèsaille' and in underglaze blue all at the same period.

Thus far there is little doubt that all these pieces were in the cargo. A group of cups, saucers and bowls with similar designs translated into six different palettes are almost as certainly the remnants of six separate services used for some beverage other than tea or coffee, with large beaker-like cups, possibly for chocolate. Even eighteenth century extravagance suggests no reason for six similar chocolate services (and the Parkers were not extravagant) – unless these came from the captured cargo. All are graceful and delicate, almost eggshell, date from about 1750, and employ variations of underglaze blue, bianco-sopra-bianco (white enamel), rose enamel and gilding, using the same basic pattern of peonies and lotus (Figs 6, 7 and 8). Six more beautiful sets of eighteenth century cups than these can hardly exist, and it is impossible to see them all together without *knowing* that they had a common inspiration, creation, and possibly provenance. Captain Parker would not have been human had he not coveted all six services!

Of far less certainty are the two remaining groups – but both were undoubtedly made in the

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 High Court of Admiralty Records in the Public Record Office:
 H.C.A. 8 No. 130, 'No. 1 French and Spanish War Asignation



10. A pair of underglaze blue saucer dishes, Chinese but of Japanese design, probably made between 1752 and 1756.

1750s and could well have been on board the galleon. There would seem no reason to purchase at that period, but the great variety of functional porcelain at Melford is not easy to explain without a collector in one or more generations of the family.

The principal dinner service, with shaped 'famille rose' dishes and scenes with cranes and other birds in a landscape is of a style more favoured on the Continent than in England (Fig. 9). More remarkable are two pairs of underglaze blue saucer dishes with unusual moulded rims and decoration (Fig. 10), examples of a style used by the Walpole family of Norfolk who had a service made in 1752 or 1756 with their arms *on the reverse*. Were these dishes left over from that special order, without arms? Did they attract a Spanish buyer and find their way to Manila? Could Captain Parker have purchased them himself in warehouses in Canton or Madras? It is not possible to say.

There is no further evidence. But there is more than enough porcelain and provenance at Melford to reward the imagination without further inventory or invention. The study of Chinese Export Porcelain too has been advanced a small step by the prize which Captain Hyde Parker took on 31 October 1762.

- Book from 9 January 1762 to 9 January 1764', pp. 231–34.
 Unpublished notes on the Parker family of Melford Hall, by Sir William Parker, Bt., 1867.

AS IMAGENS DE MARTIM
DE MELFORD HALL

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ZXO