WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000 (As Amended)
SECTION 5

Director of Services Order No: 1756/2022

Reference Number: EX 56/2022

Name of Applicant: Alfred Beit Foundation C/O Sheehan Barry Architects

Nature of Application: Section 5 Referral as to whether "Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting & copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow" is or is not exempted development.

Location of Subject Site: Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow

Report from Chris Garde EP & Suzanne White SEP

With respect to the query under Section 5 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as to whether "Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting & copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow" is or is not exempted development within the meaning of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Having regard to:

a) The details submitted with this Section 5 Application on the 30/09/2022.
b) Sections 2,3,4 and 57(i) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Main Reasons with respect to Section 5 Declaration:

The purposed works are development;

The purposed development comes within the scope of Section 4-1(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and;

In relation to Section 57(1), the works do not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Recommendation

The Planning Authority considers that "Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting & copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow" **is development and is exempted development**

Signed _____ Dated 24th day of October 2022

ORDER:

_____

That a declaration to issue stating:

That "Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting & copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow" is development and is exempted development within the meaning of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 (as amended).

Signed: _____ Dated 25th day of October 2022

Director of Services
Planning Development & Environment

Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Forbairt Pleanála agus Comhshaol
Planning Development and Environment

Áras An Chontae / County Buildings
Cill Mhantáin / Wicklow
Guthán / Tel: (0404) 20148
Faics / Fax: (0404) 69462
Rphost / Email: plandev@wicklowcocc
Suíomh / Website: www.wicklow.ie

Sheehan Barry Architects
C/O Alfred Beit Foundation
88 Ranelagh Village
Dublin 6
D06 Y2W6

24th October 2022

RE: Declaration in accordance with Section 5
of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 (As Amended)

I enclose herewith Declaration in accordance with Article 5 (2) (A) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 in respect of the following:

Exemption Ref. No: EX 56/2022

Applicant: Alfred Beit Foundation C/O Sheehan Barry Architects

Nature of Application: Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting & copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow"

Location: Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow"

Where a Declaration is used under this Section any person issued with a Declaration under subsection (2) (a) may, on payment to An Bord Pleanala of such fee as may be prescribed, refer a declaration for review by the Board within four weeks of the date of the issuing of the declaration by the Local Authority.

Is mise, le meas,

pp

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
PLANNING DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT.

Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Forbairt Pleanála agus Comhshaol
Planning Development and Environment

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Suíomh / Website: www.wicklow.ie

DECLARATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 5 (2) (A) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 AS AMENDED

Applicant: Alfred Beit Foundation C/O Sheehan Barry Architects

Location: Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow

DIRECTOR OF SERVICES ORDER NO. 1756/2022

A question has arisen as to whether "Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting & copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow" is or is not exempted development.

Having regard to:

a) The details submitted with this Section 5 Application on the 30/09/2022.
b) Sections 2,3,4 and 57(i) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Main Reasons with respect to Section 5 Declaration:

The purposed works are development;

The purposed development comes within the scope of Section 4-1(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and;

In relation to Section 57(1), the works do not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

The Planning Authority considers that "Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting & copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow" is development and is exempted development.

Signed: _____
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
PLANNING DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT

Dated 24 October 2022

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL
Planning Department
Section 5 – PLANNING REPORT SECTION 5 APPLICATION

Ref:	**EX 56/2022**
Name:	**Alfred Beit Foundation**
Development:	**Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room and all relevant works at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow**
Location:	**Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow**

APPLICATION SITE:
The subject site is that of Russborough House, located within the Russborough Estate which is located in the townland of Russborough between Ballymore Eustace and Blessington. The Estate is access off the L8363 Local road that bound the site to the northeast. The site is bounded by the N81 to the southeast and the Kildare Border to the north and west.

Russborough House is described as a detached seven-bay two-storey over basement Palladian style mansion, built 1741-48 to designs by Richard Castle, with quadrant Doric colonnades linking to seven-bay two-storey pavilion wings, themselves linked to outbuildings by walls with rusticated arches topped with cupolas. The walls are of dressed granite, with a central feature to the main block consisting of a pediment supported by four three-quarter Corinthian columns with swag mouldings between the capitals, whilst the wings have three-bay breakfront centres with Ionic pilasters. Each of the three blocks and the colonnades has a parapet surmounted with urns, and behind each parapet is a slated hipped roof with broad granite chimneystacks to the main blocks. Within the colonnades are arched niches with Classical statues. The entrance consists of a largely glazed timber door with semi-circular fanlight-like eyebrow window above, and is reached by a grand flight of stone steps with the piers of the balustrade topped with urns and heraldic lions. The windows are generally flat-headed and filled with three over three and six over six timber sash frames. Cast-iron rainwater goods. The house is surrounded by an extensive, but largely unadorned, demesne and approached at a right angle from the main avenue to the north-east.

PLANNING HISTORY:
There is an extensive Planning history associated with the site; the facility is permitted for use as an attraction with gardens, a café, car parking etc.

HERITAGE:
Protected structures/ NIAH

PS REF: 09-08 Russborough Country House-
One of the most important houses in Ireland, designed by Richard Castle for the Earl of Milltown. Complex Palladian composition and superb craftsmanship. (National monument)

NIAH ID: 16,400,503- Detached seven bay two storey Palladian style mansion built 1741-48.

PS REF: 09-09 Russborough Entrance Arch
Triumphal arch flanked by pedimented, side gates.

NIAH ID: 16,400,504- Classic style gate screen (constructed in granite) at main entrance to Russborugh House built c.1745.

Monuments
WI005-067- Designated landscape feature.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT:
Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Section 3(1) of the Act states the following in respect of 'development':
"In this Act, 'development' means, except where the context otherwise requires, the carrying out of any works on, in, over or under land or the making of any material change in the use of any structures or other land."

Section 2(1) of the Act states the following in respect of the following:
'works" includes *Any act or operation of construction, excavation, demolition, extension, alteration, repair or renewal..."*

Section 4 sets out the types of works that while considered 'development', can be considered 'exempted development' for the purposes of the Act.

Section 4 (1) (h) is relevant for the purposes of this declaration:
"development consisting of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any structure, being works which affect only the interior of the structure or which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures."

Section 4(2) makes provision for ministerial regulations to set out further exemptions. The 2001 Planning Regulations as amended derive from this section and designate further works as being exempted development for the purposes of the act.

Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended)
Article 6 *(1)*:
Subject to Article 9, ...development of a class specified in column 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 2 shall be exempted development for the purposes of the Act, provided that such development complies with the conditions and limitations specified in column 2 of the said Part 1 opposite the mention of that class in the said column 2.

Article 9 (1):
Development to which article 6 relates shall not be exempted development for the purposes of the Act–
(a) If the carrying out of such development would–
(i) Contravene a condition attached to a permission under Act or be inconsistent with any use specified in a permission under the Act,
(iii) Endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard or obstruction of road users,
(viii) Consist of or compromise the extension, alteration, repair or renewal of an unauthorized structure or a structure the use of which is an unauthorized use

SUBMISSION:
The applicants have applied to see whether or not the following is or is not development and is or is not exempted development:

- Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting and copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork; all based on research including archive photographs and expert analysis of historical paint schemes.

Details Submitted in support of Application:
- Supporting letter.
- Application form.
- Site location plan.
- Architectural/Conservation Assessment
- Reports i.e. "expert paint analysis" and "Milltown Collection"
- Plan of house indicating the location of the Drawing Room.
- Design proposals for reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme

ASSESSMENT:
The first assessment must be whether or not the proposal outlined above constitutes development within the remit of Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2001. In this regard, Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act provides that:

"development" means, except where the context otherwise requires, the carrying out of any works on, in, over or under land or the making of any material change in the use of any structures or other land.

It should be noted that Section 2 of the Act defines works as:

"works" includes any act or operation of construction, excavation, demolition, extension, alteration, repair or renewal and, in relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, includes any act or operation involving the application or removal of plaster, paint, wallpaper, tiles or other material to or from the surfaces of the interior or exterior of a structure.

I am satisfied that the proposal would involve **works** to the existing structure and therefore the proposal does constitute development.

The second stage of the assessment is to determine whether or not the proposed works would be exempted development under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) or it's associated Regulations.

The proposed works are considered to be development works for the maintenance and improvement which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures. It is considered that the works come within the scope **of Section 4(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).**

With respect to Russborough House being a protected structure. Section 57 (1) sees that notwithstanding section 4(1) (h) and any regulations made under Section 4(2), the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or a proposed protected structure, shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of –

(a) The structure

(b) Any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest

The proposed works are not considered to materially affect the character of the protected structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, therefore in this instance ~~section~~ Section 57 (1) does not apply and the works are within the remit of Section 4-1(h).

The proposed works are considered to be exempt.

CONSIDERATION:

With respect to the query under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), as to whether the:

- Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting and copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork; all based on research including archive photographs and expert analysis of historical paint schemes.

at Russborough House, Blessington is exempted development under the provisions of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)/ Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The Planning Authority considers that:

In consideration of the above, the proposed development is considered to come within the scope of Section 4-1 (h) as the proposed:

"Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room" which affect only the interior of the structure are types of development consisting of the carrying out of works ~~for the maintenance and~~ and which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures. They are also works to a protected structure which would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

RECOMMENDATION:

With respect to the query under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), as to whether the proposed

'Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting and copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork; all based on research including archive photographs and expert analysis of historical paint schemes at Russborough House, Blessington, Co. Wicklow,''

constitutes exempted development within the meaning of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 (as amended).

The Planning Authority considers that the proposal:

'Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting and copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork; all based on research including archive photographs and expert analysis of historical paint schemes' is development and is exempt development.

Main Considerations with respect to Section 5 Declaration:

a) The details submitted with this Section 5 Application on the 30/09/2022.
b) Sections 2, 3, 4 and 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Main Reasons with respect to Section 5 Declaration:

The proposed works ~~is~~ are development;

The proposed development comes within the scope of Section 4-1(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and;

In relation to Section 57(1) ~~does not apply in this case as~~ the works do not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Agreed as amended
Senior SEP
20/10/22

Chris Garde
Executive Planner

Date: 19/10/2022

MEMORANDUM

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

TO: **Chris Garde**
Executive Planner

FROM: Crystal White
Assistant Staff Officer

RE:- **EX 56/2022 - Declaration in accordance with Section 5 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 (as amended)**
Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room and all relevant works at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow

I enclose herewith for your attention application for Section 5 Declaration received 30th of September 2022.

The due date on this declaration is the 27th October 2022.

Senior Staff Officer
Planning Development & Environment

Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Forbairt Pleanála agus Comhshaol
Planning Development and Environment

Áras An Chontae / County Buildings
Cill Mhantáin / Wicklow
Guthán / Tel: (0404) 20148
Faics / Fax: (0404) 69462
Rphost / Email: plandev@wicklowcoco.ie
Suíomh / Website: www.wicklow.ie

05/10/2022

The Alfred Beit Foundation C/O Sheehan Barry Architects
88 Ranelagh Village
Dublin 6
D06 Y2W6

RE: Application for Certificate of Exemption under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended). Ex 56/2022
Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room and all relevant works at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow

A Chara

I wish to acknowledge receipt on the 30th of September 2022 details supplied by you in respect of the above section 5 application. A decision is due in respect of this application by 27/10/2022.

Mise, le meas

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
PLANNING DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Forbairt Pleanála agus Comhshaol
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05/10/2022

The Alfred Beit Foundation C/O Sheehan Barry Architects
Russborough,
Blessington,
Co Wicklow

RE: Application for Certificate of Exemption under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended). Ex 56/2022
Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room and all relevant works at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow

A Chara

I wish to acknowledge receipt on the 30th of September 2022 details supplied by you in respect of the above section 5 application. A decision is due in respect of this application by 27/10/2022.

Mise, le meas

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
PLANNING DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

Wicklow County Council
County Buildings
Wicklow
0404-20100

30/09/2022 10 13 06

Receipt No L1/0/302266
***** REPRINT *****

THE ALFRED BEIT FOUNDATION
RUSSBOROUGH
BLESSINGTON
CO WICKLOW
W91W284

EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES		80 00
GOODS	80 00	
VAT Exempt/Non-vatable		

Total	80 00 EUR

Tendered	
Cheque	80 00

Change	0 00

Issued By Cashier5MW
From Customer Service Hub
Vat reg No 0015233H

Wicklow County Council
County Buildings
Wicklow
Co Wicklow
Telephone 0404 20148
Fax 0404 69462

Office Use Only

Date Received _____

Fee Received _____

APPLICATION FORM FOR A DECLARATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000(AS AMENDED) AS TO WHAT IS OR IS NOT DEVELOPMENT OR IS OR IS NOT EXEMPTED DEVELOPMENT

1. Applicant Details

(a) Name of applicant: The Alfred Beit Foundation

Address of applicant: Russborough, Blessington, Co. Wicklow W91W284

Note Phone number and email to be filled in on separate page.

2. Agents Details (Where Applicable)

(b) Name of Agent (where applicable) Sheehan Barry Architects

Address of Agent : 88 Ranelagh Village, Dublin 6 D06 Y2W6

Note Phone number and email to be filled in on separate page.

3. Declaration Details

i. Location of Development subject of Declaration : The Drawing Room within, Russborough, Blessington, Co. Wicklow

ii. Are you the owner and/or occupier of these lands at the location under i. above ? Yes/ No.

iii. If 'No' to ii above, please supply the Name and Address of the Owner, and or occupier: The Alfred Beit, Foundation, Russborough, Blessington, Co. Wicklow W91 W284

iv. Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act provides that : If any question arises as to what, in any particular case, is or is not development and is or is not exempted development, within the meaning of this act, any person may, an payment of the prescribed fee, request in writing from the relevant planning authority a declaration on that question. You should therefore set out the query for which you seek the Section 5 Declaration: **Reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme within the Drawing Room to include new wall colour; new gilding, painting and copper highlighting of decorative plasterwork; all based on research including archive photographs and expert analysis of historical paint schemes.**

v.

Additional details may be submitted by way of separate submission.

v. Indication of the Sections of the Planning and Development Act or Planning Regulations you consider relevant to the Declaration : **Planning & Development Act 2000 – Section 4(1) (h)**

Additional details may be submitted by way of separate submission.

vi. Does the Declaration relate to a Protected Structure or is it within the curtilage of a Protected Structure (or proposed protected structure) ? YES

vii. List of Plans, Drawings submitted with this Declaration Application

Conservation report;
Plan of house indicating location of Drawing Room
Site Location Plan
Design proposals for reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme

viii. Fee of € 80 Attached YES – cheque attached

Signed : David Hurley Dated : 29/09/2022

Additional Notes :

As a guide the minimum information requirements for the most common types of referrals under Section 5 are listed below :

A. Extension to dwelling - Class 1 Part 1 of Schedule 2

- Site Location Map
- Floor area of structure in question - whether proposed or existing.
- Floor area of all relevant structures e.g. previous extensions.
- Floor plans and elevations of relevant structures.
- Site Layout Plan showing distance to boundaries, rear garden area, adjoining dwellings/structures etc.

B. Land Reclamation -

The provisions of Article 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) now applies to land reclamation, other than works to wetlands which are still governed by Schedule 2, Part 3, Class 11. Note in addition to confirmation of exemption status under the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) there is a certification process with respect to land reclamation works as set out under the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Agriculture) Regulations 2011 S.I. 456 of 2011. You should therefore seek advice from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Any Section 5 Declaration should include a location map delineating the location of and exact area of lands to be reclaimed, and an indication of the character of the land.

sheehan ⊕ barry
88 RANELAGH, DUBLIN 6, IRELAND
T:353 (1) 496 2888
F:353 (1) 496 2923
E:post@sbl.ie

29.09.2022

Planning Department,
Wicklow County Council,
County Buildings.
Station Road,
Whiegates,
Wicklow
Co. Wicklow A67 FW96.

Re: **Section 5 Application : proposal for reinstatement of earlier decorative scheme to walls of Drawing Room at Russborough, Blessington, Co. Wicklow.**

Dear Sirs / Madam,

On behalf of our Client, we enclose application for and accompanying documentation to apply for a Section 5 exemption for works to reinstate an earlier decorative scheme in the Drawing Room at Russborough which detailed research has given evidence for.

It is proposed to reinstate this scheme to better compliment and display the now significantly restored and augmented original painting hang for this room.

Documents:
Application Form & Cheque.
Site Location Plan
Location of Drawing Room within principal floor plan.
Architectural / Conservation Assessment
Catherine Hassall: expert paint analysis – extract from report
Aidan O'Boyle – The Milltown Collection: Reconstructing an eighteenth-century picture hang.

We trust the attached is in order. Please contact this office if there are any queries tc.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID AVERILL
DA/da

2418_03.1_2021.06.28

ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT OF DRAWING ROOM INTERIOR DECORATION

AT

RUSSBOROUGH, BLESSINGTON, CO. WICKLOW.

FIG 1.0 COVER PHOTOGRAPH IS OF THE DRAWING ROOM, RUSSBOROUGH

By

Sheehan and Barry Architects
88 Ranelagh, Dublin 6

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The following report has been prepared as part of the submission for planning permission under Section 5 application for the redecoration of the wall colour and decorative wall plaster cartouche and frames to the walls of the Drawing Room at Russborough House, Blessington, Co. Wicklow.

1.2 The building is included in the Wicklow County List of Protected Structures – Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022) and is thus a 'Protected Structure' (formerly listed building) as defined by the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 2000. It is described as set out below:

Ref	OS Map ref	Building address	Structure	Description
09-08	09	Russborough	Country House	One of the most important houses in Ireland, designed by Richard Castle for the Earl of Milltown. Complex Palladian composition and superb craftsmanship (National Monument).

1.3 This report has been prepared by Sheehan & Barry Architects Ltd, a Grade One Conservation Practice under the RIAI system of conservation accreditation.

1.4 The purpose of the report is to set in context the proposal and in particular the requirement for the client to enhance the amenity and experience of visitors to Russborough House. This report will examine the architectural history, context and present condition of the subject structure in order to make an outline architectural assessment and to assess the potential impacts of the proposal in the context of the status of Russborough House as a Protected Structure within the definition of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 2000.

2.0 DESCRIPTION & BACKGROUND

2.1 Russborough House is one of the most important 18th century houses in Ireland, combining a grandeur of scale and richness of decoration with a unique series of collections as assembled firstly by the Leeson family, Earls of Milltown and more latterly by the Beit family. Sir Alfred and Lady Beit bought the estate in 1952 as a home for their art collection as well as their own residence. Designed by the prolific German born architect, Richard Cassels (anglicised to Castle) in 1742 and erected between the years of c.1742-1750, it is perhaps his most resolved and accomplished achievement.

Within the NIAH (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage) the house (ref. no. 16400503) is described as follows:

Detached seven-bay two-storey over basement Palladian style mansion, built 1741-48 to designs by Richard Castle, with quadrant Doric colonnades linking to seven-bay two-storey pavilion wings, themselves linked to outbuildings by walls with rusticated arches topped with cupolas. The walls are of dressed granite, with a central feature to the main block consisting of a pediment supported by four three-quarter Corinthian columns with swag mouldings between the capitals, whilst the wings have three-bay breakfront centres with Ionic pilasters. Each of the three blocks and the colonnades has a parapet surmounted with urns, and behind each parapet is a slated hipped roof with broad granite chimneystacks to the main blocks. Within the colonnades are arched niches with Classical statues. The entrance consists of a largely glazed timber door with semi-circular fanlight-like eyebrow window above, and is reached by a grand flight of stone steps with the piers of the balustrade topped with urns and heraldic lions. The windows are generally flat-headed and filled with three over three and six over six timber sash frames. Cast-iron rainwater goods. The house is surrounded by an extensive, but largely unadorned, demesne and approached at a right angle from the main avenue to the north-east.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

3.0 HISTORICAL APPRAISAL - FABRIC AND INTERIORS

Background

Joseph Leeson (First Earl of Milltown) embarked on two Grand Tours of Italy, between 1744 and 1745 and 1750 and 1751; where he purchased much of his fine art and sculpture collection. The collection remained intact in the house through five further generations of the Leeson family until 1902, when Geraldine Evelyn, widow of the 6th Earl and last Countess of Milltown, bequeathed the contents of Russborough House, now known as the Milltown Collection, to the National Gallery of Ireland by deed of gift.

The Milltown Collection is the only large-scale Irish Grand Tour collection of paintings and sculpture to have survived relatively intact.

Over the years, there has been ongoing discussion between The Alfred Beit Foundation and the National Gallery of Ireland to bring the contents of the Milltown collection back to their original location in the house. Russborough currently has twenty items, including paintings and furniture, on long term loan from the Milltown Collection at the NGI. There is already an agreement in principle to substantially increase this in the coming years.

An improved interior decorative scheme is required in order to present the art collection in a manner that is considered to be academically and historically in keeping with the original presentation of the rooms.

Historical Evidence

A visit to Russborough House by John Preston Neale in 1825 was documented in his 1827 volume of his 'Guide to Country Houses of Great Britain and Ireland, Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland', in which he catalogued Leeson's art collection, room by room. In this Neale documented eight paintings by Joseph Vernet in the Drawing Room (See Appendix A). Joseph Leeson had commissioned as many as twelve paitings from this prominent French artist on his second grand tour in 1750.

This inventory coupled with recently discovered c1864 photographs of the reception rooms at Russborough has allowed historian Aidan O'Boyle to reconstruct the original picture hang of the Milltown collection at Russborough. His findings were first published in a 2011 edition of Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies entitled *'The Milltown Collection: Reconstructing an eighteenth-century picture-hang'.* (See Appendix B and C)

The article presents an in-depth analysis of picture hanging, display and interior decoration in the 18th Century Irish Country House.

The Drawing Room is included amongst this collection of images (the originals of which are now in the private collection of Gerald Turton – a descendant of the Leeson Family). Russborough holds another set, gifted by Avia Daly in 2018.

Building records have not survived for Russborough, nor have the Milltown family archives, so the photographs are a valuable source of information, concerning the decoration and presentation of the rooms prior to the removal of the Milltown collection to the National Gallery in 1906.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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Paint Analysis:
A detailed and scholarly paint analysis report was carried out by Catharine Hassall in 2015 for the Alfred Beit Foundation. She analysed a number of paint samples in the Drawing Room.

She noted the particular phases of decoration:

Phase 1 'First Decoration':
The report notes that the walls were first decorated using a soft distemper. It was determined that the first distemper layer, although largely washed off, contained some traces of Blue Verditer. This was an expensive pigment which in the 18th century. It was rarer and more expensive than Prussian Blue suggesting that the selection of the Blue Verditer was a conscious decorative choice. This same pigment was also discerned in the Entrance Hall suggesting that these two rooms were initlally seen as complimentary. It is also suggested that this could have been a temporary scheme allowing the decorative plasterwork to dry out.

Phase 2 – First Oil Paint Scheme:
The ceiling, cornice and cover were identified as having a soft white distemper.

The wall distemper was largely washed off and sealed with a primer of lead white and then painted with a greyed white oil which was used on the walls both inside and outside the decorative plaster cartouches. The cartouches themselves were partly gilded and in places painted brown. The gold leaf was overlaid onto a dull yellow of ochre mixed with a little lead white. The brown was built up of three layers - a yellow followed by a reddish brown of mixed umbre and red ochre and a coat of varnish to finish. The report noted that the brown may have been in imitation of the mahogany graining used in the shutters suggesting the effect may have been designed to imitate a gilded timber picture frame.

Another feature identified was the presence of copper filings dusted over the paint prior to the application of the varnish. This was a technique used in the 18th century to 'bronze' the finish, giving it a more lustrous and metallic sheen.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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(Fig 1.1) Image of the Drawing Room at Russborough House prior to the removal of the Milltown Collection to the National Gallery of Ireland. Image is believed to date from 1864-1870 and was photographed by Blake and Edgar, Bedford, UK. The room is furnished in the cluttered style of the mid-Victorian period.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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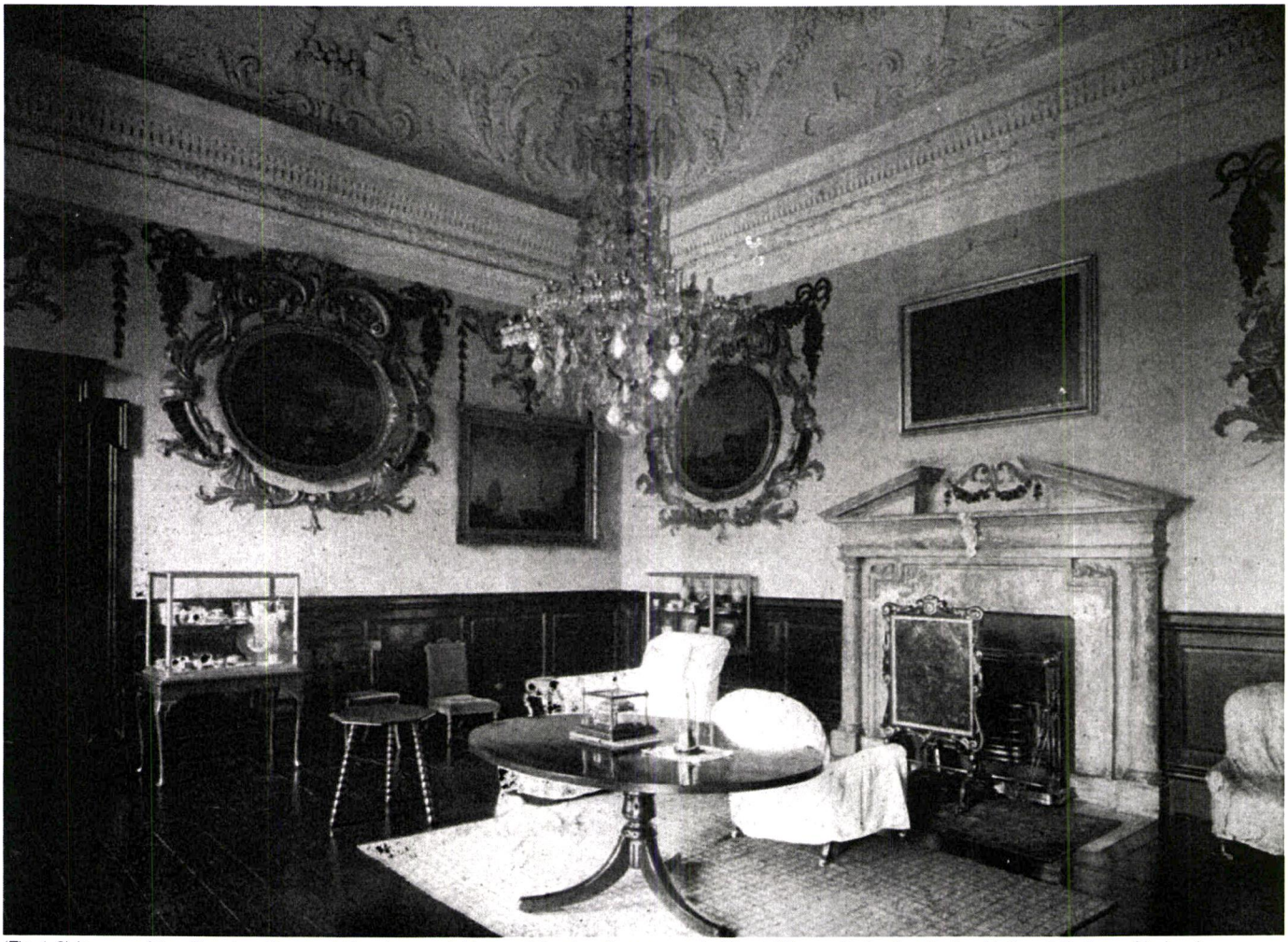

(Fig 1.2) Image of the Drawing Room at Russborough House following the removal of the Milltown Collection to the National Gallery of Ireland. Image is believed to date from 1913 not long before the last Countess of Milltown died after which the estate passed to her nephew Sir Edward Turton Bt.

Phase 3: Later Decorative Schemes: The ceiling, cover and cornice were continued with soft white distempers. The flat part of the walls were painted with a stone coloured oil paint. The gilding was not overpainted or removed. The photograph of 1913 clearly indicates this. The flat parts of the walls were painted with a stone coloured oil paint. This was later overpainted with a blue / grey paint and it is suggested that this is the scheme indicated in the 1864 photograph.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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Phase 4: The Daly era; After the death of Geraldine, Countess of Milltown the house was inherited by her nephew Sir Edmund Turton Bt. The house was then sold in 1931 to Colonel Daly whose family were to reside at Russborough until its sale to Sir Alfred Beit in 1952. It was during this era that a new decorative scheme was introduced in the Drawing Room (see fig. 1.3).

Fig 1.3 – this photograph dates from the Daly ownership era and shows the Drawing Room now painted in tones of grey with the cartouche and wall painted as one and the Vernet painting series removed. This photograph was taken as part of an article published in Country Life magazine in 1937.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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The Beit Decorative Schemes: The Beits came to Russborough in 1952 and were to redecorate the Drawing Room twice. They removed the soft distemper from the ceiling and repainted it using an oil paint in white. A pale greyish green was used on the walls, recorded in a painting of Sir Alfred & Lady Beit by Derek Hill. The decorative cartouches were picked out in a creamy white paint. This scheme was noted by John Cornforth in a 1953 Country Life Article so must have been carried out shortly after their purchase of the house.

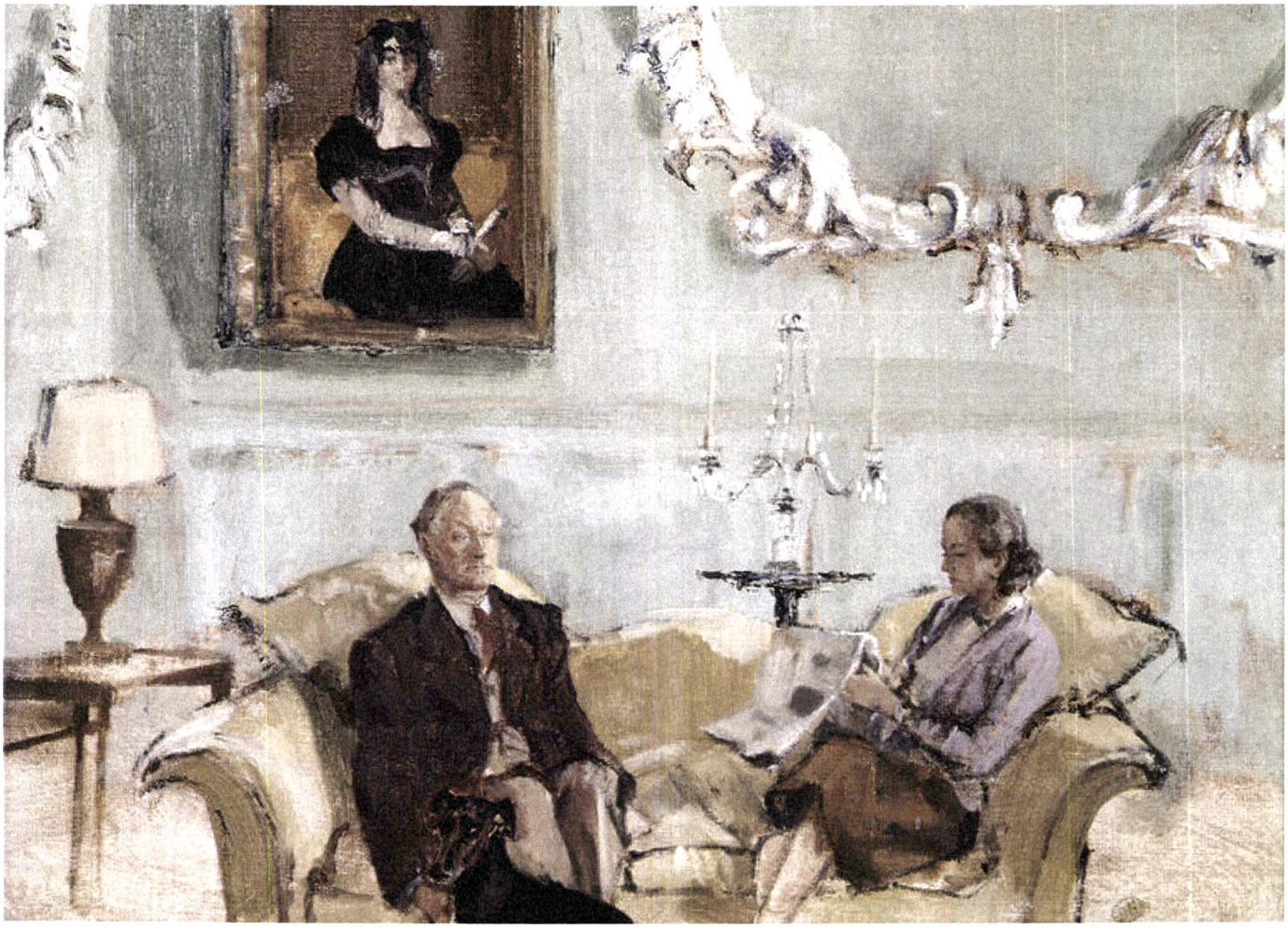

Fig 1.4 : A painting by Derek Hill painted c. 1960 and in the Russborough collection, shows the Beits in the Drawing Room. The first scheme undertaken after their purchase of the house is evident. The cartouches are picked out in a creamy white and the walls in a grey / green. The panelling remains painted.

In 1971 the room was redecorated by the company Sibthorpe. The paint was stripped off and the ceiling and cove painted yellow and white and the present colour painted on the flat of the walls with the cartouches remaining in white. This scheme was refreshed in matching colours in 2012.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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Fig 1.5 – the present scheme accurately reflects the 1971 scheme which replaced the grey / green walls indicated in the Derek Hill painting of 1960. The painting hang is now largely restored and the wood panelling cleaned and re-polished.

It is clear, therefore, that the interiors of the main reception rooms along the north and west fronts were treated as rooms of parade, placed in sequence or *'in enfilade'*.

William Laffan and Kevin Mulligan's 2014 book on Russborough describes more succinctly, the decoration in the ground floor reception rooms.

"In the Saloon was a fine suite of very fine mahogany seate furniture comprising at least 10 and possibly 20, square backedopen armchairs, two sofas and a daybed. These were upholstered in the same crimson velvet used for the wall hangings, with the armchairs fitting snugly against the high dado, indicating that these were designed to be in harmony with the main rooms, and so will have enhanced the overall effect of the fabric.

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Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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There is some uncertainty as to whether the surviving stamped wool velvet, with its distinctive pomegranate pattern is original (although the weave is as narrow as one might expect of an original) or a late nineteenth century Genoese replacement to the same pattern. The use of crimson velvet wall hangings is in evidence as early as 1826 when Neale refers to it.

Given the quantities that were used, for the walls and on the seat furniture, it is likely that Leeson acquired the original fabric on one or other of his spending sprees in Italy. It makes for a lavish display that accords well with eighteenth century conventions for picture hanging against richly patterned material, whether velvet, caffoy or damask and, in general, was fitting for rooms of parade as paralleled by examples at Knole in Kent, Houghton, Holkham and Felbrigg in Norfolk. At Russborough, the fabric was used successfully as a foil for pictures, hung from cornice to dado in the Saloon, and in the adjoining rooms as an interrelated suite to display Leeson's pictures, with the Small Drawing Room (Tapestry Room) even more densely hung, so that it was in effect treated as a picture cabinet." [1](Mulligan, 2014)

The Paintings:

The design and decoration of the Drawing Room at Russborough is inextricably linked to the painting hang. Although most of the contents of the house were gifted to the National Gallery of Ireland by Gerldine, Countess of Milltown, the Vernet series specially commissioned for the Drawing remained in situ for some time after the larger Milltown bequest. It is possible that the Turton family sold them in the 1920s. The room was at once diminished as an aesthetic conception. When Sir Alfred Beit bought the house in 1952, he was determined to try and recover the Vernet series and restore them to their original location and to reinstate the room as an artistic totality. Sir Alfred eventually tracked down the paintings in America in 1969 and was able to arrange their purchace and reinstate them in the Drawing Room. Over the years further paintings identified in the earlier inventories have been located. The recent sale at Killadoon, Co. Kildare has allowed two of these to be brought back to augment the hang. More recently another oriignal painting from the set of eight has been acquired, along with a complimentary pendant, making it possible for the first time since 1906 to restore the full picture hang of this very important room.

From the moment that Sir Alfred Beit rediscovered the 'Times of the Day' series in America and brought them back, the question of the restoration of a more authentic and complete decorative treatment arose. The more recent acquisitions which further compliment the painting hang has accelerated the need to examine how best the unique set of pictures assembled for this room can be unified with a proven scheme. The painting analysis gives cogent evidence to suggest that the initial treatment was in effect a 'temporary scheme'. Rather, the first fully realized scheme is identified in the paint analysis reports as Phase 2 wherein the gilded and copperized decoration becomes extant. This appears to have lasted from the end of the 18th century right through to the period of ownershiop by the Daly family in the second quarter of the twentieth century.

Subject to examination of test colours, treatments and samples it is proposed to reinstate the scheme identified in Phase 2, based on gilding and highlighting the cartouche and other decorative wall plasterwork to form an appropriate setting for the now re-unified set of paintings.

[1] William Laffan and Kevin V. Mulligan; 'Russborough, A Great Irish House, its Families and Collections' P.125

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

Fig 1.6 : the paintings acquired from the recent Killadoon sale, now back at Rusborough, which were identied as part of the hang in earlier inventories.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

4.0 GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE DRAWING ROOM

Description:

Architecture:
This space is architecturally intact. The floor is a later softwood floor.

Condition:
The condition of the ceiling and wall stuccowork is generally excellent.

Decorative Order (Walls & Panelling):
The decorative scheme is clearly a modern scheme. It does not fully reflect the earlier schemes which were designed to suitably frame the series of paintings commissioned from Vernet. Here, the intention as evidenced by the use of gilding and copper enhanced brown finishes was to recreate the sense of a gilded timber picture frame similar in scale, form and effect to the gilded frame of the painting over the mantelpiece: 'The Triumph of David' after Giovani Francesco Barbieri (Il Guerncino) which is evident in the 1864 photograph and which has been loaned by the National gallery of Ireland to its former location to reinstate the scheme.

Indeed, the four oval marine landscapes contained within the once gilded stucco cartouches were purchased by Alfred Beit in New York in 1968 after their removal from the house in the c. 1920s. Alfred Beit, recognizing the importance of the decorative scheme of the room when he bought the house in 1952, had left the cartouches in situ and resolved to find and reinstate the Vernet paintings.

Furniture & Paintings:

The loan of the overmantle and the gilded pier mirror by the National Gallery of Ireland, along with the more recent considered acquisition of the four additional Vernet paintings has enabled a faithful reconstruction of the 18th century hang of the room. Three of the recently acquired Vernets can be traced back to Rusborough and one directly to the Drawing Room. The two larger paintings will hang on the east and west walls, from the stucco drops designed to host them, the two smaller works will hang on either end of the south wall, returning the total number of Vernets in the room to eight, as Documented by J. P. Neale in 1827. Restoring the picture hang adds to the room's interest and significance as well as adding impetus to the reinvestigation and reinstatement of earlier decorative schemes.

Aspiration
The current decorative scheme in the Drawing Room is clearly of relatively modern introduction. The detailed paint analysis report added to the evidence of the two photographs and in particular the c. 1864 photograph indicate a much richer and complex decorative approach which was intended to provide a proper and appropriate setting for the Vernet series. This has now been described in a series of paintings by Alec Cobbe which indicate how the intended richness and magnificent qualities of the cartouche in conjunction with their intended paintings may be revealed and enhanced as a unique statement and survivor of the 18th century decorative intention. The paint analysis notes that the first scheme may reasonably be seen as a temporary or transitional approach and that the scheme incorporating both gilding and copperised paint together with a lighter, possibly off white / pale blue wall scheme was the intended decorative setting for the paintings in imitation of the adjacent Barbieri mantel painting.

It is considered that an upgrade to this scheme is an opportunity to recreate a unique setting for the paintings understanding that this room is the only surviving Irish scheme where the original painting series remains in its originally intended location. This should in turn reveal to the visitor how a room of this importance was not merely domestic but a room of display.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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It is proposed to reinstate the gilded and copperized scheme for the decorative cartouche around the paintings and to other decorative wall plaster and to repaint the walls in a soft distemper close to the counterpoint colour used in the 1864 photograph and evidenced within the 2015 paint analysis report. The ceiling will remain in a soft off-white distemper and the joinery finished as currently restored.

Reason:
1. To restore the original intention of the Lord Milltown's decorative scheme; an exceptional reception room used for the display of a specially commissioned series of paintings by Vernet and augmented by Lord Milltown's purchace of the 'The Triumph of David' (hung over the mantelpiece).

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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5.0 CONSERVATION METHODOLOGY (as and where applicable)

5.1 RECORD AND SURVEY:

Prior to commencement, the parts of the building concerned are to be recorded through a combination of measured survey and photographic record. This is to assist in establishing the initial construction, later interventions and general condition. Works should be carefully recorded during the construction period ensuring that a proper document of the process is created.

Note that detailed policy in regard to methodologies is carried out in association with the Head of Collections and Conservtion at Russborough House.

These survey works should include:

5.1.1 Contents:

A proper and full inventory of contents has been carried prior to any works. All rooms have been properly and fully inventorised so that all contents to include furniture, relevant soft furnishings such as curtains, carpets, rugs, and cushions be carefully recorded and photographed. This will allow for the careful re-introduction of interior schemes where appropriate. This is a curatorial issue.

5.1.2 Protection and storage:

5.1.2.1 Storage: as well as a full and comprehensive inventorisation, a strategy for safe storage during works has been established. All items once identified should be protected as appropriate and stored in a safe location during works. Safe storage areas have been identified.

1.2.2 Protection: it is vital that as part of any pre-tender exercise for permitted works, a detailed schedule of methodology for the protection of architectural elements, fixtures and fittings should be prepared by the appropriate curatorial person. Suitable, stable and properly executed protection methods should be established so that where, for instance, a building element or feature is protected during works this should be done in a manner which is both durable and also not harmful to that being protected eg. Coverings should be breathable and not encourage condensation.

5.2. CONDITION SURVEY:
To complement existing condition surveys it may be necessary to open up areas for analysis and examination as work phases progress. Where this is necessary, opening up is to be done with great care and follow certain guidelines – this is not considered necessary in this case.

5.2.1 Opening up must be the absolute minimum required to facilitate examination. In tnis case opening up will not be required. It should be noted that a comprehensive survey of the existing condition should be established using non-invasive methods as a first resort. Experienced personal should be used for any such works.

5.2.2 It is the core philosophy for these proposed works that existing survey and historic drawings (where available) be used to guide and direct investigation.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

5.2.3 Opening-up works must only be done where the present condition is such as to give cause for concern that deterioration is occurring behind covered areas or where areas of potential historical or architectural merit are covered with later unsuitable works. Where this applies, opening up should only be minimal and exploratory such as to establish what material (if any) is covered. Micro-drilling or fibre-optic camera technology or other minimally invasive methods should be prioritized. A photographic record of any areas opened up is required.
Opening up in areas of architectural significance should be avoided and only contemplated where absolutely necessary or unavoidable. The opened up material must be set aside for reinsertion even if the opening up is minimal.

5.2.4 Where interventions require localised disturbance to plaster or render finishes, a careful analysis of the present finishes should be established so that localised repair can be carried out 'like for like' to minimise the possibility of later shrinkage or visual disturbance. If it is proposed to make good inappropriate, damaged or failing internal finishes, this should also be done only where strictly necessary and according to the same 'like for like' repair principle.

5.3. DETAILED METHODOLOGY PRINCIPLES:
In conducting the works, the following guidelines are advised:

5.3.1 All interventions will be subject to the appropriate statutory approvals prior to commencement.

5.3.2 It is be a guiding principle that the maximum amount of original material is retained wherever interventions are proposed.

5.3.3 Where interventions are made the method of construction and materials used will be as far as possible compatible with the existing building. Interventions should always be reversible as far as possible, and carried out without causing significant disruption or damage to the fabric and finishes of a building.

5.3.4 In some cases original materials or methods of construction may have lead to structural or decorative problems. In repairing these areas, the repairs shall use the same materials as the original construction where available but shall have regard to sound building techniques such that the original problem or defect is remedied and stablised. As noted on the opening up works below the first floor a number of previous structural supports have been inserted. The conservation engineer should be consulted when opening up works are considered.

5.3.5 Where and if interventions are necessary in modern materials, such as the previous structural supports, they should be discreet and not overwhelm the original construction both in terms of scale or construction detail and should be clearly distinguishable from original work.

5.3.6 In the unlikely event that original material has to be removed, it should be set aside for careful reinstatement, unless a restoration scheme has specifically been permitted by the statutory authority which seeks to return a building or part of a building to a particular style or period covered or altered by later interventions. This however is unlikely to arise specifically as a result of the proposed service upgrade works. If that later material is not then required it should be recorded.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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5.5. PROTECTION OF BUILDING FABRIC DURING AND AFTER WORKS

5.5.1 A schedule of protection should be included as part of tendering for any permitted works. Thus where building works are to take place; where materials and labour are to be moved through the building, all vulnerable fixtures and fittings such as the staircase, fireplaces, exposed joinery, windows etc should be identified and well and properly protected. This protection should be maintained on an on-going basis during works.

5.5.2 Materials used for protection purposes should be durable but should also consider issues of ventilation and condition during works and should not cause damage to the fixtures under protection.
Thus a room-by-room schedule of protection has been established as part of any tendering procedure.

5.5.3 Works must of necessity review all present fire protection and containment measures and seek to upgrade the present condition. This must be reviewed in the context of the legal requirements for publicly accessible buildings as set out in Part B of the Building Regulations.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

6.0 SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The visitor experience is in part dependant upon the proper and optimal presentation of objects and of the house itself. This experience is complimentary to the needs of the fabric and its contents. The reconciliation of the needs of the house and contents and the visitor need not be mutually exclusive. A considered curatorial approach is required to balance these requirements and enhance both aspects.

6.2 The proposed redecoration works to the Drawing Room will restore an appropriately magnificent setting for the paintings and decorative plasterwork. It will restore the original decorative intention using the first fully realized scheme making this room a unique testament to this mid 18th centiury room of display in a house of exceptional calibre.

Russborough House Interior Redecoration

Drawing Room – Interior decoration of walls and plasterwork.

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7.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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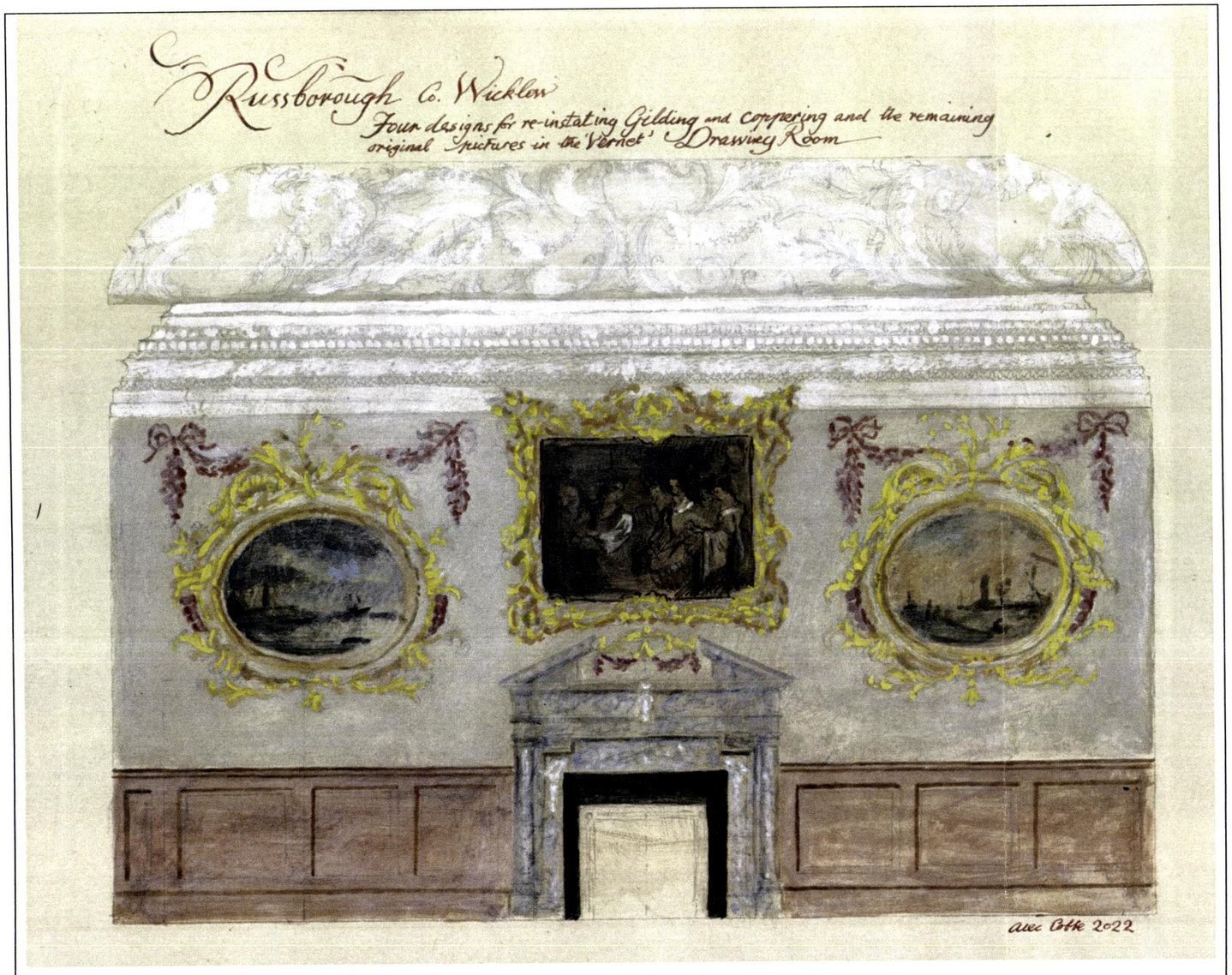


Fig 1: View of the chimneypiece wall – cartouche re-gilded and swags highlighted and copperized; new wall colour in soft distemper in selected off white / grey.

Fig 2: View of the east wall (door leading to the entrance hallway) – cartouche re-gilded and swags highlighted and copperized; new wall colour in soft distemper in selected off white / grey.

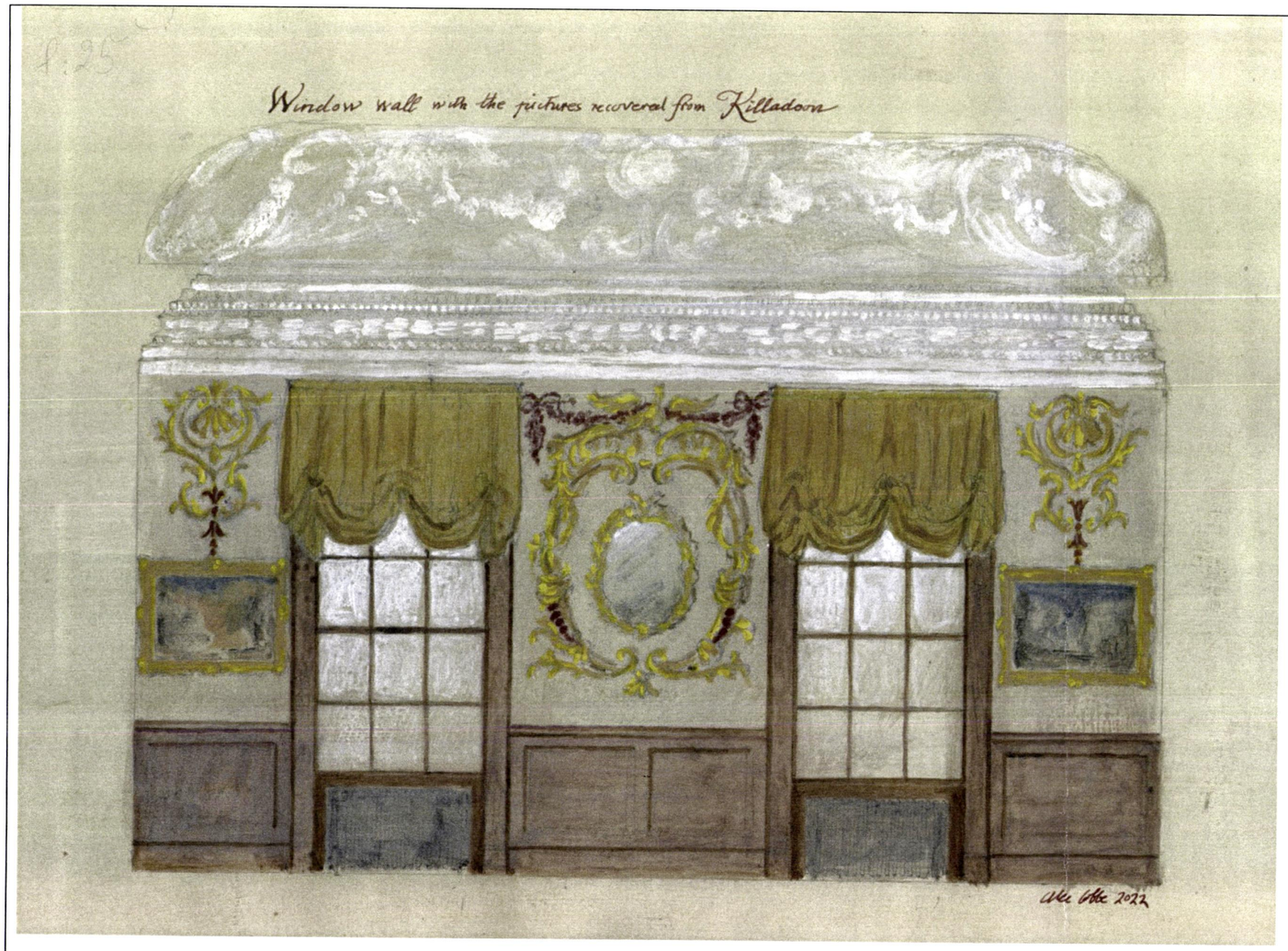


Fig 3: View of the window wall (facing south)– cartouche re-gilded and swags highlighted and copperized; new wall colour in soft distemper in selected off white / grey.

Fig 4: View of the west wall (door leading to Lady Beit's boudoir) – cartouche re-gilded and swags highlighted and copperized; new wall colour in soft distemper in selected off white / grey.

RUSSBOROUGH HOUSE

County Wicklow, Ireland

An examination of the paint in the main rooms.

Contents of report

The number of samples taken was limited, and some aspects remain a puzzle

(i) In the first place, there were some unexplained early paint layers found on the first floor Bedroom skirtings. Those early paint layers had no equivalent on the panelling, the doors and the windows. This might simply mean that the builders re-used skirtings from an earlier house, but it may mean that the plans for that floor changed part way through the building campaign.

(ii) On the ground floor, the elaborate plasterwork in the south rooms will have needed to be left for many years before it was safe for it to be painted, and even then it would not have been possible to use oil paints. Soft distempers were used as a first scheme in these south rooms. This was probably not thought of as a temporary finish because the pigments used were expensive ones, and the house was clearly being used. The decorators who eventually replaced the distempers with oils, washed the walls down very thoroughly, and almost nothing has survived. It has therefore not been possible to guess how long these distemper schemes lasted.

(iii) The status of the decoration seen today on the ceilings of the Tapestry Room and Music Room remains unclear. It may be the work of the Sixth Earl, as it is on today's Library ceiling, but it was not possible to prove this.

SUMMARY

Earliest decoration

The ceilings, coves and cornices of all the ground floor rooms, and all the first floor Bedrooms, were painted with plain white soft distemper. [Colour was only introduced for ceilings in the later nineteenth century].

The flat walls of the Entrance Hall and Drawing Room were painted with a blue soft distemper based on the sky blue pigment, blue verditer. Blue verditer was much more expensive than the alternative Prussian blue. The raised plasterwork may not have been painted at all, and remained white.

The walls of the Dining Room were painted scarlet, using pure vermilion. The red was applied over an undercoat of distemper. Even though the red would only have been used for the fireplace wall, and above the shelving on the other walls, this would have been a very costly scheme.

Fabric or wall paper must have been used in all the north rooms. The original velvet still survives in the Saloon, and a scrap of dark blue was found in the Tapestry Room, but no clues were found in the Music Room and Library.

The softwood shutters and shutter boxes in all the ground floor rooms were grained to imitate mahogany. When the first floor Bedrooms were completed, a similar mahogany graining was used for the doors, shutters and skirtings, but the panelling on the walls was painted a greyed white.

The Back Stairs walls were painted with a pale pink distemper and the banisters were painted off-white.

Change to oil paints in the ground floor south rooms

The distempers were eventually thoroughly washed off, and the walls of the three south rooms were painted in oils. The pigments themselves give no clue to when this happened, but the number of times that the rooms were later re-painted, means it must have been in the eighteenth century.

The ceilings were once again painted with white distemper.

The shutters were re-grained. That graining can be seen today in the Music Room.

The Entrance Hall samples are difficult to interpret. Some samples suggest that there was a greyed white oil paint scheme, but this may have been an undercoat for a second distemper scheme. By the third scheme it was certainly being painted blue and white once more.

The Dining Room walls were painted a mid green.

The Saloon walls were painted a greyed white, and the ornamental plasterwork was partly gilded and partly painted brown. It is possible that the brown areas were in fact grained, liked the shutters, because similar paint layers were used, but the fragments were too small to tell. Parts of the brown areas were dusted with a powder of glittery copper filings, and then all the brown was varnished. The effect of the copper filings can only be guessed at.

Decorations up to the late nineteenth century

The Saloon remained virtually unchanged until the end of the nineteenth century. The flat walls were regularly re-painted, using darker tones to the original pale grey, but the brown and gold plasterwork was left untouched.

The Entrance Hall was painted blue and white through most of the nineteenth century.

The Dining Room [the Old Library] was painted green once more, and then blue.

The first floor Bedrooms were repeatedly painted off-white. The doors, skirtings and shutters were now no longer painted brown, but were off-white like the panelling.

The Back Stairs walls were initially painted with distempers [first yellow then blue] but then these walls were also painted in oils. White oils were used on the walls, blue was used for the banisters and the doors on the first floor Stairs landing were painted brown.

The Sixth Earl

A major refurbishment of the house took place before the Beits took over. It was initially thought that this could have been the work of the Daly Family, but further examination of the samples suggests it probably happened before that, and was therefore done by the Sixth Earl, who was in a strong financial position. It seems to have taken place after the set of 1880s photographs was taken.

The Library ceiling was repainted in 1884 by the Sibthorpe company, and this pink and white scheme is still in place today. The painters' names and the date can be seen at the base of the east cove [see p.22]. It is remarkable that the paintwork has survived untouched for 130 years.

It is possible that the ceiling paint seen today in the Music Room and Tapestry Room also dates to 1884. These are the only other rooms still painted with soft distemper, and the layers look similar to those in the Library, but they could be later re-paints because the Strachan & Co. accounts show that distempers were still being used at Russborough in 1955. [Note - only the west wall in the Tapestry Room and the north wall in the Music Room were examined: other walls may have a signature].

The Library was turned into what is now the Dining Room, and the walls were painted a greenish blue.

The Entrance Hall walls were painted green and cream using oil paints, the ceiling was painted ochre and white using distempers.

The Drawing Room walls were painted a pinkish putty colour and all the gilding on the cartouches was now covered over. The colour used for the ceiling is unknown.

On the first floor, connecting doors were inserted between the Bedrooms, creating four separate suites of rooms. Each suite was painted a different colour, with the panelling picked out in three tones. For instance, in Rooms 6 and 7, pink, pale blue and white were used. This use of more than one tone for panelling was not uncommon in the late nineteenth century, but the choice of colours, particularly a dark red used in Rooms 1 and 2, is unusual.

In Room 5 the panelling was removed, and the walls were replastered and painted blue.

It may have been at this point that the Back Stairs walls were painted a dark red/brown from floor to ceiling. On the ground floor the east wall had been removed, and therefore the red/brown continued round into the east end of the building.

The 1930s

Paints based on the twentieth-century pigment lithopone were used, and this must be the work of the Daly Family. The first floor Bedrooms were all repainted, but not much work was done on the main ground floor rooms. A two-tone green scheme on the Back Stairs, with black painted dado line, may be their work, but could have been in place when they took over the building.

The 1950s

The Beits appear to have carried out work in two phases: once in the 1950s and then again in the early 1970s. In the 1950s they used oil paints based on zinc white.

In the Drawing Room a greyish green paint was used for the plaster walls and also for the mahogany joinery. The plaster mouldings were picked out in white. This scheme is seen in the Derek Hill portrait.

The Dining Room was painted a pinkish red and the newly made skirtings were painted to match the mahogany doors and windows.

The Entrance Hall was painted white with oil gilding on the plaster mouldings.

In all three of those south rooms, the distempers were washed off the ceilings, the plaster was sealed with a coat of animal skin glue size, and then the ceilings were decorated using oil paints.

On the first floor, the Bedrooms were all painted in pastel colours, with mouldings picked out in white. The Landing walls were re-plastered and then painted pale blue.

The Back Stairs walls were painted a pale green from floor to ceiling, covering up the earlier scheme with fictive dado. The banisters were painted black.

The 1970s

The paints used in this phase were all based on the pigment titanium dioxide white.

In the Drawing Room the paint was stripped off the mahogany dado, and then the upper walls were painted yellow and white. The Dublin decorators who worked in this room were Sibthorpe, and they signed their work above the west doorway.

The Dining Room was repainted red.

This may have been when the Saloon ceiling was painted cream and white as seen today. The paint used was based on titanium dioxide white.

The First Floor Bedrooms were all re-painted as seen today.

More recent re-decorations

Richard Ireland re-painted the Entrance Hall, The Main Stairs and the First Floor Landing in 2005.

Nat Clements re-painted the Drawing Room and the Dining Room in 2012, repeating the colours that were there already.

THE ENTRANCE HALL

First decoration

Blue and white. Blue was certainly used on the upper walls [but the colour of the lower walls is uncertain]. White was used for the plaster wall ornaments and for the ceiling.

As in the Drawing Room and the Dining Room, the walls of this room were first decorated with soft distemper. The walls were later thoroughly washed down when it came to painting in oils, and so only tiny fragments of these early finishes have survived.

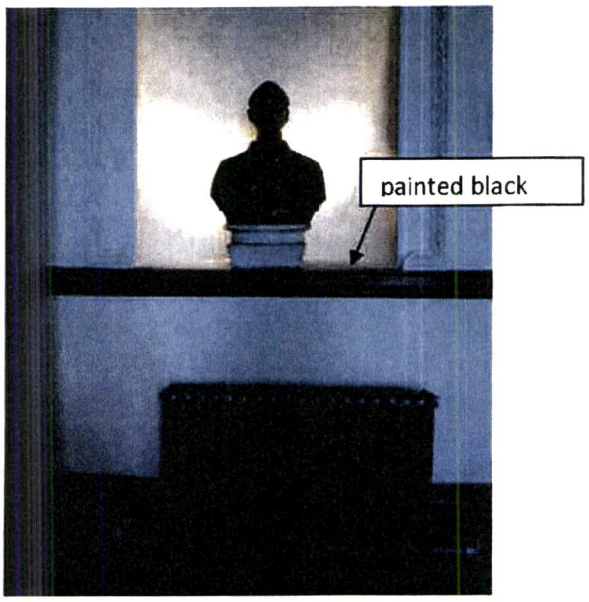
Traces of the blue distemper were only found in samples taken from the flat walls above the dado rail. They were not found in the samples taken from the wall below the dado rail, but this area may simply have been more thoroughly cleaned, and one cannot rule out the possibility that the blue extended down to the floor.

Unlike the Drawing Room and the Dining Room where the soft distemper was applied directly to the plaster, here a thin coat of lead white oil paint was brushed onto the flat walls as an undercoat. The blue distemper based on chalk and blue verditer was painted over the top [Sample EH.18, p.37]. Verditer is a bright blue pigment which was popular in the eighteenth century. It was much more expensive than the only other blue pigment, Prussian blue.

The plaster ornament was not given an undercoat of lead white, and white distemper was applied directly to the plaster surface.

The shutters were grained to imitate mahogany [Sample EH.27, p.38].

The wooden bases of the main niches were painted pure black [Sample H.101, p.38].



The ceiling, cove and cornice were painted with a plain white soft distemper [Sample EH.53 p.38].

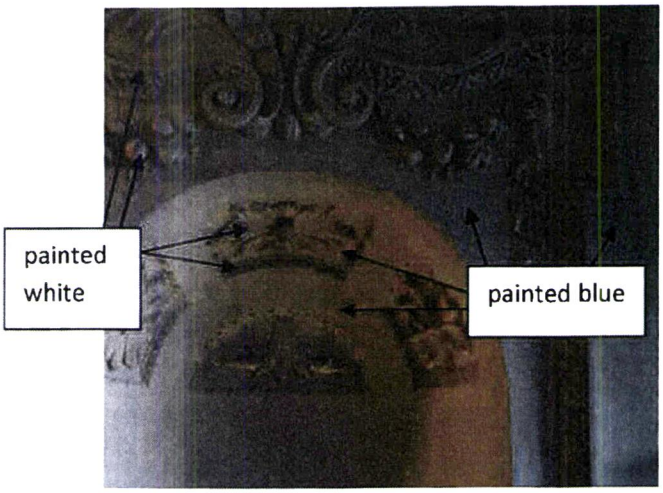
Later decorations

2 A couple of samples, taken from behind the top of the door case leading to the Drawing Room, and one from the back of the NW niche suggests that there may have been a second distemper scheme. The samples show a layer of greyed white oil paint – without better evidence it is impossible to say if this was a full greyed white scheme, or the undercoat for a second lot of distemper.

3 The distempers were thoroughly washed off the walls and the room was decorated with oil paint. One can only guess at the date when this happened, as the pigments provide no clues. Based on the number of times that the room went on to be further re-painted it is likely to have been in the eighteenth century.

A blue oil paint, based on Prussian blue and lead white, was used on the flat walls from floor to cornice. This blue was also used for the backs of the niches.

The same blue was used as a background to the flowers in the coffers of the large east wall niche.



The ceiling continued to be painted with white distemper.

5 A repeat of scheme 4, using a slightly darker shade of blue. The tinting pigment in the blue continued to be Prussian blue.

6 A plain white scheme.

7 In the mid or later nineteenth century there was a return to blue and white. The pigment in this blue was French ultramarine, and so the scheme has to be post-1828. [Sample EH.1, p.36 shows all the blue schemes].

8 **The Sixth Earl ?**

The final nineteenth-century scheme saw a change from blue and white to green and cream. It is assumed that this was the work of the Sixth Earl, as the paint was still based on lead white, and the decoration had acquired a thick coat of dirt by the time it was re-painted by the Beits.

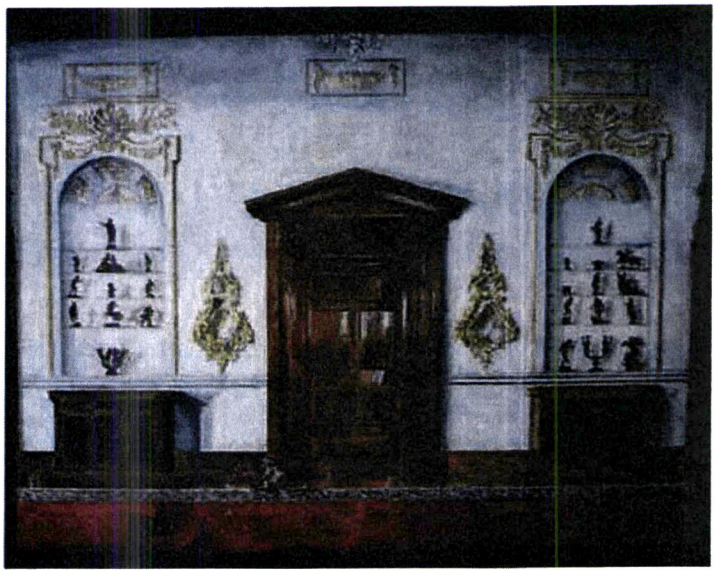
The flat walls and the backs of the niches were painted a soft green, using a mixture of Prussian blue, lead white and yellow iron oxide.

Some colour was now introduced to the ceiling in the form of a pale ochre-coloured soft distemper used for certain areas [p.38]. This paint was only found in a couple of samples, so one can only guess at how the colour was distributed.

9 **The Beits before 1953**

The room was painted white, with gilding used on details of the plaster ornament [Sample EH.15, p.37]. The white paint was based on zinc white and the oil gilding was carried out using an oil size tinted with some chrome yellow.

The scheme is shown in the 1953 Country Life article, and is also depicted in this watercolour now hanging in one of the first floor Bedrooms.



10 The present scheme was carried out by Richard Ireland in circa 2005.

THE DRAWING ROOM

1 - First decoration [a temporary scheme?]

As in the Entrance Hall and Dining Room, the walls of this room were first decorated using soft distempers. When it came to re-painting, the distemper was thoroughly washed off, and so no complete layers were found, however a few traces of blue pigment did survive, and in the cross-sections we can see them caught up in the later under-layers. Sample DR.9 [p.39] shows particles of blue verditer caught up in the oil primer of the second scheme, and Sample DR.104 [p.40], shows a more complete layer of the blue..

Blue distemper, based on the same blue verditer, was also used in the Entrance Hall, and the two rooms were treated as a pair. In the mid eighteenth century, blue verditer was much more expensive than Prussian blue, and its choice is therefore significant. If this was a temporary scheme, allowing the elaborate plasterwork to fully dry out, the rooms were clearly intended to be used.

The ceiling, cove and cornice may not have been painted at all. There is a bright white carbonation layer on the surface of the plaster which suggests a long drying time. When they were eventually painted, a plain white soft distemper was used.

The shutters were grained to imitate mahogany.

2 - First oil paint scheme

The ceiling, cove and cornice were painted with a white soft distemper.

The blue distemper was washed off the walls, which were then sealed with a priming layer of lead white mixed with a few particles of red lead. The flat parts of the wall were painted with a greyed white oil paint mixed from lead white and a small amount of charcoal black [p.39]. This greyed white paint was used both inside and outside the cartouches.

The cartouches, and all the other plasterwork on the walls, were partly gilded and partly painted brown. In the gold areas the gold leaf was laid over a dull yellow undercoat of ochre mixed with a little lead white [p.39]. The brown was built up in three layers with a yellow followed by a reddish brown of mixed umber and red ochre, and finally a coat of varnish [Sample DR.103, p40].

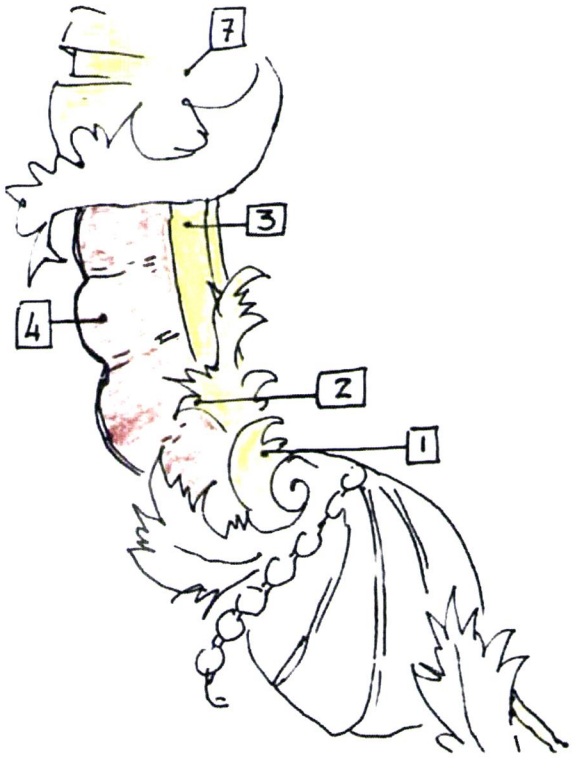
The samples were too small to tell if the brown was a solid colour, or a type of graining like that used for the ground floor shutters and for the joinery on the first floor. The layers used for the brown areas do look very similar to those used for the grained woodwork, but this may be a coincidence, and true appearance could only be established by uncovering an area of the brown.

A curious feature of the brown areas is the fact that certain details had copper filings dusted over the top of the paint prior to the varnish being applied [see Sample DR.104, p.40]. Copper filings were used by decorators in the eighteenth century for 'bronzing', so the material would have been available to the painters. The filings are undoubtedly part of the brown scheme, and not later restoration,

because they rest cleanly on the brown surface and are sealed in by the varnish. The filings were only found in certain areas [see p.11] and one can only guess at the effect.

The number of samples taken was necessarily limited, so it is not possible to give the exact distribution of the brown and gold. The following areas were examined [the numbers are the sample numbers, yellow indicates gold, brown indicates brown].

North wall, cartouche over jib door



Above centre of fireplace

because they rest cleanly on the brown surface and are sealed in by the varnish. The filings were only found in certain areas [see p.11] and one can only guess at the effect.

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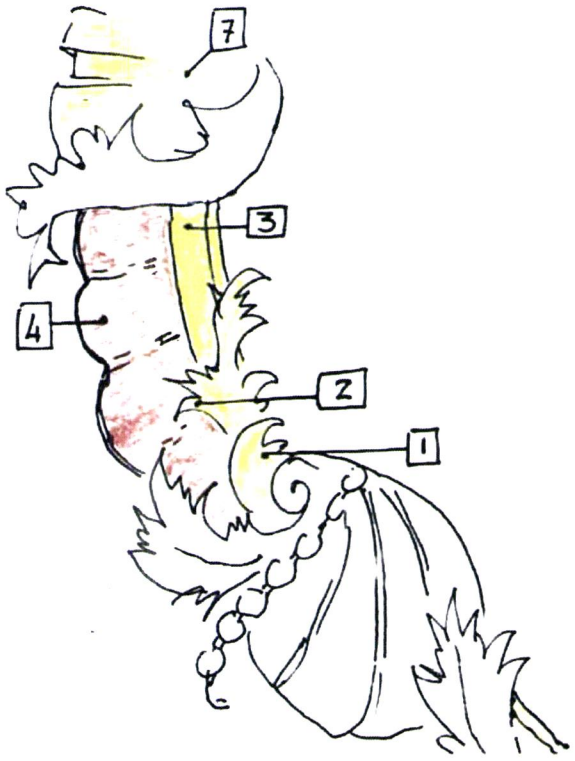


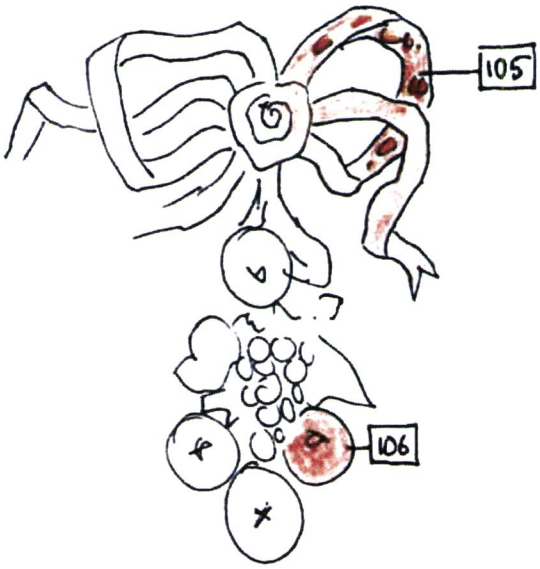
Above centre of fireplace

East wall, above door to the Entrance Hall

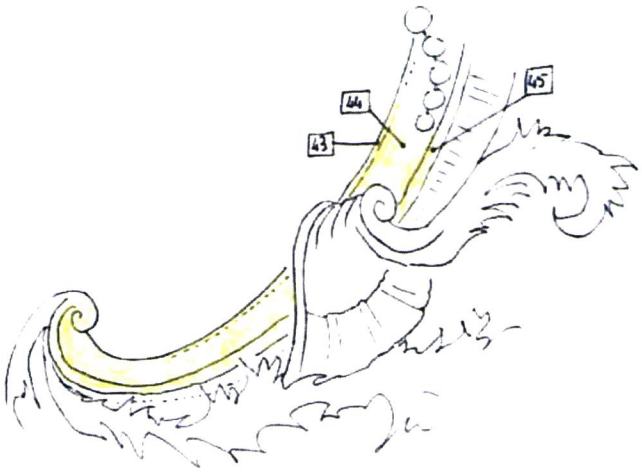
Samples 103 and 104 came from areas where the brown was dusted with copper filings.

Top of cartouche on east wall

Sample 105 came from from an area where the brown was dusted with copper filings

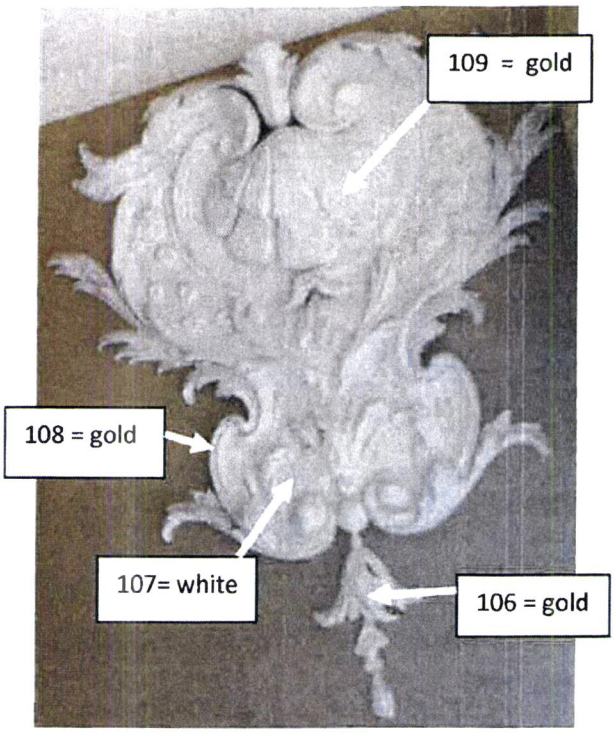


South wall cartouche
Bottom right side



South wall, east end, to left of window

Sample 107 showed neither gold nor brown, but the main greyed white wall colour.



Later decorations

3 The ceiling, cove and cornice continued to be painted with white distemper.

The flat parts of the walls were painted with a stone-coloured oil paint.

The gold areas were not touched.

Some brown areas were not touched, others were re-painted brown [p.40], and the areas that had copper filings, were given a fresh dusting.

3 The paint used for this scheme contained particles of French ultramarine, so it must be post-1828. It was eventually replaced by a scheme almost certainly carried out by the Sixth Earl, so this could be a mid nineteenth-century decoration.

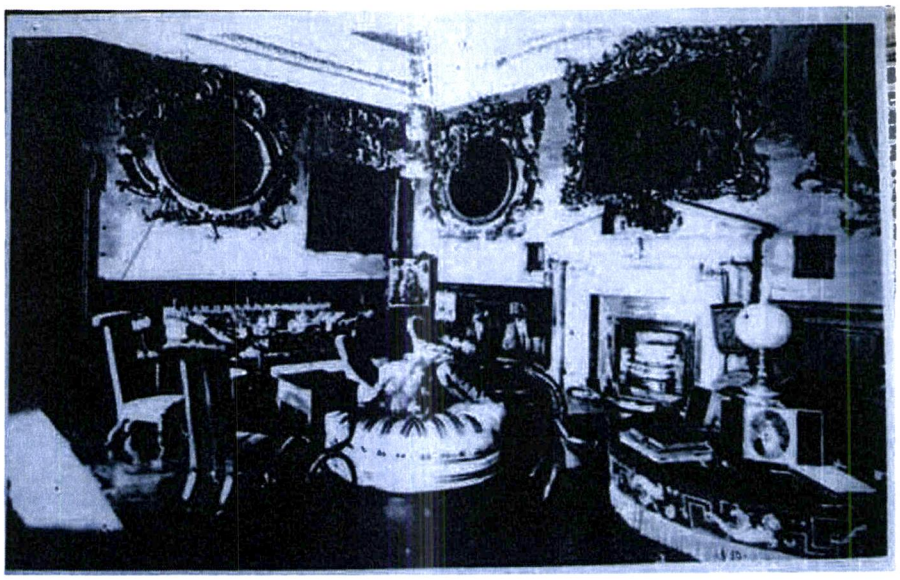
A sandy-coloured soft distemper was used for at least some parts of the ceiling, cove and cornice.

The walls were painted a blue/grey colour.

The brown and gold decoration on the raised plasterwork was not touched.

This must be the scheme recorded in the 1880s photograph [see next page].

The gilding and brown are still visible in this photograph.



4 **The Sixth Earl?** The final decoration before the arrival of the Beits saw the walls solidly painted with a putty-coloured oil paint. This now covered all the brown and gold plasterwork. Distemper must still have been used on the ceiling, but it has all been washed off, and the colour that was used is not known.

The oil paint used for the walls was based on lead white. Lead-based paints were technically still available in the 1930s, but the amount of dirt on the surface suggests this scheme was a lot older than that, and therefore the work of the 6th Earl. In addition, the pinkish, putty-colour was very fashionable in the later nineteenth century, whereas the early twentieth century saw a fashion for lighter, brighter colours

5 **The Beits before 1953**

The Beits redecorated the entire room.

The ceilings were first washed down to remove most of the earlier layers of distemper, and then the plasterwork was sealed with a coat of glue size [see Sample Dr.76, p.42].

The decorators used oil paints on the ceiling as well as on the walls. White was used on the ceiling, cove and cornice, and a pale greyish green on the walls. The green was even used for the mahogany doors, windows, skirtings and doors. The raised plasterwork on the walls was picked out in a creamy white. The paints were based on zinc white.

The scheme is illustrated in the painting by Derek Hill.

The painting is not dated, but John Cornforth in the 1953 Country Life article describes the room as 'blue-grey', so the re-decoration had already taken place when he visited.

6 **The Beits in 1971**

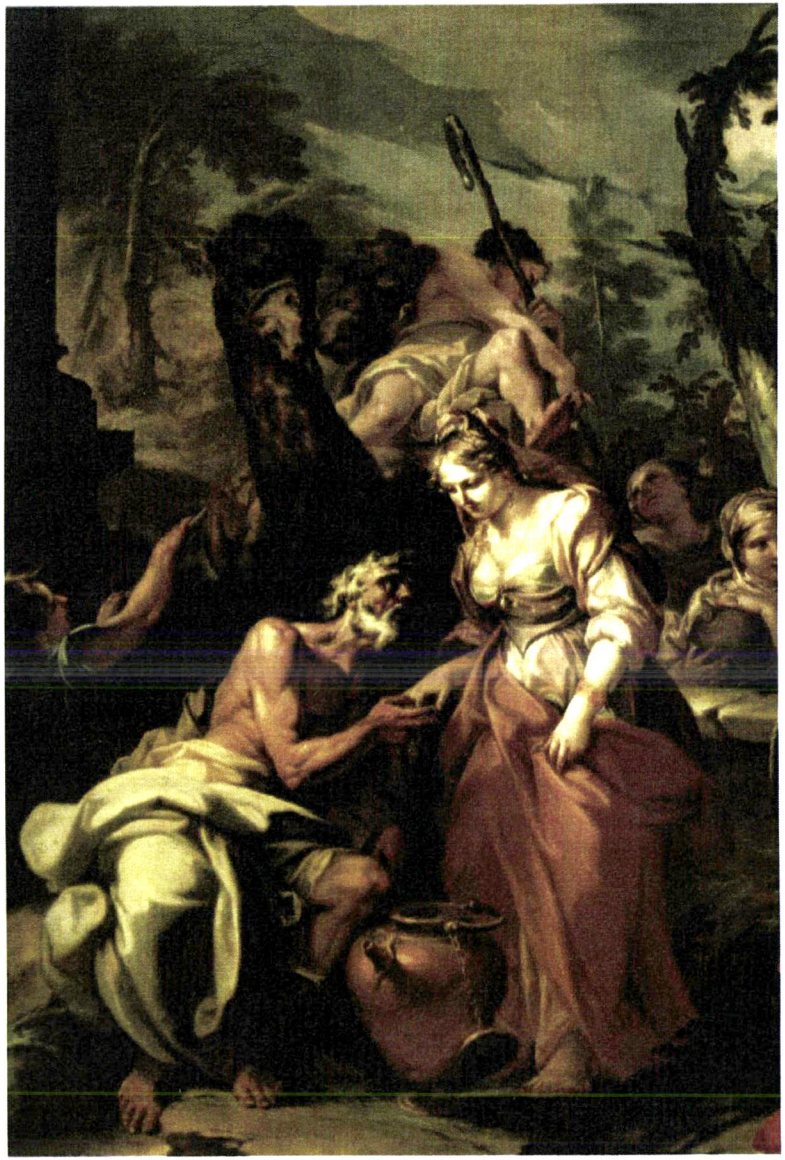
The room was re-decorated for the Beits in 1971 by the company Sibthorpe. The green paint was stripped off the mahogany, and the upper walls, the ceiling and the cove were painted yellow and white.

The paints used were based on titanium dioxide white.

An inscription over the door in the north wall records the work.

7 2012

The present decoration was apparently carried out by Nat Clements. It seems to have faithfully replicated the previous scheme.



The Milltown Collection: reconstructing an eighteenth-century picture-hang

AIDAN O'BOYLE

The Milltown Collection is the only large-scale Irish Grand Tour collection of paintings and sculpture to have survived relatively intact.[1] In 1902 Geraldine Evelyn, 6th and last Countess of Milltown, bequeathed the contents of Russborough to the National Gallery of Ireland by deed of gift. This article considers these important collections of the Georgian period within their original settings by using a combination of documentary evidence and newly discovered Victorian photographs of the interiors at Russborough House. It thus presents a unique glimpse of attitudes to picture-hanging, display and interior decoration in the eighteenth-century country house.

Both Russborough house and its collections were largely the work of one man, Joseph Leeson, later 1st Earl of Milltown (1711-1783). A wealthy Dublin business family of Northhamptonshire extraction, the Leeson's accumulated their wealth in property development and brewing. Joseph Leeson's father, Joseph Leeson senior, was described by Jonathan Swift as a 'fanatic brewer', and accused of sharp practice, having apparently bought new houses at drastically reduced prices from bankrupt Dublin tradesmen. In this way, according to Swift, Leeson senior was 'reported to have [accumulated] some hundreds of houses in this town'.[2] Joseph, the brewer's son, appears to have grown up in the shadow of his father, his obituarist, in 1783, noting that almost the whole of his vast property had been accumulated by the founder of the family and not his art-collecting son.[3] Between the brewer and the 1st Earl of Milltown, the family amassed vast estates in nine counties.[4] Joseph Leeson was both socially and politically ambitious. Having inherited a fortune built on trade, he acquired an estate near Blessington, county Wicklow. The ownership of property was the first step in a career that saw him enter the Irish parliament as MP for Rathcormack in 1743. Primate Stone writing to Chief Secretary Weston in 1748 recommended Leeson for a peerage:

1 – Sebastiano Galeotti, Rebecca at the Well (also known as Rebecca and Eliezer) (detail) 1709, oil on canvas, 218.4 x 276.8 cm (courtesy National Trust: Biffe Collection, Basildon Park)

> His chief merits are a great fortune and constant attachment to the King and his Government. His demerits are of a common failing of a Bourgeois Gentilhomme ... In the course of a long Government, as I wish my Lord Harrington's to be, it will be difficult to steer ... clear of objections, and in an age where the Doctrine of Temporal Rewards ... is so firmly believed and practiced, this Gentleman would lie heavy upon your hands if he grows to think, that he stands particularly excluded.[5]

Leeson, with a fortune of £50,000 and an income of £8,000 a year, built Russborough House between 1741 and 1751 (Plate 2). Clearly it was intended as a symbol of his wealth, status and political ambition. He did not have long to wait for a peerage as he was created Baron Russborough in 1756, Viscount Russborough in 1760, and Earl of Milltown in 1763. Leeson's art collecting activities were conducted in tandem with the building of the house and his political career. In 1744, the year after he entered parliament, Leeson departed for Italy on his first Grand Tour. With his new house under construction, there was a pressing need to furnish it and to acquire a suitably grand collection of sculpture and paintings for its bare and ancestor-less walls.

In Florence he acquired a pair of tabletops from Don Petro Belloni, while in Rome he was one of the first Grand Tourists, British or Irish, to sit to the celebrated portraitist Pompeo Batoni (1708-1787). This painting, signed and dated 1744 (NGI 701), is the first record of Leeson's presence in that city. Shown casually dressed in an expensive fur-lined *robe de chambre*, and posing against a red drape and pedestal, it is a portrait of Leeson as aspiring aristocrat, revealing no trace of his bourgeois origins.[6] Leeson was fortunate

2 *Russborough House, exterior, c.1864-70* (all b/w photos, private collection)

to have as secretary in Rome the distinguished Irish archaeologist and traveller Robert Wood (1717-1771), whose interests encompassed both architecture and painting.[7] Indeed, Wood may well have had a considerable influence on Leeson's purchases. On his first trip Leeson is believed to have acquired four paintings – two Roman landscapes and two *capricci*, dated 1742, by Giovanni Paolo Panini (1691-1765). In March 1745 he also commissioned a copy of Salvator Rosa's *Death of Atilius Regulus* (NGI 1045) from the French painter Claude Joseph Vernet (1714-1789). In that same month, perhaps not long before his departure from Rome, Leeson's collecting activities were dealt a severe blow. Horace Mann, in a letter to Horace Walpole dated 9th March 1745, noted that a vessel 'named the Augustus Caesar, with £60,000 worth of goods, and many statues, pictures, etc, of one Mr Leeson', had been captured by the French.[8] The full extent of the loss remains unclear but must have been substantial. It is unlikely that Leeson, with a new political career to attend to and an expensive house under construction, could have afforded the time or the money to readily assemble a second collection. The loss of the *Augustus Caesar* therefore necessitated Leeson's second Grand Tour of 1750-51, and it is the fruits of that tour which forms the focus of discussion in this paper.

EARLY PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

During the course of research, a uniquely important series of photographs of the interiors of Russborough House were discovered. These images, now in a private collection, consist of an external view of the house and five views of the principal reception rooms. The rooms in question are the entrance hall, the large drawing room, the small drawing room, small dining room and the saloon. In the absence of family papers, these photographs are an exceptionally valuable source of information concerning the arrangement of the paintings and sculpture at Russborough prior to the removal of the Milltown Collection to the National Gallery of Ireland in 1906. The images, which are in the *carte de visite* format, are reduced copies of larger photographs taken by the studio of Blake & Edgar of 32 Midland Road, Bedford. This firm of photographers was in existence between 1860 and 1910, indicating that the photographs could be no earlier than 1860. The images have also been carefully examined by the photographic historian David Davison, and on the basis of format, paper and chemicals used, have been dated to the period 1860 to 1870. Furthermore, the identification of a seated marble statue of Erato (NGI 8207) in the small dining room by the English sculptor Nicholas Roskill (fl.1861-72) is dated 1864, a fact which further narrows the date range to the years 1864 to 1870. The accurate dating of these photographs is of particular importance as it enables us to view the Russborough interiors as they were in the mid-Victorian period, prior to any alterations or additions to the collection which were made by and during the long residence of Geraldine Evelyn, 6th and last Countess of Milltown (1841-1914). Edward Nugent Leeson, 6th Earl of Milltown (1835-1890), married Lady

Geraldine Evelyn Stanhope, daughter of the 5th Earl of Harrington, in 1871. In that same year he inherited Russborough from his unmarried brother Joseph Henry, 5th Earl of Milltown. The photographs of the interiors must, therefore, have been taken towards the end of the 4th Earl's life (d.1866) or during the short tenure of his son, the 5th Earl (d.1871). In any event, they illustrate the arrangement of the collections of paintings and sculptures before the addition of a substantial number of Victorian portraits and busts of various members of the Stanhope family.

The addition of these and other works in the late nineteenth century must, to some degree, have disturbed the arrangement of the collection as photographed in the 1860s. This is particularly true in relation to the appearance of the entrance hall, which became the repository for many of the Stanhope paintings and sculpture. Without the photographic evidence it would be impossible to reconstruct what was, in all likelihood, the original eighteenth-century arrangement. While the photographs of the other rooms reveal a good deal of nineteenth-century furniture disposed in a typically cluttered Victorian manner, the arrangement of the paintings conforms well to what is known of eighteenth-century hanging practice.

THE SCULPTURE COLLECTION AT RUSSBOROUGH

Russborough House has long been admired as, among other things, an elegantly designed repository for the display of sculpture. It is reasonable to assume that Joseph Leeson would have discussed his intention of forming a sculpture collection with his architect Richard Castle (d.1751) prior to his departure for Italy in 1744. As a result, Castle provided niches for thirty-three statues in total – twenty-six externally and seven internally. Indeed, the building of the house between 1741 and 1751 coincided with Leeson's Grand Tours of 1744-45 and 1750-51, during which time most of his sculpture was acquired, and the niches, both inside and out, suggest that he did not intend to return from Italy empty-handed. On the entrance front there are twelve niches, six in each of the colonnades flanking the central block. At the rear of the house there are a further fourteen niches, seven on either side of the garden front. Internally, the entrance hall was reserved exclusively for the display of sculpture.

The sculptures in the colonnades survive intact in the niches for which they were intended. According to the research of the late Chris Caffrey, there is no documentary evidence to prove that they were commissioned by Leeson, although the bulk of the circumstantial evidence points in that direction.[9] Leeson had, according to Horace Mann (noted above), already acquired and dispatched a large shipment of statues and pictures by 1745. This poses the question: how many other undocumented shipments did Joseph Leeson get through in the 1740s and early 1750s? Had the records survived the question might be answerable. Either way, it is beyond doubt that Leeson was actively collecting sculpture while Russborough House was being built.

Despite Leeson's great wealth, the acquisition of high-quality Roman antiquities was no easy matter in mid-eighteenth-century Rome. The opening decades of the eighteenth century saw the dispersal of several of the collections of the more impoverished Roman patrician families. The departure of the Odescalchi Collection of sculpture to Madrid in 1724 and the Chigi Collection to Dresden in 1728 prompted the Papal authorities to take stringent action. Restrictions were placed on the export of antiquities and a licensing system was introduced, entitling the Papal authorities to one-third of any antiquities excavated within their territories. Equally, they could prevent the export of any individual work deemed to be of particular quality. Hence, Leeson, like Ralph Howard, the Earl of Charlemont and others, had to content himself with modern copies after the antique. This, however, did not prevent him from attempting to acquire the two Furietti centaurs from Hadrian's Villa (1751), now held in the Capitoline Museum in Rome. Their distinguished provenance, and the fact that they bore genuine inscriptions by Aristeas and Papias of Aphrodisias, made them highly desirable. Unfortunately for Leeson, his offer of £2,000 was met with indignation, and there the matter ended.[10] However, this incident clearly indicates Leeson's pursuit of first-rate classical antiquities.

Back at Russborough, Richard Castle probably conceived the entrance hall as a repository for choice examples from Leeson's sculpture collection. The hall contains five niches and four oculi, with an additional two niches in the west quadrant corridor. While the sculptural programme of the external colonnades has apparently remained unaltered since its earliest recorded description in G.N. Wright's *A Tour in Ireland*, published in 1823, the indoor sculpture has been the source of much speculation and controversy, principally due to the lack of family papers, the cursory nature in which the National Gallery of Ireland originally inventoried the Milltown bequest, and the absence of photographs of the interior prior to its removal in 1906.[11] The schedule or inventory attached to the deed of gift merely lists the sculpture in the entrance hall in 1902, but is of little use in visualising the arrangement of the individual pieces. The items listed were marble busts of Portia, Brutus, Seneca and Cicero. There were also life-size statues of the youthful Bacchus and Diana, the latter being almost certainly a statue of the *Venus Genetrix*.[12] Two statuettes were listed of Hercules in marble and plaster.[13] To confuse matters, there is also an undated typescript list of sculpture in the Milltown Papers in the National Gallery from which the following 'modern sculpture' can be added: casts of Mercury, *The Musical Faun* and the *Venus de Medici*. There was also a bust of Marcus Aurelius as a boy and four casts of the heads of Roman empresses. The latter were certainly those which occupied the oculi above the doors at the angles of the room, and which were still *in situ* when the hall was photographed by *Country Life* in 1937.[14] It would appear that there was an element of duplication between the internal and external sculpture, as the figures of Mercury, Hercules and the faun appear more than once. It is fortunate, therefore, that in the course of research, a photograph of the entrance hall has come to light. Soundly dated to the mid or late 1860s, it was created a generation before the deed of gift inventory was made and shortly before the 6th Earl and Countess inherited the house. When the inventory is cross-

referenced with the photograph, it becomes clear that much had been rearranged in the entrance hall in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. However, for the sake of clarity, this article will concentrate on the earlier photographic evidence.

The 1902 inventory attached to the deed of gift merely lists the sculpture in the entrance hall. According to recent research by the conservator Richard Ireland, the sculpture in the entrance hall would have been originally displayed against a stone-coloured background of pale grey and matt white.[15] Such colour schemes were common in entrance halls in the eighteenth century, and those at Russborough have recently been reinstated on the basis of scientific evidence. Such a neutral choice of colours would not have distracted attention from the white marble and plaster sculptures which were intended to be the primary source of interest.

It is necessary, at this point, to take stock of the indoor sculpture as listed in the 1902 inventory. Excluding small sculptural groups, busts and bronzes, it consisted of nine statues, comprising four casts and five marbles. The casts were of *Mercury*, *Hercules*, the *Venus de Medici* and *The Dancing Faun*. It is worth noting that Joseph Lesson was content to settle for casts of these antiquities while his less affluent peers, Ralph Howard and Lord Charlemont, commissioned marble copies of such works.[16] The *Mercury* was much admired in the eighteenth century. The statue was first recorded in the sculpture court of the Belvedere in the Vatican palace in 1536 and was later removed to Florence. Although frequently reproduced, it is unclear whether the copyists looked to the Uffizi version or a bronze copy in the Farnese Collection. Indeed, there are many copies in Britain and Ireland, such as that made for Houghton Hall in Norfolk.[17] The *Venus de Medici* was first recorded in the Villa Medici in Rome in 1638. It has been in the Tribuna of the Uffizi since 1688, where it would have been seen by most Grand Tourists, including Joseph Leeson. It was considered one of the best statues to have survived from antiquity, though in fact it is a copy of a lost bronze and dates from about the first century BC.[18] *The Dancing Faun* is a third-century copy of a bronze original, first recorded in 1665. It was in the collection of the Grand Duke of Tuscany by 1673 and in the Tribuna by 1688. It was often paired with the *Venus de Medici* and was frequently copied.[19] According to Lynda Mulvin, the remaining works, five in number, comprised 'one of the few collections of antique sculpture brought to Ireland in the mid eighteenth century'.[20] It is possible, therefore, that Leeson was advised on these purchases by the Robert Wood who had acted as his secretary in Rome in 1744-45. Wood is known to have commissioned four landscapes from the French painter Claude Joseph Vernet (1714-1789) on Leeson's behalf in December 1749, and may have continued working for him until he left Italy in May 1750.[21] Interestingly, the author of *A Guide to the County of Wicklow*, published in 1827, noted the presence at Russborough of 'a few figures, in small life found in the subterranean cities of Pompeii, and Herculaneum'.[22] Mulvin may well be correct in her assertion that Leeson built his sculpture collection around this core group of antiquities. However, both Caffrey and Mulvin are almost certainly incorrect in thinking that such valuable works were intended for the garden front, and it seems more likely

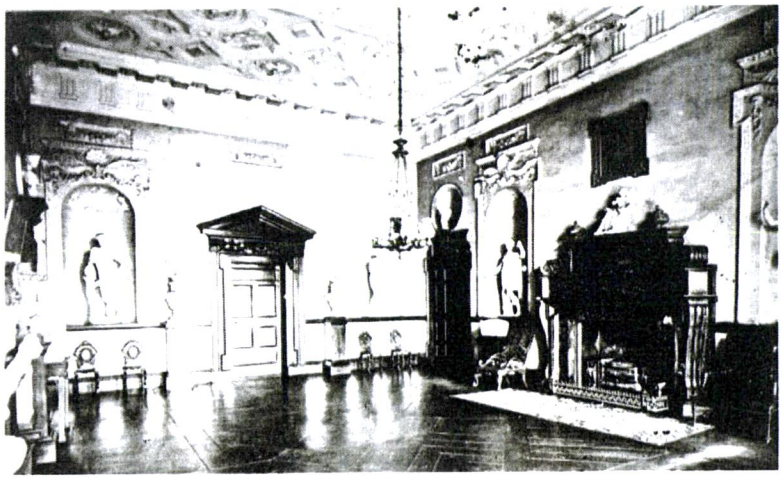
that such prized works were displayed indoors. These consisted of statues of Bacchus, Diana, Hercules, *Venus Genetrix* and Dionysos/Apollino. The works, which appear to have been of high quality, are thought to have been of Parian marble and are believed to date from the late first to the second century AD, being Roman copies of Greek originals.

As was standard practice in the eighteenth century, these Roman antiquities were probably repaired – with new heads and limbs added – by Bartolomeo Cavaceppi (c.1716-1791), who was then the most prominent restorer in Rome. By the time of Leeson's second visit to Rome in 1750-51, Cavaceppi was a well-established dealer and antiquarian working from his own studio on the via Gesu e Maria, close to S Maria del Popolo. His principal patron was Cardinal Albani, by whom he was employed on the restoration of sculpture. Cavaceppi produced copies of antiquities in various sizes and media for the Grand Tour market. Joseph Leeson possessed two, *Faun with A Kid* and *Faun with a Goat*, both of which are signed and dated 1751.[23] It would make sense, therefore, that Leeson would have acquired his antiquities from Cavaceppi, with Wood acting as agent; foreign collectors such as Leeson generally preferred to deal with agents of their own nationality.

A TOUR OF THE HOUSE IN THE 1860S: THE ENTRANCE HALL

Based on the photographic evidence, and working in a clockwise direction, it is possible to reconstruct the arrangement of the sculpture around the entrance hall (Plate 3). Mercury, Roman god of commerce and prosperity, stood to the left of the saloon door; to the right of this door was a cast of the *Venus de Medici*, one of the most revered of all Roman antiquities. The statue of Venus, in turn, was followed by the youthful Bacchus, god of wine (both Bacchus and Mercury were lovers of the goddess). The statue of Bacchus is thought to have been made from finely carved Parian marble dating from the second century AD, and wears a tunic trimmed with goat or faun skin known as a nebris. Depictions of this costume are rare and are normally associated with pastoralism and hunting.[24] This is appropriate, as the statue of Bacchus was originally paired, on the other side of the chimneypiece, with one of Diana the Huntress. This was not a copy of the well-known *Diana of Ephesus*, now in the Louvre, but was closer to a related work in the Vatican Museum. As with the statue of Bacchus, the Diana appears to have been a work of high quality in Parian marble. It is likely that the heads of both the Diana and Bacchus were part of Cavaceppi's eighteenth-century restorations.

Out of range of the camera, the west wall contains only one niche opposite the chimney piece. It is slightly larger than all the others and is pedimented. Of the thirty-three sculpture niches at Russborough, both indoor and out, it is by far the most conspicuous and was presumably intended to hold the most important of Joseph Leeson's antiquities. So far, four of the indoor statues have been accounted for; by a process of elimination the occupant of the most important niche in the house must be drawn from one of the remain-



3 Russborough House, entrance hall, c.1864-70

ing sculptures listed in the 1902 inventory. These consisted of a cast of *The Dancing Faun*, a rather slight and insubstantial antique marble of a youthful Dionysus/Apollino, and a *Venus Genetrix*. Of these, the *Venus Genetrix* is, according to Mulvin, the finest piece of antique sculpture in the Milltown Collection.[25] It is believed that this work is one of many Roman copies after a Greek original, dated, on stylistic grounds, to around 410 BC. Leeson's Roman copy has been dated to the late first or early second century AD.[26] Therefore, as the centrepiece of his collection, it seems reasonable to assume that it would have been given pride of place in the most prominent niche in the house. The pedimented niche in question was flanked by a pair of marble urns on mahogany pedestals, beyond which stood a pair of tables surmounted by sculptures. These were copies of *The Wrestlers* and *The Arrotino*, also known as *The Knife Sharpener* or *Listening Slave*. It was common practice for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century collectors to pair these works of similar size and fame. Like the *Venus de Medici*, these were works that no self-respecting eighteenth-century connoisseur would have been without. *The Wrestlers*, according to Tobias Smollet, delighted dilettanti such as Leeson, who enjoyed gauging the groups' qualities against those of other famous antique statues in the Tribune at the Uffizi in Florence.[27] There was much controversy among the connoisseurs of Leeson's day as regards the title of *The Arrotino* or *Listening Slave*, and it is unknown which of the many titles Leeson himself used. The Uffizi work is now thought to be a Pergamene original of high quality.[28] Leeson's *Wrestlers* and *Arrotino* were executed by Giovanni Battista Piamontini (fl.1725-1762), who was thought by Dr James Tyrrell, Leeson's agent in Florence, to be the finest copyist in that city.[29] Piamontini was the lesser-known son of the

eminent Florentine sculptor Giuseppi Piamontini (1664-1742). Unfortunately, little is known of his activities to date, except that he copied busts of Tully and Seneca for another Irish Grand Tourist, Ralph Howard, in 1752.

The formal sculptural arrangement of the entrance hall was completed by three cinerary urns, now held in the National Gallery of Ireland. Although their authenticity and provenance have been questioned in the past, they are clearly visible in the 1860s photograph. They stood on black marble bases beneath the niches flanking the chimney piece and under the pediment niche directly opposite. All three are listed in the 1902 inventory. According to Sergio Benedetti, two of the three are genuine antiquities, while the third is an eighteenth-century Roman copy.[30]

Having thus far accounted for the arrangement of most of the indoor sculptures, the remaining two – a cast of *The Dancing Faun* and an antique marble of Dionysius/Apollino – must have stood in the niches in the west quadrant corridor. There is evidence that the west corridor, unlike that in the east wing which led to the kitchen, served as a repository of tapestry and sculpture until the removal of the Milltown Collection to the National Gallery in 1906.[31] This corridor, which led from the private (or bachelor) quarters in the west wing to the large drawing room in the central block, was admirably suited to such a purpose. While it is possible that it may have been an early nineteenth-century development, prompted by the 4th Earl's Grand Tour in 1820, the presence of two niches would suggest that it could have been designed with the display of sculpture in mind. However, two niches do not make a sculpture gallery, and therefore it is fortunate that Lady Milltown had the foresight to record that it was the principal repository of the family collection of bronzes.[32]

THE MILLTOWN BRONZES

The Milltown bronzes have, to date, received relatively little attention, despite the fact that such works were a characteristic feature of most Grand Tour collections.[33] Those who could not acquire the most expensive and sought-after classical antiquities often contented themselves with miniature copies in bronze or less expensive materials. Joseph Leeson, in all likelihood, was no exception. By the middle of the eighteenth century, small bronzes had begun to emerge from the cabinets of the cognoscenti to take their place on top of chimney pieces in drawing rooms and libraries. The most famous contemporary illustration of this trend is Johann Zoffany's painting of Sir Laurence Dundas in his London library of 1769 (private collection). Such *garniture de cheminée* may well have existed at Russborough during the eighteenth century. The *Illustrated Summary Catalogue of Prints and Sculpture* in the National Gallery of Ireland lists fourteen bronzes of Milltown provenance.[34] Of these, only five predate the nineteenth century and were probably bought by Joseph Leeson or his son, the 2nd Earl (1744-1801). Significantly, all of these works are either copies after the renowned Renaissance

sculptor Giambologna (1529-1608), or works by one of his students. For Leeson's generation, Giambologna had almost achieved the status of his antique predecessors.[35] Lord Charlemont, for example, used a copy of his *Mercury* as the focal point of the long corridor leading to the library wing at Charlemont House (since demolished). Of the five bronzes, one depicts *The Executioner with the head of John the Baptist* (NGI 8122). This is a variant of a statuette of Mars by Giambologna dating from the 1570s. It was executed by the Florentine sculptor Massimilno Soldani (1656-1740), who catered almost exclusively for the tastes of northern European clients such as Joseph Leeson.[36] Soldani specialised in the production of small-scale replicas after the antique. Leeson, with his large collection of life-size copies, would have had no reason to duplicate them in miniature, opting instead for these works in the style of Giambologna.

The remaining four bronzes represent *The Labours of Hercules*. They were executed in the workshop of the Florentine sculptor Ferdinando Tacca (1619-1686). Tacca cast statuettes after Giambologna using the original models, his father having inherited the master's studio. Two of the four Milltown bronzes, *Hercules with the Hydra* (NGI 8121) and *Hercules with the Erymanthian Boar* (NGI 8123), are thought to have been cast from the original models. The other two, *Hercules slaying the Nemean Lion* (NGI 8124) and *Hercules with the Pillars* (NGI 8125), are attributed to a follower of Giambologna.[37] The remaining nine Milltown bronzes, now also held in the National Gallery of Ireland, were added to the collection in the early nineteenth century. J.P. Neale, in his account of Russborough published in 1826, noted that the then earl had 'brought from Italy some very fine Bronzes'.[38]

The earl in question was Joseph, 4th Earl of Milltown (1799-1866). Following his father's premature death in 1800, his mother, Emily Douglas, married one of the great Irish art collectors of the early nineteenth century, Valentine Lawless, 2nd Baron Cloncurry (1773-1853). The 4th Earl would therefore have spent his formative years at Lyons, county Kildare, under the influence of his stepfather Lord Cloncurry. He reached the age of majority in 1820, and sometime between that date and the publication of Neale's work in 1826 he visited Italy. He was certainly there in 1824, for in that year he fathered the eldest of three illegitimate children known as the Fitz Leesons.[39] As a collector of sculpture, his activities are naturally overshadowed by those of his great grandfather, the 1st Earl. However, he did, at least in terms of bronzes, make a valuable contribution to the ancestral collection and one that complemented the activities of his predecessors.

There is a series of seven early nineteenth-century bronzes of the Roman School in the National Gallery of Ireland collection. These are reduced copies after the antique, and consist of *The Dying Gaul* (NGI 8112), *The Borghese Gladiator* (NGI 8117), *Laocoon* (NGI 8127), the *Apollo Belvedere* (NGI 8144) and the *Venus de Medici* (NGI 8226), as well as copies of the *Apoxyomenos* (NGI 8126) and the *Cincinnatus* or *Sandal Binder* (NGI 8286).[40] The production of faithful replicas after such famous antiquities became the norm in the late seventeenth century, but was beginning to wane by the early nineteenth century. This was due to the fame of the Venetian sculptor Antonio Canova (1757-1822) and

the demand for bronze copies after his works.[41] It would appear that the 4th Earl acquired a bronze of *The Dancing Girls* after Canova, and there is also a reduced marble copy of his *Sleeping Nymph* (NGI 8103) in the National Gallery of Ireland.[43] Leeson did, however, also possess two bronzes after Thorvaldsen: one, *A Shepherd Boy* (NGI 8227), is a reduced copy after a marble of 1817; the other, *Venus with an Apple* (NGI 8110), is a copy of a marble of about 1813–16.[43]

It is probable that these works were acquired, like the others, in the 1820s. However, a few are unaccounted for, such as Canova's *Dancing Girls*, *Apollino* and *Mercury*; busts of Nero, Napoleon and the King of Rome; and replicas of Trajan's Column and another unidentified column. Another two bronzes that do not appear to match any in the National Gallery of Ireland collection are visible in early photographs of Russborough of the 1860s and in 1912.[44] It is likely that any statuettes from the Milltown Collection which are not now held in the National Gallery of Ireland were sold by auction at Russborough in 1932.[45]

THE SOUTH ROOMS: THE LARGE DRAWING ROOM, OLD DINING ROOM AND STUDY

IT HAS BEEN ARGUED BY JOHN CORNFORTH, ON STYLISTIC GROUNDS, THAT THE DECORATION of the large drawing room and dining room which flank the entrance hall on the south side of the house was completed after 1751.[46] This is based on the baroque character of the stuccowork in these rooms as opposed to the lighter rococo ornament found in the north facing room, which must have been executed at a slightly later date. There is no question as to the nature of the picture-hang in these rooms, as the walls of both apartments were decorated with stucco frames. The Kentian-style rectangular frames in the dining room were removed by Sir Alfred Beit in the 1950s, but originally contained a series of nine landscapes by the Irish painter George Barret (*c*.1730-1784). This substantial commission would have come as a major boost to Barret, who was scarcely more than twenty years old at the time. It was also a forerunner to the much more ambitious series of landscapes Barret painted for Richard Wingfield, 3rd Viscount Powerscourt, in the early 1760s. However, unlike Powerscourt's commission, which consisted of views of his estates, Leeson opted for idealised Italianate landscapes and views of Rome after Giovanni Battista Busiri (1698-1757).[47] It might be expected that Leeson would have preferred views of his own estate, but at the time Russborough was built, its surroundings were, for the most part, barren and treeless. It would have taken a considerable time for the newly planted demesne to reach maturity. This may well account for the general absence of such works in the Milltown Collection.[48] Given Leeson's great wealth and discernment as a collector and patron, it is surprising that three of Barret's paintings are actually enlarged copies after small gouaches by Busiri, recently described as an artist of 'very modest talent but considerable popularity'.[49] He was, in fact, one of the earliest

Roman artists to supply small, portable and well-painted souvenirs of Rome to Grand Tourists, and his work was much sought after between the 1730s and early 1750s. Noted for his excellent draughtsmanship, if rather restricted repertory, Busiri's views of Rome are very common, and are also to be found in both the Wicklow and Westport collections.[50] Joseph Leeson's discernment, or lack of it, in this regard is difficult to explain. Given that he had just completed two Grand Tours, it is surprising that he had not commissioned a series of paintings for the dining room as he had done for the large drawing room, or at the very least have enlargements made of the four fine Panini views in his possession. However, in the absence of documentary evidence, his motives must remain a matter for speculation.

The decoration of the large drawing room, like that of the old dining room, was believed by Cornforth to have been executed after 1751 (Plate 4). Here, the walls were decorated with vigorously modelled stucco frames, specifically designed to accommodate four oval seascapes by Claude Joseph Vernet.[51] According to Vernet's account book, Robert Wood, in his capacity as agent, commissioned four oval paintings on Leeson's behalf in December 1749. The order was placed shortly before Leeson's departure for Rome, where he is recorded as being resident by Easter of 1750. Vernet had undertaken to complete the commission by the middle of 1751 – in other words, before Leeson's departure for Ireland. According to Benedetti, Joseph Leeson prolonged his stay in Rome until later in the year. However, there is evidence that he attended Lord Orford's picture sale in Covent Garden, London, on 13th and 14th June 1751.[52] Leeson's second Roman sojourn was therefore, if anything, shorter than has been previously thought. Given that

4 Russborough House, large drawing room, c.1864-70

Vernet was seriously overburdened with work in the early 1750s and had difficulty meeting the deadline for Ralph Howard's commission, among others, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that Leeson may have left Rome empty-handed.[53]

On the basis of photographic evidence from the 1860s and 1912, it is clear that these stucco frames were, during the nineteenth-century at least, lavishly gilded, and that the paintings within them – four oval marines representing the times of the day – were not hung in chronological order. Francis Russell, in his work on picture-hanging and display, has noted that 'the claims of symmetry, place a premium on sets and pairs', and that individual works might be enlarged or reduced to serve as pendants.[54] This is certainly true of the Russborough drawing room, where Vernet's four seascapes were augmented by two copies of works which were executed for Benjamin Lethieullier in 1751.[55] These were *Morning: A Port in Mist – Fishermen hauling in their Boat* and *River Landscape with the Temple of Vista at Tivoli*. These must have been painted when Leeson was in Rome, and are the work of the French artist Charles François Lacroix (1700-1782), who worked in Vernet's studio. Both copies were carefully integrated into the overall baroque decorative scheme, and were suspended from fictive stucco chains on the east and west walls. Two important references to copies of works at Russborough executed for the Earl of Bective are the only known comments by Joseph Leeson regarding paintings in his collection, and date from December 1766:

> ...the six pictures I bespoke for your Lordship are now finished and ready to be sent, according to any directions you give. I expected they would have been done much sooner, but there is so much work in them, and the man took such pains to execute them, that they proved very tedious. When I have the pleasure of receiving your commands, directed to me in Dublin, I shall in consequence send them when you desire.[56]

The six paintings in question are most likely the four oval Vernets and the two copies by Lacroix in the large drawing room. Copies of the oval paintings in landscape format existed at Headfort, county Meath, as did duplicates of the Lacroixs from the Milltown Collection.[57] The unnamed copyist referred to was almost certainly the obscure Dublin artist William Woodburn (*c*.1735-1818). A further two copies sold in 1811 suggest that there were more Vernet copies in the Milltown Collection than previously thought.[58] On 14th December 1766, Lord Milltown again wrote to Bective from Russborough:

> The bearer is the painter who takes up the pictures as your Lordship desires. I should have rather kept them another week till they dried more, but as they are carefully packed, I hope they will go safe, and prove agreeable to you. I think they are very [fine?] copies and well done, and as the subjects are pleasing, shall be glad to find they meet with your approbation.[59]

Given that both letters were addressed from Russborough, there is no doubt that the paintings being copied were hanging in the house at the time.[60]

The Vernet paintings in the large drawing room were never intended to be the centre of attention, but rather a foil to the most important picture in the room – a late seventeenth century copy of *The Triumph of David* (NGI 1323) by Guercino (1591-1666), originally painted for Cardinal Colonna in Rome in 1636-37.[61] Leeson may have seen the original painting in the Galleria Colonna, and was evidently sufficiently impressed to display the copy as an overmantel in the large drawing room at Russborough. This Old Testament subject, hung like an altarpiece above the chimney piece, acted as 'a kind of secular altar and a source of physical if not spiritual warmth', according to Gervase Jackson-Stops.[62] The picture was mounted in a lavishly carved and gilt baroque frame similar to that in the saloon. Both frames have been attributed by the Knight of Glin to the Dublin carvers John Houghton and John Kelly, working under the influence of the engraved designs of Mathias Lock.[63]

The Guercino copy and the four Vernet seascapes were hung above eye level, the height being dictated by the high pedimented chimneypiece: the two Vernet copies by Lacroix were the only paintings in the room hung at eye level. The overall effect of the paintings in their giltwood and stucco frames must have been overpowering, the whole being more than the sum of its parts. Neale, writing in 1826, listed eight Vernet's in the large drawing room. This is incorrect, as the decorative scheme could only accommodate seven paintings in total, including the overmantel.[64] The Vernet paintings, like those of Barrett in the large drawing room, served a purely decorative purpose that set them apart from the bulk of the collection, which was hung in a suite of crimson velvet-clad rooms on the west and north sides of the house – the small drawing room, music room, saloon and small dining room (discussed below).

The small panelled study next to the large drawing room served as a cabinet or closet. In 1826 it contained just seven paintings. It was here that Reynolds' three oil studies for *The Parody of the School of Athens* (NGI 735, 736, 737) were hung. These were painted in the early months of 1751, shortly before Leeson's departure from Rome. Given that he never owned the finished work, the oil sketches served as a valuable reminder of the friends he made in Rome, and were therefore worthy of hanging in his private study. George Newenham Wright, writing in 1822, described them as works 'of great excellence'.[65] Later generations of the Leeson family, though heavily indebted, seemed to have agreed. Barbara, widow of the 4th Earl of Milltown, took the opportunity to fill a gap in the collection by acquiring the finished work when it appeared at auction at Foster's in London on 25th May 1870 at a cost of £105. Her son Edward, 6th Earl of Milltown, was also, according to the Earl of Kildare, 'very much interested in the caricatures'.[66] It should also be noted that Barbara, Countess of Milltown, was responsible for the acquisition of two *Views of Tivoli* (NGI 746, 747) by the Welsh painter Richard Wilson (1714-1782). Here, again, her purchases were entirely consistent with the character of the 1st Earl's collection. Indeed, despite their financial difficulties, Leeson's nineteenth-century descendants were conscious of the importance of the ancestral collection.

THE SMALL DRAWING ROOM AS CABINET

The origin of picture cabinets can ultimately be traced back to the Kunst und Wunder Kammer of the Renaissance, and in particular to Italian examples such as the Tribuna of the Uffizi. According to Alastair Laing, the term 'cabinet' is derived from the medieval Latin word *cabana* or *capana*, and has three distinct meanings: firstly, it refers to a small room which serves as a repository for an art collection; secondly, in French, to the collection itself; and thirdly, to a secure piece of furniture with many drawers.[67] The small drawing room at Russborough fulfilled all three criteria in that it was a relatively small room, mostly hung with cabinet-sized pictures and furnished with a large ebony cabinet containing numerous drawers for coins, medals and gems. The cabinet is referred to in an undated late nineteenth-century inventory, and the paintings are visible in an early photograph (Plate 5).[68] It is one of two surviving Florentine cabinets from the Milltown Collection in the National Gallery of Ireland. It is interesting to note that one of Reynolds' oil sketches for *The Parody of the School of Athens* (NGI 735), depicts Leeson with his quizzing-glass examining a coin or medal.[69]

The small drawing room was a cabinet in all but name, though never referred to as such in nineteenth-century inventories. No example of an eighteenth-century Irish cabinet of paintings is known to survive.[70] Those rooms at Charlemont House, Moira House and Powerscourt House, among others, are lost with their contents. In Britain, with the exception of the cabinet at Corsham Court and the Landscape Room at Holkham Hall, very few eighteenth-century examples survive. The Landscape Room at Holkham, for

5 *Russborough House, small drawing room, c.1864-70*

example, cannot be compared with the small drawing room at Russborough, as the arrangement differed greatly in terms of the density of the picture-hang and the variety of subject matter. According to Cornforth, the most remarkable surviving example from the Georgian period is the cabinet at Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk, which was created by William Windham. Its arrangement can be dated, like that of Joseph Leeson's collection, to the mid eighteenth century. As was often the case, the paintings were hung against a rich crimson background to highlight the gilt frames of the pictures and mirrors in the room.

The Felbrigg cabinet was hung with a red-flowered paper, which was replaced by crimson worsted damask in the early nineteenth century.[71] Likewise, Neale described a crimson cut-silk velvet in the four principal picture-hanging rooms at Russborough.[72] At Felbrigg, Windham's own diagrams for the arrangement of the picture-hang survive, and date from the early 1760s. His correspondence provides a valuable insight into the care with which collectors of Leeson's generation approached the arrangement of their cabinets. The following extract from a letter written by Windham in January 1752 is of particular interest:

> ...at Mr Hall's leisure I would have him make me elevations of the four sides of the cabinet & great parlour each on separate pieces of paper by a scale of one inch to a foot making to whole height of the dado & all ... He must mark the cornice, doors everything in general, not[e] ye parts and than on other pieces of past[e] board ... I would have the sizes of the best pictures cut out by the same scale to outside of the frames and inside marked by a line & what the picture is wrote on it, or that last part may be left till I come in this manner.[73]

There is nothing to suggest that Windham's manner of picture-hanging was unconventional and it is quite possible that Leeson may well have adopted the same method. Mrs Jameson, in her companion to the private galleries of London, published in 1844, noted that to select a cabinet of pictures was both a matter of time and taste, requiring both feeling and experience for their arrangement and selection:

> A private collection confined to works of one particular class ... is less exciting and agreeable than one in which the schools of art are mingled ... in short, it is the highest criterion of an exact, as well as an educated taste in art, to select a small collection of pictures of various date, style, and feeling; to hang them in the same room; and so to hang them, that neither the eye shall be offended by inharmonious propinquity, nor the mind disturbed by unfit associations.[74]

Jameson's opinions may well reflect the conventional wisdom of collectors. There are, however, certain fundamental differences between the picture-hang of Windham's cabinet and that at Russborough. While Cornforth found the arrangement of the pictures in the cabinet at Felbrigg quite dense, he was unaware of the existence of the 1860s photograph of the small drawing room at Russborough, and of the fact that the rooms had being originally hung with smaller cabinet pictures. The density of the hang in the Russborough cabinet was, in fact, far greater than that at Felbrigg, resembling what Julius Bryant has described as the 'frame to frame, dado to cornice displays favoured on the Continent'.[75] Indeed, this density of hanging looked back to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century galleries and cabinets of Italy. Leeson would have seen many such arrangements of private collections in Florence and Rome, the most influential being the Tribuna of the Uffizi.

The position of the three doorcases in the room dictated the arrangement of the picture-hang. The wall space was divided up into several distinct groups or clusters of paintings tightly arranged in a carefully balanced and symmetrical manner around certain key works. These were *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, attributed to Girolamo Troppa (1637–1710), *Lot and his Daughters* and *St Mary Magdalene* by Felice Ficherelli (1605–1660), and a copy of Guercino's *Aurora*. All are now in the National Gallery of Ireland. Once the position of those works had been determined, it became a matter of arranging clusters of smaller paintings around them. The crimson velvet backdrop to the paintings and the mostly uniform choice of picture frames gave a general cohesion to the overall arrangement. An *Adoration of the Magi* (NGI 1072) attributed to a follower of Bonifazio de'Pitati (1487–1553) took pride of place above the chimney piece as the focal point of the room. This was balanced on the opposite wall by a large painting of *Lot and his Daughters* (NGI 1746) by Ficherelli. *The Adoration of the Magi* was itself flanked by a group of smaller works by Busiri; the Felbrigg cabinet, in contrast to that at Russborough, was devoted exclusively to the works of that artist. Interestingly, Leeson's set of paintings by Busiri were mounted in rococo frames identical to those in Windham's cabinet at Felbrigg, and are thought to have been the work of the London carver René Duffour.[76] The Busiris, in turn, were carefully integrated with the sculpture which formed a garniture on the mantel.

Judging from the early photograph, Cavaceppi's *Fauns with Kid and Goat* (NGI 8243, 8242), signed and dated 1751, flanked an eighteenth-century Roman bust of Portia (NGI 8295) above the chimney piece.[77] To the left of the chimney piece hung Batoni's portrait of the 2nd Earl of Milltown, also dated 1751; to the right, another tightly knit group of paintings clustered around Ficherelli's *St Mary Magdalen* (NGI 1707) of about 1640.[78] Smaller works and larger paintings deemed to be of particular interest were hung at eye level for closer study. To the left of the doorcase on the east wall hung another tightly knit group of pictures, the focus of which was a copy of *The Expulsion of Adam and Eve* (NGI 4006) after the baroque painter Domenichino (1581–1641). Leeson must have seen the original in the Palazzo Colonna while in Rome.[79] Beneath it hung a smaller painting, *An Angel leading Lot and his Daughters out of Sodom* (NGI 1653), attributed to Alessandro Turchi (1578–1649).[80] This erotic subject seems to have been particularly popular with Leeson for it appears no less than four times in the Milltown Collection. The Turchi, in turn, was flanked by two of the four Panini paintings – *A View of the Roman Forum* (NGI 726) and *St Paul preaching to the Romans with the Temple of Vesta and Pyramid of Cajus Cestius* (NGI 728). Based on Neale's inventory of 1826, coupled with the 1860s photo-

graphic evidence presented here, it would appear that the four Paninis never hung together. In the 1820s, the remaining pair is recorded as hanging in the study at Russborough. This series of paintings was undoubtedly one of the highlights of Leeson's collection. They are signed and dated 1742, and, according to Benedetti, may have been acquired by Leeson though the Jacobite agent Dr John Clephane while in Rome in 1744.[81] There is, however, no solid evidence for this. Lord Milltown, writing to the 1st Earl of Bective on the 14th December 1766, made specific reference to the series of Panini's in his possession:

> Should your Lordship choose anything here [to be copied], I hope you will believe I shall have a pleasure in obeying your commands, and as this man's cheif fort[e] lies in landskip and ruins, I think Paulo Powlini's [Ruins of Rome] will answer his genius best. The four I have are pretty fine, and I think he will copy them well. Mr Nevill, I find, as he tells me, has agreed to give him 5 Gns. apiece. Should you choose to have them, pray command me...[82]

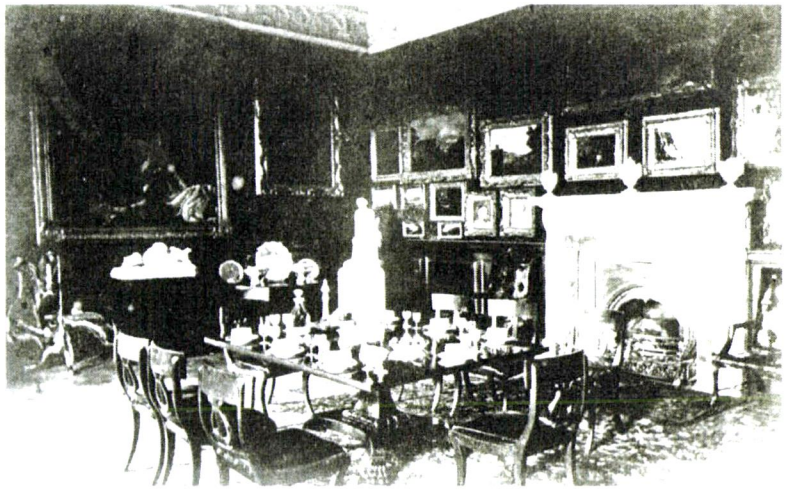
It is not known whether Bective availed of Lord Milltown's suggestion to commission copies of the Paninis at Russborough, although the artist in question appears to have been William Woodburn of Dublin, who had already copied works at Russborough on Bective's behalf.

Evidence has recently come to light that the plans for the picture-hang of the Felbrigg cabinet were drawn by an assistant of the architect James Paine in 1764.[83] Given the precision with which the Russborough drawing room or cabinet was hung, professional help cannot be ruled out. Richard Castle may be eliminated by virtue of the fact that he died in 1751. Francis Bindon (d.1765), who completed the house, seems the most likely candidate as he was both architect and painter. As such, he would have been admirably suited to the task of devising a picture-hang. Detailed calculations would have been made of the spaces between the dado and the bottom of the frames and, likewise, between individual pictures.[84] The distance between the uppermost tier of paintings and the cornice was calculated in such a way as to allow a slender border of the background material to be visible. The same was done between the dado rail and lower tier of pictures. Despite the fact that the red cut-silk velvet hangings may have been renewed in the Victorian period, it is tempting to believe that the arrangement of the small drawing room had survived unaltered since the 1750s. As it corresponds in many ways with what is known of contemporary eighteenth-century practice in Britain, it seems not an unreasonable hypothesis. Unlike the Felbrigg cabinet, which was devoted exclusively to the works of one artist, that at Russborough was an eclectic mélange of works, many of them copies after Poussin, Salvator Rosa, Andrea del Sarto, Domenichino, Wouvermans and Holbein, among others.

THE MUSIC ROOM AND SMALL DINING ROOM

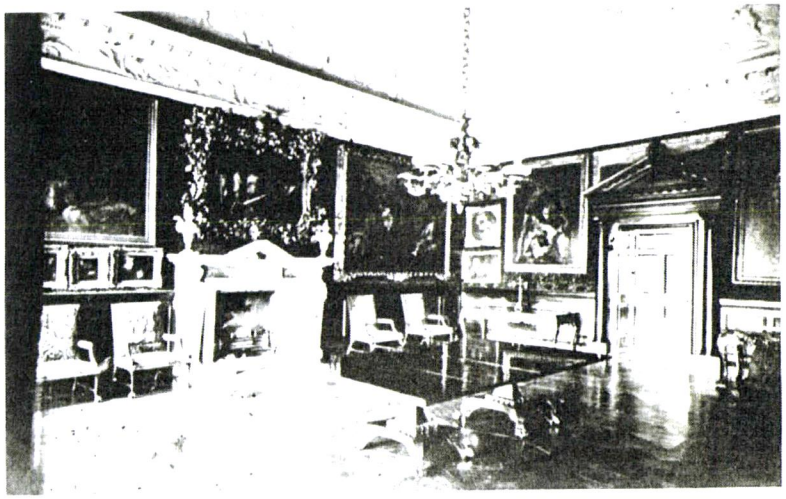
DUE TO THE LACK OF PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE, NOTHING IS KNOWN OF THE PICTURE-hang in the music room. Judging by Neale's inventory of 1826, the room contained thirty-eight paintings. Some were very large, like Sebastiano Galeotti's *Rebecca at the Well* (National Trust: Basildon Park) and Dandini's *Moses driving away the Shepherds* (NGI 1683), while the smaller works included Batoni's *Shepherdesses* (NGI 703). The picture-hang of the small dining room appears to have undergone a certain amount of alteration in the early nineteenth century, when a large full-length portrait of Napoleon after Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825) was hung on the east wall. This, no doubt, upset the original arrangement on that wall. Most of the works recorded by Neale in 1826, including a series of four female portraits by the Venetian pastellist Rosalba Carriera (1675–1757), and Batoni's portrait of the 1st Earl of Milltown, were still *in situ* when the room was photographed in the 1860s (Plate 6). Around the chimney piece the paintings were hung in a typically well-balanced and symmetrical eighteenth-century fashion. The focal point of the room was a copy of *A Bathing Piece* (NGI 990) by Annibale Carracci (1560–1609) above the mantel; beneath it were two small works, *Music* and *Dancing* (NGI 721, 722), by Jean Lebel.

6 Russborough House, small dining room, c.1864-70



THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE SALOON

The saloon at Russborough is widely regarded as one of the finest mid-eighteenth-century rooms of its type in Britain or Ireland, and took shape during the same decade (1741-51) that Joseph Leeson was assembling his art collection in Italy. Embellishing its walls would have been a priority for an art collector of Leeson's stature. At the planning stage, prior to his departure for Italy in 1744, he would, no doubt, have been aware of the immensely influential saloon designed by the renowned English architect William Kent (*c*.1685-1748) for Sir Robert Walpole at Houghton Hall in Norfolk. Leeson also possessed a copy of *Vitruvius Britannicus* (3 vols, 1715-25), and would have been familiar with other contemporary English examples. Walpole's saloon served primarily as a picture gallery for the display of his collection of Italian paintings, and was the template for other saloons of the following generations. As at Houghton Hall, the visitor approached the saloon at Russborough through a stone-coloured entrance hall, axially aligned with the front door and decorated with sculpture. Kent based the Houghton saloon on the *salone* he had seen in the palaces and villas of Rome, as well as his study of the works of the much-admired architects Andrea Palladio and Inigo Jones.[85] Paintings were arranged in a carefully balanced and strongly symmetrical manner, but not hung so high that they could not to be read, nor hung between windows where visibility would have been difficult due to the glare of sunlight. The spaces between windows were occupied by pier glasses, reflecting much-needed light into candle-lit interiors. Large mirrors, though both difficult and expensive to produce, were an essential component of any eighteenth-century saloon, as were the pier tables beneath them. The Knight of Glin has speculated on the arrangement of the pier glasses in the saloon at Russborough, referring to those in the Milltown Collection in the National Gallery of Ireland (NGI 12,003, 12,004). He suggests that a pair of large mirrors flanked the Corinthian pedimented doorcase leading into the entrance hall, and that a large landscape mirror surmounted the chimney piece, balanced by one on the opposite wall.[86] The idea of a large pair of pier glasses flanking the principal doorcase makes sense, as they would have helped balance the three bays of the window wall directly opposite. However, such an arrangement would be quite impractical as it would have greatly reduced the amount of wall space available for paintings. In fact, the glasses in question hung on the piers between the windows above a pair of matching pier tables with marble tops by the Italian scagliolist Don Pietro Belloni (1695-1771). These tabletops are not to be confused with the one surviving Belloni tabletop formerly in the music room at Russborough. Instead, these must have been the saloon pair – inlaid with landscapes and borders of shells, flowers and scrolls[87] – to which Sir Horace Mann referred in a letter to Horace Walpole dated 11th July 1747.[88] Indeed, this pair of tabletops would have been closer in scale to those commissioned in 1750 by Ralph Howard of Shelton Abbey than to the surviving one at Russborough, and there is no evidence that the existing tabletop, dated 1750, ever formed part of a pair. Further circumstantial evidence suggests a friendship between Leeson and Benjamin Lethieullier and Sir



7 Russborough House, saloon, c.1864-70

Matthew Fetherstonhaugh of Uppark in West Sussex, both of who were in Rome at the same time.[89] Leeson owned copies of a painting by Vernet still at Uppark, and the chimney piece in the saloon at Russborough, by Thomas Carter of London, is virtually identical to those in the saloon at Uppark.[90] Unfortunately there is no documentary evidence to prove the link between the two collections, as most of the family papers at Uppark were destroyed by fire in 1989.[91]

There has been much speculation as to what occupied the space above the saloon chimney piece, which was, after all, the focal point of the principal interior at Russborough. The Knight of Glin was the first to suggest that one of the two elaborately carved gilt rococo frames now in the National Gallery of Ireland was hung there (NGI 12,158). Decorated with cherubs' heads, it echoed those to be found on both the pier glasses between the windows and in the Lafranchini stuccowork on the ceiling. All were elements in a coherent ensemble, of which the paintings formed an integral part.

The arrangement of the paintings in the saloon can be worked out with considerable accuracy by cross-referencing the earliest list of the pictures by Neale with the photographic evidence of the 1860s (Plate 7). Of the thirty paintings listed by Neale, all but four can be accounted for in the current National Gallery of Ireland catalogues, despite the fact that titles and attributions have, in many cases, changed. The photographic evidence illustrates two of the three walls on which pictures hung, and it is possible therefore to plot the position of two-thirds of the paintings in the room and account for the relatively few alterations that took place between the 1820s and the 1860s. Neale, when

listing the paintings, worked his way around the room in an anti-clockwise direction, beginning and ending with a pair of landscapes by George Barret. These decorative paintings hung above the doors to the music room and small dining room, and were matched by a pair of triangular-shaped landscapes designed to fit above the pedimented doorcase leading to the entrance hall. They formed part of a larger series of Italianate landscapes commissioned by Joseph Leeson from Barret in the late 1740s, sixteen of which survive in the National Gallery of Ireland (NGI 1091, 1092, 1627-1637, 1753-1754, 4003).[92] These four Barret landscapes were sold by auction at Russborough on 21st October 1952.[93]

According to Cornforth, the hanging of paintings above chimney pieces, as opposed to being inserted into overmantels, could be problematic, presumably due to the adverse affects of heat and smoke; hence the widespread use of copies in that position. However, he also noted a fashion in the late 1740s and 1750s for the hanging of decorative pictures in elaborate rococo frames, citing that from the Russborough saloon as an example.[94] According to his research, no example of this trend survives *in situ*. It is fortunate, therefore, that the 1860s photograph of the Russborough saloon provides evidence of this practice. It also predates the often-confusing late Victorian inventories which record that the frame in question contained a mirror; in fact, it contained a copy of Rubens' *Judgement of Paris* (NGI 1991). According to Neale's list of pictures, this painting was in the saloon in 1826, and there is no evidence to suggest that it had not occupied the same position since the 1750s.[95] Rubens had, in fact, painted two versions of this subject, both of which were frequently copied; that in the Milltown Collection is thought to be a late seventeenth-century copy of the version now in the Gamaldegalerie in Dresden.

This Rubens copy, in its lavishly carved gilt frame, effectively served as an overmantel, dominating the room despite it relatively small size. This is not an isolated instance of a copy being hung in such a prominent position. In the picture gallery at Corsham Court, for example, a studio copy of Rubens' *A Wolf and Fox Hunt* hangs above the mantel as the focal point of that room. As Jonathan Richardson noted in 1719, 'a copy of a very good picture is preferable to an indifferent original: for there the invention is seen almost entire, and [a] great deal of the expression, and ... good hints of the colouring, drawing and other qualities.'[96] It is this mindset, and the fact that copies were cheaper and easier to obtain, that may well account for the preponderance of replicas in the Milltown Collection. The saloon at Russborough, normally the repository of the best large-scale Italian works, contained numerous copies. This was also not unusual, as it was seldom possible to obtain permission for the export of first-rate works from Rome. It is also worth noting that suitable works of a sufficiently large scale for a saloon or picture gallery were often hard to come by in Britain and Ireland during the eighteenth century. Even the wealthiest of collectors, such as the Duke of Northumberland, commissioned copies of Raphael's works and that of other Old Masters for his picture gallery in the 1750s.[97]

On his first trip to Italy in 1745, Joseph Leeson visited the Palazzo Colonna, which at that time, like many other aristocratic residences in Rome, was open to the public.

Leeson must have been particularly taken with Salvator Rosa's *The Death of Atilius Regulus* (NGI 1045) – a work then considered to be of the first importance[98] – as he commissioned a copy from Vernet in March of that year. Indeed, the subject of Regulus was extremely popular with eighteenth-century British and Irish collectors, who regarded the Roman Consul as a fine example of Roman virtue. It is also worth noting that Leeson's contemporary, Ralph Howard, commissioned a related work, *The Departure of Regulus* (private collection), from the Welsh artist Richard Wilson in 1751-52. Leeson's copy of *The Death of Regulus* was a work ideally suited to the Russborough saloon, where it was first recorded by Neale in 1826.[99]

Directly opposite the chimney piece hung the largest painting in the room, a copy of an altarpiece by Correggio (1489-1534), then, as now, in the Dresden Gallery. Depicting *The Virgin and Child with Saints John the Baptist, Geminian, Peter Martyr, and George* (NGI 1042), this large work (231 x 175 cm) dominated the west wall and was an integral part of the structure of the picture-hang in the room. By positioning it directly opposite Ruben's *Judgement of Paris*, an interesting balance of the sacred and profane was achieved. On the south wall, flanking the principal door leading to the entrance hall, were two large canvases, *Prince Rupert, Count Palatine* and *Cain and Abel* (NGI 1667). The full-length portrait of Prince Rupert was a seventeenth-century copy of a lost original by Van Dyck, believed to have been painted in 1636-37.[100]

The painting of *Cain and Abel* (NGI 1667), now attributed to the circle of the Pisan artist Orazio Riminaldi (1586-1630/1), is thought to date from about 1620. A popular subject among Italian artists during the first half of the seventeenth century, in Leeson's lifetime it was thought to be the work of Guercino, and was described as such by Neale in 1826.[101] Both pictures share a very distinguished provenance having come from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole; Leeson acquired them at a sale of paintings from the Orford Collection held in London on 13th-15th June 1751.[102]

The portrait of Prince Rupert (NGI 1738), listed as lot 49, was acquired on the first day of the Walpole sale and was the most expensive of the four paintings Leeson purchased, costing £22 1s.[103] The painting of *Cain and Abel* (lot 93) was purchased the following day for a mere £7 15s.[104] Leeson also acquired two other works, both copies – an *Adoration of the Kings*, after Tintoretto (day 2, lot 17), and *Jupiter and Europa*, after Veronese (say 1, lot 53), costing £4 and £6 6s respectively. The former may correspond to a work listed by Neale in the small drawing room in 1826, and then attributed to Empoli.[105] This may perhaps be identified with a work of the same title by a follower of Bonifazio de'Pitati (NGI 1072). The latter hung in Sir Robert Walpole's parlour in Grosvenor Street and is listed as number 296 in the catalogue of 1736.[106] This picture is recorded as hanging on the west wall of the saloon at Russborough by 1826. It is worth noting that the whereabouts of these paintings is unrecorded in Dukelskaya and Moore's recent catalogue of the Walpole Collection.[107]

Given the prominent position of the two large canvases from the Walpole Collection, flanking the principal doorcase in the saloon at Russborough, it is reasonable

to assume that Leeson wished to show his strict adherence to the Whig establishment, the source of all political power and preferment in his time. These paintings, therefore, evidently carried great political significance, as did Russborough as a whole, signifying Leeson's transformation from wealthy brewer to Baron (in 1756) and later Earl of Milltown (in 1763). This process was well under way in the early 1750s, and his staunch support of government brought its own rewards.[108] Indeed, Robert Walpole's own building and collecting activities provided an exemplary model for an aspiring nouveau riche politician like Leeson.

During the course of research, an important lost work from the Milltown Collection was located. This picture, which formerly hung in the saloon after 1826, now forms part of the Iliffe Collection at Basildon Park in Berkshire. This painting, depicting *Rebecca at the Well* (Plates 1, 8), is dated 1709 and is the work of the obscure Florentine artist Sebastiano Galeotti (1675-1746). Galeotti, though now largely forgotten, was one of the foremost fresco painters in northern Italy during the first half of the eighteenth century.[109] It is clear that he was also an accomplished painter in oils, though relatively few of his works in that medium have thus far been identified. His *Rebecca at the Well*, formerly at Russborough, was first recorded in the collection of the Florentine nobleman Baron Andrea Franceschi in 1724.[110] It was later acquired by the painter, collector and dealer Ignazio Hugford, and is recorded as being in his possession in 1766.[111] The picture could not therefore have been acquired by Joseph Leeson on either of his Grand Tours in 1744-45 or 1750-51. The work was listed by Neale in 1826 as hanging in the music room, where it was attributed to the French artist Laurent de La Hyre (1606-1656). Given that it is very much in character with the collection assembled by the 1st Earl in the mid eighteenth century, the possibility of its having been acquired on a subsequent Grand Tour cannot be ruled out. In any event, it was the only major alteration to the picture-hang in the saloon at Russborough in the nineteenth century. It was also perhaps the last major painting from the Milltown Collection to leave the house, and remained on display in the saloon until it was sold with the remainder of the original contents in October 1952.[112]

CONCLUSION

Given that Joseph Leeson completed two Grand Tours while Russborough was being built, and that the bulk of his Italian paintings predate 1750, there is good reason to believe that he, and not later members of the family, was the principal collector. Joseph Leeson's taste in picture-hanging, and his desire, like Walpole, to fill the empty ancestor-less walls at Russborough must inevitably have influenced the treatment and formation of the collection. Apart from copies of the major seventeenth-century Bolognese masters, such as Domenichino, Guercino, Reni and Carracci, Leeson acquired works by and after lesser masters, including Bassetti, Empoli, Giordano and Salvator Rosa among others. One of his most important purchases was a group of sev-

8 Sebastiano Galeotti, Rebecca at the Well (also known as Rebecca and Eliezer) 1709, oil on canvas, 218.4 x 276.8 cm (courtesy National Trust: Iliffe Collection, Basildon Park)

enteenth-century paintings of the Florentine school. These works, by Casare Dandini, Ficherelli, Furini and others, was quite at variance with the taste of most British and Irish Grand Tourists. The late Michael Wynne doubted Leeson's connoisseurship in this regard and attributed their purchase to his Florentine agent Dr James Tyrrell.[113] This seems entirely plausible given that Tyrrell acted for other Grand Tourists. Leeson may also have relied heavily on the advice of Robert Wood and other individuals who acted as agents. In this respect, Leeson may have been typical in that he relied on professional advice. He may well have been among the richest of Irish Grand Tourists, but there were others such as Lord Charlemont, Ralph Howard and Joseph Henry who, with lesser means, were arguably more discerning. Joseph Leeson's reputation as a collector is, however, beyond reproach. The donation of the Milltown Collection to the National Gallery of Ireland in 1902 raised the stature of both the collection and the collector. As the only major Irish Grand Tour collection to have survived more or less intact, it continues to receive more attention than other Irish collections of the eighteenth century. However, in the absence of the Milltown family papers, Joseph Leeson himself is likely to remain something of an enigma for the foreseeable future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ENDNOTES

1 All artworks referred to, unless otherwise stated, are now in the National Gallery of Ireland.

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3 Obituary of Joseph Leeson, 1st Earl of Milltown, *Gentleman's Magazine*, LIII, November 1783, 979.

4 Memorial of the will of Joseph Leeson, 1st Earl of Milltown, registered 7th November 1783 (Registry of Deeds, 355/154/238338).

5 E. M. Johnston-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament 1692-1800*, 6 vols (Belfast, 2002) 74.

6 S. Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns: A family reunion* (Dublin, 1997) 20.

7 J. Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy 1701-1800* (New Haven and London, 1997) 1015-16.

8 W.S. Lewis (ed.), *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, 48 vols (New Haven and London, 1955) XIX, 13.

9 Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 67.

10 F. Haskell and N. Penny, *Taste and the Antique* (New Haven and London, 1984) 178-79.

11 For the external sculpture, see Christopher Caffrey, 'The Eighteenth Century Sculpture at Russborough House', unpublished MA thesis, UCD, 1997. See also Lynda Mulvin, 'The Roman Sculptures at Russborough House' in Michael McCarthy (ed.), *Lord Charlemont and His Circle* (Dublin, 2001).

12 This statue is now in the Getty Villa in Malibu, California.

13 NGI, Milltown Correspondence, Deed of Gift (1902): List of Sculpture, no. 265, 15.

14 S. O'Reilly, *Irish houses and gardens-from the archives of Country Life* (London, 1998) 89.

15 I am grateful to Richard Ireland for this information.

16 He also owned marble copies of the *Mercury* and *Dancing Faun* which were in the colonnades. It is difficult to explain why he required two more indoors, except perhaps to integrate the external and internal groups of sculpture.

17 Haskell and Penny, *Taste and the Antique*, 266-67.

18 *ibid.*, 325-28.

19 *ibid.*, 205-06.

20 Mulvin, 'The Roman Sculptures at Russborough House', 167.

21 Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy*, 1015-16.

22 G.N. Wright, *A Guide to the County of Wicklow* (Dublin, 1827) 159-60.

23 Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 104-05.

24 Mulvin, 'The Roman Sculptures at Russborough House', 170-71.

25 *ibid.*, 173.

26 I am grateful to Dr Hazel Dodge of the Classics Department at Trinity College Dublin for her opinion on the Milltown antiquities.

27 Haskell and Penny, *Taste and the Antique*, 339.

28 *ibid.*, 156.

29 Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 98. See also C. O'Connor, 'Dr James Tyrrell, Agent at Florence', *Studies*, 69, no. 274, Summer 1980, 137-44.

30 Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 106.

31 NGI, Milltown Correspondence, List of the Contents of Russborough written by Geraldine Evelyn, Countess of Milltown.

32 *ibid.*

33 A. Le Harivel (ed.), *National Gallery of Ireland: Illustrated summary catalogue of prints and sculpture* (Dublin, 1988) 571, 588-89, 598, 600.

34 *ibid.*, 555, 588-89, 593, 598, 600. See also Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 110-13.

35 H. Honour, 'After the Antique: some Italian bronzes of the eighteenth century', *Apollo*, LXXVII, March 1963, 195.

36 *ibid.*

37 Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 110-12.

38 J.P. Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in the United Kingdom*, 2nd series, 5 vols (London 1826) III, 17.

39 E. Grant, *The Highland Lady in Ireland, Journals 1840-1850* (Edinburgh, 1991) 173.

40 Le Harivel (ed.), *Illustrated summary catalogue of prints and sculpture*, 588-89.

41 Honour, 'After the Antique', 200.

42 Le Harivel (ed.), *Illustrated summary catalogue of prints and sculpture*, 555.

43 *ibid.*, 600.

44 *The Georgian Society Records*, 5 vols (Dublin 1909-13), V, pl.LVI.

45 James H. North & Co, Auctioneers, Russborough, 27th July 1932, advertised in *The Irish Times*, 23rd July 1932.

46 J. Cornforth, 'Russborough, Co Wicklow III,' *Country Life*, 19th December 1963, 1688.

47 M. Wynne, 'Continental European Sources for George Barret', *Irish Arts Review*, X, 1994, 136-39.

48 With the exception of one, A *View in Lord Milltown's Demesne, at Russboro* by Thomas Roberts, no other paintings of the demesne are known. This picture, which was sold in Dublin in 1820, must have been painted sometime between Robert's first exhibition in 1766 and the artist's death in 1778. I am grateful to Dr Brendan Rooney, for this information.

49 Nicola Figgis and Brendan Rooney, *Irish Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland: vol. I* (Dublin, 2001) 54.

50 E.P. Bowran and J.J. Rishel (eds), *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 2000) 336.

51 Cornforth, 'Russborough Co Wicklow III,' 1626.

52 L. Dukelskaya and A. Moore, *A Capital Collection: Houghton Hall and the Heritage* (New Haven and London, 2002) 457-58.

53 National Library of Ireland (NLI), Wicklow Papers, MS 38,628/9, Tyrrell, J. Agent in Florence to

Howard, R. (Dublin) 12th August 1753.

[54] F. Russell, 'The Hanging and Display of Pictures 1700-1850', in G. Jackson Stops (ed.), *The Fashioning and Furnishing of the British Country House* (Washington D.C., 1989) 144.

[55] Benjamin Lethieullier (1728-1797), brother-in-law of Sir Matthew Fetherstonhaugh (c.1714-1774) of Uppark. Both were included in Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Parody of the School of Athens* (1751). Both may have been friends of Joseph Leeson.

[56] NLI, Headfort Papers, Special List, no. 238, 43, ref no. F/5/75, Lord Milltown, Russborough to Lord Bective, Kells, 7th of December 1766. This is a copy of an interim summary list compiled by Dr Anthony Malcolmson for the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in 1975.

[57] I am grateful to David Griffin for this information and also to the *Country Life* Picture Library.

[58] B. Fredericksen Burton (ed.), *The Index of Paintings Sold in the British Isles during the Nineteenth Century. 1811-1815*, 3 vols (London, 1993), III, Part 2. The Provenance Index, of the Getty Art History Information Program (London, 1993), 1133.

[59] See note 57.

[60] From extracts transcribed by A.P.W. Malcolmson in 1975.

[61] M. Wynne, *Later Italian Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland* (Dublin, 1986), 48-49.

[62] G. Jackson Stops and James Pipkin, *The Country House: A Grand Tour* (London, 1984) 99.

[63] Knight of Glin, 'Russborough, Its Decoration and Furniture, Some Preliminary Thoughts' in Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 121.

[64] Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in the United Kingdom*, 18.

[65] Wright, *A Guide to the County of Wicklow*, 159-60.

[66] NLI, Wicklow Papers, MS 38, 628/9, Earl of Kildare, Carton, to Lady Wicklow, 9th September 1883.

[67] Alistair Lang, *In Trust for the Nation* (London, 1995) 155.

[68] NGI, Milltown Correspondence, box number NGI/89, blue handwritten inventory (no date).

[69] It is unclear whether Leeson's numismatic collection has survived.

[70] C. O'Connor, 'The Charlemont House Medal Cabinet,' *Irish Arts Review*, I, 2, Summer 1984, 23-27.

[71] Jackson Stops and Pipkin, *The Country House*, 189.

[72] Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in the United Kingdom*, 17.

[73] J. Cornforth, *Early Georgian Interiors* (New Haven and London, 2004), 312.

[74] A. Jameson, *Companion to the Most Celebrated Private Galleries of Art in London* (London, 1844) 383-86.

[75] A. Lang (ed.), *Clerics and Connoisseurs* (London, 2001) 71.

[76] Jackson Stops and Pipkin, *The Country House*, 189.

[77] Le Harivel (ed.), *Illustrated summary catalogue of prints and sculpture*, 587.

[78] Wynne, *Later Italian Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland*, 33.

[79] *ibid.*, 28-29.

[80] *ibid.*, 126.

[81] Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 92-94.

[82] See note 57 above.

[83] Russell, 'The Hanging and Display of Pictures 1700-1850,' 159, n.15.

[84] *ibid.*, p1.38.

[85] Jackson Stops and Pipkin, *The Country House*, 89.

[86] Glin, 'Russborough, Its Decoration and Furniture', 120.

[87] NGI, Milltown Correspondence, Inventory of Contents by Mary Kelly Housekeeper Russborough March/April 1906, 27.

[88] M. Wynne, 'The Milltowns as Patrons,' *Apollo*, XCIX, 144, February 1974, 104-11.

[89] Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 79.

[90] Cornforth, *Early Georgian Interiors*, 64.

[91] Those that survive in the West Sussex Record Office contain nothing of relevance.

[92] Figgis and Rooney, *Irish Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland*, 47.

[93] Hamilton & Hamilton, *Residue Sale of Fine Art*, Russborough, 21st October 1952, 10, lots 147, 148, 154).

[94] J. Fowler and J. Cornforth, *English Decoration in the 18th Century* (London, 1974) 240.

[95] Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in the United Kingdom*, 17.

[96] J. Richardson, *The Connoisseur, an Essay on the Whole Art of Criticism, as it Relates to Painting*, cited in Cornforth and Fowler, *English Decoration in the 18th Century*, 234-36.

[97] J. Wood, *Raphael Copies and Exemplary Picture Galleries in Mid-Eighteenth Century London*, (Munich and Berlin, 1999).

[98] Benedetti (ed.), *The Milltowns*, 96-97.

[99] Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in the United Kingdom*, 17.

[100] Other versions of it are to be found in the National Gallery London and in Baltimore. The most accurate and detailed account of this painting is to be found in D. Oldfield, Later Flemish Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland (Dublin, 1992), 42-44.

[101] Wynne, *Later Italian Painting in the National Gallery of Ireland*, 109-110.

[102] Dukelskaya and Moore (eds), *A Capital Collection*, 457-58.

[103] This is a copy with slight variations of an original now in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.

[104] Neither picture is listed in the manuscript catalogue of Sir Robert Walpole's collection of 1736, nor in the updated addition of the Aedes Walpolinae. Horace Walpole did not include the paintings in his father's three London houses in the latter publication. It would appear, therefore, that the pictures sold by auction in June 1751 came from one of Walpole's London residences in either Downing Street, Grosvenor Street or Chelsea. Dukelskaya and Moore (eds), *A Capital Collection*, 445-49, 355-417.

[105] Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in the United Kingdom*, 17-18.

[106] Dukelskaya and Moore (eds), *A Capital Collection*, 448.

[107] *ibid.*

[108] Johnston-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament 1692-1800*, V, 74.

[109] R. Dugoni, *Sebastiano Galeotti* (Torino, 2001) 151.

[110] Piero Matini Stamp, *Nota de'quadri e opere di scultura Che sono esposti per la Festa di S.Luca dagli Accademici del Disegno nella loro Cappella posta nel Chiostro del Monastero de' Padri della SS.Nonziata di Firenze i Anno 1724* (Firenze, 1724) 16, cited in Dugoni, *Sebastiano Galeotti*, 151.

[111] A. Pazzi and O. Marrini, *Serie di ritratti di celebri pittori dipinti di propria mano in seguito a quella gia pubblicata nel Museo Fiorentino esistente appresso l'Abate Antonio Pazzi con brevi notizie intorno a medesimi compilate dall'Abate Orazio Marrini, Nella Stamperia Moucktiana* (Firenze, 1766) III, cited in Dugoni, *Sebastiano Galeotti*, 151.

[112] Hamilton & Hamilton, *Residue Sale of Fine Art*, 10, lot 146. See also Wynne, *Later Italian Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland*, xiii-xiv.

1 Site Location Plan
Scale: 1:2500

NORTH

Overall lands owned by client

Site boundary for this application

sheehan barry
ARCHITECTURE
CONSERVATION
INTERIORS
88 RANELAGH, DUBLIN 6, IRELAND
W: www.sheehanandbarry.com
T: 353 (1) 496 2888
E: post@sbl.ie

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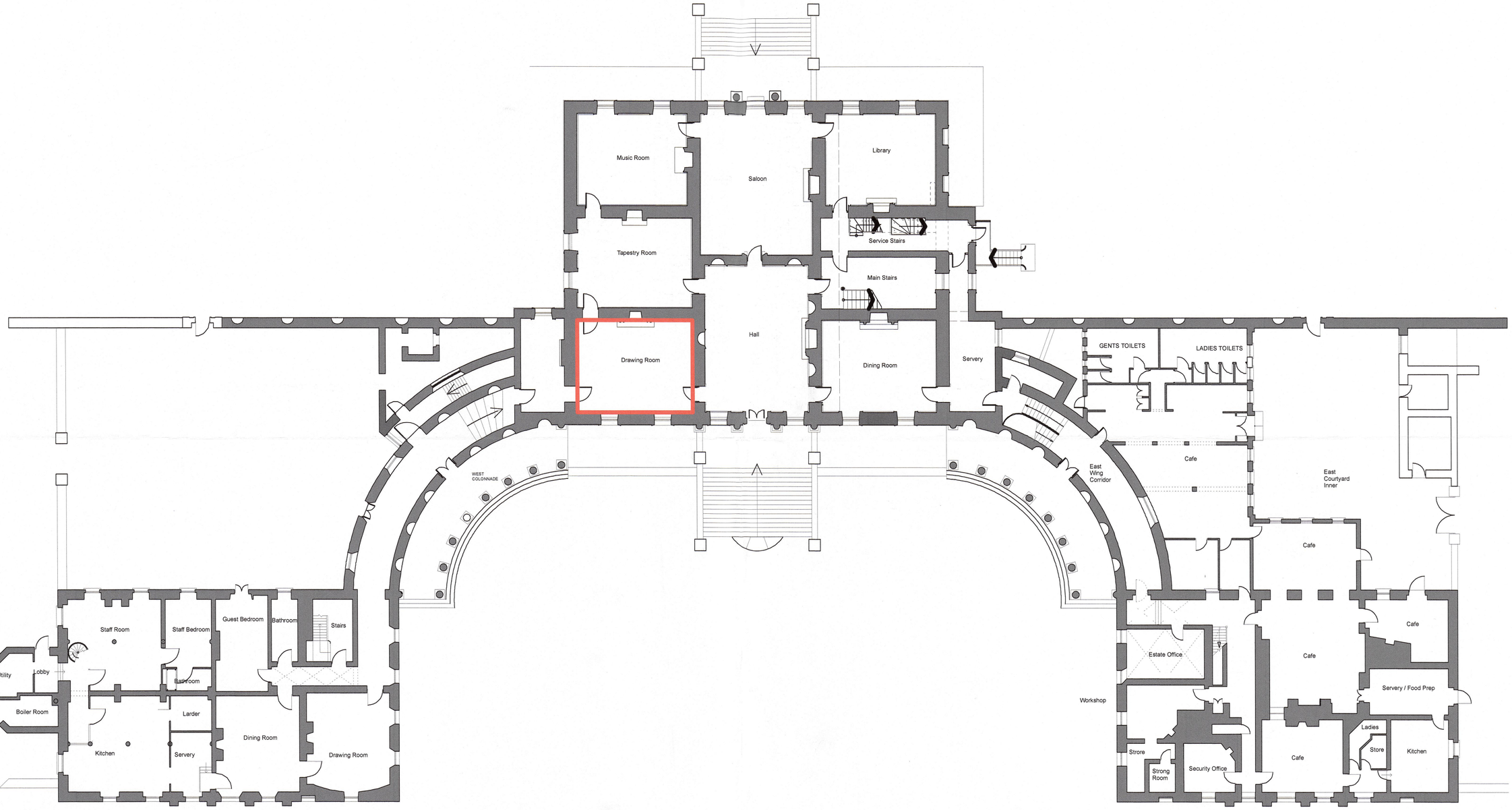
FIGURED DIMENSIONS TO BE TAKEN. THIS DRAWING SHOULD NOT BE SCALED. SITE DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CHECKED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT. IN CASE OF DOUBT OR DISCREPANCIES PLEASE REFER TO THE ARCHITECT FOR INSTRUCTION.
ALL WORKS TO BE BUILT IN ACCORDANCE WITH BUILDING REGS & RELEVANT CODES OF PRACTICE

Section 5 Application

JOB: Russborough House	DWG No.: 11.4_200		
LOCATION: Blessington	DRAWN: 29/09/2022	BY: J.M	
Co Wicklow	SCALE: 1:2500	@: ISO A1	
TITLE: Russborough House Site Location Plan			

REV	REVISION DESCRIPTION	REVISION DATE	REVISED BY



AREA TO WHICH SECTION 5 APPLICATION RELATES

NORTH

sheehan barry
ARCHITECTURE
CONSERVATION
INTERIORS
88 RANELAGH, DUBLIN 6, IRELAND
W: www.sheehanandbarry.com
T: 353 (1) 496 2888
E: post@sbl.ie

Section 5 Application

JOB	Russborough House	DWG No.	11.4_201
LOCATION	Blessington	DRAWN 29/09/2022	BY J.M.
	Co Wicklow	SCALE 1:200	@ ISO A2
TITLE	Drawing Room Location Plan		

REV	REVISION DESCRIPTION	REVISION DATE	REVISED BY