

**The Decoration  
of the Suburban Villa  
1880–1940**



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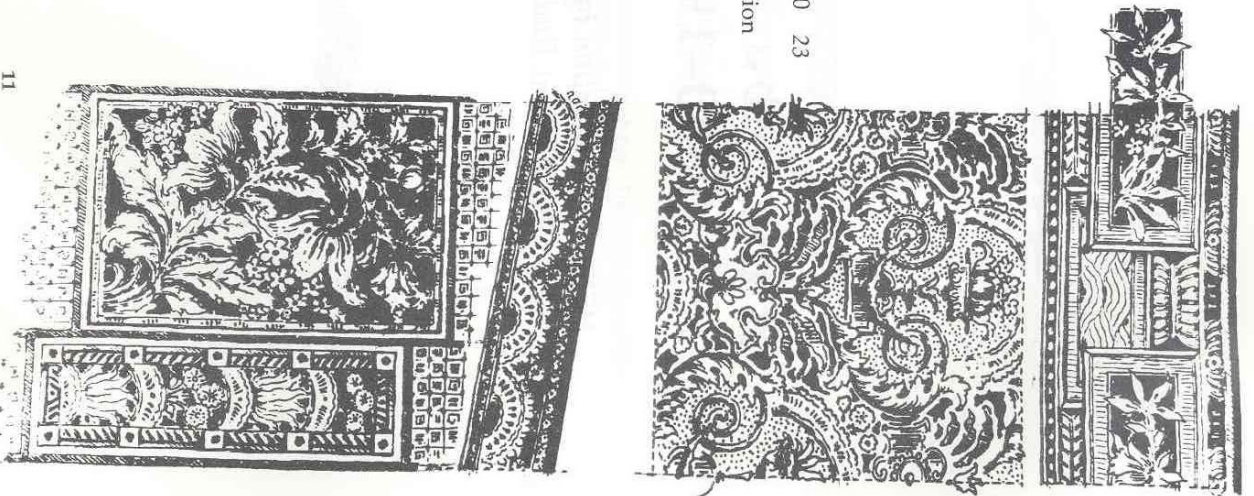
# The Decoration of the Suburban Villa 1880-1940

With an introduction by Mark Turner  
and contributions by William Ruddick and Graham Dalling



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## FOREWORD

Early in 1983, Middlesex Polytechnic mounted an exhibition at Broomfield Museum using material from the Silver Studio Collection to show the changing styles of household textiles over the last one hundred years. The present exhibition represents a further development of the theme and is intended to show the history of the interior decoration of the ordinary suburban house in which so many of us live. As well as using material so kindly lent by the Local History Library at Southgate Town Hall and by local residents, we have again drawn heavily from the Silver Studio Collection.

Arthur Silver who founded the Studio in 1880 and his sons, Rex and Harry, were responsible for the production of many thousands of designs for the wallpapers, fabrics, linoleums and carpets which were subsequently bought by suburban residents. The Silvers themselves lived in suburban houses and many of the shop catalogues which are used in this exhibition were those used by the family for the purchase of their own household furniture and fittings.

Arthur Silver bought his elegant, fashionable Queen Anne-style house in Brook Green, Hammersmith, when it was brand new in 1884. He was, as befits an avant-garde designer, very much in the vanguard of design conscious middle class taste both in choosing that particular style of architecture and in buying, rather than renting, his house. Subsequently his sons, Rex and Harry, bought houses in the Hampstead Garden Suburb. Both of their houses were in a style which was a development upon their father's Brook Green house.

The style derived from a careful study of English vernacular architecture and used such homely domestic features as leaded casement windows, hipped roofs of mellow tiles and pebble-dashing. It was largely this style which was adopted by the speculative builders of London suburbs from 1900 onwards, and its bay-windowed cottagey charm remained popular up to the Second World War. It was a style that everybody seemed to like.

Many of the people who moved to suburbs such as Palmer's Green and Southgate during the period had come from the rather gaunt early 19th century stock brick terraces of Finsbury Park and Holloway. These houses were invariably built on the traditional London plan: two to four storeys plus a back addition. The frontage was narrow and the rooms at the back (being overshadowed by rear additions) invariably dark.

The new style of the 20th century suburban house was a complete contrast. Although these houses varied considerably in size and



quality, they all offered light, airy rooms, such modern amenities as electric light (particularly after 1920), a bathroom and inside WC, decent gardens and a cottagey charm that combined both nostalgia and convenience at a very reasonable price.

The area around Broomfield Museum shows how a typical outer London district developed from the late 19th century onwards. There were comparatively few houses for the middle class built between 1870 and 1900. On the other hand, there are excellent examples of how a fast railway service to the City benefited both the rich businessman and the artisan or lesser clerk. In Bush Hill Park, an estate of expensive houses set in spacious grounds was developed from the late 1870s onwards. Bush Hill Park was assured of a prosperous future, for not only did it have a good train service to Liverpool Street, but it had the exceptional fortune to be one of the few districts in north London that was on gravel soil.

The Victorians, sensibly, hated clay soil as it meant bad drainage, frequent mists and fog, cracked foundations and a depressing, sodden aspect. Two miles east of Broomfield Museum, on badly drained marshland in Edmonston, rows of two-storey artisan houses were built for renting by manual workers or lower office workers for whom the low rents and cheap workmen's fares into London meant a better standard of living than that obtainable in more central suburbs.

The middle class expansion of this and other outer London suburban areas really began between 1900 and the outbreak of the First World War. By the early 1900s there was a greatly increased demand for spacious, well-built houses in healthy districts. At the same time, many people were considering buying a house rather than continuing the traditional habit of renting. There are several reasons for this. Probably the most important is that large numbers of people, for the first time, enjoyed the security and income that would enable them to raise a mortgage. Thanks to the 1870 and subsequent Education Acts, far more people than ever before were attaining a standard of education that led to white collar jobs, either in public service or commerce. London, in particular, saw a terrific expansion of public services in the late 19th century: nor was there any shortage of work in the commercial centre of a flourishing empire. At the same time the leading building societies raised the level of advances to 90% on loans of £300 to £400 (this would buy a substantial three-bedroomed house in New Southgate or Palmers Green). As a consequence, the population of Southgate reached 33,612 by 1911, an increase from the 1900 population of 124%.

The First World War and high prices of building materials for nearly ten years afterwards meant that despite great demand, comparatively few houses were built and those that were built cost nearly three times the pre-war price. But by 1927 houses were being built in the London area at the rate of about 34,000 a year.

Costs had fallen and a three-bedroomed terraced house was easily obtainable for about £750 freehold.

My own house is one of a small estate in New Southgate built in 1927 by a builder named Stacey. He was by no means one of the foremost builders in the area and I was told that at weekends he would carry a bucket of five-pound notes round his estate so that he could lend the £5 deposit to anyone who looked interested in buying. Some of my neighbours still live in the houses they bought when new, over fifty years ago. Without exception they came from the inner north London suburbs which, by this time (having been deserted by most of the middle classes) had deteriorated.

Although London (thanks to its diversity of industry) managed to escape the worst of the depression, builders then as now found it difficult to sell houses. It is most probable that the public were reluctant in times of such uncertainty to commit themselves to a mortgage. However, by 1933 things had improved considerably. Although wages were still more or less the same, prices had fallen, so providing one was in full employment it was easier than ever before to buy a house. The Underground was extended in the 1930s and this made large areas of land available for housing development. Much of Southgate, Oakwood and Cockfosters was developed after the Piccadilly Line was extended in 1933. In 1934, 72,756 houses were built in London, but the figure began to fall as saturation point was reached and the rearmament programme began to take effect.

In this exhibition we have tried to describe and illustrate exactly how these houses looked inside. We have been fortunate in finding owners of untouched houses who have let us photograph the interiors, and we have talked to many people who were buying and furnishing houses in the 1920s and 30s. Sadly, original pre-war interiors are disappearing at an alarming rate. As I write this, the charming gas-lit interior of the terrace house in Tottenham, which was complete with its original wallpapers and linoleums (see catalogue number 8A) is being gutted and converted into flats. Others we photographed were already up for sale and presumably will be altered and modernised.

Although the Silver Studio Collection is a marvellous reference source for the wallpapers and textiles used in the suburban house, there is nothing as informative and evocative as seeing a complete room. We would be very pleased to hear from anyone who knows of suitable houses which we could photograph to add to the archive at Middlesex Polytechnic.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This exhibition is very much a joint effort with the London Borough of Enfield and we would particularly like to thank the curator of Enfield Museums, Mr John Griffin, and his colleagues Mr Ian Cooper and Miss Vanessa Attwell for their very hard work.

Very special thanks are due to Miss Mary Peerless whose donation of the Silver Studio Collection to Hornsey College of Art (now part of Middlesex Polytechnic) in 1967 has enabled us to mount this exhibition.

We are very grateful indeed to Mr William Ruddick, lecturer in English Literature at Manchester University, and Mr Graham Dalling, Local History Librarian for the Borough of Enfield, for contributing such scholarly and informative articles for the catalogue.

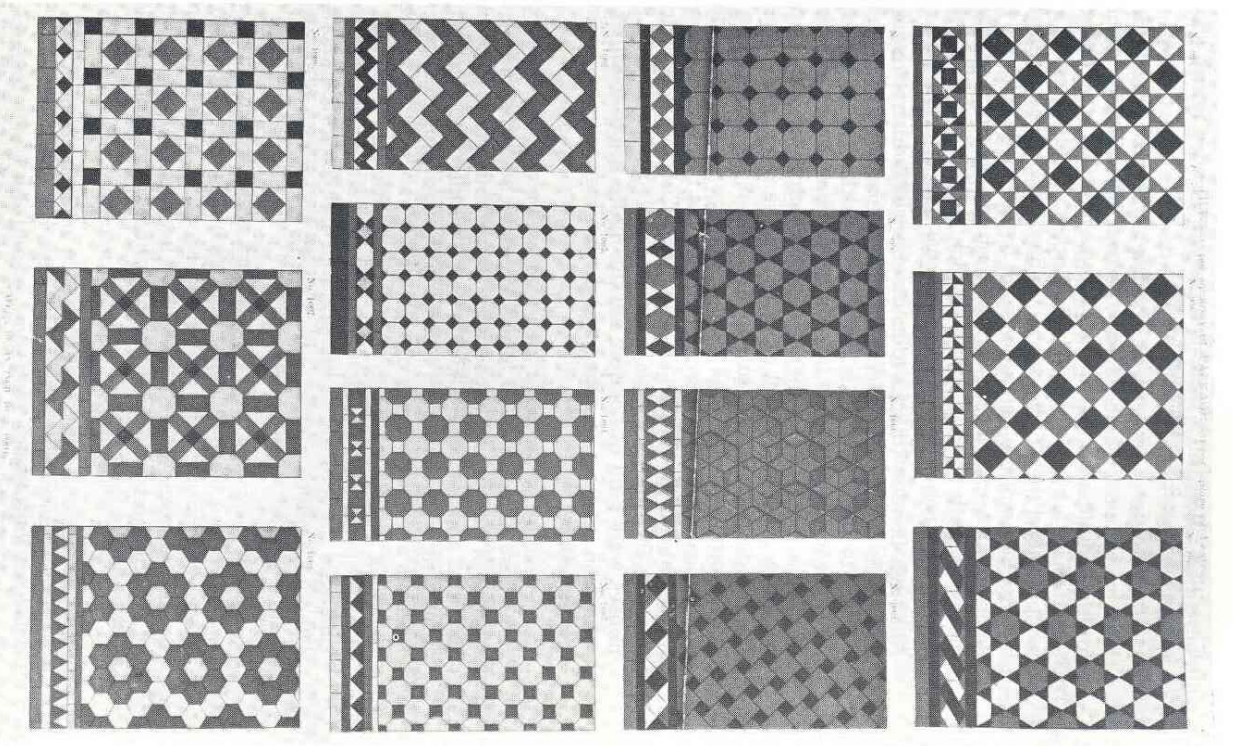
We are indebted to local residents Mr Graves, Mrs Williams, Mrs Fournacre and Mr Wilmott for allowing us to photograph their houses and for providing so much invaluable information on suburban life before the last war. A local estate agent, Mr Richard James, has also given us much information and kindly lent a photograph to the exhibition.

Another local resident, Mr George King, not only donated a large number of textile samples to the Silver Studio Collection and an 1894 trade catalogue, but also gave invaluable information on the textile and upholstery trade in the 1930s and 40s.

Special thanks are also due to Mrs Audrey Kirby and Mr Bill Bradley of the Southgate Civic Trust for their great help in suggesting and arranging to photograph houses and for their support of this project. We are also indebted to Mr Philip Jeffreys who has taken some marvellous photographs for us.

This exhibition would have been impossible without the wonderful help we have received from volunteers. These include volunteer textile conservators from Harrow National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies (NADFAS), Mrs Diane Clipson, Mrs Elizabeth Baxter, Mrs Mavis Starns, Mrs Muriel Rata and Mrs Rachel Dullely from Highgate NADFAS. Also from Harrow NADFAS are Mrs Ann Murray, Mrs Denise Tucker and Mrs Ethel Tucker who have been working as volunteer paper conservators. Mrs Peggy Fincken and Miss Margaret Stoll have returned to Middlesex Polytechnic after retirement to work on a voluntary basis and have done superb work on indexing and cataloguing the collection.

A number of people within the Middlesex Polytechnic have worked very hard on this exhibition. These include the staff of the Silver Studio: Mr Mark Turner, Miss Sarah Mansell, Mrs June Marshall, Mrs Frances

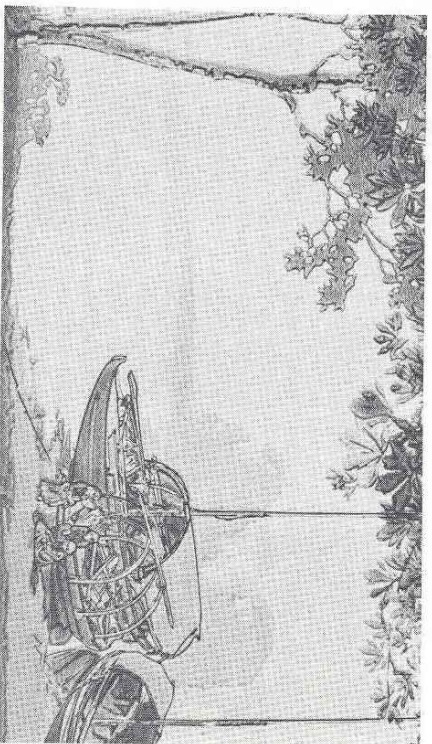




Rackley and Mrs Sheila Levy. Mrs Lesley Hoskins who will be a student on the Polytechnic's MA History of Design course has done much hard work in cataloguing textiles for this exhibition as a volunteer. Our most grateful thanks go to Mrs Bobby de Joia and Mr David Cheshire who have always been closely involved with the Silver Studio and have worked so hard on the publicity and research for this exhibition. Other members of Polytechnic staff who have given us much assistance include Mr Tony Saunders, Mr John Morgan and Miss Michelle Williams who have taken a considerable number of photographs for the exhibition and catalogue.

The production of this catalogue is due largely to the help and expertise offered by the Polytechnic's Office Services. We thank in particular Mr Dave Exell, Mr Brian Joiner and Mrs Joyce Smith for their help.

*The Silver Studio Steering Committee*  
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*August 1983*



## INTRODUCTION

*by Mark Turner*

Fortunately it is at last becoming recognised that what is still dismissively referred to as 'suburbia' is worthy of serious academic study. In recent years a number of excellent books have appeared dealing largely with suburban planning and architecture and, less frequently, with interior decoration.

However, we felt that despite the fact that many of us live in modest houses built between 1880 and 1940, not enough attention has been paid to how these houses were decorated and furnished. Then as now the suburbs contained people of widely different incomes and backgrounds and the home of a 'Mr Pooter', clerk, was decorated in quite a different way to that of a prosperous City businessman, even though the two might be living within a mile of each other. We have tried in this exhibition to use as much original material as possible. Fortunately there is plenty still available. We were able to find houses as early as 1880 that contained original wallpapers and paintwork (see catalogue numbers 8A, 8B) and several from the great period of outer suburban expansion from 1900 to 1935 (see catalogue numbers 62, 117). Thanks to the kindness of owners and estate agents we have been able to photograph them.

Films such as *This Happy Breed* give an accurate, albeit patronising picture of English suburban life in the 1920s and 30s and of course there are many people with excellent memories who have told us how they set up home in the inter-war years or could remember the late Victorian and Edwardian interiors of their parents' houses. Above all we have used the Silver Studio Collection at Middlesex Polytechnic. Because the Silvers designed for a very wide range of manufacturers who in turn supplied wallpapers, fabrics and floor coverings to an equally wide range of people, we can accurately form a clear picture of the types and patterns of decoration for the home which were available at any one time. The thoroughness of the archive enables us to date the designs with ease. A few samples from the same date give a clear idea of the most popular colours for that time. This is especially important for the early part of this exhibition when contemporary illustrations in books and journals are invariably in black and white and artists concentrated either on depicting grand houses or country cottages in their paintings.

For the sake of simplicity (if not scholarship) we have divided the exhibition into three twenty-year periods: 1880-1900, 1900-1920 and 1920-1940. Of course changes were gradual and many factors influenced the style of room decoration - class and income in



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particular – but these dates coincide roughly with distinct periods both of decorating styles and outer suburban development. It is worth noting here that wallpapers, more than any other decorative material reflected changes of taste and fashion. This was partly because wallpaper was cheap and partly because the constant use of coal fires often necessary even in summer as the sole means of heating water, meant that it had to be replaced frequently.

Wherever possible we have referred to houses and areas within the borough of Enfield, and particularly in the neighbourhood of Broomfield Museum where this exhibition is first being shown. However, all would apply equally well to any other outer London borough.

## 1880–1900

The 1880s and 90s were fascinating decades in the history of English decoration. In the mid 19th century all but the very poor were guided by certain conventions in how they furnished and decorated their houses.

Although colours had changed, for ordinary middle class folk the layout of rooms had changed but little since the 18th century. Until the First World War modest London suburban houses were laid out in more or less the same way. On the ground floor a hall ran from the front to the rear of the house. On one side there were the stairs and on the other a sitting-room and a dining-room. At the rear or in the basement were kitchen and scullery. On the first floor were two or three bedrooms, and, especially after 1890, a bathroom.

In the mid 19th century it was usual to furnish both the dining-room and sitting-room in an identical manner (often there were dividing doors between the two rooms so that they could be opened to make one large room). Contrary to popular belief it was not fashionable to overcrowd these rooms. Each room would have a fitted carpet, sometimes of an identical pattern, though the most usual was an imitation Turkey carpet, all deep red, green and blue geometrical patterns in the dining-room and a French inspired carpet in the sitting-room, with acanthus scrolls or cabbage roses framing the design.

Each room would contain a large oval table, one for dining, the other for reading at. Both rooms would contain a sideboard or chiffonier and six or more upright chairs. There would probably be chintz covered armchairs in both rooms, with a sofa in the sitting

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room only. Over each chimney piece would be a gilt pier glass which increased in size in proportion to the owner's income. Pictures would be oil portraits or engravings in the dining-room and watercolours and prints in the sitting-room.

When we think of Victorian interiors we imagine them to be very ornate and cluttered, but this was not true until the last twenty years of the century and then only in the houses of the more prosperous. In the mid 19th century, ornaments were kept to a minimum: a clock under a glass dome, a conch shell or peacock feather on the chimney piece, perhaps a glass case containing ferns. This was partly due to expense. Prices for household goods were very high compared with income in the 1850s and 60s. Great attention was paid to quality and durability. It made sense to buy the very best because the longer something lasted, the less likely the need to replace it.

The provident housekeeper bought linen sheets instead of cotton, and furniture made from durable woods such as mahogany, walnut and rosewood. Windows were heavily draped to prevent the sun from fading expensive carpets and brocade upholstery was protected with loose covers against the ravages of coal dust and sunshine. It is also undoubtedly true that the taste of the time required a certain degree of opulence if it was at all possible to afford it. Furniture was french polished to give it a brilliant shine, no room was complete without its gilded pier glass to reflect the light, which in turn was refracted by crystal lustres. The very rich would spend a fortune on crystal chandeliers and fantastically elaborate drapery, requiring hours of work on the part of the upholsterer. At great risk of fire, even the chimney pieces were festooned with damask drapery and looped-up curtains to draw over the fire opening when the grate was not in use.

As we all know, each generation despises the taste of the generation which has gone before, and by 1880 a very strong reaction had set in against what was described as the fairground showiness of mid-Victorian taste. Mid-Victorian genre artists often painted interiors of middle class homes, and we are able to look back and see them as being charming, indeed sometimes very beautiful, but by a generation that had grown up on the writings of John Ruskin and had possibly attended one of the government sponsored schools of design (as Arthur Silver had done) they were condemned as being ugly and tasteless.

During the 1880s many articles and books were published advising the prosperous middle classes on how to do up their houses. Their



influence would have been felt much more strongly in an area such as Bush Hill Park than in the small terraced houses of Tottenham and Edmonton. For many people, the 1880s and 1890s were decades of rapidly increasing wealth, and with competition from abroad, the prices of many household goods were actually falling. Consequently there was more money available to spend on home decoration. Many of the writers on home decoration during the 1880s suggested not only complete decorative schemes but also mentioned specific patterns of wallpapers and fabrics and shops where these could be purchased.

It is difficult to avoid generalisations in this short introduction, but here are some of the major decorative innovations that occurred during the 80s and 90s and were to have a lasting effect on the decoration of the suburban house. Perhaps the most important was the division of the wall into three separate horizontal areas: the dado which was three feet high from the skirting and was marked by a horizontal dado or chair rail, the filling which was four feet or more in height from the dado and was finished with the picture rail and above this the area known as the frieze between the picture rail and the ceiling. These areas could be given quite separate treatments or papered with relating wallpapers. The picture rail and dado rail were to survive in the most modest of suburban homes until the late 30s, particularly in halls and staircases and dining rooms. If you are restoring a house of between 1880 and 1935 and these rails are missing, it is still possible to buy them and install them oneself.

The second major change was the increased informality of room layouts, particularly of the sitting-room and dining-room. Not only was it considered desirable to give these rooms quite separate decorative treatments, but also to make them much more comfortable and cosy. This was done by filling them with armchairs, bookcases, small tables, pots of plants, vases of flowers and masses of pictures and ornaments. Readers were told to buy ornaments 'by the fiver's worth,' as one would buy yards of material. Visitors from abroad were enchanted by the riot of clutter and pattern that characterised the late Victorian English house. To this day, English houses have remained far more crowded with goods and chattels than those of our Continental neighbours. The rich bought Oriental porcelain and Persian carpets, while the poor bought cheap glassware and china plates with 'A Present from Brighton' and a view printed on them. In a curious way, the overall effect was quite similar.

Another lasting innovation of the late 19th century was the use of dark colour schemes. How often one hears people say when they have bought and done up an unmodernised home: "But you should have seen it when we first came here – dark brown paint everywhere. It was so gloomy." In the 1850s rooms were kept dark by having the curtains perpetually drawn. In the 1860s and 90s dark colour schemes were preferred for the rich enclosed effect they produced. The practice of graining the woodwork of the house to resemble mahogany, oak or walnut was condemned by the smarter writers on interior decoration, but in the ordinary suburban home it never went out of favour. As late as the 1930s it was still the standard treatment for all internal woodwork. There was a practical side, too. Dark colour schemes hid the dirt, this was particularly important when everyone had continuous coal fires. Finally, this was the period when reproductions of historic furniture styles began to be available. It became fashionable to have 'period' furniture styles: Queen Anne, Sheraton, Chippendale or Jacobean. The exteriors of some suburban houses were beginning to look 'old world' with such rustic features as bay windows and tile-hung walls, and the interiors very gradually began to follow suit.

The lower down the social scale, the more the likelihood of finding interiors which were furnished and decorated in the mid 19th century way. While the clutter of more opulent houses was emulated, the owner of a small suburban house was much more likely to cling to his gilt mirrors and polished mahogany sideboard and his wallpapers would still have three dimensional patterns instead of the more tasteful flat patterns recommended by the design conscious (see catalogue numbers 32, 42).

I mentioned in the Foreword that we were lucky enough to photograph a small house in Tottenham which had been but little altered. The hall and stairs had a narrow strip of dark green linoleum with a border of Greek key pattern. The walls were hung with a 'sanitary' paper printed by Lightbown and Aspinall with a traditional damask design (see catalogue number 31). Sanitary papers were very popular in the smaller suburban house from the late 19th century until 1930. These were papers printed by engraved copper rollers to produce a very fine surface which could be varnished and so rendered washable, hence the term 'sanitary'. Throughout the house the woodwork had been grained to imitate walnut. The majority of rooms had been distempered in various light colours: cream, pale blue and pink. Distemper is basically



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coloured limewash and has a lovely powdery finish. Because it is cheap it was always popular in poorer homes, but because of its charming finish it was frequently used in more prosperous homes, particularly after the First World War when labour for paper hanging was harder to find and more expensive.

At this point it is worth mentioning that emulsion paint is a modern invention and was almost never used before 1940. Those who are anxious to decorate their homes with any degree of period accuracy should either use distemper, which is obtainable from Crown Paints Ltd, or eggshell paint, which is the nearest finish now obtainable to the matt oil paint which was frequently used on walls which received a lot of wear, such as kitchens or staircases. Paints sold as undercoat also have the correct finish.

To return to the house in Tottenham, it was interesting to note that where the floors were not covered with linoleum, they had been dry-rubbed, a practice which was old fashioned even in the 1880s but still sometimes used for bedroom floors where a high degree of cleanliness was necessary. The method consisted of heating a bowl of silver sand and then scrubbing the floors with the sand. Afterwards, the sand could either be left or swept up immediately. It produced a slight shine, and gave the boards a lovely white finish. A house like this would never have had fitted carpets. Linoleum squares with painted surrounds would have been usual. Grander houses also abandoned fitted carpets on hygienic as well as aesthetic grounds.

As the 19th century progressed, people's awareness of hygiene increased. It was realised that dust harboured germs and so rugs and carpet squares which could be taken up and beaten were thought to be less of a health risk. Floorboards were either stained and polished or painted in various shades of brown, dark chocolate being the favourite. Even when vacuum cleaners became within the price range of the average suburban resident in the 1930s, carpet squares and linoleum remained the favourite floor coverings.

In this section of the exhibition we have included a wide range of Silver Studio designs which show the variety of patterns available to the suburban resident for his wallpapers, textiles and floor coverings. Although many of the designs are quite small (they were samples kept by the Studio after the full-size finished design had been sold to the manufacturer) they are very useful for showing the colours and patterns that were available.

You will notice that often the colours used are subtle tertiary ones instead of the bright greens and reds of the mid 19th century.

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When used for wallpapers and textiles, they helped to create the rich, enclosed atmosphere that was so sought after by everyone at the time. Also included in this section are some remarkable photographs taken by a clergyman of the various rectories he inhabited and of his house in York Gate, Regents Park. Although taken in the period 1910 to 1920, they show the ideal middle class interiors that writers such as Mrs Panton and Mrs Haweis recommended for their more prosperous readers: masses of books, flowers and pictures with dark walls divided into dado, filling and frieze. It is certain that many of the larger houses in Bush Hill Park had interiors such as these in the 1890s.

### 1900-1920

From 1900 until the First World War large numbers of houses from the middle classes were built in the outer London suburbs.

London's growing prosperity in conjunction with higher mortgage advances and improving public transport made it possible for large numbers of people to achieve their ambition of buying or renting a new home in semi-rural surroundings. Areas such as New Southgate, Winchmore Hill and Palmers Green were substantially developed at this time.

Earlier photographs of these districts show rustic cottages and leafy lanes which subsequently disappeared under an ever increasing tide of bricks and mortar. The influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement was beginning to be seen even in these modest speculative built houses. Nineteenth century slates and sash windows were beginning to be replaced by tiled roofs and casements. Their elevations were softened by gables, bay windows and porches. Builders saw the advantages to be gained from making their houses as different as possible from the early 19th century terraces in which most of their prospective purchasers lived. Much still went into providing charming detailing both inside and out. This included such features as stained glass in the front door and Minton tiling in the hall (see catalogue number 61). The internal layout, however, remained much the same, though a bathroom was nearly always included. Some builders, to lower the selling price, reduced the old plan of a separate kitchen and scullery to a small kitchen, and thus saved the cost of a rear extension, but this did not become common practice until after 1920.

We know far more about the furnishings and decorations of ordinary suburban houses of this period than those of the late 19th



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century. This is partly because more houses have survived relatively unchanged, and the period is still within living memory. In addition, the Silver Studio Collection has a considerable amount of material relating to this period in the form of shop catalogues, wall-papers, fabrics and designs. Many of the shop catalogues in the collection are those of firms such as Waring & Gillow which catered for the middle classes. These catalogues are illustrated with colour pictures of idealised interiors. It is obvious that many people, buying their first house, were dependant on these furniture stores for advice on how to do up their new home. Wallpaper catalogues of the period also show colour illustrations of interiors to aid customers in their choice.

During the period 1900 to 1910 most of the Silver Studio's production was of elegant, stylised art nouveau designs for wall-papers and fabrics. However, it would seem that this was not a style that had a universal appeal. In the collection is a very useful wall-paper album from 1913. This contains a selection of middle priced wallpapers from the well-known firm of Heffer Scott. Although a concession is made to art nouveau in a few stylised two-colour patterns, the majority are of designs which would have been perfectly acceptable fifty years earlier.

These include papers printed to imitate watered silk, in pastel colours, and many traditional bird, vine and flower chintz patterns, not dissimilar from those produced by Laura Ashley today. Yet others reproduce rococo ornament in the form of scrolls and swags as elaborate 18th century styles had been revived in the 1870s and 80s and were now filtering down the social scale.

Probably the most noticeable feature of the period is that interiors were gradually becoming simpler. By present day standards they were still very dark, but it would seem that at least some of the plants and ornaments were being removed. The vogue for re-production Sheraton and Hepplewhite furniture meant that although the respectable suburban homeowner was expected to have large matching suites of sitting-room, dining-room and bedroom furniture, the style was altogether lighter. Even the re-production Jacobean furniture of the period was adapted in an attenuated manner so that it appeared to be thin and delicate.

Writers on home decoration were often quite specific about which historical style was suitable for any particular room, and the furniture stores would describe their products (usually quite inaccurately) as 'William and Mary' or 'Louis Quinze'. Some of the better firms such as Heals had ranges of modern furniture, strongly

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influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement. These pieces were constructed from oak or stained deal, with beaten copper or wrought iron hinges, handles and escutcheons. But it was re-production furniture that seems to have been the most popular, particularly the 'Queen Anne', 'Adams' and 'Sheraton' styles. To make the purchase of new furniture less of a strain on an already over-taxed budget, the owner of a new suburban house was encouraged to buy on the instalment plan. The better stores such as Harrods and Schoolbreds discreetly mentioned this facility at the back of their catalogues, while the cheaper firms such as the Hackney Furnishing Company made HP the basis of their selling technique.

The aesthetic movement practice of dividing the walls into three horizontal bands of dado, filling and frieze had become the universal treatment for rooms which received a lot of use, in particular the hall and dining room. The dado was invariably treated with either an imitation wood paper such as Lincrusta or painted and varnished to resemble wood. Graining was still the commonest treatment of all internal woodwork, although gloss paint (then known as enamel paint) was used by the more design conscious. To hide wear and tear and dirt, the hall and dining-room (usually, the family's sitting-room as well) were always decorated in dark colours.

As well as a grained dado, the dining-room might well have had a decorative wallpaper frieze (see catalogue numbers 65, 67). The frieze which was originally introduced in the 1880s and for which Arthur Silver produced some magnificent designs, became one of the most ubiquitous fashions of the early 20th century house. Every wallpaper catalogue contained a wide range of them. Landscape friezes were the most popular, but other motifs such as roses and ribbons, or stylised flowers, were common.

Most of the purchasers of new houses in the outer suburbs were of humble origin and were anxiously seeking an improvement in social status. One way of achieving this was to have an immaculate sitting room, kept only for Sundays and special occasions. These rooms would be hung with a delicate watered silk paper and have brocade curtains at the window. Suites of drawing-room furniture were sold at this time, consisting of a sofa, two armchairs and two or three matching upright chairs. It was also possible to purchase occasional tables and china cabinets to match. Carpet squares with elaborate neo 18th century designs were sold to complete the room. The dining-room, as in the 19th century, was dominated by a



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massive sideboard and, as well as the dining table and chairs, there would be armchairs and often a bookcase and desk. The dining-room always had a dado rail to prevent chairs from being pushed against the wall and damaging the paper. The family could save money on fires by using this room as a sitting-room, with the added advantage of knowing that the sitting-room at the front of the house was preserved in good order.

The 19th century tradition of using velvet brocade and damask for curtains for the sitting-room and drawing-room continued, as it has today. Cheaper fabrics such as chintz would be used for the bedrooms but would be lined in the same colour as the downstairs curtains, so that the exterior would produce a unified effect. Wooden venetian blinds were nearly always installed as a standard fitting in new houses, and no window was considered complete without a pair of tied-back Nottingham lace curtains in an elaborate design.

## 1920-1940

Although a growing number of people were buying their houses on a mortgage before the 1914-18 war, it was still a very small percentage of the population. After 1918, this situation changed markedly. In the five years after the end of the war, there was a chronic shortage of both labour and materials in the building industry.

Although the 1919 Housing Act introduced a subsidy for private house builders, a new house cost more than twice that of its pre-war counterpart. A three-bedroomed terraced house in a suburb such as Palmers Green would have cost £350 in 1914. In 1920 the price was at least £750. Builders found it difficult to provide houses for renting on economic terms. It proved much more satisfactory to build houses for sale. Even when house prices fell in the late 1920s, the custom of building houses for sale, rather than for rent, continued.

As the 1920s progressed, a pattern which is now very familiar emerged. Young couples would begin married life either with relations or in a rented flat while they saved up a deposit. At week-ends, housing estates in appropriate areas would be inspected. There was a tendency to move outwards from the inner suburbs along important routes of communication, which explains why so many people who came to live in Palmers Green and Southgate had come from suburbs such as Holloway and Finsbury Park.

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In the 1930s particularly, estate developers were able to arrange high mortgages with building societies, thus enabling houses to be bought with a very small deposit. To keep costs to a minimum, room sizes were reduced and the standard of construction was often lower than before the war. For most people, a new home in the suburbs meant two rooms and a kitchen downstairs and two bedrooms, bathroom, WC and a box room or small third bedroom upstairs. The hall was reduced to a mere passage and the kitchen often was very small indeed.

As in the Edwardian suburban house, the dining-room was the family's most important room and constantly in use. As well as a dining table, chairs and a sideboard, there would almost always be an armchair or two, possibly a piano or a desk. Many people were obliged to keep a fire going in this room winter and summer as the sole means of providing hot water (the kitchen was often too small to allow space for an independent boiler). However, because of the brightness of these post-war houses, without the grim back extension for the scullery, and with their cheap bricks covered with cream-painted pebble-dashing, they were attractive investments for young couples. They were ideal for a small family and, on the whole, have stood the test of time very well.

Despite the comparatively low purchase price, furnishing and decorating the new suburban house was very difficult for most people. During the 1920s and 30s many upper middle class suburban residents, including Rex Silver, bought antique furniture and hand block-printed furnishing fabrics. Patterned wallpapers were virtually unknown in the bigger suburban house. Floorboards were stained, varnished and covered with beautifully coloured Oriental rugs, in accordance with the best Arts and Crafts traditions. The modest three-bedroomed semi was treated in a very different manner.

As far as wallpaper and paint were concerned, the purchaser was often at the mercy of the builder. Most new house buyers were given some sort of choice as far as wallpaper was concerned but often it was from a collection of old stock wallpapers which the builder had bought cheaply. Bathrooms and kitchens were usually painted in oil paint so that they could be washed easily. Woodwork throughout the house was grained, though this custom began to disappear in the late 1930s. Wallpaper styles varied enormously, though on the whole those of the 1920s were in much brighter colours than those of the 1930s. In the 1920s many people used wallpapers with exotic landscape designs, in rich reds and blues



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(see catalogue number 122). In the 1930s plain wallpapers were more usual, often in cream or brown, but enlivened by a brightly patterned cut-out border (see catalogue number 161).

The textiles used in modest houses underwent a dramatic change during the 1920s and 30s. The impoverished suburbanite was presented with enormous expanses of window to be curtained, quite unlike the small vertical sash windows of the 19th century house. The large bay windows of the new style of suburban house meant a considerable expenditure if one was to use the traditional method of blinds, lace curtains and heavy lined inner curtains.

Women's magazines of the 20s and 30s gave many suggestions for dealing with this problem, and the one most often adopted, and ideal for the cottagey appearance of these houses, was the use of casement curtains. Casement curtains were thin, unlined curtains of a variety of materials, such as rayon, cotton, linen and silk or combinations of these materials. They were hung close together so that they fulfilled the purpose of lace curtains during the day, and when closed, of ordinary curtains at night. They were invariably accompanied by a frilled valance or pelmet to enhance the light, cottagey appearance. The new three-piece suite would often be given a cretonne or chintz loose cover, but it was much less usual than formerly to give every chair in the house a chintz cover.

One of the first things the owner of a new house would do would be to purchase linoleum or floorcloth for every room in the house. It would be bought either locally or from a store such as Catesby's in the Tottenham Court Road. Typical patterns would be imitation parquet for the sitting-room, imitation Turkey carpet for the dining-room and a chintz pattern for the bedrooms. If at all possible a carpet square would be purchased for each room, often an imitation Persian design, though sometimes in the 1930s, a 'modern' design could be chosen (see catalogue number 153).

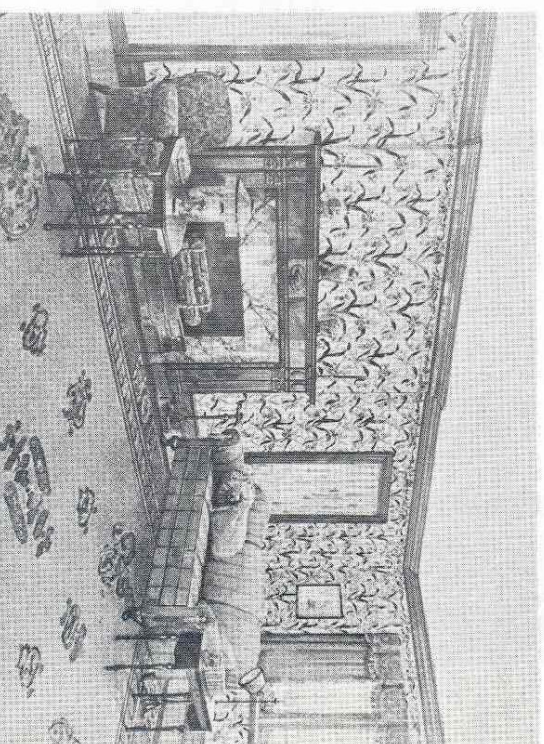
Furnishing the new house was very expensive and by the mid 1920s buying furniture on hire purchase terms was becoming more common. However most people felt that to take on a mortgage was more than enough commitment and so contented themselves with taking family cast-off furniture or buying second-hand pieces to be replaced with new furniture at a later date. The upper middle class fashion of collecting antique furniture was not copied in the majority of new suburban houses, although much of the new furniture sold in the 1920s or 30s was loosely derived in style from period designs, particularly Jacobean and Georgian. Throughout the 1920s and 30s, the effect to be aimed at was that of an idealised

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country cottage, with as much old world charm as possible but combined with such modern conveniences as hot and cold water and electric lighting.

It partly explains why the practice of graining woodwork remained so popular, and the fact that dark oak remained much the most common wood for furniture throughout this period. The suburban housewife, relieved of many of her chores by such useful institutions as the charwoman, the laundry, and shops which promptly delivered, was able to devote her time to her family and to creating a cosy house for the breadwinner to return to: a house which smelt strongly of wax polish mingled with a faint hint of Jeyes Fluid (just enough to indicate that the drains were kept in good order).

*Mark Turner, an art historian, is the keeper of the Silver Studio Collection.*





## DEVELOPMENT OF PALMERS GREEN

*by Graham Dalling*

The 25-inch-to-the-mile Ordnance Survey map of 1867 shows Palmers Green as a minute hamlet. It consisted of The Fox and a cluster of cottages where Fox Lane and Hazelwood Lane join Green Lanes. To the south, in the area around the Cock Tavern lay another small hamlet known as Bowes. To the west, close to the junction of Fox Lane and Bourne Hill (then called Dog and Duck Lane) lay the tiny settlement of Clappers Green. Much of the land formed part of large estates such as Bowes Manor, Broomfield, Grovelands and The Lodge.

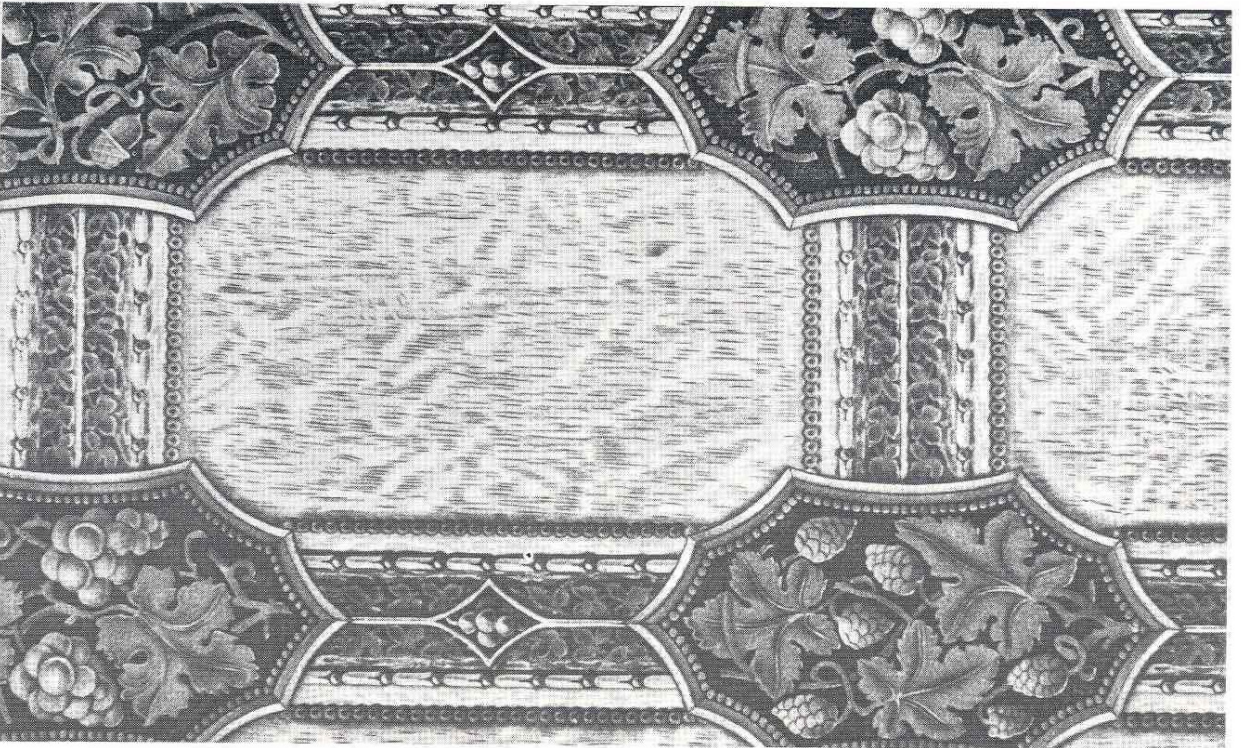
In 1871 the Great Northern Railway opened its branch line from Wood Green to Enfield. A station was built in Aldermans Hill to serve Palmers Green. The station stood in open country: the nearest houses were nearly a quarter of a mile away near The Fox. For nearly thirty years little development took place. Most of the land was tied up in big estates whose owners had no intention of selling for building. By 1896 the only development that had taken place was the construction of some large villas on the west side of Green Lanes between Fox Lane and Hoppers Road.

Things changed dramatically in 1902 when large tracts of land formerly owned by the Taylors of Grovelands were sold for building. The first area to be developed was the Old Park Estate between Fox Lane and Aldermans Hill. This was rapidly covered with large semi-detached houses which were built by a great variety of small builders. At the same time building work began on the Hazelwood Park Estate, between Hazelwood Lane and Hedge Lane. The houses were large but the general layout of the estate and the detailing of the individual houses were rather old-fashioned and unimaginative compared with the Old Park Estate.

More and more land came on the market. Clappers Green Farm (between Fox Lane and Bourne Hill) was sold in 1908. Part was acquired by Middlesex County Council forming the site of the Southgate County School. The rest was sold for building. Many of the streets on this estate were developed with small terraced houses. At the time this aroused fears that, as a result, a poorer class of resident might be attracted to Palmers Green. These fears turned out to be unjustified.

In 1911 The Lodge estate (between Hazelwood Lane and Oakthorpe Road) was sold off for building. This was developed rapidly mainly with smaller terraced houses similar to those on the Clappers Green Farm estate.

The rapid development of Palmers Green involved more than just the building of houses. Shopping parades soon lined much of







## THE SUBURBAN VILLA IN LITERATURE: 1880-1940

by William Ruddick

Green Lanes and part of Aldermans Hill. The Fox in Green Lanes was completely rebuilt in a rather hearty art nouveau style to suit its new surroundings. There were also many new places of worship. St John's in Green Lanes was built in stages between 1904 and 1909. The number of Roman Catholics in the area, previously insignificant, rose rapidly. A large Roman Catholic Church (St Monica's) was built in Green Lanes in 1914. The Congregationalists built a large church and hall in Fox Lane. Nearby in Fox Lane a Presbyterian Church was built. This attracted a substantial number of emigrant Scots to the area.

The new population also required places of entertainment. The Queen's Hall Cinema in Green Lanes opened in 1912. This was joined in 1921 by another cinema, the Palladium, on an adjoining site in Green Lanes. For those who liked live entertainment, Palmers Green was just a short tram ride away from the Wood Green Empire whose programmes were prominently advertised in the *Palmers Green Gazette*.

The growth of Palmers Green is reflected in census reports in a vast increase in the population of Southgate Urban District. Prior to 1881 Southgate had formed part of Edmonton. In 1891 Southgate had a population of 10,970. By 1901 this had risen to 14,993. The census of 1911 shows a spectacular rise to 33,612; the population more than doubled in ten years. This period was crucial in the development of the area. From that time onwards Southgate was to be firmly within the orbit of London.

*Graham Dalling is the local history librarian for the London Borough of Enfield*

"It is a statistical fact that most family people in Britain would rather have a suburban house than any other kind of home," declares Anne Scott-James in *The Pleasure Garden*, published in 1977. She finds the reason for this quite clear: "A suburban house is compact and private, and it allows the owners to create their own world; its garden has advantages to match."

But approval such as this was hard to find in literature before the 1970s. In *The Dreaming Suburb* (1958) RF Delderfield speaks of an earlier attitude; one which characterises most books dealing with the suburbs published between 1880 and 1940:

"Suburban is never said without a sneer or a hint of patronage. This is curious, for three-quarters of our population continue to reside in suburbs of one sort or another".

Suburb mockery has its roots in a long, very English, tradition of poking fun at the lower class or less smart areas of Georgian London. Allied to this is a second tradition, going back at least to the days of the Regency, of making jokes about the operations and creations of the speculative builder. One recalls the contemporary jingle about the stucco facades of Regent Street and the Regents Park terraces:

*And is not our Nash, too, a very great master?  
He finds us all bricks and he leaves us all plaster.*

while the plain brick fronts of Wimpole Street were condemned by Tennyson in *In Memoriam* (1850) as 'the long, unlovely street'.

As Londoners moved outwards in the second half of the 19th century, the satirists followed them. The early garden suburbs such as Bedford Park and Belsize Park were widely praised for their healthiness, fresh air, good architecture and superior amenities. But the scaled down versions run up by speculative builders in the 1880s and later (whether in terraced or semi-detached units) and the even smaller houses with gardens which sped in every direction around the great cities in the late 1920s and the 30s attracted widespread criticism from planners, architectural writers, novelists and poets. Indeed until about the middle of the 1970s, when the swing of taste away from tower blocks and flats back to the individual house stimulated a reappraisal of pre-war architecture and a series of books and television programmes on suburbia, it was hard to find a writer who had a good word for the suburbs or their way of life. The change of tone has been sudden and radical.



The very title of the redoubtable Mrs Panton's *Suburban Residences and How to Circumvent Them* (1896) speaks of a basic disapproval of the size and facilities of the larger suburban villa. In less commodious surroundings, at 'The Laurels', Brickfield Terrace, Holloway, Mr Pooter, the hero of George and Weedon Grossmith's *The Diary of a Nobody* (1892) had already done his not very successful best to improve his 'nice six-roomed residence, not counting basement, with a front breakfast-parlour'. Mr Pooter paints the servant's wash-stand, towel-horse and chest of drawers with bright red enamel (she says she thinks they looked as good the way they were) and then goes on to paint the bath in the same shade, to the consternation of Mrs Pooter who (less adventurous soul that she is) says she's never heard of such a thing. The fact that the house is rented prevents Mr Pooter from altering basic colour schemes: when the old stair carpet turns out to be too narrow for the new house he ventures forth in search of dark chocolate paint to match up with the landlord's paintwork at the sides. A piano is acquired on a three-year scheme of hire purchase, and the illustrations show the usual white marble chimney piece, pier glass, central table with its plush cloth, horsehair armchairs and wax fruit under a glass dome of Mr Pooter's class and period.

Endless small disasters befall the Pooters, but 'The Laurels' is indisputably a home. Warmth and a basic cheerfulness mark the story of their adventures and (more usual) misadventures at 'The Laurels'. In the main, however, the records of suburbia make for gloomy reading. In an anonymous short story called *The Woes of Mrs Carciacus Brown* published in *Cassell's Family Magazine* for 1892, a young bank clerk with literary aspirations and his loyal country-bred wife endure the discomforts of 10 Alabama Terrace, Islington, for the full term of a customary three-year lease until his sudden success as a writer enables them to escape. Their story can be compared with other accounts of life in the older suburban terraces at that period:

*There was a black little kitchen, well-stocked with beetles, earwigs, crickets, mice, white ants and rats. There was a study for Mr Brown at the back of the house, smelling very mouldy, and with the paper peeling off the walls; and a little conservatory for Mrs Brown, which had the signal merit of promptly killing every plant that was ever put into it.*

Mr Brown finds it hard to write with dogs barking and parrots chattering in the neighbouring gardens. Mrs Brown finds life lonely after the close-knit community of the country village in which she

had lived as a child. They suffer bad health because of the drains (which the landlord refuses to put right), their children are feeble and their nerves go to pieces after the first couple of years. Their escape to the country is seen as having come in the nick of time.

Such attitudes to suburban life persist into the 20th century, though with less of a sense of first-hand knowledge; perhaps with more of the feel of snobbish prejudice about them (sometimes social, sometimes political in its origin) as can be felt in two writers as dissimilar as Beatrice Kean Seymour and George Orwell. Beatrice Kean Seymour's novel *Youth Rides Out* (1928) shows a young couple with a moneyed background trying to live on the husband's modest salary in a small suburban house (in Liverpool, admittedly, but the setting is unimportant); it could equally well be in north London.

*It was small, but it looked on to the strip of garden in which Lindsay spent his spare time coaxing a lawn to smoothness, and small seedlings and plants to a new independent life of their own.*

Small though the house is, the wife, Camilla, who has been brought up in grander surroundings, needs the help of a living-in maid to cook, clean and assist with the new baby. The servant is disorganised, however, the house seems difficult to cope with, and before long Camilla is regretting the 'effortless existence' of her childhood, finding her own little house an annoyance, its walls seeming to close in on her.

Gloomily though this view of suburban living is, a far gloomier one (from the husband's point of view this time) can be found in George Orwell's final pre-war novel *Coming Up for Air* (1939).

Orwell's depressed commercial-salesman hero prepares to leave his house in Ellesmere Road, West Blechley, one very ordinary morning. "Do you know the road I live in?" he asks the reader, and adds, "Even if you don't, you know fifty others exactly like it". He mentions "the stucco front, the cresoiled gate, the privet hedge, the green front door" (the few colours used on houses before the War and the absence of colour wash made the estates much more sombre than they are today). Orwell's hero reflects on how the leasehold system and sixteen-year mortgages increase the cost of a house such as his by a full half and put fat profits in the builders' pockets. To him the street is "just a prison with the cells all in a row. A line of semi-detached torture chambers." But at the end of the novel he is seen making his way back through Southall to the "miles and miles of ugly houses, with people living dull decent lives inside them". Modern England offers no alternative.

Orwell's descriptions of suburban living is not without a note of



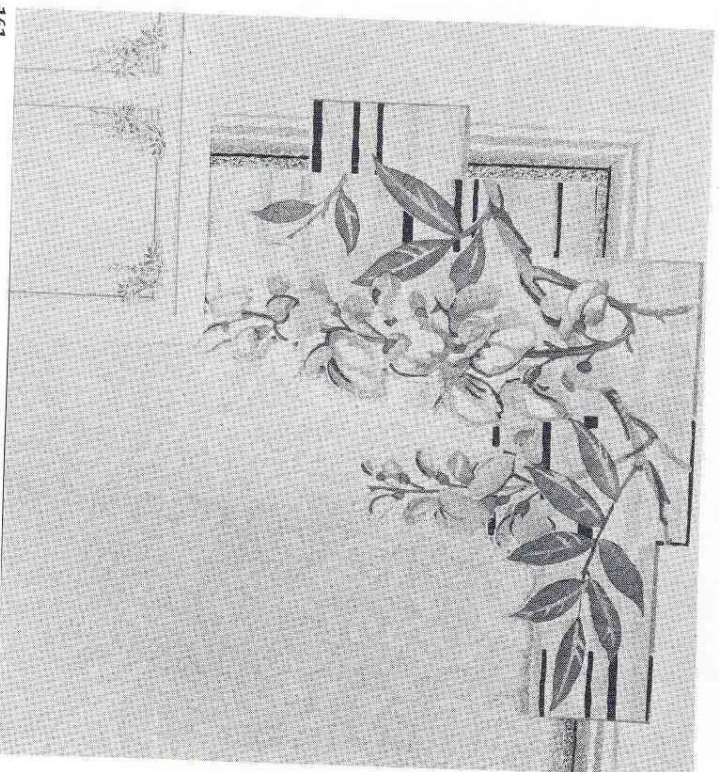
patronising contempt which is, of course, partly political, but also owes a lot to rigid social attitudes ("ugly houses with people leading dull decent lives inside them"), snobbery and simple ignorance. The novelists who deal with suburbia generally show little real knowledge of it; one notices that exact descriptions of the interiors of these 'ugly houses' are scarcely ever to be found. Whether Socialist or Tory in their allegiances, writers generally disliked the suburbs and what (they imagined) suburbia stood for.

For several years in the 1930s, John Betjeman (in later years a leader in the new appreciation of suburbia with his 'Metroland' and similar television programmes) was the editor of the *Architectural Review*. In 1937 he cast a period eye along the 'interminable avenues' of the suburbs and speculated: "in twenty years' time, when the Building Societies have got more than their money back" only the carefully tended gardens would have improved. The actual houses would be in a poor state: "Bay windows will be falling out, foundations crumbling, plumbing leaking, leaded lights letting in the rain." By 1957, he concluded, "Metroland will be rather unpleasant". Time has shown this to be excessively pessimistic: in the main the pre-war estates have lasted well, certainly far better than most people expected them to do when they were built. And by the time he made his 'Metroland' television feature, over 35 years after the essay just quoted from was composed, Sir John's feelings about suburban architecture had undergone a total change of heart. But the mood of the 1930s was sharply hostile to the new housing estates: of that there can be no doubt. Betjeman's contemporary, Sir Osbert Lancaster, knowledgeably and wittily satirised the fashions of suburban architecture, and the interior decoration and furnishing of suburban houses in the drawings and text of *Pillar to Post* (1938) and *Homes Sweet Homes* (1939). The comedy of such classifications as 'Wimbleton Transitional', incorporating 'the revival of half-timbering, a method of building which has been allowed to remain in a state of well-merited neglect for nearly three centuries' or its down-market mutant 'By-Pass Variegated' in the former book is matched by the splendours of 'Modernistic' interiors in the latter ("radios lurk in tea-caddies and bronze nudes burst assunder at the waistline to reveal cigarette lighters; and *nothing is what it seems*"). For all the brilliance of such satire the suburban scenes in pre-war books are noticeably lacking in a sense of real life really being lived. It is a positive delight to turn even from witty mockery to the quirky but genuine cheerfulness of Stevie Smith, the poet and novelist who spent most of her adult life in Avondale Road, Palmers Green, with a formidable aunt who features in *Novel on*

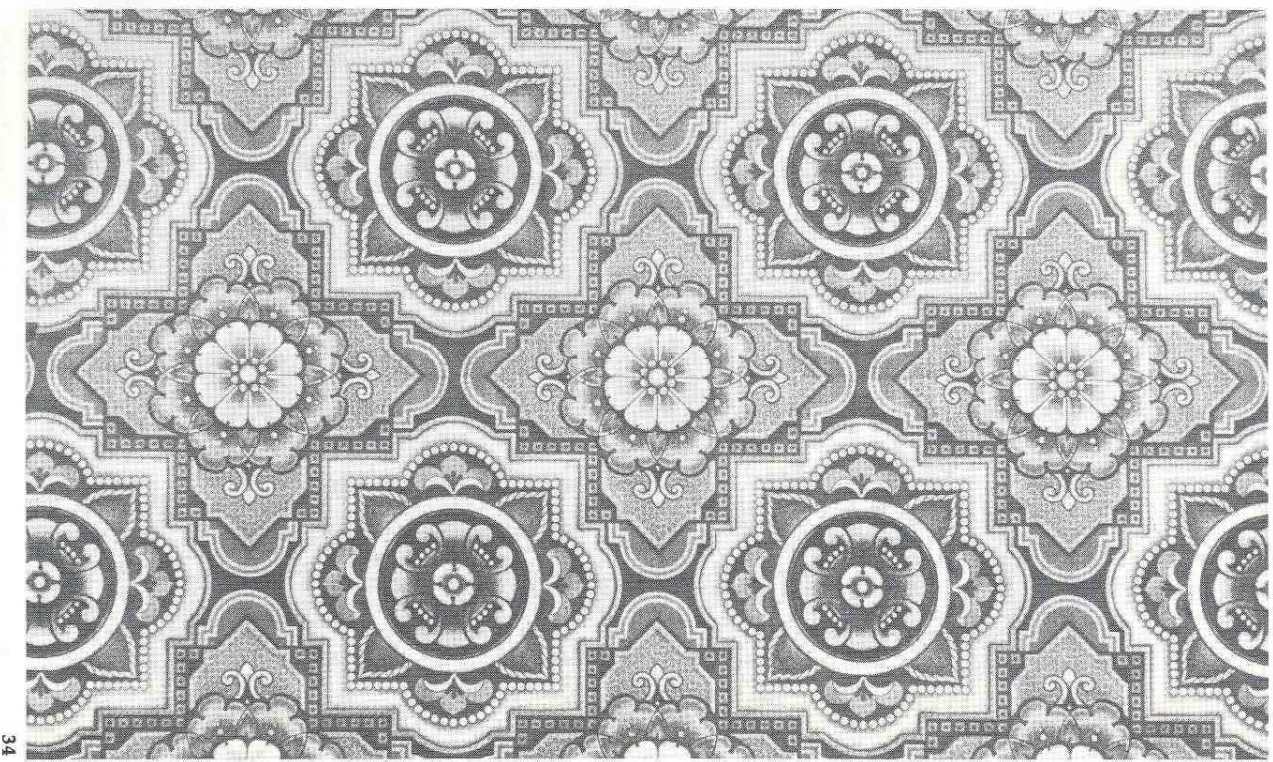
*Yellow Paper* (1936) as 'the Lion of Hull'. The richest page of the book concerns Aunt's nightly forging in the larder: "No light late-night cup of Horlicks is helping her now, but the cold game pie she found in the larder. . . . Already my Aunt has the feeling 'Oh lovely Meal-O, oh blessed food.'"

The scene is warm and cheerful, with the cheerfulness of the Ealing comedies of London life that were to be made in the immediate post-war years. Unlike almost all the treatments of London suburban life written at that time it has its roots in real knowledge: and it is neither dismissive, patronising, snobbish nor doctrinaire.

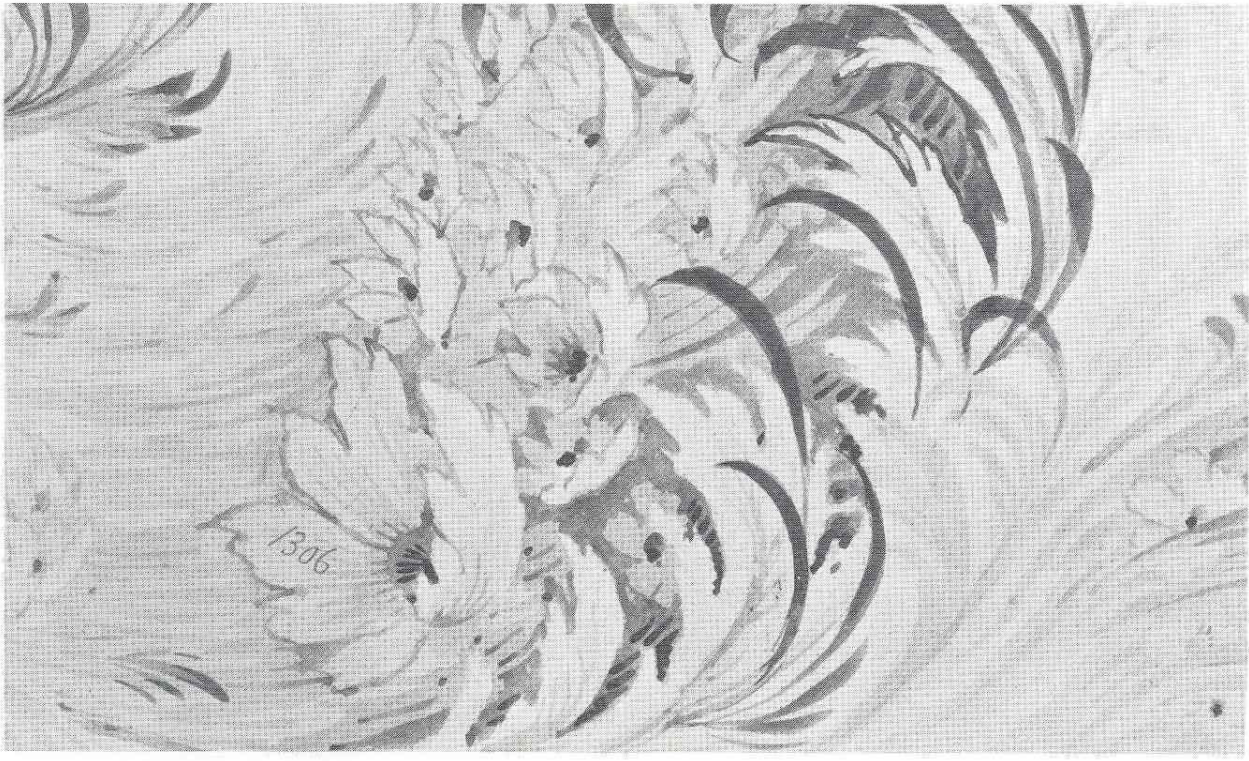
*William Ruddick is a lecturer in English literature at the University of Manchester.*





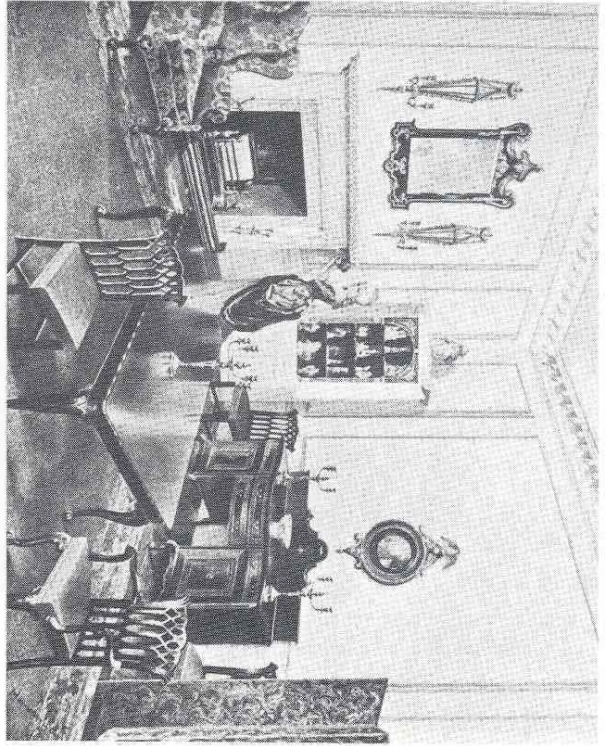


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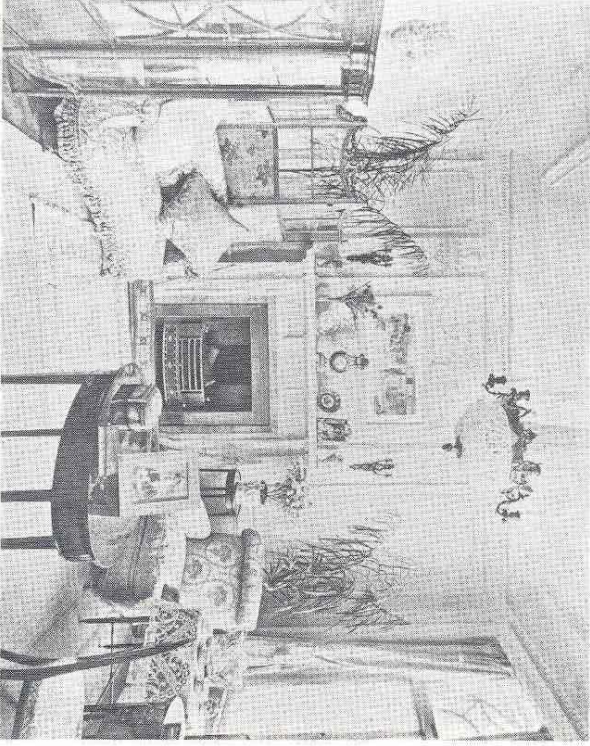


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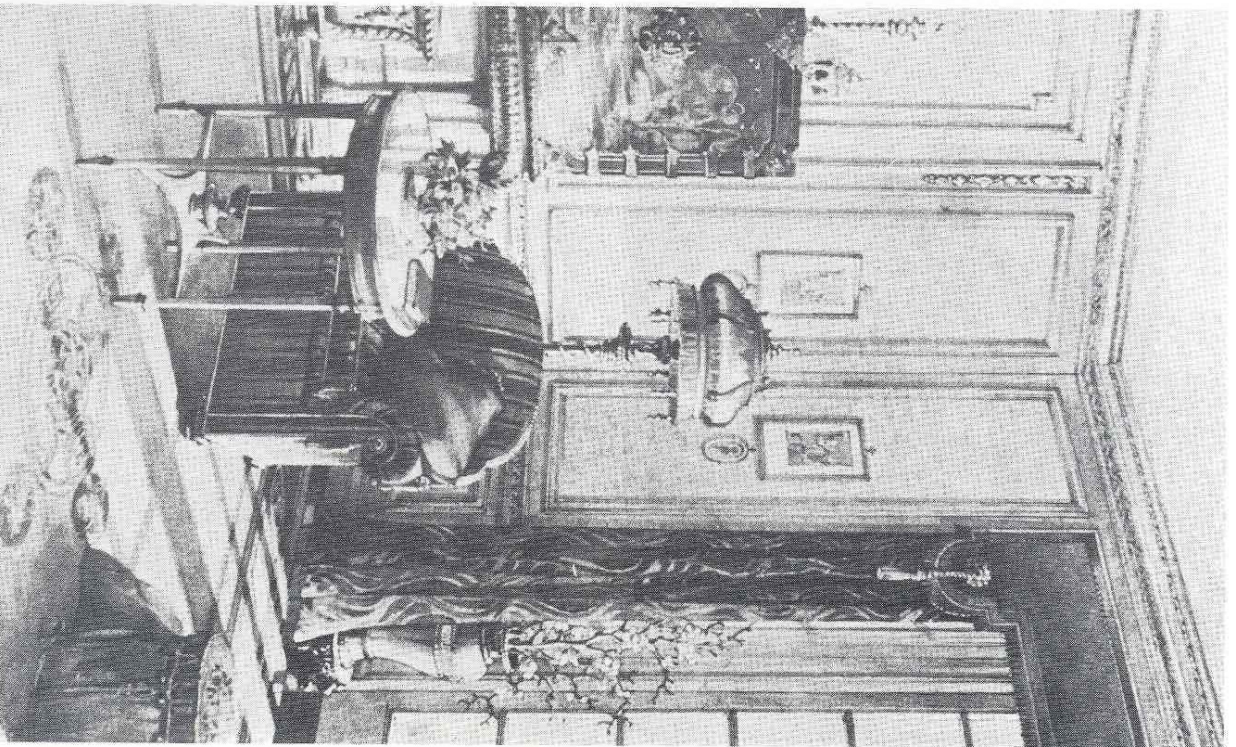




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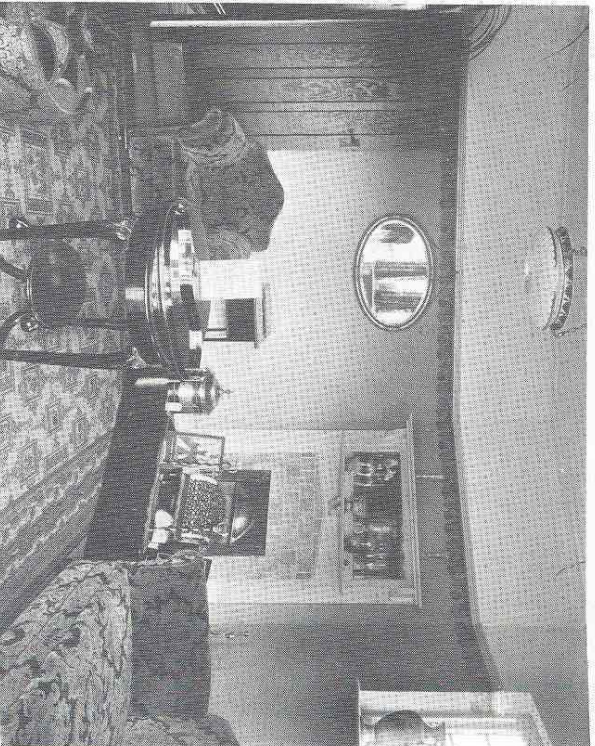
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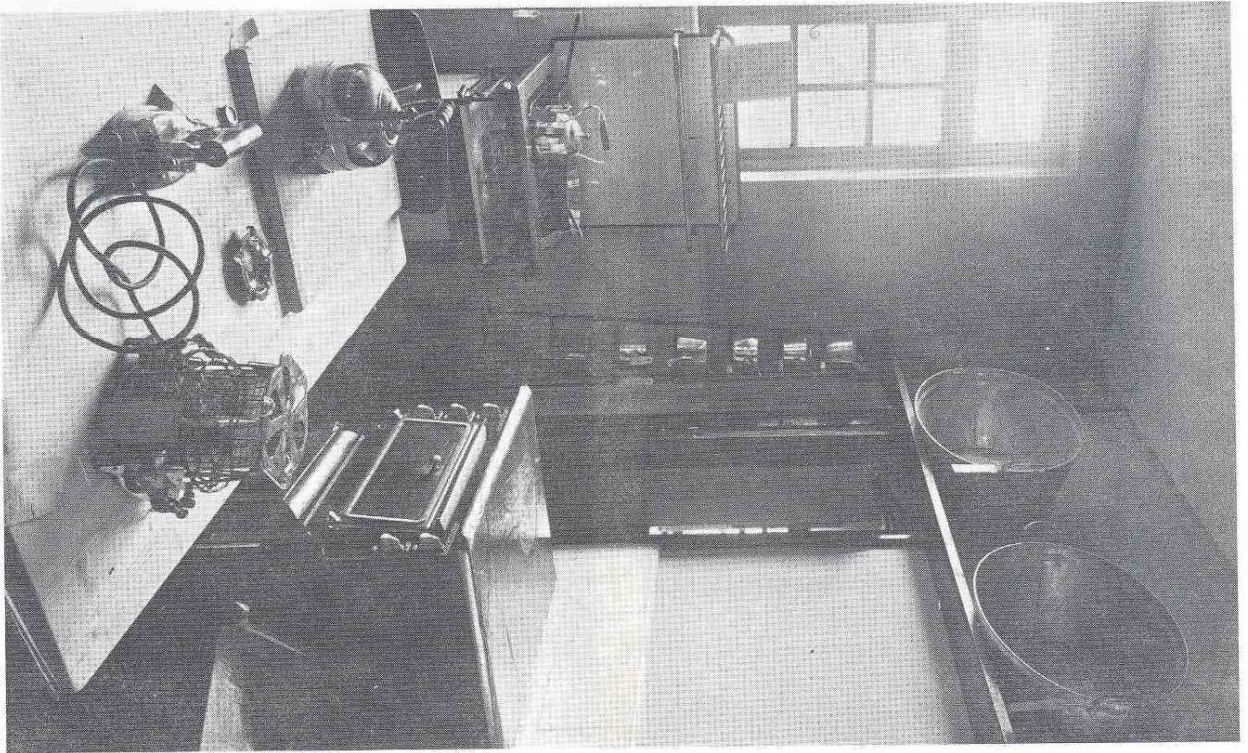


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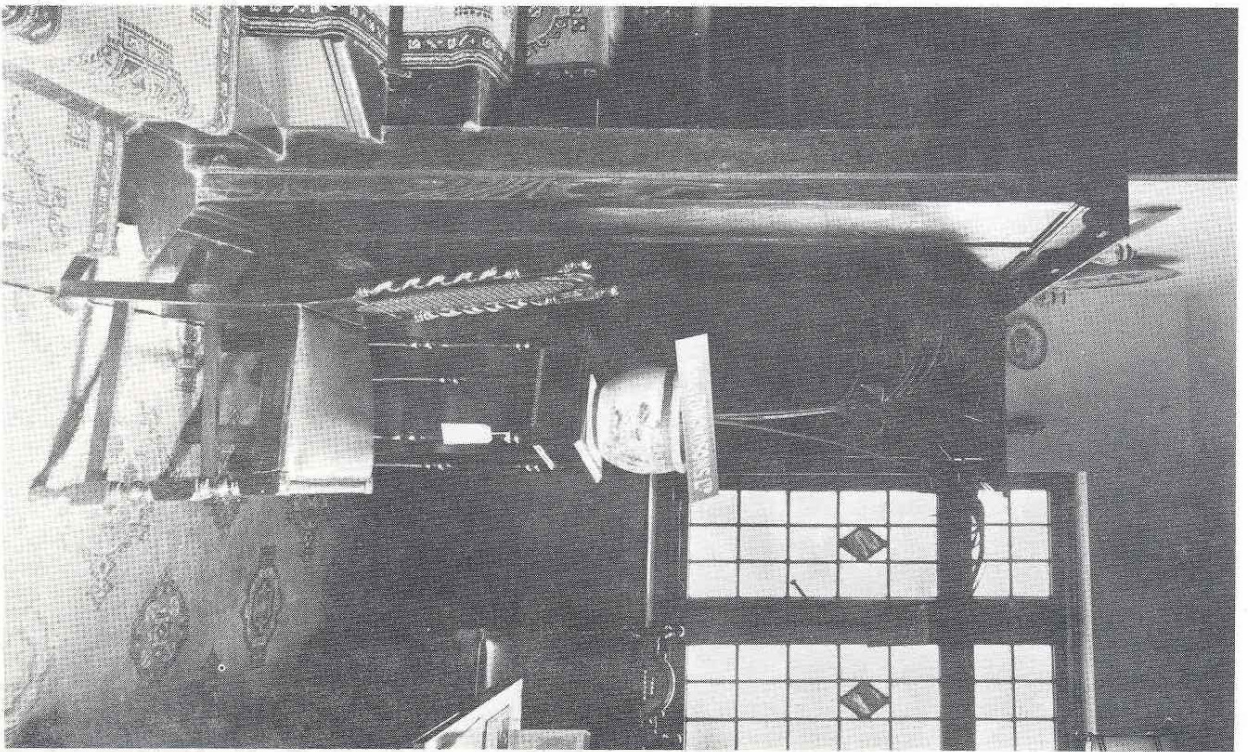


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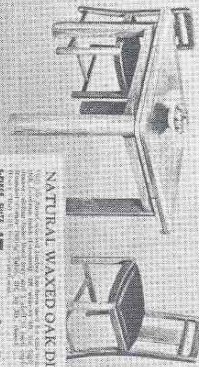
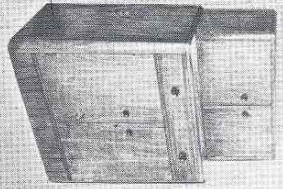
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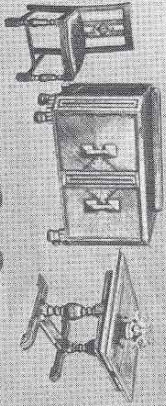




# FIVE FLOORS OF FINE FURNITURE



**NATURAL WAXED OAK DINING SUITE**  
 This is a beautiful set of furniture made of natural waxed oak. It includes a large dining table and four chairs. The price is £17 0/0. Terms: 10% down, balance in 3 months.



**JACOBSEAN DINING SUITE**  
 This is a beautiful set of furniture made of Jacobsean wood. It includes a large dining table and four chairs. The price is £13 0/0. Terms: 10% down, balance in 3 months.



**TAPESTRY 3-PIECE SUITE**  
 This is a beautiful set of furniture made of tapestry. It includes a large sofa, a chair, and a footstool. The price is £20 0/0. Terms: 10% down, balance in 3 months.

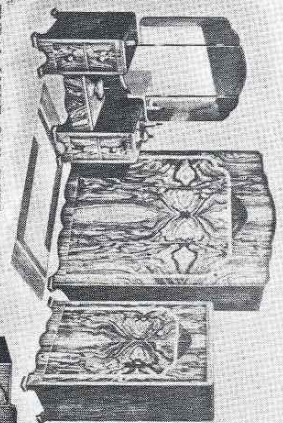


**MODERN HIDE 3-PIECE SUITE**  
 This is a beautiful set of furniture made of modern hide. It includes a large sofa, a chair, and a footstool. The price is £20 0/0. Terms: 10% down, balance in 3 months.

TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD **Catesby's** LONDON, W.1

INDEPENDENT 3rd FLOOR, STATION

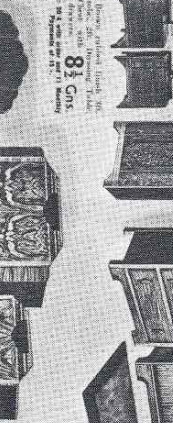
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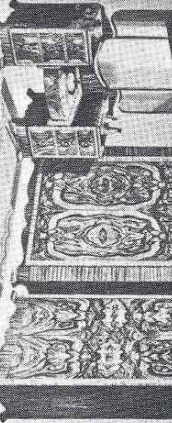
**NATURAL LIGHT OAK SUITE**  
 This is a beautiful set of furniture made of natural light oak. It includes a large dining table and four chairs. The price is £10 0/0. Terms: 10% down, balance in 3 months.



**SPECIAL STAR VALUE 3rd OAK SUITE**  
 This is a beautiful set of furniture made of special star value 3rd oak. It includes a large dining table and four chairs. The price is £8 0/0. Terms: 10% down, balance in 3 months.



**SUPERB FIGURED WALNUT SUITE**  
 This is a beautiful set of furniture made of superb figured walnut. It includes a large sofa, a chair, and a footstool. The price is £22 1/2 0/0. Terms: 10% down, balance in 3 months.



**TOILET TABLE 77/6**  
 This is a beautiful set of furniture made of toilet table. It includes a large toilet table and four chairs. The price is £77/6. Terms: 10% down, balance in 3 months.

CATESBY'S, Tottenham Court Road, LONDON, W.1

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**Note:** Measurements in this list are given in centimetres; height precedes width. The accession numbers given are those assigned to the items in the permanent collection from which they come. An asterisk (\*) indicates that the item is illustrated in this catalogue.

- Reproduction late 18th century design by Arthur Silver showing the interest in historical furniture styles at this time.  
SD 180

- SE 1209

- SE 1240





- 9 **Two photographs of 1880s wallpaper dado and filling**  
9 x 12.5 and 12.5 x 9  
Original 'sanitary' wallpaper dado and filling from a house in Putney prior to restoration.  
SE 1243
- 10 **Design for the decoration of a wall**  
51.5 x 18  
Pencil and wash on tracing paper  
1880  
This is a very elaborate neo 18th century design for a dado, filling and frieze by Arthur Silver, and although such a scheme would be beyond the means of the average suburban resident it is a good example of the desired decorative effect.  
SD 4956
- 11 **Design for the decoration of a staircase wall**  
33.5 x 21.5 (Illustrated on Contents page)  
Pen and ink on cartridge paper  
1880  
This is an elaborate design for a staircase dado, filling and frieze. Note how the dado design has been 'stepped' to accommodate the rise of the staircase.  
SD 4918
- 12 **Liberty's Peacock Feather cotton furnishing textile**  
44 x 81  
1884  
First designed by Arthur Silver in 1884 this was one of Liberty's most popular furnishing fabrics in the 1890s and early 1900s. It was widely used for loose covers and curtains in more prosperous suburban houses, particularly where the owners were design conscious. The blue/green and ochre colours were very fashionable in the late 19th century.  
ST 178
- 13 **Design for a linoleum**  
30 x 29  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
circa 1885  
Imitation tiling linoleum design. Note the use of Celtic scrollwork in the centre of the panels.  
SD 8611
- 14 **Design for a linoleum**  
22.5 x 34  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
circa 1885  
This linoleum design is meant to imitate tiling, and would have been used for halls, passageways and kitchens.  
SD 8610
- 15 **Design for the centre panel of a carpet**  
33 x 20.5  
Pen and ink and wash on bond paper  
1885  
This is a typical 1880s carpet design of rococo scrollwork of a type that designers such as William Morris would have absolutely loathed, but was very popular with suburban residents.  
SD 5124
- 16 **Design for a carpet border**  
20.5 x 26.5  
Pen and ink and gouache on bond paper  
1885  
Rococo scrollwork carpet border to go with design SD 5124.  
SD 5123
- 17 **Design for a carpet border**  
12 x 24  
Charcoal, gouache, pencil on Ingres paper  
1885  
This is a popular reproduction late 18th century carpet design of flowers and acanthus scrolls, probably by Arthur Silver.  
SD 4908
- 18 **Design for linoleum**  
45 x 45  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
circa 1885  
Imitation mediaeval tile design for a linoleum. Note the use of terracotta and dark green – a very fashionable colour combination in the 1880s.  
SD 8612
- 19 **Design for a carpet filling and border**  
27 x 14  
Watercolour on cartridge paper  
1885  
An early Arthur Silver design for a conventional reproduction Persian carpet.  
SD 6912
- 20 **Design for a wallpaper filling and frieze**  
31 x 17  
Pen and ink and pencil on bond paper  
1885  
This is a design derived from Morris's Willow wallpaper and shows the filling and frieze patterns.  
SD 5002
- 21 **Design for a linoleum**  
30.5 x 30.5  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
1885–90  
Imitation mediaeval tile design for a linoleum.  
SD 6216
- 22 **Design for a linoleum**  
23 x 22.5  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
1885–90  
Imitation Minton tile design intended for a linoleum.  
SD 6206
- 23 **Design for a linoleum**  
28 x 29  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
1885–90  
Imitation mediaeval tile design for a linoleum.  
SD 6223
- 24 **Design for a linoleum**  
45.5 x 39  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
1885–90  
Imitation mediaeval tile pattern intended for a linoleum for halls and passages. Two colour schemes are used here: brown, ochre and blue, and brown, ochre and terracotta.  
SD 6132
- 25 **Design for a linoleum**  
22.5 x 23  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
1885–90  
Imitation mosaic design for linoleum which would probably have been used for a hall.  
SD 6129
- 26 **Photograph of 1890s terraced houses in Palmers Green**  
11.5 x 16  
circa 1890  
Note the use of dark paint for the external woodwork and the wooden venetian blinds. The striped canvas curtain in the doorway is to protect the paint from being blistered by the sun.  
*Lent by the Borough of Enfield Local History Library.*
- 27 **Sheet of designs for parquet flooring**  
56.5 x 40  
circa 1890  
Parquet flooring was often laid in the halls and drawing rooms of better class suburban houses, particularly in the period 1880–1910.  
SE 1207
- \*28 **Page of Maw & Co's tile patterns**  
38 x 28 (Illustrated on page 4)  
circa 1890  
This page from Maw's catalogue shows examples of tiled flooring which was often used in halls and kitchens in late 19th century suburban houses.  
SE 1206
- 29 **Design for a carpet border**  
22.5 x 60.5  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
circa 1890  
This design shows the use of secondary and tertiary colours popular in pattern design in the late 19th century.  
SD 8609
- 30 **Design for a hearthrug**  
41 x 30  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
1890  
An art nouveau design – used for a hearthrug – of stylised poppies and leaves in ochre, blue, yellow, red and terracotta.  
SD 3639



- 31 Imitation damask 'sanitary' wallpaper**  
36.5 x 49  
circa 1890  
This is a typical dining room wallpaper of the late 19th century, and would have been used in many a modest suburban house. Blue and gold were very fashionable colours in the 1890s.  
SW 1565
- \*32 'Sanitary' wallpaper**  
43.5 x 24.5 (illustrated on page 20)  
circa 1890  
Another example of a washable wallpaper. This paper imitates carved panelling with a design of oak squares surrounded by vines.  
SW 1564
- 33 Design for a hearthrug**  
38 x 28  
Grey wash on cartridge paper 1890  
This design is very typical of late 19th century hearthrugs. This one has a woodland scene with arched trees and foxgloves.  
SD 3638
- \*34 'Sanitary' wallpaper**  
25 x 43 (illustrated on page 28)  
circa 1890  
Here a reproduction tile design is used for a washable dado wallpaper. Sanitary wallpapers were papers that had been printed with engraved copper rollers to produce a very fine surface. Not only did this mean that very detailed designs could be reproduced but also that the surface could be varnished, and thus rendered washable, hence the term 'sanitary'.  
SW 1562
- 35 Design for linoleum**  
45.5 x 45  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
circa 1890  
This is a design which reproduces a Persian carpet pattern. Linoleum such as this would be used for sitting and dining-rooms.  
SD 8613
- 36 Imitation moiré silk wallpaper**  
31 x 52  
circa 1890  
Imitation watered silk wallpapers such as this were very popular throughout the latter half of the 19th century, particularly for sitting rooms. They can still be obtained from Cole's of Mortimer Street, London W1.  
SW 1563
- 37 Sample of patterned linoleum**  
31 x 18  
circa 1890  
This piece of linoleum was taken from a late 19th century terraced house in Tottenham. Note how the design reproduces the pattern of a Persian carpet.  
SE 1217
- \*38 Design for the Floral Sea wallpaper**  
35 x 23.5 (illustrated on page 29)  
Watercolour, gouache on cartridge paper 1891  
This was one of the Silver Studio's best known and most avant garde designs which was sold for both wallpaper and printed textile.  
SD 4786
- 39 Design for a printed furnishing textile**  
17 x 20  
Gouache on cartridge paper 1892  
This design of stylised tulips and leaves was probably intended for Liberty's range of 'Art fabrics' for the design-conscious household. Note the 'Aesthetic' colours: terracotta and blue-green.  
SD 5546
- 40 Design for a printed furnishing textile**  
19.5 x 17.5  
Gouache on cartridge paper 1892  
A conventional, naturalistic design of a spray of roses, but given fashionable 'Aesthetic' colours of blues and apricot browns.  
SD 5486
- 41 Design for a printed furnishing textile**  
26 x 20  
Watercolour on cartridge paper 1892  
This is an old-fashioned naturalistic chintz design of dahlias and leaves on a white ground and typical of the fabrics used in conventional suburban houses at the time.  
SD 5504
- 42 Part of a design for a wallpaper**  
15 x 12.5  
Watercolour on cartridge paper 1892  
Naturalistic design of chrysanthemum sprays of yellow, brown and green on a cream ground.  
SD 8316
- 43 Part of a design for wallpaper**  
14 x 11  
Gouache on cartridge paper 1893  
Design of naturalistic flower spray in pinks and greens on pale blue ground.  
SD 8222
- 44 Part of a design for wallpaper**  
11.5 x 12  
Gouache on cartridge paper 1893  
Design of naturalistic spray of roses in pale oranges and green on cream ground.  
SD 8207
- 45 Part of a design for a wallpaper**  
17 x 14.5  
Gouache on cartridge paper 1893  
This was a very popular type of wallpaper pattern in the late 19th century, consisting of large feather scrolls in shades of terracotta and brown.  
SD 8257
- 46 Trade catalogue of upholstery patterns**  
28 x 21  
1894  
A fascinating, rather old-fashioned upholsterer's trade catalogue showing extremely elaborate drapery arrangements for portières, windows etc. A photograph from this catalogue is also included in the exhibition.
- 47 Photograph of schemes from 1894 trade catalogue for pelmets and portières**  
25.5 x 20.5  
This photograph is from an upholsterer's trade catalogue and shows the elaborate drapery which was usual in the late 19th century suburban home.  
SE 1225
- 48 Machine printed wallpaper**  
56 x 56  
circa 1895  
A fashionable Silver Studio art nouveau wallpaper with a design of poppies and acanthus scroll leaves in three shades of blue/green on duck egg blue ground.  
SW 72
- 49 Design for a linoleum**  
20 x 23  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
circa 1895  
Simple Arts and Crafts linoleum design of stylised trees in pink, green and brown on a green ground, probably for use as a bedroom floor covering.  
SD 6228
- 50 Page of illustrations from Oetzmänn's Catalogue**  
27 x 20  
1895  
Oetzmänn's was an extremely popular store in the late 19th century and much patronised by the owners of suburban houses. Illustrated here are examples of sofas and armchairs. Note the art nouveau designs of the upholstery fabrics.  
SE 1203
- 51 Catalogue of Anaglypta designs**  
27.5 x 35  
1896  
Anaglypta was (and still is) widely used in the suburban house for ceilings, friezes and dados. This catalogue is particularly interesting as it mentions the names of some of the designers who worked for the firm, including CFA Voysey and Christopher Dresser.  
SE 1012



- 52 Part of a design for wallpaper**  
17 x 12  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
1896  
This design is very typical of the type of wallpaper pattern which most suburban residents would have chosen: naturalistic bougainvillea in pink and yellow, mixed with rococo scrollwork on an eau de Nil ground.  
SD 8389
- 53 Part of a design for a wallpaper**  
19 x 24.5  
Gouache on cartridge paper  
1896  
This design shows Silver Studio art nouveau at its best. Many such designs were sold for cheap wallpapers which subsequently found their way into the more fashion conscious suburban house.  
SD 8390
- 54 Design for a wallpaper**  
23.5 x 17.5  
Watercolour on cartridge paper  
1898  
This is a good example of an art nouveau wallpaper for the fashion conscious suburban home.  
SD 5824
- 55 Pattern book for Pilkington's Leaded Windows**  
23 x 14.5  
1899  
The stained glass in this catalogue is typical of that used for front doors etc in suburban houses.  
SE 1025
- 56 Design for a wallpaper**  
25.5 x 22  
Watercolour on cartridge paper  
1899  
Elaborate, densely patterned art nouveau wallpaper of stylised flowers and leaves in red, ochre and light brown on a blue ground.  
SD 5816
- 57 Design for a wallpaper**  
25 x 23.5  
Watercolour on cartridge paper  
1899  
Fashionable art nouveau wallpaper. The rich dark colours would suggest this was a paper which would be used for a hall or dining-room, where dark colours were preferred.  
SD 5818
- 58 Design for a wallpaper**  
22.5 x 17.5  
Watercolour on cartridge paper  
1899  
Imitation tile design probably intended for a washable 'Sanitary' wallpaper for dados on kitchens and bathrooms.  
SD 5814
- 59 Photograph of Edwardian villas in Tottenham Road, Palmers Green**  
20 x 25  
circa 1925  
These terraced houses were built circa 1900, though the photograph was probably taken in the 1920s. Note the gas-lighting of the street and the delightful Hovis delivery cart.  
*Lent by the Borough of Enfield Local History Library.*
- 60 Stencil and block printed wallpaper frieze**  
51 x 37  
circa 1900  
Art nouveau wallpaper frieze of stylised flowers and leaves in shades of red and terracotta with a green/orange stencil ground.  
SW 739
- 61 Three photographs of a hall, sitting-room and dining-room of a 1903 terraced house**  
each 15 x 10  
These photographs were taken recently of a house in Maidstone Road which has been owned by one man since 1912, and very little altered. Note the tiled floor and graining in the hall, and the cream 1930s wallpaper with chocolate woodwork in the sitting-room.  
SE 1242
- 62 Two photographs of the kitchen of a 1903 terraced house**  
each 14 x 10  
The photograph on the left shows an Ideal Cook-and-heat Range which the owner still uses for cooking and heating water in winter. It was installed in the late 1930s. The other photograph shows a glazed dresser and a 1930s wireless speaker.  
SE 1211
- 63 Machine and block printed wallpaper frieze**  
51.5 x 28  
circa 1905  
Delightful wallpaper frieze based on a Japanese landscape with mountains and flowering cherry tree.  
SW 699
- 64 Machine printed wallpaper frieze**  
51 x 26.5  
circa 1905  
Wallpaper friezes were immensely popular in the suburban home in the early 1900s. This is an inexpensive machine printed one with a design of Tudor galleons.  
SW 692
- \*65 Oriental landscape wallpaper frieze**  
44.5 x 26.5 (illustrated on page 6)  
Machine printed wallpaper  
circa 1905  
Wallpaper frieze with a design of an oriental landscape. Note the delightful subdued blues and greens.  
SW 874
- 66 Machine printed wallpaper**  
70 x 53  
circa 1905  
Cheap two-colour late art nouveau wallpaper. These shades of deep red were particularly popular for dining-rooms. The quality of the printing gives the impression of a flock wallpaper.  
SW 177
- 67 Dutch landscape wallpaper frieze**  
44.5 x 26.5  
Machine printed wallpaper  
1905  
Cheap, but highly decorative wallpaper frieze for the area between the picture rail and ceiling.  
SW 696
- 68 Glazed chintz**  
92 x 66  
circa 1905  
Glazed chintz was always popular in the suburban house. Its shiny surface repelled the dust from incessant coal fires. It was used mostly for loose covers and for bedroom curtains. It was a comparatively inexpensive material and so was found in all but the poorest houses. This design is a typically Edwardian one, inspired by 18th century French decorative art.  
ST 175
- 69 Sketch design for a wallpaper with attached sample of printed wallpaper**  
20.5 x 12  
Watercolour on cartridge paper  
1906  
This is a good example of a late art nouveau wallpaper – a highly stylised design of flowers, leaves and stems. Note the organic, upward movement of the pattern and the fashionable blue and gold colour scheme.  
SD 6280
- 70 Royal Doulton Potteries fireplace catalogue**  
27.5 x 21.5  
1906  
An excellent selection of fireplaces for the design conscious suburban house. A photograph of the delightful art nouveau cover is included in the exhibition.  
SE 1077
- 71 Photograph of the cover of Doulton's catalogue of fireplaces for 1906**  
25.5 x 20.5  
This is worth showing for the cover design alone, an excellent example of art nouveau graphic design. Doulton fireplaces were frequently used in suburban houses built in the early 1900s.  
SE 1227



- 72 **Design for a printed bedspread border**  
22.5 x 28  
Pencil and watercolour on cartridge paper  
1907  
French empire border design of cabbage roses, cornflowers and ribbons.  
SD 6618
- 73 **Twelve photographs of interiors from Waring & Gillow's catalogue of model interiors of circa 1910**  
each 15 x 20.5  
These give a good indication of the range of furniture available to the suburban resident in the early 1900s. Note the preponderance of reproduction furniture.  
SE1228-SE1239
- 74 **Block printed wallpaper frieze**  
52 x 48.5  
circa 1910  
This wallpaper frieze of large poppies, corn and scabious would have been used in the more expensive and design conscious suburban house. It was hand block printed and cost eight shillings a yard, a considerable amount of money in 1910.  
SW 120
- 75 **Roller printed furnishing linen**  
92 x 82  
circa 1910  
This was quite an expensive furnishing fabric of a traditional design based on a late 18th century French damask. This would have been bought by the prudent suburban resident who wanted a good quality material for curtains and loose covers that would go well with the popular taste for reproduction 18th century furniture.  
ST 177
- 76 **Hampton's catalogue**  
30.5 x 22 (Illustrated on page 30)  
circa 1910  
Contains pages of specimen rooms many of which are reproductions of period interiors.  
SE 1150
- 77 **Catalogue - British Homes, their making and furnishing**  
26 x 29  
circa 1910  
This catalogue is from the Hackney Furnishing Co Ltd, one of the first firms to offer furniture on hire purchase.  
SE 1001
- 78 **Waring & Gillow catalogue**  
27 x 19  
circa 1910  
Contains colour illustrations of complete interiors and also a selection of genuine antique furniture. Photographs from the catalogue are also included in this exhibition.  
SE 1244
- 79 **Machine printed wallpaper frieze**  
52 x 45  
circa 1910  
French rose and ribbon patterns were very popular in suburban houses during the early 1900s. Here the design is used for a wallpaper frieze for the area between picture rail and frieze.  
SW 111
- 80 **Machine printed wallpaper**  
58.5 x 54.5  
circa 1910  
A reproduction late 18th century French wallpaper of baskets of roses and lilac connected by ribbons and with festoons of pearls. This type of wallpaper would have been used in many suburban sitting-rooms.  
SW 143
- 81 **Eight samples of oilcloth**  
56 x 81 (mount size)  
circa 1910  
Oilcloth was widely used in the suburban home throughout the period 1880 to 1940 for tablecloths, covering shelves, etc.  
SE 1219
- 82 **Machine printed wallpaper**  
45 x 43.5  
circa 1910  
Reproduction 18th century French wallpaper of ribbon trellis with sprays of Bourbon roses. A very popular style of wallpaper pattern for Edwardian sitting-rooms.  
SW 134
- 83 **Printed cotton furnishing textile**  
114 x 81  
circa 1910  
This is a typical early 20th century furnishing fabric reflecting the taste for the more elaborate late 18th century decorative styles. Note the use of soft colours such as pink and grey which were very popular at this time.  
ST 56
- 84 **Printed textile design**  
24 x 17  
Pencil, watercolour on cartridge paper  
1910  
Furnishing fabric with imitation tapestry design of fruit, leaves and flowers.  
SD 7474
- 85 **John Wilson's Successors Catalogue of Lace Curtains and Bedspreads**  
18.5 x 25  
1910  
A selection of good quality English and Swiss lace and muslin curtains for the more expensive suburban home. The Silver Studio sold designs for lace curtains to this firm in the 1890s.  
SE 1243
- 86 **Printed linen furnishing textile**  
49 x 96  
1911  
The Silver Studio produced many textile designs like this one, which clearly shows the influence of William Morris. Morris fabrics were extremely expensive and the demand for cheaper versions was very great throughout the period.  
ST 172
- 87 **Design for embossed ceiling paper**  
54 x 49.5  
Pencil on detail paper  
1914  
Elegant neo Adam ceiling paper design of a type which must have added character to many a suburban sitting-room.  
SD 3475
- 88 **Design for a printed textile**  
15 x 16.5  
Pencil, watercolour on tracing paper  
1918  
Stylish Arts and Crafts sketch design for a cretonne based on a view of a cottage garden.  
SD 5229
- 89 **Design for a printed textile**  
34 x 29.5  
Pencil and watercolour on tracing paper  
1918  
This design has been adapted from Tenniel's illustration for *Alice in Wonderland* and would have been used for fabrics for children's bedrooms.  
SD 8043
- 90 **Four examples of Staines inlaid linoleum**  
each approx 13 x 15  
circa 1920  
Three of these are of small geometric patterns which were popular for linoleum in the 1920s. The fourth is a reproduction of an Oriental carpet which would probably be used for a dining-room.  
SE 1227
- 91 **Chintz wallpaper**  
56 x 38.5  
circa 1920  
Cheap chintz design wallpapers such as this one were first introduced in the 1890s and remained a popular style for bedroom wallpapers until World War II.  
SW 144



- 92 Warp printed furnishing textile**  
76 x 81.5  
circa 1920  
The shadowy effect of warp-printed fabrics was very popular in the 1920s. This is a traditional design of Chinoiserie birds and flowers. Note the use of soft colours – pale pinks and browns – which were a hangover from the early 1900s.  
ST 176
- 97 Block printed linen**  
57 x 132  
circa 1920  
This richly coloured design of a foliage and landscape shows the 1920s fashion for bright colours. Designs like this brought a splash of colour to the new suburban house.  
ST 61
- 98 Machine printed wallpaper**  
62 x 55  
1920  
Imitation tapestry wallpapers such as this were very popular in suburban houses throughout the 1920s.  
SW 90
- 99 Design for a printed textile**  
16.5 x 14  
Pencil, watercolour on detail paper  
1920  
After the First World War, brilliantly coloured and stylised designs were very popular. This is a good example of the exotic designs which were often used in suburban houses for cushions etc.  
SD 7995
- 100 Buoyant upholstery catalogue**  
29 x 23  
circa 1920  
A catalogue of typical 1920s upholstered furniture of the type used in many suburban houses. Photographs from this catalogue are also on display in the exhibition.  
SE 1152
- 101 Cover for the Buoyant upholstery catalogue**  
25.5 x 20.5  
circa 1920  
This shows examples of popular upholstered furniture arranged in a room setting for the Royal Show of 1921.  
SE 1220
- 102 Photograph of a three-piece suite from the Buoyant upholstery catalogue of circa 1920**  
25.5 x 20.5  
This is a standard 1920s three-piece suite: solid, comfortable and covered in a Silver Studio designed cretonne. Suits of this type were an essential purchase for the new suburban home.  
SE 1221
- 103 Design for a printed textile**  
24.5 x 19.5  
Pencil, gouache on tracing paper  
1922  
Japanese-influenced furnishing fabric design of cherry blossom and fans, on mauve and grey ground.  
SD 7191
- 104 Sketch for a chintz**  
21.5 x 8.5  
Pencil, watercolour on tracing paper  
1922  
These old fashioned chintz patterns of exotic birds, roses and ribbons were very popular throughout the early 20th century as they went so well with the reproduction and antique furniture.  
SD 8029
- 105 Machine printed wallpaper**  
36 x 20.5  
1924  
This all-over design of stylised flowers and leaves was typical of patterns used for wallpapers in 1920s suburban houses, particularly for halls and dining-rooms in conjunction with oak grained woodwork.  
SW 395
- 106 Design for a printed furnishing textile**  
14 x 16  
Watercolour on tracing paper  
1924  
Design of a grapevine trellis enclosing panels with views of a Mediterranean town and fishing boats.  
SD 8035
- 107 Robbialac colour chart**  
13.5 x 9  
circa 1925  
This chart shows the range of matt (flat) and gloss oil colours available in the mid 1920s. Note the preponderance of dark colours.  
SE 1009
- 108 Block printed wallpaper**  
51.5 x 71.5  
circa 1925  
An expensive Sanderson hand printed wallpaper with a design of passion flowers trailing through baskets of roses. Papers such as this would have been used in larger suburban houses.  
SW 122
- 109 Printed textile design**  
27.5 x 21.5  
Gouache on detail paper  
1925  
Chinoiserie cretonne design of pine trees and parakeet.  
SD 8107
- 110 Waring & Gillow's Catalogue**  
22 x 13  
circa 1925  
Catalogue of furniture, curtains, linen, glass and china for the suburban home. A photograph of light fittings from this catalogue is also included in this exhibition.  
SE 1242
- 111 Photograph of a page of lamps and light fittings from Waring & Gillow's Catalogue of circa 1925**  
20 x 25.5  
This gives a good indication of the range of light fittings available in the 1920s.  
SE 1219
- 112 Four pages from Waring's Sale Catalogue**  
each 24 x 14.5  
circa 1925  
Three pages are of lace and net curtains, the other is of furnishing fabrics.  
SE 1197
- 93 Illustration of a sitting-room from Hampton's catalogue**  
15.5 x 10.5 (illustrated on page 31)  
circa 1920  
An idealised suburban sitting-room with a lacquered cabinet, reproduction Sheraton tea table and rich purple upholstery.  
SE 1202
- 94 Two views of the rear elevation of Rex Silver's house in Wellgarth Road, London, NW11**  
each 8 x 13.5  
circa 1930  
Rex Silver moved into this house in 1926. This is an excellent example of the vernacular revival in English domestic architecture which had begun in the latter half of the 19th century and was to have a great influence on English suburban architecture. Note the details such as the dripstone over the gable window, the large roof and leaded windows.  
SE 605 a & b
- 95 Printed linen furnishing textile**  
69 x 79  
circa 1920  
These richly coloured designs, rather scorned by the design conscious but very popular in suburban houses, show how English design was being influenced by the French at this time.  
ST 169
- 96 Design for printed cotton bedspread**  
18.5 x 16.5  
Watercolour on tracing paper  
1920  
Elegant Arts and Crafts design of peacocks and pine trees used for a bed-spread design.  
SD 7229



**113 Printed textile design**

25 x 18.5

Watercolour, gouache on tracing paper  
1925

Fashionable Oriental landscape design in blue, black and yellow for a furnishing textile.

SD 7923

**114 Design for a printed furnishing textile**

22.5 x 15.5

Pencil, watercolour on detail paper  
1925

Landscape design of trees and water for a furnishing fabric in brilliant 20s colours: black, mauve and orange.

SD 7930

**115 Machine printed wallpaper**

56.5 x 65

circa 1925

Floral tapestry wallpaper of a type which was widely used in suburban sitting-rooms.

SW 174

**116 Design for a furnishing textile**

20 x 13

Pencil, watercolour on tracing paper  
1926

Chinoiserie design of exotic birds and flowers in blue and red on brown ground, probably used for a cretonne.

SD 8011

**117 Two photographs of the sitting-room of a late 1920s house in Enfield**

each 13 x 9

This home has been lived in by the owner since new. Much of the furniture dates back to the late 1920s and shows the popular taste for a cosy oak-filled interior. Note the door curtain to exclude draughts, and the oak overmantle of the chimney-piece.

SE 1218

**118 Two photographs of the kitchen of a 1927 terraced house**

each 14 x 10

After the First World War many speculative builders reduced the cost of a new house by reducing the size of the kitchen. As the picture on the right shows, these kitchens were well supplied with fitted cupboards. The gas water boiler in the photograph at the left was installed in the 1930s by the owner to avoid having to light a fire in the summer for hot water.

SE 1215

**119 Design for printed furnishing textile**

22 x 20.5

Gouache on detail paper  
1927

Richly coloured design for a furnishing fabric of vertical bands of brown, Chinese red and black with a centre design of a melon, vine and white flowers.

SD 8010

**120 Sketch for a furnishing textile**

19 x 15.5

Pencil watercolour on tracing paper  
1927

Chinoiserie design of parakeets, roses and lilac on trellis ground typical of popular patterns for furnishing fabrics in the 1920s.

SD 8000

**121 Design for a printed furnishing textile**

25.5 x 22.5

Watercolour on detail paper  
1927

Japanese landscape scene adapted for a cretonne.

SD 8022

**122 Machine printed wallpaper**

71.5 x 52

1928

Oriental landscapes were very popular as a motif for both wallpapers and textiles in the 1920s.

SW 379

**123 Machine printed wallpaper**

51.5 x 66.5

1928

This wallpaper shows the 1920s craze for bright colours: orange, mauve and blue. The design is of tropical foliage.

SW 364

**\*124 Illustration of a sitting-room**

39.5 x 36.5

1928 (illustrated on page 19)

This is an illustration of a sitting-room from a Sanderson Wallpaper Album, showing *The Blackstone* wallpaper in situ. The furniture, light fitting and ornaments are all typical of the ordinary suburban house of the period. Note the continuing fashion for brown woodwork.

SW 624b

**125 Design for a printed furnishing textile**

23.5 x 20

Watercolour and gouache on tracing paper  
1928

This is a typical exotic 1920s furnishing fabric design, with a castle and galleon in bright blue, gold and red.

SD 7273

**126 Advertisement for Main gas fires**

24.5 x 37

1928-9

Main gas fires are being cleverly advertised in a baronial Tudor setting – just the right image to capture the imagination of the suburban resident.

SE 1059

**127 Illustration of lace curtain designs from the *Furnishing Trades Organiser***

32 x 23

1929

Nottingham lace curtains continued to be popular throughout the 1920s and 30s. The designs in these examples are very traditional.

SE 1198

**129 Photograph of Wades Hill, Winchmore Hill**

11.5 x 32

circa 1930

This is an interesting photograph, showing Wades Hill and Eversley Crescent with building plots for sale and newly-erected houses. Many of the rural areas around London were sold off for housing development in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

Lent by Mr Richard James

**130 Photograph of the Meadway Estate in Southgate, north London**

11.5 x 32

circa 1930

Sensitively laid out estate of expensive detached houses. Note the vernacular features such as hipped roofs and half-timbering.

Lent by the Borough of Enfield Local History Library.

**\*131 Seven photographs of Messrs Edmondsons Ltd show house on the Meadway estate, Southgate, north London**

each 16.5 x 12 (illustrated on pages 32, 33, 34, 35, 58)

circa 1930

The show house was furnished by a local firm, Henry Hayson of Palmers Green. Note the preponderance of dark wood (probably grained) everywhere to give an old-world atmosphere. Note too the up-to-date electrical appliances in the kitchen, such as the toaster, kettle and iron.

Lent by the Borough of Enfield Local History Library.

**\*132 Catesby's Linoleum Catalogue: For Cottage or Mansion**

22 x 17 (illustrated on pages 36, 37, 38, 39, 40)

circa 1930

Catesby's was a major supplier of linoleum for the London suburban home. The firm had a large department store in the Tottenham Court Road, the largest linoleum showroom in the world. Many of the designs shown here were very modern, and almost all were in dark shades which did not show the dirt.

SE 465

**128 Design for a printed textile**

23 x 20.5

Pencil, watercolour on detail paper  
1929

Abstract design for printed textile in pale ochre, blue, mauve and green wash.

SD 8021



- 133** A selection of pelmet and curtain patterns from *Homes and Gardens* 29 x 21.5 1930  
This gives examples of the elaborate upholstery that was still available in the 1930s.  
SE 1201
- 134** Page from Harrods Sale Catalogue 27 x 20.5 1930  
This gives a good selection of medium-priced furnishing fabrics available at the time.  
SE 1204
- 135** Printed cotton furnishing textile 94 x 77 circa 1930  
This is very typical of popular furnishing fabrics of the late 1920s and early 1930s, and of a type which would have been used in many suburban houses. Note the bright colours of the stylised flowers.  
ST 55
- 136** Cut-out wallpaper border 16 x 41  
Block printed distemper on paper circa 1930  
Rather subdued colours of mauve, blue, brown, green and black on grey ground. The design is of stylised flowers and leaves.  
SW 1656
- 137** Cut-out wallpaper border 16 x 53  
Block printed and stencilled circa 1930  
Typical cut-out wallpaper border to be used in conjunction with plain wallpaper. The design is of brightly coloured fruit and leaves.  
SW 1655
- 138** Cut-out wallpaper border 18 x 42  
Block printed distemper on paper circa 1930  
A design of leaves and stylised flowers in eight colours on white ground.  
SW 1647
- 139** Cut-out wallpaper border 13 x 38.5  
Block printed distemper and stencil on paper circa 1930  
Rich red, gold, brown and black design of fruit and leaves to be used in conjunction with plain wallpaper.  
SW 1679
- 140** Advertisement for the Berkeley Curtain Service 18.5 x 12 circa 1930  
This advertisement shows two examples of pelmets and curtain arrangements. Note the fashionable rust brown and dark green of the upper right design.  
SE 1216
- 141** Design for either a wallpaper or printed textile 39 x 29  
Watercolour and gouache on detail paper 1931  
Cubist design of interlocking squares with sprays of stylised flowers in pale colours.  
SD 7045
- 142** Design for a printed furnishing textile 35 x 28.5  
Gouache and watercolour on detail paper 1932  
Typical 1930s furnishing fabric of sprays of naturalistic roses on a cubist background.  
SD 7672
- 143** Design for a rug 27 x 17  
Watercolour on detail paper 1932  
Abstract rug design probably intended for a Paton & Baldwin Rug Kit. Rug making was a very popular pastime in the 1930s suburban home.  
SD 6917
- 144** Design for a woven furnishing textile 50.5 x 33.5  
Watercolour on detail paper 1933  
Cubist inspired fabric design which would have been used for a moquette or tapestry for upholstering sofas and chairs.  
SD #139
- 145** John Hawkins Catalogue 21 x 13.5 1933  
Contains illustrations of furnishing fabrics and dress fabrics for the ordinary suburban house, some designed by the Silver Studio.  
SE 471
- 146** Design for a printed furnishing textile 21.5 x 21.5 1933  
Gouache on detail paper 1933  
Modernist design probably for furnishing cretonne.  
SD 7558
- 147** Nine photographs of a 1934 house in Southgate each 8.5 x 13  
These photographs are of a George Reed house in Arlington Road, Southgate. The owner had altered the decorations and fittings but little. In particular note the elegant cubist stained glass in the fan-lights, the excellent graining and the stylish panel electric fire in the bedroom.  
SE 1241
- 148** Photograph from Paton & Baldwin's Rug Craft Catalogue of 1934 20.5 x 25  
The rug in this photograph is a typical 1930s cubist design very similar to those produced by the Silver Studio.  
SE 1226
- 149** Paton & Baldwin Catalogue for homemade rugs 24.5 x 18 1934  
A photograph from this catalogue is also included in the exhibition.  
SE 464
- 150** Page of furnishing textiles from *Warrings Review* 21.5 x 14.5 1934  
This gives three illustrations of 1930s modern furnishing fabrics.  
SE 1200
- 151** Design for a printed furnishing textile 23.5 x 20  
Watercolour on detail paper 1934  
Modernist cretonne design of triangles and circles in pale blues and grey with vertical stripes of blue, red and yellow. This type of design was very popular with the more fashion conscious of suburban residents in the mid and late 30s.  
SD 7559
- 152** Page from Waring & Gillow's Linen Catalogue 21.5 x 14 1934  
Elegant Italian lace tablecloth and placemats for the prosperous suburban home.  
SE 1196
- 153** Design for a rug 22.5 x 14  
Gouache on cartridge paper 1934  
Abstract rug design, probably for a Paton & Baldwin Rug Kit.  
SD 8042
- 154** Photograph of the North Circular Road at Palmers Green 15 x 21.5 circa 1935  
This photograph was taken shortly after the North Circular road was built. The houses lining the road were typical of the 'Bypass' sent so despised by contemporary writers.  
*Lent by the Borough of Enfield Local History Library.*
- 155** Photograph of pairs of semi-detached houses in Southgate 11.5 x 16.5 circa 1935  
Note the 1930s custom of painting the external woodwork in two colours – one dark, the other white or cream. Popular colour combinations were dark green, dark brown or red, all with cream. This custom may have come from the Netherlands, where casement windows are still painted in this manner.  
*Lent by the Borough of Enfield Local History Library.*



- 156 Gloss paint colour card produced by John Lane & Son**  
 circa 1935  
 24 x 42

Gloss paint, more usually known as enamel paint, became popular for internal work only in the 1920s. Formerly it was used largely for exterior work. Matt oil paint or eggshell paint was the more usual treatment for internal walls and woodwork. Note the preponderance of dark colours, particularly greens and browns.  
 SW 1208

- 157 Six samples of linoleum**  
 56 x 81 (mount size)  
 circa 1935

Linoleum was the most popular floor-covering for the suburban home. The patterned examples here would be used for bedroom floors, while the plain and mottled samples would be for kitchens, bathrooms and halls.  
 SE 1221

- 158 Machine printed wallpaper**  
 41.5 x 25  
 circa 1935

A very typical cubist wallpaper of the late 1930s in greens and orange with white feather pattern overlay.  
 SW 756

- 159 Six printed linoleum samples**  
 56 x 81 (mount size)  
 circa 1935

The imitation Turkey carpet linoleum was very popular for dining-rooms. The cubist sample was probably for kitchens and bathrooms.  
 SE 1220

- 160 Machine printed wallpaper**  
 36.5 x 25.5  
 circa 1935

Cubist design of rectangles and waves in typical 1930s colours of browns, orange and green.  
 SW 983

- \*161 Embossed wallpaper and cut-out corner**  
 37 x 49.5 (illustrated on page 27)  
 circa 1935

Plain wallpaper used in conjunction with decorative corners and friezes were one of the most ubiquitous forms of decoration in the suburban house.  
 SW 2000

- 162 Wallpaper and border**  
 35 x 49.5  
 circa 1935

Semi abstract embossed wallpaper with simple border of horizontal lines.  
 SW 2001

- 163 Page of Marshall Roberts Catalogue**  
 32.5 x 23.5  
 circa 1935

This catalogue shows a good range of 1930s furnishing textiles, ranging from floral cretonnes and traditional damasks to modernist cubist-inspired designs.  
 SE 1213

- 164 Three illustrations of wallpapers**  
 each 20.3 x 13.3

Reproduction book illustrations on coated art paper  
 circa 1935

These are illustrations from Sanderson's catalogues showing the fashionable hand printed wallpaper corners used in conjunction with plain papers.  
 SD 1478

- 165 Machine printed wallpaper**  
 79 x 56  
 circa 1935

This is a late 30s suburban wallpaper *par excellence*. The cubist design of triangles and half circles is in browns and oranges which went very well with dark oak grained woodwork.  
 SW 725

- 166 Page of lace curtain patterns from Marshall Roberts Catalogue**  
 32 x 23  
 1935

Lace curtains remained popular throughout the whole period covered by this exhibition.  
 SE 1195

- 167 Design for a printed textile**  
 29.5 x 22.5  
 Watercolour on detail paper  
 1935

Abstract printed textile design in blue, green and yellow on olive ground.  
 SD 6094

- 168 Glazed chintz**  
 98 x 133  
 circa 1935

This design epitomises the nostalgia for the Tudor period in the 1930s suburban house. The rope trellis pattern frames oval panels containing Tudor galleons. The chocolate brown of the background of this textile was a very fashionable colour at this time.  
 ST 59

- 169 Woven furnishing textile**  
 31 x 33.5  
 circa 1935

Simple woven designs became very popular in the late 1930s. Their appeal lay in the elegance of their designs and the good quality of the material used. The design of this one, single leaf forms in beige on a dull green ground, reflected the growing interest in Scandinavian design.  
 ST 11

- 170 Page from Morgan Squires Sale Catalogue**  
 25 x 56  
 circa 1935

Cheap furniture – much of it oak – of a type which was often used in suburban houses. Note the range of styles offered which include a neo Jacobean bureau and a modernist sideboard with triangle motifs.  
 SE 1212

- 171 Three photographs from Bowman's Catalogue of 1935**  
 each 20.5 x 25.5

Examples of 1930s modernist furniture for dining, sitting and bedrooms. In the 1920s, Bowman's was one of London's best known furniture stores, specialising in good modern furniture at a very reasonable cost. This shop would be an obvious choice for the fashion conscious young suburban couple wanting the most modern furniture at an affordable price.  
 SE 1222, 1223, 1224

- 172 Design for a printed textile**  
 29.5 x 22.5  
 Watercolour on detail paper  
 1935

Abstract printed textile design in blue, green and yellow on ochre ground.  
 SD 6094

- 173 Design for a printed linen or cretonne**  
 38.5 x 31.5  
 Pencil, watercolour on detail paper  
 1935

Neo Jacobean needlework designs such as this were very popular throughout the 1930s for suburban houses. They went so well with the reproduction Jacobean oak furniture.  
 SD 8052

- 174 Photograph of large 1930s suburban houses in Palmers Green**  
 11.5 x 16  
 1936

Note the different exterior detailing given to these basically similar houses. Some are pebble-dashed, others have half-timbering or are given a finish of superior quality brick.  
*lent by the Borough of Enfield Local History Library.*

- 175 Design for a printed linen or cretonne**  
 32 x 27.5  
 Watercolour on detail paper  
 1936

Neo Jacobean needlework designs of birds and deer.  
 SD 7789

- 176 Glazed chintz**  
 91 x 125  
 circa 1937

During the 1930s, Regency inspired patterns became popular for both wallpapers and textiles. The contrast between light and dark colours, in this instance beige and deep salmon pink, was also a feature of patterns at this time.  
 ST 48

- 177 Copy of Harrods News**  
 23 x 16.5  
 1937

An interesting selection of modern and period interiors for the more prosperous suburban house.  
 SE 1003



178 Catesby's Cork Linoleum Catalogue

22 x 18  
1938

Selection of modernist linoleum designs—  
some are illustrated as part of complete  
room settings.  
SE 466

179 Design for a chintz

38 x 29.5  
Pencil, watercolour on detail paper  
1938

Chintz with regency designs became  
popular in the late 1930s and remained  
fashionable well into the 1950s.  
SD 7973

180 Design for a printed cotton

28 x 31  
Watercolour on detail paper  
1940

Simple designs such as these, inspired by  
mid-European folk art, became  
increasingly popular for furnishing  
fabrics during the late 1930s.  
SD 7796

181 Design for a printed furnishing textile

27.5 x 24.5  
Watercolour on detail paper  
1942

Conventional chintz design of sprigs of  
blue red and mauve flowers on a beige  
ground.  
SD 7218



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