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A STRATEGY OF DISTINCTION: CULTURAL IDENTITY AND THE CAREWS OF ANTONY

FRASER, JENNIFER

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**A STRATEGY OF DISTINCTION:
CULTURAL IDENTITY AND THE CAREWS OF ANTONY**

by

JENNIFER ANNE FRASER, MA

A thesis submitted to the
University of Plymouth
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

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DRAKE CIRCUS, PLYMOUTH PL4 8AA.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Sub-Committee.

Work submitted for this research degree at the Plymouth University has not formed part of any other degree either at Plymouth University or at another establishment.

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ABSTRACT

When William Carew (1689–1744) and Reginald Pole-Carew (1753–1835) unexpectedly inherited the Antony estates in the southwest of England, each invested in material culture to create, maintain and justify his distinction as a landowning member of elite society. Discourses around the uses of visual and material culture throughout the eighteenth century are usually framed in contrast: either the ostentatious collections of the hereditary nobility which denoted rank, wealth and power, or the status-seeking “middling sorts” who used luxury goods to paper over social and cultural gaps. In the space between these two social groups were the Carews (and a great number of landed gentry like them) who built relatively unpretentious country houses and who commissioned, collected and displayed luxury goods as statements of an identity not based on declarations of affluence, prestige, or social mobility.

Using original, unpublished, archival research and testing the findings against historical and contemporary studies, the interdisciplinary approaches in this thesis will analyse the Carews’ uses of luxury goods – in country-house building, landscaping and portraiture– to cultivate an identity commensurate with their aims. Unpacking a strategy of distinction for each of William Carew and Reginald Pole-Carew offers a new perspective on eighteenth-century conspicuous consumption. The findings assert that what the Carews commissioned, collected and displayed fills a gap in current scholarship and must be integrated into any comprehensive understanding of the uses of luxury goods throughout the century.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 1704, 14-year-old William, the second son of Sir John Carew, inherited his father's estates and the title as fifth baronet of Antony when his elder brother died leaving no issue. Seventy years later, his 19-year-old great-nephew, Reginald Pole, the grandson of a Devonshire clergyman, could not have imagined that he would inherit his cousin's estates (and append the Carew name to his own) due to similar circumstances. The attention of each of these two men was promptly focused on a strategy designed to create, sustain and safeguard an identity that would bind them to their Cornish lands and to their wider social milieu. This thesis will examine their consumption of art and design in three areas: buildings, landscaping and paintings (portraiture) as specific aspects of gentry material culture (and not the generality of household objects typically examined in studies primarily based on inventories or accounts.)¹

Heritage industries steer visitors to England's eighteenth-century stately homes to view their contents as cultural objects, displayed through the carefully curated lenses of ownership, association and heritage. Grand statement (so-called prestige) houses – Blenheim or Syon, for example – claim significant historical, political or social figures whose personal exploits provide useful narratives to valorise connections between famous resident and renowned

¹ For example: Jon Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers: Supplying the Country House in Eighteenth-Century England,' *The Economic History Review* 64, no. 3 (2011), online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0289.2010.00562.x>]; Andrew Hann and Stobart, *The Country House: Material Culture and Consumption* (David Brown Book Company, 2015); Stobart, "'So Agreeable and Suitable a Place": The Character, Use and Provisioning of a Late Eighteenth-Century Suburban Villa,' *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39, no. 1 (2016), online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1754-0208.12279>]; Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660–1760* (Taylor & Francis, 2002).

residence. Conversely, owners of a greater number of smaller and less magnificent country houses often lacked any corresponding military prowess, scandalous association, or the gloss of literary imagination. Their personalities, family connections and contributions to the material culture of the house all but evaporate for want of a compelling storyline. We often experience them only as dull-eyed portraits peering out of painted gloom, dimmed further by brief guidebook entries which fail to stimulate interest in the sitter, their connections to the house or the portraits hanging on the walls beside them. This thesis is not, however, a critique of heritage industry studies but is focused on two such effaced owners of a Cornish country house – the Carews of Antony – and asks two questions: what is the value of examining the self-fashioning strategies of individuals whose lives are inconsequential to most; and what does knowing them add to our understanding of the period?

Eighteenth-century England is often viewed through the prisms of rank and economics: the peerage's conspicuous consumption has been well documented² and recent scholarship has focused on the so-called middling sorts, as supplanting the highest-born as the principal consumers of luxury goods.³ However, despite the contrast between these two social groups providing a neat

² See, for example: John Fowler and John Cornforth, *English Decoration in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1974); Maxine Berg, *Luxury & Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

³ Scholarly works on this topic include: Neil McKendrick, 'The Consumer Revolution of Eighteenth-Century England', in *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, McKendrick, John Brewer, and J.H. Plumb (eds), (London: 1982); Lawrence Klein, 'Politeness for Plebes. Consumption and Social Identity in Early Eighteenth-Century England,' in Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (eds.), *The Culture of Consumption: Image, Object, Text*, (London: Routledge, 1995).

shorthand for historians, there is a notable deficiency in literature relating to the uses of material culture among the relatively large number of gentry landowners.⁴ While parallels among analogous families of rank appear as occasional, illustrative comparisons, this thesis is not an attempt to argue representativeness. Rather, it is a focused enquiry into the material culture of two generations of one family, and its findings argue that their responses to the social requirements of the age – to project a cultural identity – contribute to and enrich our understanding of Britain’s eighteenth-century cultural landscape. Property ownership bound the Carews to a specific place, a particular status and to societal codes of behaviour; their investments in material culture exemplify collaboration between obligation (their functional *locus* of provincial responsibility) and selfhood. Mediated by personal relationships and the intertwined, often dialectic relationships between people and things, what the Carews commissioned, collected and displayed is read as a defining strategy of distinction for each of them.

Accordingly, William Carew’s (hereinafter ‘William’) and Reginald Pole-Carew’s (hereinafter ‘Reginald’) individual agency exploited an array of goods to construct an identity that does not fall into the standard polarities of the

⁴ Rosie MacArthur, 'Kinship, Remembrance, and Luxury Goods in the Eighteenth Century: A Study of the Hanbury Family of Kelmarsch', *History of Retailing and Consumption* 1:2 (2015). Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/2373518X.2015.1062323>]. This article offers recent scholarship on this under-reported social group albeit through the lens of luxury consumption.

conspicuous consumption by the noblest and the socially aspirant.⁵ The difference, rather than quantitative or qualitative, is based on motives to establish a social position rather than to aggrandise it. While upper echelon aristocrats, such as the dukes of Devonshire and Northumberland, expended vast amounts of money on lavish and impressive, often imported, decorations for their palaces as expressions of social prestige, the Carews privileged close relationships – family and friendships – selecting material culture that expressed these connections. Northumberland’s art collection is comparable in visual grandeur only to that at Chatsworth, each collection the repository for works of art spanning 2,000 or more years.⁶ Numerous paintings by Titian, Raphael and van Dyck clothe the walls of Syon House whilst a first-century Roman marble depicting Aphrodite and a copy of the Hellenistic *Dying Gaul* greet guests in the Hall. By comparison, the Carews’ strategies of distinction embraced neither Old Master paintings nor antique sculpture: the images welcoming visitors to Antony were family portraits by artists whose reputations were cultivated in the eighteenth century. Thus, it becomes apparent that the Carews’ collection represents introspection rather than ostentation, a manifestation of the primacy of relational networks, and evidence of more modest individualities.

This study frequently uses the terms *élite* and *gentry*. In current historical studies such as Paul Langford’s *A Polite and Commercial People* (1998),

⁵ See Colin Campbell, *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism* (Alcuin Academics, 2005), p.288.

⁶ The National Gallery, with the assistance of the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Art Fund and others, bought Raphael’s *Madonna of the Pinks* (1507) for £22 million.

Penelope Corfield's *Class by Name and Number* (1987), and Hannah Grieg's *The Beau Monde* (2013), the term 'élite' is used to refer to people whose status, conferred by wealth, birth, or power, qualified them for membership in the uppermost echelons of society, while 'gentry' is understood as denoting landowners, with or without a title, who could live entirely from estate income. Since well-ordered sequences of ranks and degrees in human society described a divinely-ordained hierarchy embracing the whole of creation (often referred to as the 'Great Chain of Being'),⁷ a title provided the most reliable means of distinction, with social precedents invariably determined by the 'antiquity of the original patent'.⁸ Nonetheless, those holding the rank above knight were indiscriminately referred to as the aristocracy, even though the term conflated hereditary nobles (dukes, earls, marquesses and barons), who sat in the House

⁷ The Great Chain or Golden Chain were among the most frequently cited visual references: Jacob's Ladder was the main alternative, but that was going out of fashion by the 18th century as the notion of ascent to heaven was taken less and less literally. See Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: a study in the history of an idea*, 1936, Harvard University Press. See also Pope's *Epistle 1 (An Essay on Man)* online [<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2428/2428-h/2428-h.htm>]. 'Of the Nature and State of Man' referred to a 'vast chain of being'. Pope stressed the fact that we can only understand things based on what is around us, embodying the relationship with empiricism that characterises the Augustan era. He encouraged the discovery of new things while remaining within the bounds one has been given. These bounds, or the Chain of Being, designate each living thing's place in the universe, and only God can see the system in full. Pope was adamant about God's omniscience, and used that as a sure sign that we can never reach a level of knowledge comparable to His. In the last line however, he questions whether God or man plays a bigger role in maintaining the chain once it is established.

⁸ Penelope J. Corfield, 'Lords & Ladies: Titles, Status and Precedence', *London Electoral History, 1700–1850: Steps towards Democracy*, (Bristol Academic Press, 2013), p. 3 refers to the endurance of hereditary titles which 'could not be recalled' or assailed unless by an Act of Attainder for high treason.

of Lords, and the non-peerage upper gentry, (viscounts, baronets and knights) who were eligible for election to the Commons.⁹

Because the Carews arrived at their status by way of descent from Welsh nobility with royal connections and a seventeenth century hereditary baronetcy granted to a mutual paternal ancestor, they were *de facto* members of the established aristocracy (the titled gentry) although among its lower ranks.¹⁰ William inherited his father's title and was afforded the honorific 'Sir'; Reginald would have been referred to as a 'gentleman' as possessor of a social status separate from a title but still denoting men of high birth, good social standing, leisure and wealth.

To guide eighteenth-century persons concerned with nuanced intra-rank hierarchies, detailed handbooks such as *Of the Several Degrees of Gentry, and their Precedency* (1719) were designed to distinguish among the four 'excellent' (royal) degrees – earl, marquess, viscount and baron – and the 'noble' ranks of baronet and knight (further subdivided into nine categories descending from

⁹ John Cannon, *Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge University Press, 1984) attempted to highlight the differences between 'poor' peerage families and those of equivalent rank who were wealthier (some due to advantageous marriage settlements), larger landowners, and had fewer debts. He acknowledged the difficulties in quantifying economic worth in relation to power due to insufficient data noting that when the 4th Duke of Manchester died in 1788, his "fortune bore no proportion to his dignity", p. 126.

¹⁰ Although William and Reginald could claim land and descent from 11th century nobility it should be noted that as Baronets of Antony, the Carews were not ennobled but hereditary knights. The present hereditary Order of Baronets in England dates from 22 May 1611 when it was erected by James I who granted the first Letters Patent to 200 gentlemen of good birth with an income of at least £1,000 a year. See: Martin D. Lindsay of Dowhill, Bt, *The Baronetage*, 2nd edition, (self-published (1979)).

'gentlemen of ancestry' to gentlemen 'of blood').¹¹ Crispin Gill's 1995 survey of Cornish landowners notes that the county was 'rich in landed gentry but short on titled aristocrats',¹² with the majority, like the Carews, positioned on the fifth tier of an aristocratic hierarchy. In this thesis, 'gentry' is used to describe William and Reginald, even when, as a lower subset of the aristocracy, the term is elastic at best. Developments in social history over the past generation have travelled in two main directions: towards a more quantitative approach to social groups, or towards an interest in their underlying *mentalités*.¹³ Without statistical evidence, however, one can never be sure how representative is a collective term. The problem is highlighted in the first chapter of *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660–1830*, (2004) which notes the difficulties nominating aristocratic culture as different from that of other social groups.¹⁴ Helen Berry's tabular account for the status of subscribers to the Newcastle Assembly Rooms settles on a category defined as the 'nobility/greater gentry' as being uppermost in a social scale, followed by 'lesser gentry'.¹⁵ There is a time-honoured assumption that gentry status claimed wealth and position; although, it did not (as

¹¹ Anon., *Of the Several Degrees of Gentry, and their Precedency*, (published by J. Smith, 1719), p. iii.v cited in Corfield, *Lords and Ladies*, p. 8.

¹² Crispin Gill, *The Great Cornish Families: A History of the People and their Houses*, (Halsegrove, 1995), introduction, p.i.

¹³ The history of mentalities, or *histoire des mentalités*, is a term used to describe works of history aimed at describing and analysing the ways in which people of a given time period thought about, interacted with, and classified the world around them.

¹⁴ Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory, (eds), *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England*, (Ashgate Publishing, 2004), p.1.

¹⁵ Berry, 'Creating Polite Space: the Organisation and Social Function of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms', in *ibid.*, p. 125.

Corfield emphasises), depend on the ownership of a country estate.¹⁶ As a social label, 'gentry' fails, ultimately, to account for its constituents. From the *nobilitas minor*, the sons of nobles and hereditary baronets (William) to non-titled estate owners (Reginald), municipal office-holders, scholars, and the clergy, all were gathered (indiscriminately) into a category denoting high-ranking persons. Indeed, by the later seventeenth century, people referred not only to the (titled) 'landed gentry' or the 'country gentry' but also to the 'city gentry' and 'town gentry' which included successful businessmen and professionals who were living off private incomes.¹⁷

The conventional view, voiced by Samuel Johnson, preferred that social position was set 'by the fixed, invariable rules of distinction of rank ...,'¹⁸ (or, as Pope rhymed: 'Order is Heav'n's first law; / and this confest, / Some are, and must be, / greater than the rest') articulating the notion that landed estates, established lineage and wealth were the main ingredients of status.¹⁹ Corfield admits there is no strict legal definition of a gentleman and identifies the term's social and moral frameworks from Chaucer's 'veray parfit gentil knyght'²⁰ to a courtesy title afforded non-peerage, leisured men of property and pedigree.²¹ Throughout the long eighteenth century there were attempts to draw up social

¹⁶ Corfield, *Lords and Ladies*, p. 9.

¹⁷ Corfield, *ibid.*, p.9.

¹⁸ James Boswell and Edmond Malone, *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LLD*, (J. Sharpe, 1830, 2009), p. 243.

¹⁹ Pope, *Essay on Man*, Epistle IV, lines 49–50.

²⁰ Geoffrey Chaucer, 'The Knight's Tale' from the *Canterbury Tales* 1387–1400, British Library.

²¹ Corfield, *The Rivals; Landed and Other Gentlemen*, in N.B. Harte and R. Quinault (eds), *Landed Society in Britain, 1700–1914* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 1–33.

tables, but we should be circumspect when relying on the findings of Gregory King (1688), Joseph Massie (1759) and Patrick Colquhoun (1801) as evidence of status.²² Common to all are the “A” list comprising Temporal lords, Spiritual lords, Baronets, Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, Persons in offices (greater and lesser), Persons in the Law and Clergymen (greater/lesser). Despite the 113-year span between King and Colquhoun, and the political agenda of each compiler,²³ there is no accounting for the shifts in society as the middling sorts scaled the social ladder and the meanings of the term ‘gentry’ responded to its new constituents. Thomas Heyck reminds us that although there was little mobility among the titled aristocracy throughout the period, none of the rungs on the social ladder was legally closed to outsiders.²⁴ Money was the key: property, and status, could be purchased.

Gregory King’s table presents a suspiciously simple society running from the peer to the peasant, through discrete social groups, each sharing common status, occupation and income. By this census, William’s rank appears third on the list as one among 800 baronetcies, between lords and knights, the entire cohort achieving an average income of £880 per annum. Since titles were in the monarch’s gift, the numbers of high-ranking, titled, heads of family (when tallied against King’s principal resource – hearth-tax revenues) are probably the least

²² Each reproduced at Appendix 5.

²³ King’s interest was the nation’s capacity to raise tax revenues for wars against France; Massie railed against the sugar monopoly; and Colquhoun highlighted the nation’s ability to afford care for the poor.

²⁴ Thomas Heyck, ‘The Age of the Landed Oligarchy’, *A History of the Peoples of the British Isles: From 1688 to 1914* (Taylor and Francis, 2013), p. 50.

problematic calculation. When it comes to positioning Reginald, difficulties arise in attempting to group status in a way that can be applied uniformly across the tables and is socially meaningful; although lacking a title, he is at one and the same time 'landed' and by virtue of that fact, 'gentry'. The arithmetic in Massie's mid-century table was deliberately articulated to account for the frequencies of tea, coffee and chocolate consumption. It is certainly true that Reginald consumed all three beverages, and household receipts show regular payments for large quantities of these luxury goods between 1823 and 1834,²⁵ too late for Massie's survey whose findings are, in any event, inconclusive on the question of Reginald's status. Colquhoun's calculations imitated King's statistics to the extent that his tables show similarly broad social categories among higher-ranking citizens but his efforts are clearly concentrated on more thorough delineations among women (who had not previously been counted) and the lower social orders (e.g. innkeepers, mine workers and confined lunatics.) 'Occupational' designations are organised by descending annual income – from £200,000 (the King) to £10 (paupers, prisoners, and prostitutes) – by which calculation we deduce Reginald's social position as equivalent to that of William earlier in the century.²⁶ Of course, social stratification was determined not simply by income but through often-countless yet discernible social indicators including

²⁵ CE/E/51 is a bundle of grocery receipts for, among others, Jordan almonds, chocolate, sugar, 'Caroline' rice, raisins and coffee. Reginald's household consumed 2.9lbs of "best coffee", 145lbs of rice, 154¾ lbs of sugar and 63½ lbs of chocolate in 1830.

²⁶ CA/H/133 – Summaries of accounts and valuations between 1784 and 1805 show estate income (rents, tithes etc.) in that latter year of £6,716.14s.1d.

independent wealth, family background, family and social connections and education. Thus, because of their broad-brush classifications, these social tables give us a good indication of, but not a precise pigeon-holed, social position among the gentry. As the economist Peter Mathias concluded, they provide 'historical enlightenment without quantitative accuracy'.²⁷

Within the landscape, architecture was a key factor in the expression of aesthetic, political and economic superiority: the scale and grandeur emphasising the owner's social position – housing collections of luxury goods that imagined or reinforced influential associations.²⁸ The Carews' home, Antony House, was not a prestige mansion with strong connections to Crown or State; it was the medium-sized country residence of a landed family, one of hundreds across the country, and the ancestral seat represented a lineage that spanned 500 years at the dawn of the eighteenth century. The social capital of rank and education, plus the advantages of disposable income, conferred upon them a group identity; its terms of membership obliging them to follow a set of culturally conspicuous undertakings that framed their social position. Thus, commissioning the construction of a modern country house and the expertise of famous garden designers or artists to produce the visual culture that reinforced family lineage

²⁷ Peter Mathias, 'The Social Structure in the Eighteenth Century: A Calculation by Joseph Massie', *The Economic History Review*, vol. 10, no. 1, 1957, pp. 30–45, online [www.jstor.org/stable/2600060].

²⁸ Saltram's Catherine Parker owned a writing desk passed on to her through the Duchess of Montagu and Marlborough which had reputedly been made for Louis XIV. Christopher Christie, *The British Country House in the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 31–32.

(alongside other genres that made statements of taste) can be seen as the foundations of a strategy whereby William and Reginald created an identity not only responsive to their time and situation, but also designed to consolidate and legitimise an inheritance.

William's accession to the baronetcy brought with it manors, totalling 21 properties, and 'scattered lands' across Devon and Cornwall providing royalties, tithes, and other (seasonal) profits from wrecks and fisheries. Rights to and revenues from the profits of his estate's agricultural production, in metal mines (tin, copper and lead) and timber (coppice or woodland), 'produced him yearlie a very considerable income'.²⁹ His marriage to the Earl of Coventry's daughter was settled with a dowry of £5,000 (which funded the building of Antony House) plus income from lands in Middlesex and Warwickshire.³⁰ Added to these were lucrative offices and pensions for William's parliamentary work, all of which accumulated to support the lifestyle of a well-funded country gentleman who could also afford a permanent residence in London. Reginald's marriage to Jemima Yorke, the grand-daughter of Earl Hardwicke, added £15,000 to his coffers, manors in Cornwall, Devon and Dorset to the landed portfolio, and a

²⁹ CRO Ref R/5879 'Values of the Hon'ble Sir William Carews demesne Lands as they are modestly computed to be worth yearly', dated 24 March, 1711.

³⁰ Antony archive CVS/Y/25 contains letters concerning the marriage of Anne Coventry to William but is very fragile and therefore unusable. However, CVA/AA/20 contains information of a visit to Antony in 1712 by the Earl of Coventry to arrange his daughter's marriage wherein the settlement of a marriage portion and lands is outlined.

grand townhouse in the capital.³¹ In this iteration, William and Reginald each exemplified Defoe's pen portrait of a gentleman as 'such who live on estates, and without the mechanism of employment':³² a status enjoyed by a small but powerful percentage of the population of England throughout the century. Undeniably, status and money provided the opportunities to create an identity beyond a position in a social hierarchy: there were more landowning families who formed the fifth division of the English gentry throughout the century and each, to one extent or another, created identity through material culture. Yet, to date, baronets (William), as the larger percentage of title holders (and concomitantly tax payers and politicians), and the greater gentry (Reginald), have been neglected in available conspicuous consumption discourses.

The value of land ownership and the functioning power behind the government of the country had, historically, been tightly bound. Given that William had legitimate claims to a landed interest in both England and Wales, at the beginning of the century, it was imperative that the incidental heir's significant pedigree and entitlements be publicly rehearsed. Thus, the appearance of Antony – in substantial grounds, with sequences of entertainment spaces, and displays of fine art – vaunted William's hegemonic presence in the local

³¹ Devon Heritage Centre, reference number 281M/T/1060 – Marriage Settlement by lease and release, Jemima Yorke and Reginald Pole-Carew, 12 November 1784.

³² Defoe quoted in Heyck, *A History of the Peoples*, p. 49. Cannon's *Aristocratic Century*, p. 153 notes that the peerage comprised about 400 families who, between them, owned approximately 20% of all cultivated land in England and Wales. See also: Richard G. Wilson, 'The Landed Elite' in Harry T. Dickinson, (ed.), *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain*, (Malden MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), p.159.

community. British country-house owners were unconcerned about what the middling sorts thought of their properties; grand edifices and costly collections were created for the approbation of their own peer group. Friends and neighbours, Richard Eliot and Richard Edgcumbe, shared parallel social objectives. Although the architecture of Port Eliot or Mount Edgcumbe bears little comparison to Antony,³³ the Eliot collection of paintings and the portrait galleries of the Edgumbes were similar to William's at Antony, and Reptonian gardens at both sites share affinities with those created for Reginald. Each suggests analogous qualities and characteristics – displayed in commissions for, and the uses of, material possessions. At the beginning of the century William, Eliot and Edgcumbe had in common near-identical status and politics which were authoritative at regional and national levels. Although principally a family residence, the responsibilities inherent in the legacy of Antony (Port Eliot/Mount Edgcumbe) shackled its owner – one foot to the affairs of state and the other to the ancestral estate – consequently affecting broader constituencies than landowners' immediate estates. According to Lewis Namier's *History of Parliament 1754–1790*,³⁴ a handful of West Country propertied aristocrats influenced early eighteenth-century elections in 111 of the 417 borough seats in

³³ Port Eliot's 5th century monastery was given an eighteenth-century 'facelift' by John Soane, and Mount Edgcumbe's castellated Tudor manor was modified by several interventions dating from the mid-eighteenth century culminating in a total rebuild in 1958 after bombing raids gutted the house in 1941. A 16th century ancestor built the house and successive generations landscaped the gardens. Online [<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>].

³⁴ Lawrence Namier and John Brooke (eds), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1754–1790*, (London: Haynes Publishing, (1964) 1985).

Parliament with Lord Falmouth (Hugh Boscawen) and Edgcumbe controlling seventeen seats between them.³⁵ As members of the upper ranks of society, William, Eliot and Edgcumbe benefited from family wealth and the (often self-serving) moral underpinnings of loyalty to Crown and Church. Within this *clique* they formed an undeniably powerful, discretionary élite, trained from childhood to fulfil pre-ordained roles in society.

The offspring of élite landowners had to learn the moral autonomy and independent agency associated with their family's status before they could perform their social role effectively. Thus, a so-called aristocratic education intended to fit heirs (and occasionally spares) for Society and for responsibilities in government: both were inevitable prospects for first-born sons of privilege.³⁶ Alongside grammar, logic and rhetoric, students absorbed a pervasive code of values, the duty of service, and the rightness of patrician rule.³⁷ Incubated within an 'élite British agenda of social emulation, aristocratic competition, and [...] self-representation', well-born youths forged friendships and enduring alliances which

³⁵ Gordon.E. Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1963), p. 111 cites a '... general preference ... for members of noble or eminent gentry families to serve as their representatives [because, it was felt] men of rank and connexions would do most to further the townspeople's interests, and that they were better fitted by their breeding and education to sit in Parliament'.

³⁶ When capitalised, 'Society' refers to the élite and their activities; lower case 'society' is a generalised noun. Relevant discussions are found in George C. Brauer, *The Education of a Gentleman: Theories of Gentlemanly Education in England, 1660–1775* (Bookman Associates, 1959), p. 117, and Henry French and Mark Rothery, "'Upon Your Entry into the World": Masculine Values and the Threshold of Adulthood among Landed Elites in England 1680–1800', *Social History* 33, no. 4 (01 November 2008), Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03071020802410387>].

³⁷ Cannon, *Aristocratic Century*, p. 34. A classical education not only encouraged a common sense of purpose, but 'shaped the context of their lives intellectually and physically.'

reinforced close family ties.³⁸ Edgcumbe, for example, had been educated at Eton; the names of William and Eliot appear among the alumni of the newer, but no less illustrious, Blundell's School. William, in 1707, and Eliot, a year later, went 'up' to Exeter College, Oxford, popular with the offspring of Cornish and Devonshire aristocrats for its emphasis on tradition, (although kinsman Humphrey Prideaux considered it noteworthy only for 'drinking & duncery'),³⁹ where they rubbed shoulders with their Cornish neighbour Hugh Acland, the fifth Baronet of Killerton (William's Haccombe relative), and followed in the footsteps of Anthony Ashley Cooper, Exeter's most illustrious alumnus. Edgcumbe attended Trinity College, Cambridge where he became friends with Robert Walpole, the first Earl of Orford,⁴⁰ and Reginald was schooled at Winchester where he met his future political ally, Henry Addington. At Oxford, Reginald came across John Parker of Saltram and fell in with William Petty, the second Earl of Shelburne⁴¹ and the group surrounding William Pitt.⁴²

³⁸ Vicky Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique: Neoclassicism in Britain, 1760–1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 163, expands on the conceptual correlation of ancient Rome and 18th century England.

³⁹ Humphrey Prideaux, the Dean of Norwich from 1702, was a kinsman of William and educated at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. See French and Rothery, *Man's Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities, 1660–1900* (OUP Oxford, 2012), p.93. Prideaux's son, Edmund, a graduate of Christ Church, became a talented amateur architectural artist whose views of aristocratic houses included Antony.

⁴⁰ From that association he secured a seat at the Treasury board, later promoted to the post of joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, worth £3,000 a year. His political campaigning, on behalf of Walpole, promoted him to chief government manager in Cornwall, making him the "disposer of the government's money for buying the Cornish elections for Members in Parliament". Eveline Cruickshanks, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1715–1754*, 2 vols. (Boydell & Brewer, 1970).

⁴¹ Parker is referred to as a member of the 'Shelburne party' by James Harris, Lord of the Treasury. Harris, Shelburne's Wiltshire neighbour, kept journals of the debates in Parliament from 1762 until his death, capturing conversations and discussions with wit and humour, although his own

Matriculating from England's universities bestowed lifetime membership in an exclusive club: the discriminatory characteristics of which are ably, if slightly paradoxically, illustrated by the experience of the Cornish author, Richard Polwhele.⁴³ Despite his claims to the ancestral estates at Treworgan and a functionally comparable early education (Truro Grammar School's curriculum was based on that of Eton⁴⁴), when Polwhele went 'up' to Christ Church he complained that he was unable to make friends. His tutor, Archdeacon Nares, explained that those at Oxford had already made all the friends they would need at school, intimating that Truro Grammar's alumnus (despite clear social advantages) lacked the intrinsic support networks enjoyed by his fellow students.

speeches failed to court the same admiration (Walpole called him 'a wretched orator'). John Brooke, 'Harris, James (1709–80), of Salisbury, Wilts', in Namier and Brookes, (eds), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1754–1790*, (London: Haynes Publishing, 1964) (1985).

⁴² Pitt's elder brother, Thomas, purchased the Boconnoc estate near Lostwithiel with the proceeds from the sale of the Regent or Pitt Diamond to Philippe II of France in 1717. The jewel subsequently adorned the hilt of Napoleon's sword. His grandfather, also Thomas, was involved with the English Company Trading to the East Indies (1698) which was floated by English merchants with Tory affiliations – including William's father – with a capital of £2m. Boconnoc Estate and House History, online [<http://www.boconnoc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Read-more-on-Boconnocs-history-and-restoration.pdf>].

⁴³ Richard Polwhele (1760–1838) was a clergyman, poet and historian of Cornwall and Devon. His *Unsex'd Females, a Poem* (1798), was a defensive reaction to women's literary self-assertion and is, today, perhaps his most notorious poetic production: in the poem Hannah More is Christ to Mary Wollstonecraft's Satan. See also: Dafydd Moore, ' "The Romance of Real Life": Richard Polwhele's Representation of the Literary Culture and Language of Cornwall,' in Shelley Trower, (ed.), *Place, Writing, and Voice in Oral History*, Palgrave Studies in Oral History (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2011). Correspondence between Polwhele and Nares, dated January 17 1829, recalls: "Mr. Nares was tutor to the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe (my contemporary at Christchurch): it was there I first knew his Lordship and my much-revered friend." John B. Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century: Consisting of Authentic Memoirs and Original Letters of Eminent Persons; and Intended as a Sequel to the Literary Anecdotes* (published by the author, 1848), p. 680.

⁴⁴ Nicholas Carlisle, *A Concise Description of the Endowed Grammar Schools in England*, vol. 1 (1818), pp. 144–145. Although designated a 'free' school, Eton's Latin and Greek grammars were in use. St. John Elliot's Trust (late Rector of St Mary's in Truro) provided an annual bursary of £30 for an alumnus for his "support and maintenance ... to be from time to time chosen by the present Trustees, &c, at EXETER COLLEGE, in Oxford." Online [<https://archive.org/stream/aconcisedescrip01carlgooq#page/n6/mode/1up>].

Polwhele was not only friendless, he was unsuccessful in garnering influential contacts at university. He also failed to graduate (having spent most of his time writing poetry) and took up a curacy in Manaccan on the Lizard peninsula where, now-characteristically, he also failed to impress his parishioners.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, university education conferred greater edification on Britain's élites beyond a working knowledge of Ovid. Alumni confirmed their patrician credentials by externalising, through privileged lifestyle choices, a shared repertoire of skills, taste, and attitudes that they had internalised at school. For the Carews, a classical curriculum based on aristocratic values and cultivated personal relationships became an effective Chorus to their performative cultural identities.

As a strategy of distinction among the landed gentry, the desirability of marrying well intensified in the eighteenth century. An idealised view might echo Olwen H. Hufton's observations that:

an appropriate union was one in which wealth and status, religious affiliation and age, as well as less easily defined qualities such as temperament and moral qualities, were seen to be approximately consonant.⁴⁶

Although Barbara Harris's more cynical assessment is probably closer to the truth:

⁴⁵ It was, however, not unusual not to graduate in the period – university was a means to an end and not an end in itself. (Polwhele penned what his obituary in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, (vol. 146, 1785, pp. 545–549) referred to as a “satirical sketch” titled *The Follies of Oxford: Or, Cursory Sketches on a University Education, from an under graduate To his Friend in the Country*. Polwhele angered Manaccan parishioners with his efforts to restore the church and vicarage.

⁴⁶ Olwen H. Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe* (New York: Knopf, 1996), p. 65.

the explicit purpose of marriage among the upper classes was to advance the political and economic interest of the patrilineally defined family.⁴⁷

Such emotional detachment is ably demonstrated by two of the Carews' close relationships who offer *a priori* evidence. First, William's contemporary relative, the Sussex-born John Ashburnham, whose, meteoric upward mobility came as a result of his being a (strategic) serial bridegroom. Ashburnham, like William, had been brought up to expect only the narrow life of a younger son but, upon the death of his elder brother, he seized the sudden upturn in his fortunes and promptly married Mary Butler, a daughter of the second Duke of Ormonde. The union gained him a substantial portion in the marriage settlement and social advancement through his bride's mother, the Duke of Beaufort's daughter.⁴⁸ When Mary died in 1713 she was replaced by the daughter of one of England's richest earls, the already-affluent Henrietta, the widowed Countess of Anglesey and 4th Baroness Strange, and her estates.⁴⁹ Five years later she, too, died and Ashburnham's third attempt at fruitful matrimony joined him to Lady Jemima Grey, a daughter and co-heiress of the Duke of Kent, whose marriage portion

⁴⁷ Barbara Harris, 'Power, Profit, and Passion: Mary Tudor, Charles Brandon and the Arranged Marriage in Early Tudor England,' *Feminist Studies* 15 (1989), p. 60.

⁴⁸ East Sussex Record Office, Marriage Settlement John, Lord Ashburnham and Lady Mary Butler ASH/4182. Coincidentally, Lady Mary Somerset, the bride's mother, was sister to Anne Somerset who married the 2nd Earl of Coventry, Anne Carew's grand-uncle. Her portrait by Godfrey Kneller hangs at Antony although its inscription (Winifred Edgcumbe) is incorrect.

⁴⁹ East Sussex Record Office, ASH/4189. A post-nuptial settlement agreed an annual income for Henrietta, Countess of Anglesey, of £2000 per annum from estates in Bedfordshire and Sussex, dated 22 July 1714.

was £10,000 and regular income from widespread landholdings.⁵⁰ Although only one of these wives provided Ashburnham with an heir,⁵¹ it is clear that his antennæ were finely tuned to the opportunities that consolidated his status and increased his wealth with marriages to asset-rich women: by 1883 Ashburnham heirs reaped the income and benefits from 24,500 acres.⁵²

Rather than vast estates, Reginald's friend and neighbour, John Parker, gathered social advantage in his choice of bride. Parker succeeded his father in 1768 and inherited not only the family seat at Saltram and other properties but also cash in hand, described by Ronald Fletcher in *The Parkers of Saltram*, (1970) as in excess of £30,000.⁵³ As an eligible and wealthy landowner, Parker attracted the daughter of Baron Grantham, Theresa Robinson, whose marriage portion brought £6,000 and regular annual payments from her father of £12,000, plus interest. Crucially, however, his wife's family added value to the marriage beyond mere affluence: Grantham's social assets included ancestral Yorkshire baronetages and the friendships of Thomas Pelham-Holles, the Duke of Newcastle (landowner in eleven different counties) and the Marquess of Tavistock (heir to the Duke of Bedford and owner of estates in London and Wiltshire). Their extended spheres of influence added further effulgence via

⁵⁰ East Sussex Record Office, ASH/4205. The marriage settlement between John Ashburnham and Jemima Grey stipulated an annuity for Jemima of £2000 out of property in Sussex, Bedford, Carmarthen, Glamorgan, Brecknock and Dorset.

⁵¹ Henrietta gave birth to a daughter, Henrietta, in 1716, but she died in 1732; Jemima's son, John, succeeded his father's title as the 2nd earl in 1743.

⁵² Ashburnham Place, the family seat, is now a Christian Conference Centre. *Ashburnham Place Past & Present*, booklet (Ashburnham Christian Trust, 1990).

⁵³ Ronald Fletcher, *The Parkers at Saltram 1769–89: Everyday Life in an Eighteenth-Century House*, (London, BBC publications, 1970), pp. 14, 18.

influential political and monarchical offices: the accumulation of prestigious association enhancing the perception or reality of Parker's social standing. In 1784 and having hosted the King, Parker was raised to the peerage as the first Baron Boringdon, outranking Reginald.

Wealth, property, and status not only greased the wheels of power in the eighteenth century, but bought prestige that was, according to John Plumb, 'fundamental to happiness'.⁵⁴ Money and happiness may not always be mutually complementary but the ability to afford a splendid dwelling and the accoutrements of rank and privilege constituted a pleasure actively pursued by the landed élites. We will see that, in the context of leisure pursuits, the Carews' discretionary income not only funded their activities in Plymouth, Bath, and London but also the conspicuous consumption that accumulated as markers of distinction. William and Reginald, although not in the same league as the top tier dukes (Devonshire, Northumberland, et. al.) were, nonetheless, counted among the élites, which position obliged them to demonstrate their entitlements by building, collecting, commissioning, and displaying culturally-significant goods while preserving and, where possible, augmenting the family's wealth for future generations.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ John H. Plumb, *The Pursuit of Happiness: A View of Life in Georgian England* (New Haven: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), p. 3; and Richard Wilson and Alan Mackley, (eds.), *Creating Paradise: The Building of the English County House*, (London and New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2000), p. 18.

⁵⁵ David Cannadine's essay "The Landowner as Millionaire", <http://www.bahs.org.uk/AGHR/ARTICLES/25n2a1.pdf>, a Silver Jubilee prize essay for the *Agricultural History Review*, contains a table listing the wealthiest British landowners around the

William's and Reginald's inherited property and wealth could have been enjoyed in Edenic isolation were it not for the necessities and advantages of participating in Society; whether to consolidate alliances, broker marriages or, as MPs, to give voice to national policy. As these two men established their own networks, family, friends and neighbours connected them to vital and wider cultural spheres. Their engagement with Society is evidenced in the artefacts they commissioned and selected as visible manifestations of a cultural self. To understand relationships between the social/cultural and the material as the mediating interfaces of Carew self-fashioning, their commissions and collections must be explained as expressions of a principal desire to claim heritage and privilege. When in London, William and Reginald circulated among the gilt-edged socially-exclusive *beau monde* whose activities provided a platform for the transmission of culturally-significant ideas.⁵⁶ Such encounters were necessary to the Carews' cultural identity since the traditional symbols of aristocratic status such as estate management, heraldry, and family prestige functioned less visibly as signs of distinction in the larger social networks.⁵⁷ London cared less about

time of Reginald's ownership of Antony. Devonshire possessed 104,194 acres generating £180,750 per annum; Northumberland's acreage was calculated at 186,397 with a gross annual value of £176,048, p. 92.

⁵⁶ The term *beau monde* was first coined in the 1690s and was used to describe emergent urban, primarily metropolitan, fashionable world which drew on pedigree, connections, manners, language, appearance and modish fashion. Also known as the "ton", the "Company", "Society", and the "Quality", membership in such circles was an exclusive form of social distinction.

⁵⁷ Grant McCracken, 'Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods,' *Journal of Consumer Research* 13 (Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 16–22. Online [http://www.jstor.org/stable/2489287?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents]. McCracken's wider

lineage than the Carews, although their rank, (evident in their “first-rate” addresses off Berkeley Square), added lustre to the capital’s hyper-social veneer.⁵⁸ However, except for the extravagant, scurrilous, or perennially lionised, most of London’s élites were as unremarkable as William and Reginald, although each enjoyed contact with this mutable group by virtue of his inheritance.

Tracing the extent to which they made connections through personal relationships allows us to understand the family and its cultural worlds. So that the agency of William or Reginald is not obscured by a generic approach, their material culture and closely-knit social worlds are explored to identify the strategies they used in creating and maintaining a cultural identity appropriate to each of them and their station in life. This alignment establishes, in this thesis, the umbrella term ‘cultural identity’ and is embodied in characteristic visual and material evidence that embraced the key concerns of the Carews: lineage, position and association (personal, political and fashionable). The phrase ‘strategy of distinction’ serves as an expression of the consciousness revealed in William’s and Reginald’s individual motivations for and approaches to the creation of a cultural identity exploited through interconnected relationships.

Narrowing the examination to argue for closely held relationships as the functional apparatus for William’s and Reginald’s goals brings to light various

investigations into the cultural meanings of goods explored how meaning is transferred from product to consumer and exchanged (or transformed) in the construction of an identity.

⁵⁸ First rate houses were worth over £850 per year in ground rent and occupied over 900 square feet of space. These houses faced streets and lanes. See: Steven Parissien, *The Georgian Group Book of the Georgian House* (Aurum Press, 1995).

aspects of self-fashioning which have been bypassed in previous studies of the social cultures of early modern England. Scholars have analysed the architecture, interior décor, or libraries of prestigious country houses as displays of power or sites of conspicuous consumption – an assumed *modus operandi* of the nobility whose advantages of birth and monarchical association often relieved them of any fundamental concerns with ratifying status.⁵⁹ In this thesis, the virtue of an approach that considers relational patterns is that it offers an alternative perspective: one which is not centrally defined by issues of power, affluence, and socio-political or intellectual status, but which encourages an interrogation of the uses of luxury goods by lower ranked blue-bloods. While we can never fully reanimate William’s and Reginald’s decision-making, we can examine the material evidence heuristically, hypothesise their self-fashioning strategies, and suggest how, through patterns of consumption and personal relationships, their efforts interconnected with a limited network, which may have parallels in the larger exchange networks of the eighteenth century.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (Yale University Press, 1978), p. 15, says that Framlingham Castle, home of the Duke of Norfolk, was designed and furnished as the “main instrument with which he maintained his power and prestige and prepared the way for the jobs and marriage alliances which would increase them”. For a catalogue of prestige house interiors, see John Cornforth, *Early Georgian Interiors*, Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, (Yale University Press, 2004).

⁶⁰ In this thesis ‘networks’ refers to the personal relationships the Carews used to achieve their self-fashioning goals and not the nodal networks proposed by Bruno LaTour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford University Press, 2007). LaTour’s actor-network theory (ANT) has, according to the author, very little to do with social networks but concerns the effects of social systems without the ontology, topology and politics that goes with them. In line with LaTour’s view, this thesis takes a universalist approach because it attempts to fill in the surfaces of the enquiry with order or contingencies, contrary to ANT.

1.1 STRUCTURE

Each of the following chapters examines William and Reginald through the lens of self-fashioning. Because the Antony estates and associated obligations were thrust upon them unexpectedly it is not possible to propose any predetermined strategies for their separate accessions. Once invested, however, each created for himself a distinctive cultural identity through material possessions which added layers of meaning to the house and his own histories. The primary source that informed the means by which the Carews created a cultural identity is the family's archive held at Antony House. Of particular interest are: correspondence between William and his builder; a 1771 inventory of paintings created as the estate passed to Reginald; inventories of the household goods in two London properties; and Reginald's Letterbooks. These do, however, present a singular viewpoint on transactional evidence. As James Daybell cautions, researchers of the historiography of textual materials are confronted with a 'series of intractable methodological problems' – most of which surround the identity of the composer, copyist and reader, each of whose contexts and personal interests generated new meanings and applications for manuscripts.⁶¹

In all likelihood, the 1771 inventory was prepared by Antony's house steward, Richard Blighe or his successor, and the commentaries therein should

⁶¹ James Daybell, 'The Scribal Circulation of Early Modern Letters', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 79:3 (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), p. 368.

be viewed as a reflection of his interests/tastes. Revisions to several entries (in a different hand) include the re-attribution of a painting; insertion of a named artist where none had previously been listed; notations on the re-siting of portraits; and subjective value judgements (the 'battle piece' by Wootton in the Saloon deemed 'very good') that may not have accompanied the original acquisition. The compiler(s) of this inventory were concerned with artistic provenance and descriptors that could differentiate between the painting in the Saloon from that of a similar subject in the Hall – an appropriate gesture since the inventory was prepared as the estate passed to a non-lineal descendant. By contrast, the London inventories – again in different hands, and across several decades – are mere lists of things in rooms, e.g: in the Drawing Room, 'a landscape – gilt frame', without identification of view or maker. Household goods – furniture, plate and china – are inventoried with no indication of when they were acquired and the expense(s) incurred.⁶² The conclusion must be that these authors were less concerned with the merits of artistic production than with preparing a catalogue of furnishings; perhaps because many items on the list would travel with the family from Antony to London; or, possibly, they were being referred to in support of an insurance or other valuation.

One-sided correspondence and manuscripts invite us to supply the circumstances for the exchange, which is often feasible when considering a date or location and the scribal content. However, there are many gaps. Notably,

⁶² CE/E/56 the 'Berkeley Square' inventory; occupied by William and his son, Coventry.

there are no extant letters, diaries, or other writings originating from the women of Antony: Anne Carew and her daughter-in-law, Mary, or Jemima Pole-Carew and her successor, Caroline. Their significant absence denies them the roles they played in, at the very least, the commission, purchase and display of household goods. Antony is revealed to us from a gendered perspective: Carew women existed only as mediated artistic constructs in portraits or as beneficiaries of marriage settlements and post-mortem legacies, none of which allow their voices to be heard. That censorship reinforces the patriarchal nature of eighteenth-century society wherein the male heads of household authored and authorised fiduciary transactions. Could Lady Carew's letters and diaries have added flesh to the sketches of her contributions to life at Antony? Almost certainly. Enriching material that might have included records of day-to-day activities, correspondence with friends and relatives, and social and other significant events that orchestrated a landed gentlewoman's calendar no longer forms part of the archive. We cannot say when they were discarded although the Cornwall Record Office cautions researchers about the 'eccentric' cataloguing – suggesting that when Antony passed to the National Trust in the 1950s, the then-County Archivist organised the muniments room according to what he thought might be 'of interest'. Because the archive is not digitised, it is gathered in 'bundles of plans' and 'bundles of estate/family/garden/household accounts' and moved, handled and replaced more than would be needed if details of individual items were available. Sadly, the textual lives of Anne, Mary, Jemima and Caroline are lost to us.

The design and construction of Antony House, as a visual statement of William's early-century personal and social aims and as a repository for accumulated paintings, is examined in Chapter Two as a basis for his self-hood. This theme continues through the century to include Reginald's modernisations of the house and gardens, both as an explicit response to changes in the social use of country houses in the later eighteenth century, and as evidence of the strategy he employed to authorise his claims to the Carew lineage and an identity appropriate to his new status. An evaluation of the family portraits in Chapter Three examines how they were fundamental in creating and maintaining William's and Reginald's cultural identity – as objects of art historical and social interest; through the maturation of personal relationships as conduits of influence; and in the narrative goals for display. Chapter Four moves on to the Carews' London properties in order to speculate on the intra-connectedness of their strategies of distinction beyond Antony. The capital was crucial to the formation, preservation and promotion of the Carews' cultural identity and this chapter considers its public spheres and its agencies. The conclusion (Chapter Five) will draw together the findings to identify ways in which the eighteenth century looks different when the Carews of Antony are included in an appraisal of the uses of material culture throughout the century. But before discussing these in detail, it is useful to offer a more discursive overview, locating each approach in studies of the period.

1.2 APPROACHES

The objective for this study is to explore the self-fashioning strategies of William and Reginald in order to fill a gap in social and cultural history discourses. Recent research has suggested new proximities of interests and methods that, under the rubrics of ‘cultural history’ and ‘materiality’, cut across areas of specialisation and traditional disciplinary boundaries.⁶³ The author’s expertise as an art historian is grounded in investigating art and architecture to account for style, form and context; and although such object-centred approaches provide familiar evidence, they do not fully satisfy the thesis framework which is more properly aligned to a wider range of cultural studies.⁶⁴ Therefore, the thesis brings into close contact visual and material culture with archive-based social history in an iterative process to examine the themes of consumption, identity and experience that occupied William and Reginald. Underpinning a strategy of distinction was a responsiveness to the standards of comportment and discernment demanded by their social standing. To add conceptual frames of reference, Pierre Bourdieu’s seminal *Distinction: A Social*

⁶³ See Dan Hicks and Mary C. Beaudry, *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies* (OUP Oxford, 2010); Chris Tilley, Webb Keane, Susanne Kuechler, Mike Rowlands, and Patricia Spyer, (eds), *Handbook of Material Culture* (London: Sage, 2006).

⁶⁴ Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson, (eds), *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and Its Meanings* (Ashgate, 2010). The introduction to this collection of essays explores the challenges for cultural historians whose divergent trajectories often privilege object over evidence (or vice-versa). Visual Culture, like Material Culture, shares many thematic interests and theoretical concerns but differs in the nature and scope of the subject of enquiry. In the editors’ analysis, “material culture is concerned with the forms, uses, and meanings of physical objects; visual culture can be defined as being concerned with all aspects of culture that communicate through visual means”, see p. 10.

Critique of the Judgment of Taste (1986)⁶⁵ demonstrates how the æsthetics of choice inform the symbolic systems of social judgement employed by the Carews; and Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980),⁶⁶ considers the projected image and the conventions for interaction in social situations. These scholarly works are augmented by historical and contemporary literary sources to place the Carews and their values/world view in a wider cultural context.

1.2.1 COUNTRY HOUSES

Gordon Mingay argues that the country house gave its owner 'family status, a sense of identity, of achievement, and of permanence'.⁶⁷ The historiography of England's country houses has been advanced from a variety of perspectives. Among scholars whose work influenced this thesis are Dana Arnold (*The Georgian Country House*, 1998); Christopher Christie (*The British Country House in the Eighteenth Century*, 2000) and Richard Wilson and Alan Mackley (*Creating Paradise: The Building of the English Country House, 1660–1880*, 2001). Each focuses on architecture as visual culture through the agency of the artistic

⁶⁵ Bourdieu discusses the 'aristocracy of culture' as how those in power define aesthetic concepts such as taste and set the agenda of what constitutes taste, developing cultural peculiarities which mark them out from one another. They have distinct cultures – hence 'distinction.' Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, 1986, Trans. Richard Nice, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA., Part I, pp. 11–63

⁶⁶ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, (University of Chicago Press, 2012), frames his exploration in the 'highly charged geographical and ideological' social worlds of three non-titled men who moved out of a 'narrowly circumscribed social sphere and into a realm that brought them in close contact with the powerful and the great.' Introduction, p. 7.

⁶⁷ Mingay, *English Landed Society*, p. 209. See also Cornforth, *Early Georgian Interiors*, pp. 109–12, 215–36.

authority of certain key figures and their buildings. Arnold examines what the country house meant in different social, political, economic and cultural contexts; Christie explores how the country house acted as an important player in the architectural, artistic, social and economic history of eighteenth-century Britain; and in *Creating Paradise*, Wilson and Mackley question why country house builders decided to build in certain styles, using particular architects. Their findings are the foundations upon which the case for Antony and its estate, as key to Carew strategies of distinction, is promulgated.

Among the earliest visual references we have for Antony is that found in Edmund Prideaux's topographical drawings of country houses, published around 1727.⁶⁸ Such books provided subscribers with carefully considered views and sketched biographies of each owner – sufficient to create interest in country-house visiting as a pastime for the aristocracy and the middling sorts alike. Contemporary pattern books by Colen Campbell and James Gibbs, the putative designer of Antony House, adapted sixteenth-century schemes of the Italian Andrea Palladio for an English landscape creating, for England's owner-builders, a *beau ideal* in modern architecture. The extent to which neo-classical façades became visual shorthand for the eighteenth century's built environments is recorded by John Summerson in *Architecture in Britain, 1530–1830*, (Baltimore, 1954) adding critiques of political context to style and promoting studies of Georgian architecture as an academic discipline. None of these, however,

⁶⁸ Reproduced at Figure 2.2.

considers the country house as a lived-in environment: even Cornforth's *Early Georgian Interiors*, (2004) appraises decorative schemes as empty stage sets; their owners/occupiers' presence obscured by fashionable upholstery and *objects d'art*. However, Mark Girouard's *Life in the English Country House* (1978) offers an invaluable resource for understanding the role of the country house as a prime signifier of William's and Reginald's cultural identity. Girouard was the first to draw together architectural and social history and stimulate the diverse specialist approaches now best termed 'cultural history'.⁶⁹ Amanda Vickery (*Behind Closed Doors*, 2009) updates this approach to explore, as she writes, the 'experience of interiors' and the 'determining role of house and home in power and emotion, status and choices.'⁷⁰ In this thesis, for example, a cultural-historical exploration of the issues of composite 'identities' considers the interaction between Antony House and the Carews' London properties to map the importance of the magnetic forces exerted by the London Season.⁷¹

1.2.2 MATERIAL CULTURE

Bourdieu's theory of 'habitus' (unpacked in *Distinction* and understood as moral character and a way of thinking)⁷² is manifest in the aristocracy's acquired

⁶⁹ See Corfield, 'Exploding the Galaxy: Historical Studies of Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 34:4 (2011), pp. 517–26, which draws attention to the challenges presented to researchers by the numerous specialist strands or lines of inquiry.

⁷⁰ Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 3.

⁷¹ See H. M. Port, 'Town House and Country House: their Interaction', in Dana Arnold, (ed.), *The Georgian Country House*, (Sutton Publishing, 1998), pp. 117–138.

⁷² Habitus is created through a social, rather than individual process leading to patterns that are enduring and transferable from one context to another, but that also shift in relation to specific

education and social skills, but there is a sense that individual agency or self-consciousness are not part of his equation.⁷³ In the creation of a cultural identity, William's and Reginald's instrumentality and awareness were fundamental, for, without cognisance of self and approaches to self-fashioning, the interpretation of cultural goods stalls as a one-dimensional consideration of material possessions. Germane to this project is Daniel Miller's *Stuff*, (2010), which argues *against* Thorstein Veblen's (*The Theory of the Leisure Class*, 1991) conspicuous materialism as a characteristic of status and *for* an understanding of the meanings of things and the dialectics of relationships with them.⁷⁴ Miller asserts the centrality of material culture as underpinning human relationships in *The Comfort of Things* (2008), which draws on Bourdieu to suggest that people are (in part) socialised through objects and their subsequent importance to the development of audience and reception studies. This point is taken up by Ann Bermingham's focus in *The Consumption of Culture: Image, Object, Text* (1995) on an historiography that obscures consumption's relationship to social and

contexts and over time. Bourdieu shows how the 'social order is progressively inscribed in people's minds' through 'cultural products' including systems of education, language, judgements, values, methods of classification and activities of everyday life (*Distinction*, p. 471). These all lead to an unconscious acceptance of social differences and hierarchies, to 'a sense of one's place' and to behaviours of self-exclusion. For Bourdieu's initial definition and exploration of the concept of the habitus, see Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977 [1972]). For its later use in explanations of the deployment of objects in social formations and aspirations, see *Distinction*, pp. 141, 327.

⁷³ Andrew B. Trigg, 'Veblen, Bourdieu, and Conspicuous Consumption,' *Journal of Economic Issues* 35, no. 1 (2001), pp. 99–115.

⁷⁴ Dan Miller, *Stuff* (Cambridge, Boston MA: Polity Press, 2010) and Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (Fairfield, New Jersey: Augustus Kelley, 1991). A critique of the leisure classes for their role in fostering wasteful consumption. The phrase 'conspicuous consumption' first appeared in this book, defined as spending money in emulation of hierarchically-superior individuals in order to impress.

cultural forms by privileging the launch of a full-scale market economy engineered by the middling sorts.⁷⁵ Yet, in the consumption practices of the élite, the pursuit of luxury has long been seen as a key element: marking status and distinguishing them from lower social groups. Indeed, the nature of the goods being consumed is central to Veblen's notion of conspicuous consumption as a means of cementing and displaying social status. Specifically referring to the leisured class, he writes that consumption:

undergoes a specialisation as regards the quality of the goods consumed. Since the consumption of these more excellent goods is an evidence of wealth, it becomes honorific; and conversely the failure to consume in due quantity and quality becomes a mark of inferiority and demerit.⁷⁶

Thus, taking anthropological license to consider what objects say about owners, this thesis will argue that the dialectics of commissioning, collecting and displaying luxury goods with the goal of creating a cultural identity demonstrates the Carews' acute awareness of how their projected identities would be crafted, received and sustained. Since the Carews had a certain level of choice in how they would direct their spending, what they bought and displayed tells us much about their priorities, interests and identities, and equally about the values and patterns of behaviour they shared as members of the landed élites.

⁷⁵ Bermingham, *The Consumption of Culture*, pp. 4, 9.

⁷⁶ Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, p. 74.

1.2.3 PORTRAITURE

One collective enthusiasm among gentry families was for portraiture. Invested with meaning beyond a sitter's likeness, commissioned portraits became coveted declarations of heritage, pedigree and power.⁷⁷ Girouard probes the themes of power and pleasure in *Life in the English Country House* when he pays specific attention to collecting and curating displays; a point also taken up by Robert Tittler whose essay, *Displaying the Civic Portrait* (2010), addresses the meanings of objects in relation to spaces.⁷⁸ From these we can consider how space was both conceived and experienced at Antony; the relationships between people and the spaces they occupied; and the curatorial/commissioning strategies employed by the Carews. Retford's *Placing Faces* (2013) and Marcia Pointon's various analyses of eighteenth-century portraiture are aimed at art-historical considerations of display and the reception of the century's 'face painters' within wider social contexts.⁷⁹ The relevance of these lines of enquiry to this thesis lie in the make-up and display of Antony's collection: its principals' portraits, continuously shown in Cornwall and in London,

⁷⁷ Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth Century England* (Oxford, 2005), p. 242.

⁷⁸ Robert Tittler, 'Faces and Spaces: Displaying the Civic Portrait in Early Modern England,' in *Everyday Objects*, pp. 179–189.

⁷⁹ Hannah Lyons, Gillian Perry, Kate Retford, and Jordan Vibert (eds), *Placing Faces: The Portrait and the English Country House in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Manchester University Press, 2013), was the first book to explore in detail the social, historical, political and aesthetic relationships between two important aspects of eighteenth century cultural life: portraiture and the country house, villa or estate. Marcia Pointon, ' "Surrounded with Brilliants": Miniature Portraits in Eighteenth-Century England,' *The Art Bulletin* 83, no. 1 (2001), Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3177190>]; 'Portrait-Painting as a Business Enterprise in London in the 1780s,' *Art History* 7, no. 2 (1984), Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8365.1984.tb00140.x>]; *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (Yale University Press, 1993).

underscore a cultural identity based in heritage and family associations. Most country houses of the period display portraits but a comparison with the Carews' nearest neighbours proves instructive when considering display as a strategy of distinction. The Parker family were keen artistic patrons, yet of the almost 200 paintings at Saltram fewer than thirty are family portraits. The majority were landscapes, mythological, or history paintings which, at least thematically, form part of the neo-classical decorative scheme of the property as designed by Robert Adam. By contrast, the majority of paintings at Antony represent the kind of collection that was often deployed to illustrate a 'complex pictorial family tree', communicating dynastic lines and wider familial connections.⁸⁰ It is clear, therefore, that the owners' commissioning and curatorial practices were driven by a need to project a certain image: for the Parkers as connoisseurs and patrons, and for the Carews as scions of an ancient family.

Tarnya Cooper's *Citizen Portrait* (2012) identifies the subtle, contextual notions of value, inherent in portraiture, as the subject-matter lost resonance for successive generations, a near-universal experience for family collections expressing longevity.⁸¹ As we will see, for William and Reginald the material properties of portraits were useful in the creation of a cultural identity even when

⁸⁰ Kate Retford, 'Patrilineal Portraiture? Gender and Genealogy in the Eighteenth-Century English Country House', in John Styles and Amanda Vickery (eds), *Gender, Taste and Material Culture in Britain and North America 1700–1830* (New Haven, CT, 2006), p. 4, 327. This process could sometimes be complicated by a desire to showcase the work of particular painters associated with the family.

⁸¹ Tarnya Cooper, *Citizen Portrait: Portrait Painting and the Urban Elite of Tudor and Jacobean England and Wales* (Yale University Press, 2012) examines the patronage and production of portraits in Tudor and Jacobean England, focusing on the motivations of those who chose to be painted and the impact of the resulting images.

the original associations or memories had faded. Indeed, as Retford states (with regard to the portraits at Welbeck, but equally as pertinent here), many portraits 'would have been of minimal use value if it were not for the identity of the sitters.'⁸² Landed gentry deemed it a duty to maintain, consolidate, and continue their family's collections by creating displays that would inspire future generations and buttress the claims of those generations to heritage and respectability.

The case-studies in Jon Stobart and Mark Rothery's *Consumption and the Country House* (2016) provide neat intersections with this present thesis: two similarly-placed landowning families (the Leighs and the Newdigates) in the English Midlands who, alongside the Carews, formed 'a small cross-section of provincial landed society, but one representative of large swathes of that group.' As Maxine Berg argues, 'the choice, display, and use of the variety of goods had to be cultivated',⁸³ and in comparable houses across the country's counties we find a circumscribed combination of patron, artist, and subject matter (representing what Veblen referred to as forming 'the voucher of a life of leisure').⁸⁴ Virtually undifferentiated displays indicate that the prestige of celebrity 'face-painters' was counted in the cultural capital of their commissioners.⁸⁵

⁸² Retford, *Patrilineal Portraiture?*, p. 339.

⁸³ Berg, *Luxury & Pleasure*, p. 41

⁸⁴ Veblen, *Theory of Leisure*, p. 49

⁸⁵ Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the Country House* (Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 22. The authors analyse the goods that the aristocracy purchased, both luxurious and mundane; the extent to which they pursued fashionable modes and goods; the role that family and friends played in shaping notions of taste; the influence of gender on taste and refinement; the geographical reach of provisioning and the networks that lay behind this consumer activity, and the way this all contributed to the construction of the country house. For a discussion of 'cultural capital' see Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p.1.

Louise Lippincott's chapter 'Expanding on Portraiture' in *The Consumption of Culture* examines the life of the portrait as a commodity, with the gloss to routinised portraiture derived from the celebrity of artist and sitter alike. Posing for a portrait was a recognised social pastime but the act of commissioning a portrait was foremost one of commemoration. Leaving Eton, departing for the Grand Tour, coming into an inheritance, marrying or acquiring a significant title, office or property – the majority of which (excluding marriage) were life-events largely unavailable to non-leisured society.⁸⁶ Stobart reminds us that at Newdigate's Arbury Hall portraits were presented as 'old luxuries', or symbols of power-making that underscored the traditional signifiers of status and wealth, in contrast to the approaches to self-fashioning framing this thesis. While they were as concerned to demonstrate their discernment and status, Newdigate's ostentatious displays of wealth were no fit for the materiality of Antony nor the cultural identities of the Carews.

1.2.4 CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION

Self-fashioning at a distance from the Cornish borders mandated the negotiation of a provincial/metropolitan balance, with Bath and London emerging as sites where the performance of a cultural self was tested against the reception of that cultivated performance. According to Bourdieu, the coded meanings by which élites are able to differentiate themselves from the lower orders through

⁸⁶ Louise Lippincott, 'Expanding on Portraiture: the Market, the Public, and the Hierarchy of Genres in Eighteenth-Century Britain' in *The Consumption of Culture*, p. 81.

consumption of goods were only accessible to those with the necessary cultural capital. Greig's analysis of the *beau monde* makes just this point. What distinguished this group was not so much their wealth, although they were generally extremely rich people. Rather, it was a quality that Lord Chesterfield described in 1755 as a certain '*je ne scay quoy*, which other people of fashion acknowledge'.⁸⁷ Seen by McKendrick as the vehicle of emulation-lead consumer behaviour, fashion is the restless pursuit of modish and novel things – part of the so-called 'new luxury' that was linked closely to commercial growth.⁸⁸ Whilst being up-to-date was important to élite consumers, fashion in this context might better be understood in terms of refined taste and a set of goods and practices which connoted rank and dignity – something which approaches Veblen's 'most excellent goods' and Bourdieu's notions of distinction.⁸⁹ Shopping, as a leisure activity of the élites, offered the consumer sociability and agency as well as material goods. Each purchase was embedded with signs that linked the person and personality to the distinctive materials, styles and innovation in luxury goods, contributing to his or her cultural identity.⁹⁰ So when Caroline Carew ordered a pianoforte for a reception room in her London townhouse, or 'four vase lamps with brass arms' for the Hall, not only did she display appropriately fashionable

⁸⁷ Hannah Greig, *The Beau Monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 3.

⁸⁸ McKendrick, *The Consumer Revolution*, pp. 9–33.

⁸⁹ Greig, *Beau Monde*, pp. 32–4, 270–1; Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, pp. 129–65; Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure Class*, p. 74.

⁹⁰ See: Berry, 'Polite Consumption: Shopping in Eighteenth-Century England,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, no. 12 (2002), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0080440102000154>. Berry's research interests are centred on a polite shopping culture that formed a distinctive yet everyday part of life for England's gentry.

purchases, shopping for them embraced the polite arts of public sociability, reinforcing her status, and contributing to her husband's cultural identity.⁹¹

It is unfortunate that we have no detailed evidence of how much the Carews spent nor a definitive list of purchases. However, where archives suggest, we can speculate on the proportion of income spent on luxury goods. For example, in 1805, Reginald's running costs for both his townhouse and Antony amounted to £1,677.17s. 6d yet he received £6,716.14s.1d from rents and estate income.⁹² The surplus of over £5,000 per annum (or more than £40,000 today) easily funded his social obligations and cultural interests within the limits set by financial resources. When compared to other families of similar social status, the Leighs spent around 2.5 per cent on art and books and almost ten per cent on furniture and furnishings.⁹³ Unlike the Leighs, whose archived accounts are meticulous and complete, a qualitative analysis of discretionary spending is unavailable from the Carew archives: record-keeping by Antony's steward was confined to general household expenses rather than luxury purchases. Household account books for the London properties were not returned to Antony and were probably included with the furniture and fittings when they were sold. And, although we cannot judge how important goods were

⁹¹ Items listed in the inventory for New Cavendish Street. Glennie and Thrift rightly argue that it is unlikely that eighteenth-century consumers had a 'complete intellectual framework through which they articulated their motives and which they deployed when encountering commodities, other consumers, and consumption sites' although the active choices they made constructed an identity and defined status through symbol-laden possessions. See: Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the Country House*, p. 13.

⁹² Archive CA/H/133 – summaries of accounts and valuations 1784–1805.

⁹³ Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the Country House*, p. 31, and chart on p. 35.

within the Carews' wider household expenditure, we can assert that what was retained from generation to generation (and survived the disposal of the London addresses) bespeaks a cultural or sentimental value to the family. We know that many items inventoried in London appeared in Antony's 1771 inventory, thus, the only costs involved would have been transportation between capital and county, (a common practice among country-dwelling families of rank), and further suggesting that these itemised luxury goods held a value to the family that was not directly connected to cost. The physical evidence of the objects commissioned or collected by the Carews is material evidence (in itself) of high expenditure; yet, from what we know of their characters, neither William nor Reginald indulged in the kind of conspicuous consumption that Veblen theorised. Although not on the same scale as lavish architectural embellishment, entrepreneurial risk, or agrarian development, in the concrete evidence of existence, what was commissioned, collected and displayed worked as background context, framing behaviour and atmosphere: as silent partners in the creation of a cultural identity.⁹⁴

1.2.3 SELF-FASHIONING

One of the key terms that permeates this treatise, self-fashioning, was introduced to cultural discourse by the literary historian Stephen Greenblatt's

⁹⁴ For a discussion of the 'silence of objects' and the 'humility of things', see: Dan Miller, *The Comfort of Things*, (John Wiley & Sons, 1995).

Renaissance Self-Fashioning (1980).⁹⁵ In what he calls ‘cultural poetics’ Greenblatt is able to show that the fashioning of human identity was an artful process that responded to cultural coding – both as a constituted and a constitutive cultural practice. (In this he follows Foucault in seeing cultural practice in relation to, or as an expression of, power and the creation of works of art as a reflection on social practices).⁹⁶ *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* is, however, a study not of the way in which human subjects fashioned themselves but rather of the way in which certain political and religious forces in the Renaissance created the fiction of individual autonomy. Self-fashioning made sense of a world in which the Tudor Court was central to life – for this was a world in which prudent accommodation, and even deception, were often seen as virtues. Indeed, the Renaissance world was a theatrical age – an age of masks, of masquerades, of role playing, of the studied nonchalance of *sprezzatura*. Among its privileged ranks, men and women were conscious of fashioning particular selves in order to survive, or to advance, in the high-stakes world of Court society.

⁹⁵ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (University of Chicago Press, 1980), in which the author examines self-fashioning in Renaissance England by looking at Thomas More’s *Utopia*, William Tyndale’s *English New Testament*, the poetry of Thomas Wyatt, Edmond Spenser’s *the Faerie Queen*, Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*, and William Shakespeare’s *Othello*. Each group of three form two groups in which strong opposite responses to community, tradition, and authority cause a third response in which the contrast is repeated and changed. Wyatt is used to illustrate the conflict between More and Tyndale; Shakespeare is the contrast between Spenser and Marlowe.

⁹⁶ Foucault defines ‘techniques of the self’ or ‘arts of existence’ as ‘those reflective and voluntary practices by which men not only set themselves rules of conduct, but seek to transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being, and to make of their life into an oeuvre that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria’”. Michel Foucault *The Use of Pleasure. The History of Sexuality: Volume Two*. Trans. Hurley. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, (1984) [1992]), pp. 10–11.

In this study, the concept of self-fashioning is repositioned away from the Elizabethan Court and into early modern society, with a compatible shift in interpretation. By the eighteenth century, the power of the monarchy to impose its ceremonies on its servants had been diluted by political upheaval, courtiership (the accumulation of social skills accessible as a group identity by the élite) survived as a set of codified behaviours that marked the qualities of aristocratic landowners.⁹⁷ Tudor externally-formulated self-fashioning became the consociate of peer-lead practices in selfhood as reflections of self-determination. In the same way that Greenblatt's analyses focus on the ways in which written texts operated and could be interpreted so, too, the 'voices' of the eighteenth century, (Pope and Defoe, Addison and Steele, among others), constituted broader experiences of landed society. In contemporary poetry, prose, and dramaturgy, the rural knight was rarely defended (although generally respected as a necessary part of society) whose opinions and deportment were (often negatively) rehearsed in the popular press and satirical prints. The archives accommodate different strategies and voices in this thesis and, where available, the Carews speak for themselves in Letterbooks, commissions, and other textual material.

⁹⁷ Peter Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier: The European Reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano* (Wiley, 2013). Castiglione's *The Courtier* held that an educated functionary confers distinction upon the prince and his court through his fine manners and elegant, fashionable, humanist-style talk. See also Douglas Biow, *On the Importance of Being an Individual in Renaissance Italy: Men, Their Professions, and Their Beards* (University of Pennsylvania Press Incorporated, 2015), p. 70.

1.2.4 POLITENESS

A seamless transition from rural gentry to London's *beau monde* was lubricated by complex and specialised touchstones that governed an array of indicative categories: aspects, aesthetics and arenas. Recent interest in the history of manners and the development of the public sphere as well as long-standing efforts to understand the social and institutional organisation of society have combined to bring such topics as civility and politeness in the early modern period nearer the foreground of scholarly concern.

While it is generally understood that in Georgian Britain all human society depended on bare civility, politeness was a fundamental competence that survived context or genre. In the rise and fall of polite society, from an aristocratic ideal in the early eighteenth century, to a bourgeois aspiration at mid-century, then finally as a concept to be shunned by the reformist middle classes, the art of pleasing and thus of advancing one's own interest in the context of satisfying that of others was preserved. Samuel Johnson's 1755 definition of the words 'polite' and 'politeness' as 'elegance of manners, gentility, good breeding', conjures a civilised outlook, a measured code of manners based on refinement and stateliness, oligarchical politics, and aristocratic fashions.⁹⁸ The kind of comportment that might have underscored Boswell's resolution to 'maintain a

⁹⁸ Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary of the English Language*, (London: J. & P. Knapton, 1755), p. 552; Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People, England 1727–1783*, (Oxford, 1989), p.1.

calm mastery of myself this time in London, and not to grow giddy in it as usual'.⁹⁹

Social masks created the distances necessary for working sociability: the inner self was something that had to be kept closed. The outer appearance had priority over the inner self; the façade did not reflect the qualities of the inner self but fashioning the outer behaviour produced the goal of a genteel person – which was to appear worldly and dignified, but naturally so. From contemporary reports, Reginald's friend Petty (the Earl of Shelburne) struggled with the boundaries of politeness. He was described by George Rose, the Treasury Secretary, as 'sometimes passionate or unreasonable [...] and at other times offensively flattering'.¹⁰⁰ Such extremes of behaviour provided print culture not only with its most memorable caricatures but also the mirror to the society it lampooned, while essays in *The Tatler* (1709) and *The Spectator* (1711–1714) illustrated, through literary examples, the way that polite society should conduct itself. Its overarching concept, the 'dextrous management of [...] Words and Actions',¹⁰¹ indicated the social, psychological and formal dimensions of the term, and proponents of politeness frankly acknowledged the necessity, even the

⁹⁹ J. Boswell and C.M.C. Weis, *Boswell in Extremes, 1776–1778* (McGraw-Hill, 1959), p. 22. As Boswell was a noted toper, his reference here may have been unconnected to the consumption of vast amounts of drink. The example is used, however, to illustrate Boswell's concerns of social expectation – that notwithstanding the temptations of his host's generous cellar, he could/should conform to appropriate codes of behaviour.

¹⁰⁰ Vernon Harcourt and Leveson Veneables, (eds), *The Diaries and Correspondence of the Right Hon. George Rose: Containing Original Letters of the Most Distinguished Statesmen*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (London: R. Bentley, 1860), p.25.

¹⁰¹ Abel Boyer, *The English Theophrastus: or, the Manners of the Age. Being the modern characters of the court, the town, and the city* (1702), (Gale ECCO print editions [2010]), pp. 106 and 108. Polite behaviour was often identified as 'familiar', endorsing a style that was not too formal or ceremonious, although familiarity might also suggest the sort of extra-social intimacy or privacy characteristic of the closest friendships or kinship relations.

virtue, of social artifice. Thus, when John Gay sought to account for the popularity among the very people targeted by its moral criticisms of Richard Steele's *Tatler*, Gay noted that Steele:

ventur'd to tell the Town, that they were a parcel of Fops, Fools, and vain Cocquets; but in such a manner, as even pleased them, and made them more than half inclin'd to believe that he spoke Truth.¹⁰²

The concept of politeness and the eighteenth century are so enduringly coupled that one might conclude that before 1700 British society was boorish and disrespectful. In fact, conduct literature inspired by the European court provided the basis for the Georgian obsession with socially acceptable comportment. Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, translated into English in 1561 and widely-read, linked first impressions to social success so that the ideal person was one who 'conceals art, and presents what is done and said as if it was done without effort and virtually without thought'.¹⁰³ For Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third earl of Shaftesbury, however, Castiglione's courtliness was 'hopelessly distorted by the vectors of patronage, the need to please those in power or with access to it': symptomatic of the cultural hegemony of France and demonstrated by affectation, narcissism, and flattery.¹⁰⁴ In its very nature, courtliness was

¹⁰² Quoted in Klein, 'Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century', *The Historical Journal*, 45:4 (Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 875, Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3133532>].

¹⁰³ Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier*, p. 31.

¹⁰⁴ Antony Ashley Cooper, Earl Shaftesbury, *Soliloquy: Or, Advice to an Author* (John Morphew, 1710), in Klein, *Shaftesbury, Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, . pp. 70–162, part 1

inimical to sociability and thus to both moral and cultural refinement.

Shaftesbury's post-courtly vision situated politeness in the realm of social interaction and exchange where it governed relations of the self with others.

Calculated, but less ruthlessly sycophantic, eighteenth-century politeness reinforced an élitist ideology of self-control and of being pleasing in company.

Laced with complexity (and often dichotomy) the rules of etiquette served to make distinctions *within* the élite.¹⁰⁵

This thesis aims to fit the Carews within the extant, extensive historiography on politeness. While the gist of politeness was expressed as refined yet sociable gentility, its usage was directed by its conformity to a well-rehearsed formula that required submitting one's behaviour or expression to social discipline, polishing one's appearance and marking affinities with the highest group in the social order. According to Paul Langford, (*Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650–1850*, Oxford University Press, 2000), politeness shifted significantly in the middle of the century away from the sociable and conversable ideal (which held that an individual's manners were descriptive of his upbringing, education and experience) and towards politeness as a narrower ideal of etiquette and constituent of a more generous 'national'

section 3; part 2 section 2 and 3; 'The Moralists, a Philosophical Rhapsody' in part 3, section 2; Soliloquy I.iii, lines 199–200, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy*, 1999.

¹⁰⁵ A polite concern for others might conceal a far more basic self-concern. In Klein's illustration the altruistic or charitable appearance of politeness might conceal opportunistic egoism. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p.4, his emphasis.

character (much admired by readers of English novels on the Continent).¹⁰⁶

Lawrence Klein highlights just how problematic standardising the characteristics of politeness throughout the period can be.¹⁰⁷ For example: John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) and the fourth Earl of Chesterfield's letters to his son (1748) share common features despite the years separating their authors.¹⁰⁸ Both take the form of, or originated as, correspondence, written for gentry sons, and demonstrate an understanding of a concept of self-identity dependent on internal and external refinement, in each case open to development for the individual's promotion within Society. Such (early-century) commonplaces, identified by Edward P. Thompson (*Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture*, 1974),¹⁰⁹ aligned polite culture with the patriciate and may serve this thesis in general terms but, more recently, scholars have demonstrated the cultural realities that constituted the practice of politeness.

¹⁰⁶ Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650–1850*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 175ff. Langford asserts that the foreign visitor, with a pre-formed idea of Englishness derived from novels, became an influential interpreter at precisely the time when interest in national character was growing in the last decades of the eighteenth century. This point is further developed in Paul Langford, 'The Uses of Eighteenth-Century Politeness', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (Cambridge University Press, 2002) pp. 311–31.

¹⁰⁷ Klein, *Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century*, pp. 869–898.

¹⁰⁸ Philip Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield, in one of the most celebrated and controversial correspondences between an adult and a child, wrote almost daily to his natural son, Philip, from 1737 onwards, providing him with instruction in etiquette and the worldly arts. Praised in their day as a complete manual of education, and despised by Samuel Johnson for teaching 'the morals of a whore and the manners of a dancing-master', these letters reflected the political craft of a leading statesman and the urbane wit of a man who associated with Pope, Addison and Swift. See, for example: Chesterfield to his son, 9 Oct. 1746, 15 Oct. 1747, and 15 May 1749; Chesterfield to his godson, 11 Aug. 1762, in Bonamy Dobrée, *The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield*, vol. 4 (AMS Press, 1968), pp. 783, 1035, 2409.

¹⁰⁹ Edward P. Thompson, 'Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture', *Journal of Social History*, vol. 7, no. 4, 1974, explores the notion of the paternalist gentry hegemony as a cultural rather than economic control.

The constellation of interpretations of eighteenth-century politeness challenges the ideology of a cultural trait within a social hierarchy and embraces its appropriation by the newly prosperous middling sorts. Politeness, in this context, was not restricted to the aristocracy because it was measured, not by status, but by the activities in which people engaged.¹¹⁰ Polite sociability within the urban public sphere allowed merchant and landowner to socialise, irrespective of rank.¹¹¹ Consumption was an important domain for the actuation of politeness because the spread of consumerism was characterised not just by quantitative increases but by qualitative alterations in the processes and meanings of acquisition.¹¹² The reciprocity of politeness and commerce in this period is the main argument in Langford's work.¹¹³ While it is not possible to gauge any direct impact of Carew encounters with the middling sorts, such contact would be hard to dismiss. It is unimaginable that neither William nor Reginald visited London's coffee-houses: the city's most prestigious establishments in St James's, Covent Garden and Cornhill welcomed strangers, whatever their social background or political allegiances, into lively convivial company. The coffee-house's cultural importance as a site of refined assembly, as well as its relationship to the emergence of popular literary forms, has been widely recognised. Klein argues that the importance of the portrayal of utmost civility in coffee-house conversation was imperative for the survival of their

¹¹⁰ Klein, *Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century*, p. 869.

¹¹¹ Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee* (Yale: University Press, 2005), pp. 2–3.

¹¹² Klein, *Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century*, p. 882.

¹¹³ Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, p.1.

popularity throughout the period,¹¹⁴ although Helen Berry also points out that some coffee-houses could be assuredly impolite – providing a space in which refined behaviour could be ‘suspended’.¹¹⁵

Rosemary Sweet (‘Topographies of Politeness’, 2002) notes that politeness was a ‘quintessential urban concept’, formulated as a response to the pressures of urban living.¹¹⁶ Sweet’s evaluation resides in the metro-centric print culture of the eighteenth century which capitalised on the development of the ‘polite worlds’ of the West End. Textual and visual material, such as Addison and Steele’s *Mr. Spectator*, Hogarth’s sketches, or Swift’s *A Treatise on Polite Conversation*, (begun 1704, published 1738), became emblematic characterisations that parodied polite conversation and behaviour.¹¹⁷ Sweet acknowledges that not all towns were equally polite, however, and the degree of politeness on display became another yardstick by which to categorise and judge provincial society.

¹¹⁴ Klein, ‘Coffeehouse Civility, 1660–1714: An Aspect of Post-Courtly Culture in England’, *The Huntington Library Quarterly*. Vol. 59, No. 1, 1996: pp. 30–51.

¹¹⁵ Berry, ‘Rethinking Politeness in Eighteenth Century England: Moll King’s Coffee House and the Significance of “Flash Talk”’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (2001), Vol. 11, p.74. www.jstor.org/stable/3679414.

¹¹⁶ Rosemary Sweet, ‘Topographies of Politeness’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), pp. 355–74, online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3679352>].

¹¹⁷ Susan Fitzmaurice, ‘Changes in the Meanings of politeness In Eighteenth-century England: Discourse Analysis and Historical Evidence’ in *Historical (Im)politeness*, vol. 65 (2010), pp. 87–116, examined the historical, social and generic contexts to expose the uses of politeness (and impoliteness) throughout the period, and drew upon the work of many researchers whose work informs this thesis. Notably: Berry, Brewer, Klein, and also Langford, ‘The Uses of Eighteenth-Century Politeness’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), pp. 311–13; Phillip Carter, “Polite” Persons: Character, Biography and the Gentleman’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12, (2002) 333–354, doi:10.1017/S0080440102000130. John Tosh distinguishes how politeness and polite society have come to be used by historians as the broad social group of the ‘better sort’ from merchant upwards via gentry to dukes in ‘English Politeness: Conduct, Social Rank and Moral Virtue, c. 1400–1900’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12, (2002) p. 263, [www.jstor.org/stable/3679347].

The focus of Addison's and Steele's essays was manners. In social and urban environments, London was often presented as the centre of true politeness in contrast to provincial vulgarity. Towns, however, saw themselves as the centres of innovative ideas and performance because their openness to visitors encouraged a high degree of sociability.¹¹⁸ Town-dwelling members of polite society thought of themselves as cosmopolitan, inevitably superior to the 'very much behindhand' country-dwellers in terms of good breeding and conversation, and staking out claims to polite status by emphasising the centrality of amenities like coffee-shops and assembly halls.¹¹⁹

Plymouth's assembly rooms, the balls and card games at the Fountain Tavern, and the military presence at the Royal Naval Dockyard may stand as contributing factors to the 'polite town' of Plymouth. However, the day-to-day mechanics of politeness with its capacity for constant reinterpretation and renewal in the name of modishness, depended upon more than leisure pursuits and civic pride. The impact of commercial activity on established social boundaries, and its actual deployment in public spaces, created the 'sites and circuits ... through which social life was produced and reproduced.'¹²⁰ Of value here are the uses of politeness in the creation of public spaces as mapped out in Berry's essay on the Newcastle Assembly Rooms, because of the direct

¹¹⁸ Peter Borsay, 'The Culture of Improvement'. In Langford, P. (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) p. 197

¹¹⁹ Addison, *The Spectator*, November 7, 1711.

¹²⁰ Jon Stobart, Andrew Hann and Victoria Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption: Leisure and Shopping in the English Town, c. 1680–1830*, (Routledge, 2013), p. 87

relevance to the wider social world of the Carews. The funding and patronage of Newcastle's Assembly rooms was mirrored in Plymouth as it also constructed a cultural status sponsored by regional grandees and controlled by a set of rules governing entrance fees, codes of behaviour and dress. Assembly rooms emerged not only as sources of civic pride but also as forums for urban sociability for which, as Berry avers (in reference to Newcastle), there were 'sufficiently large' numbers of gentry and the aspirational middling sorts to secure year-round programmes of entertainments.¹²¹ Replicated throughout the nation, such fundamental similarities in the experience of polite spaces sets the Carews within the cultural life of Plymouth and also recommends an approach to self-fashioning that is not based solely in material objects.

Mingay refers to 'the transformation of behaviour in polite society' (doubtless encouraged by assembly rules) into a 'more refined and knowing lot, of the sort approved by Joseph Addison'.¹²² The century's metamorphosis from politeness to gentility was, to a noteworthy extent, to make a cultural rather than a sociological claim about oneself. William and Reginald, by dint of status, were members of polite society since taste in the arts and material culture was socially

¹²¹ Berry, 'Creating Polite Space, The Organisation and Social Function of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms', *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England*, Gregory, J. and Berry H., [eds], Aldershot and Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2000, pp. 120–140; especially pp. 122–123. See also John Mee, *Conversable Worlds: Literature, Contention, and Community 1762–1830*, (OUP, 2011), p.12.

¹²² Mingay, *English Landed Society*, p. 145. Mingay offers a more complicated account of gentry manners in *The gentry: the rise and fall of a ruling class* (London and New York, 1976), pp. 153–8. See also: Thomas Macaulay, *The History of England*, ed. Hugh Trevor-Roper (first published 1848–61; Harmondsworth, 1979), pp. 56–61.

determined.¹²³ However, in the later iteration of the concept, its boundaries were expanded to include the lower gentry and genteel families of good education and a modest private income, who shared with traditional polite society, their beliefs, values, manners and enthusiasms for the arts.

Politeness assumed a role in the classification of knowledge: employed to make broad distinctions between humanistic or artistic endeavours and philosophical, mathematical and scientific enquiry; and in literary politeness where it served as an umbrella for 'a range of stylistic and critical campaigns.'¹²⁴ Overall politeness, as refined sociability, brought aesthetic concerns into close contiguity with ethical ones. No matter who or what propelled the ideology of politeness as a discriminatory device, in William's and Reginald's world, politeness was the operational currency of society. In this thesis, the topic of politeness provides a contextualised, non-material framework which takes this investigation beyond physical evidence and into the realms of social reception. Politeness defined the notion of the gentleman. Without renouncing the

¹²³ Bourdieu's theories of social difference and hierarchies are embodied in a set of active social processes that anchor taken-for-granted assumptions into the realm of social life.

¹²⁴ Eighteenth-century British writing presents a progressively self-conscious literary culture, a turning inward to interrogate its own standards and precepts. This is particularly evident in its gathering preoccupation with principles of taste, decorum and the complicated notion of 'politeness'. These concern not only aspects of moral conduct (such as sexual propriety) – though these are prominent enough – but also increasingly prescriptive standards of language usage and 'style', and notions of aesthetic judgement as they apply to both literature and external experience in general. From Steele and Addison to (Hugh) Blair and (James) Beattie, Pope and Johnson to Shaftesbury and Burke, eighteenth-century thinkers put forward increasingly elaborate and specialised criteria for the delicate matter of literary and aesthetic judgement. From its outset, this complex area of cultural analysis incorporated diverse fields of creative and scientific study; eighteenth-century thinkers increasingly pursued the serious and systematic investigation of how abstract concepts such as 'beauty' relate to wider moral and intellectual ideas. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness*, p.6.

traditional criteria of gentility (such as land, pedigree and public service), the language of politeness placed the depiction of the gentleman as exercising good taste, manners and virtue in his social interactions with others.¹²⁵ Until politeness became devalued to mean little more than the etiquette of personal encounter, it always entailed a display of leisure – and thus also acted as a marker excluding the unleisured. As Langford shows, from being a means of benevolent intercourse, politeness became ‘an instrument of social warfare’, as the more confident strove to exclude the newer aspirants from polite society.¹²⁶ When William reached his majority the principles of politeness became crucial to his new-found status. Unlike his ancestors, William had to negotiate eighteenth-century codes of behaviour which admitted membership to polite society; Reginald had to maintain them, although both achieved their aims in part through the agencies of material culture.

On the surface, it could appear that the Carews’ engagement with high culture (commissioning, collecting and displaying luxury goods) held a mirror to the practices of the noblest families as a tool in the creation of an identity that shored-up their station in life. As the thirst for knowledge and learning ‘became public, fashionable and a matter of cultural status’,¹²⁷ the example of Reginald’s library additions, viewed through this lens, could be considered an investment in

¹²⁵ Klein, ‘Liberty, Manners and Politeness’, *The Historical Journal*, 32:3 (1989) p. 588.

¹²⁶ Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*.

¹²⁷ Jeremy Black, *Eighteenth-Century Britain, 1688–1783*, (Palgrave, 2001), p. 158.

polite literature as visual evidence of his culture.¹²⁸ Therefore, it is possible to evaluate how the Carews' conspicuous consumption featured in the (general) landscapes of élite politeness and how their engagement with its concepts assisted (more specifically) in the creation of a cultural identity.

The Carews occupied an erstwhile neglected stratum of society: although landed, well-funded, and socially advantaged, they have all but disappeared from scholarship. The disconnect arises because they have not been given much attention. This thesis proposes that the Carews' material culture is of interest to the arguments of existing social historical research since they were neither anonymous in their time nor in the historical record. The family's archives contained a chronology of life-events which, when matched to extant physical evidence, offered a scaffold to which social history's 'cultural turn' added meaning.¹²⁹ Frederic Jameson explains that cultural products (art, architecture, literature) could be investigated conterminously with social relationships to seek meaning beyond structure, and subjectivity beyond status formation and adherence.¹³⁰ From this perspective culture (and cultural artefacts) played an

¹²⁸ Listed at Appendix 2.

¹²⁹ To designate something as culture or cultural is to claim it for a particular academic discipline or style of analysis, distinct from a set of concrete and bounded beliefs and practices which characterise an identifiable sub-societal group. Postmodern academic social historians disagree on the nature of social realities – shot through with ideological preconceptions – and the proper way to study them, depending on the declaimer's persuasions (Marxist, Foucauldian, Jamesonian, etc.) Victoria Bonnell and Lynn Hunt's edited collection of essays in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture* (University of California Press, 1999) offers an introduction to the origins and implications of the cultural turn and its postmodern critiques of knowledge.

¹³⁰ Frederick Jameson, *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern, 1983–1998* (Verso, 1998), p. 111.

unprecedented role in constituting social relations and identities, or as John Brewer clarified:

high culture is less a set of discrete works of art than a phenomenon shaped by circles of conversation and criticism formed by its creators, distributors and consumers.¹³¹

As lesser nobility, the cultural capital embedded in education and rank equipped them *comme il faut* with the social skills of their social superiors. The catalyst for investing in culturally significant material goods, however, emerged as double pressures in William's and Reginald's lives: both in response to personal circumstance and to external societal expectation. In many ways, they had no choice but to present themselves in the visual language of the century (buildings, gardens, portraits) if they were to negotiate and engage with their aristocratic world. Of the 67 extant baronetcies created in the seventeenth-century, a mere handful still occupy British-Palladian houses on ancestral estates. The legacies of William and Reginald become, therefore, rather unique although, in their time, they were probably representative of a large contingent of aristocratic families who used luxury goods modestly. The lack of comparable scholarship and dearth of accessible primary sources from among similar families have presented challenges and required an interdisciplinary approach.

¹³¹ John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: HarperCollins, 1997), p. 15.

Analysing Carew correspondence with builders, landscape gardeners and portraitists, alongside contemporary literature and modern scholarship, allows for the development of arguments for the design of the family seat, not only as a stylistic concern but also as a method to explore how its forms consolidated the self-fashioning strategies of the Carews. Their individualities create the distinction between them and those above and below them in the social tables. William neither refurbished an ancestral Tudor manor (in homage to his lineage) nor built a Baroque palace (in a conspicuous display of wealth). He, like many other aristocratic house builders, chose a style that was a re-interpretation of Classical architecture. We can be certain that it was fashionable but we can also say that it reflected William's everyday desires for how his principal residence would function. Reginald employed a famous landscapist for Antony's gardens but elected to modify Repton's designs to accommodate his own interests. Re-designing the plans may not have been unique, but it reveals Reginald's vision for the property and indicates how he meant it to be enjoyed. Their visible legacies can be mined for the circumstances, attitudes and objectives each employed to achieve their self-fashioning goals, which will be explored in more depth in the following chapters.

This thesis will argue that the Carews remained connected to social and political events as well as cultural movements despite being geographically remote. In many instances, family, close friends, and social peers acted as intermediaries; sourcing, recommending, and exchanging all types of cultural material. Such a reading challenges, more generally, the traditional interpretation

that country house residents were disconnected from the nation's capital as well as the local communities that they neighboured. Far from being detached from London, landowners argued that only those with a stake in the country (i.e. propertied taxpayers) should take part in politics, ensuring that any heir to an estate also held a seat in Parliament. On the second point, however, the relationships of smaller estate owners and their subordinates were necessarily more intimate than that of, say, the Devonshires whose numerous servants reinforced the sort of detachment represented by feudalism. Recent research has argued that rather than disembodied scene-setters who made the beds, brought tea and laid fires, servants were constitutive of social order.¹³² William's expenditure on staff quarters and Reginald's inventory of the furnishings and paintings hung in his Housekeeper's room indicate that Carew servants (whose families were probably also tenants) enjoyed comfortable lodgings.¹³³ Furthermore, upon their deaths William and Reginald bequeathed money to long-serving members of staff which suggests a relationship that acknowledged them as members of the household whose lives mattered to their employers.

This thesis offers the first concentrated investigation into the Carews and their material culture between 1700 and 1835. The framework considers Antony House as cultural repository and its portrait collections as a way into the larger

¹³² See: Kristina Straub, *Domestic Affairs: Intimacy, Eroticism, and Violence between Servants and Masters in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2008). Straub's study of the power relations between servants and their masters frames domestic staff not as a 'subaltern class in society but as an integral part of the early modern family', p.2.

¹³³ Archive CE/E/56.

issues of how relationships feed into shared cultural influences and interpretations among the aristocracy. The findings challenge extant polarised discourses on the uses of luxury goods in the eighteenth century.

1.3 THE FAMILY SEAT

Langford remarked to his audience in the late nineteen-nineties that '[a] world without property was almost inconceivable to eighteenth-century Englishmen.'¹³⁴ In the mental landscape of the age, the ideal was a compact estate, authorised by lineage and outright ownership, featuring a splendid house, a picturesque park and a [contented] community of tenant farmers. William inherited these by default but probably devoted time during his minority planning on how to exert dominion over his legacy and create a strategy to assert his cultural identity based in conspicuous consumption. As a dynastic enterprise, building, decorating and furnishing an impressive residence provided a canvas upon which future generations could contribute a visible imprint of the part each played in the evolution of the family house.¹³⁵

His wife's marriage portion allowed William to commission the most conspicuous symbol of his new authority – a country house. Initially, his choices

¹³⁴ Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman 1689–1798* (University of Oxford, 1991). Langford's original remark was made at the Ford Lectures in English History, given at Oxford University in 1991.

¹³⁵ In a discussion of gendered spending patterns among the Leigh family members, a distinction is drawn between investing surplus capital in the preservation and augmentation of the family's wealth through land, and discretionary spending which could account for personal taste or prevailing fashions of the age. Bermingham's insights (gleaned from more substantial records) established similar goals for the Carews, the evidence residing in the House inventories. See Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the Country House*, p.113.

were to either refurbish the ancestral Tudor manor on the estate or to build anew. As no information on the original manor exists, we can only ponder the reasons why William would not want to remain in his childhood home. It may not be unreasonable to suggest that Antony manor at the turn of the century was much like Trerice, (home of his great-great-grandfather's Arundell relatives),¹³⁶ and in need of major restoration; but even if in good repair, it would have presented challenges in adapting its Tudor layout to modern living. William's neighbours, the Parkers, faced similar decisions when they engaged a succession of architects to refurbish Saltram, which had languished in a state of disrepair since its then-owner James Baggs forfeited it in 1660 to pay his debts. William Kent's 1743 plans had been rejected in favour of a simplified scheme by an unknown designer, only reaching maturity in 1768 when Robert Adam was commissioned to make internal changes (including the formation of a library).¹³⁷ The Edgcumbe family moved out of their ancestral (medieval) manor at Cothele in the seventeenth century and into a 'new' Tudor house overlooking Plymouth Sound, and then spent the next two centuries in extensive remodelling. Perhaps William recognised that refurbishing a family home would cause severe disruption to domestic harmony? Sir Thomas Cullen of Hardwick House wisely removed himself to Rome while his house was being remodelled, writing to his banker,

¹³⁶ John Arundell (1576–1654) was father-in-law to Richard Carew (*Survey of Cornwall*): his daughter, Juliana (sometimes referred to as Julian or Julia), married Carew in 1577.

¹³⁷ Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000699>.

'Pray Sir, don't think of building, you can't tell the misery of it.'¹³⁸ William had, at least, an existing manor to retreat to until the work was completed.

A few years after William began construction, Giacomo Leoni published Palladio's *I Quattro Libri dell'architettura* containing line drawings which popularised the Italianate villa as the *beau idéal* template for an English country seat. In a number of his designs, the sixteenth-century Venetian architect had demonstrated how a columned portico, the signature motif of ancient temples, could be applied to domestic buildings. Palladio had mistakenly believed ancient Romans employed porticoes on their more prestigious dwellings; nevertheless, to Palladio was owed the fashion in eighteenth-century England for embellishing houses with this ubiquitous architectural feature. Between 1710 and 1760, the rediscovery of the earlier works of Palladio and of his English follower, Inigo Jones, formed the basis of a style that became to be known as British-Palladian. The spread of architectural classicism from the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century has usually been told as the story of an increasingly exacting loyalty to classical rules, a process said to have reached its apogee in the British-Palladian style. However, British-Palladianism is not equitable with an eighteenth-century interpretation of classicism and attention must be drawn to the subtleties of the terms. Classicism can be understood as having been

¹³⁸ Richard Wilson and Alan Mackley (eds), *The Building of the English Country House (Creating Paradise)*, (London and New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2000), p.145. Cullen was 7th baronet in a line noted in *The Gentleman's Magazine, volume 101, Part 2* (p. 270) as the 'oldest Baronetcy existing in the country of Suffolk'. Educated at Charthouse, he dedicated his leisure to literary and scientific pursuits, acceding to the baronetcy upon the death of his elder brother.

associated simultaneously with the universal rules of taste and with naturalness of design. Since politeness was often identified with classical idioms, polite architectural taste was classical and, in a wider, European, standard of design taste, it also identified the embodiment of simplicity, restraint, and good breeding.¹³⁹ British-Palladianism, on the other hand, was a niche within that universal tradition occupied by aristocrats and the architects that group employed to design their country houses. As a social distinction, therefore, it becomes important whether a house is British-Palladian (i.e. directly based on a design by Palladio) or merely classical, although as Elizabeth McKellar's (*Articulating British Classicism*, 2004) proposes, the reception and spread of classicism in the eighteenth century suggests not a top-down model but rather overlapping spheres of influence between the national and the provincial, the élite and the everyday. We must also admit the use of non-classical and mixed classical modes as legitimate alternatives to Palladian classicism.¹⁴⁰

Reconsidering the traditional historiography of British eighteenth-century architecture from a range of disciplines, such topics as social and gender identities, notions of the rural, provincial urban, and suburban, as well as issues of theory and historiography are examined by contemporary scholars like James Ackerman (*The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses*, 1995), and Denise

¹³⁹ See Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660–1770*, (London, 1989), pp. 235–306; John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530–1830* (Baltimore, 1954), p. 201; David Watkin, *The English Vision: the Picturesque in Architecture, Landscape, and Garden Design*. (Harper & Row, 1982), p. 124.

¹⁴⁰ Elizabeth McKellar, *Articulating British Classicism: New approaches in Eighteenth Century Architecture*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

Baxter and Meredith Martin, editors of *Architectural Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Constructing Identities and Interiors* (2010). For Ackerman, the phenomenon of the 'country place' emerges as a focus for examining not only the relationship between urban and rural life but also that between building and natural environment and between social, cultural, economic and political forces and architectural design. Baxter and Martin address the role played by different spatial environments in the production – not merely the reflection – of identity at defining historical and cultural moments, situating ideas of space and the self within the visual and material remains of interiors in eighteenth-century Europe. This latter study, alongside those of historians specialising in eighteenth-century interiors: John Cornforth, *Early Georgian Interiors*, (2004); Marica Pointon *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England*, (1993); and Andrew Hann and Jon Stobart's *The Country House: Material Culture and Consumption*, (2015), has underpinned examinations of how the Carews furnished Anthony House as a reflection of their self-fashioning goals.

Early-century commissioners of country houses modelled on the Roman villa were seen to be making a statement about the nature of their property and of themselves. For established landowners in particular, the symmetry and balance of a Classically-inspired building apotheosised their aim of maintaining national stability (like their Roman antecedents) through a vested aristocratic interest

based in historicism and the paternalistic landownership systems of the past.¹⁴¹ Whig advocates of British-Palladianism appropriated an Italianate self-image, associating architecture with the oligarchic liberty of Venetian republicanism, in contrast to the Baroque which was mooted as its (simplistically, Tory) alternative.¹⁴² Conservatism and local tastes undoubtedly accounted for much (not every newly built country house had a columned portico) but the importance of architectural pattern-books circulating among aristocratic landowners and their builders cannot be overstated in promoting the Italianate style. Two important historical documents, Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus*, first published in London, 1715–1725, and *A Book of Architecture* by James Gibbs (1728), mapped out ground plans and decorations through a selection of meticulous engravings of buildings which drew inspiration from the Italian Renaissance and were targeted at country house owner-builders. William's library contained both.

For the Earl of Shaftesbury, Palladian architecture could be seen as analogous to his preference for 'designs [...] run all on moral emblems and what

¹⁴¹ High Tories preferred the values of the historical landed gentry and aristocracy, with their *noblesse oblige* and their self-imposed sense of duty and responsibility, to those of the modern commercial business class championed by the Whig party. See: Harry T. Dickinson, (ed.), *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Malden MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 2006) and John G.A. Pocock, *Politics, Language, and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (University of Chicago Press, 1971).

¹⁴² Carol Fry, 'Spanning the Political Divide: Neo-Palladianism and the Early Eighteenth-Century Landscape,' *Garden History* 31, no. 2 (2003), p. 181 Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1587294>]; Black, *Culture of Eighteenth-Century England: A Subject for Taste* (London and New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2005), p.14.

relates to Ancient Roman and Greek History, Philosophy, and Virtue'.¹⁴³ From the vantage of St Giles House (its design reputedly influenced by Jones) on his Dorset estate, Cooper's moral and aesthetic principles embraced a classical language critical of luxury, effeminacy and corruption (formerly in defence of the Roman state) within intellectual endeavour and cultural refinement (as representative of the early-modern age).¹⁴⁴ Thus, when it was remarked that the sixth Duke of Somerset's new house at Petworth:

constantly preserved his Rank, like a Man of Birth and Fortune, ever moved in a Sphere above the Vulgar, thereby maintaining that just Order and Regularity which proceeds from a Distinction of Persons without which a State could not look comely nor government subsist...¹⁴⁵

- the commentator's appraisal neatly conflated patron, his culture and the effect of his self-fashioning countryside. Alexander Pope's praise for classically-inspired architecture concluded that its principal champion, Lord Burlington, like Somerset, developed his estates not for the selfish indulgence of his own vanity, but for the good of the nation and the benefit of the public.¹⁴⁶ This was an

¹⁴³ Benjamin Rand, (ed.) *Antony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury: Second Characters, or the Language of Forms* (Cambridge: 1914), p. 468 – letter from Shaftesbury to Sir John Cropley, 16 February 1712.

¹⁴⁴ For more on this topic see Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness*, and *Shaftesbury, Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, pp. xix-xx.

¹⁴⁵ Petworth was built in 1688 in a Neo-Classical style and remodelled in 1714 following a fire. Somerset was a Tory and friend of Queen Anne; his wife became her closest confidante. Joan Johnson, *The Gloucestershire Gentry* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1989)

¹⁴⁶ Pope's *Epistle IV To Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington*, lines 183–8: 'Whose cheerful tenants bless their yearly toil / Yet to their Lord owe more than to the soil; / Whose ample lawns are not ashamed to feed / the milky heifer and deserving steed; / Whose rising forest, not for pride or show, / But future building, future navies, grow ...'. *The Complete Poetical Works of Alexander Pope. Moral Essays: Epistle IV: To Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington 'of the Use of Riches'*, Henry W.

idealistic concept attractive to both Tory and Whig civic moralism which, furthermore, resists overwriting architectural style with partisanship although, in the case of Antony, William's altruism may have been overshadowed by his Jacobitism.

There was a clear distinction made between the true country house and a house in the country. A country house required sufficient landed estates to pay for its upkeep, and had to possess tenanted land as an indication of the intention to use the house as a source of influence in the local community. The estate immediately surrounding Antony commanded four parishes – or approximately 9,740 acres – supporting 7,878 people in 1,336 houses.¹⁴⁷ One hundred years after William's marriage, the parochial records of landownership reveal that the annual value of the Real Property ('Land Tax' and 'Assessed Taxes' – the latter referring to tariffs such as window tax at four shillings per property having up to 20 windows) returned to Parliament was £6,361.0s.0d.¹⁴⁸ It has been estimated that the average peer's income in 1690 was around £6,000 rising, a century later, to £10,000.¹⁴⁹ Incredibly wealthy *grands seigneurs*, such as the Bedfords, Devonshires and Shelburnes, had incomes of four or five times as much again, the equivalent to the riches of many 'small independent rulers of the

Boynton, (ed.), Cambridge edition ed. (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1903).

¹⁴⁷ J. M. Wilson, 'East Hundred', vol. II, *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* (Edinburgh: Fullarton Printers, 1870–72).

¹⁴⁸ Approximately £374,300 in 2015.

¹⁴⁹ Mingay, *English Landed Society*, pp.20–23.

Continent'.¹⁵⁰ Although few records exist to account in full for William's finances,¹⁵¹ it is clear that regular estate income allowed for a flutter on the South Sea Company,¹⁵² and for all members of the Carew dynasty to spend on luxury items to support a lifestyle appropriate to their rank.

Upon his inheritance, the opportunity to build in a progressively modern architectural style offered a visual narrative that reflected the scholarship and self-discipline most characteristic of William. Correspondence between William and John Moyle, his builder, confirmed Antony was not merely an outcome based on a stylistic template, but purposeful construction with specific functions in mind, providing clues to the patron's pecuniary intelligence. Building anew was expensive, although William's rationality and restraint were ably demonstrated in his choice not to spend money refurbishing his Tudor manor, as his Courtenay relatives had at Powderham, nor squander on a more extravagant display such

¹⁵⁰ See: Black, *Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 18. Also: David Cannadine's paper for the British Agricultural Society *The Landowner as Millionaire* estimated that the four greatest incomes in the kingdom belonged to the Duke of Northumberland, Earl Grosvenor, the Marquess of Stafford and the Earl of Bridgewater each of whom was reputed to possess 'one hundred thousand pounds, clear of everything'. Cannadine has published extensively on aspects of social, cultural, political and imperial history from this period, with a particular focus on: the British aristocracy; urban development and the structure of power in British towns; issues of class in Britain and the themes of cultural expression and ceremony both within Britain and its empire.

¹⁵¹ Rent and tithe books, household accounts and receipts build a generalised picture but detailed records are incomplete and can only amount to an approximation since debts, loans and other demands on income are merely sketched, if they figure at all. Reginald's attention to his accounts was more proficient.

¹⁵² William was charged with not having paid for £1000's worth of stock he acquired in the South Sea Company, a venture that later developed into the 1720 financial crash, known as the South Sea Bubble, but following a protracted period where his 'case' was before the Court, he was absolved.

as his cousin Thomas Carew's red brick Crowcombe Court, near Taunton.¹⁵³ Antony's architectural elements reinforced William's self-control: communicated through its undecorated, symmetrical composition and its subtext that suggested William's education and worldliness. Schooled in the Classics, as part of the curriculum enjoyed by élite sons, and further embellished by continued cultivation through travel and literary discourse, William's interest in and exposure to ideas from lands both within and beyond his native soil incubated the cultural capital necessary to reinforce notions of hereditary landownership and rule.¹⁵⁴ William did not participate in the Grand Tour (unlike his elder brother, Richard, who was issued a 'pass' to visit Padua and Venice in 1699);¹⁵⁵ perhaps his father felt no need to invest in the educational advantages of foreign travel for his youngest son? Not every young man of privilege travelled, of course, although contemporary correspondence noted there being sufficient numbers in Rome in 1718 to 'fill two coffee houses'.¹⁵⁶

Even without the benefit of having gazed upon the Roman Forum, from his country house amid gardens in which art complemented nature as recommended

¹⁵³ Completed in 1739 to a design by Nathaniel Ireson, who also built Stourhead and Venn House, the style is described as English Regional Baroque and sits across the Queen Anne and Georgian periods.

¹⁵⁴ Michele Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* (Taylor & Francis, 2002), p.54.

¹⁵⁵ CZ/AV/9 – the archive does not tell us whether Richard used this passport, only that it existed.

¹⁵⁶ Reported in correspondence by the Irish philosopher, George Berkley (also known as Bishop Berkley), a friend of Addison, Pope and Steele, who embarked on one of the most extensive Grand Tours of the length and breadth of Italy ever undertaken. See: Edward Chaney, 'George Berkeley's Grand Tours: The Immaterialist as Connoisseur of Art and Architecture', in *The Evolution of the Grand Tour: Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations since the Renaissance*, (London, Routledge, 2000).

by Shaftesbury, Addison, and Pope,¹⁵⁷ William might have seen himself as a latter-day Pliny: away from the cares of Rome (London) at Laurentinium (Antony).¹⁵⁸ The Roman author celebrated the benefits of the rural villa, writing in detail of the pleasurable living experience that they provided.¹⁵⁹ Pliny's lifestyle at his Laurentine retreat was, according to Roy Gibson and Ruth Morello:

largely defined by [the] absence of disruptive influences (noise, spoken criticism, emotional upheaval), and a freedom from the uncomfortable moral compromises required by urban life.¹⁶⁰

The concept that country houses were designed both for their owner's enjoyment and for relaxation is only part of the story, however. James Ackerman stressed that the villa was not wholly divorced from urban culture but rather a counter-balance to it: in many instances rural villas were built with money that had been made in the city and the pleasures of a country retreat were appropriate and just rewards. Nonetheless, the notion of the ancient villa as a 'fantasy' residence (albeit 'impervious to reality') was irresistible, and one of the

¹⁵⁷ Alexander Pope in his *Essay on criticism* (1711), Anthony Ashley Cooper Earl of Shaftesbury in *Characteristics of Men, Manner, Opinion, Times* (1714) and Joseph Addison in the famous newspaper *Spectator* (1711–14) spurned the heretical excesses of modern Europeans' taste and hoped for the foundation of universal rules based not only on the ancients, but also on the examples of the Italian masters of '400 and '500 and at the same time on the most correct English production. Palladio had become an uncontested authority. A further discussion of this point is found in Chapter 2, subsections 2.3 and 2.5.

¹⁵⁸ Phillip Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 126.

¹⁵⁹ See, in particular, Pliny's letter to Gallus in P. G. Walsh, (ed.), *Pliny the Younger: Complete Letters* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 47–51.

¹⁶⁰ Roy K. Gibson and Ruth Morello, *Reading the Letters of Pliny the Younger: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 173.

principal reasons comparisons between Roman retreats and England's country houses have been drawn.¹⁶¹

1.4 CULTURAL TOPOGRAPHY

The prestige of a celebrity invariably guarantees attention, embellishing the status of project and patron alike. If the cultural capital of an assured association with a famous name increases social history's interest in the Carews, then Reginald's commission of Humphry Repton to renovate Antony's landscaping is potent. Repton amassed approximately 400 illustrious clients by capitalising on the whims of fashion-conscious landowners left rudderless after Lancelot 'Capability' Brown's death in 1783. Brown's styling demolished the geometric formality of Versailles, replaced by a seemingly-natural grassed park, often with a large lake fringed by majestic oaks and maples. For Pope, such schemes were admired as extolling 'the genius of the place'.¹⁶²

To help his clients visualise the potential of their estates, Repton's famous *Red Books* contained illustrations of 'before' and 'after' views. It was an illusory sleight of hand which made the present scene seem not only worse than it was but also a state of affairs that had somehow been papered over. Repton's overlays portrayed a landscape he was intent on uncovering and restoring to its proper condition. The steward at Longleat, perhaps resistant to modernising

¹⁶¹ James S. Ackerman, *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses* (Thames and Hudson, 1995), p.9.

¹⁶² Boynton, *The Complete Poetical Works of Alexander Pope*, Epistle IV, line 57.

planting, complained that Repton's proposal to fell old lime, plane, and elm trees near the house to make way for maples was merely a 'stage trick'.¹⁶³ Repton was pleased to report later that Nature herself removed the trees (disease being more effective than a spade) with the result that Repton was able to enhance the Marquess of Bath's parklands (updating earlier designs by Brown) with hanging beech woods and ornamental species cut through with carriage drives.

Antony's *Red Book* reimagined the approach to the house in a scheme that relied on what might be termed delayed gratification (the element of surprise as successive vistas was revealed being a Reptonian hallmark).¹⁶⁴ By removing the formal walled garden at the front of the house, constructed for William by Humphry Bowen of Lambeth, and replacing it with lawns, with trees and shrubberies framing the views to the river and Jupiter Point,¹⁶⁵ dramatic effects were assured. Repton's modernisation of the rear elevation of the house provided for a loggia (at Reginald's request), and a wide flight of stone steps descending from a centrally placed door on the north-west facade of the house to reach a gravelled terrace which extended the full width of the building. These terraces, the balustrading, flower gardens and conservatories not only gave

¹⁶³ The formal garden was replaced with well-drained green turf and an apparently natural water course and trees forming pleasing groups and silhouettes by Capability Brown whose contracts with the 1st Marquess of Bath date between 1757 and 1762. Using materials from the old Grove wall, Brown also planted the Pleasure Walk, the arboretum to the South West of the House, with 'trees and shrubs of curious sorts' (this area was one of the last projects of the 6th Marquess who commissioned a replanting in this same spirit). Repton prepared a *Red Book* for Longleat in 1803–4, and various alterations were made to the house and grounds at this time. Marc Treib, *Representing Landscape Architecture* (Taylor & Francis, 2008), p.47.

¹⁶⁴ Archive CE/E/66.

¹⁶⁵ Approximately 400m north-northwest of the house and one of several prominent hills on the site.

outdoor spaces adjacent to the house the traditional pleasures of flower gardens, but also provided Repton (somewhat ironically) with an artistic approach to landscaping by foregrounding elements with which to compose views of the house.

The theoretical framework for what became known as the English landscape is usually based on (often acrimonious) exchanges among Repton, Uvedale Price and Richard Payne Knight. In 1794 Knight and Price simultaneously published vicious attacks (which Repton defended) of Brown, criticising his smooth, serpentine curves as bland and unnatural. They espoused rugged and intricate designs composed according to formal aspects of 'picturesque' landscape painting which referred to dramatic effects rendered by light, composition or perspective. Repton himself was attacked for a total lack of any painterly appreciation: to Repton's mind, what was much more to the point was concord between architect and gardener, for a house was presupposed for every garden. His schemes aligned landscape type with the patrimony of estates so that 'the symbolism of [...] gardens reflected the owner's own tastes and outlook in an unprecedented way.'¹⁶⁶

Garden taste, however, was rarely the work of a single individual and there were always many other motives and forces which contributed in some proportion or other to the evolving result. In this context, landscape artists had

¹⁶⁶ Tim Richardson, *The Arcadian Friends (Inventing the English Landscape Garden)* (London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland and Johannesburg: Bantam Press, 2007), p.6.

been historicised as a medium of national identity; preserving on canvas a form of nostalgia for a world the landed aristocracy were keen to perpetuate. As Walter Mitchell recites in *Landscape and Power*, (2002), 'landscape is a natural scene mediated by culture'.¹⁶⁷ The recurrent metaphor of landscape as the inscape of national identity (wherein the power of the eye to naturalise the rhetoric of national affiliation, and its forms of collective expression, is emphasised) is a beguiling conceit.¹⁶⁸ Brewer's perception of this trope is more pragmatic: he writes that 'the English nation in the eighteenth century was conceived as represented landscape in spite of being cultivated nature.'¹⁶⁹ The jingoistic turn for landscaping found its target in Britain's nearest Continental neighbours whose formal, geometric gardens were a reflection of the control its monarch exerted over his citizens. Thus, when Price and Knight accused Repton of:

impoverishing the nation by demolishing its old, irregular beauties, associated with ancient 'natural' British rights and freedom,¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Walter J.T. Mitchell, *Landscape and Power, Second Edition* (University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 5. A significant cultural factor in the development of aesthetic conventions for landscape art was the Grand Tour of Europe that flourished from the mid-seventeenth century, where wealthy travellers and the European elite appropriated foreign, idealised landscape art.

¹⁶⁸ The reliance on the French style of garden design in the seventeenth century constituted a serious cultural threat to early eighteenth-century authors writing about the principles of landscape gardening. H. Bhabha in Brigitte Weltman-Aron, *On Other Grounds: Landscape Gardening and Nationalism in Eighteenth-Century England and France* (State University of New York Press, 2001), p.43.

¹⁶⁹ Bermingham and Brewer argue that although the English landscape was changed by enclosure and scientific agriculture, travel writing turns into a patriotic experience of English landscape, its nature being 'evidently a cultural artefact', *Consumption of Culture*, p. 632–3.

¹⁷⁰ Jenny Uglow, *A Little History of British Gardening* (Random House, 2012), pp.168.

their contempt for Brownian ‘place-making’ was barely concealed. Brown had, in one example, persuaded the Earl of Dorchester to move whole villages out of sight, ‘regardless of resentment’.¹⁷¹ For these two gardening commentators, such arrogance too closely resembled the absolutism exemplified by the Court of Versailles. Knight’s passion for the use of indigenous planting was rehearsed as patriotism and published in *The Landscape: A Didactic Poem* (1794), ‘where every shaggy shrub and spreading tree / Proclaimed the seat of native liberty’.¹⁷² His *Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*, written eleven years later, made his point explicit: the picturesque was, in effect, a theory of association richly stored in a warehouse of British memory. His reverence for Nature’s ‘irregular beauties’ referred to gnarled oaks in historic woodland, some dating back to William the Conqueror and metaphorically invested with the characteristics of the ideal landed family: liberal, venerable, patriarchal, stately, autonomous, and quintessentially English.¹⁷³ The sins of Brown, and Repton, were the destruction of a heritage (the disarrayed planting schemes that Knight, Price, and Pope praised as ‘artful wilderness’) whereby the effects on the imagination were swept away into ‘huge heaps of littleness’.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p.161.

¹⁷² Richard Payne Knight, *The Landscape: A Didactic Poem in Three Books: Addressed to Uvedale Price, Esq.* (London: W. Bulmer and Co., 1795).

¹⁷³ Pope’s *Windsor Forest*, (1704) – a topographical poem that reflected British history and politics within its 422 lines. Windsor Forest was a royal hunting ground and preserve, and Pope’s work incorporated panegyric, pastoral and georgic poetic elements. Along with the description of external nature, Pope injected his feelings about society and the country’s political events in the poem.

¹⁷⁴ Pope and W. Roscoe, *The Works of Alexander Pope: Esq. With Notes and Illustrations by Himself and Others, to Which Are Added, a New Life of the Author, an Estimate of His Poetical Character and Writings, and Occasional Remarks* (J. Rivington, 1824), *Epistle*, lines 109, 115-8.

Part of Repton's plans for Antony included the construction of a bath house built some distance from the house and fed by the waters of the Lynher River. From this space, we can suggest Reginald's engagement with medical science, fashion and the entertainment of his guests, as components of his self-fashioning. The benefits of a cold bath were held to be almost limitless by medical opinion of the eighteenth century, and a cursory inspection of Reginald's notebooks reveals his fascination with progressive therapies. A wealth of material in æsculapian magazines linked melancholy, the vapours, nervousness, gout, consumption and many other diagnoses, with an élite and superior sensibility.¹⁷⁵ The role of illness as an agent of sociability found a focused arena in the growth of seaside towns, like Exmouth, which offered a 'scientific' veneer on popular sea-bathing customs and marketed the result as a supplement or (increasingly) alternative to 'taking the cure' at a spa.¹⁷⁶ According to Nicholas Jewson, among the prized cultural symbols was the attention of a physician, a latter-day accessory *du jour*.¹⁷⁷ Reginald had *two*, and several pages in his Letterbooks are dedicated to his correspondence with Doctors Addington and Watson and their prescriptions for his hypochondriasis.¹⁷⁸ Notwithstanding its

¹⁷⁵ See Roy Porter and G.S. Rousseau, *Gout: The Patrician Malady* (Yale University Press, 2000); Allan Ingram, et al., *Melancholy Experience in Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century: Before Depression, 1660–1800* (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2011), and Glen Colburn, *The English Malady: Enabling and Disabling Fictions* (Cambridge Scholars Publisher, 2009).

¹⁷⁶ John K. Walton, 'The English Seaside Resort: A Social History 1750–1914' (1983, 2016), Online [<http://www.History.Ac.Uk/lhr/Focus/Sea/Articles/Walton.Html>].

¹⁷⁷ Nicholas D. Jewson, 'Medical Knowledge and the Patronage System in 18th Century England,' *Sociology* 8, no. 3 (1974), Online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/42853096>].

¹⁷⁸ CE/E/32 contains receipts, advertisements for servants, prescriptions, letters between the doctors and Reginald, the physicians' case notes for June 1795; recipes in French and English for

therapeutic benefits, the bath house was a site of sociability. Many saw it as novel recreation in picturesque countryside. Guests could participate in cold-water bathing for amusement, or pleasure – in reflection of the cold-water springs at Bath. Thus, Reginald’s plunge pool at Antony becomes an unexpected constituent in the cultural identity of a modish, well-read and socially-engaged landowner.

William’s and Reginald’s strategies of distinction for house and garden were calculated: from Palladian façade to Arcadian parkland, the intent was superficially fashionable but profoundly eloquent, transmitting the ideologies of enlightenment, taste and rank. What they created was not, however, unique. The aristocracy numbered less than 200 noble families owning estates over 10,000 acres apiece at the beginning of the eighteenth century and, among such a small group, it is unsurprising to note repetition in the style of newly-built country houses surrounded by the *jardins anglais* promoted by Brown and Repton.¹⁷⁹ The demand for such replicable schemes finds its essence in a

an alarming variety of ailments and cures; beer-brewing recipes and home preserving winter vegetables.

¹⁷⁹ Although commentaries disagree, King’s social tables in *State and Condition of England*, 1688, are notoriously inconsistent and underestimate both landed incomes and land values (see Appendix 5). Lawrence Stone’s *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558–1641* (Oxford University Press, 1965) calculated that two-thirds of the group of great landowners possessed 15–20 per cent of the cultivated acreage, distributed among 200 families. Thompson provides an overview of the difficulties historians encounter when attempting to provide useful estimates of the population since most studies are biased towards an outcome (exploited peasantry, capitalism, constitutional or political interpretations, etc.), F. M. L. Thompson, *The Social Distribution of Landed Property in England since the Sixteenth Century*, *The Economic History Review*, 19:3 (1966), pp. 505–517, online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2593160>]. See also Dickinson, *Companion*, p.312 – this figure excludes the great aristocratic families such as the Cavendishes, Cecils and Saviles but, again, it is biased in using landownership as its raw data basis and includes non-titled landowners. Supplemental approaches are suggested by Mingay and Cannon.

particular collective apprehension: throughout the century, the aristocratic order was anxious to convey the image of an elegant society whose leaders resided in magnificent country houses inside a federation of great estates.¹⁸⁰ Cognisant of its cultural power, Antony House and grounds claimed for William and Reginald visible confirmation of their status and provided the basis upon which they could craft cultural identities.

In the reception of Antony and its landscape we identify the visual elements and suggest how they might have been digested. Gardens and houses were, of course, also designed to be experienced synaesthetically, so that sound, smell, texture and sight worked in collaboration to amplify the experience thereby also enhancing their meaning-making potential.¹⁸¹ Johan Herder's 1778 essay titled *On the Cognition and Sensation of the Human Soul* highlighted such sensory inter-connections:

Sight borrows from feeling and believes that it sees what is only felt. Sight and hearing decode each other reciprocally. Smell seems to be the spirit of taste, or at least a close brother of taste. From all this now, the soul weaves and makes for itself its robe, its sensuous universe.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ Frank O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688–1832* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

¹⁸¹ See Simon T. Shaw-Miller, "Disciplining the Senses: Beethoven as Synaesthetic Paradigm," in *Other Than the Visual: Art, History and the Senses*, Patrizia di Bello and Gabriel Koureas (eds.,) (Ashgate, 2009), pp. 1-15.

¹⁸² Johann.G. Herder, *Herder: Philosophical Writings 1772–97*, trans. Michael N. Forster, (Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 205.

Recently, scholars in diverse disciplines have challenged the rational and detached position of the perceiver in order to delve beyond the social dimension of cultural production into the non-discursive and experiential nature of social interaction. Daniel Miller's edited volume, *Materiality* (2005), explored what one reviewer referred to as a 'Pandora's box' that we call 'culture' by questioning objectification, agency, habitus, power and representation.¹⁸³ Miller asserted that the materiality of objects represents reifications of self-hood, framed variously as the subject, as social relations, or as society. Objectification (or what Miller calls 'the tyranny the object') is the concrete embodiment of an idea although, as he argues, things are not just objectifications at the points of their production but throughout their life cycles, in moments of exchange, appropriation and consumption.¹⁸⁴ Aspects of materiality debates are relevant to this thesis although the focus is firmly on the message communicated by art and architecture and how it contributed to the self-fashioning of William and Reginald.

1.5 FAMILY MATTERS

Architects and patrons, alike, realised the ways in which exterior forms and interior spaces could be crafted as a spatial composition: framing the sitter to his or her best advantage and, thusly, paramount in the cultural identities of the Carews throughout the century. William's achievements were rewarded by the entry in the *Parochial History of Cornwall* asserting his provenance as 'a

¹⁸³ Miller et al., *Materiality*, (Duke University Press, 2005), pp. 1–50.

¹⁸⁴ See Tilley, et al., [eds] *Handbook of Material Culture*. (London: Sage, 2006), p.61.

gentleman that in every respects comes up to the merits of the greatest of his ancestors'.¹⁸⁵ In the countryside, land, bricks and mortar commemorated the meritorious service to the Crown that had secured the family's position and Cornish estates in earlier centuries. Stewardship demanded much of its landlord, as Defoe cautioned:

... if thou art not as well an inheritor of the Father's and
Ancestors' virtue, as estate, thou art but a titular
Gentleman at best¹⁸⁶

– a remark weighted by history and freighted with the expectancies inherent in rank and privilege. The character of an English gentleman was defined by a code of conduct based on such medieval concepts as loyalty, chivalry and courtesy, which thrived because of the nation's unique social system. The weft of family and tradition forms the primary causative agencies in Carew self-fashioning, with ancestral land representing time, and therefore lineage, through

¹⁸⁵ Gilbert Davies, *The Parochial History of Cornwall*, (London: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1838) was based on parochial histories published in 1750 by Messrs. Hals and Tonkin. William Hals from Fentongollan near Truro 'made collections for a parochial history of Cornwall [...] to about the year 1736' (preface p.viii); Thomas Tonkin of Trevaunance, Helston began writing his parochial history for the press in 1702, using Hals's collections. Sir Wymond Carew (1498–1549) was appointed Receiver-General to three of Henry VIII's queens (Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves and Catherine Parr), outliving each of them. In 1563 Wymond's son, Thomas (1526–64), was elected MP for Saltash, a seat which was subsequently controlled by the family for more than 200 years. Thomas Carew's son, Richard (1555–1620), a member of the Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries and a courtier, is particularly remembered for his *Survey of Cornwall* (1602), the second English country history to appear in print. At Richard Carew's death the estate passed to his son, also Richard (c.1580–1643), who was created a baronet in 1641. Both of Sir Richard's sons, Alexander who inherited as 2nd Baronet in 1643, and his half-brother John, were executed during the Civil War. Alexander's son, John, became Antony's third baronet siring two sons, Richard and William, to whom the title would pass as 4th and 5th Baronet, respectively.

¹⁸⁶ Ian Pears, *The Discovery of Painting: The Growth of Interest in the Arts in England, 1680–1768*, The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1988), p.10.

the length of occupation. The warp identifies personal relationships, shared exchange patterns and circulations, and how each contact contributed to the cultural identities of William and Reginald.

Throughout the centuries, Carew genealogy drew its familial alliances from within a small gene pool; names and bloodlines recur with alarming regularity and, despite the teachings of the Church, cousin was most often betrothed to cousin (see the family tree at Appendix 1). The disadvantages of in-breeding were superseded by the rewards of land acquisition and, as a shared practice among the élite, it was not unusual for this charmed society to marry within narrow geographical or familial boundaries to secure (relatively) undiluted territories and preserve hereditary birthrights. Political and social influence could also be a part of the compensation for such intra-, or endogamic, marriages via augmented connections. Bernard Deacon (*The Cornish Family: The Roots of Our Future*, 2004) estimates that between 1720 and 1775 as many as 73 per cent of Cornish gentry had affinal kin.¹⁸⁷ Sir Richard Carew's comment that all Cornishmen were cousins might, indeed, have been based in truth: intermarriage produced a complex web of relationships as the gentry were:

[F]or ever in one another's houses, dining, playing at bowls or gaming into the night; travelling for business or pleasure in one another's company; quarrelling about land

¹⁸⁷ Bernard Deacon, *The Cornish Family: The Roots of Our Future*, (Fowey, Cornwall Editions, Ltd., 2004), p.18

boundaries and inheritances, and marrying and arranging marriages among themselves.¹⁸⁸

Across the eighteenth century, William and Reginald gathered a handful of earls, barons and a larger number of lesser landed aristocrats (including Pole ancestors and Buller descendants), each with their own spheres of influence. In particular, William's marriage to Anne Coventry grafted onto the family tree kinship with the Edgcumbe, Shaftesbury and Craven lineages. Undoubtedly a dynastic coup for Sir John's second son whose elevation to front-line aristocratic and political status had not been anticipated. Likewise, Reginald's first wife was born of influential stock: a grand-daughter of Philip Yorke, Earl Hardwicke (the Lord Chancellor) with whom she lived as a child. Hardwicke's position at Court commanded the ear of the period's most powerful politicians and commended social ease for Jemima.

The desired result of any aristocratic marriage was an heir; the biggest fear was the lack of one since a broken line affected the survival of the family name and its entitlement to hereditary lands. Male primogeniture, the key component of inheritance law, governed the patterns and circulations of land acquisition among the ruling élites. For the Carews, as for many landed families, the enlargement of their estates arose from both opportunistic wedlock and failures in the direct line of succession. Reginald's accession arose as the next-available bloodline male when his third cousin, Coventry Carew, (William's son), failed to

¹⁸⁸ Richard Carew, *Survey of Cornwall*. (London and Penzance: Law and Hewett, 1602 (1769).

produce an heir. Reginald introduced many of the contents of Shute House (his Pole ancestor's family seat) into Antony along with hereditary estates in Dorset and Devon. His second marriage added wealth and properties in Kent, Somerset, and Cambridgeshire to the portfolio.¹⁸⁹ As a result, we can see the significance of displayed objects within Antony in terms of a gathering of familial meaning – both across time spans and the geographic extent of the family network.

Since the eighteenth century prized land as a measure of worth, the expansion of Carew holdings not only maintained and secured their place in local and national social hierarchies, but were publicised in land-ownership figures (and taxes). The scrutiny of proprietorship was not confined to the eighteenth century: in 1873 John Bateman's *Acre-Ocracy of England* listed owners of 3,000 acres and upwards, noting also their church, college, and club affiliations as glosses to seignery rights and entitlements.¹⁹⁰ Brewer rightly argues that the

¹⁸⁹ By 1886, Lt. General Reginald Pole-Carew, Reginald's and Caroline's grandson, held 4,288 acres worth £6,401 a year. Reginald's Pole ancestors, the Poles of Shute (whose direct line of descent failed in 1926 whereupon the Pole lands were bequeathed to John Carew-Pole, who reversed his surnames, and his successors) held 5,846 acres in Devon, worth £7,416 a year. Source: National Register .

¹⁹⁰ Vaughan's review of the 4th reprint of Bateman's work (now titled *Great Landowners*) concludes that its value lies not only as a directory of landed property owners who 'gloried in showing off huge estates' undiminished by the burgeoning 'land question' but perhaps and more importantly, in showing that 'the matchmakers and fortune hunters of the 1880s were better informed of their victims' assets and resources than were the Mrs Carbuncles and Misses Bennets of an earlier age.' William E. Vaughan, 'The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland by John Bateman', *Irish Historical Studies* 18, no. 71 (1973), online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30005444>]. For example: the entry for Sir Thomas Acland (William's relative through his great-aunt, Jane Rolle) revealed he attended Christ Church, was a member of the Athenaeum in Cornwall, and gained income based on the 16,319 acres of his Somerset estates, and a further 15,018 acres in Devon. Reginald's son, William Henry (1811–1888) claimed Charterhouse and Oriel for his education and the Carlton Club as one of his social networks, but only 5,923 acres in Cornwall worth £6,401 a year. Despite the

sinews of power resided in a small number of aristocrats whose control was accepted as a necessary component of society in a near-hysterical regard for the constitution.¹⁹¹ Representing less than five per cent of the adult male population of Britain, this tiny group's cohesiveness (for the preservation of their interests) found roots in religion, bonds in a common educational background and exclusivity in endogamic marriage.¹⁹² They ruled, not so much by force and repression, as by a widespread consensus based on the belief in a balanced constitution, driven by the political and economic weight of landownership.¹⁹³ As guardians of the fundamental principles of government, their duty was to resist imbalance and corruption in the polity through civic virtue, by active participation in political affairs. Control over large pockets of land in the southwest and a political presence in Westminster accrued to a powerful network that reinforced the strong bonds between the Carews, as landed gentry, and the governance of the country in post-Interregnum Britain. Replicated throughout England, such

reduction in land and income from estates immediately surrounding Antony House, William Henry maintained the family's political networks and influence by serving as High Sheriff of Cornwall and MP for East Cornwall, both hereditary appointments connected to the larger estate.

¹⁹¹ See Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State 1688–1783* (Taylor & Francis, 2002), whose interests lie in the broader effects of government, politics and society and the transformation of Britain from a peripheral participant into a major international power.

¹⁹² The idea that nobles occupied a divinely ordained place on the cosmic ladder was an invaluable symbol of permanence and stability for the post-revolutionary British elite. See Timothy McInerney, 'The Better Sort: Nobility and Human Variety in Eighteenth-Century Great Britain', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 1 (2015), which explored the hierarchies within the nobility. Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1754-0208.12138>.]

¹⁹³ 'Each individual,' wrote Richard Allestree, provost of Eton, 'is furnished with an ability, which qualifies him for one sort of calling', and the nobility's refined education, extraordinary wealth and abundance of leisure time made it clear that they had been called to rule. *The Gentleman's Calling, Written by the Author of the Whole Duty of Man* (London: G. Pawlet, 1660).

concurrences also shaped the cultural authority of the ruling classes.¹⁹⁴ Thus, William's obligations were entrenched in the management of his estates and tenants to sustain his rural hegemony and, as a Member of Parliament, firmly embedded in the administration of the country, the roles defaulting to Reginald in the 1770s. William's and Reginald's seats in Parliament were assured as inseparable from their inherited social position.

Mindful that his eldest surviving son (Richard) was not yet nine years old, 55-year-old Sir John Carew created a testamentary trust to ensure his heir's inheritance and prescribe his future. Son-in-law Jonathan Rashleigh, father-in-law William Morice of Wirrington, kinsman Richard Edgcumbe, and his business partner Hugh Boscawen¹⁹⁵ were appointed trustees and charged with the management of the Antony estate and the family's finances. Carew directed their energies to:

the improvement and augmentation of my estate and
most beneficiall and advantagious for my sonne and heire
that shall bee living at the time of my Death¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Nicholas Carew became the head of a younger branch of the ancient family which traced its descent from the Conquest, although its surname, derived from Carew castle in Pembrokeshire, went back only to the reign of John. In the 15th century the family settled at Antony, Cornwall, gaining lands and political influence until the nineteenth century.

¹⁹⁵ Boscawen was the wealthy heir to copper mining fortunes and the elder Carew's business partner in an international trading company. Having petitioned Parliament in January 1692, in March that same year, together with the earl of Bath (John Granville, of Stowe Kilkhampton, Devon) earl Radnor and Viscount Bodmin (John Robartes of Truro), Carew subscribed £70,000 to build two ships to trade from Cornwall to India independently of the East India Company, under a grant from Charles I. Eveline Cruickshanks, et al., (eds), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1690–1715*, 5 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

¹⁹⁶ The Will of Sir John Carew, National Archives ref. PROB 11/412/372.

Sir John chose his trustees well: each had a personal investment in the *status quo* and would secure for the Carew heir sovereign continuity, both locally and nationally. Richard would not live long enough to enjoy the fruits of his father's careful arrangements and died, unmarried, before reaching his majority, leaving Rashleigh, Morice, Edgcumbe and Boscawen in control of the Antony estates, in trust, for William. Apart from the obvious advantages of appointing landowner-neighbours with business acumen, as relatives and friends the trustees were effectively *in loco parentis*. The widowed Lady Carew had responsibility for the health and education of her children, but the trustees provided fiscal accountability and crucial introductions.

Closely-knit by marriage, the trustees consolidated the network of relationships enjoyed first by William and later by Reginald. The fifteenth-century humanist Alberti provided a useful metaphor by which to visualise the familial web of connectedness that linked the Carews of Antony to a variety of social and cultural spheres:

[Y]ou know the spider and how he constructs his web. All the threads spread out in rays, each of which, however long, has its source, its roots or birthplace [...] at the centre. From there each filament starts and moves outward. The most industrious creature himself then sits at that spot and has his residence there. He remains in that place [...] but keeps so alert and watchful that if there is a touch on the finest and most distant thread he feels it [...] and instantly takes care of the situation. Let the father of the family do likewise. Let him arrange his affairs and place them so that all look up to him alone as

head, so that all are directed by him and by him attached to secure foundations¹⁹⁷

In the social climate of the eighteenth century, personal relationships were the currency with which to create and sustain power bases among the aristocracy. Alberti's arachnid comparison was apt: an aristocrat had to be an agile hunter who could react with speed to consolidate social and cultural connections and secure his position. As patriarch, both William and Reginald could rely on the tensile strength of the strands that bound them to family and friend; through those relationships and patterns of consumption they could engage with a strategy of distinction that could safeguard an entitlement to their social position.

1.6 AMICABLE COLLISIONS¹⁹⁸

Naturally, the south west did not define the Carews, even though it was instrumental in their social positioning. William's great-great-grandfather, Richard (*Survey of Cornwall*, 1602) had written about Plymouth's ancient maritime history and its importance for Drake's victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588. One hundred and one years later, in 1689, on his accession to the English throne, William III commissioned the building of Dock to support the port city's activities

¹⁹⁷ Leon-Battista Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, 1421, trans. Renée Neu Watkins (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1969), p. 206.

¹⁹⁸ Shaftesbury's *Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour* published in *The Tatler*, 1709, used this expression to express the necessary give-and-take that smoothed out differences in social interactions. David Fairer, *English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century, 1700–1789* (Taylor & Francis, 2014), Chapter 2. See also: Klein, 'The Third Earl of Shaftesbury and the Progress of Politeness', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 18, no. 2 (Winter 1984–85, 1985). 'Politeness' was the creation of an image, not the manifestation of the soul. See p. 191.

which, over the century, expanded to employ more than 4,000 workers. Due to the patronage of the Royal Navy, Dock (now known as Devonport) is best understood as the western limb of the metropolitan body politic, since it enjoyed a commercial maritime industry on a par with Bristol or Falmouth, was one of six Royal Navy Dockyards, and attracted a range of polite cultural outlets (theatres, assemblies, subscription libraries, etc.) that were similarly patronised by the local gentry in important regional towns throughout England.

In the historiography of politeness in the eighteenth century, scholars Norbert Elias, Philip Carter and Lawrence Klein, among others, have relied on various assessments of the idiom to characterise distinctive aspects of eighteenth-century British culture.¹⁹⁹ Politeness has been used to interpret material and visual cultures, the organisation of space, the constitution of social and political identities, the character of intellectual and artistic life, and even institutional structures.²⁰⁰ According to Langford, the meanings of politeness shifted significantly in the middle of the eighteenth century away from a sociable and conversable ideal to one that emphasised gentility (propounded by

¹⁹⁹ Elias's *The Civilising Process* (Urizen Books, 1978) traced the 'civilising' of manners and personality in Western Europe since the late Middle Ages by demonstrating how the formation of states and the monopolisation of power within them changed Western society forever. Philip Carter's *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660–1800*, (Longman/Routledge, 2000) linked a code of manners, and later a 'code of being', to the coffee house and drawing room. This was to imply an important role for these forms of behaviour in the creation of a new kind of political nation in which the 'public sphere' is influential in government decision-making, and in which a hierarchy of politeness (and hence authority) can be mapped onto the patchwork-quilt boundaries which make up the eighteenth-century British state. Klein, *Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century*, p. 869.

²⁰⁰ An epitome of the cultural range of politeness can be found in John Styles's introduction to the Georgian section of Michael Snodin and John Styles, (eds), *Design and the decorative arts: Britain, 1500–1900* (London, 2001), pp. 182–4.

Shaftesbury and *The Spectator*) or, the civilising processes described by Elias.²⁰¹ The dominance of the polite gentleman was premised on his exclusive claim to an understanding of the principles of taste, which were deemed universal by Steele, David Hume, Reynolds, and many others.²⁰² As an aesthetic taxonomy, taste was given intense moral significance in the writings of Shaftesbury who, as an influential commentator on aesthetics, equated bad taste with vice – in that both constituted an opposition to the natural order of the universe. In order to achieve the pinnacle of aesthetic appreciation and virtuous activity – *ergo* to become fully natural – one had to have an education and acumen beyond the reach of that of the majority of citizens (*sotto voce*: an aristocratic education).²⁰³ As a titled alumnus of Winchester and Oxford, Shaftesbury was inherently biased towards his own experiences, however, his philosophical writings were among the earliest to introduce the concept of the sublime as an aesthetic quality to like-minded audiences, and which can be discerned in Antony's landscaping.²⁰⁴

William is recorded as having graduated from Exeter College in 1707 and, like many second sons of well-born families, was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law. The judiciary, the Church or the military were the preferred

²⁰¹ "Manners and the eighteenth-century state: the case of the unsociable Englishman", in John Brewer and Eckhard Hellmuth, (eds), *Rethinking Leviathan: the eighteenth-century state in Britain and Germany* (London, 1999), pp. 280–316. Langford also pursues this theme in *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650–1850*. (Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 175 ff.

²⁰² John Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt* (New Haven and London, 1986), pp. 1–68.

²⁰³ See Shaftesbury's 'Soliloquy, Or Advice To An Author' and 'Miscellaneous Reflections' in *Characteristics*, also cited in Michael Gill, 'Lord Shaftesbury [Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury]', *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, 2011.

²⁰⁴ See also Andrew Ashfield and Peter de Bolla, *The Sublime: A Reader in British Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Theory* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

occupations for heirs not destined to inherit the family's landed interests and the award of a law degree signalled William's intended pathway. Exeter College's strong links to the West Country had been established in an endowment by William Petre (a Pole ancestor) and, despite Prideaux's damning assessment, a reputation for high academic achievement (the bursary linking Truro Grammar School and Exeter suggests as much). Foremost among its alumni was Shaftesbury²⁰⁵ who, with the unaffected immodesty of the aristocrat, related that he owed his leadership of the undergraduates to 'my quality, proficiency in learning, and natural affability'.²⁰⁶

We have no commentary on whether Exeter College provided William with the same experience as Shaftesbury but his birthright guaranteed membership in an élite club whose guiding principle was discernment. This is best understood in terms of a sensibility, a set of attitudes, habits and preferences that found exclusivity in shared knowledge and interests. Using cultural material and archival evidence it is possible to interpret William's and Reginald's engagement with the ideologies of taste: characterised as integrated assertions and aims that constituted a socio-political programme of self-fashioning. Their accumulations of good breeding and influential forebears, funded by wealth, enhanced by political association, burnished by social connections and increased by endogamatic marriages were the aggregate of Carew taste – first established in

²⁰⁵ His father-in-law was the eldest son of Sir Thomas Coventry, the Lord Mayor of London, and of Margaret Jeffreys who inherited Croome d'Abitoit, the Coventry family seat.

²⁰⁶ Source for this quotation: Exeter College historical documents.

an aristocratic education and later by the external appearance of Antony and its garden, and in the design and furnishing of interior spaces (whether in Cornwall or London) throughout the century.

In an age when appearance counted for far more than just being fashionable, Antony House constituted the manifestation of William's good taste. In general, to possess good taste meant to have the 'capacity to make discerning judgements on beauty', while the ability to demonstrate good taste was 'central to a family's social standing.'²⁰⁷ In the social culture of the eighteenth century, taste was the badge worn by the dominant peerage and gentry in resistance to the emerging meritocracy fuelled by the birth of capitalism. The mutable rules of taste also gave rise to a set of norms and behaviours that encompassed rules of politeness, the invention of a distinctive high culture and a growing interest in taste as a category of understanding.

By what means, then, can we judge how William and Reginald used politeness in creating and sustaining a cultural identity? Inferences lie in the aims for and interpretations of their material culture, the subjects of Chapters 2 and 3, and in their social circulations between Cornwall and London (Chapter 4). If, as Langford notes, in the social geography of the eighteenth century the aristocracy lead by example, then what William and Reginald commissioned, collected and displayed united them to their peer group and proclaimed for them

²⁰⁷ Daniel Maudlin, *The Highland House Transformed: Architecture and Identity on the Edge of Britain, 1700–1850* (Dundee: Dundee University Press, 2009), pp. 47 and 63.

the role of politeness in aristocratic formation.²⁰⁸ Beyond his perennially artless social conduct, Petty had demonstrated that personal cultivation was not only a goal it was also a foundation for leadership in society. As principals of their rural hegemony and constituent members of national governance, employing the social interpretations of politeness in the cultivation of a cultural identity were as essential to William and Reginald as the patterns of consumption that lead to commissioning a house or a portrait.

1.7 PAINTED ABSTRACTS

As a country seat, Antony House assumed importance throughout the century as a location for entertaining guests, canvassing (parliamentary causes), and consolidating local support (for the Torpoint ferry, as one instance). Furthermore, with no forum for the public display of art, Antony became the principal place where art was viewed in the locale. The Carews understood that a portrait was never merely a two-dimensional image, but a multi-layered object that was as personal as it was cultural and that, most of all, was used in social interaction. Both Pointon and Shearer West argued that portraits engage with ideas of identity as they are perceived, represented and understood in different

²⁰⁸ Langford points to a prestigious 'in-group' composed of groups of individuals with political, financial and moral power in the state who did everything to uphold the mystique of politeness and to construct the knowledge of the 'je ne sais quoi' (undefinable but instinctively recognised) as an elusive, but for outsiders, never to be attained goal. Langford, 'The Uses of Eighteenth-Century Politeness,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 12 (2002).

times and places.²⁰⁹ As devices of self-fashioning, the portrait became a powerful weapon in the arsenal of the aristocrat with the choice of ‘face painter’ crucial to the sitter’s characterisation.

At the beginning of the century, it was important for William that his portrait and that of his bride were created by a Court-sponsored painter. Not only was he assured of professionally executed canvases that incorporated appropriate allusive content, the status of Michael Dahl added lustre to the images via the artist’s link to broader cultural spheres. William’s portrait was equally critical to Reginald’s self-fashioning, albeit for slightly different reasons. William’s principal concern was to establish hereditary continuity while Reginald’s was to connect with and claim an entitlement to Antony and its estates. As a principal goal, the painted images commissioned and displayed throughout the century advertised the Carews’ cultural identity to anyone entering their domain.

As the explicit preserve of a self-declared and cosmopolitan élite, discernment created a culture of connoisseurship (consecrated in the art theorist Jonathan Richardson’s 1719 discourses). Judging the ‘Goodness of a Picture,’ Richardson extrapolated, was a complex process that encompassed the evaluation, distinction, and appreciation of the work’s quality; the ability to determine the time and place of its execution; and, as far as possible, the identity

²⁰⁹ Marcia Pointon, *Portrayal and the Search for Identity* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), and Shearer West, ‘An Architectural Typology for the Early Modern Country House Library, 1660–1720’, *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* 14, no. 4 (December 2013), p.11, online [<http://doi.org/10.1093/library/14.4.441>].

of the artist (who he nominates as 'Masters').²¹⁰ In *An Essay on the Whole Art of Criticism as it Relates to Painting and an Argument in Behalf of the Science of the Connoisseur* (1792), Richardson attempted to create an objective system for ranking works of art while at the same time appealing to the social and intellectual interests of those who commissioned or collected. Its pages borrowed the language of science in the service of connoisseurship and offered reassuringly practical advice to those who would heed it:

There is but one Way to come to the Knowledge of Hands; And that is To furnish our Minds with as Just, and Complete Ideas of the Masters as we can: And in proportion as we do Thus we shall be good Connoisseurs in This particular.²¹¹

Since picture collecting was the preserve of the wealthy, those with great houses to furnish such as Robert Walpole and James Brydges, the first Duke of Chandos, were obvious targets for Richardson's theses. Walpole and Chandos had amassed significant collections – principally portraiture – between 1710 and 1725 to furnish Houghton Hall and Canons (respectively) in support of their claims to gentlemanly status.²¹² Walpole, a country squire who inherited ten manors at the death of his father in 1700, had increased his wealth by enormous

²¹⁰ Carol Gibson-Wood, 'Jonathan Richardson and the Rationalisation of Connoisseurship', *Art History*, March (1984), volume 7, issue 1, pp. 38–56, Online [<http://doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8365.1984.tb00127.x>].

²¹¹ Jonathan Richardson *Works, Containing 1. The Theory of Painting. 2. Essay On the Art of Criticism (So Far As It Relates To Painting.) 3. The Science of A Connoisseur, A New Edition, Corrected, With the Additions of An Essay On the Knowledge of Prints, and Cautions To Collectors.* London: White, 1792. p.84–114, p. 142.

²¹² Susan Jenkins, 'James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos, and Sir Robert Walpole: The Politics of Collecting in the Early 18th Century,' *The British Art Journal* 1, no. 2 (Summer) (2003), Online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41614464>].

profits from the sale of shares in the South Sea Company,²¹³ conceived his house as a temple to his name, his dynasty, but most of all to his stupendous art collection. He assembled major works by, among others, Rubens, Poussin, Velázquez, and Van Dyck,²¹⁴ and was reputed to have paid £1,500 to purchase many portraits from the Wharton family collection.²¹⁵ Walpole had recognised that material culture, when judiciously assembled and displayed, could overcome his social shortcomings. No doubt Lord Wharton's collection of Lely and van Dyke portraits did much to mitigate Walpole's social imperfections, however, the long-term effect was not entirely successful: an unimpressed Edmund Burke would write that, despite wealth and connoisseurship, Walpole demonstrated:

[a] careless, coarse, and over familiar style of discourse, without sufficient regard to persons or occasions, and an

²¹³ Walpole is reputed to have bought at the bottom of the market and made 1000% profit.

²¹⁴ The curator of 'Houghton Revisited' (2013), Thierry Morel, reunited over 75 key works from Walpole's collection, from the Hermitage, and Washington DC, and hung them, in original frames, in the positions they occupied in the early 18th century at Houghton Hall. Walpole's grandson sold the 'Houghton Collection of Pictures' (204 works) to the Empress of Russia for £40,555. See: *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 77, part 2, p. 738.

²¹⁵ Oliver Millar, 'Philip, Lord Wharton, and His Collection of Portraits', *Burlington Magazine*, August 1994, Vol. 136. According to Millar, Philip, Lord Wharton, began collecting portraiture in the late seventeenth-century, filling galleries with an unrivalled display of full-length portraits of the age's most illustrious subjects by the age's most celebrated artist. Philip's son inherited his father's title and estates at the age of sixteen in 1715. This 'talented but profligate young man', characterised by Alexander Pope in his *Epistle to Cobham* as 'the scorn and wonder of our days', died childless which led to the sale of Wharton's accumulated assets. Contemporary accounts describe the endless processions of carriages arriving at Houghton for sumptuous banquets held in the marble dining room dedicated to the god Bacchus. Others mention receptions that took place in the majestic state rooms hung with a collection of paintings that was hardly bettered anywhere in Europe. It included pieces by Italian Baroque masters such as the Carracci, Salvatore Rosa and Luca Giordano, Flemish artists of the order of Rubens, Frans Hals and Van Dyck, and individual works that were legendary even then, including Murillo's *Immaculate Conception* and Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X, for which Walpole paid in 1739 the then astronomical sum of 100 guineas. All were seen in settings by Kent, designed to enhance their moods and colours. Larissa Dukelskaya et al., (eds), *Houghton Revisited: The Walpole Masterpieces from Catherine the Great's Hermitage*, (Harry N. Abrams, 2013).

almost total want of political decorum, [...] the errors by which he was most hurt in the public opinion: and those through which his enemies obtained the greatest advantage over him.²¹⁶

Brydges, the son of a baronet who was elevated to the peerage in 1719, filled Canons with Old Masters and Grand Tour acquisitions, but his focus was not Walpolean self-aggrandisement but rather on an overall vision for his house as a temple to art patronage.²¹⁷ To this end, Brydges employed fashionable artists to decorate his great mansion; took in Handel as a lodger, and maintained a private orchestra of 24 instrumentalists, (Defoe wrote about the choir that entertained guests every day at dinner).²¹⁸ William and Reginald were unlikely to have hosted such lavish entertainments: the size of Antony's social spaces would have prohibited the seating of an orchestra, although an evening's musical performances might have included renditions of the latest ballads or recitals on the harpsichord and, later on, Caroline's pianoforte.²¹⁹ Neither did the Carews, for the most part, invest in Old Masters nor display portraiture that was not

²¹⁶ Edmund Burke, 'An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs', *Reflections on the French Revolution*, (J. Dodsley), 1971, The Library of Liberal Arts, (1962), pp. 62–63.

²¹⁷ Having lost a fortune in the South Sea Bubble, the 2nd Duke was forced to sell off the house's contents in a 12-day sale beginning on 16 June 1747 which included works by Titian, Giorgione, Raphael and Guercio, most bought by Catherine the Great for the equivalent of £50 million. The National Gallery bought Caravaggio's *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*. Dahl's portrait of the 1st Duke sold at Christie's for \$37,500 in 2011.

²¹⁸ Harold Elvin, *The Story at Canons, 1744*, (Greenbie Press, 2007) Chapter 1.

²¹⁹ An illustration in Thomas Badeslade's 1735 engraving *Richard Edgcumbe entertaining his guests before the Garden House at Mount Edgcumbe* shows the assembled company dining *al fresco* with a troupe of musicians playing, as servants bring laden trays to the secluded grove. Girouard, *A Country House Companion* (Magna Books, 1992), p.99.

connected to the family.²²⁰ The presence of family portraits by Kneller and Dahl at both Canons and Antony suggests Brydges and William shared similar (Richardsonian) concerns for the 'Goodness of a picture', but it is clear that their incentives sponsored different approaches.

Despite the apparent imperative to reproduce exact likenesses, eighteenth-century artists produced a profusion of seemingly-indistinguishable portraits. An anecdote on such mimetic portraiture, attributed to the naturalist John Ray, recalled: 'I see not but the Faces of some Men might be as like, as Eggs laid by the same Hen' he declared.²²¹ Formulaic representations were, markedly, no hindrance to either patron or artist. In fact, impersonal accessories such as wigs, or the universal treatment of complexions, could conceal a host of imperfections (sometimes literally) and permit the characterisation of the sitter to be visualised by its conformity to a set of stylistic conventions. For viewers, the shorthand in such commonality of types (which Pointon describes as an 'intractable historical problem') was quickly assimilated.²²² As Richardson's *Theory of Painting* made clear: 'to sit for one's Picture, is to have an Abstract of one's Life written and

²²⁰ A notable exception being Reginald's collection of Rembrandt etchings and prints, sold at auction following his death.

²²¹ As a naturalist, John Ray is more concerned about the effect of 'similitude' leading to 'confusion and disturbance' in all human affairs, citing fraud, murder, and theft as likely outcomes. *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of the Creation: In Two Parts, Viz. The Heavenly Bodies, Elements, Meteors, Fossils, Vegetables, Animals ... More Particularly in the Body of the Earth ... And in the Admirable Structure of the Bodies of Man and Other Animals; as Also in Their Generation, &C.: With Answers to Some Objections* (William Innys and Richard Manby, 1735), p. 245.

²²² Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, pp. 81–82.

published'.²²³ Reynolds, too, would later concede that '[a] painter [...] has but one sentence to utter, but one moment to exhibit. He cannot [...] expatiate'.²²⁴ Undifferentiated though they may be, portraiture's compressed biography served the goals of the sitter and asserted 'the primacy of collective categories or groupings over the individuals who constituted them'.²²⁵ The portrait, therefore, became a vital tool in William's and Reginald's self-fashioning, and since the costs associated with such commissions seem not to have been a concern, the choice of artist to memorialise the sitter was the most direct reflection of the patron's strategy of distinction. From among several well-placed artists, each chose the painter who could best project an agreed-upon identity.

Whatever the derivative qualities in a portrait, the work remained a representation of the subject, containing indexical properties whose primary function was to signal an individual's presence by (often highly concentrated) symbolic means.²²⁶ Portraits have privileged properties of representation that affect recognition and, in this present thesis, enable us not only to place Antony's inhabitants within familial roles, but also to demonstrate the ways in which they remained connected to society. Commemorative portraiture, whether displayed for political or ancestral ideologies, satisfied early-modern aristocratic landowners

²²³ Richardson, *Works*, p.8.

²²⁴ Joshua Reynolds and Allan Cunningham, *The Life and Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds* (Sawyer, 1853), p.52.

²²⁵ Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (USA: Yale University Press, 2006), p.183.

²²⁶ The various indexical properties in portraiture are assisted when the image is properly named, so that the symbol labels one individual. Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), p.26.

who increasingly saw themselves as the cultural, social and political core of the nation; citizens in the Greek sense, with the lower ranks of society scarcely figuring in their understanding of the concept of 'nation'.²²⁷ A roomful of family portraits, by evoking the assemblages of likenesses accumulated by families in ancient Rome, could allude to traditions of public service and historic distinction.²²⁸ We cannot say with certainty that William or Reginald were motivated by such references although, in their culturally-constituted world, commissioned portraits created the distinctions of status and lineage that were such powerful agents in self-fashioning. As they were heirlooms (and denied the process of selection), landed families were not minded to jettison any image that, even when unfashionable, assisted the creation of a cultural identity.

Pictures of kith and kin, friends and associates, formal and informal, large and small, clothed every inch of the walls of Antony House. Above the bookcases in the Library were (and still are) a pageant of relatives' images while William, Anne and their parents' portraits, later to be joined by those of Reginald's family,²²⁹ intermingled with those of the great and the good of the land

²²⁷ Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Kumar argues against theories for English nationalism that range in date from the 11th to the 19th century.

²²⁸ Lippincott suggests that Reynold's portraits of sitters in a sort of generic classical dress may have recalled such Roman portait galleries even more explicitly than they referred to the conventions of his grand style. *Expanding on Portraiture: The Market, the Public, and the Hierarchy of Genres in Eighteenth-Century Britain, The Consumption of Culture*, Routledge, 1995., pp.82.

²²⁹ Reginald's father bequeathed to him his 'family pictures [which] I desire and request may never be disposed of'; presumably including the portrait of the senior Reginald by Sir Joshua Reynolds, since it remains the property of his decendants at Antony. Other portraits of his grandfather, Sir John Pole, and aunt, Lady Urith Trevelyan, which Carolus Pole (Reginald's grandfather) had inherited from his mother, Lady Ann Pole (d. 1713) are also displayed. PROB 11/955, dated 26

in socially-significant spaces. As Retford (*The Art of Domestic Life, Family Portraiture in Eighteenth Century England*, 2006) shows, such careful placement advertised alliances to political parties and devotion to royal houses. These, in turn, encouraged the growth of a vision that allowed the aristocracy to identify a set of common interests and attitudes shoring up their ideological *raison d'être*.²³⁰ In an attempt to hammer out a conceptual framework that would permit an understanding of the significance of art in the social world, the relationship of object to individual was easily the dominant strand of enquiry throughout the eighteenth century.²³¹ Do the Carew portraits amount to straightforward emulation? Alternatively, can we read into them an independence from a reductive cultural template that reveals, however subtly, the interests of the family and the contributions to William's and Reginald's self-fashioning? Pears (*The Discovery of Painting*) established that vogueish picture-collecting among the élite emerged as a part of increasing British cultural sophistication. It may be possible to consider fashion as inspiring some works in the Antony collection: indeed, the similarity among them and others of periods elsewhere in the country contribute to such an assessment. Independence might only be suggested in the overwhelming preference for the familiar and the closely-held, with family portraiture being the mainstay.

September 1767. Smiles, *Sir Joshua Reynolds: the Acquisition of Genius* (Bristol: Sansom & Co., 2009), p. 51.

²³⁰ Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life, Family Portraiture in Eighteenth Century England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press (Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art), 2006), Ch. 5.

²³¹ Pears, *The Discovery of Painting*, p. 28.

As 'most private commissions fulfilled important social functions by maintaining family relations and sealing ties of friendship',²³² it follows, therefore, that the artist's role in the creation of his client's cultural identity assumed an importance beyond talent and celebrity. The Plympton-born Reynolds was a close friend of the Carews and their immediate circle, the Parkers, Eliots, and Edgumbes, each of whom commissioned portraits by him. Reynolds lived until 1749 with two unmarried sisters at Plymouth Dock, and to these years belong portraits of Richard Eliot (father of the first Lord Eliot) and his wife; of Elizabeth, Eliot's sister, wife of Charles Cocks (afterwards Baron Somers)²³³; and of George Edgumbe, in his Admiral's uniform. Between 1753 and 1760, in his London studio, Reynolds painted important Devonshire families: the Bastards (related to the Parkers through the Poulett peerage); Molesworths (Pencarrow baronets); and Bullers of Downes House in Devon, connecting the Carews to the earl of Bathurst and the Acland and Trelawney baronetcies by marriage. The relationship between Reynolds and his sitters was so agreeable that many became his friends; and to the Keppels²³⁴ and other families of position were soon added many more of rank and fashion, at whose houses he was a welcome guest and who visited him in return. Reynolds' south-western patrons could be seen as an important linking agent between these prominent families in terms of

²³² Lippincott's 'The formation of a public for art and literature' highlights the public role of family portraits in the political, social and economic life of Britain, *The Consumption of Culture*, pp 82.

²³³ Elizabeth Eliot was Somers' first wife; his second, Anne, was Reginald's sister.

²³⁴ Commodore Augustus Keppel had invited the young Reynolds to accompany him to the Mediterranean; Reynolds' life-sized portrait of the viscount was a gift commemorating both the opportunity to visit Rome and their close (lifelong) friendship.

the cultural identities of each estate's principals, as well as the transmitter of those qualities to a wider audience. Edgcumbe, for instance, had persuaded many of the 'first nobility' to sit for him for their pictures which eventually lead to his appointment as the first President of the Royal Academy.²³⁵ Sitting for Reynolds (Kneller, Riley, or Romney) located the Carews within an emulative domain (the artist's 'signature' evident in the images he produced) yet we can read beyond the formulaic and concentrate on the interpretation of each portrait throughout the century, which will be explored in Chapter 3.

Viewing country house art collections as an embodiment of social and cultural refinement is invariably weighted on visible legacies – the paintings, the sculptures, etc. The processes of consumption are often overlooked including the exchange networks which met the needs of those commissioning or buying artworks as devices for creating and maintaining cultural identity. This is especially the case among the gentry whose numbers far exceeded the spectacularly wealthy or famous. In this thesis, the Carews' legacies and sites of display establish their intentions while their networks, friends, family and social

²³⁵ Reynolds arrived in London on 16 Oct. 1752, greatly developed as a man and an artist, and found success was so great that the number of his sitters increased to 120 in 1755, to 150 in 1758, and to 156 (his busiest year) in 1759. Between 1753–60, he painted three members of the royal family (the Duke of Cumberland and Prince Edward in 1758, and the Prince of Wales, afterwards George III, in 1759); at least twelve dukes, beginning with the Duke of Grafton in 1755, and several of their duchesses, with very many other peers and persons of wealth and fashion. His leisure was much taken up with dinners, evening assemblies, card-parties and suppers, almost daily notes of which are to be found in his pocket-books. He had also commenced his connection with some of those eminent men who formed the inner intellectual circle of his companions in life – with Garrick, at least, and Goldsmith, and Johnson, with whom he became acquainted about 1753. In 1767 and 1768 his pocket-books contain comparatively few new names, but he painted a good many of his old friends over again, including Mr Parker of Saltram (afterwards Lord Boringdon), Dr. Armstrong, Burke, Foote, and Johnson. Dictionary of National Biography, volume 48, edited by Sidney Lee, New York, Macmillan, 1885.

milieux, offer the mechanisms by which ideas were advocated, transmitted and adopted. As Pears noted '[an] interest in painting ultimately derived from a process of cultural unification of the upper ranks of English society' and, more than any other social group, the ruling élites created the art market, favouring particular artists, subjects or dealers.²³⁶ Antony's archives and extant collection demonstrate that William and Reginald were active participants in these markets. From a 'wish list' of Dutch paintings contained within the 1771 inventory to the commission of society portraitists, manuscripts flesh out the physical evidence and allow us to hypothesise their conscious self-fashioning.

1.8 THE RURAL GENTRY: CONSUMPTION AND A WORLD OF GOODS

Much recent scholarship has been focused on the social and geographical variation in ownership of luxury goods. Useful contrasts have been drawn between consumption regimes in town and country: the former being seen as dynamic and modern, and the latter as torpid and traditional; however, the chasm separating rural and urban consumption practices is often overplayed. For example, Lorna Weatherill's tabular analyses of probate inventories (*Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain*, 1996) presented material goods, from books and paintings to more mundane possessions (earthenware and utensils for hot drinks) as a percentage of ownership by region. If this was the complete picture, major urban cities appear as undisputed centres of a (culturally) material

²³⁶ Pears, *The Discovery of Painting*, p.3.

world, possessing the major percentage of luxury goods. In her analysis, remote Cumbria falls to the bottom of the list declaring only three per cent of pictures in the entire region and a dismal one per cent of all sets of curtains. The major flaw in this type of evaluation is that it cannot be fully comprehensive – great swathes of the country are missing. Weatherill investigated only eight regions – not one west of Hampshire.

The south-west is typically ignored in such studies because its trade and growth surrounds the service industries of mining and maritime activities rather than the industrial centres of the Black Country or the textile towns of eastern Lancashire. For instance, early-eighteenth century Newcastle boasted 20,000 inhabitants; its nearest West Country ‘match’ was Exeter. While Newcastle was poised to take advantage of the commercial benefits of the Industrial Revolution, Exeter’s progress through the century was more gentrified. Although one of the foremost woollen towns in the country, early on it resisted manufactory expansion and became, instead, a consumer of manufactured goods. Plymouth’s fortunes were bound to the docks, with a population of only 4,000 inhabitants; its regional, economic and social influence feature on a scale much diminished by the powerhouses of Liverpool or the north-east manufactories. Several hundred miles away, the rural south-west would appear to be unable to compete with such giants of commerce and their attendant cultural framework. However, although often bypassed by historians of material culture, Plymouth eclipsed northern cities on an international stage precisely because of its maritime links and the processing trade of goods from Britain’s colonial interests.

Regardless of the area's mercantile and naval prestige, its location caused Carew to grumble in 1602 that 'Nature hath shouldered out Cornwall into the farthest part of the realm',²³⁷ while Defoe's judgement of south-western towns consigned them to the 'utmost angle of the nation'.²³⁸ Ever negatively compared to London, he concluded that this corner of England was 'so very remote from London, which is the centre of our wealth'. While the language of being jostled athwart from city life implied a dislocation of the Carews from the perceived advantages of society, good transportation links to major urban centre from the Rame peninsula, which Antony shared with the Mount Edgcumbe estates, abnegated the perception.

Stobart traced the wider integration of regional consumerism through the multifaceted impact of improved distribution networks, and the desire for novel goods inculcated by the flow of capital, ideas and information. Transport, he says, 'shaped the region as a space of production through facilitating spatial divisions of labour and linking local production to distant markets'.²³⁹ Turnpikes, in particular, are cited as playing a particularly significant role in the dissemination of market information, (the first Turnpike Act covering Cornish roads was dated 1754; by 1770 three turnpike roads served principal towns, Plymouth docks and ferries, and routes over Bodmin Moor). In 1658, the journey from Cornwall to London had taken four days; a hundred years later it took two

²³⁷ Carew, *Survey of Cornwall*, p.8.

²³⁸ Daniel Defoe, *Tour through the Eastern Counties of England and London to Land's End* (Lulu Enterprises Incorporated, 2005), p.181.

²³⁹ Stobart, *Spaces of Consumption*: , p.51

days; in the autumn of 1785, the fastest mail coaches made the run in 24 hours.

Such speeds prompted a letter to the local newspaper: its writer was astonished:

that any rational person will venture a life in any of those destructive and dangerous vehicles [...] could no line be drawn between melancholy and madness? No balance struck from moving to flying? What! Must we jump from four miles to nine within the hour?²⁴⁰

Local journeys were more sedate: a carriage ride from Exeter to Barnstaple (approximately 44 miles) took eight hours but Bristol, 83 miles distant, required at least a day's travel and several changes of horses.

Towns like Plymouth were central to processes of consumption – as points of supply for their own populations and those of their hinterlands. As Weatherill conceded, imported goods said 'something about the local economy as much as they do about domestic life and material culture'.²⁴¹ Conflating Weatherill's overview of the consumption of a world of goods and Stobart's mechanisms that responded to supply and demand, a satisfying (and convincing) argument for the amalgamation of item, location and possession was posited by what Peter Borsay called a 'post-Restoration urban renaissance'.²⁴² Borsay highlighted the role of sociability, social competition and commercialised leisure in shaping a

²⁴⁰ Sam Farley, an established printer, started the first weekly newspaper, the *Exeter Post-man*, in the city perhaps as early as 1704; his paper may have been the first outside of London although there is some evidence that the *Norwich Post* (1701–1713) claimed the honour. See: David Stoker, 'Printing at the Red Well: an early Norwich press through the eyes of contemporaries'. *The Mighty Engine: The printing press and its impact* (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 2000), pp. 97–106.

²⁴¹ Weatherill, "Was the North-East Different from Other Areas?" in Berry and Gregory (eds), *Creating and Consuming Culture*, p. 23.

²⁴² Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance*, p. 539.

physical and cultural renewal which affected rural communities as much as those in town. Borsay's contribution to our understanding of 'consumer culture' is richer for its consideration of its 'civilising' frameworks, adding depth, character and a greater local inflection to the acquisition of material culture.

Antony's archival abstracts refer to an array of luxury goods passing through Plymouth and Devonport and although specific receipts and disbursements are missing, there is a notation of items 'sent to Antony by ship from London' which underscores the practice among the aristocracy of sourcing goods from outside the immediate locale.²⁴³ In particular, the century-long plans for a Torpoint ferry linking Antony to Plymouth (conceived by William and realised by Reginald) expanded their domain beyond the far-flung Cornish peninsula and offered a physical network along which the transmission of ideas and goods could travel. National and international maritime trading routes notwithstanding, as roads improved, Plymouth filled with coaches from London, Bristol and Bath. Despite the disadvantages of lengthy and often uncomfortable transport, rewards could be found in opportunities to spend time with family and friends along the route (as William's ancestor had diarised). Visiting the country estates of richer, more famous, members of Society whose connections to the Carews were perched at the bough-ends of the family tree, paid dividends in sociability and kinship obligations. Such visits might also have added value to Antony's art

²⁴³ Antony archives CA/H/130 and CE/E/31 dated 1714 feature pictures, frames, plants, silver and chinaware.

collections (by association) while out-of-county gardens could prove inspirational with planting models or novel architectural embellishments translated to the Cornish estate.

The Carews enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle in Cornwall where the seclusion of Antony created an environment free from courtly ritual and the hurly-burly of London's overcrowded streets. William and Reginald were not, however, disengaged from Society; they exchanged news and views in letters and through the printed press, ideas or material goods via published volumes of pattern books and merchants' catalogues, while family, friends and well-placed social or political associations could provide first-hand information on the latest topics of interest. All of these contributed, to a greater or lesser extent, to their self-fashioning. In many ways, the Carews' distance from London was beneficial for it provided them with a unique perspective from which to observe. Their experience of what was happening in the capital was, for several months of the year, at a remove – a position viewed by many among their contemporaries as a valuable asset.²⁴⁴ Yet, while the concept of a place where they could 'retire to enjoy and sleep, without pretence of entertainment of many persons,'²⁴⁵ seemed idyllic, access to the capital was paramount to the maintenance of a cultural

²⁴⁴ Writing to his father-in-law (the 3rd Earl of Carlisle) from London in 1737, Colonel Douglas, the second husband of Viscountess Irwin, fawned 'I can see what it is to be an old Courtier; you have made a righter judgment of things at a distance, than most people, and those of Consequence too, have done here.' MSS of the Earl of Carlisle, digitised from Eyre and Spottiswoode's 1897 publication. Online

[https://archive.org/stream/earlcarlislehow00greauoft/earlcarlislehow00greauoft_djvu.txt].

²⁴⁵ Dorian Gerhold, *Villas and Mansions of Roehampton and Putney Heath* (London: Wandsworth Historical Society, 1997), p.234.

identity for, in London, the Carews' strategy of distinction could be tested and embellished.

A key theorist of social structures, Jürgen Habermas, whose *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962) suggested that both literal and symbolic sites of eighteenth-century discourse represented, within its cultural context, a 'public sphere'.²⁴⁶ Habermas emphasised the role of the public sphere as a way for civil society to articulate its interests, developing out of the private institution of the family, where discussion of art and literature became possible for the first time. The public sphere was, by definition, inclusive but entry depended on one's education and qualification as a property owner. Thus, when the Carews paused at Bath, mid-way to London, the break not only provided them with mercantile opportunities but also important social circulations and arenas for the exchange of ideas.

The *Bath Chronicle* drew attention to *beau monde* arrivals, including the Carews, as they, along with neighbours and other family members, congregated in the spa town to partake of the city's cultural offerings. As a setting for aristocratic self-fashioning, Bath allowed the élite to demonstrate their social mastery of the complex set of behaviours of 'polite society'. Those who transgressed found themselves the subjects of unwelcome attention in the columns of the local press. The public appetite for 'secret history', as it was

²⁴⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry Into A Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1962 [1991]).

called, was often fuelled by the salacious details of evidence from adultery cases heard in the House of Lords. As the editor of *Fog's Weekly Journal* (1736) explained:

I look upon them as pieces of domestic intelligence, much more interesting than those paragraphs which our daily historians generally give us, under the title of home news.²⁴⁷

Amid the reports of the *ton's* activities readers could find 'puffs'. In a market with no regulations on advertising, 'puffing' was an appropriate term for advertisements that glossed over facts in favour of grandiose claims. *Fog's* editor assured his readers that 'the advertisements are filled with matters of great importance, both to the great, vulgar, and the small.' One can see value for the entrepreneur who advertised his remedy for deficient mastication in *La Belle Assemblée*. He proclaimed:

A Lady of Distinction has declar'd that most of her teeth became loose and some dropped out quite sound, but after using four bottles of Cherry Lotion the remainder of her Teeth became quite firm. Ask for Prince's Cherry Lotion. ½ a guinea a bottle, or one dozen bottles Five Pounds²⁴⁸

Doubtless, the hope that if 'puffed' by alignment with an aristocratic patron, the restorative would attract clientèle from among the 'tuft hunters', seduced by

²⁴⁷ Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (Taylor & Francis, 2010), p. 59.

²⁴⁸ Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and John Plumb, (eds), *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialisation of Eighteenth-Century England* (Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 183.

such representations.²⁴⁹ Reginald was an avid collector of ‘puffs’: his Letterbooks were interleaved with cures for inflammation of the eyes, cold remedies, a salt and water balm for ‘swellings’, scurvy cures, and ‘Columbo Root Pills’ (with the accompanying directions to infuse the root pill in a Madeira wine to aid digestion, nausea and ‘wind’).²⁵⁰ To decode an entry of a recipe for ‘the Gravel or Stone’, Smythson’s *Compleat Family Physician* (1785) informs readers that this remedy was useful in cases of ‘Hysterics and Hypochondriac Disorders’.²⁵¹ The cure’s components included pills made of ‘salt of steel’, infusions of ‘chalybeat wine’, ‘Peruvian bark’ and a tea of ‘wormwood and the powdered flowers of cuckow-pint’.²⁵² Reginald lived to the age of 82, although we cannot say whether his longevity was due to or in spite of his considerable investment in quack remedies inspired by puff literature.

Bath was particularly attuned to the *dernier cri* – the pressing dictates of fashion – whether in the season’s fabrics, the mode in gowns, innovations in silverware and porcelain, or the newest flavours in syllabubs. Out-of-date

²⁴⁹ ‘Tuft hunter’ is a mid-eighteenth century term meaning a sycophantic or obsequious person. Originally used with reference to the ‘tufts’ or gold tassels formerly worn by titled Oxbridge undergraduates. Source: *Oxford English Dictionary*.

²⁵⁰ Archive CE/E/32.

²⁵¹ Hugh Smythson, *The Compleat Family Physician; or, Universal Medical Repository. Containing the Causes, Symptoms, Preventions and Cures, of All the Various Maladies to Which Human Nature Is Liable, Etc* (1785), p. 353.

²⁵² Chalybeate – containing or impregnated with or tasting of iron. Cuckow pint – *arum maculatum* – the fresh plant is an acrid poison, causing burning and swelling of the throat, vomiting, colic, diarrhoea, and convulsions; – by drying, the activity of the plant is in a great measure destroyed. Medicinally, the tubers were formerly used as diuretics in dropsies, and as expectorants in chronic catarrhs. See Alston’s *Lectures on the Materia Medica*, 1770 (London, Edward and Charles Dilly), p. 387.

merchandise was soon cleared from the shop shelves, as the diarist John Penrose discovered:

... we went to every Mercer in Bath to match Mrs. Michel's Silk, but in vain. The Pattern is too old for Bath, but it may probably be matcht in London.²⁵³

It is an interesting summation of the mercantile importance of the spa town to Society that Bath should have the latest silk patterns rather than London.

Scholars have argued that the eighteenth century marked the beginning of a consumer revolution in England driven by the middling sorts. It may well be that the merchant was able to capitalise on both the advances in industrial production and a continuous parade of bourgeois consumers, however, the trade in luxury goods including sitting for a portraitist, buying jewellery, or purchasing novelties (even the expensive Prince's Cherry Lotion) were clearly organised around the higher-born with disposable income for, as Defoe bemoaned, 'without money a man is nobody'.²⁵⁴

As Berry has highlighted, shopping is rarely described as a 'polite' activity, however, while servants oversaw the day-to-day provisioning of the country house, shopping for pleasure was an exclusive activity of the Quality when in town.²⁵⁵ Shopping often orchestrated the social lives of the élite and, as a mobile form of self-fashioning, it reinforced status and patronage. Berry also notes that

²⁵³ Trevor Fawcett, 'Eighteenth-Century Shops and the Luxury Trade,' *Bath History* 3, no. 52 (1990), p.52. See also: Penrose, *Letters from Bath 1766–1767* (London, Alan Sutton, 1983).

²⁵⁴ Defoe, *Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (London: J.M. Dent, 1724), Letter 2, Part 2: Canterbury and Sussex.

²⁵⁵ Berry, *Polite Consumption*, p.337.

from the rituals of 'polite browsing' arose an entire vocabulary that was as discriminatory as it was descriptive in 'a new and observable social development'.²⁵⁶ Although we cannot know if the female Carews were *The Spectator's* 'Silk Worms', we can easily imagine Anne, Mary, Jemima and Caroline engaging in this cultural activity as they handled gee-gaws and ribbons: the archives contain literature (some receipts, but no specifics, and some advertisements) from urban merchants across the century demonstrating their interest in luxury goods and novelty items.²⁵⁷ Unfortunately, a handful of handwritten notes describing household furnishings (in the main) cannot formulate a quantitative analysis of discretionary spending. Researchers with access to more comprehensive archival materials can offer details of the acquisition of positional goods either in response to changing decorative styles and tastes, or to practices of sociability.²⁵⁸ At one extreme, the 'heroic financial laxity' of the first three dukes of Chandos who accumulated huge debts in pursuit of a 'splendid style of life, whatever it cost',²⁵⁹ whereas, more modestly, Edward Leigh's purchase of furniture to update Stoneleigh Abbey (nearly £820 for 238

²⁵⁶ Ibid., p.387. Berry recounts Mr. Spectator's 'discovery' in 1712 of the word 'Cant' as slang for women 'who ramble twice or thrice a Week from Shop to Shop, to turn over all the Goods in Town without buying anything.' These shoppers, also known as 'Silk-Worms', were indulged by shop keepers as promoters of their goods.

²⁵⁷ CE/E/62 – inventory of linen, china and glassware dated 2 July 1771; CE/E/56 Inventory and Valuation of Reginald's Berkeley Square residence, 1793; CE/E/57, China inventory, Berkeley Square, 1797; CE/E/58 – Linen (Berkeley Square), 1800.

²⁵⁸ Stobart, *Spaces of Consumption*, p. 46.

²⁵⁹ Peter G.M. Dickson and John V. Beckett, 'The finances of the Dukes of Chandos: aristocratic inheritance, marriage and debt in eighteenth century England', *Huntingdon Library Quarterly* 64 (2001), 309–55. For other examples, see also Mingay, *English Landed society*, pp. 61–6, 126–9; Robert J. Gemmett, '“The tinsel of fashion and the gewgaws of luxury”: the Fonthill sale of 1801', *The Burlington Magazine*, CL (2008), 381–8; Ray A. Kelch, *Newcastle, A Duke without money: Thomas Pelham-Holmes, 1693–1768* (London, 1974).

mahogany chairs and stools) represented a small percentage of his estate income which stood at around £10,000 per annum in the 1760s. The conspicuous consumption of the Leighs and Carews represent the more measured spending of gentry families, especially those who had recently inherited a profitable estate.

The major obstacle in citing Edward Leigh's spending habits as comparable to the Carews arises in the inability to account for intangibles. Similarly, while Weatherill's conclusions were formulated from available probate inventories, such documents account only for material possessions and not the significant contexts of ownership. Any calculation of expenditure cannot be merely estate income minus discretionary spending: estates were often encumbered with inherited mortgages and debts, ongoing repairs, clothing, education, food and drink, and servants' wages. We know, for example, that Reginald paid a quarterly bill to Oriel College for £24.19s.6d for 'tuition, room rent, coals, dues and hairdresser fees' – the costs associated with his son's education; and for his daughters' school, Camden House, Reginald purchased an organ and other musical instruments in charitable patronage.²⁶⁰ Many other transactions were not recorded as accurately as the modern archivist might hope, or have not survived. That Reginald saw fit to note that he spent twelve pounds for an unspecified number of mourning rings (presumably in commemoration of

²⁶⁰ Archive CZ/EE/10. The bundle also includes the repayment of a debt of £35 to 'Stephen' upon Reginald's wife's death: the identity of the lender and nature of the debt are not revealed.

Jemima) tantalises with one small piece of information: their cost.²⁶¹ Questions about the materials used, the design, and a recipient list might have added value to desultory book-keeping.

Carriage costs (and risks) accompanied most transactions, and a curious entry in Reginald's *Transactions* makes reference to an invoice for 'carriage of Pictures, £6.5s.0d.' and a letter relating to sums paid to Sir James Harris, (a Coventry relative, seemingly part of the same exchange).²⁶² The letter (now lost) reported that when the inventory (also lost) was checked it was found 'wanting' with several items of books and furniture missing. The unknown author accused his addressee: 'you are suspected to have been the Thief of all ...' and calculated that, in addition to the pictures, £114.14s.10d was paid for the furniture. While we understand the amount of money involved, we cannot know which pictures, what furniture or books and their condition, the circumstances of the original transaction, nor who wrote the letter nor its intended recipient (and his subsequent fate). Although disappointingly absent, the lack of details does not substantially revise how we view William and Reginald's efforts to create a cultural identity, nor (where the archives do permit) what they acquired, used, and displayed as a strategy of distinction.

²⁶¹ CZ/AV/7, the cost of mourning rings (£12.4s.3d) paid to Messrs. Jeffreys and Sons. From the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths' index, six goldsmiths by the name of Jeffreys worked around the Strand, Fleet Street and Picadilly between 1768 and 1802; and without an invoice, it is impossible to pinpoint which goldsmith carried out the work.

²⁶² Harris was the family name of the Malmesbury barons (later earls). Harris was a noted grammarian whose philosophical works were published by his son, the first earl. Like Reginald, Harris was a Fellow of the Royal Society .

Routine visits to Bath and London for the Season, or on parliamentary business, provided access to the cultural patterns and circulations of the city and Society. That the Carew name rarely appears in contemporary accounts publicising the activities of the *ton* is no bad thing because absence from the gossip columns allows us to consider them as honourable men, unsullied by the diversions of scandal or celebrity. The wellspring of William's or Reginald's cultural identity resided in Cornwall and at the Antony estate. Its agency as the site of lineage, privilege and social position invites a closer examination of how the house and gardens contribute to a strategy of distinction, explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: COMMISSIONING THE HOUSE AND GARDENS

Of all the great things that the English have invented and made part of the credit of the national character, the most perfect, the most characteristic, the only one they have mastered completely in all its details [...] is the well-appointed, well-administered, well-filled country house.¹



FIGURE 2.1: ANTONY HOUSE (NT PHOTOGRAPH)

From the construction of a house in the country, its setting, and its interior design, the choices made by the Carews were conscious reflections of not only how their appearance was expressed and maintained but also of how they exemplified constituencies of status and power throughout the century. This chapter focuses on the architecture and gardens of Antony, using primary sources and objects – letters, building records, sketches, and paintings – to consider mutually constitutive aspects of space and identity forged by aristocratic landowners throughout the eighteenth century.

¹ Henry James, *English Hours: A Portrait of a Country* (I.B.Tauris, 2011).

In 1704, William inherited his father's title and lands following the death of his brother, Richard. The weight of heredity and tradition now rested upon slender and somewhat inexperienced shoulders. As the second son he was not groomed to assume the mantle of responsibility for the estate and all it entailed, although William was to benefit from his father's foresight. Prudentially, he had appointed the steady and seasoned hands of relatives, friends and neighbours as trustees of his estate. As experienced estate managers, William's uncle Jonathan Rashleigh and family friend Richard Edgcumbe, who owned properties covering the length and breadth of Cornwall, would have been of practical value. William Morice (a maternal grandfather and Secretary of State for the Northern Department) and Hugh Boscawen, a local MP with lucrative copper mines at Chacewater and Gwennap (Wheal Busy was known as the richest square mile on earth), introduced political and commercial horizons beyond the immediate boundaries of Antony. This powerful trustee network would ease William's transition from spare to heir.

The perils of handing over the family estate to unprepared sons were recounted in historical references to feckless characters like Edward De Vere (1550–1604), the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, who sold off his inherited lands and sank the profits into speculative enterprises. The search for the Northwest Passage, investment in the Canadian gold-rush, and in Burbage's Blackfriars

theatre company ended in disappointment.² Most of the wealthiest families spent up to the limits of their income, and often beyond (the Chandos dukes accumulated huge debts on a 'splendid life style, whatever it cost');³ although instances of aristocratic bankruptcy, though spectacular, were rare. More responsible landowners understood that their duties included amassing wealth (through more land), securing a profitable marriage partner (for oneself and one's offspring), adding to the family's material culture and preserving the entirety of one's efforts for the next generation. Most recently, Charles Spencer, the twentieth-century heir to Althorp, insisted that an aristocratic code of conduct, fashioned by education and governed by a sense of duty, formed the fundamental DNA of successful dynasties.⁴ Judicious estate management not only provided a steady income stream, it also had economic benefits reaching down the social scales through the commodities produced – all of which reflected on the owner.

Nine years after he inherited the estate, and on the brink of a marriage that could secure his authority, William's correspondence details the steps he took to create a residence that would stand as the visual representation of his cultural

² Blackfriars Theatre was closed at the onset of the Civil War and demolished on 6 August 1655. Thomas Looney's 1920 *Shakespeare Identified in Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford* argued that the earl was one of the aristocratic authors of Shakespeare's works. Looney cited the evidence of an aristocratic education, conversance with the law, and the command of French and Italian as underpinning his promotion of Oxford. Several characters, including Hamlet, were, he believed, self-portraits. Interest in the Oxfordian theory was revived in the 1970s, and most recently, in 2011 with the release of Roland Emmerich's film *Anonymous*.

³ Dickson and Beckett, *The Finances of the Dukes of Chandos*, pp. 309–55. For other examples, see Mingay, *English Landed Society*, pp. 61–6, 126–9; and Gemmett, *The Tinsel of Fashion*, pp. 381–388.

⁴ Charles, Earl Spencer, 'Enemies of the Estate', *Vanity Fair*, Condé Nast, October, 2010.

identity.⁵ Archived letters, memoranda and accounts indicate that William, like many landowners of his day, was the guiding force in design and the programme of works at Antony. The success of his efforts appeared in the substantive

Parochial History of Cornwall:

[Carew] hath lately built a stately house here of Pentewan stone; and hath adorned it with gardens, &c. suitable to it. From the bowling-green above the house is a beautiful prospect of the river, and of all the country round.⁶

The spare prose of Messrs. Tonkin and Hals, its authors, prompted their readers to envisage the building's form (appropriate to its owner's rank), evaluate its materials (native Pentewan stone), and setting (gardens, lawns, and panoramic views) as a précis of a composite rural mansion for a knight of the realm. Sited on the highest point of the peninsula, Antony House was the fitting focus of William's rural hegemony. From the south, a series of vistas cut through woodland while to the north, gardens down to the river presented a variety of prospects and the expanse of the immediate grounds.⁷ To the south-east of

⁵ Antony archives: C/E/22, (32 items – agreements and sketch, specifications and some bills re: construction of garden and house, dated 1713–34 and 1768); CE/E/23, (2 notes of work done and materials used, 1723 and undated); CE/E/24, (9 Letters and plans re: construction of bath house and bathing pool, c. 1788); CE/E/27, (57 letters and plans re: furnishing of Antony House and coach building, undated); CE/E/65, (a packet of 15 items including specifications, accounts, plans etc. for work on the house at Antony, dated 1773 to 1808)

⁶ Gilbert Davies, (ed.), *The Parochial History of Cornwall: Founded on the Manuscript Histories of Mr. Hals and Mr. Tonkin; with Additions and Various Appendices*, (London: J. B. Nichols and Son, 1838); online

https://archive.org/stream/parochialhistory01gilbuoft/parochialhistory01gilbuoft_djvu.txt.

⁷ The impressiveness of such schemes lead Felicia Hemans to pen her paeon to Palladianism and introduce the phrase 'stately homes' to the English vocabulary. The first paragraph of 'The Homes of England' begins: 'The stately Homes of England / How beautiful they stand! / Amidst their tall

Antony's forecourt, a wide avenue of horse chestnuts ascended a northwest-facing slope to reach a *clairvoie*, (modelled on a seventeenth-century gate screen at a relative's Surrey manor),⁸ which framed the perspective on the skyline.

Antony's formal courtyard and terraces were constructed by a London landscaper, Humphry Bowen, whose original design and walled garden were sketched in 1727 by Edmund Prideaux, an amateur topographer who published several views of landed estates (see Figure 2.3).⁹ This scheme was later remodelled by Humphry Repton who prepared a *Red Book* for Reginald.¹⁰ In Repton's scheme, visitors approaching the house by road travelled along an imaginatively re-designed route which offered tantalising views of the house as glimpses between dense woodlands, while those arriving by boat could admire the sweeping greensward leading the eye upwards to an impressive stone staircase and *parterre*. The view is shown in Figure 2.1.

ancestral trees, / O'er all the pleasant land'. Hemans, *Records of Woman: With Other Poems* (Read Books Design, 2010), pp. 169–171.

⁸ Beddington Park (near Croydon) was a former manor house of the Carew family. The *Domesday Book* mentions two Beddington estates and these were united by Nicholas Carew to form Carew Manor in 1381 but were lost to money lenders and bad debts in the 1850s. In the 16th century Henry VIII often stayed at Beddington, lodging Jane Seymour at the manor while conducting the removal of Anne Boleyn, although their friendship collapsed when Carew was accused of abetting the Marquess of Exeter's treason. Carew was beheaded on Tower Hill on 8 March 1539. His cousin, Sir Wymond Carew, was Jane Seymour's treasurer, acquiring Antony, lands in Devon, and manors in Hertfordshire and Middlesex.

⁹ The Prideaux family was among the most widespread and successful gentry families of Devon; Edmund Prideaux's 16th century grandmother was Catherine Edgecombe (an earlier spelling of Edgecumbe); Elizabeth Prideaux married William Morice in the early 17th century.

¹⁰ Antony Archive CE/E/66, Repton's *Red Book* with two letters from Repton to Reginald dated 1804 and 1808 and four letters from Reginald to Repton dated 1805 and 1809 CZ/AV/7, Reginald's 'Transactions' December 20, 1794, pp.407-431 which lists Reginald's desires in correspondence with Repton.

The language of the house's structural elements, substantive volumes, and fashionably restrained style characterised it as a 'gentleman's residence', the phrase Gibbs coined in his compendium *A Book of Architecture* (1728). Priced at four guineas (the average annual wage of a London domestic servant)¹¹ the *Book* was specifically aimed at those:

as might be concerned in Building, especially in the remote parts of the Country, where little or no assistance for Designs can be procured.¹²

In twenty-four words Gibbs particularised the apprehensions of aristocratic estate owners whose cultural identity and patrimony were never more palpable in bricks and mortar than in the countryside. The typological form of a Georgian country house connects to a specific time and culture allowing a superficial interpretation of Antony as an eighteenth-century aristocratic residence. Beyond a stylistic appraisal, however, Antony's four-square solidity connoted its importance in the landscape while its silver-grey stone added lightness to its mass without diminishing its commanding position. Pentewan's quarries provided the stone that had built many medieval churches in Cornwall and, in Antony's elegant geometries, it not only reinforced and validated ideas of longevity and stability, but also grounded it to a locality and an indigenous industry. Sited at the end of a long driveway, amid greenswards and woodlands, the sensory route to the house

¹¹ Paula Humfrey, *The Experience of Domestic Service for Women in Early Modern London* (Ashgate, 2011), p.24.

¹² James Gibbs, *A Book of Architecture, Containing Designs of Buildings and Ornaments*. (Dover Books, 1728), p.(i).

described an experience that imagined, as Alain de Botton proposes for his twentieth-century readers, 'the kind of life that would most appropriately unfold within and around' it.¹³

For eighteenth-century builders, the classical forms of the Palladian villa not only expressed morality, but also demonstrated rational and universal principles through harmonious proportions. Rome was never forgotten, and perhaps this is why the term Augustan Age is still used as shorthand for the period. Philip Ayres contends that such a discourse is justified by its:

success in anchoring the principle of political liberty deep within the nation's culture and, by way of the plastic arts, in giving civic values visible form.¹⁴

The tendency to recall images of ancient Rome in the buildings of the period expressed the self-validating identification of the ruling élite with antique civic values, something reflected repeatedly in Pope's Shaftesburian view of the function of a national architectural style. Such theories, already evident in *Windsor Forest* (1713), were still strong in 1731 when, in the *Epistle to Burlington*, he evoked what he hoped would be Burlington's legacy.¹⁵ Pope's

¹³ Alain de Botton, *The Architecture of Happiness* (Pantheon Books, 2006), p. 72.

¹⁴ Philip J. Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. xv.

¹⁵ Ayres, *ibid.*, p. 130. Pope remarked that Stowe was 'a work to wonder at' in celebration of the design of its gardens as part of a poetic tribute to Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington, who was largely responsible for developing the new taste for gardening and architecture in England during the early eighteenth century. The full title of the first edition (1731) was *An Epistle to the Right Honourable Richard Earl of Burlington, Occasion'd by his Publishing Palladio's Designs of the Baths, Arches, Theatres, &c. of Ancient Rome*.

primary interest in the Palladian derived from his belief that the most important aspect of architecture was its connection to virtue and its value as:

an index of the moral character of the builders, the architect, or the entire nation; and his judgments of builders, buildings, and architects depend as much on ethical as aesthetic principles.¹⁶

The nexus of virtue and nationalism in architecture emerges when the classicism of Palladio appeared compatible with the ideologies of constitutional government and Protestantism, as promoted by the Whig party. Existing rhetoric links Whiggism and the succession of George I to the success of the Palladian in Britain, yet the historians Francis Dodsworth and Carol Fry challenged the myth that the style was the sole territory or emblem of one political party. Dodsworth pinpointed the superficiality of connecting political affiliation to an architectural style, acknowledging that:

while most of the major building-work by [British]-Palladian architects was for Whigs, this [was] due to their political ascendancy rather than a particular meaning in Palladian[-style] architecture.¹⁷

Fry's analyses of the subscribers to Campbell's volumes of *Vitruvius Britannicus* lent weight to arguments against Whig proprietorship of the British-Palladian.

¹⁶ Cited in Morris R. Brownell, *Alexander Pope & the Arts of Georgian England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), p. 294

¹⁷ Francis Dodsworth, 'Virtus on Whitehall: The Politics of Palladianism in William Kent's Treasury Building, 1733–61,' *Journal of Historical Sociology* 18, no. 4 (2005), Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6443.2005.00259.x>].

Campbell's subscribers were 'over 40% Tories, if not hardened Jacobites';¹⁸ and the list included William. As the son of a staunchly Tory family, could William have been concerned that his architectural choice contradicted his politics?

William's inheritance bestrode both the hereditary entitlements of landownership and the commercial investments in overseas trade made by his father. A significant proportion of his revenues came from marketing agricultural products and the industries supported by his tenants; neither of which confronts any rigid dichotomy in Tory or Whig partisanship. Certainly, a man's politics do not automatically dictate his architectural preferences and thus, we might ask what factors might have influenced William's decisions for the appearance of his new building. As a child of the late-seventeenth century he could have been swayed by the grandiose English Baroque – perhaps along the lines of Castle Howard – except that Vanbrugh's (still-unfinished) brooding monumentalism was generally considered already outmoded and self-indulgent. William could have been demonstrating his allegiance to the Tories by engaging a known Tory architect, but the noose of party politics as a blanket taxonomy is unhelpful: British-Palladianism was a style as much favoured by court Whigs, city Whigs,

¹⁸ Carol Fry, 'Spanning the Political Divide', p. 180. The Tory Gibbs worked on Stowe House from 1726; at Houghton (1727); and for his patron the 2nd Duke of Argyll, Sudbrook Park; the Whig Campbell is associated with Stourhead (1721) at Houghton (1721–22); Lydiard, Wiltshire (1729) and, most importantly, Burlington House (1717).

country Whigs, Tories and Jacobites. There is an inherent danger in assuming that such terms have a fixed and settled meaning without also acknowledging that they are notoriously slippery and of limited use. Of more importance are the values projected by architecture during this period.

Among well-born sons educated in the Classics and those who undertook the Grand Tour throughout the century, the perception of the 'ideal' was represented in Greek art and architecture. Karl Axelson writes that early eighteenth-century philosophers and critics displayed a readiness to explore a nexus between Britain and ancient Greek culture in order to rediscover political and artistic parallels and a sense of national superiority.¹⁹ The most visible corollary appears in buildings constructed between 1710 and 1720, such as Antony, where the characteristic forms endorsed by the ancients offered a reimagined idealised social hierarchy that gave worth to one's moral being, underpinning a national body politic, and strengthening a British identity.²⁰ Clearly, for William, deviation from a design template that signified the essence of the achievements for British society, albeit from a rather narrow and lofty viewpoint, would have proved detrimental to the visual culture inculcated in his social rank. British-Palladian architecture was as useful to William (a Tory MP with Jacobite sympathies) as it was to any Whig oligarch, and it became one of

¹⁹ See Karl Axelson, "'Taste Is Not to Conform to the Art, but the Art to the Taste": Aesthetic Instrumentalism and the British Body Politic in the Neoclassical Age,' *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 5 (2013) <http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/jac.v5i0.21096>.

²⁰ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837*, Rev. edn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), pp.30–43.

the several styles architects could choose to build in, instead of symbolically standing for the solidity of the government of the Whig party. British-Palladianism intentionally set itself against the irrationality of Baroque through a rigorous application of the classical principles of symmetry and proportion. Sober, measured and solemn, it translates into visual symbols the role as protagonist of the aristocratic élite.

The design of Antony House appears as an illustration in *A Book of Architecture* (1728) which suggests Gibbs was its architect although no correspondence between patron and designer exists.²¹ It had been thought that Gibbs did not work so far into the West of England but his name appears as one of the architects for the Hawkins family at Trewithen, near Truro.²² From the exterior Trewithen is virtually identical to Antony in scale and used similar materials – its Pentewan stone was extracted from Hawkins' quarries. Since the date of its construction coincided with William's building works, there appears no valid reason (save for the lack of a commissioning document) not to ascribe Antony to Gibbs. Plate 57 (Figure 2.2) in Gibbs' folio appears to be a near-exact template for Antony House, although doubts have arisen that prevent secure attribution. First, there is a chronological mismatch – Antony's construction pre-dates the publication of the *Book* – this may be misleading as it is likely that

²¹ Gibbs is most often acknowledged - largely due to an attribution in Lysons' *Magna Britannia* of 1814 which still divides academics. Unlike other topographical and historical surveys published in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, *Magna Britannia* remains of value today because the Lyson brothers included content on topics such as population, manufacture and commerce.

²² Source: Historic England's database for Trewithen. Online [<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>].

Gibbs' designs circulated informally before being printed. Secondly, the British architectural historian Howard Colvin maintained that Gibbs could not have designed the main block of Antony for it was 'not in his style'.²³ This assertion can be challenged given compelling documentary and material evidence (not least in Plate 57), although Colvin does concede that since the width of the house in Gibbs' illustration is identical to that of Antony, as built, Gibbs *could* (emphasis added) have been involved to some degree. The prospect still excited architectural students in the 1930s, as evidenced by the recent auction of a RIBA Testimony of Study featuring Antony and crediting Gibbs as architect.²⁴

This discussion highlights the issue of authorship and, to a similar extent, authenticity. In terms of a strategy of distinction, aligning an architect of renown with Antony helps us consider William as a gentry landowner with very specific aims for the materiality (or agency) of his country residence; among a community of aristocratic owner-builders with shared ambitions. A secure connection with Gibbs draws William into a circle of noble patrons such as the aforementioned Boyle and Harley, and by association, into the upper echelons of a highly-stratified society of élite owner-builders. By contrast, however, the use of a local builder with a Gibbs-*ian* pattern book to hand suggests a social operation at a more regional level and, in that, somewhat deficient in terms of validation: a local mason working from a widely-circulated book of designs could not carry the

²³ Harold Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840*, 3rd edn (New Haven ; London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 1995).

²⁴ Lot 18C in a 2013 auction at Bicton Street Auction Rooms, Exmouth, of architectural drawings and plans included one of Antony dating to the 1930s or 1940s.

same cultural weight as having a famed architect custom-design one's country house. Our modern concerns with the prestige associated with celebrity had less social resonance when viewed through eighteenth-century eyes. As Summerson was clear to point out, the idea of (a succession of) personalities is a more recent chapter in the chronicles of architectural history.²⁵ For William, what mattered most was that his self-hood was projected through bricks and mortar, visible, as Christopher Christie puts it 'as an example of power and taste in the countryside'.²⁶ As the most conspicuous aspect of William's self-fashioning, the choice of design(er) was key to achieving his ambitions; his success was probably due to pre-existing societal links between Gibbs' subscribers and their families which granted indirect provenance to Antony House.²⁷

²⁵ Summerson, *The Architecture of the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1969 and 1986).

²⁶ Christie, *The British Country House*, p.29.

²⁷ See Fry, *Spanning the Political Divide*, pp.180–192; also Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p.39.

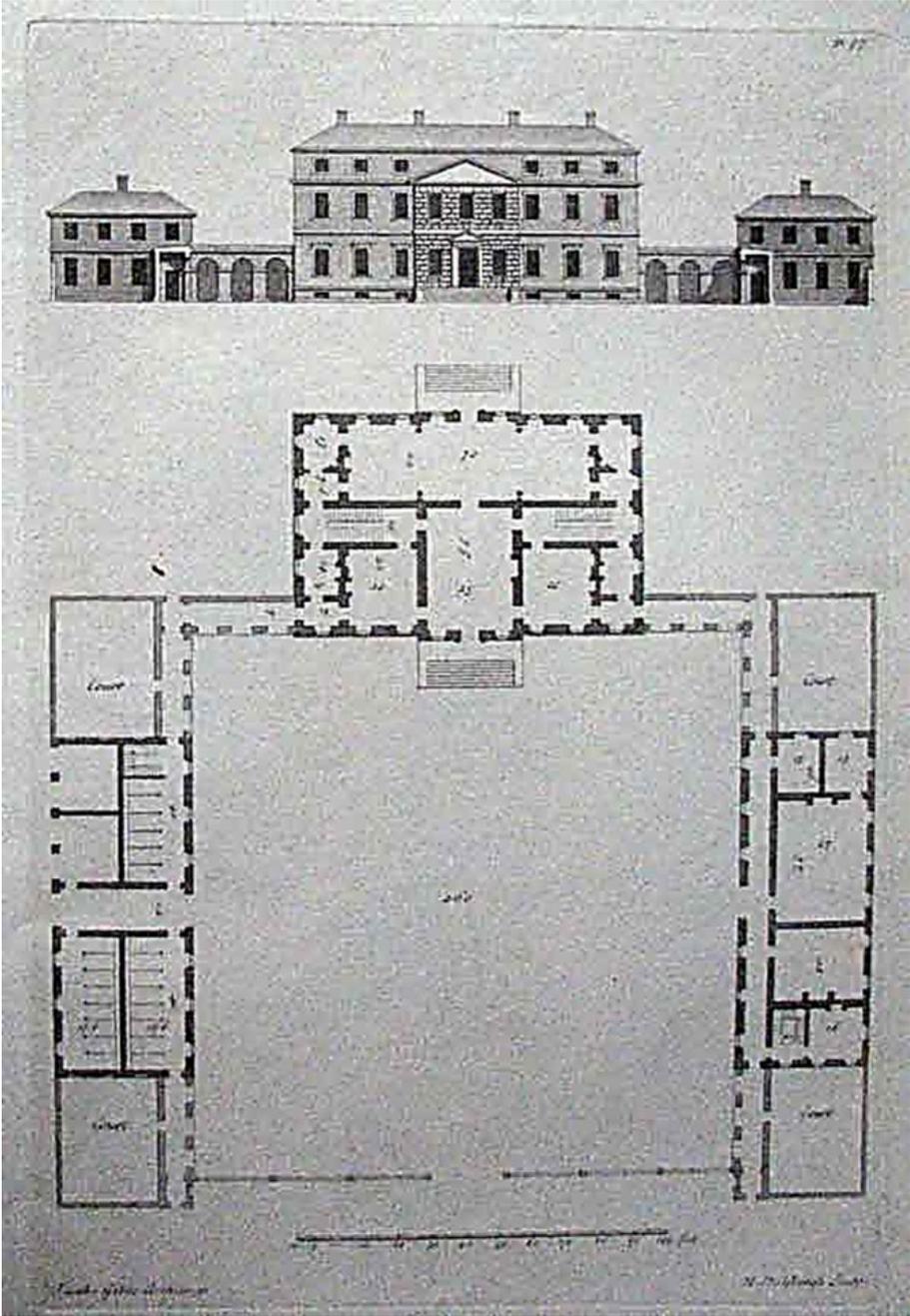


FIGURE 2.2: GIBBS, A BOOK OF ARCHITECTURE, (1728) PLATE 57

2.1 WILLIAM AND MOYLE

Married for five years and living in the old Tudor manor house on the estate with their two-year-old son, Anne and William were probably as keen to upgrade their accommodations as they were to make their mark in the county and advertise their social position within it. So, in 1718, William commissioned Devonshire master mason John Moyle 'for building the shell of a new house according to a Draught agreed'.²⁸ Moyle arrived at Antony with a portfolio of completed projects including alterations made to Powderham Castle, the ancestral home of William's maternal relatives, the high-status earls of Devon. Powderham had been severely damaged during the Civil War and Moyle had been commissioned by William Courtenay, the fifth earl, to rebuild the east and west towers in the walled courtyard and update the Tudor Great Hall.²⁹ It is likely that Courtenay referred Moyle, and his endorsement, when added to the credit of a tested architectural practitioner in the modern idiom, were reason enough for the lower-ranked Cornish baronet to employ a relatively unknown mason to execute his building project.³⁰

²⁸ Cornforth's article for *Country Life* (June 1988) cited Moyle as 'a master builder of some importance in the south-western counties in the reign of George I, and was probably capable of making his own architectural designs, although no direct evidence of this has so far been found.' *Country Houses in Britain, Can They Survive? : An Independent Report* (London: *Country Life* for the British Tourist Authority, 1974). Contract with Moyle is found in Antony archives CE/E/22/6.

²⁹ Source from Historic England's on-line database for Powderham. Online [<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>].

³⁰ Joan Courtenay, daughter of the Earl of Devon, was the wife of William's 15th century ancestor; progeny from that union also married into the Edgcumbe and Pole families. Recent research for the Devon Historical Society by Clare Donovan and Jocelyn Hemming (2014) has evidence of the major rebuilding that took place at the Bampfylde family's Poltimore House between 1726–8. Detailed analysis of Edmund Prideaux's three drawings of Poltimore provides visual evidence of the

The memorandum of agreement (archive CE/E/22/6) between William and Moyle specified that the latter's responsibilities included 'finding all materials [and] finding all labour att twelve hundred and sixty pounds', the modern equivalent of approximately £2.5 million. Comparative costs for building a two-storey, five-bay house in the country at this time were about £500 revealing, at least, that William was willing to invest almost three times as much in the construction of his home.³¹ However, unlike his profligate and socially unstable cousin, Thomas Carew, who sold six manors to fund the £5,913 cost of refurbishing Crowcombe Court in an ostentatious Queen Anne style, the comparably modest expenditure on Antony could be interpreted as a genuine reflection of the restrained character of William.³² Indeed, the evidence exists in invoices and Letterbook entries which indicate that the use of on-site kilns and regional suppliers reduced building costs, although the resulting structure bears none of the hallmarks of enforced frugality.³³

changes made to the building and its grounds between 1716 and 1727. A re-examination of evidence from the surviving early fabric, together with newly-discovered documents of a court case in which John Moyle, the builder, describes the work completed, revealed new understandings both of the original Tudor manor and the updated Georgian mansion it became. Taken together, this evidence unites Antony to Poltimore through a builder and a topographer – the personal relationship between Carews and Bampfyldes arrives through intra-marriage.

³¹ Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p.39.

³² Thomas Carew is described by Walpole as 'a crazy zealot, who believed himself possessed by the devil, till he was cured by his apothecary assuring him that he had met the devil upon the stairs coming from him. He was the author of the Gaming and Swearing Acts and would have been glad in the latter to have prohibited the taking of oaths, being a stout Jacobite'. Walpole and Montagu, *The Correspondence of Horace Walpole, With George Montagu, Esq., [and Others] 1735–1759*. (Henry Colburn, 1837). The 2013 equivalent of Thomas Carew's outlay was £11,310,000.

³³ Archive CE/E/22 – 32 pages of Letters and plans for the construction of the garden and house at Antony.

William commissioned Moyle to construct ‘a south-east facing house 101 feet wide by 55 feet deep’, exactly to Gibbs’ dimensions (the point conceded by Colvin) supporting the notion that Moyle was working with Plate 57 in mind. William’s instructions were specific: ‘the middle part where the pediment comes to project two foot of a side more according as expresst in the Draught’. His reference to the Draught (as a working document) implies extended negotiations as patron and builder clarified the design and deliberated both on practical uses and construction materials. An explicit example concerns a utilitarian space: a sketched ground plan for the washhouse, kitchen and a cellar, the latter, according to the agreement ‘sunck under ground [...] and paved with Purbick’. Whether or not William prepared the sketch himself, it was important that Moyle understood that the cellar was to have ‘[a] wide door to bring in liquors with a light over it’.³⁴ William’s predilection for wine (there is copious correspondence with his vintner regarding bottles of madeira) was supplanted by his successor’s passion for chocolate (in excess of 63lbs consumed in 1823 alone) thus the considerations for the original cellar served two masters equally.³⁵

³⁴ Archive CE/E/30 – p.36 contained this sketch; William’s correspondence with his vintner is found in archive CE/E/27 along with a ground plan of Antony and a bundle of drapery receipts.

³⁵ Reginald’s accounts for chocolate (among other luxury consumables) are found in CE/E/51.



FIGURE 2.3 EDMUND PRIDEAUX'S SKETCH OF ANTONY, 1726

Two archival documents help us see Antony as it existed in William's day. Prideaux's 1726 sketch (Figure 2.3) of the north elevation of the House shows the pavilions and arcades, but not the wall and gates which still form the southern forecourt.³⁶ The formal landscape bisected by tree-lined, arrow-straight *allées* signifies a design informed by seventeenth-century Continental models which emphasised the control and manipulation of nature. Similar formal qualities appear in a painting by an unknown artist from a little later in the same decade (Figure 2.7) showing a simple yet elegant front with pediments on the south elevation of the completed house. That image reinforces the comparison to

³⁶ Prideaux, a member of an ancient Cornish family that settled at near Fowey following the Norman Conquest of 1066 made architectural drawings of regional country houses belonging to the extended Prideaux family and their friends. Today, they are preserved in two bound volumes at Prideaux Place and provide valuable information concerning the form of several houses long since demolished. Amongst his drawings are several of Prideaux Place; of Netherton, the seat of his cousins; and of Stowe House, Kilkhampton, in Cornwall, seat of the Grenville Earls of Bath. The Carew and Prideaux families are related through the Morices: Elizabeth Prideaux, sister to Edmund's father, married William Morice and her portrait hangs at Antony.

Gibbs' style including stables positioned to the left of the main block, service rooms to the right, and a figurative sculpture on a substantial plinth in the centre of the forecourt. The four courts in Gibbs' Plate 57 positioned symmetrically at the corners of the extension ranges are not evident, leading to an assumption that Moyle was prepared to modify designs to accommodate his client's personal or economic preferences. Thus, we might say that although the design of Antony was informed by Gibbs, it was not a slavish pastiche. In the relationship between text and practice, the probability that Moyle adapted Gibbs' designs exemplifies the process by which design was transmitted and transplanted in pre-industrial Georgian Britain.

Whether or not Gibbs was directly involved in the design of Antony is, in many ways, immaterial. The fixation with provenance could be more properly ascribed to a twenty-first-century mindset wherein historicism invests artefacts with (quantitative) cultural value. Gibbs' *Book* offered subscribers a step-by-step guide with dimensioned blueprints, elevations and drawings of ornamental features ('which may be Executed by any Workman who understands Lines') and practical support including alterations ('easily made by a Person of Judgement').³⁷ Gibbs was, perhaps, indifferent to the 1710 copyright law that would have protected his designs, and more concerned about style than patent. He actively encouraged widespread distribution of his *Book* and its success was immediate: it was probably the most widely used architectural book of the

³⁷ Gibbs, *A Book of Architecture*, Introduction (un-numbered pages).

century.³⁸ Again, in the relationship between a book of designs and built realities, the circulation of Gibbs' book was one of the most influential: the expectation was that his drawings could be realised in different sites by different hands.³⁹ The architectural language of Gibbs' designs offered builders flexibility, as the Palladian template could be proportionally enlarged or reduced, allowing for both the grand façades of Stowe and more modest residences, such as Antony. Builders were also at liberty to use regional materials. Gibbs' commissions for the Earl of Lichfield at Ditchley, in Oxfordshire (1722), and for the Duke of Argyll at Sudbrook, in Richmond (1726), were also pattern-book designs, adjusted to suit the patron. Ditchley's ashlar limestone façades were capped by Welsh-slate roofs and Sudbrook's red brick façade was dressed in local stone. As at Antony, the economy in élite works privileged the use of local materials which, as mentioned earlier, were cheaper to transport to craftsmen or finished on site but in no way diminished the end result.

William's house functioned not only as a site to display an idealised self but also as a continuum within which his cultural identity might be crafted and

³⁸ Ibid., p. 333: 'If this Book prove useful in some degree answerable to the Zeal of my friends in encouraging and promoting the Publication of it, I shall not think my time mis-spent, nor my Pains ill-bestowed.' Also Summerson, 'The Classical Country House in 18th-Century England,' *Journal of the Royal Society for the Arts* 107, no. 5036 (1959), p. 546, online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41368764>].

³⁹ See the introduction to Daniel Maudlin and Bernard Herman, *Building the British Atlantic World: Spaces, Places, and Material Culture, 1600–1850* (University of North Carolina Press, 2016). Maudlin's research interests are concerned with social history of early modern Britain and the British Atlantic world. This volume specifically asks questions of identity, personhood and social relations, and how they can be understood through physical and conceptual investigations into everyday spaces, places and things.

discerned.⁴⁰ In specific terms, the organisation and decoration of rooms, which Oliver Goldsmith described as ‘the little republic to which I gave laws’, were crucial to William’s authoritative narrative.⁴¹ The hegemony of Antony’s interior spaces might easily exemplify Bourdieu’s concept of ‘habitus’, which expressed power as culturally and symbolically created, constantly re-legitimised through an interplay of agency and structure.⁴² Moyle’s success was demonstrated in the adaptation of a functional design to William’s specific needs, and in the creation of spaces within which the status-enhancing rituals of social performance could take place.⁴³ For William, the expenditure on building the house and attention to the design and outfitting of interiors represented his ratification of a set of active social processes that anchored taken-for-granted assumptions about his provenance into the realm of social life and an Habermasian public sphere.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Tilley, et al, *Handbook*. In Chapter 15, p.352, Fowler proposes that personhood is a specific axis of identity and integral to the relational concepts of materiality. ‘Identity’ considers shared characteristics, ‘personhood’ interrogates the relationships between human beings and objects to study how material things and cultural activities are given value alongside human lives.

⁴¹ Karen Harvey, *The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p.1.

⁴² Eighteenth-century European architects understood the client’s instrumental role in giving form and meaning to architectural space. See: Germain Boffrand, *Livre D’architecture; Book of Architecture: Containing the General Principles of the Art*, trans. David Britt (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1745 [2002]).

⁴³ This focus on the imbricated aspects of architecture, interiors, and social acts, particularly in the context of domestic architecture, has typified scholarship on the British country house. See, for example, Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*; Gervase Jackson-Stops and James Pipkin, *The English Country House: A Grand Tour* (Orion Publishing Group, Limited, 1998); Jackson-Stops, *The Fashioning and Functioning of the British Country House*, (National Gallery of Art, 1989); Dana Arnold, *The Georgian Country House* (Stroud, Glos: Sutton Publishing, 1998), and Miles Ogborn and Charles W.J. Withers, *Georgian Geographies: Essays on Space, Place and Landscape in the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester University Press, 2004).

⁴⁴ See Habermas, *The Public Sphere*.

2.2 SOCIABLE SPACES

By interrogating the physical evidence, we can begin a consideration of the social meaning of Antony's public spaces for William, Reginald, and their guests. This evidence includes the primary resource of an inventory of paintings at Antony prepared in 1771,⁴⁵ as well as secondary information in printed material, and scholarly research that is concerned with the experience of country house interiors.

Despite the initial commission for building the 'shell of a house', Moyle's handling of the Earl of Devon's refurbishments might have influenced William to entrust his mason with responsibility for the interiors. Later commissions of note were for 'two staircases one of solid oak from top to bottom of the house, the other of clean deal, to go from the cellars', (accounts in bundle CE/E/20 record a payment of 141 shillings for deal – or pine – boards which we can assume were destined for the unseen servants' quarters). To frame Antony's entrances, 'two doorcases of the Doric order, one to each front' were commissioned in oak.⁴⁶ The marriage of English oak and the Classical order for the principal access points to the House made symbolic statements about William's traditionalism and discernment and established the tenor of his fiefdom from his principal threshold. We know that Moyle made recommendations to his patron for paving the Hall, Dining Room and passages with 'what stone S^r William pleases; either in square

⁴⁵ Archive CE/E/48.

⁴⁶ Archives CE/E/20/ and CE/E/22.

Purbick or in octagon with little squares of marble'. Memorialising such details in correspondence was not only prudent for both but also shows effective consultation between mason and client wherein William's active interest in form and style are acknowledged.

We can conclude that Antony House was the architectural embodiment of William's strategy of distinction: its contemporary design announced his self-fashioning goals while its internal organisation promoted the young heir's social competencies. And, by 1724, the staircase was installed, the glazier was finishing the windows, and the interior decoration almost complete.⁴⁷ Antony House was ready to receive guests.

Judith Butler's assertion that 'identities are in some sense constructed in and through social action' responds to the concept that the types of performance that took place in the country house were as much about constructing identity as projecting it through staged enactments of self.⁴⁸ Each of the interior spaces had a role in constructing an identity that can be deduced from the distribution and clustering of key objects.⁴⁹ The following paragraphs attempt to reconstruct a

⁴⁷ Evidence of near-completion is found in a flurry of bill paying around this date. Bundles CE/E/22/11 through 26 includes drapery receipts, (and recommendations), and bills for furnishings (not specified); CE/E/41 – 53 concern plate, linen, china and other household goods.

⁴⁸ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Routledge, 2011), p.25. Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the country house*, p.72., draws attention to "'Consumers, Identities and Consumption Spaces in Early-Modern England,' (1996) – an edited study by Paul Glennie and Nigel Thrift based on shopping practices in the early modern period but that focuses on the interpretation of identities through objects in an age prior to widespread product advertising. Glennie, and Thrift. 'Consumers, identities, and consumption spaces in early-modern England', *Environment and Planning A* 28.1 (1996): 25–45.

⁴⁹ See Denise A. Baxter and Meredith Martin, (eds), *Architectural Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Constructing Identities and Interiors* (Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate

strategy and suggest how cultural identity could have been created and interpreted.

Entering through the southern-most Doric-columned doorcase and crossing the threshold, visitors to Antony arrived into a spacious Hall. The Saloon beyond, on the same north-south axis, framed views to the distant river, flanked by a Dining Room and a Withdrawing Room to each side; a spinal corridor ran west to the Library, and east to the Inner Hall and staircase. The Hall ('large and noble') was used as a waiting room whilst the Saloon's principal function as a reception space could be opened out into the Hall for 'large companies and public feasts.'⁵⁰ A double-flight staircase led to the upper rooms while each of the elegant but not overly-large ground-floor rooms facing the garden opened into the next with their doors arranged *en filade*. At Court, this device created an effective hierarchical succession of rooms that enforced status although it was functionally abridged in the more modest proportions of a country house. Nevertheless, the main rooms, as Girouard reminds us, were 'designed as the orderly setting for meetings between gentlemen, lords, and princes, who seldom forgot their rank'.⁵¹

The Carews' visual narrative began in the double-height Outer Hall which provided access to the significant ground-floor rooms and the staircase to the

Publishing, 2010), p.284. Baxter and Martin coin the phrase 'interior turn' to emphasise the social agency of design and to challenge interpretative hierarchies that privilege makers over users, paintings over furniture, luxury objects over quotidian goods. The Jamesonian phrase also registers the recognition among architectural historians that modern ideas about domesticity, interiority, consumption, and the public and private spheres are rooted in eighteenth-century culture and often expressed through its visual and spatial practices.

⁵⁰ Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*, p.136.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.145.

upper floors. The broad frontages of Georgian country houses permitted generous plans and while the entrance hall of larger houses accommodated two identical staircases, at Antony the single staircase is set at right angles to the Inner Hall thus maximising the available space without the loss of its importance as a functional prologue. Beyond practicality, the staircase was a planned place for the display of artworks with the purpose of enhancing the owner's status and connections. Furthermore, it operated as a complex, performative space: wide enough for two people and open to view from all angles, a place of encounter, conversation, and of social and physical ascent. As Richard Johns explained, the staircase was neither private nor public but occupied a transitional place between the two.⁵² Abraham Swan had privileged its utility but acknowledged a bonus to the social capital of the patron was the opportunity to display '[a] great Variety of curious ORNAMENTS, whereby any Gentleman may fix on what will suit him best'.⁵³ And what satisfied aristocratic sentiments most were displays that identified the owner, his status and, especially in circumstances where lineage or acumen were lacking, could propose narratives beyond the immediately observable. As such, the staircase served as an additional gallery – becoming a destination in itself as well as a prelude to the rooms above and beyond. In larger houses – contemporaneous Hanbury Hall, for example –

⁵² Richard Johns, 'Mind the Step: Animating the Country House Staircase' (paper presented at the conference *Animating the 18th-century country house*, National Gallery, London, 5 March 2015, 2015).

⁵³ Abraham Swan, *The British Architect, or, the Builders Treasury of Stair-Cases: ... Illustrated with Upwards of One Hundred Designs and Examples Curiously Engraved by the Best Hands on Sixty Folio Copper-Plates* (1745), title page.

opportunities for grandiloquent murals aided the interpretation of the patron's status. There, Thomas Vernon commissioned Devonshire-born James Thornhill to decorate the walls of his staircase with stories from the life of Achilles in an oblique reference to Vernon's character ['Achilles speaks and behaves suitably to the manners, ideas, and sentiments of his age'.]⁵⁴ No such bombast existed at Antony – William's heroes were not those based on Greek legend and he felt no need to garb himself in the cloak of antiquity. His formative years had not been spent on the Grand Tour and his exposure to the Classics came from his tutors at Exeter College. In comparison with Vernon, William's tastes were far more mundane: at his death, Antony's staircase displayed a secular selection of landscapes, portraits and family pets.

⁵⁴ Pope and Roscoe, *The Works of Alexander Pope*, p. 145.



FIGURE 2.4: THE HALL AT ANTONY, BY NICHOLAS CONDY, 19TH CENTURY, WATERCOLOUR, 30 CM X 22 CM

Among the painted works owned by Sir Richard Carew Pole (the current occupant and thirteenth baronet of Antony)⁵⁵ is a set of watercolours executed by local artist Nicholas Condy. Created in the 1840s, they depict several interior views of Antony which are a useful adjunct to the 1771 inventory. In Condy's

⁵⁵ The family name changed in 1924 when the estate passed to John, Reginald's great-nephew, who inherited the baronetcy of Pole of Shute and adopted the name Carew Pole.

view of the Inner Hall (Figure 2.4) visitors pause to admire a wall hung map, their cloaks and umbrella thrown casually on a richly carved table; while more fabric lies on the floor by the map, suggesting that this feature could be unveiled when required.⁵⁶ Estate maps were commonly displayed in country houses, often in the Hall, to serve two purposes: as a functional tool that enabled estate owners to manage and improve their property and, in the context of self-fashioning, as status symbols that enabled a landowner to display the extent of his property ownership.⁵⁷ (Unseen in Condy's sketch are the 'maps of Cornwall and Somerset at the Head of the Stairs' mentioned in two inventory volumes, designated CE/E/42, dated 1771 and 1804.)⁵⁸ The figures in Condy's interpretation are being entertained at ground-floor level and held within this space, implying they are not aristocratic guests but tourists. As such, they are subsidiary to the central interest of the rooms and decorations. Sunlight pouring in through large plain glazed windows illuminates the Outer Hall beyond and could hint at summer, the notion supported by the flower arrangement in the fireplace. Numerous paintings of various sizes and subjects draw attention to the height of each room's walls while the tiled floor (William must have opted for the square 'Purbick' with marble inlay) visually expands the space along orthogonal

⁵⁶ Nicholas Condy, a Plymouth artist, painted several views of Antony's interior in the nineteenth century and which are here used as generalised views of the Hall, Library, Dining Room and Saloon to aid discussion.

⁵⁷ Locally, Saltram and Endsleigh have similar displays.

⁵⁸ The bundle in the Antony catalogue is referred to as "Furniture at Antony" and the earlier compilation would have been prepared as the estate passed to Reginald; the later volume, Reginald's own inventory at Antony.

lines. The restrained grandeur of this Hall with its display of family portraiture was clearly appreciated as the setting of a wealthy landowner, a man of taste, and the successor of a long line of descent.

Condy's 'tourist view' of the Inner Hall appears to show three Dutch 'kitchen scenes', a sub-genre of still life painting that was associated with a privileged lifestyle that the owner was either accustomed to or wished to be identified with. None of these paintings feature in any inventory. However, in the main Hall, the large canvas of a male figure in a blue coat is particularly relevant to William for it resembles the portrait of the Jacobite Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn, a family friend. William in Cornwall and Williams-Wynn in Wales had pledged to raise armies for a planned Stuart rebellion which led to the former's arrest in 1715. Being briefly locked in the Tower added no drama to what is known about William although the presence of Williams-Wynn is testament to a political conviction and an association that reappeared in 1745 with the second Cornish (Jacobite) Rising. William's participation in two contemporary campaigns to restore the Stuart monarchy not only highlighted his political persuasion, it also drew attention to his personal relationships. Virtually every landed family in the county was connected to William by marriage and by Jacobitism.⁵⁹ To modern eyes this conflation of recent history with the fifth baronet could be viewed as slightly dangerous,

⁵⁹ Among them were: John St Aubyn of Pencarrow, the leader of the Cornish rebellion, was of similar age and rank as William and the pair had met at Exeter College. St Aubyn had married Catherine Morice, the daughter of William's guardian, at Werrington on 1 October 1725. Sir Francis Basset married Anne Trelawney; their eldest son married Anne Prideaux; and Sir Richard Vyvyan of Trelowarren, a leading Jacobite, was imprisoned with William.

although it was not unusual to advertise one's loyalties through material culture such as the 'white rose' picture of Mary Carew, discussed in Chapter Three.⁶⁰

As guests moved from the Hall and into the Saloon at Antony, space was defined less by practical functions than by formal characteristics – notably volume and height exceeding that of surrounding rooms and a strict adherence to symmetry, as can be seen in Figure 2.5. Saloons were compared to show-rooms, notably:

highly architectural in treatment, a magnificent setting for great gatherings rather than for everyday life, and essentially masculine in feeling, as opposed to the feminine attributes of the withdrawing room beyond.⁶¹

Constructively, the 1771 inventory records the placement of the paintings and furnishings as Reginald inherited and that were largely illustrated in Condy's watercolours. In order to suggest William's decorative scheme, we might turn to near-contemporary visual sources for clues. Hogarth's *Marriage a la Mode* (c.1743) showed, beyond the story of avarice, patronage and morals, the spectrum of living (or lived-in) conditions available, expected or imagined in the homes and leisure-sites of Britain's élites. Throughout the series, we read interior spaces as framing devices for the narrative: from an extravagant drawing

⁶⁰ In the years before 1745, any signs of Jacobite allegiance were suppressed and Jacobites had to meet and plot in secret. From the early 1720s Watkins-Wynn headed one of the best known Jacobite clubs, the Cycle of the White Rose. His Jacobite leanings were never concealed — he even publicly burned a picture of George I in 1722. A number of secret Jacobite symbols emerged for those less 'brave' which revealed their allegiances. The white rose symbolised the exiled James.

⁶¹ Jackson-Stops, *The Fashioning and Functioning of the British Country House*, p. 82.

room in the first scene to the impoverished dwelling at the conclusion of the tale, the furnishings providing anecdotal context to the crumbling marriage and its dreadful outcome. Each character acquired depth through interaction with his or her setting, and eighteenth-century audiences were as acutely attuned to the room sets, presented as they would have been if they were physically manifest. Plate 1, *The Marriage Settlement*, takes place in the Saloon – a room not dissimilar to that at Antony – richly furnished and elegantly appointed. But while the heavily indebted Earl Squanderfield decorated his room (and his dogs) with emblematic coronets and Italian Old Masters, William gravitated towards the security of kinship, with the portraits of family and friends as the *locus* of his cultural identity.



FIGURE 2.5: THE SALOON AT ANTONY BY CONDY

Even when altered so that Antony's Saloon became an extension of the Hall, the conjoined space functioned as a Ciceronian civilising process where *art de vivre* was practised (particularly the art of friendship and of polite and droll conversation).⁶² Typically, a Saloon's furnishings included large-scale works of art, with a set of parade furniture arranged around the walls, as seen in Figure

⁶² Cicero's *societas hominum* viewed an idealised (Roman) society as functioning around the common culture of citizens bound together by mutual interests, which resurfaces in the 18th century's obsession with politeness. Although Cicero's work informed many illustrious minds, including Locke, Hobbes and Burke, his insistence that the state exists primarily to safeguard private property and the accumulation of property, must have played into the hands of English aristocratic landlords whose way of life was threatened by the rise of capitalism. See: Neal Wood, *Cicero's Social and Political Thought* (University of California Press, 1991), p. 138.

2.5, inviting its use as an arena for the development and dissemination of ideas and manners. Quite what *art de vivre* William's guests might have enjoyed is entirely speculative, although one can imagine that his eclectic selection of paintings might have summoned lively conversations on religion, mythology or heroism (it should be noted that Condy's view does not accord with the inventory: the overdoor 'Venus' is listed as having been 'removed to the Study' although some of the smaller works can be identified in the 1771 list). The inventory tells us that a large portrait, attributed to Van Dyke, of Sir Kenelm Digby, hung on the Western Wall among pictures of nymphs, shepherds and a battle piece. Digby (1603–1665), a courtier, swashbuckling privateer, and sometime novelist (he wrote *Loose Fantasies, a roman à clef*, about his love for his wife) was known as the 'ornament of England'. Tales of his great deeds in the service of his country, or more prosaically, his invention of the wine bottle, could infuse the most lacklustre social occasion.⁶³ Apart from this, and surprisingly, given that the majority of works at Antony are portraits, only three others graced the room – one of Coventry, William's son, and a pendant pairing of Sir William Butts and Lady

⁶³ His elegiac eulogy was written by Richard Ferrar: 'Under this tomb the matchless Digby lies / Digby the great, the valiant, and the wise: / This age's wonder for his noble parts, / Skilled in six tongues, and learned in all the arts: / Born on the day he died, the eleventh of June, / On which he bravely fought at Scanderoon; / 'Tis rare that one and the same day should be / His day of birth, of death and victory.'" (Scanderoon is a city on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey and where Digby engaged French and Venetian ships in harbour battles.) *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol 15, Digby, Kenelm 1603–1666, pp 60–66. During the 1630s, Digby owned a glassworks and manufactured wine bottles which were globular in shape with a high, tapered neck, a collar, and a punt. His manufacturing technique involved a coal furnace, made hotter than usual by the inclusion of a wind tunnel, and a higher ratio of sand to potash and lime than was customary. Digby's technique produced wine bottles that were stronger and more stable than most of their day, and which due to their translucent green or brown colour protected the contents from light. During his exile and prison term, others claimed his technique as their own, but in 1662 Parliament recognised his claim to the invention as valid.

Butts. The compiler's inventory notation is helpful in identifying Butts as the physician to Henry VIII, and that his 'excellent' portrait and that of his wife ('capital') were the results of sitting for Hans Holbein. All other paintings in this room appear to have been small landscapes or Biblical subjects. What would William's guests have made of this collection and how could it have contributed to a cultural identity?

The interest in Butts and Digby was historical: both had served in the same Tudor court as Carew ancestors,⁶⁴ and their portraits almost certainly arrived into Antony as heirlooms (and may have been gifts among friends in the sixteenth century). Research has not revealed any further connections although the link to Court physician and Court artist may have been valuable to William's ancestors, even though its history had been lost over time. The relevance of Digby's portrait to William's cultural identity is perplexing until the search for a relationship is abandoned. According to reports, the sitter was '[a] man of very extraordinary person and presence, which drew the eyes of all men upon him.'⁶⁵ Eloquent, elegant, mellifluous and possessed of 'all the advantages that nature, and art, and an excellent education, could give him,'⁶⁶ Digby could have been William's

⁶⁴ Wymond Carew had been Household Treasurer of Catherine Parr and Receiver General for Jane Seymour and Anne of Cleves. Thomas Carew, son of Wymond, was married to Elizabeth Edgcumbe, daughter of Sir Richard Edgcumbe (then spelled Edgecombe) and served in parliament in 1555 and 1556.

⁶⁵ Simon Jenkins, 'The Politics of Collecting in the Early 18th Century', *The British Art Journal* 1, no. 2 (Summer) (2003), p.357.

⁶⁶ Samuel Egerton Brydges and Arthur Collins, *Collins's Peerage of England* (F.C. and J. Rivington, Otridge & Son, 1812), p.357.

beau ideal and guests may have associated their host with the sixteenth-century paragon.

If Digby was William's role model, then the next important room in the progression of privileged access and myth-making, the Library, was visual evidence of an educated and wealthy landowner. Cicero had once said that to add a Library to a house was to give that house a soul, and while books had formed part of the interests of the royal family since the fourteenth century, there was still a remarkable number of aristocrats who had little enthusiasm for them. Girouard noted that in 1601, Bess of Hardwick kept only six books at Hardwick Hall; but functional illiteracy was the likeliest culprit – the majority (92 out of 146) Northumberland nobles were unable to sign their name.⁶⁷ Yet, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, a library was seen as:

an appendage which no man of rank or fortune can now be without if he possesses or wishes to be thought to possess taste or genius.⁶⁸

The Carews, as typical of their peer group, equated education with a form of prestige, and books required special accommodation.⁶⁹ A library not only augmented the owner's mystique (from the viewpoint of those subservient to him) and secured his place among the ranks of the élites, it also helped to keep out

⁶⁷ Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*, p.165.

⁶⁸ Lawrence Stone and Jeanne C. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite?: England, 1540–1880* (Clarendon Press; New York and Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 221.

⁶⁹ Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*; Patricia F. Ferguson, 'Wedgwood, Boulton, and Henry Hoare II: Patronage of the Antique Taste at Stourhead', *The Magazine Antiques*, June 2006, 2006. p.164.

‘intruding upstarts, shot up from last night’s mushrooms’ as George Peacham described non-hereditary aristocrats.⁷⁰ Despite Peacham’s discriminatory anecdote, owners always provided access to their guests and, as their books were probably also the only significant source of knowledge for many miles, they were also available to a select few in local society. One notable local example was at the grand Nanswhyden House, Cornwall built in 1740 for Robert Hoblyn whose vast wealth enabled the commission of the most expensive house ever built in Cornwall (according to a descendant). The house, destroyed by fire in 1803, boasted a library that ‘occupied two rooms, the longest of which was 36ft in length, 24ft broad and 16ft high’ and contained over 25,000 volumes. Hoblyn intended that his book collections were ‘designed as a standing library for the county, to which, every clergyman and author, who had the design of publishing, were to have the readiest access.’⁷¹ However, as Peter Reid explained, the British aristocracy have never viewed their libraries as being sacrosanct: in contrast to other, more visible, collections – portraits, furniture and plate – books were expendable and easily sacrificed if the need arose.⁷² Reid recited the astonishing disposal of the entire contents of Stowe in 1848 – including its library of 40,000 volumes – to settle a debt of over £1 million amassed by Richard

⁷⁰ Henry Peacham, *Peacham’s Compleat Gentleman, 1634* (The Clarendon Press, 1906).

⁷¹ Richard Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall, Civil, Military, Religious, Architectural, Agricultural, Commercial, Biographical, and Miscellaneous* (Michel & Company, Ptrs., 1816), p.94.

⁷² Peter H. Reid, ‘The Decline and Fall of the British Country House Library’, *Libraries & Culture*, Vol. 36, No. 2, (University of Texas Press, 2001), pp. 345–366.

Grenville, the second duke of Buckingham and Chandos.⁷³ Some of the purchasers of the Stowe sale were gentry who came away with a handful of judiciously purchased works to enhance their small(er) collections; many more bought books 'not for intellectual advancement but for social aggrandisement'.⁷⁴

Pope's *Epistle to Lord Burlington* attacked such archetypal tasteless and vulgar literary collections via his fictitious Timon, (generally agreed to be James Brydges)⁷⁵ who filled his villa with magnificent volumes that were never opened. 'Lo, some are vellum, and the rest as good' wrote Pope, 'for all his Lordship knows, but they are wood,'⁷⁶ Books had been chosen for their appearance and not their content; and while the luxurious bindings created a fine impression, the owner was unable to differentiate between real volumes and false spines and had no actual interest in ideas or in literature. (As Mr. Spectator satirised, such libraries were amassed to 'fill up the number like faggots in the muster of a regiment.')⁷⁷ Mark Purcell's attempt to refute the depressing cliché about books

⁷³ The sale, in 1848, lasted over forty days and everything from the duchess's wardrobe to the heirloom paintings was sold. The *Times* reported that the 'Duke's collapse was more than personal ruin ... it was public treason, a blow at the confidence of Englishmen in the aristocratic order of society', 'The Fall of the Grenvilles', (*Times*, 14 August 1848).

⁷⁴ Reid, 'The Decline and Fall of the British Country House Library', p. 352

⁷⁵ Pope sketched Timon's Villa as the epitome of prodigality and false taste, its tyrannical lord hosting lavish entertainments attended by crowds of sycophants. Traditionally, commentators have cited Pope's wanton attack on Brydges, one of his supposed benefactors, as inspiration for the association. See: George Sherburn and Donald F. Bond, "'Timon's Villa.' and Cannons,' *The Huntington Library Bulletin*, no. 8 (1935), online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3818106>]. Other scholars have questioned whether it was Brydges and Canons, Walpole and Houghton, or even the Duke of Marlborough at Blenheim, since each had some qualification to be a candidate for Pope's scandalous vindictive. James R. Aubrey, 'Timon's Villa: Pope's Composite Picture', *Studies in Philology* 80, no. 3 (1983), pp.325–348, online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4174153>] summarises them.

⁷⁶ Boynton, *The Complete Poetical Works of Alexander Pope, Epistle to Burlington*, lines: 137–140.

⁷⁷ *The Spectator*, no, 37, 12 April 1711, pp. 203–8.

being bought 'by the yard', re-established the primacy of country house libraries as functional spaces, existing 'to fill the leisure time of their owners and their owners' friends.⁷⁸ Stobart tells us that Edward Leigh of Stoneleigh Abbey spent in excess of £1,600 on books for his library, while Newdigate's investment of £30 for a volume of Piranesi engravings was more typical of those whose 'taste for classical architecture and civilisation' was evidenced in extravagant purchases.⁷⁹ Antony's Library has altered little since it was created, with leather-bound volumes crammed together in custom-made bookcases framing three sides of a room that overlooks the garden to the south, as seen in Figure 2.6. Clearly, not all libraries fulfilled identical functions although, from Reginald's additions to Antony, we can assume that its volumes were read both for pleasure and study, across a range of interests. In 1802, an eclectic array arrived into Antony – possibly from the library at Shute House (the Pole country seat) – on topics including botany (Linnaeus' *Natural History*), religion (Tillotson's *Sermons*), French history (in French, Mme Cayus' *Les Souvenirs*), travel guides (Brydon's *Tour of Sicily and Malta*), and novels (*The Arabian Nights*). Studying the liberal arts and sciences and displaying his interests in foreign travel, religion and the education of children denoted the appropriate social polish that articulated

⁷⁸ Mark Purcell, 'The Country House Library Reassess'd: Or, Did the 'Country House Library' Ever Really Exist?', *Library History* 18, no. 3 (2002). Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1179/lib.2002.18.3.157>]. Thomas Dyke Acland, a Carew cousin, installed false spines at Killerton and, in keeping with the fashion among library owners with 'contrived' collections, many bore humorous titles. As early as 1832, commentators were noting Acland's quirky selection, which included 'Hobble on Corns', 'Wig Without Brains', 'Hard Nuts to Crack' and 'Sermons on Hard Subjects'. Other notable examples of this practice are found at Chatsworth, Holkham and Belton.

⁷⁹ Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the Country House*, p.45.

Reginald's privileged education and familiarity with contemporary literature.

Reginald's emotional attachment to his library collection was demonstrated in his

Will that directed his books be considered 'Heir Looms' and reside permanently at Antony as if part of the fixtures and fittings of the house.⁸⁰



FIGURE 2.6: ANTONY'S LIBRARY BY CONDY

⁸⁰ National Archives, ref: PROB11/1844/28. Elizabeth Dryden's inventory drew a telling distinction between goods that were hers and those that were 'Heir Looms of the Mansion of Canons Ashby'. Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the country house*, p.,107. For Reginald, it would appear that his books were part of his cultural identity and should, therefore, rest with the estate.

Antony's Library is probably closer in scale to that at Saltram with more than 3,500 volumes.⁸¹ Saltram's collection is very much a country house collection as opposed to an antiquarian one; it, like Antony's, contains mostly books spanning the owner's interests, some illustrated, and several in foreign languages. Elizabeth Lawrence, who examined the growth and development of Saltram's library, describes the acquisition of volumes as 'useful' – a set of the works of Voltaire (1797); *Bell's British Theatre* (1785) for example, while others reflected their art-collecting interests, such as volumes compiled for the 1st Lord Boringdon by Angelica Kauffmann. Lawrence's opinion is that Saltram typifies a country house collection: one that represents the varied interests of several generations, but that none of its owners was a dedicated bibliophile.⁸² From the range of titles in lists of books brought in by Reginald to augment Anthony's Library, (Appendix 2), we can deduce familiar approaches to book collections. Individual book titles are not identical although, thematically, Reginald and his friend, Parker, shared interests in the natural world, geography and foreign travel. It is a commonplace that scholars and readers in the early modern period were fascinated by Italy and its cultural heritage, both classical and contemporary. The number of French texts in British country house libraries demonstrate the status of French as a gateway language into Italian, and since an aristocratic

⁸¹ Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009). Page 656 discusses the library as the enclave of an aristocratic head of household – 'a Noble Apartment', as described by Pamela in Richardson's novel of the same name. See also Purcell, *The Country House Library Reassess'd*, pp. 157–74.

⁸² Elizabeth Q. Lawrence, '“There is No Describing the Library”: The Parkers of Saltram and Their Books', *Library History*, 18:3, (2002), p. 208ff.

education was rooted in the Classics and the development of language skills, the presence of French texts was indicative of exposure to Continental cultures. William and Reginald were proficient in the language: correspondence and collected items (recipes, pamphlets and other ephemera) evidence their competencies in *la langue française*. Although William did not complete the Grand Tour, diary notes by Reginald place him in several European cities from the date of his accession to Antony onwards.

Mark Purcell made the important point that it was common for owners of multiple residences to move their books between them — most often between a London house and a country house — and in urban settings, there were substantially more contexts in which books might be circulated and discussed.⁸³ As the National Trust's David Pearson rightly pointed out, the immense importance of libraries may not lie in the texts of the books they contain, but rather, in their significance as records of reading and acquisition and, in many cases, as collections of historical artefacts which have accumulated marks of acquisition.⁸⁴

Contemporary visitors might well judge the owner of a house by the quality of the books in their collection as much as by the art on their walls, although in

⁸³ Purcell, *The County House Library Reassess'd*, pp. 162–63. For an illuminating Scottish case study, see Mark Towsey, 'I can't resist sending you the book': Private Libraries, Elite Women and Shared Reading Practices in Georgian Britain', *Library and Information History*, 29 (2013), pp. 210–22.

⁸⁴ David Pearson, *Books as History: The Importance of Books Beyond Their Texts* (London: British Library, 2008) p. 172. See also: Nicolas Barker, *Treasures from the Libraries of National Trust Country Houses* (New York: Royal Oak Foundation & The Grolier Club, 1999), p. 11.

combination, printed and painted works were another component in creating a cultural identity. To enhance his literature yardage and provide a worthy context to his bound volumes, William chose family portraits.⁸⁵ It may appear surprising to find so many Pole portraits in the 1771 inventory for this room: Carolus, (1686–1731) Reginald’s grandfather; his great-great grandfather Courtenay (1618–1695); great-uncle William (1678–1741) the fourth Baronet of Shute; and his father, (also Reginald, 1717–1769) by Reynolds. The Pole family’s ties pre-date the demise of the direct Carew lineage through the Morices of Warrington. Carolus’s mother, Anne, was the sister of William Morice, the first Baronet of Warrington and aunt to Mary Morice, William’s mother. In 1771, an attempt to express this sometimes-complex interconnectedness took place on the chimney wall where principal Poles and Carews were displayed side-by-side in visionary congress. Today we find the scheme relatively unchanged although portraits not mentioned in the original inventories are now displayed above the bookcases.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ In Condy’s painting, the chimney breast is dominated by a large portrait of the Dutch admiral Cornelius van Tromp, created a baronet by Charles II in 1675. Van Tromp’s recklessness in battle and his reputation as a hard drinker might have endeared him to the popular imagination of the English – and his inclusion here might be an opaque reference to a series of events following reconciliation with the Dutch and the formation of the British East India Company in which William’s father invested.

⁸⁶ These include small ovals of Winifred Edgcumbe, wife of the 1st Earl of Coventry, Margaret Jeffries, referred to as the ‘mother of Lord Rupert Coventry’, William’s brother Richard, and Lady Anne de la Pole, wife of the 6th Baronet of Shute. The Edgcumbes (descendants of the de Cotehele family) were near neighbours and Winifred, daughter of Piers Edgcumbe, married Thomas Coventry, 1st Earl of Coventry in about 1660, her second son, Gilbert, becoming William’s father-in-law. The notation in the inventory next to the portrait of Margaret Jeffries is misleading: she was Lady Margaret Tufton (styled Margaret Jefferies of Croome d’Abitot, Lady Coventry), the daughter of the 2nd Earl of Thanet, who married George Coventry, (the 3rd Baron Coventry of Aylesborough and brother to Thomas Coventry, Lady Anne’s grandfather) with whom she had three children John, Margaret and Thomas Coventry – but no son named Rupert: again we must assume the *laissez-faire* afforded the inventory’s compiler.

As a strategy of distinction, the formation of a library offered cultural richness: its portraits defined heritage and entitlement, and the bookshelves indicated intellectual engagement with the varieties of humanistic and scientific texts the gentry found so fascinating. Both were useful in the creation of a cultural identity for William and Reginald, and an effective reminder that conspicuous consumption could operate at various different levels and was rarely one-dimensionally conspicuous.

The appetites of Carews' honoured guests, visually stimulated by progress through the Saloon and Library, may have next been exercised in the performance of dining. Its rituals were laid down in any number of conduct books from the period, and that formed part of the general appraisal of manners (as a component of discernment). The room in which house guests lingered longest – over the many courses of a formal feast – was decorated to present the host family in its most advantageous light.⁸⁷ William's early-century dinner guests could not have failed to notice the imposing portraits and implied weight of family provenance. Here were great-great grandfather Richard, the celebrated antiquarian; William's sibling, Richard; his son and heir, Coventry; Crowcombe Carews; Camerton Carews, and other family members descended from the

⁸⁷ Every meal consisted of two courses and a dessert. However, a course in eighteenth-century elite society consisted of between five and twenty-five dishes. In one course, soup or creams, main dishes, side dishes and pastries would be placed on the table all at once. Unfortunately, this type of presentation meant that by the time the guests finished eating the soup, the other foods had to be eaten cold. The dishes were placed on the table with a certain balance. Meat dishes occupied the centre of the table, while accompaniments were placed on the sides and corners. The soup was placed at one end, with the fish at the other. Vegetable, fish or custard dishes were never placed at the centre of the dinner table. Maggie Lane, *Jane Austen and Food*, (London: the Hambledon Press, 1995), p. 42.

fifteenth century patriarch, as an entire encyclopaedia of Carew bloodlines. Coventrys, Keyts, Morices, and Bampfyldes were merged in to extend the familial connections, so that William's history and claims to entitlement were substantiated as part of his cultural identity (and later adopted into Reginald's selfhood). Should the narratives of such careful curation have escaped a guest's attention, then perhaps Lady Anne's new porcelain and silver utensils would have declared their modernity and apparent wealth instead? In them did there lie an alternative mode of evaluating the hosts' cultural identity?⁸⁸

Unfortunately, the Dining Room schemes as written in the 1771 inventory or painted by Condy are no longer in place; the ancestral Carews have been removed and, instead, Wootton's painting of Gilbert Coventry with his huntsmen occupies the privileged place over the fireplace, with another by the same artist on the same subject on the facing wall; Van der Vaarts's *Two Spaniels and a Jay in a Landscape* is sited in the alcove, mirrored by another Wootton of *Two Spaniels and a Bird in a Wooded Landscape*, opposite; Weenix's *Still Life (with Dead Poultry, a Parrot, and a Spaniel)* faces the windows which overlook the rear terrace and views down to the river.

⁸⁸ CE/E/41—47, and CE/E/53 contain lists of furniture, plate, linen, and china in a date range from 1762 to 1851 .



FIGURE 2.7: ANTONY'S DINING ROOM BY CONDY

These paintings had been acquired by William. Most assuredly Anne brought her father's equestrian portrait as part of her Coventry inheritance; but the Wootton and Dutch animal paintings indicate a secular, and fashionable, interest of William. Such paintings were popular since they created an aristocratic image of country life (from the 1700s only landowners worth £100 a year could hunt),⁸⁹ and when displayed in a Dining Room, made explicit reference to the landowner's automatic entitlement to the beasts and fowl that moved back and forth across their estates. Landscapes often echoed those seen (or imagined) through the windows, but it is clear that William had preferred portraits of his nearest relatives as a backdrop to the feast and this display is of a much later vintage. Some of the paintings migrated to other rooms in the house while more have disappeared. Since Condy's painting was created after Reginald's death, the assumption must be that Reginald's successors were initially responsible for an arrangement that resists William's and Reginald's self-fashioning narratives.

By the time Jane Austen was penning her novels, the pairing of Drawing Room with Dining Room, to either side of a Hall, orchestrated sites of polite

⁸⁹ Sportsmen had the run of the land, but only the very richly landed could be 'sportsmen': small farmers were forbidden to take game even on their own property, whereas those whose huge estates licensed them to hunt were entitled to tramp through neighbouring crops in pursuit of their quarry. Poaching followed these un-neighbourly injuries to traditional commons rights as vigorously as hounds follow hares. The state answered with the Waltham Black Act, so named because it targeted poachers' practice of 'blackening' their faces. The 1722 law made it a hanging crime to go on the hunt in disguise, as well as a hanging crime to poach deer, rabbits, conies, or fish. Formerly, 'deer-stealing' and the like had been seen as mere misdemeanours. E.P. Thompson's 1975 *Whigs and Hunters: the Origins of the Black Act*, has its titular legislation as an expression of the ascendancy of a Whig oligarchy, which created new laws and bent old legal forms in order to legitimise its own property and status.

sociability. This arrangement, besides establishing the familiar symmetry of Palladian domestic architecture, physically expressed the two poles around which the social life of a house revolved; the Dining Room was dedicated to formal meals while the Drawing Room hosted post-prandial entertainments, and the service of tea or coffee during the day. The guiding rules for social usage held that the Dining Room was an especially male province and the Drawing Room was a female one. Adam offered an explanation for this division in the 1770s:

To understand thoroughly the art of living, it is necessary to have passed some time amongst the French [...] their eating rooms seldom or never constitute a piece in their great apartments, but lie out of the suite, and in fitting them up, little attention is paid to beauty or decoration. The reason for this is obvious: the French meet there only at meals, when they trust to the display of the table for show and magnificence. It is not so with us. Accustomed by habit, or induced by the nature of our climate, we indulge more largely in the enjoyment of the bottle. Every person of rank here is either a member of legislation, or entitled by his condition to take part in the political arrangements of his country [...] these circumstances lead men to live more with one another, and more detached from the society of the ladies.⁹⁰

As the wine loosened the tongue, the ladies withdrew to another room to brew tea while the men 'discussed politics' in an increasingly bibulous evening.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Christie, *The British Country House*, p. 53

⁹¹ Amanda Vickery's extensive research is based on the experience of the eighteenth century from a female perspective. See: *Behind Closed Doors* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009); *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 1998); 'His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Household Accounting in Eighteenth-Century England,' *Past & Present*, no. 1 (2006); and John Styles and Vickery, (eds),

During the construction of Hagley Hall, Worcestershire, Lord Lyttleton (Reginald's second wife's grandfather) advised his architect, Sanderson Miller, that:

Lady Lyttleton wishes for a room of separation between the eating room and the drawing room, to hinder the ladies from the noise and talk of the men when left to their bottle, which must sometimes happen, even at Hagley.

While Lord Lyttleton made light of the predictable effects of post-prandial port and politics, Peter Motteux (editor of the *Gentleman's Journal* in 1712) published his *Poem in Praise of Tea* which heralded the benefits to society of the beverage over wine. By his account, tea both humanised and civilised; saving the British gentleman who would 'otherwise remain in his drunken stupor'.⁹² Addison and Steele repeatedly envisioned the tea table as a scene of moral and virtuous improvement (taken with *The Spectator*, obviously); while for Simon Mason tea drinking was conducive to good conversation – provided, of course, that the tea was not followed by a dram.⁹³

Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700–1830 (New Haven and London: 2006).

⁹² Beth Kowaleski-Wallace, 'Tea, Gender, and Domesticity in Eighteenth-Century England,' *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 23 (1994), p.132, Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/sec.2010.0065>]. Motteux edited *The Gentleman's Journal, or the Monthly Miscellany* from its initial issue, dated January 1692, to its last of November 1694; evidence suggests he wrote most of the prose in each issue as well, (the plan was for monthly issues, though some were late, and some were missed). Motteux may have been influenced by *Le Mercure Galant*, a French periodical of the 1670s devoted to Court news and gossip — though Motteux's *Journal* was more ambitious. The *Journal* published 'News, History, Philosophy, Poetry, Musick, Translations, &c.' and covered a wider range of topics than other periodicals of its era like *The Athenian Gazette*, giving it some claim as the first 'general interest' magazine in English. Robert N. Cunningham, *Peter Anthony Motteux: A Biographical and Critical Study* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell), 1933.

⁹³ Simon Mason, *The Good and Bad Effects of Tea Considered* (London: M. Cooper, 1745). Cf. Dr Johnson: 'tea is not a liquor proper for the lower classes of the people, as it supplies no strength to labour, or relief to disease, but gratifies the taste without nourishing the body'. Quoted in *A Journal*

Drawing Rooms received the best of the fine art, furniture, textiles and upholstery, centred on a substantial fireplace to provide warmth, with tall windows for daylight and to frame fine aspects (the views at Antony take in the distant River Lynher). A typical display of such material magnificence is exemplified by surviving late-eighteenth century examples such as Robert Adam's Drawing Room at Saltram. Theresa Parker was almost certainly the driving force of the improvements, and her brother, Thomas Robinson, might have been responsible for introducing Parker to Adam through a mutual friend, the Marquess of Lansdowne. (Adam designed the interiors, a magnificent orangery, and a small zoo for Lansdowne's country residence, Bowood.) There is no comparable updating of interior design for Antony: perhaps because of the uncertainty occasioned by Coventry's death in 1748, but even when Reginald inherited, he appears not to have modernised the interior's decorative schemes.

In the choice of Palladian for the design of the country seat, William's strategy of distinction lost none of its power to communicate throughout the eighteenth century. Reginald's only modifications to its fifty-year-old design involved opening up the range of rooms facing the garden *en filade* and suggesting the addition of an exterior covered colonnade so that those spaces could be extended on to the terrace. We can assume that he used its interiors as William had intended and that the rational geometries of Gibbs' design suited

of Eight Days Journey, p. 166, and referred to in Mason, *The Good and Bad Effects of Tea Considered*, 1745.

Reginald's lifestyle. We also suggest that inheriting a modern house that proclaimed through its architecture a plethora of aristocratic attributes (education, connoisseurship, taste, etc.) contributed to Reginald's strategy of distinction. Overall, as the repository for the Carews' accumulated self-fashioning symbols, Antony became the cultural framework for the traditions and value systems of each of its owners and the jewel in the crown of its landscaped gardens.

2.3 THE LAMBETH NURSERYMAN

As early as 1710 William had begun to remodel the gardens under the supervision of nurseryman Humphry Bowen of Lambeth but his attention was diverted to building the House.⁹⁴ Perhaps his renewed interest in the grounds came at the insistence of his new bride? Nevertheless, the house and garden appear to have developed alongside each other and, as such, must be considered as an entire scheme. The recorded activity on Antony's landscaping provides useful data on William's approaches: the progress of various schemes of work can be traced through archival bundles as an unfolding record of achievements and visual enrichment.

The landscape garden movement became a fundamental conveyor of meaning within the framework of aristocratic discernment in the eighteenth

⁹⁴ The only other reference to Bowen is found in a Survey of London in connection with the garden of Queen's House in Greenwich for which he supplied plants and a bill amounting to £42.18.04. Source: George H. Chettle, 'Architectural description', in *Survey of London Monograph 14, The Queen's House, Greenwich* (London, 1937), pp.59–83. Online [<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/bk14/pp59-83>].

century. Once again, the complexities of taste were woven into the fabrics of both nationalistic and political discourse. Formal designs were associated with French autocracy, which caused varying degrees of ambivalence. On the one hand, there was admiration for the elegance of the style; on the other, there was dislike of the political system it represented. Prideaux's sketch indicated a discernible formality but whether this was as a result of a conscious design or the limits of the gardener's creativity cannot be determined. There is a suggestion that Gibbs might have influenced the design since his work at Brampton, for the earl of Oxford, included plans for gardens that resemble the scheme shown for Antony.⁹⁵ If so, it is reasonable to consider that the combination of social position and newly-acquired title might have been instrumental in the choice of a backward-looking design.⁹⁶ Certainly, William would have been keen to establish a cultural identity in the grounds and, perhaps, asserting hereditary claims through landscaping could have contributed to the rigidity in Bowen's design. However, practicality rather than position might have been more influential: as head of the household-family which, in the eighteenth century, included servants, apprentices, wards, co-resident relatives, long-term guests, and other contractual relationships, William's pragmatic use of the land swept away the pleasure- and

⁹⁵ Brampton Bryan Park is an extensive former deer park with lines and groves of trees. Within the park is the outline of an early 18th-century formal garden, including terraced lawns and a chain of ponds which was captured in a survey plan by Charles Bridgeman in 1722.

⁹⁶ Harley's peerage was created in 1711 and he claimed the ancient Oxford title because of his relationship through marriage with the original patent holders, the de Veres. His fascinating biography is online [<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/member/harley-robert-1661-1724>].

hunting-grounds of his forebears in favour of large kitchen gardens and orchards to supply Antony's larders, which form the view Prideaux sketched.

In the 20th April issue of *Tatler* of 1710, Addison had articulated the Whig concept that the picturesque landscape garden could only originate in a purely English liberal political system, declaring a close connection between natural gardens and Palladian-style architecture. Addison, however, was not a disinterested observer and, while Reginald's politics supported the first Pitt administration, his gardener (Repton) was commissioned by both Whig and Tory landowners. Thus, viewing landscaping (as with building styles) through a political lens – whether William's or Reginald's – creates difficulties in aligning design, discernment and politics so resolutely in one outcome. For Antony, and in the consciousness of contemporary observers, the stylistic pluralism of the garden posed fewer quandaries for the house and its setting appeared to be referential to the individual.⁹⁷ For instance, in its time Pope's Twickenham garden was seen as a self-conscious echo of the themes and forms of his poetry, recalling both literature and ideals from the Classical past rather than a response to Whig gardening aesthetics. Likewise, the 'wiggle' (a serpentine walk), deemed a Whiggish contrivance, was a feature at Hamels, the home of Tory MP Sir Ralph Freman. It becomes plausible, therefore, to regard William and Reginald's

⁹⁷ B-P. Lange, 'The English Garden and the Patriotic Discourse,' *Englishness (Anglistik & Englischunterricht)*, Winter (1992), p.57.

choices in landscaping as an extension of personal interests and, as such, landscaping's role in creating a cultural identity must be considered.

The archives provide *prima facie* evidence for William's overall intentions: the contract with Bowen, dated 6 July 1713, provided that the gardener 'make a new garden 575 by 254 feet' for which Bowen's services were charged at 16 shillings, and his sub-contractors, 30 shillings.⁹⁸ A further £160 (plus board and lodging) was paid for the creation of a *parterre* and kitchen garden sometime between July and October 1713 (the account is undated but appears in the records within this time frame.) The *parterre*, although of fifteenth century origin, was employed in later garden design as a transition between the formality of the house and its immediate plot and the expansive, naturalistic gardens beyond, often elevated by a raised terrace to afford a better view. The kitchen garden was created in a space separate from the rest of the residential garden and plants were chosen as much for their function as for their colour and form; indeed, in larger estates, kitchen gardens could serve as a central feature of an ornamental, all-season landscape. Prideaux's sketch had detailed the walled (kitchen) garden and dovecote, along with a central tree-lined *allée* leading down to the river.

⁹⁸ CE/E/22/1 is a packet of agreements, bills, etc., for work on the house and in the garden, including ponds and wilderness areas. The bundle bears the dates 1713–1734 (William) and 1768 (Coventry's widow?) and contains 32 items.

In the year of Bowen's commission, Moyle was re-called to construct garden walls and to fire, on site, the 400,000 bricks needed.⁹⁹ Moyle's payment for the work included 14 shillings to 'make a burne' [kiln] with a further 22 shillings per rod for 'a good brick wall'. Receipts for 'garden potts' dated 27 November 1714 amount to £2.11s., while £125.09s. was paid to Bowen on 9 February 1719 in respect of a shipping bill for plants to the Cornish estate.¹⁰⁰ Plants and manure ['to sweeten the soil'] had arrived by the barge-load at Antony quay, evidenced perhaps by a memorandum of 'goods sent down by ship from London' dated 1714 although there are no details, the notation appears within bundles of manuscripts in regard to landscaping settled between 1713 and 1724.¹⁰¹ A letter from John Davis dated 30 June of the same year instructed William's steward, Richard Blighe, to 'be shore to mush the hounds' to meet a boat carrying goods inbound for Antony.¹⁰² If speed was of the essence, then whatever was inbound must have been time-sensitive, hence Davis' concern to have his cargoes off-loaded quickly, perhaps, before the plants withered.

Again, between July and December of 1713, disbursements of £118 ('for the garden') and £32 ('for a canal') are listed, although the accounts do not record the specifics of the work undertaken.¹⁰³ Water features – canals, ponds, and cascades – had been popularised in the previous century and provided

⁹⁹ CE/E/22/3 and 4 and CE/E/22/24 – £10.5s for bricks, 60,044 'kilned'.

¹⁰⁰ CE/E/22/9/1.

¹⁰¹ CE/E/31 p.37 – 'in all 34 parsls'.

¹⁰² CE/E/31.

¹⁰³ CE/E/22/ 4–10.

visible proof of discernment: possessing large acreages permitted any number of stylish flourishes. For instance, an entire chapter of Worlidge's *Systema Horticultrae* encouraged the insertion of ornamental features as cultural adjuncts: 'Plenty in Fountains always graceful shows / And greatest Beauty from abundance flows.'¹⁰⁴ Although water remained important as a decorative or even a structural element in the garden, a few decades later the aesthetic appreciation had changed. In his *Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening* (1755), William Shenstone commented that 'only the vulgar citizen [...] squirts up his rivulets in jettaux!'¹⁰⁵ There is no evidence for a fountain at Antony although the archives contain a bill for £89.02.01d for the construction of a pond which also details the number of days spent by labourers and the work done in constructing it. At a cost of nearly £90, it must have been a significant feature but we have no indication of what William or his guests thought of it and – in the final analysis – it might have been more practically appreciated by Reginald than William.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ John Worlidge, *Systema Horticultrae, or, the Art of Gardening* (Burrell, 1677).

¹⁰⁵ William Shenstone (1714–1763) was an English poet and one of the earliest practitioners of landscape gardening through the development of his estate, the Leasowes; Shenstone and Robert Dodsley, *The Works in Verse and Prose, of William Shenstone: With Decorations* (Printed for J. Dodsley, 1777), p.122.

¹⁰⁶ CE/E/23/3.



FIGURE 2.8: VIEW OF ANTONY FROM THE SOUTH, UNKNOWN ARTIST, C. 1730S, OIL ON CANVAS, 49 X 65 CM

Ideas about garden design circulated in bird's-eye-perspective illustrations showing a country house surrounded by gardens and indications of the larger immediate estate. The emphasis was on what the house looked like from a distance and on showing its relationship to its surroundings. Figures 2.3 and 2.8 are such views of Antony and while not technical drawings or plans, they provided not only an expectation but also an interface between the beholder and the builder. According to John Harris, the tradition of country house and garden view painting, or 'estate portraiture', began in the sixteenth century based upon Continental precedents.¹⁰⁷ As in the Limbourgs' views of the various chateaux

¹⁰⁷ He cites the illustrations by the Limbourg Brothers in *Les Tres Riches Heures du Duc du Berry* (c. 1416) as being a watershed in the production of commemorative views. The careers of Leonard Knyff, a draughtsman and fellow-Dutchman Jan Kip, his engraver, trace a specialty of engraved topographical views of English country houses informed by their Low Countries exactitude. Their

that dominate each scene in the Duc du Berry's exquisite calendar, or Knyff's aspirational landscapes so, too, Prideaux's composition for the view of Antony placed the built environment at the centre of an unfolding narrative. Here William's country house was the visual statement of his hegemony – the lands (and derived income) over which he held sway.¹⁰⁸

No matter the viewpoint, the conclusion that a portrait of the estate needed to be recorded because it was an image of the source of political power and social prestige is unassailable. The panoramic view in Figure 2.8, executed several years after Antony had been completed, invoked heritage and tradition by showing the house at the centre of its universe; an ordered plot carved from the countryside, indicative of the family's (continued) rural hegemony. Distant views towards Plymouth connected the owners to their customary civic roles and responsibilities while also acknowledging crucial connections to the maritime industries plying the Hamoaze and Lynher Rivers. In the foreground, a tenant farmer herds cattle from the woodland (a source of revenue) as the clouds part to illuminate Antony as God's chosen ground.

major work was *Britannia Illustrata: Or Views of Several of the Queens Palaces, as Also of the Principal seats of the Nobility and Gentry of Great Britain, Curiously Engraven on 80 Copper Plates*, 1707, London (published in the winter of 1708–09).

¹⁰⁸ Of the thirty-three country houses drawn by him, at least twenty were so-called Prideaux houses, or houses connected in some way with the family through ties of marriage. Edmund travelled to visit his family and to make a record of each house and in doing so he is the earliest amateur artist to prepare a consistent record of country houses. On 20 September 1727 he was in Cornwall passing through Launceston; on 2 October he was at Prideaux Place – a house to come into his possession the following year – and then he set off south to Roche on 7 October and to Trewarthenick on the 9th. Still eastwards, he is found at Glynn, Antony, and probably at Ince between the 14th and 15th, and on the 20th he is at Plymouth and perhaps at Mount Edgcombe.

The synopsis of the country house in Figure 2.8 exemplified the kind of estate portraits that often appeared on many walls or as frontispieces in printed visitor guide books.¹⁰⁹ Richard Wilson, a Welsh artist, built his entire practice around such views, painting qualities the landowner admired (and the tourist expected). Wilson's images of the estate as a power base and idyllic retreat from metropolitan corruption likened it to the untainted rural bliss of antiquity. He attained, in the process, a satisfactory combination of the contrasting ideologies of French absolutism and Roman philosophy underpinned by the vocabulary of Humanism and British democracy.¹¹⁰ Order, not drama, was the dominant motif in early eighteenth century landscape works, as we see in both contemporary views of the Cornish house and grounds. Although Wilson is not (currently) represented at Antony, he painted at least three views (now in Manchester City Galleries) of the Carew ancestral home, Pembroke Castle, and a view of Croome Court painted for the eighth Earl of Coventry for which he received the sum of 50 guineas.¹¹¹ The portrait of William's heir, Coventry, (Figure 3.6) could be

¹⁰⁹ Christie, *The British Country House*, p. 201; see also Chapter 4 in this thesis for a discussion of country-house visiting and the rise of tourism.

¹¹⁰ David Solkin, 'The Battle of the Ciceros: Richard Wilson and the Politics of Landscape in the Age of John Wilkes' *Art History*, 6 December(1983), pp. 406–22.

¹¹¹ The 6th Earl of Coventry, after his marriage to Maria Gunning, commissioned Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716–1783), for his first independent project. Brown succeeded in transforming the setting from a marshy piece of land into a spacious lawn, bordered by a gentle stream. The house itself, the church, the wooden bridge and the ice-house in the park were also built to his designs but the interior was decorated by Robert Adam. The church was not finished until 1763, and was not included in Wilson's preparatory drawing, however, Wilson probably added it to the painting at the request of Lord Coventry. The house is seen from the south, with the morning sun's rays streaming down from the East at the top right of the picture and casting strong diagonal shadows across its facade. The house and setting are integrated by these shadows and by the white smoke rising lazily from the roof-line. At the far left are glimpses of the agricultural

considered as a variant estate portrait as the young man is shown commanding the fields and woodlands that lead down to the river, with Antony highlighted on the hill to his right. However, this painting was celebrating landownership as an asset that would fund and secure a dynasty rather than a typical estate portrait.

2.4 REGINALD AND REPTON

On his return from the Grand Tour in the early 1780s, Reginald set about repairing and refurbishing Antony House, adding a porch to the main entrance on the north and extending the façade (the Queen Anne-style red brick wing edifice to the right of the main house as seen in Figure 2.9.¹¹² His descendant Lt Gen Sir Reginald Pole-Carew, (1849–1924), was apparently so horrified with the ruined symmetry that he dismantled it. Quite how Reginald was reconciled to it remains unknown). Archived bills and receipts indicate that, despite ongoing

foundations of the estate, with two sheep and a shepherd or shepherdess looking in the direction of distant cornfields.

¹¹² This image appears in an article by Tom Bowden dated April 2011 online [<http://www.cornwall24.net/2011/04/the-carews-of-antony-house/>]



FIGURE 2.9 : POSTCARD OF ANTONY HOUSE C. 1908 SHOWING THE RED BRICK EXTENSION

schedules of repairs, parts of the house were in a poor state; new slates for the leaking office roof cost £93.12.10½d, with appreciable sums invested in new guttering throughout.¹¹³

Once he had dealt with the immediate repairs and external modifications to his satisfaction, Reginald tackled the gardens and, in 1792, commissioned Repton to produce a *Red Book* for the estate.¹¹⁴ Although championed by the Duke of Portland (who paid him a retainer of 100 guineas a year for advice), Repton's principal patron was the Duke of Bedford whose influence garnered commissions from among conservative Whig MPs throughout the south of

¹¹³ CE/E/65.

¹¹⁴ CE/E/66 contains correspondence between Reginald and Repton.

England. In fact, it was due to Francis Russell, the fifth duke, that Repton gained access to William Pitt and the patronage of his Cornish supporters: Reginald, Francis Glanville of Catchfrench,¹¹⁵ Francis Gregor of Trewarthenick¹¹⁶, and John Eliot, the St German's heir, who controlled six Cornish seats.¹¹⁷ Reginald, then MP for Lostwithiel, took charge of Repton, recommending him to his friends and giving him information about upcoming marriages, impending deaths, and changes of fortune which could make the gardener's overtures acceptable and desirable.¹¹⁸ It becomes an interesting dimension in Reginald's self-fashioning that his patronage of the landscapist was also responsible for the latter's commissions in the south west including Mount Edgcumbe and Port Eliot.¹¹⁹

Bound in red morocco leather and made specifically for each client, Repton's *Red Books* provided visual demonstrations of his ideas by means of

¹¹⁵ Like his childhood friends the Eliot brothers, Glanville went to Pembroke College, Cambridge. There, according to his daughter, he became 'one of a circle of young men who were attracted round their fellow collegian William Pitt by admiration of his early talents'. Said to have been 'present at the taking of the Bastille', he 'rejoiced at what he considered the downfall of despotism', but quickly repented his error. In 1790, he married an heiress who brought £62,000 and whose sister was the wife of his closest friend Francis Gregor, the new Member for Cornwall. R. G. Thorne, ed. *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1790–1820* (Martlesham, Suffolk and Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 1986).

¹¹⁶ Boswell described him during his Cornish jaunt in 1792 as 'a civil, sensible young man'; Gregor's niece recalled him, with 'his plain features marked with smallpox, and his tall awkward figure', as a military enthusiast who had given up the army for the law to please his jaundiced father, and as a man of integrity capable of conciliating, by his public conduct, the established county families who had been suspicious of him at his first election as a *parvenu* allied to a wealthy heiress, herself a stranger. *History of Parliament*, *ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Eliot, described by Lord Minto in 1805 as 'a fattish, fairish, silent gentleman', had married Caroline Yorke, Reginald's niece (her father was Jemima's uncle), and secondly (at age 58) Harriet Pole-Carew, Reginald's eldest daughter. *History of Parliament*, *ibid.*

¹¹⁸ For an account of Repton's relationship with Pole-Carew see Edward Malins, *The Red Books of Humphry Repton*, (London: The Baselisk Press, 1976), introduction.

¹¹⁹ Stephen Daniels, *Humphry Repton: Landscape Gardening and the Geography of Georgian England*, Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999).

sliding tabs or partial overlays. The books were an effective sales enhancer and in time, like the finished schemes, became part of the owner's material culture and as much vaunted as the delivered product.¹²⁰ A secure attribution to the most famous name in later eighteenth-century garden design elevates Reginald's gardening plans into the realms of the fashionable, although the caution here is that Repton's proposals were only partly implemented: Reginald continued to develop the estate according to his own ideas – disregarding Repton's carefully constructed (and illustrated) schemes.

Repton's improvements for the lands immediately surrounding the house included removing the walled gardens to the north, creating a new kitchen garden to the west, effectively reordering the external appearance of the house and gardens to the benefit of both in terms of visual qualities. Prideaux's sketch of the northern aspect reinforced the traditional paternalistic authority view that William had inherited from the seventeenth century. The stiff formality of Bowen's planting with its *patte d'oie* intersections of pathways and regimented trees found corollaries in paintings and Court-lead rules of social performance and interaction (as seen in a seventeenth-century portrait of the patriarch, Sir John Carew, bristling with courtly symbolism). In the 1720s William Kent had pioneered the classical Arcadian style with informal layouts and, influenced by

¹²⁰ In addition, Repton's prolific writing on garden design promoted his celebrity: from *Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening* (1795) to *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1803) and *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1816): his books ensured that his ideas were always kept before the public eye.

¹²⁰ Daniels, *Humphry Repton*, p.317.

experiences on the Grand Tour, pavilions or statuary to stimulate the intellect as well as the senses (underlining, as Pope called it 'the genius of the place').¹²¹ In the 1740s Repton's immediate predecessor 'Capability' Brown transformed Kent's Arcadian greenswards into Elysian fields, recalling the mythological paradise and resting place for the souls of the virtuous. The idealised Classical landscape created at Stowe was unified by sweeping, undulating lines, serpentine lakes and walks, and the articulation of light and shade by rearranging hills and wooded areas. Repton's modern and 'more sociable-looking landscape' schemes reintroduced people to the landscape so that patron and landownership were seen syncretically.¹²² Where feasible, he made use of distant features such as church spires or rivers to enhance and embellish the landscape; although, at Antony, Reginald was particularly anxious to see the estate's scenery improved as a whole and urged Repton to bring together old and new plantations and coppiced woods.¹²³ The landscapist was at pains to provide a balance between his client's desire, the art of the gardener, and the limitations and advantages of the landscape itself. His designs for this period show an increasing emphasis on gardens and pleasure grounds; placing these once more in prominent positions relative to the country house while, at the same

¹²¹ Pope, 'Epistle to Several Persons', *Epistle IV* in Faulkner, Berry, and Gregory, *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England* (Boydell, 2010).

¹²² Humphry Bowen's accounts for the construction of William's formal gardens in the early eighteenth century refer to tree planting in the 'Warren' and 'Horse Park' which may indicate the existence of a seventeenth century (or earlier) park at Antony.

¹²³ Cornwall Gardens Trust: *Landscaping of the Tamar Valley* by Mavis Batey, Vice-President of the Garden History Society. The current President of the Society is Richard Carew Pole, the 13th Bt of Antony.

time, consciously manipulating the landscape in order to emphasise the extent of ownership.



FIGURE 2:10: REPTON 'RED BOOK' FOR ANTONY (BEFORE VIEW)

Figure 2.10 shows the beginnings of the transformation of Antony's setting, with labourers breaking up the ground for a new layout. Repton had recommended that the southern approach be rearranged to create a grander entrance along a winding, tree-lined route to create anticipatory drama. The house remained hidden from view until one's carriage broke from the foliage: Repton termed these visual dynamics as the 'peep' and the 'burst' interspersed with more protracted ' "vista thro" the wood towards the river' to engage the visitor.

The topic of carriage-drives plied the conversations of romantics, thrill-seekers and, somewhat incompatibly, the less mobile who, nonetheless, were engaged in discourses on the merits of an experience that could accommodate

individual needs. Women, in particular, were encouraged into horse-drawn conveyances to prevent them from over-extending themselves on country house visits, and to allow them to see more of the landscape than they could on foot. Repton's carriage-drives were dictated by his desire to control the movements of visitors and satisfy their inevitably transient demand for variety and choice: the casual visitor's experience would never be jaded by repeated journeys around the same landscape but delighted by the ever-changing scenery.¹²⁴ As a form of passive exercise, the carriage drive was prescribed by Dr James Adair as being 'best adapted to the [...] delicate invalid, and those who labour under slow diseases,'¹²⁵ although both the female population and the infirm risked being mown down by the eighteenth-century equivalent of 'boy-racers' (George, Prince of Wales, took to driving phaetons such as 'The Suicide' that were renowned for their instability because of recklessly high driving positions). Ownership of a carriage was not only a sign of wealth, it also contributed to status: the '*pars pro toto* of an élite lifestyle', merging old repertoires of status consumption with newer concerns for fashionability.¹²⁶ We are reminded that the social standing of Lord Orville in Burney's *Evelina* (1778) was enhanced by possession and knowledge of multiple and differing types of vehicles; and so when Coventry Carew's 1747

¹²⁴ Jane Bradney, 'The Carriage-Drive in Humphry Repton's Landscapes,' *Garden History* 33, no. 1 (2005), online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/25434155>], pp. 35–36. Bradney's paper argues that Repton designed parkland with the needs of the country house visitor to the fore. His carriage-drives were pivotal in controlling the way these strangers viewed and used his landscapes. By understanding the design principles that underpinned his drives, and by conserving and reinstating them, the experience of Repton's parks can be fully appreciated and experienced today.

¹²⁵ James Adair, *Medical Cautions Chiefly for the Consideration of Invalids* (Bath, 1787), p. 403.

¹²⁶ Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the Country House*, p.40.

Will specifically bequeathed his 'Coach Chariot and Chaise' to his wife, we can read into the gift more than mere practicality.¹²⁷ Although Vickery wrote about coaches and allied tackle as occupying the 'utterly masculine dark brown territory of goods', coach ownership reinforced the widowed Lady Carew's identity.¹²⁸ To amplify the value of possession: a coach chariot required four horses to pull it while the sportier chaise could be harnessed to a pair. Mary Carew had both. Add the ongoing equine costs to stabling, food, grooms, footmen and maintenance, and the gift becomes significant to his widow as an owner who had transportation options and the wealth to sustain them. A coach and horses became emblematic of the landed ranks and, in this instance, raised Mary's profile to that of a woman of good fortune to any man in want of a wife (to appropriate Austen), although, in the gift, it is Coventry's cultural identity that is emphasised.

¹²⁷ The Will of Coventry Carew, Source: National Archive Ref. PROB 11/765/5.

¹²⁸ Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, p.122.



FIGURE 2.11: REPTON 'RED BOOK' FOR ANTONY (AFTER VIEW)

Repton's transition from a terraced garden to the parkland and the woodland garden (Figure 2.11) proposed a gentle route via a colonnade spanning the width of the house to create an exterior social space, a device championed by his opponents Knight and Price and seen as 'a foreground, or frame, to a pleasing picture.'¹²⁹ This, however, would have required structural alterations to create the bay to anchor the colonnade and Reginald must have abandoned this idea. Instead he widened the terrace, inserting a double staircase (Figure 2.1). As with the correlation of Bowen's plantings to portraiture, Repton's modern garden design also referenced contemporaneous paintings (see Romney's portrait of Jemima Yorke, Figure 3.9). The relaxation of pose,

¹²⁹ John C. Loudon, *The Landscape Gardening and Landscape Architecture of the Late Humphry Repton Esq.* 1840 (Mill Press, 2010), p.235.

paint handling and composition was a reflection of correspondingly informal societal expectations: in the companionate marriage for example, or the freedoms enjoyed by the satirical press; in public behaviours (at the theatre, in particular) which, in earlier times, might have been considered seditious; and in less geometric landscaping.¹³⁰ Since Antony is sited on a peninsula, the terraced staircase offered guests panoramic views of the estuary, with glimpses of Plymouth beyond the Hamoaze, and invited further exploration – to the woods dotted with statuary and the all-important bath-house, nestled just above a tributary of the Lynher River in an area known as Lower Westdown Wood. Repton had inserted such a scheme at the Duke of Bedford's Endsleigh which shared an estuarine view; although Edgcumbe's prospect was less picturesque – laden with barges and warships – requiring a different approach to landscaping. Created by Richard, the first Earl of Mount Edgcumbe in 1789, it featured seashore summer houses and swirling formal planting, which continued to be added to as the century progressed with a Gothic ruin, Milton's Temple, the Great Orangery, and the intricate paths on a dramatic cliff known as the Zig-Zags, famously described in the eighteenth century as 'the Horrors'.

Part of the leisure-experience of a country house garden was outdoor bathing and Cornwall's climate is especially suited to the practice. Within the

¹³⁰ In 'Crowds Publics and Consumers: Representing English Theatre Audiences from the Globe to the Op Riots,' *Participations: the Journal of Audience & Reception Studies* 7, no. 1 (2010), Richard Butsch considers politicised social disorder within the realms of theatrical performance. Online [https://www.academia.edu/8157158/English_Theater_Audiences_Crowds_and_Publics_17th_and_18th_centuries_in_Participations_v_7_n_1].

formal gardens at Mount Edgumbe a single-storey, stuccoed, neo-Classical structure contained a marble-lined plunge bath. A drawing by the early-century topographer Thomas Badeslade indicated that the central section of this building had existed since 1735 in what was then a 'wilderness'.¹³¹ Bath houses represented a fashionable addition to country estates whose owners responded to medical books which often described modes of healthy living that, the authors claimed, would extend life expectancy, even though full immersion was thought to allow diseases into the body. London's high-end bath houses ('bagnios') were centred on Covent Garden and offered hot and cold baths although their reality was as expensive places of pleasure and assignation: prostitutes would be fetched in a chair if a client required their services. Hogarth's *bagnio* scenes (plates 3 and 4 in the *Marriage a la Mode* series) drew on this practice although its perceived dangers were rather more extreme. The earl's dalliances in the Turkish bath lead to his death – stabbed by his wife's suitor, Silvertongue – and although the protagonist's morals were questionable, the depiction of the earl's despatch linked bath houses to corruption, criminality, or worse. Dr Johnson told the chillingly 'irresistable' tale of his near-relative, Parson Ford, who was reputed to have died at the *hummums* (as the *hammam* was called) – his ghost appearing twice to a waiter.¹³²

¹³¹ Mark Laird, *The Flowering of the Landscape Garden: English Pleasure Grounds, 1720–1800* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, 1999), p.36.

¹³² Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (Everyman's Library, 1820), p.143.

Despite cultural resistance to the incipient risks in bathing, the medical profession saw no contradiction in condemning baths for health reasons while prescribing them as cures. In the perversities that often delineated social boundaries, the landed élites (except for fictional examples) were exempt from the dangers that accompanied bathing among lesser mortals and built bath houses in their grounds as the height of fashionability. Moving bathing outdoors claimed the benefits of exposure to the elements and cold water was never viewed as being as hazardous as warmer conditions. One of the great advocates of such regimes was the philosopher John Locke who, in the 1703 edition of his tract, *Some Thoughts on Education*, argued that:

Every one is now full of the miracles done by cold baths on decay'd and weak constitutions, for the recovery of health and strength; and therefore they cannot be impracticable or intolerable for the improving and hardening the bodies of those who are in better circumstances.¹³³

¹³³ Virginia Smith, *Clean: A History of Personal Hygiene and Purity* (OUP Oxford, 2008).



FIGURE 2.12: THE BATH HOUSE (NT)

Antony's bath house (Figure 2.12) was built to the designs of the Devonport architect Thomas Parlby around 1788 or 1790 and appeared, with its associated pond, on Repton's plan of 1792.¹³⁴ The pond may have been that constructed in the early eighteenth century (William's £90 pond?) although there is earlier evidence of a 'fishful pond' in the records of Richard Carew who derived great pleasure from daily visits to his contemplative spot:

¹³⁴ Parlby's timber bill for £28.3.10d (CE/E/65) relates to the bath house, and the amount for the raw materials is equivalent to approximately £2000 today. Parlby was the architect of New Shute House for the Pole family but was also uncle to John Pole's wife, Anne Templer, and thus related to both William and Reginald. The amount of £28.3s.10d for the raw materials is equivalent to approximately £2000 today.

where a little creek of ooze lieth between two hills, which delivering a little fresh rillet into the sea, receiveth for recompense a large overflowing of the salt tides.¹³⁵

Whether of sixteenth- or eighteenth-century origin, the pond fed the bath which was open to the sky and situated in a low wing to the west of the main single-storey structure (blind arcaded on the exterior) containing changing rooms. A similar structure was built for Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn who combined sea-bathing with frequent trips to his very own cold bath. Sited in the grounds of his Welsh estate it represented both the desire to include a classical garden structure within his landscaped park, and the desperate search for a cure for the disfiguring and painful skin condition from which he suffered all his life.

The one-third of a mile walk from Antony House down the sloping lawns and through the natural woodland to the bath house would easily have provided the psychological benefits advocated by Burton, whose influential *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1626) suggested:

the most pleasant of all outward pastimes is [...] to make a petty progress, a merry journey now and then with some good companions, [...] to walk amongst orchards, gardens, bowers, mounts, and arbours, artificiall wildernesses, green thickets, arches, groves, lawns, rivulets, fountains and such like pleasant places, [...] brooks, pooles, fishponds, betwixt wood and water, in a fair meadow, by a river side.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Carew, *Survey*, p.22; and Girouard, *A Country House Companion*, p.154.

¹³⁶ Mark Jenner, 'Bathing and Baptism: John Floyer and the Politics of Cold Bathing' in Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker, (eds), *Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

The routine of walking around the landscape in order to reach the bath could be viewed as elemental to the regimen. As late as 1839, James Tunstall's *Popular Observations on Sea-Bathing, and the General Use of the Cold Bath* advised individuals to walk leisurely to the bathing place and, on coming out of the water, to take moderate exercise – half an hour's walk, or an hour's ride on horseback – which he considered would add much to the benefit experienced.¹³⁷ For Reginald, however, his expenditure on a bath house might have been more of a vanity project than a well-considered sanatorium. Archived bundles reveal that Reginald was something of a hypochondriac, suffering from recurring stomach and bowel complaints for which his forbearing (but doubtless well-paid) physicians prescribed numerous 'decoctions' and bathing cures.¹³⁸ A letter from Dr Addington¹³⁹ dated 19 June 1754 referred to a new 'prescription' for a bathing cure to be 'taken for 6 weeks'. Another letter, nearly 30 years later (14 August 1783), urged Reginald not to give up on the bathing cure 'before the middle', which suggests that the patient was as reluctant to follow the advice of his physician as he was that of his landscaper.

Before judging Reginald too harshly, it should be noted that contemporary medical discourse associated rank with 'hereditary' diseases such as gout,

¹³⁷ William Buchan, *Buchan's Domestic Medicine Modernised ... Containing ... An Essay ... Enabling Ruptured Persons to Manage Themselves, with Engravings of Bandages ... A Family Herbal, Etc* (London: Knight and Compton, 1807).

¹³⁸ CE/E/32.

¹³⁹ Dr Addington, who lived in Devon, was one of the physicians called in to attend to George III, a confidential adviser to Lord Chatham, and father of Reginald's friend, Henry Addington, Prime Minister between 1801 and 1804.

ostensibly indicating a certain family distinction.¹⁴⁰ So-called nervous disorders, as described in George Cheyne's immensely popular medical treatise *The English Malady*, could instantly associate the sufferer with high society.¹⁴¹ Weak nerve fibres, wrote Cheyne, were a hallmark of fair, intelligent and emotionally profound individuals – as well as of the upper orders, who apparently encouraged the condition with fine food, comfortable furnishings, and too many parliamentary responsibilities.¹⁴² While the patient was troubled with 'vapours and lowness of spirits', this also indicated 'a greater degree of sensibility; [sufferers, wrote Cheyne] 'are quick thinkers, feel pleasure and pain the most readily, and are of most lively imagination'.¹⁴³ At the other end of the spectrum, 'fools, weak or stupid persons' rarely suffered from the condition at all.¹⁴⁴ His 'discoveries' introduced to contemporary medicine the idea that there might exist a physical attribute which identified the physiology of upper orders ranks as somehow 'different'. Cheyne's well-chosen test cases were unambiguously drawn from the upper ranks, including a lady of 'honourable and opulent family' who inherited paroxysms from her parents; 'a gentleman of fortune' whose colic ran in his family; 'a knight baronet of an antient family' who battled flatulence on account of 'keeping bad hours in attending on the business of parliament'; the last easily

¹⁴⁰ Roy Porter, (ed.), *George Cheyne: The English Malady* (London: Tavistock, 1991).

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.60.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p.2, 100–01, 268, 277.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.105.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.52.

descriptive of Reginald's complaints about his time in Westminster.¹⁴⁵

Unsurprisingly, any new ailment guaranteed Cheyne a steady stream of well-to-do patients who were eager to publicise the physical taxation of belonging to the social élite. Reginald's hypochondria – in this context – becomes another strategic element of his self-fashioning.

Despite illustrious benefactors and wealthy clients, Repton's schemes were savagely attacked by the century's aesthetic theorists, along with amateur gardeners Price and Knight, both of whom published on the subject of the picturesque, and who accused the younger designer of insipid reproductions of 'Capability' Brown's landscapes. Their criticism of what they termed his 'meagre genius' may not have been entirely inaccurate: Repton's commissions for Portland and Bedford (and owners of other large estates) directed him to fine-tune the work of Brown and, as a result, he was unable to shrug off the accusation of being merely a follower of Brown.¹⁴⁶ The ensuing lengthy controversy split Price, Knight and Repton on the question of the affinity of landscape gardening and painting. Knight's estate at Downton exhibited a rugged untamed wildness, with remarkable similarities to the contrived landscapes in a Salvatore Rosa painting; Price's grounds at Foxley appear to have been devised in a more disciplined (Claudean) painterly scheme; but

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p.268, 277, 287, 290; also CE/E/32, Dr Watson's case notes, dated June 1795, for Reginald's painful stomach and bowel complaints, 'occasioned by an incautious life'.

¹⁴⁶ Quoted from Knight's poem 'The Landscape, a Didactic Poem ... Addressed to Uvedale Price, Esq'. (1794) in Tobias G. Smollett, *The Critical Review, or Annals of Literature* (London: W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, 1795), p.315.

Repton refused to treat the garden as a blank canvas and made allowances for each commission having different natural geographies.

The foundations for appreciation of the eighteenth-century garden were found in the literature of poets and theorists, (pointedly, Price's *Essay on the Picturesque* and Knight's *The Landscape*); and in Claude's or Rosa's paintings. Knight's didactic poem was meant to be a work of art in itself and was surely enjoyed as such. His somewhat exaggerated portrayal of the tragedy of Brown's improvements entertained the reader much more than a simple clarification of ideas. Knight cast Repton in the role of an oppressor, imposing order on nature. Repton countered:

Sham churches, sham ruins, sham bridges, and every
thing which appears what it is not, disgusts when the trick
is discovered.¹⁴⁷

Price accused Repton of being interested only in that area which immediately surrounded the house. Repton's retort dismissed the picturesque as only preferred in landscape-gardening by those who failed to distinguish between landscape-painter and landscape-gardener. Whereas the painter considered foreground, middle-ground and background, the landscape-gardener could only consider the first, since the second was often under the control of others, and the third was dependent on powers upon which neither the landscape-gardener, nor

¹⁴⁷ Repton, *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening: Including Some Remarks on Grecian and Gothic Architecture, Collected from Various Manuscripts, in the Possession of the Different Noblemen and Gentlemen, for Whose Use They Were Originally Written: The Whole Tending to Establish Fixed Principles in the Respective Arts*, (London, T. Bensley 1805), p.18.

anyone else, could improve. Repton also maintained that the point of view, the field of vision and the quality of light, differed in such quantity from landscape-painting to landscape gardening that the latter art form could in no way be seen as dependent on the former. Modern scholars feel that the differences between Knight, Price and Repton were minor – even the protagonists were unclear as to what their differences were, especially in comparison with the range of important matters on which they were in complete agreement.¹⁴⁸ In the event, Repton's vision achieved for Antony a modern authority: the house retained its dominance as the signifier of social order while the landscaping provided its visual theatre.¹⁴⁹ Reginald's cultural identity was read in a scheme that unified his predecessor's Palladian with contemporary gardening ideas. It was not unique, but a compelling catalogue of aesthetics, sociability and conspicuous consumption that accumulated to Reginald's credit.

2.5 A PLEASURE NOT TO BE ENVIED¹⁵⁰

Besides its obvious contribution to a cultural identity, the principal purpose of a country house was to provide a home from which generous hospitality could be dispensed to extended families, to tenants and employees, and to the wider county community. Its building was one of the most demanding and expensive tasks that a landowner undertook, although the majority of gentlemen (unlike

¹⁴⁸ David Watkin, *The English Vision: The Picturesque in Architecture, Landscape, and Garden Design* (Harper & Row, 1982), p.80.

¹⁴⁹ Arnold, *The Georgian Country House*, p.22.

¹⁵⁰ The title of Chapter 5 in Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*.

William) were less confident of their ability to manage a building project. They might have enjoyed a Grand Tour education, looked at a whole range of country houses when travelling, studied architectural tomes by Italian masters and their English disciples (published in ever increasing numbers after the 1730s), discussed plans, consulted architects and engaged craftsmen, but they were still dependent upon complex *ad hoc* arrangements for the realisation of their dreams. The final bill they would face was uncertain (and it increased with every change of mind); completion dates were elastic. The likelihood was that the gentleman-builder would expend several years' income from his estate upon the venture. In a period of imprecise costing and accounting practices, of menacing demographic uncertainty, the large-scale enterprise of building a grand new house was a nerve-racking experience. 'I have bricklayers, joiners, carpenters, glaziers, upholsterers, smiths at work, from all of which the Lord soon deliver me', wrote Stephen Thompson during the building of Kirby Hall (Kirby Ouseburn) in Yorkshire in the late 1740s.¹⁵¹

William built Antony as an expression of his projected cultural identity. Since the extent to which politics or fashion informed his decision is unrecoverable from archival evidence, we can suggest his motivations. That he chose not to refurbish his childhood home and built anew indicated he was keen to assert his authority on the land and on the community within his patronage as a conscious strategy that would project his cultural identity, (assuming his

¹⁵¹ Wilson and Mackley, *ibid.*, p. 160.

ancestors' manor would not have allowed him to express himself as dynamically.) Prior to 1714 most country-house builders were hereditary landowners, educated in the Classics and who, where funds and time allowed, participated in the Grand Tour. Scholars have challenged the assumption that gazing upon Palladio's Villa Almerico Capra provided sufficient inspiration for a revival of its stylistic elements, citing instead its use by the Hanoverian Court at least a decade before Burlington (via Campbell) began promoting it.¹⁵² Legions of British noblemen, seeking to gain influence with George I, flowed into Hanover and transmitted the Palladian style to Britain on their return from diplomatic missions. For William, we assert that his choice was not primarily driven by political persuasion but by an appreciation of the aesthetics of British-Palladianism, which also communicated the enlightened, virtuous and learned characteristics his social peers were keen to project.

Antony's grounds fulfilled Repton's desires for harmonious interchanges between client, gardener and the landscape itself: a relationship which could not simply be codified pictorially. In his *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1803) Repton espoused the view that the country gentleman's property should be seen as a field in which traditional paternal authority should be made visible. Lacking the hegemony of the traditional landed interest, Reginald's next best (and more permanent) effort at creating a cultural

¹⁵² Barbara Arciszewska, *The Hanoverian Court and the Triumph of Palladio: the Role of Palladian Architecture in the Political Ascendancy of the House of Brunswick-Luneburg in Germany and England, c.1700* (University of Toronto, 1994).

identity that claimed paternalism was through Repton. The transformation of Richard Carew's 'fishful' pond into Reginald's bath house incorporated contemporary society's attitudes to cold bathing while pandering to the patron's chronic anxieties about his health. Repton's name, his *Red Books*, and the association with Antony and Reginald also added social *cachet*, independent of the quality of the design.

2.6 CONCLUSION

The social history of Britain's upper ranks is often inextricably entwined with that of country houses and estates, especially when property represents an invested lineage. The local understanding of a house and landscape rested within the wider picture of participation in the political, economic, cultural and social affairs of the nation, and in the practice of using one's rank as a surname (thus 'Antony' rather than 'Carew'). To create the physical environment, William and Reginald were, each, able to call upon informed craftsmen and tradesmen who could demonstrate not only an understanding of style but also an appreciation of the sentiments of aristocratic discernment, thereby contributing to the success of their patron's cultural identity. Demonstrable taste, as here interpreted in a modern, well-furnished house interwoven with contemporary landscaping, was vital to establish and sustain individual agency and rank. Evelyn Waugh referred to the English country house as 'our chief national artistic

achievement¹⁵³ and, similarly, the architectural historian Christopher Hussey argued that the country house was England's most characteristic visible contribution to the richness of European civilisation.¹⁵⁴ For William and Reginald, however, the house and garden represented the realisation of a complex set of characteristics that amounted to a cultural identity.

¹⁵³ Cited in the preface to a reprinted edition of Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited: The Sacred and Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder* (Penguin, 2008).

¹⁵⁴ Hussey is chiefly remembered for the long series of articles he wrote from the 1920s onwards for *Country Life* (where he became architectural editor), in which he continued the work of his mentor, Tipping, in setting architectural history in its social history.

CHAPTER 3: Commissioning and Curating Paintings

No nation in the world delights so much in having their own, or friends', or relations' pictures; [...] and not being encouraged in that great article of religious pictures, [...] accordingly, in fact, face-painting is no where so well performed as in England.¹



FIGURE 3.1: ANTONY'S MAIN STAIRCASE (NT)

The primary source for this chapter is an inventory created almost thirty years after William's death as the house and contents passed to his thrice-removed cousin, Reginald. When commingled with those of his own family – the Poles – the collection expanded to add new interest to the identity and social prominence of Antony's principals. This chapter takes a selection of those portraits to explore methodologies of crafting and communicating identity, with links to display and broader cultural spheres. Documents include the paintings, archived accounts and correspondence, augmented by contemporary literature and a review of the status of artists commissioned to create the images that, collectively, contributed to the cultural identities of the Carews.

¹ Jean André Rouquet, *The Present State of the Arts in England* (London: 1755). See also: Angus Ross (ed.), *Addison and Steele: Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator* (Penguin, 1988), p.496.

On 5 January, 1713 William married Anne, the seventeen-year-old heiress of Gilbert, the fourth Earl of Coventry of Croome Court, Worcestershire. A relationship between bride and groom had already been established: among Anne's paternal relatives was Richard, Baron Edgcumbe who became a co-trustee of the Antony estates and financial guardian of the groom during his minority under the terms of Sir John Carew's 1691 Will.² To commemorate an event which, in effect, fused three important south-western families, the court artist Michael Dahl was commissioned to create two large portraits of the newly-weds. They became not only the site-specific fulcrum to the visual culture of their marital home, Antony House, but also in the declaration of their cultural identities. To decode these and other portraits we need, as Pointon argued, to approach them from the wider social contexts of the encounter, and it is on this premise that the selection of portraits in this chapter will be considered.³

William and Anne's images exhibit what we believe to be a passing likeness of each individual, borne out by other portraits of them in the collection, and present the young couple in a conventional manner for the time. The so-called aristocratic portrait, derived from a portrait-type introduced into England by Antony van Dyke in the early part of the seventeenth century, had been invented

² Edgcumbe was MP for Cornwall from 1701; Lord of the Treasury from 1716–1717; Lord-Lieutenant of the county between 1742 and 1758 and held the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster between 1743 and 1758. Walpole described him as 'a man of fine parts, great knowledge and original wit [...] who was calculated by nature to serve the public and to charm society.' He was also, however, what Walpole termed 'a man of pleasure,' an incurable gambler who squandered his money. Quoted in Westley, M., *myCornwall* magazine, Vol 2 Issue 9, 2011/12.

³ See Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, p.9.

to describe an ideal of consummate ease and self-command – essential for the self-fashioning of gentlemen of property.⁴ In the public sphere, aristocratic portraiture followed Richardson's comment (*Essay on the Theory of Painting*, 1715) that the painted image functioned as a first impression in permanent form and, as such, had to incorporate a set of criteria that conformed to audience expectation. For the owner who hung them, they were:

at one and the same time, a material acquisition, a symbol of wealth and position and (sometimes) a source of aesthetic pleasure, for the artists who produced them portraits were [...] a commodity, but one that implicated the artist as producer in a dense web of commerce and ideology.⁵

Our twenty-first century experience of these paintings is often judged superficially, as a singular artefact bereft of the historical insights portraiture can provide to the personality of the sitter (which Pointon called an 'intractable problem').⁶ Modern art historians could highlight the contrast between William and Anne's images and those of Reginald and his wife, Jemima, which book-end this chapter in terms of stylistic, compositional and narrative transitions.⁷ The progression from stiff, doll-like figures to more dynamic, less remote characterisations traced modifications in deportment and intended dialogues with

⁴ Solkin, *Painting for Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth Century England* (New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press, 1993), p.32.

⁵ Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, p.14.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.81–82.

⁷ William's portrait was created around 1710, when he inherited Antony and its estates, and Anne's in the year of their marriage; Reginald's portrait by Wyrch is dated 1773, shortly after he acceded to Antony, and Romney's portrait of Jemima is dated c. 1784.

audiences tied to social change.⁸ In the earlier portraits William and Anne enacted tightly scripted, relatively inexpressive roles – a staged presentation which took place behind the picture plane, whereas Reginald's and Jemima's images suggested a narrative beyond the confines of a frame and invited more imaginative, perhaps even empathetic, responses. These are relatively one-dimensional readings, however, and in order to understand the principals' portraits as active products of self-fashioning, we need to consider their roles in the Carews' selfhood strategies.

Undoubtedly, the principal purpose of William and Anne's portraits was to consolidate family history and proclaim their social rank as the first steps in the creation of a cultural identity. Old Master paintings may have been displayed in celebration of conspicuous consumption and connoisseurship but family portraits were always in the country house because that location lay at the heart of an élite family's identity, linking lineage to land and wealth.⁹ Furthermore, as a strategy of distinction, displaying portraits in an imposing architectural context authenticated and highlighted the family's interconnectedness.¹⁰ As Horace Walpole noted on visiting Stourhead, 'family portraits [are] a very appropriate decoration for the first entrance into a house'¹¹ for, in the performative spaces of

⁸ Retford's *The Art of Domestic Life* is particularly erudite on the stylistic changes in élite family portraiture throughout the century as the genre responded to the lived experience of the sitters, and the social and cultural continuities that their portraits portray or mask.

⁹ Lyons, et. al., *Placing Faces*, p.3

¹⁰ Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, p.10.

¹¹ Lyons, et. al, *Placing Faces*, p.7.

country residences, as on a stage set, the *dramatis personae*, and didactic storyline were introduced with the first steps over the threshold.

Walpole's observation declared both practice and expectation, and in cases where bloodlines were of recent or suspect vintage, an amount of social engineering could conceal deficiencies and enhance a cultural identity. At Saltram, for example, the prominent display of an early seventeenth-century portrait of Sir Thomas Parker by Gheeraerts was taken by visitors to be that of a forebear of rank. However, the subject was not a lineal ancestor but a Sussex MP whose family's renown reached back to the thirteenth century. His connection to the Devonshire Parkers was fabricated around tenuous coincidences of geographical interest (the captaincy of Pendennis castle) and a shared surname in order to secure claims to an ancient and (more) prominent heritage.¹² The ancestral Parker home – Boringdon Hall, near Plymouth – had been confiscated (and destroyed) during the Civil War although the family's fortunes had recovered by 1712 to allow them to purchase Saltram. John Parker inherited in 1743 (as its fifth owner) and recent research has suggested that he employed a local artist to find suitable paintings to decorate its newly-refurbished Rococo interiors. A dinner guest of Parker's son (also John) described:

[a] very choice and expensive collection of pictures,
chiefly bought by Joshua Reynolds; the old lord

¹² This Parker (1548 – 1617) was a cousin of Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, and of Nicholas Parker upon whose death he succeeded to the Pendennis captaincy.

employing him to go to any price, provided a bad picture did not come into the house.¹³

If Reynolds collected the Gheeraerts for the family, was it because it was a 'good' picture or was he tempted by the name of its sitter and acquired it as a serendipitous investment? Unfortunately, neither Reynolds' nor Saltram's records provide an answer although the younger Parker's wife, Theresa, was anxious to source a portrait to match it. Having by now gained legitimacy in the family's historical narrative, she commissioned Reynolds for her full-length portrait as its pendant. As Retford reminds us, 'Theresa's portrait may have been intended for the family home, as an 'object to bolster familial affection' (and tie together an ancestor and a woman married into that ancestor's line), but it also had a highly public role and would have been seen by:

extended family, friends, acquaintance and the large number of country-house visitors who trooped around the seats of the great and the good during the summer months.'¹⁴

Not one of these people would have challenged the authenticity of Sir Thomas Parker in the family history. The senior John Parker's frantic attempts to create distinction by importing a questionable ancestor to forge dynastic relationships was in compensation for the loss of the family fortune and ancestral home.

Parker was not a member of the aristocracy although his ancestors had some

¹³ Sam Smiles, (ed.), *Sir Joshua Reynolds* – the chapter on the Parkers makes reference to a considerable portion of the Collection [at Saltram] that was purchased at Rome in 1750 or 1751 by Reynolds. See p. 55f.

¹⁴ Retford, 'Reynolds's Portrait of Mrs Theresa Parker: A Case Study in Context,' *British Art Journal* 4, 3 (Autumn) (2003), Online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41614492>].

connection with the upper echelons of Tudor society.¹⁵ Portraiture's role reached far beyond its purpose as a record of a life. In the public sphere, portraits gained authority, validity and influence; where they hung, and in whose company, created a distinctive narrative. William and Anne had no need to create distinction as capriciously as the Parkers: bluer tints coursed through their veins.

Dahl's portraits of the early-century Carews were among the first to greet visitors to Antony. Most homes of the well born had similar displays to reinforce notions of *noblesse oblige* – the exigencies of rights and duties that validated aristocratic privilege. Richard, the fourth heir to Stourhead, and a man of equivalent rank to William, referred to the concept of benevolent responsibility when he wrote of his entrance hall:

Its walls are chiefly covered with family portraits [...] they remind us of the genealogy of our families, and recall to our minds the hospitality, &c of its former inhabitants, and, on the first entrance of the friend, or stranger, seem to greet them with a SALVE, or welcome.¹⁶

Given the numbers of Hoare relatives costumed as Roman senators the Latin greeting was entirely appropriate: invoking the sacred and cultural duties of hospitality (or *hospitium*) enshrined in the social authority of the Republican *paterfamilias*. By the eighteenth century, any threat of invoking the wrath of the gods by violating such customs had disappeared although fostering sociability

¹⁵ Given that the younger John Parker married the daughter of the Earl Poulett and grand-daughter of the Earl of Pembroke, better and more impressive links could have been forged through those connections yet only five portraits of Poulett family members still claim the walls of Saltram.

¹⁶ Catalogue entry for auction by Duke's of Dorchester, 30 September 2015: 'Hoare, Richard Colt', *The History of Modern Wiltshire. Hundred of Mere*. (Bath, 1865).

was as fundamental to aristocratic self-fashioning as it had been in the fifth century and was as specifically sited. Matthew Craske's recent study confirms that, like the ancient *atria* where the *patroni* would gather to receive their morning *salutori*, portraits centred upon a chimney piece (England's climate rarely permitted *al fresco* reception rooms) replicated the experience of being met by the owners since, by convention, the hearth was construed as the best place to play host.¹⁷

The Hall for William and Anne was their instrumental prologue; articulating the identities they were keen to project and, with their portraits near the fireplace, guaranteeing their distinction as oligarchs of the 'republic' of Antony.¹⁸ The warp and weft of consanguinity, association, or alliance were gathered on the walls of Antony to represent them – both as a presence and as a reality in well-curated patterns that also disclosed a cultural identity. William clad the Hall in the Tudor panelling that his great-grandmother, Julia Arundell, had installed in the original Antony manor house thereby connecting him with his ancestors and the family's ancient lineage. It is unlikely that the Duke of Marlborough was as concerned with the narratives of identity as Antony's first family: Blenheim's Great Hall featured a portrait of his patroness, Queen Anne, a ceiling decoration by Thornhill

¹⁷ Matthew Craske, 'Conversations and Chimneypieces: The Imagery of the Hearth in Eighteenth-Century English Family Portraiture' *British Art Studies*, no. 2 (2016), Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.17658/issn.2058-5462/issue-02/mcraske>].

¹⁸ See Oliver Goldsmith, *Vicar of Wakefield* (Harmondsworth, 1766 [1982,1986]), Chapter 4, p.50. Goldsmith is generally thought to have been a Tory supporter of a strong monarchy and an uncompromising critic of republicanism. Despite this reputation, Goldsmith writes in the tradition of classical republicanism, in which the autonomous citizen demonstrates his virtue by refusing to delegate his public capacities to others and in which the ideal government is a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy – the three pure forms of government that, in the absence of an appropriate balance, will degenerate into tyranny, oligarchy, and mob rule.

– each related to his victorious battle – and an art collection of seventeenth-century master works which were ‘mostly gifts from grateful monarchs and cities the Duke had liberated from the French’.¹⁹ Nothing more was required for England’s greatest military hero. For William (and later Reginald), however, personal relationships and connectedness were more important, and so their purposeful curation extended to the images privileged to be hung beside their own. The circulations of these companion portraits trace a variety of impulses from their value as heritage credentials to conspicuous political allegiances throughout the century. For example William’s grandfather Alexander’s sixteenth-century portrait (by Gheeraerts) had been sliced from its frame and consigned to a cellar by outraged royalist family members following the sitter’s execution for treason, only to be later reinstated as the image of an heroic ancestor.²⁰ The archives do not reveal who took a sword to the portrait, whose rough needlework restored it, or which family member reconciled Alexander to Carew history. Its value lay in the reconstruction of an hereditary link – for

¹⁹ James Stourton and Charles Sebag-Montefiore, *The British as Art Collectors (from the Tudors to the Present)* (London: Scala Publishers Ltd., 2012), p.106.

²⁰ Alexander Carew was the eldest son of Richard Carew, 1st Baronet and elected MP for Cornwall in the Long Parliament in 1640. On the outbreak of the Civil War, Carew declared for Parliament. Although Cornwall and the rest of the South West were generally under Royalist control in the opening stages of the war, the mayor of the strategically vital port of Plymouth had seized it for Parliament, and Parliament entrusted its defence to a committee including Carew. Carew was made governor of St Nicholas’ Island in Plymouth Sound, the keystone to the defence of the town. It was while he held this post that his father died, on 14 March 1643, and he inherited the baronetcy. After the Royalist victory at Stratton (16 May 1643) and the capture of Bristol, Alexander secretly contacted the commander of the Royalist forces then besieging Exeter, offering to surrender Plymouth in return for a pardon for himself. The Royalists were willing enough but the delay left time for a disloyal servant to leak the plot to the mayor and the rest of the committee. He was arrested, and taken by ship to London, committed to the Tower of London on 5 December and eventually tried for treason by court-martial, in the Guildhall on 19 November 1644. Convicted, he was sentenced to death and beheaded on Tower Hill on 23 December 1644.

without Alexander, the Carew baronetcy would have been extinguished (his half-brother, John, inherited the baronetcy but was also executed, leaving no heirs).²¹ Unlike the Parkers' Gheeraerts, Alexander's portrait held the ancestral legitimacy crucial to both William and Reginald's cultural identities.

Art historians concede that artists commissioned for family portraits became part of the fabrication of identity: as stratified as successive applications of paint. Just a few years into the eighteenth century, William's aims for portraiture were based on seventeenth-century conventions for the genre. Consequently, Dahl's commission represented a specific instance of his application of court style to sitters of more moderate prominence. The newly-weds were posed against stark backgrounds with extravagant lighting casting an arresting shadow to one side, perhaps more a condition of the artist's training than of the sitters' personal interests but certainly within the fashion and expectations of the early eighteenth century. Anne's portrait (Figure 3.2) could be described as Augustan – both in imitation of the Classical and as the visual expression of the age's aesthetic principles of harmony and in carefully controlled techniques designed to achieve an anticipated precision. It was an entirely fitting description of the first châtelaine of Antony, as the contemporary patrician wife. Unquestionably, her principal role was as the carrier of future generations

²¹ John Carew was a prominent member of the Fifth Monarchy Men who saw the overthrow of Charles I as a divine sign of the second coming of Jesus and the establishment of the millennium of Christ's rule on earth. Like many of the other 59 men who signed the death warrant for Charles I, he was in grave danger when Charles II of England was restored to the throne. Some of the 59 fled England but Carew was arrested and put on trial around 13 October 1660. He was sentenced to be hung, drawn and quartered in that same year.

although her significance was not confined to her fecundity alone: she brought with her indispensable associations, acknowledged in her portrait by the allusions to the Classical, and subplots of good breeding, education and social rank.²²

William's appropriately sombre portrait (Figure 3.3) exudes authority, fixing the viewer with an unwavering gaze; his pose suggests the ease with which he commanded. If a Classical example were to be sought, perhaps the martial detachment of the *Augustus Primaporta* could prove fitting although, to paraphrase Wycherley, William was 'no hero in a painted field'.²³ Those with a military pedigree could be depicted in uniforms representing their national contribution, although modern painters were careful to avoid consigning their sitters to an historical timeline or a costume with definitive political overtones. Richardson's idealistic attempts to formulate an Augustan theory of painting addressed this issue: for him, painting consisted of equal parts 'invention' including 'all those Incidents which the Painter invents to enrich his Composition'; and 'expression' with 'the portrayal of the passions and sentiments, including attitude, dress, and attribute'.²⁴ Possibly the most interesting point about Richardson's theory is that artistic contrivance was as much prized as the ability to accurately record costume; this is, perhaps, the key to the success of one artist over another during this period if not a reasonable explanation for the rather

²² As such, it invites a fair comparison with Hilary Mantel's recent withering assessment of Kate Middleton, dismissing the Duchess of Cambridge as a personality-free 'shop window mannequin', whose sole purpose is to deliver an heir to the throne. Lecture at the British Museum for the *London Review of Books*, February 2013.

²³ William Wycherley, 'The Plain-Dealer: A Comedy', 1720. *The Plays of William Wycherley*, (Oxford University Press, 1979), prologue.

²⁴ Richardson, *Works*, p.84–114.

repetitive quality in aristocratic portraiture. Although the commission of William and Anne's portraits testify to a particular moment in their lives (as generalised images of an aristocratic couple), what distinguishes these images from those of their parents are the incidences of 'inrichment' signposted in milady's demeanour and milord's authority, and accrued through palette, pose, and, occasionally, paraphernalia. In art historical dialectics, the ancient symbolism of sword and livery became inappropriate for all but the more formal types of portraiture. Modern artists were expected to create contemporary allegories to indicate not only personality and status, but also all that signified identity in terms of education, association, and as an allusion to the grandeur and stability of the family seat.

Indirect reference and allusions to the Classical, or borrowings from the Italian Masters supplanted overt symbolism and rendered these images *au courant*. Although formulaic and consciously referencing Court imagery, their portraits not only cemented the newly-wed, newly-installed Carews of Antony into the fabric of Society but also expressed the universality of socially superior identity. Judgements concerning status and wealth were, perhaps, more easily grasped in portraits by famous artists hung in country houses built on ancestral lands; authority could be deduced from continued lines of succession (in ancestors' portraits), conjoined lineages (the names and faces of those who

married into the family), and in the public life of each sitter.²⁵ More perceptive viewers, attuned to the subtexts of aristocratic portraiture, might have noted the contributions of 'invention' and 'expression' in the portraits that alluded to wider concepts of aristocratic self-fashioning: William's seemingly casual hand gesture, or Anne's pseudo-Classical backdrop, carried with them barely veiled social meanings, understood by those who had mastered Richardson's theories and the discourses of connoisseurship. In the 'politics of looking', as de Bolla termed the distinct attitudes of audiences to subjects, expertise and connoisseurship were tied in the singular regime of the portrait, with the requirement that one (already) knew what one saw.²⁶ Contemporaries and posterity were faced with images in keeping with the hegemonic gendered attitudes of their time: gently refined Anne is portrayed as femininity personified and William, the capable man who can turn his thoughts to family after conducting business affairs of the world, is hegemonic masculinity actualised. The one is the complement of the other.

Dahl's commission could have been construed as politically significant: the artist's patronage by Queen Anne and her court was an association not lost on early visitors to Antony. If royal sponsorship was read into the creator of the portraits then, royalist politics permeated his canvases. The leap from portrait to politics was not entirely speculative; it has been suggested that the portraits first seen on entering Chiswick House were the key to an entire programme of

²⁵ Of course, the elevation of men's role in sustaining the family line often required some manipulation of the truth given that women contributed both titles and property through marriage and inheritance, as in the case of the first family of Antony.

²⁶ Peter de Bolla, *The Education of the Eye* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2003), p.229.

decoration favouring the restoration of the Divine Right of Kings through the re-establishment of the Stuart Dynasty, and this display alone implied that Burlington was a crypto-Jacobite.²⁷ William's family were historically Tory but since they occupied less exalted positions on Britain's political stage, reading partisanship into his image via his choice of artist might be going too far. Dahl's clients were, in the main, drawn from among the Tory élite although, as Paul Monod cogently argued, art and politics were often incompatible: portraiture's lofty ideological reaches were rarely hostage to inelegant party-political manoeuvring.²⁸ Neither of Dahl's portraits of William or Anne risked an overtly political reading (unlike Mary Carew's Jacobite 'white rose' painting discussed later in this chapter) but, rather, rendered a particular visualisation for the sitters that actively contributed to the construction of a cultural identity.

3.1 CRAFTING IDENTITY

To succeed for his clients, Dahl enlivened his portraits with techniques to add drama and interest to otherwise pedestrian poses. Thus, the painted Anne's figure against a dull-brown background with a frontal light source picking out creases and folds in her garments. The curve of her neck was defined by the dark sweep of hair falling behind over her right shoulder as the eye was drawn to the luminous flesh of her *décolleté*. Such attention to an anatomical feature was the subject of rhapsodic epistles regarding form and effect:

²⁷ Christie, *The British Country House* p.196.

²⁸ Paul Monod, 'Painters and Party Politics in England, 1714-1760,' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 26, no. 3 (1993), p.386. Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2739409>].

the beauty of a neck which is presented to our eyes hath nothing but what attracts and allures us, and as it does not cease speaking to us in its way and manner, nor cease soliciting us, and being pleasing to us, it at last triumphs over our liberty, after it has abused and betrayed our senses.²⁹

The writer of this catalogue entry for the Duchess of Portland's posthumous sale in 1786 was referring to the classical decoration on a Roman cameo glass vase acquired on the Grand Tour – and not the attributes of the deceased owner, nor of the lady of Antony. It denotes the century's interest in the antique and its formation as a quality of (aristocratic) discernment. Through the agencies of cultural associations such as the Society of the Dilettanti and the Augustan poets, intimacy with the literary and mythic worlds of ancient Greece and Rome was ensured as ideologies from the antique world spilled into the eighteenth century as models of political discourse and social intercourse.³⁰ Thus, the image of an idealised Thetis or Ariadne provided a comparative approach to encounters with contemporary female forms and conversation on a level with readers and audiences who understood the references. One did not always have to travel too far back in time to be enlightened by a painted image: Retford reminds us that in companion portraits of Charles, ninth Viscount Irwin and his wife, Frances, at Temple Newsam in Yorkshire, he is depicted as a gentleman while she is costumed as a shepherdess. While it was not unusual for a landed gentlewoman

²⁹ Stacey Sloboda, 'Displaying Materials: Porcelain and Natural History in the Duchess of Portland's Museum,' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 43, no. 4 (Summer 2010), pp. 455–472, online [<http://search.proquest.com/docview/732991692?accountid=14711>].

³⁰ Several of these perspectives are explored in James W. Johnson's 'The Meaning of "Augustan",' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 19, no. 4 (1958), Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2707920>].

to be depicted in such a pastoral guise, her appearance would have informed the viewer to reflect on the fact that Frances was the daughter of Samuel Shephard, a highly successful Cambridgeshire politician and landowner who had made her his heiress with a fortune of £60,000.³¹

A publicly-displayed image, as Anne's, combined prescription and description in a fusion of the mimetic, the ideal, and social hierarchies. In his depiction of Anne as an abstract of idealised woman, Dahl painted her flesh tones in a mixture of fresh pinks and bright whites, with the lips painted a deeper pink; not as a painterly artifice but in mimesis of the effects achieved in practice by the use of lead-based creams (the addiction to which poisoned a Coventry kinswoman in 1760).³² Her features displayed the age's concept of beauty; her coiffeur was styled in a loose but careful arrangement of shining curls, suggesting some spontaneity and drawing attention to the fabrics in her gown.

Colour, in Dahl's early works, was not merely descriptive but often employed to heighten sensation, a technique he had acquired during a sojourn in Italy where the Venetian masters were inspirational. Here, the fresh, teal green of Anne's gown (the pigment has probably faded slightly) provided a decorative foil to her white frilled chemise and the satin lining of her gown. A second full-

³¹ Retford, *Patrilineal Portraiture?*, p. 317.

³² The story of Maria Gunning, Lady Coventry, was recently highlighted by the sale of her mirror at auction (realising more than £300,000). According to contemporary reports she liked to use *ceruse*, a compound to whiten her skin composed of lead oxide, hydroxide, and carbonate. The lead, unbeknown to her, was poisonous, and the hydroxide and carbonate combined with the moisture in her skin formed acids that slowly ate it away. To redden her lips, she liked *mercuric fucus*, with the lead and mercury seeping into her blood through the skin that slowly poisoned her. Christie's auction 23 May, 2012.



FIGURE 3.2: LADY ANNE COVENTRY, LADY CAREW BY MICHAEL DAHL, C.1713, OIL ON CANVAS, 127 X 101.5CM

length picture, created two years later when Dahl was clearly more confident with a bolder palette, depicted Anne in a daffodil-yellow silk gown contrasted with a cobalt wrap as she stood in front of a red velvet curtain fringed with gold. Somewhat overwhelmed by swathes of richly-hued textiles, Anne was rendered less significant than the haberdashery. Nevertheless, the textile details in both images communicated not only general cultural references but also the

specificities of dress, colour, pose and accessories that placed Anne within a specific framework valued by the Carews. Anne's silk gown alone communicated an amalgam of aristocratic advantages: the luxury of time and the expense of travel bound up in sensory pleasure, conspicuous consumption and fashionability. The status of silk arose from its exclusivity although, in the climate of a demand-led consumer revolution,³³ the production and retail of luxury items had the most potential for a new range of consumer goods valued for their novelty, design and quality.³⁴

By painting his young female sitters in pale-hued casually-arranged luxury fabrics Dahl was responding to the dictum of a Dutch art theorist, Gerard de Lairesse, who wrote that their dress should be:

white Garments of thin Linnen, and all Sorts of airy and womanish coloured Silks, viz light blue, Apple-blossom, Pearl-colour or light lemon, cast loosely on each other.³⁵

What de Lairesse was describing was a late seventeenth-century fashion for having one's portrait painted in 'undress' – garbed in a loosely-fastened robe called a 'night-gown' pulled over a voluminous chemise – its suggestive power lodged in the mind of the (male) viewer. This formation of active feminine sensuality in aristocratic portraiture derived most directly from the social politics

³³ McKendrick, 'The Consumer Revolution' asserts that the consumer revolution of the eighteenth century was 'the necessary analogue' to the Industrial Revolution. Chapter 1, *Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 9.

³⁴ The importance of novelty's decisive role in consumption of luxury goods is described in 'New Commodities, Luxuries and Their Consumers in Eighteenth-Century England,' in *Consumers and Luxury. Consumer Culture in Europe, 1650–1850*, (Manchester: 1999), see p. 95.

³⁵ Lyckle de Vries, *How to Create Beauty: De Lairesse on the Theory and Practice of Making Art* (Primavera Press, 2011), p.165.

of the Restoration Court when it became fashionable for a lady of rank to be portrayed as if she had just engaged in 'amorous congress'.³⁶ Anne is presented in a restrained state of *déshabille*, where the neckline of her nightgown is barely perched upon the shoulder and somewhat plunging (perhaps in an evocation of the Hellenistic *Venus de Milo's* slipped toga?) However, unlike near-contemporary images of the monarch's mistresses, this portrait recorded a marriage and not an intrigue, and her portrait on the walls of Antony House served an entirely different function than those created for the royal Bedchamber by Lely.³⁷ Her pose, by contrast, is constrained; the sensuous treatment of flesh and fabric curbed by the inert formality of her posture, epitomising de Lairese's admonishment that wives should be depicted as 'tender, sedate and modest'. Seated in front of a non-specific landscape, resting her right arm on a decorative marble-topped table displaying a floral arrangement which is mirrored in the informal bouquet in her lap, her deportment replicates that associated with much aristocratic portraiture of the period.³⁸ Its symbolism echoed Titian, who frequently included a column in the background of his male portraits to convey

³⁶ To say two people were engaged in amorous congress was by far the politest option on the list, oftentimes serving as the definition for other, less discreet, synonyms. *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*, 1811, by Captain Francis Grose, et al., Campbell McCutcheon (ed.) (Amerbley Publishing Limited, 2008).

³⁷ Lely's mature style in the female court portrait is best seen in the series of 10 portraits painted as a set (1662–1665) and known as the 'Windsor Beauties.' Wrapped in voluminous but disordered shimmering draperies, the subjects of these opulent portraits gaze languidly at the spectator from heavy-lidded eyes and convey a curious combination of sensuality and dignity. Most of the portraits are three-quarter length, and generally the sitter is posed somewhat to one side of the composition. The setting is often a turbulent landscape and is frequently enriched by swags of drapery, an architectural element, or a decorative urn. Lely was famous for his facility in handling fabrics, and the play of light on flowing satin clothing is one of the primary visual elements of his painting.

³⁸ Some of these conventions were adapted from those of the *fête champêtre* as developed by Watteau.

the status and worth of the sitter. Here, however, the allusions are to Anne as the educated daughter of a distinguished extended family – her pose signified a woman of breeding; her bouquet of fragrant roses and myrtle – the flowers most associated with weddings – symbolised fidelity, the theme carried through in the strewn carnations on the table at her side. The portrait celebrated the union of two ancient lineages, but in the handling of relatively incidental details Dahl's portrait of the newest Lady Carew provided the lexicon for educated audiences to read beyond the painted surface and afford the sitter kaleidoscopic inventories of significance.

The composition also made immediate reference to Dahl's other titled clients: his portrait of Queen Anne (1714), or Frances Winchcombe, Viscountess Bolingbroke are among the tens of portraits of women that feature similar settings and architectural devices. Mathew Pilkington, one of Swift's penniless protégés (he called them 'spur-leathers'),³⁹ supplied a possible reason for these increasingly mimetic portrayals:

It is only by a frequent and studious inspection into the excellencies of the artists of the first rank, that a true taste can be established; for, by being attentively conversant with the elevated ideas of others, our own ideas imperceptibly become refined. We gradually feel a disgust at what is mean, or vulgar; and learn to admire, what only is justly intitled to our commendation.⁴⁰

³⁹ Jonathan Swift and Walter Scott, *The Works of Jonathan Swift: Journal to Stella (Letter I–Xxxvii)* (A. Constable, 1814), pp.372, 424.

⁴⁰ de Bolla, *The Education of the Eye*, p.30.

If Taste could be established by studying artists and committing to memory its quantitative measures, the conventional aspects of portraiture ensured that each example bore some resemblance to the next. As Retford argued, it 'is scrutiny of the repetitive that enables extrapolation of broader issues and developments',⁴¹ and general similarity made the distinctive qualities of each the more salient. As a crucial element in William's self-fashioning, portraits of his wife by an artist of the 'first rank' that also invoked images of the sovereign and the wife of his hero (Bolingbroke) or significant members of the nobility, enhanced his social position by association, although there were other ways in which cultural status was conferred and reinforced.

The dominant or most privileged form of masculinity in any given society is described as 'hegemonic masculinity'. Michèle Cohen has argued that in the eighteenth century 'the polite and refined gentleman' embodied the concept, supported as it was by 'conduct manuals, moral literature, popular periodical essays like those featured in *The Spectator*, and educational ideals and practices.'⁴² The private masculine virtues of civility, nobility and generosity expected by politeness and played out within the family domain were a way of displaying and idealising this conflation between public and private virtues. From the lack of accessories in his portrait, it is clear William preferred to focus attention on himself rather than (distracting) incidental staging. This is not

⁴¹ Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, p.7.

⁴² Michele Cohen, "'Manners' Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750–1830,' *The Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 02 (2005).

unique: in portraits of his contemporaries, Dahl's compositions are similarly spare, privileging the sitter over symbolism, from which one could conclude the fashionability of the style rather than a strategy for William.

Dahl's techniques highlighted the sheen of William's right sleeve, caught the gold frogging and buttons on his coat, and added contours to his otherwise unremarkable physiognomy. The full-bottomed wig lent an air of *gravitas*, as did his pose. William appears as if balanced on the edge of an upholstered chair – neither fully seated nor standing – poised to spring into some kind of action if so motivated. His position allows for the full length of his coat to be seen at his left, while a red toga-like drape (a *banyan*) covers his bent knee upon which his right hand rests, the dark hue a perfect foil to the gathered white linen at his cuff and the light playing on the back of his hand, animating the fingers.

In his *Chirologia* (1644) the physician John Bulwer described how the hand can be used to express both words and abstract concepts, although with one hand clamped to his thigh and the other hidden in his waistcoat, recreating William's narrative is challenging. There are clues, however, to understanding this portrait, even if it is not readily apparent. The position of his left hand, partially obscured by the fabric of his garment, was explained by Richardson as 'attitude', a significant term that described the totality of the sitter's body language and implied a degree of fixity (as opposed to 'gesture' which suggested motion). Attitude conveyed ideas – and in portraiture, the 'hand-in' pose was the choice of



FIGURE 3.3: SIR WILLIAM CAREW, 5TH BT., BY DAHL, C. 1710, OIL ON CANVAS, 127 X 101.5CM

'persons of quality and worth' whose manner was deemed 'agreeable and without affectation.'⁴³

⁴³ Arline Meyer identifies the genesis for this pose as the Caroline court and the social interest in gestural expression in 'Re-Dressing Classical Statuary: The Eighteenth-Century "Hand-in-Waistcoat" Portrait,' *The Art Bulletin* 77, no. 1 (Mar) (1995), p.53. Online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3046079>]. My thanks to Simon Lee for drawing my attention to this stylistic reference.

From the sheer profusion of portraits of English men of rank assuming this pose we must conclude that being able to capture ‘boldness tempered with modesty’ as a defining attribute in painted character was desirable. Richardson’s portraits of Addison, Edward, the fourth Baron Stawell, Henry Liddell and Captain Francis Blake Delaval each display the same gesture. Arline Meyer identified the genesis for this pose as having evolved from Courtly gestures that included ‘bowing’ and ‘scraping’.⁴⁴ Within eighteenth-century interpretations of politeness, the earlier-century *Chirologia* provided a stylistic model by claiming that restraining a hand in a waistcoat was ‘an argument of modesty, and frugal pronunciation, a still and quiet action suitable to a mild and remiss declamation’.⁴⁵ In the full compass of its eighteenth-century usage, the hand-in-waistcoat portrait allowed for a number of formal variables: from a half to a full-length format, either seated or standing, the setting either landscape or interior, the figure oriented towards the left or right, and with either the left or the right hand masked. Commonly, the right hand is inserted, although when the figure is depicted holding a hat, the image complied with prevailing social etiquette, which dictated that the hat be in the right hand. Clearly, the gesture is part of the language of social decorum; it belongs with the formal courtesies set by the French court in the seventeenth century. This precedent suggests that English painters transformed a French social convention into an English portrait convention, and

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.53. ‘Scraping’ refers to the drawing back of the right leg as one bows, such that the right foot scrapes the floor or earth.

⁴⁵ John Bulwer, *Chirologia, Or the Natural Language of the Hand*, 1664, (Kessinger Publishing, 2003), p.175.

that they more readily absorbed elements from France's prosaic, factual engraving tradition than from her more flamboyant portrait-painting tradition. In 1737 François Nivelon, a French dancing master, published *Rudiments of Genteel Behaviour*, a manual offering visual and verbal instruction on how to walk, stand, and present oneself for the minuet.⁴⁶ Its engraved illustrations confirmed that graceful movements had become rigidly codified into prescriptive, static poses; epitomised by the 'hand-in-waistcoat'.

In terms of practicality, without a sword, hat, book or pen, an unengaged hand presented a problem for artists – an unwelcome appendage signifying nothing and, when not well-painted, a source of negative comment. An alternative was to place the hand on the hip – a pose that frequently appears in Baroque portraits of rulers or would-be-rulers and which, in a full-length portrait, increased the sitter's air of power and self-possession. Dahl appears to have incorporated both the 'hand-in' and a variation of the 'hand-on-hip' in William's portrait, the result describing a relaxed but controlled interpretation. The sitter's pose and costume demonstrated the cultivated aristocratic predisposition for reticence – an appropriately Augustan riposte to Continental extravagances threatened in the Hanoverian succession. Classical statuary acquired during the Grand Tour provided the model and any togate marble would serve, for antique statuary moulded England's pictorial imagination much as Augustan poetry

⁴⁶ François Nivelon, *The Rudiments of Genteel Behaviour* (Paul Holberton, 2003). The British Museum holds a copy of the 1737 print made by Louis Philippe Boitard, the front cover of which shows a man in court dress, 'hand-in' and titled 'According to Act of Parliament'.

honed her literary style.⁴⁷ William's draped *banyan* indicated a rational choice, not only for its ahistoricism but also for its contemporary interpretation: it was deemed fashionable for men of an intellectual or philosophical bent to have their portraits painted while wearing the male equivalent of a night-gown for:

loose dresses contribute to the easy and vigorous exercise of the faculties of the mind. This remark is so obvious, and so generally known, that we find studious men are always painted in gowns, when they are seated in their libraries.⁴⁸

The informality of apparel suggested William was at home and, although a library is not evident, his demeanour could qualify as studious without recourse to props (indeed, he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law by Oxford University in 1736.)⁴⁹ The construction of William's public image, therefore, was couched in terms of sensibilities: strength of personality, prestige of lineage, wisdom acquired from the quality and circumstances of his birth and education, and the status invested in his rural hegemony. Each required more sophisticated interpretive skills than that of the audience for his ancestor's portrait, below.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Meyer, *Re-Dressing Classical Statuary*, p.47.

⁴⁸ Penelope Byrde, *The Male Image: Men's Fashion in Britain 1300–1970* (UK: The Anchor Press Britain, 1979), p.78.

⁴⁹ George E. Cockayne, *The Complete Baronetage*, 5 volumes (c. 1900) reprint, Gloucester, U.K., Alan Sutton Publishing, 1983), volume II, page 126.

⁵⁰ Deborah Cherry and Jennifer Harris, 'Eighteenth-Century Portraiture and the Seventeenth-Century Past: Gainsborough and Van Dyck,' *Art History* 5, no. 3 (1982), pp. 87–309. Online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8365.1982.tb00769.x>].

In previous centuries, the fashioning of identity through associative emblems had been part of the stock-in-trade for portraitists. Verisimilitude was less important than symbolism; 'looking the part' (clothing, badges of office, and accessories that identified the sitter's civic standing) conveyed the intended meaning of the whole. The solemn portrait of Richard Carew (Figure 3.4), by an unknown British artist, is just such a portrait. It depicts the 32-year-old wearing, if not weighted-down by, the chains of office as Lord-Lieutenant of Cornwall. An emblem at the top left shows a diamond on an anvil surviving the blows of a hammer (meaning 'who is truthful will endure'), while the small book in his hand, inscribed 'Invicta [mor] te vita' (Life in spite of death)', appears to be a generalised epithet rather than a reference to his important translations of Tasso's *La Gerusalemme liberata*. From this portrait, we appreciate Richard Carew was an honest and moral gentleman of means, entrusted with influential public office, but little else since its role was almost wholly civic. The painting was commissioned to celebrate and cement the sitter's political prowess by stressing the continuity, and thus the stability, of the civic community and its governing authority as vested in him; any personal claims to fame were subsumed to greater service to the nation. For both William and Reginald, this heirloom portrait documented dynastic succession; and in the public sphere of Antony, the image conveyed the family's established status, authority and wealth.



FIGURE 3.4 – SIR RICHARD CAREW, AGED 32, AS HIGH-SHERIFF AND DEPUTY-LIEUTENANT OF CORNWALL, UNKNOWN ARTIST (BRITISH SCHOOL), 1586, OIL ON PANEL, 53.5 X 43 CM. 5 X 43 CM

The language of the aristocratic portrait possesses its own formal logic with inherent tropes and structural wisdom – the genre’s art historical and visual DNA. While ancestors’ paintings recorded the assets of inherited physiognomy and/or national achievement, successive generations were compelled to add to the pictorial wealth as an expression of pedigree (although identifying many of them has become challenging because of inadequate records or, as Walpole cautioned ‘they are only sure that they have so many pounds of ancestors in the lump’).⁵¹ Notable antecedents notwithstanding, the competences required to access a range of meanings ascribed to portraiture would certainly be called into play for portraits of country aristocrats aggregated as Walpolean *avoirdufois*. Paintings have often been compared to windows and to mirrors, and images are constantly described as reflecting the world of society. Obviously, reality is mediated by the variety of intentions of painters and in the social behaviours selected to represent the sitter and, in Greenblatt’s analyses, self-fashioning creates the conventions whereby life is interpreted and understood and re-articulated as art. William and Anne’s painted reflections may well be accurate descriptions of appearance but this, to some extent, is less important than the underlying purpose of aristocratic portraiture. The cultural identities of William and Anne were forged in the objectives of reinforcing dynastic continuity and their

⁵¹ W. S. Lewis, Warren H. Smith and George Lam, (eds.), *Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, 48 volumes (London and New Haven, 1947–83), p.104 – Horace Walpole to George Montague, 3 October 1763.

close relationships. The choice of artist and the distillation of convention, attitude and attribute created images that satisfied their strategy.

3.2 TRASH AND LUMBER?

The satirist and hack writer William Combe bemoaned the 'Trash' and 'Lumber' of past styles and commended the hand of a modern artist who was able to vanquish such 'Inspidity'. Rather than the banality of costumed puppets, Combe claimed somewhat prophetically '[a] Portrait is now interesting even to the Stranger, and [...] Will be interesting to future Ages.'⁵² He suggested that the intellectual interest in contemporary portraiture came from what was known as 'Character': an attribute attached to the sitter that contained something as universally understood as allegory. Such universality not only diminished the three-dimensionality of a sitter to a singular (distinguishable) quality, reminiscent of literacy devices where major characters often announced themselves (and their temperaments) by their names, but also provided artists with a psychological substitute for regalia.⁵³ The success of such biographical pruning lay in the hands of the interpreter and how well he was able to read portraiture. Thus, the full-length of Gilbert, the Earl of Coventry in his Garter Robes – doubtless insisted on by the sitter – forced Dahl to cast Gilbert as an accessory to his costume; his distinction arising from the swathes of ermine-trimmed velvet. The 'Character' in

⁵² de Bolla, *The Education of the Eye*, pp.29 – 30.

⁵³ For example: Squire Allworthy, Fopling Flutter, Lady Teazle – characters from Fielding's *Tom Jones*; Etheredge, *The Man of Mode*; Sheridan, *School for Scandal* respectively. See also: Desmond Shawe-Taylor, *The Georgians: Eighteenth-Century Portraiture and Society* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1990), p.31; and Richardson, *Works*, p.48.

Reynold's portrayal of Reginald's father, by contrast, is earned by putting the sitter in the foreground so that we read him as active, progressive, and in command of his environment, not subordinate to it. Dahl's portraits are among those taking the first steps in that process although as a body of work, they lack the qualities of distinction that would set them apart from most other early eighteenth-century portraits. For William and Anne, though, the identities projected through the canvas clearly satisfied their personal requirements and expectations.

Similar strategies are evident at Mount Edgcumbe where its collections encapsulated the story of an English aristocratic family that can trace its ancestry back to the first century. The Edgcumbe portraits help to tell the stories of the family's relationship to the local community, to the arts, and to the wider spectrum of politics and society. The sprinkling of Montagu and Courtenay portraits point to inter-marriages throughout the centuries creating the sort of convoluted family tree we see for the Carews. Selecting any genealogical succession within the English baronetage throughout the century would support the contention that customary endogamy was both preference and practice. Virtually all south-western landed families were so-connected: we know, for instance, that Margaret Edgcumbe married William Courtenay in the fifteenth century; her four times great-grandniece Winifred, married Thomas Coventry around 1660; while her brother Richard married Anne Montagu, daughter of the first Earl of Sandwich ten years later. The Carew and Edgcumbe families shared a mutual ancestor in Philippa l'Arcedekne, (a descendant of Thomas l'Arcedekne, governor of Tintagel

Castle), who married Hugh de Courtenay in the early fifteenth century. Their daughter, Joan, married Nicholas Carew and brought with her lands at Antony, Haccombe in Devonshire and Carew Castle in Pembrokeshire. These complex inter-relationships become more legible through portraiture and, since lineages personified the richest currency, each lower-ranked aristocratic family went to extreme lengths to make those connections visible, even when only imagined (as in Parker's case.) The painting collection reflected the individual tastes and idiosyncrasies of the Edgcumbe family but also demonstrated traditional collecting patterns of ranking landowners.

3.3 PATRIMONY

In 1771, the portraits displayed in the Hall alongside those of William and Anne included Gilbert Coventry, in his robes of state, hung alongside that of his daughter; van Dyke's portraits of Kenelm Digby and the Duke of Richmond; and portraits of Watkin Williams Wynn and Gertrude, Lady Copley-Bampfylde (William's sister) by Hudson. If a claim to lineage was to be made by the display of pictures, those of the earl and his daughter made the necessary link, while William's sister's portrait emphasised connections to the Copley and Bampfylde dynasties. Digby, Richmond, and Williams-Wynn, however, were not blood relatives. Instead, they were held in the family's political affections in William's day and clearly celebrated by their prominent placement. This particular arrangement may not be original to the house's construction in 1720 but, for the sake of argument and in light of what is known about William's Tory sympathies, we could surmise that anyone entering Antony and encountering this display,

would have been in no doubt of the influence of the Stuart monarchy on this family. If, as Euripides once said, the character of a man can be judged by the company he keeps, then the portraits in Antony's Hall represented the breadth of William's self-fashioning along relational lines.⁵⁴ Such a reading has significance for the notations on the inventory that disclose the relocation of some portraits (Richmond's was removed to the Saloon in December 1804, for example) indicating that Reginald edited the original narrative, possibly in line with his liberal politics.

On the condition that the 1771 inventory could validate William's self-fashioning aims, then the portraits of his immediate family on the north wall of the Hall were powerful introductions to ancestry as a component of his cultural identity. The portrait of his father, Sir John, shows him wearing full-plate armour, outmoded by the eighteenth century but fashionable among his generation for its symbolic references to the chivalric code and the traditional role of the aristocracy in English society.⁵⁵ The third hereditary baronet of Antony is bare-headed, yet his helmet stands on the stone table to his right at the ready, visually epitomising the landed interest with inherent dual duties to estate and country.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Euripides, *The Phoenician Women*, (411–409 BC) in David Kovacs, *Helen; Phoenician Women; Orestes*, vol. 5 (Loeb Classical Library, 2002).

⁵⁵ The painting of Sir John is not dated but has many similarities to other works by the artist in the collection that a contemporaneous execution can be assured.

⁵⁶ There is a strong resemblance to a painting of Charles II (at the Bodleian Library, by the same artist showing the monarch in an identical pose, draped about the waist in a red sash and with a lace jabot softening the severe neckline of the cuirass; each sitter is holding a sword in his left hand and a baton of office in his right. This might lead to an assumption that Riley was an unoriginal painter processing 'identikit' images, however emulating the monarch was a sincere form of flattery and, for John (and other knights of the realm), casting oneself in the same terms as royalty was an

John Riley's portrait recorded the dignity and attributes of a shire knight, with the baton of command in one hand, the other on the hilt of his sword in a posture popularised by van Dyke.

Riley's companion portrait of Mary, William's mother, a daughter of William Morice, the one-time Secretary of State to Charles II and founder of Devonport Dockyard⁵⁷ was created at the time of her marriage. Nevertheless, Riley depicts her in a fashionably low-cut red gown with slashed sleeves revealing a white chemise; devoid of jewellery or other accessories except for a contrasting blue wrap, she is posed in a wooded landscape given structure by the architectural elements upon which she sits. The subtext to this portrait is, however, not as lucid: the Morice contribution to the Carew line was based in the strength of family connections. Not only was Mary's paternal uncle, Nicholas Morice, one of William's guardians during his minority, the Wirrington peer's social, political and commercial activities ensured his ward could avail himself of powerful alliances both nationally and locally.⁵⁸ The Morice name was, in fact, doubly-spliced to the inhabitants of Antony. William Morice married two female relatives into local

appropriate form of display. The mimetic message that one could 'rule' one's parochial 'kingdom' with the same effortless grace and dedication to duty as a sovereign was apparent.

⁵⁷ Then known as Dock, the repairs and warehousing facility created to support the royal naval and merchant maritime activities in the port of Plymouth.

⁵⁸ Nicholas' wife was daughter of Thomas Herbert, the 8th Earl of Pembroke, and her mother Margaret, the sole heiress to Highclere Castle. Throughout their long history the Herberts were active politicians for south-western seats, courtiers whose service was rewarded with lands, and who brokered advantageous marriages to some of England's most noble and influential families. Twice Lord High Admiral, Nicholas commanded an annual salary of 300 marks (or about £54 today) and perquisites of £5000 and £7000 for each term of office and, unsurprisingly, the Royal Navy yards including Plymouth. See: 'Lord High Admiral and Commissioners of the Admiralty 1660–1870', in *Office-Holders in Modern Britain: Volume 4, Admiralty Officials 1660–1870*, John C Sainty, (ed.), (London, 1975), pp. 18–31.

landed families – his sister Anne to John Pole, the third Baronet of Shute (becoming, in time, Reginald’s grandmother) and his daughter, Mary, to John Carew. The sum of these marriages not only buttressed the Devonport magnate’s social position and strengthened the Antony bloodline, but also expanded family connections to incorporate the Bampfylde, through Morice’s first wife, Gertrude.

Endogamic customs among the aristocracy were often circuitous, as demonstrated within this somewhat knotty branch of the family tree: Gertrude was the eldest daughter of John Bampfylde, Baron Poltimore, whose family had held a claim to the Exeter manor and estate since 1086. Her nephew, Coplestone Warwick Bamfylde, the third baronet (1690–1727), married his second cousin Gertrude (William’s sister) and their daughter Mary Bampfylde became the wife of her cousin, Coventry Carew, in 1738. After Coventry’s death, his widow married Francis Buller, the son of a Cornish family owning vast estates near Liskeard, and moved her new husband into Antony where he lived until his death in 1764.⁵⁹

Portraits, however, do not re-tell the details of fascinating life stories, and the presence of a sitter beyond the portrait, more often than not, remained a largely undiscovered quantity. Far removed from early-modern concepts of aesthetic appeal and mimetic accuracy, eighteenth-century portraits fitted neatly

⁵⁹ Canon law forbidding marriage between blood relatives – dating back to 1560 – clearly exerted less authority than the examples of the royal family whose successive first-cousin marriages are recorded from 1299 (Edward I and Margaret of France) to the late eighteenth century union of George IV and his cousin Caroline of Brunswick (1759). Marrying within a specific social group was almost *de rigueur* for the aristocracy of England.

into the contemporary Protestant belief that such artworks should take care not to 'ravish' but to 'please' the eye, documenting, rather than explicitly reproducing, an individual's appearance.⁶⁰ This response to religious and cultural restrictions conveniently worked in tandem with the more practical lack of training open to native artists on a local and regional level; as such, both the patron's wariness, and, more broadly, the artist's limitations, were implicit in the production of a portrait 'likeness'. For William, his parents' portraits were the perpetual memorials to their (and his) existence, as well as direct links to his ancestors. Lest this intra-personal relationship appear one-sided, Reginald's heritage is no less complex: he was descended from both Anne Morice and Jane Carew (William's step-sister) and thus shared many familial links with William.

Anne's mother, Dorothy Keyt, the daughter of William Keyt, a Gloucestershire baronet and Elizabeth Coventry (grand-daughter of Thomas, Baron Coventry of Aylesborough of Croome d'Abitoit, and at length her father's sole heiress),⁶¹ sat for Godfrey Kneller in 1693, the year before she married Gilbert Coventry, when she was about 23 years old. As a subject, we see Dorothy in repose against a background of the family's Ebrington estate topography (the picture has darkened over the years to obscure a landscape setting complete with a large urn or statue immediately behind her right shoulder). Although there are similarities, in many ways it is a less formal

⁶⁰ In Protestant Britain the Baroque exemplified a (Catholic) culture of excess. See Cooper, *Citizen Portrait*, which examines the patronage and production of portraits highlighting the opposing, yet common, themes of piety and self-promotion in the 17th century.

⁶¹ And sister to the marvellously-named Ultra Trajectina Coventry, who married Lacon William Childe and lived in Kinlet, Shropshire.

composition than that created by Dahl of her daughter. The focus of attention is on her Character as seen through the elegance of her pose which appears less contrived, with the sentimentality (a component of Character) of her right hand touching the paw of a hound while one finger of her elevated left hand caresses the dog's ear. Lady Coventry's image conveyed not only the sitter's estimable characteristics and the setting's classical allusions, but also referred to her own family's 400-year history, her grandfather's heroism in the service of Charles I, and the family's continuous reputation as 'beloved and honoured in [this] country'.⁶² Furthermore, the portrait carried the intrinsic 'signature' of its creator, Kneller, adding social cachet to the sitter and her family.⁶³ In sum, the subject, her pose and setting, her lineage, and the artist's interpretation carried significant value beyond the painted canvas; a combination any of the Carews' peer-group would have exploited to shore up their own cultural identities.

Its pendant of the 27-year-old Earl Coventry by Johann Kerseboom depicts Gilbert in formal wig and extravagant drapery. Kerseboom's almost identical subdued palette and treatment of fabric mirrors Kneller so that these two paintings appear to converse with each other. The earl rests his left arm on a stone plinth (again, the pigments have darkened the image and the landscape

⁶² Thomas Wotton, and 16 others, *The Baronetage of England: Containing a Genealogical and Historical Account of All the English Baronets Now Existing ... Illustrated with Their Coats of Arms ... To Which Is Added an Account of Such Nova Scotia Baronets as Are of English Families; and a Dictionary of Heraldry ...* Edward Kimber and Richard A. Johnson (eds.) (G. Woodfall, 1771), entry 170, pp.126–129.

⁶³ Following the accession of William III and Mary II in 1689 Kneller was appointed their principal painter jointly with John Riley (becoming sole bearer of the title when Riley died in 1691), in 1692 he was knighted, and in 1715 he was created a baronet by George I.

setting is barely visible) and is accompanied by a similar breed of dog as in the Keyt portrait, (Lady Coventry's dog appears in the bottom left of the earl's portrait directing the viewer's gaze upwards to the face of the earl and the dog on his left.) The Coventry portraits make up a true pair, with the outward arm of each curving gracefully inwards and low, in near mirror-images of one another, each shown in the attitude of 'contemplative melancholy'. This had become a fashionable mode of self-presentation, signifying not so much depression as intellectual seriousness. These two portraits were likely commissioned to celebrate their marriage in 1694 and served William and Anne in establishing a visual map of her family's aristocratic connections. Coventry's lineage alone introduced an impressive line-up of influential names: Edgcumbe, Tufton (earls of Thanet), Sackville (earls of Dorset), Somerset (Marquess of Worcester), Clifford (earls of Cumberland), Herbert (earls of Pembroke), Dudley (dukes of Northumberland), and Cecil (earls of Exeter). Upon Gilbert's death, these relationships took on particular significance for the newly-weds as they assumed the relationships forged by her parents and aligned themselves with peers of the realm who were, effectively, three ranks above their own station.

The consequences for the Morice and Coventry connections – to the Carews and to this investigation – are that they are intrinsic to the cultural identities created by William and Reginald throughout the century, their importance substantiated in Antony's portrait collection. Many others whose influence or authority formed part of such cultivation are also featured – as reminders of the primacy of family and the contribution of the calibre of artist

chosen to create their portraits. To list all of them would reduce this thesis to a catalogue of the collection but one example, the portrait of Reginald's wife Jemima's grandmother, Margaret Cocks, the Countess of Hardwicke, another by Kneller, will serve to illustrate the dual interest in sitter and artist in the formation of a cultural identity. To secure the talents of the great portraitist of his age represented a *coup de maître*, endowing the sitter with the assets of wealth, social position, and aristocratic connection by association. Jemima never knew her grandmother but her image was important to Reginald for it authenticated a dynastic link to a network of titled relatives. Margaret's nephew was Charles Cocks, Baron Somers of Evesham whose first wife was Elizabeth Eliot (featured in the portrait of the Eliot family by Reynolds) and whose second wife was Reginald's sister, Anne Pole. This portrait alone would have satisfied the expectations of both the family and its audiences as a vital thread in a strategy of distinction.

3.4 STRATEGIC CURATING

By 1771 William's and Anne's portraits had migrated to the north wall of the Dining Parlour, a space that held honoured guests' attention the longest as they lingered over supper. Long dead, (Anne in 1733, William by 1744) the progress and importance of the family story (and Antony House) are shown in a re-hang where the principals' portraits become part of the 'collection' and the metonymic concept of the 'family seat' is expressed. And even when not invited to dine and spend hours in the presence of the hosts' specifically curated narratives,

Antony's casual visitors were confronted with images intended to convey and, therefore, maintain the family's collective status, authority and wealth.

Once again, Condy's watercolours are useful as a comparative reference. The orientation of his view of the Dining Parlour (Figure 2.7) is from the windows overlooking the gardens with the arched opening at the top left leading into the Inner Hall, beneath the staircase. Paintings, as with furniture, are prone to relocation to reflect the interior design schemes of current occupants, but it is somewhat satisfying to consider that some of those mentioned in the 1771 inventory were *in situ* in the nineteenth century when Condy made his sketch. As we saw in Chapter 2, that inventory tells us that portraits of William's immediate family hung there: his wife, his parents and in-laws, Anne's grandparents, and the (only) portrait of Coventry Carew, whose death occasioned the preparation of that document and Reginald's accession to Antony. It is possible that the female figure on the back wall, closest to the exit, is Mary Bampfylde, Coventry's wife, so that the last of the patrilineal line are placed either side of the full-length swagger portrait of Coventry's great-grandfather, Alexander. In what could be a chronological self-fashioning counterpoint, the rich gold and red of Alexander's costume contrasts with the muted palette of Coventry's riding habit. Alexander's identity is crafted in his spurs and plumed helm and his confident appearance – the very model of a handsome and assured Cavalier. Coventry's portrait offers fewer clues – a slight figure with somewhat bemused features, this bowler-hatted descendant more resembles an apologetic groom than the hereditary master of Antony.

Nevertheless, the potency of the Carew lineage might have held some terrors for the nineteen-year old Reginald had not his own connections to local aristocracy given him some insight into the day-to-day activities of the landed ranks. Reginald had been brought up at Stoke Damerel, just across the Tamar from Antony, in the parish containing the estates of the Morice family and the naval port of Dock. His father, Reginald, married Anne Buller whose maternal grandfather was local hero, the Rt. Rev. Jonathan, the third Baronet Trelawny, who would in the following century be commemorated in the unofficial Anthem of Cornwall, *Song of the Western Men*.⁶⁴ One of John Francis Buller's thirteen children, Anne's siblings brought influential connections via the Bathursts, and further cemented those of the Courtenay and Edgcumbe lineages.⁶⁵ There is also some evidence that young Reginald had spent time at Antony with his grandparents, John Pole, the third Baronet of Shute House and his wife, Anne

⁶⁴ This song was written in 1825 by Robert Stephen Hawker (3 Dec 1803 – 15 Aug 1875), Vicar of Morewenstowe, and is sung as the unofficial National Anthem of Cornwall. Jonathan Trelawny (1650–1721) was one of the seven bishops imprisoned in the Tower of London by James II in 1688 for opposing the king's permissive legislation towards Roman Catholics. 'And shall Trelawny die?' asked the Cornish. On 30 June, 1688, the seven bishops were brought before the King's Bench in Westminster Hall and charged with seditious libel. To cheers in Westminster Hall, and in the streets of London, they were acquitted. News of the acquittal produced scenes of great joy. In Bristol, the church bells rang out and fires were lit in many parts of the city. When the news reached Cornwall, the church bells of Pelynt rang and the mayor fired the two town cannons. The imprisonment and acquittal of the seven bishops became an important milestone in English history. Soon afterwards, William of Orange, with the approval of the Church of England, took the throne. James II fled the country, never to return. Trelawny went on to become Bishop of Exeter, and then Bishop of Winchester.

⁶⁵ William Courtenay's 1512 marriage brought the manors of Chudleigh and Honiton as his wife's dowry. The Edgcumbe line lays claim to the influential Seymours and the Crown, via both Jane Seymour and Katherine, (sister to Jane Grey), and the earls of Northumberland. Anne's brother, James (who also sat for Reynolds and whose portrait is in Antony's collections) succeeded Coventry Carew as county MP for Cornwall, serving from 1748 until his death as a 'Tory country gentleman', Smiles, *Reynolds*, p. 46. James Buller's second wife Jane Bathurst was the second daughter of Allen, 1st Earl Bathurst, while her brother Henry, 2nd Earl Bathurst (1714–1794), became the Lord Chancellor. Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain & Ireland*, vol. 2 (Harrison & Sons, 1898).

Morice. The senior Reginald's portrait by Reynolds hung in the Striped Bedroom in 1771, alongside '22 Heads of Famous Men' (apparently etchings, from the notation in the inventory) – the analogy perhaps not being lost on the sitter as an occasional visitor to Antony. It is difficult to ascertain the reception of the portrait by a distant relative whose contribution to the family lineage would not be realised for thirty more years, but the commission and display of his father's image would certainly have flattered the younger Reginald and demonstrated the esteem attached to the Pole name. To make visual reference to the interconnectedness of the lineal descendants of Antony to friends and neighbours, Reginald re-sited his father's portrait in the principal public rooms.

It might be possible to extend this examination of later eighteenth-century curatorial strategies using Condy's watercolour of the Dining Parlour. If this scheme was created by Reginald then the display brought to life (and recorded for posterity) the heritage he claimed through family portraits from Alexander to Coventry, with his great-grandfather, Sir John, in the most prominent position over the hearth. Designed to operate within a culture where familial bonds could be considered as having a 'sacred' or classically rooted character, the proposition that these paintings also provided for those viewers who elected not to relate to such abstract concepts is strongly supported by the concept that they were intended to replicate actual and ordinary experience. The display of these groups, as mentioned earlier, suggests an intention to represent the sensation of meeting the family – moving away from the Hall as the point of first contact and into the more sociable spaces of the late eighteenth-century Dining Parlour.

There, the complexities of lineage would have been articulated as the host 'introduced' family members (and their relevant histories) to guests, overseen by the aristocratic portrait of Reginald's ancestor.

To this point, the creation of a cultural identity has been discussed with regard to (mostly family) portraiture. Although they comprise the majority of paintings at Antony, more can be said about other artworks in the house that contribute to distinction. Sixty-five of the 203 paintings listed for Antony in the Public Catalogue Foundation, feature landscapes, sea battles, animals and still life groups providing evidence for an interest in other genres produced by non-native artists. Pears suggested that the 1672 alliance between Holland and England and the 1720s South Sea venture encouraged the acquisition of Dutch painting in greater numbers than in any other period in the history of collecting.⁶⁶ Old Masteraintings (mainly mythological or religious subjects) commanded the highest prices but also attracted the highest import duties; while the proliferation of cheaper, smaller, secular works from the Low Countries triggered the growth in auction sales, art dealers, and collectors. Buyers became increasingly aware of the importance of authorship, provenance and the appropriate placement of particular kinds of subject matter within country houses or city mansions. The arrival of artists from Holland enlivened the British art market and provided new modes of connecting the landscape to its people. Although Walpole pigeonholed

⁶⁶ Pears, *The Discovery of Painting*, pp.106, 148–9.

the painters of Holland as 'drudging mimics of Nature's most uncomely coarseness',⁶⁷ William, and art collectors like him, showed an enduring affection for Dutch painting. Tucked into the 1771 inventory was a four-page list headed 'the Names of the best Painter[s] in Holland' with subsections of the genres in which each worked.⁶⁸ The significance of this 'wish list' among the archives points to active collecting habits, demonstrated by some of the named artists' works hung on the walls, featured in the inventories, or reproduced in Condy's sketches. Each adds dimension to William's self-fashioning and indicates a general interest among his peers in the particular significance of these new imports for the art market and the discourses of discernment.

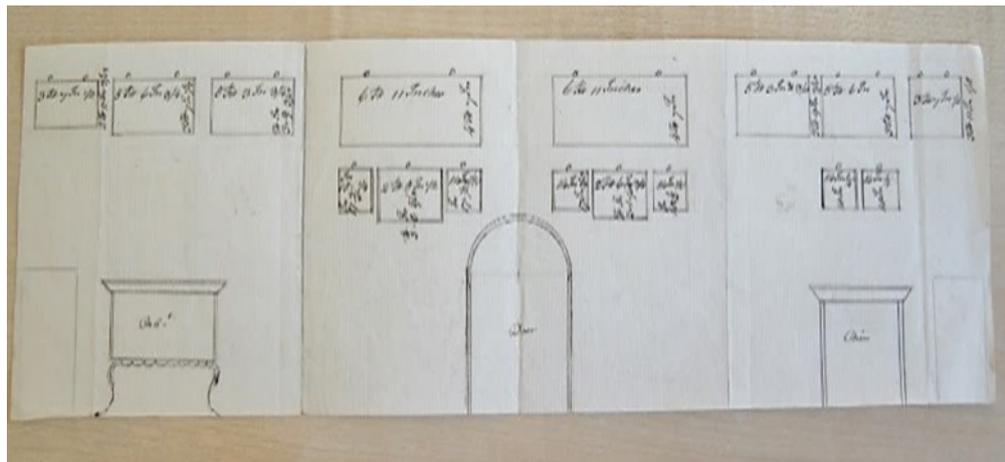


FIGURE 3.5: HAND-DRAWN HANGING PLAN (SALOON) UNDATED

⁶⁷ Christopher Brown, *Scholars of Nature: The Collecting of Dutch Painting in Britain 1610–1857* (Hull: University of Hull, 1981), p.423.

⁶⁸ Archive bundle CE/E/48.

A hand-drawn sketch of a hanging plan⁶⁹ (Figure 3.5) and Condy's nineteenth-century watercolour of the Saloon (Figure 3.6) present the opportunity to discuss the arrangements of paintings in this space in the formation of a cultural identity. Precise measurements for the pictures to be placed on the walls of this room in the sketch offer tantalising invitations to match up extant paintings in the collection but so many works have been moved or dispersed from Antony's holdings that such a project is doomed to failure. However, large paintings, like the two shown on the plan (with dimensions of 6ft 11 inches by 4ft 7 inches), usually signified important subjects such as the vast historical or biblical/mythological scenes approximated in Condy's watercolour. The 1771 inventory indicates that the walls were decorated with several landscapes and scenes of biblical subjects including a 'head' by Rembrandt, two seascapes by Van der Veldt, a couple of typical Salvatoré Rosas, and a *Battle Piece of King William* by Jan van Wyck on the chimney breast. (Fewer, however, on the scale that Condy proposed). Using the inventory, we could assert that the interest for William's guests was the range of subjects by historically-important artists, suggesting their host's discernment. The works by Rembrandt and Van der Veldt belonged to earlier centuries and were likely inherited pieces, but the addition of the son and heir – Coventry Carew's portrait – indicates the changing nature of the display as William responded to events that shaped his life.

⁶⁹ CE/E/27.



FIGURE 3.6: THE SALOON, BY CONDY

By the time Condy painted his view of the Saloon, (Figure 3.6)⁷⁰ its decoration had altered dramatically: the van Wyck is still over the fireplace but Coventry's portrait has been removed, the works attributed to Holbein have disappeared and the artist has suggested that the room was dominated by an unlikely overdoor – a *Sleeping Venus* which appears out of character for William but may have been an heirloom. The 1771 inventory notes a *Sleeping Venus* attributed to a 'follower of Titian', and *St John Preaching [in] a Landscape* by a 'disciple' of Rubens, although neither are to be found in any other inventory nor in

⁷⁰ Nicholas Condy (1793–1857) was born in the town of Torpoint, and we can date his watercolours of Antony to the 1840s as being contemporaneous with a book of illustrations of Cothele interiors he prepared for the Edgumbes. See Margaret Ponsonby, *Faded and Threadbare Historic Textiles and Their Role in Houses Open to the Public* (Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2015).

the extant holdings leading to speculation that if they had existed at Antony they may have been sold or given away. Other details of the Saloon furnishings, including the pier glasses and Queen Anne gilt gesso side tables (which were made for this room) were authentic. The subtext in Condry's view could be either a précis of Reginald's inherited interests which contributed directly to the creation of his distinction, or a Victorian concept of what the aristocratic country house should look like.

Nonetheless, as a key document, the inventory allows us to see the sum of William's collections through time. Its anonymous compiler updated the catalogue by adding artist's names when more certain attributions replaced those that had been doubtful); acquisitions, and site, if moved to another room. This may have been simply expedient upon the transfer of the house and contents, although it is just as plausible that up-to-date inventories were valuable tools for those amassing picture collections to be able to review their holdings, reassess their associations and their display strategies. In any event, the Saloon display was not unified around any one particular theme (like Marlborough's), nor was it a gallery of sought-after Italian masterpieces (as Walpole's) but instead represented an accumulation of paintings that William and Anne considered representative of their cultural identities to exhibit in this, the most spectacular of their public spaces. The conclusion must be that neither the 1771 inventory or Condry's watercolour are definitive records; only the subject, dates and names of artists (where available and verifiable) help to propose an evidence-based rationale for how they were used as cultural identifiers although the voices have

been lost. Did Reginald, as the archives suggest, put more energy into creating a cultural identity in his London residences? His audiences would have been more varied, and perhaps it would be fair to say that the visual culture he selected to craft his identity records a more prescient preoccupation in the city. As Pointon has asserted, paintings (particularly portraits) articulated the very public role they played in concepts of the individual.⁷¹ Chapter 4 will discuss this topic in more depth.

Cultural consumption has, for many social historians, been considered as the cultivation of the self,⁷² and in Bourdieu's examinations of the fields of cultural production, he concluded that the superfluity and lack of necessity in ostentatious displays of luxury goods characterised the selfhood of landowners.⁷³ In general, the objective was to create distinction and it follows that distinction was to be found in and guided by the agency of the patron. Portraiture claimed for its sitter an elevated, autonomous identity within interlinked social and political hierarchies, although the content of that identity was equally responsive to the patron's circumstances. Susan Broomhall related the story of a Scottish nobleman's quest for his cultural identity which illuminates a typical scenario. In 1751, James Murray, the second Duke of Atholl wrote to his nephew on the Grand Tour asking him to look out for portraits of William, Prince of Orange and

⁷¹ Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, p.159–75; see also Richard Wendorf, *Elements of Life: Biography and Portrait-Painting in Stuart and Georgian England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 127.

⁷² Terry Lovell, 'Subjective Powers? Consumption, the Reading Public, and Domestic Woman in Early Eighteenth-Century England,' in *The Consumption of Culture*, p.23.

⁷³ Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p.1.

his third wife, Charlotte de Bourbon. These images were to form part of an elaborate dynastic representational scheme that he would display at Blair Castle, his renovated family seat in Perthshire.⁷⁴ Atholl's family history could be traced back to Robert the Bruce and one could question why, given the excitability of clan identity and ancient lineage, he would actively search for a link to a foreign prince. Circumstantially, Murray's view seemed to be that a line of heritage that visualised the House of Orange supported his Hanoverian politics (although it alienated family members who were very senior Jacobite generals and sympathetic friends.) An equivalent situation at Antony could be seen in the portraits of Charles I and Charles II. In William's day, these formed parts of his cultural identity because the family's rank and privileges originated as royal favours and, as loyal courtiers, the Carews owed a duty to the Crown. For Reginald, the Stuart monarchs become historical footnotes, losing political relevance but retaining their ability to re-state the family's provenance, although he removed them to less privileged sites in the house.

3.5 COLLECTING CULTURE

Within six years of their daughter's marriage, both Gilbert and Dorothy Coventry were dead. As sole heiress, Anne inherited some of her father's art collections and archived papers but the Coventry titles and acreage worth

⁷⁴ Susan Broomhall, *Spaces for Feeling: Emotions and Sociabilities in Britain, 1650–1850* (Taylor & Francis, 2015), p.52. Broomhall's research is focused on the history of emotions and material culture, publishing extensively on the gender, politics and materiality in early modern Europe, 1500–1800.

£22,367 in annual income passed, under the rules of primogeniture, to a male second cousin. Unlike William, Gilbert maintained careful records of his patronage of artists and, while not complete, they provide the basis upon which hypotheses can be drawn about the primacy of acquiring art works – and portraits in particular – as a social norm among the aristocracy.⁷⁵ Formal contracts or commissioning documents no longer survive but the chronicled exchange of monies license their existence while correspondence provides invaluable transactional data matching artist, portrait and expenditure. For example, Gilbert records: ‘December: P^d Mr. Kersaboom for Drawing my Picture & for the frame £16 10s 0d.’ Its accompanying receipt verifies the transaction:

[D]ecember 21 A^{no}. 1694. Received of Mr. Coventry the sum of sixtiene p^{ou} ten syllings for his picture and frame which is now in my hands a finishing at this time [signed] by J. Kerseboom).

These two entries reveal the nature of the commission and how the finances were handled (with an added assumption that the finished portrait probably did not arrive in Croome d’Abitoit, the Coventry family estate, until the following year). Sixteen ninety-four exacted a not inconsiderable toll on the Worcestershire earl’s coffers: his expenditure on portraits equated to

⁷⁵ There are some similar archived notes from the 1740s relating to bills for painting and framing two Carew portraits but the details are sketchy and it unclear whether this is a bill from a dealer or the artist (Joseph Smith). The work – a double portrait of ‘Carew and his Lady’ cost 20 guineas, added to which were three $\frac{3}{4}$ pictures at 4 guineas each (subject not indicated); a large gold frame at £6, three black $\frac{3}{4}$ frames at 15 s. each and ‘car[riage] Wharf[age] &c’ costing 9 shillings. These works cannot be identified in the extant collection.

approximately £11,680 by today's reckoning.⁷⁶ Apart from Kerseboom's commission, Coventry paid Joseph Bird £3.10s.0d for a 'drawing of Sir William Keyte and my Ladys Picture' plus five more paintings on subjects as diverse as the Duke of York and an equestrian picture of the earl's favourite horse, Peacock,⁷⁷ as well as £30 to Kneller for the portrait of his wife. Thirty pounds for a painting of Lady Coventry by the most celebrated artist of the day would seem to be an appropriate charge for a standard three-quarter length portrait (almost twice the price of Kerseboom's portrait of the Earl) given its attendant value in societal terms.⁷⁸ The entry below that in the accounts is puzzling: it appears that Coventry gave it away as a present 'according to her promise' yet it remains in the collection and the name of the intended recipient is illegible, but it could be an indication of the currency (and value) of a portrait beyond the immediate family.⁷⁹

The portrait-gift signified likeness as presence. As part of eighteenth-century urban life, portraits enabled individuals to re-present themselves and their possessions, ensuring that clothing, jewellery, and personal adornment

⁷⁶ CE/E/48.

⁷⁷ From the Christies inventory, against a painting by Joseph Bird of a Grey Stallion led by a Groom ('the Horse Thief') in a Lely panel frame, a note from Oliver Millar records that 'Mr. Joseph Bird copied it for Mr. Coventry, later 4th Lord Coventry, cost 10 shillings; also a white stallion beloved to the 4th Earl of Pembroke, horse called Peacock' which appears in the archives as having been paid on December 14, 1694. Archive: CE/E/48.

⁷⁸ Relative value of approximately £3,895 in 2014.

⁷⁹ William Morice made his Will on 28 November 1702 'being weak in body but of perfect mind and memory' and died two days later on 30 November, aged 68. His wife, Lady Elizabeth, lived for a further 19 years and died in late December 1720. Meanwhile William and Lady Elizabeth's youngest daughter Dorothy had married her cousin Gilbert, 4th Earl of Coventry on 30 November 1694. They lived mainly at Hidcote House but also from time to time at Ebrington Manor. When he became 4th Earl Coventry in 1712 he and Dorothy moved to Croome in Worcestershire. Earl Gilbert had an extravagant lifestyle – he redesigned the gardens at Croome and redecorated and refurbished the House.

contributed to both showing their position and demonstrating luxury.⁸⁰ Women of quality were known to wear miniatures of their husbands (in emulation of the Crown's custom of signifying favour); and, when given as tokens of love, friendship or even political propaganda, such ambulant portraits were often echoed in large-scale portraiture, to serve the cultural needs of the subject or patron.⁸¹ When Hogarth's friend Jean-André Rouquet stated that 'in England [...] it is the custom, even for men, to present one another with their pictures,' it is generally assumed he was referring to full-scale portraits.⁸² There can be no explanation for Kneller's portrait of Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, in Antony's collection other than as a gift from the sitter, her husband or, in consanguinity's farthest reach, as a descendant of Elizabeth Drake, the sixteenth-century sister of Francis Drake who had married Jane Bampfylde (grandmother of Mary Morice) in 1602. Since bloodline carried such weight in the eighteenth century, it may not have been surprising that the latter, imaginative, connection held the greater authority.

⁸⁰ For an analysis of portraiture as organisational concept and practice in 18th-century England, see Pointon, *Hanging the Head*. For issues of 18th-century luxury, see, for example, the classic account by John J. Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

⁸¹ See Susan Staves, 'Married Women's Separate Property in England 1660–1833' in Brewer and Staves, eds., *Early Modern Conceptions of Property, Consumption and Culture in 17th and 18th Centuries* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1996); and E. Tavor Bannet, 'The Marriage Act of 1753: A Most Cruel Law for the Fair Sex', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 30, no. 3 (1997), pp.233–54; Pointon, *Surrounded with Brilliants*, p.51, highlights the fashion and extent of wearing portable portraits.

⁸² Rouquet. *The Present State of the Arts in England*, p.33.

3.6 HEIRS AND SPARES

For the hierarchically superior Gilbert, the fourth Earl Coventry,⁸³ the decisive detail in the marriage match for his daughter was the promise of matrilineal descendants: Anne was Gilbert's only child. Primogeniture was vital to the maintenance of the social structure but when bloodlines failed to produce the required male heir, the foundations of aristocratic dynasties were undermined. They were prey to all the moral horrors of Roman legacy hunting, so brilliantly described in the satires of Horace which, in topical conversation, engrossed English gossip-columnists and matrimonial agencies.⁸⁴ The lack of a male heir posed a serious problem for the Coventrys; for William, too, the pressure to marry well would have been a prime concern. He, like Anne, carried dynastic weight upon his shoulders, although his position lacked the desperation of any of Aphrodite's acolytes.

We cannot know how the Coventrys viewed the field of prospective husbands for their daughter although research has shown that between 1700 and 1724 there were fifty-seven unmarried peers.⁸⁵ Ruling out minors, idiots, and the otherwise inappropriate, there should have been thirty-six appropriate and

⁸³ Thrice-enobled, Coventry was created Viscount Deerhurst in 1711 and Baron Aylesborough in 1712.

⁸⁴ Legacy hunting (or *captatio*) is the practice of insinuating oneself into the will of a wealthy (usually childless) individual through various types of attention (including flattery, social deference, political, legal, or moral support, and even sexual favours). The three most substantial legacy hunting narratives in Latin literature were Horace Sermones 2.5, the end of Petronius' *Satyrice*, and Juvenal Satire 12. See: Heather A. Woods, *Hunting Literary Legacies: Captatio in Roman Satire*, (University of Minnesota, 2012).

⁸⁵ Of this number, 4 were Catholic priests, 7 died before the age of 15 (including the 3rd Earl Coventry who died in 1712 age 10, at Eton, having held the title for 18 months), and 10 died before reaching their majority. Cannon, *Aristocratic Century*, .p.81.

eligible bachelors whose position in society corresponded to the Coventrys and whose assets would (materially and socially) profit their daughter. Social equality in marriage was, for most in their ranks, part of the natural order of things. Henry Stebbing wrote in 1755, that while it was advantageous for a woman to marry above her station, 'the rich and great have as rarely so little pride as to permit them to marry below theirs'.⁸⁶ Impoverished noblemen whose dire financial straits suppressed objective dignity could be persuaded to enter into a 'fortunate' marriage, although these were not necessarily successful in personal terms. The case of Thomas Thynne II (distantly related to the Coventrys) stands out: he abducted Elizabeth, the fourteen-year-old heiress to the vast Percy estates but was murdered at the instigation of a rival suitor.⁸⁷ Such spectacularly disastrous unions were unusual, in most cases a fortunate marriage was a very useful boost to a family's social and financial prospects. Marriages among landed families were essentially financial arrangements, designed to cement powerful alliances and exchange or acquire land and property, arranged by parents with the

⁸⁶ Recent research by Anne Laurance of the OU reveals that in 1742, a guide was published: *A Master Key to the Rich Ladies Treasury: the Widower and Batchelor's Directory* listed more than 400 women, including widows and spinsters, their place of abode, their reputed fortune and amount of money they had invested in the stock market. The anonymous author cast his net wide: several of the women were in their 70s and 80s. (Paper presented to the Economic History Society Annual Conference, 2015, by Anne Laurence, *Women in England 1500–1760* (Hachette UK, 2013). See also Henry Stebbing, *A Dissertation on the Power of States to Deny Civil Protection to the Marriages of Minors Made without the Consent of Their Parents or Guardians: In Which the Opinion of Baron Puffendorf Upon That Subject, Is Examined* (C. Davis, against Grays-Inn-Gate in Holborn, 1755), in Randolph Trumbach, *The Rise of the Egalitarian Family: Aristocratic Kinship and Domestic Relations in Eighteenth-Century England* (Academic Press, 1978), p. 107–8. In Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, Marlow rejects Kate Hardcastle when he is still mistaking her for a simple barmaid instead of a lady: 'But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune and education makes an honourable connection impossible' Goldsmith, *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (Oxford University Press, 1966), p.42

⁸⁷ B.D. Henning, *The House of Commons, 1660–1690* (History of Parliament Trust, 1983), p.21.

prospective bride and groom having little or no say.⁸⁸ Lord Halifax made the prospects plain when he explained to his daughter ‘it is one of the Disadvantages belonging to your Sex, that young Women are seldom permitted to make their own Choice.’⁸⁹

Unsurprisingly, given the interest in portraiture and the cultivation of projected individualism, the aristocratic institution of pragmatic marriage came under attack from several quarters.⁹⁰ Novels and advice literature created a necessary relationship with social practice while in the broader visual culture of the age, Hogarth's *Marriage à la Mode* reflected the mood. His series concerning a ‘fortunate’ marriage, which depicted the tragic outcome of a match made between an impoverished, debauched young earl and the daughter of a social-climbing rich merchant, was afforded exposure through the rise of the popular print. The writer Hester Chapone characterised such matches as ‘Smithfield bargains’, in reference to the famed London meat market (and the ‘vulgar’ commercial activities in the City), and exclaimed ‘so much ready money for so

⁸⁸ The Judge considered ‘it was [the petitioner’s] duty to love and obey the man chosen by her parents and relations, who were qualified by their experience to judge better for her, than she could for herself’ *Mary, a Fiction and the Wrongs of Woman, or Maria*, Michelle Faubert, (ed.), (Broadview Press, 2012), p.199.

⁸⁹ George Savile, *The Lady's New-Year's Gift ... [by George Savile, Marquis of Halifax.] the Fifth Edition, Etc* (M. Gillyflower, 1696), p. 25.

⁹⁰ In her section of *Early Modern Concepts of Property*, Staves cites a popular play: Susanna Centlivres’ *A Bold Stroke for a Wife* (1718) which concerns a ‘dead-hand’ gesture, wherein a deceased father handed the control of his daughter’s marriage choices to four highly idiosyncratic guardians whose consent must be achieved before her lover may claim her hand (and her inheritance) Brewer and Staves, loc. cit. See also Peyton v. Bury (1731) – a case before the Court to rule on the forfeiture of a legacy upon an unapproved marriage in Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, pp.533–560.

much land, and my daughter flung in into the bargain!⁹¹ The lack of compassion or subtlety in such arrangements was rather bluntly, but no less accurately, voiced by Fielding's Sir Positive Trap, who revelled in the cattle market analogy and argued that there was no need for courtship:

I never saw my lady [...] till an hour before our marriage. I made my addresses to her father, her father to his lawyer, the lawyer to my estate, which being found a Smithfield equivalent – the bargain was struck. Addressing quotha! What need have young people of addressing, or anything, till they come to undressing.⁹²

Personal relationships, existing or cultivated, represented the currency that achieved necessary introductions, vital recommendations, and the orchestrated settings for societal transactions leading to fruitful unions.⁹³ In the age when appearance was a primary concern, behind-the-scenes brokering and other, often unseemly, strategies to secure advantageous matches among the minor aristocracy were glossed over as *faites accomplis* in elegant, academically-finished portraits that celebrated the successful outcome of social engineering. One can easily imagine the conversations that occupied the Coventrys from the day of Anne's birth and which took on more urgency as no male heir appeared to secure their lineage. While the archives do not privilege the negotiations, the satisfaction of locating a suitable groom from among society was doubtless

⁹¹ Hester Chapone, in *Eighteenth-Century Women: An Anthology*, ed. Bridget Hill (Unwin Hyman, 1984), p.74.

⁹² Henry Fielding, *Love in Several Masques*, quoted in Bridget Hill, *Women, Work and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England* (Taylor & Francis, 2005).

⁹³ David Cressy, 'Kinship and Kin Interaction in Early-Modern England', *Past and Present*, 113 (1986).

cause for celebration (and concomitant relief.) Perhaps Anne's grandfather, Thomas Coventry, and William's father, who served in the same Convention Parliaments (1660–1690), agreed the mutually beneficial match for their offspring? A cautionary note might have been interjected, however, by the example of William's erstwhile guardian, Richard Edgcumbe, who was 'cullied' into marrying Lord Sandwich's youngest daughter Anne. (Her father, Edward Montagu, was £10,000 in debt just before he was drowned at the battle of Solebay in 1672.)⁹⁴ Montagu was accused of ransacking the holds of prize ships during the Second Anglo-Dutch War of 1665–67 and unlawfully helping himself to a fortune. When word reached London, it became a national affair – dubbed the Prize Goods Scandal – fanned by his political adversary Sir William Coventry, (a descendant of Margaret Jeffreys whose marriage portion included the family seat, Croome d'Abitoit, and uncle to the unfortunate Thomas Thynne II. Betrothal to William would have, at least, secured a future for Anne as the newest member of an established landed family, cinched to her own claims to an impressive lineage.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ *The House of Commons, 1660–1690*, p.83. According to the *Flagellum Parliamentarium*, subtitled: 'Sarcastic Notices of Nearly Two Hundred Members of the First Parliament after the Restoration, AD 1661 to AD 1678' 'cully' is explained as 'to befool'. The entry for Edgcumbe reads: 'Cullyed to marry the Halcyon bulk breaking Sandwich's daughter' p.4. Bulk-breaking, in law, refers to the removal of parts of a package or parcel, destroying its entirety; Nicholas Harris and Andrew Marvell, *Flagellum Parliamentarium* 1827, (London: Printed by J. B. Nichols).

⁹⁵ It is interesting to note that between 1690 and 1715, of the Members of Parliament who became connected by marriage with a titled family, nearly three-quarters were themselves descended from that same social milieu. The very largest windfalls went to those already at the top of the social pyramid: from those with precisely calculable portions, we find 37 heiresses worth £10,000 or more, and as many as 19 married into the peerage, including the dukedoms of Beaufort and Devonshire, the marquessates of Exeter and Halifax, and the earldoms of Ailesbury, Derby, Oxford, Sandwich, and Sunderland.

Unmarried daughters represented social burdens – ‘pathetic, failures, or even loathed, diseased, and bestial creatures’ - often seized upon by the press in order to diminish a family’s status and cultural value.⁹⁶ Spinsters presented a distinct, ideological and practical threat to the community’s welfare: scrutinised and subject to malicious slander, unmarried women or widows were often the targets of accusations of illicit sexual relationships and, perhaps most importantly, the financial burdens of bastardy. Vickery referred to them as ‘unstable’ households⁹⁷ although Stobart and Rothery drew attention to the fact that such households were ‘common amongst the landed élites in this period.’⁹⁸ In the patriarchal society of eighteenth-century England, marriage was the only path to female respectability. Among so-called redundant women the pressure to make a suitable match was never more keenly felt.

William’s step-sister, Rachel, was the youngest of two surviving daughters from their father’s first marriage. Her elder sister, Jane, had married Jonathan Rashleigh, a local landowner and MP in 1687, but by this date, Rachel’s spinsterhood was a cause for concern. Sir John had now taken a third wife (the union produced William and his siblings) and so, when a marriage for Rachel to Ambrose Manaton of Kilworthy, Devon was secured in 1690, the relief must have been palpable for all parties. The Manatons were significant landowners and

⁹⁶ Amy M. Froide’s, *Never Married: Single Women in Early Modern England* (Oxford Scholarship, 2005) argues that a negative view of single women was, in part, due to the success of some spinsters in employment and as property holds. Critics feared others might follow the women’s example and choose to remain single despite being needed to produce the next generation. See p. 175.

⁹⁷ Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, pp. 49–82, 184–206.

⁹⁸ Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the country house*, p. 111.

staunch royalists which must have pleased Sir John, if not for political alliance then certainly for the alleviation of the encumbrance (and allied expenses) of an unmarried female under his patronage. Rachel's portrait by Mary Beale is noted in the 1771 inventory as hanging on the south wall of the Library – among her kith and kin, and depicts the sitter as a confident, handsome woman draped in a Lely-*esque* gown of contrasting shimmering silks, whose eyes capture the viewer as a smile plays about her lips. There is nothing in this portrait that would indicate that Rachel was not a 'catch'; although her arranged marriage to landed gentry, rather than landed aristocracy, demoted her in the hierarchies of society. Her age may have played a part in this – at 26, Rachel was already at the margins of eligibility and, prophetically, fertility.

Manaton held the post as Mayor of Tintagel and MP for the Cornish towns of Newport, Camelford and Tavistock, until frequent ill-health forced his parliamentary absences. He died at the age of 48, merely six years after his marriage. Of Rachel, there is little further information except the anecdotal reference that she was the inspiration for Daphne DuMaurier's *My Cousin Rachel*, published in 1951, relevant only to twentieth-century audiences. Fortunately, however, Rachel's name and rank '2nd D^{au} of Sir John Carew, Wife of Ambrose Manaton of Kilworthy,'⁹⁹ was inscribed across the top of the canvas bearing her likeness. This was a customary practice among the nobility who 'had a responsibility to catalogue and keep careful note of the identities of sitters who

⁹⁹ CE/E/48.

might otherwise become meaningless faces.¹⁰⁰ When the celebrated English philosopher John Locke sat for Kneller for his portrait in 1704 he asked the artist to inscribe the reverse of the canvas with his name and the date:

else the pictures of private persons are lost in two or three generations and so the picture loses of its value, it being not known whom it was made to represent.¹⁰¹

Upon Rachel's demise, leaving no children to carry on the Manaton name, her earthly remains were returned to her family for burial. In death, a non-productive wife found no right to rest in her husband's family vaults. Her image, now superfluous to the Manaton line, found refuge as a memorial portrait which preserved her link and identity, as a (status-superior) Carew and a member of the aristocracy. In terms of its contribution to the cultural identity of William (and those who followed him), Rachel's portrait celebrated a capability to increase the connectedness of the family to a wider world, sadly unrealised.

William and Anne's son, Coventry, was born in 1717, just four years after his mother sat for Dahl. Depicted in an undated portrait (Figure 3.7) by Edward Penny, the sixth heir to the baronetcy is costumed in a riding habit complete with what appears to be a bowler hat.¹⁰² A notation in the inventory declares that it is a 'striking likeness' but since this is the only portrait of Coventry at Antony (or

¹⁰⁰ Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, p. 151.

¹⁰¹ David Piper, *Catalogue of Seventeenth-Century Portraits in the National Portrait Gallery, 1625–1714* (Published for the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery at the University Press, 1963), p. 209.

¹⁰² Bowler hats were not created until 1849 for the younger brother of the 2nd Earl of Leicester, although several of Wootton's equestrian portraits show this type of headgear being worn, but principally by grooms.

elsewhere), we cannot confirm this comment and, as noted elsewhere in this paper, the credentials of the compiler are often suspect. Moved from its original position, it currently hangs above the main staircase of the House, perhaps as a pointed twenty-first-century curatorial decision to group family members together in one space to create more legible narratives.



FIGURE 3.7: SIR COVENTRY CAREW, 6TH BT., BY EDWARD PENNEY,
UNDATED,
OIL ON CANVAS, 127 X 101CM.

In this picture, the young heir has paused, making direct eye-contact with the viewer, as he pulls on his gloves while his groom steadies his mount in the

middle ground (the image has been artificially lightened so the details can be seen). Mustered pack animals are about to move off in search of their quarry while dawn light breaks over the distant hillside. The artist, Edward Penny, became the Royal Academy's founding Professor of Painting and, while not as celebrated as Reynolds, recent scholarship suggests that his mid-1760s paintings should be recognised as a highly significant attempt to apply the themes and concerns of historical art to accessible, contemporary subject matter.¹⁰³ He does this in Coventry's image by revising the genre of the equestrian portrait: the loaded entail of self-fashioning is here communicated in a composition which relied on contemporary cognisance of the role of the country aristocrat as guardian of the nation rather than *bravura* monarchical depictions of man and (symbolic) beast (as seen in van Dyke's depictions of Charles I.) In 1771, this portrait hung in the Green Room in the company of painted views of Antony House and Dock – the two locations of interest to the sitter's family – as well as portraits of his wife, Mary Bampfylde, and of his younger sister, Anne – for whom there is no further information nor any extant image. By the time Nicholas Condy painted his watercolour views of Antony's interior, the portraits of Coventry and his wife had been re-sited to the Dining Room along with the full-length of Alexander Carew. One might assume that in this location, the interest for visitors lay in the scandalous ancestor whose position between Coventry and Mary added a narrative to stimulate after-dinner conversation. Depending on a guest's

¹⁰³ Lucinda Lax, 'The "ingenious Moral Painter": *Edward Penny, the Royal Academy and the Reinvention of Genre Painting 1768–1782*' (University of York, 2013).

political persuasion, a further frisson of excitement was indicated in Coventry's archives:¹⁰⁴ a reference to a small pen and ink of his wife, engraved with the Jacobite emblem of a white rose and the dates of birth of Charles Edward Stuart and Henry Benedict Stuart around the edges with the legend 'Mart^yred for King and Country 1746' at a central point.¹⁰⁵ Overtly political portraiture often used a single biographical detail to draw a personage into association with a contemporary or historical event, or text.¹⁰⁶ The flowering of Jacobite material culture in numerous media, from glassware to prints, in the years between 1746 and about 1760 lent credence to the theory that Jacobitism remained more of a threat (real as well as perceived) after Culloden.¹⁰⁷ Coventry's father was involved in both 1715 and 1745 Uprisings and although the young Carew followed his Tory father's politics, there is no evidence he was involved in the Jacobite cause, but perhaps his wife's sympathies lay with the 'king over the water'.¹⁰⁸

A more conventional portrait of Mary, who had married her cousin Coventry in 1738, depicted her in a three-quarter length seated pose, clad in a white dress, embellished with a lavish lace collar and sleeves, and pink ribbon lacing her bodice. She wears pearls and coral shawl and there is a small brown dog at her

¹⁰⁴ CZ/EE/30.

¹⁰⁵ Charles Edward – the Young Pretender/Bonnie Prince Charlie, and his brother Henry; the date 1746 refers to the Battle of Culloden which effectively ended the Jacobite cause.

¹⁰⁶ Kevin D. Murphy and Sally O'Driscoll, (eds), *Studies in Ephemera: Text and Image in Eighteenth-Century Print* (Bucknell University Press, 2013), pp. 180–183.

¹⁰⁷ Neil Guthrie, *The Material Culture of the Jacobites* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), p.16.

¹⁰⁸ William Carew was involved in Jacobite plotting, notably in 1743–44 when he was one of the English Tory leaders who requested a French invasion to boost Jacobite risings in England and Scotland. He furthered such plotting with fellow Jacobite Sir Watkin Williams Wynn under the guise of meetings of the Independent Electors of Westminster.

side.¹⁰⁹ These are all details which might promise animation, except that her face is mask-like, revealing nothing of her personality. Retford commented that such mid-century portraits conveyed gentility and polite posture as fashionable sensibilities demanded. Later paintings deployed the concept of sentiment in order to prompt sentimental reflection in the viewer and to advertise artists' abilities to convey emotion, which would gain them further commissions.¹¹⁰ Mary Carew's impassive image belongs to early Georgian painting philosophies and, like her mother-in-law, Anne, her portrait advertises her wealth and status although it lacks the accessorising that Dahl found necessary to create his sitter's identity. Painted within seven years of their marriage, Mary's painted image knits the kinship of the Devonshire Politmore and Morice baronetcies with the Carews of Antony. To ensure the connections were more legible, the portraits of Elizabeth Drake, Mary's paternal great-great-grandmother and William Morice, her maternal grandfather, hung in close proximity. During the brief four years that Coventry held the title as Antony's sixth baronet he was unable to add much to the family's cultural artefacts, although he was able to increase the estate's holdings funded by £16,000 that arrived as part of Mary's dowry. Sadly, Penny's painted aspirations outlived those of his sitters: Coventry died aged 32 without leaving an heir and although Mary remarried (Francis Buller) she, too, died without issue.

¹⁰⁹ From the 16th century onwards, lap dogs and hunting dogs in paintings represented social status.

¹¹⁰ Retford, 'Sensibility and Genealogy in the Eighteenth-Century Family Portrait,' *The Historical Journal* 46, no. 3 (2003), online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3133561>].

Once again, the precedents of primogeniture instituted a chaotic search for a suitable heir before descending upon Reginald Pole, a cousin through William's step-sister, Jane. By the terms of Coventry's Will, Reginald added Carew to his own surname: no doubt Reginald was happy to comply for although the Poles had aristocratic connections, his branch of the family would have been considered gentry. It was not unusual for non-aristocratic inheritors to assume the name of their benefactor on inheriting a family seat and, for Reginald, it legitimised his claim to the Antony estates. Almost immediately on claiming his inheritance, Reginald set off on an extended Grand Tour not returning to Cornwall until 1781.¹¹¹ Repatriated to the land of his birth and seeking an appropriate occupation, Reginald counted on the powerful support of his friend and neighbour, Lord Mount Edgcumbe, and the Hardwicke connections of his future wife Jemima Yorke, which ensured him a seat in Parliament as befitting a country gentleman of means.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Letterbook CC/G3/1 contains 9 pages of tiny, closely-spaced handwriting listing the places Reginald visited with annotations and tourist guide notes (and some mileage between stopping places) from Antwerp, through North Holland to Germany ('3 days with the same horses and a 2-wheel chaise', calling in at Hanover, Berlin, Dresden. He makes a point of writing here 'If Edgcumbe is desirous of seeing the silver.' Then again, two pages later 'If Edgcumbe [wants] to go to the B_____, he will do well to enquire at Clausthal for Baron Reden, the Chief Director of them, who was last year in England and speaks both English and French, and is a very intelligent man.' The Grand Tour notes culminate with Reginald's recommendations for maps, books, lists of hotels, poste information, sights and the invitation that he '[...] will have particular pleasure in [...] the Ladies of that Court who want recommendations to command his attention.'

¹¹² Jemima Yorke was a daughter of Philip Yorke, 2nd Earl of Hardwicke and his wife the Marchioness Grey, and grand-daughter of Philip Yorke, the 1st Earl of Hardwicke and Margaret Cocks (whose portrait by Reynolds hangs at Antony.)

Newly styled 'the Right Honourable' Reginald, now twenty, hyphenated Pole-Carew, and heir to extensive properties in the south-west of England,

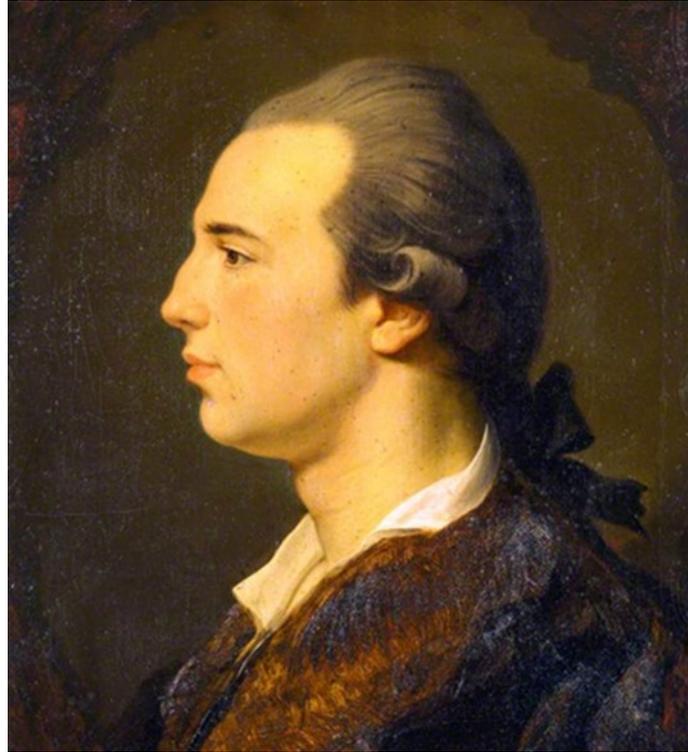


FIGURE 3.8 – THE RIGHT HONOURABLE REGINALD POLE-CAREW, MP.,
BY JOHANN WYRSCH, 1773, OIL ON CANVAS, 54 X 43CM

commissioned the Swiss artist Wyrsh for his portrait (Figure 3.8). Perhaps inspired by his exposure to the symbolism of antique statuary, Wyrsh presented his subject in profile against a featureless, mud-brown background, dressed in a dark brocaded waistcoat in stark contrast to the white collar of his shirt, open at

the neck.¹¹³ The sitter's hair was fashionably clubbed and held with a black ribbon (the alternative to a powdered wig for formal occasions), curled on each temple and swept back from the forehead. This elongated his already-patrician features, so that he appeared in the form of a commemorative medal. Reginald's friends may have been able to discern his interest in the antique in the portrait, indemnified by his travels and membership in the Society of the Dilettanti, however, a more generalised reception may have roots in the political appropriation of the antique. Such associations had been given a constitutional dimension by Richard, Viscount Cobham, whose Temple of Friendship at Stowe featured classicising busts of the patron and nine friends, fellow Whig partisans.

The interest in a profile view depended on the proportions and relationship of the bony structures of the face and while Reginald's skull might lead to assumptions about his intelligence (the high forehead), his Character (the totality of *attitude*, as discussed earlier) is incomplete.¹¹⁴ A review of contemporaneous portraits of politicians and literary luminaries demonstrates that this styling was fashionable at the time, but in the context of Reginald's accession to Antony, Wyrsh's composition allows us to consider how closely it might have been a 'likeness' of the sitter and its value in the self-fashioning of the sitter. As a conscious commission, Wyrsh's portrait may indeed be more indicative of Reginald's character than might be assumed; although a review of the artist's

¹¹³ The V&A has several similar examples, designated as 'formal silk daywear'.

¹¹⁴ A flattened, widened and fully frontal face is a standard sign of authority in art, the very device that gives the iconic, impersonal dignity of a Christ, a Jupiter or a king. Shawe-Taylor, *The Georgians*, p.98.

work reveals a limited selection in portraiture that each show rather distanced sitters, lacking clues to personality. They are, in fact, rather bland portraits that offer neither celebration nor decoration. Perhaps, however, that is exactly what Reginald wanted to project? It may have been that Reginald was as unenthusiastic at the prospect of sitting for an artist as he was about taking up his political roles after his Grand Tour and opted for the stark profile that resists comprehensive interpretation. Pragmatically, sitting for Wyrsh would not have consumed as much time as the more eloquent portraits of his ancestors, although it is perhaps disingenuous to suggest a lack of commitment to the process rather than a personal inclination for the style. Undoubtedly and however-wrought, portraiture could continue its unifying function of demonstrating lineage and proclaiming a cultural identity for its sitters.

Considering portraiture as one of the primary approaches to self-fashioning, is it possible to extrapolate from the portrait any identifying characteristics? Does it foretell a jaded politician whose role in national life was probably at odds with his personal desires? A lacklustre MP, he found the politician's life tiresome, informing his friend the Speaker on 27 April 1799:

I have long found the attendance in the House of Commons adverse to my health and wholly inconsistent with the attention which I am desirous of giving to my family'.¹¹⁵

He grumbled in a letter to his brother that:

¹¹⁵ Oliver Garnett, *Antony* (Swindon, Wiltshire: National Trust (Enterprises) Ltd, 1996), p.36.

the attendance there, at no time pleasant to me, was daily growing more irksome [...] the early dinners, the late dinners, the no dinners, and the great dinners of the House of Commons I have always found as adverse to health as inconsistent with all domestic comfort. ¹¹⁶

On his appointment by Pitt as an auditor of accounts, though, he wrote in a happier tone:

the duties of the office in question are moderate, at stated and convenient hours, the situation at Somerset House, the colleagues respectable men [...] the tenure, *quamdiu se bene gesserint*¹¹⁷—the salary [...] as good as most of these sort of offices, and regularly paid, which under all the circumstances which I now stand, is of no small importance.¹¹⁸

Inasmuch as his clear preference was for regularised behind-the-scenes employment, the claim that he acted as a spy for William Wickham, founder of the British foreign secret services, has the potential to inject an uncharacteristic note of danger into Reginald's personality. Sadly, it remains speculative and arose from a clerical blunder rather than a systematic ploy to discover political secrets.¹¹⁹ Reginald's relationship with politics had been unexceptional; his reputation founded on two documented actions: one supporting penal reform and

¹¹⁶ Pole-Carew letterbooks: CC/G3/2; and National Records PRO 30/8/195, f. 200; NMM, WYN/107.

¹¹⁷ 'As long as he shall behave himself well'.

¹¹⁸ Pole-Carew letter books and National Records, loc. cit.

¹¹⁹ Contemporary accounts claim Reginald blundered by sending a list of informants (known as the 'Book of Informations 1796–1803') and identified as being connected with the Irish Rebellion of 1803. Michael Durey, *William Wickham, Master Spy: The Secret War against the French Revolution* (Taylor & Francis, 2015), p.110.

the other championing Henry Addington's election as Speaker of the House.¹²⁰ Nevertheless, his contributions to Antony's material culture (and concomitantly, his own cultural identity) can still be seen in the large number of books brought into the house and in the additions to the paintings collection (Appendix 2). His redesign of Antony's gardens (Chapter 2) and his social activities beyond Cornwall (Chapter 4) are, perhaps, more instructive as a strategy of self-fashioning.

On 18 November 1784, Reginald married Jemima Yorke, the only child of John, the third son of the Earl of Hardwicke and Elizabeth Lygon. Romney's portrait of Jemima (Figure 3.9) is a polar opposite of her husband's. Painted in the year of her marriage, it indicated a calculated dissociation from past styles and all the 'trash' and 'lumber' that Combe had complained of. Romney's technical approach to both portraiture and characterisation is present here in the broad brushwork of Jemima's dress and the emphasis placed firmly on the sitter's personal allure, as opposed to her decorous pose, fashionable dress, or social position. The fluidity of the composition generated a dramatic

¹²⁰ Jeremy Bentham's letter to Reginald, 3 October 1783, Online [<http://www.oxfordscholarlyeditions.com/view/10.1093/acrade/9780485132038.book.1/acrade-9780485132038-div2-88>].



FIGURE 3.9: JEMIMA YORKE, MRS REGINALD POLE-CAREW, BY GEORGE ROMNEY, C1784, OIL ON CANVAS, 76 X 63.5CM

impression of vitality and differed markedly from the rigid formality of many earlier artists. Here, therefore, is a work that demonstrated not only a new approach to portraiture but suggested, not least in Jemima's distinctly 'come hither' expression, a more liberal approach to the portrayal of women. Her illustrious extended family was deeply embedded into the fabric of English society and doubtless her upbringing was constrained within the frameworks of service and public scrutiny. In her husband, she may have found liberated attitudes to comportment (if his own behaviour was indicative) and a relatively autonomous role as a wife, although the faces of her grandparents and father hung on the

walls of Antony as constant reminders of her heritage and social position. The presence of his wife's extended family in portraiture underscored significant contributions to Reginald's accession. Earl Hardwicke, the Lord Chancellor was the confidante of the Duke of Newcastle, the Prime Minister, amassing privilege and additional titles through the association. His wife, Margaret, was the niece of Charles, 1st Baron Somers, also Lord Chancellor, and Charles II's confidential adviser.

Jemima was 37 when she died: her epitaph in Antony St. James church praised her 'elegant and unaffected manners [...] lively and interesting sensibility [...] well cultivated [...] mind [and] distinguished propriety',¹²¹ but as these words were written from the personal perspective of Reginald, it is difficult to respond to such post-mortem attributes. Nor can we be certain that these are descriptive of Jemima rather than the personality traits propounded for ideal womanhood in the *Lady's Companion* or other eighteenth-century conduct books. Furthermore, we should be reasonably cautious that Romney's portrait of Jemima is not a collage of his other society portraits. There is such a remarkable similarity among them that, with a few exceptions, the face of his muse, Emma Hamilton, can be seen as a prototype for all. Romney's template for the portraits of young women meant that they were often half-length, posed in material rather than a costume, against an indistinct background. Portraits of the Countess of Sutherland, Lady

¹²¹ Transcribed from her epitaph in Antony church.

Altamont and Jemima Yorke look similar and each reference the sixty or more paintings of Emma.

Romney's studio at 24 Cavendish Square was, in 1775, close to Reginald and Jemima's London residence, the value in such proximity is in locating Jemima (and Reginald) within the *beau monde* who sat for the artist and its accessible connections. Romney's account books show that between 1776 and 1795 he painted 1500 sitters, placing Jemima in the company of her cousin, Philip, the third Earl of Hardwicke, Henry Hoare and his wife Lydia, and Lieutenant Colonel and the Honourable Anne Louisa Bertie, who each sat for Romney in the same year.¹²² Louisa Bertie had married the son of the earl of Bute and Mary Wortley-Montagu, Baroness Mount Stuart. With Bute, Reginald shared an interest in botany, evidenced in their libraries; and an undated receipt in the account books for payments to Dr Woodville¹²³ suggests that Jemima had adopted Lady Mary's enthusiastic promotion of smallpox variolation, paying £27.7s.0d for inoculations of four of her children.¹²⁴

Scholars have produced increasingly sophisticated analyses of subjectivity by approaching portraiture as a social construction of the self that is born from the gap between self and other, the public and the private, the authentic and the fictional, that forms part of the transition from the early-century aristocratic portraits to those at the end of the century. From their portraits, there is little to

¹²² His records show twelve sittings for Anne Louisa, but these may have included work on other portraits of her. The price paid for the piece, 36 guineas, may have included Charles's portrait.

¹²³ William Woodville ran the St Pancras Smallpox Hospital between 1752 and 1805.

¹²⁴ C/E/32 – Receipts and correspondence on medical matters dated between 1754 and 1795.

indicate that Reginald and his bride held the accumulation of assets, material and associational, facilitated by the uneven course of events that lead to their union and their roles as custodians of Antony. Yet, as de Bolla reminds us, by the time they sat for artists, these sitters were at ease with performing as subjects-in-a-picture.¹²⁵ In William's day sitting for portraits had been a rather tedious duty with virtually predictable results. Early-century portraiture conformed to a template, the 'aristocratic portrait' mentioned earlier. Despite the relative informality in William's image (when compared to that of his great-grandfather), his character is read in the shorthand of gesture and clothing. As the century progressed, however, sitting for an artist had become both interesting and fashionable. Since a finished portrait need no longer depart at once for some remote country mansion, to be seen only by the family and a trickle of guests, having one's portrait painted by a famous British artist had become a social adventure. By the time Reginald and Jemima commissioned their portraits, the artist's style and technique were seen as a reflection of a culture that gradually had become preoccupied with strategies of showing and seeing oneself in relation to an audience. Reginald's portrait invokes what de Bolla has called the 'sentimental look' – an attitude or pose in which the viewer feels what it is like to become a picture. The differences between William's and Reginald's pictures arise in the distinct senses of the societal rules that permit access. It is, perhaps, why the later portraits are more intelligible to the modern viewer, although it cannot

¹²⁵ de Bolla, *The Education of the Eye*, p.5.

explain why Romney's portrait of Jemima is now hung in an uppermost corner of the Library – permanently shrouded in the gloom. Perhaps later inheritors of the House and its collections had no reverence for Romney's society portraits? Alternatively, one could speculate that this curatorial decision was made by the next Lady Carew, who consigned her predecessor's image to 'history' on becoming the next châtelaine of Antony.

3.7 CAROLINE

Reginald and Jemima's marriage produced at least nine children but their only son, Joseph, died aged four. The line of succession would have, again, been extinguished but for Reginald's second marriage to Caroline Lyttleton. Their pendant pictures (Figures 3.10 and 3.11) by Luke Macartan, a virtually unknown artist, were executed in 1832 when Reginald was 79. Unlike the fresh-faced first family of Antony whose images radiated promise, or Reginald and Jemima's modish depictions – Reginald's and Caroline's careworn visages speak of lives lived. Such un-idealised portrayals were an attempt at authenticity and, within the demands for individualism in nineteenth-century painting, it would have been inconceivable to depict them otherwise. The spare palette in the portrait of Reginald draws attention to his heavily veined hands, elongated nose and baggy



FIGURE 3.10: THE RIGHT HONOURABLE REGINALD POLE-CAREW, MP., AGED 79, BY LUKE MACARTAN, 1832, OIL ON CANVAS, 90 X 70CM



FIGURE 3.11: CAROLINE LYTTLETON, SECOND WIFE OF REGINALD POLE-CAREW, BY MACARTAN, C. 1832, OIL ON CANVAS, 96 X 70CM

eyes – an antithesis of Dahl’s representation of William. Caroline’s sombre attire is, perhaps, prophetic – she would die a year after sitting for the artist and Reginald would follow her to the grave within twelve months. Dressed in black crepe or bombazine silk, her costume was enlivened by modish hair waves, gold jewellery and white feathers in her headdress. It is also possible that Caroline had a preference for dark clothing, (a portrait miniature of Caroline dated to around 1808 shows her similarly dressed), but nothing of her personality is known.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ This miniature is at National Trust, Lanhydrock.

No doubt Lord Lyttleton, one-time governor of both Charleston and Jamaica, was concerned by the burden of his only daughter's spinsterhood and pleased that she accepted a much-older husband: Reginald was 55 years old to Caroline's 31 at their marriage. It is perhaps significant that one of the features of Caroline's portrait is her prominent wedding ring. As the eighteenth century progressed so, too, did attitudes about marriage and couples were formed on the basis of personal affection rather than as a contractual result negotiated by parents.¹²⁷ Their ages alone suggest that Reginald and Caroline arranged such a 'companionate' marriage since neither would have needed parental consent. An announcement in *the Lady's Magazine* noted for 4 May 1808:

At Hagley, by special licence, by the rev. Geo. Trevelyan, the right hon. Reginald Pole-Carew, to the hon. Caroline-Anne Lyttleton, daughter of lord Lyttleton,¹²⁸

the notice's parsing directed readers' attention to the crucial (newsworthy) details in the match. The wealthy, who wanted to marry in a private house or chapel could pay higher fees for the privilege thus, by default, a marriage-by-licence became a standard symbol of social status – here made pointedly by reference to titles. If, as is suggested, Reginald and Caroline's marriage was a mutual decision, we might ask what interest was created by the wedding venue and how this contributed to Reginald's public self. Hagley Hall in Worcestershire was the Lyttleton family seat, a creation of George, Lord Lyttleton, an MP for Okehampton

¹²⁷ Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (New York: Harper's Torch Books, 1979), p. 85.

¹²⁸ Anon, *The Lady's Magazine: Or, Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex*, (June 1808), p. 283.

and a patron of the arts whose wife was Richard Temple's sister, connecting Hagley to Stowe. The two country mansions shared similar renown. In its day, Hagley was visited and reviewed to great acclaim by some of the century's most enlightened minds. Pope was often a guest, the Scottish poet James Thomson's first visit inspired his deeply descriptive prose in praise of the Park's natural beauty and its creatures' virtuous nature in *The Seasons*.¹²⁹ Walpole's visit drew the statement: 'I wore out my eyes with gazing, my feet with climbing, and my tongue and vocabulary with commending'.¹³⁰ John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the second and third American presidents, along with Russian counts and Italian princes, made pilgrimages to witness the beauties of Hagley's 'hallowed ground'. For Reginald, the relationship forged at the altar with Caroline's socially superior extended family could be made visible in the choice of Hagley and exploited by the associational worlds it invited.

Despite advancing years, Reginald and Caroline produced five children including two sons. The eldest of them, William Henry, married a daughter of the Buller line (as his paternal grandfather had done) in 1838, doubly securing Antony House by direct descent to the present day.¹³¹ William Henry assumed the roles of his father, as MP for East Cornwall and High Sheriff of the county,

¹²⁹ *The Gentleman's Magazine* (A. Dodd and A. Smith, 1845), p.450.

¹³⁰ Walpole and Montagu, *Correspondence*, p.207.

¹³¹ Their daughters: Frances married Joseph Yorke; Caroline married Major General Bucknall Bucknall-Escourt; Juliana married Thomas James Agar-Robartes, 1st Baron Robartes of Lanhydrock and Truro; their son Gerald, vicar at Antony, married Eliza Buller but died aged 29, without issue.

while from among their seven children, Lieutenant-General Sir Reginald Pole-Carew carried the family name into the twentieth century.

3.8 CONCLUSION

The burden of expectation for portraiture, which before 1400 was not primarily concerned with individuality, rose to be ineluctably associated with changing concepts of the individual and his or her identity in relation to the social.¹³² As Pointon made clear, the idea that a portrait could stand as a material correlative to a particular human subject is a 'conceit', traceable to royal portraiture or religious icon.¹³³ However, for the Carews, as for any family of rank, the abstractions of biography implicit in portraiture not only authorised the societally-acceptable characteristics for the genre (pose, attribute, etc.) but also fostered an awareness of how their painted images were viewed by society which, together, dictated, in part, what they collected.

We can approximate the reception of some portraits by the anonymous compiler's notations although we cannot comment on his proficiency: would a servant have the requisite skills to decode the societal value of a family portrait? Are inaccuracies and mis-attributions to be expected? The estate or household steward was the highest ranking, best paid, and most responsible staff member. He presided over manorial courts and undertook the duties of the lord in his absence, and could have gleaned, from long service to the family, value

¹³² Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, p. 61.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p.17.

judgements that reflected his employer's. A good steward was considered an asset and held a position of trust in the family and social rank within the community. The parliamentary history of Saltash relates that William poached his uncle Morice's agent, Richard Blighe, to replace Richard Eare, a Saltash attorney, who had been his father's steward. We cannot say whether this was due to a clash of personality or a desire to start anew, but in 1705 William took a claim to Chancery Court alleging that Eare had failed to account for monies received.¹³⁴ There are many reports of landowning aristocrats who devolved most, if not all, of their estate responsibilities to their stewards and it follows that accounting for pictures could easily have fallen within the remit. Where William's correspondence suggests Blighe as *de facto* governor of Antony, Reginald's cites his great-uncle, Jonathan Rashleigh III, the 'dear cousin' who took care of the south-western estates during Reginald's absence.¹³⁵ Rashleigh sons had, historically, been educated at Winchester, the school of choice for non-titled landowning families (although a few peer's sons are listed as Wykehamites, notably Antony Ashley-Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury), which might have equipped him to comment, although he has left us no such commentaries.

Correspondence with artists from the end of the seventeenth century through to Reginald's death, while short on detail, offers evidence of a continuing interest in commissioning and collecting paintings. A disbursement for £47.5s to

¹³⁴ John T. Cliffe, *The World of the Country House in Seventeenth-Century England* (Yale University Press, 1999), p 117.

¹³⁵ CE/E/31 and CH/G3/1, respectively.

Mr. d'Agar on April 14 1718¹³⁶ refers to the portrait of William's sister Gertrude; the acquisition of several Dutch paintings at auction is listed in a handwritten note organised by lot number. Communications between William Henry, (Reginald's heir), and H. Restra Bolton, a picture cleaner and restorer, discussed the portraits of the Duke of Richmond and Sir Kenelm Digby, which were still at Antony in 1843.¹³⁷ Among the scattered papers, however, Gilbert Coventry's documents recording portrait commissions were a rare discovery. They enabled us to establish beyond doubt the exact and full amount paid to an artist for an identifiable picture at a certain stage in his career. We are, however, left wondering what that sum meant at that time. In 1737 Dr Johnson told Boswell he could live on £30 a year in London 'without being contemptible', although Lord Durham remarked that a gentleman of fashion 'could barely manage to jog along on £40,000 a year.'¹³⁸ Certainly, Durham's parliamentary appointments and commercial interests demanded significant financial investment to support his roles, but what of William and Reginald? The fiduciary chasm between someone of Johnson's rank and a landed gentleman figured in the political discourse of

¹³⁶ CE/E/XX.

¹³⁷ CE/E/48. H. Restra Bolton was a picture cleaner and restorer. He was employed to clean the collections of noblemen and gentlemen including Lord Morley, Lord Fortescue, Lord St. Germaine, Lord Mount Edgumbe, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Salisbury and Lord Cowper. He is also believed to have undertaken some work for the National Gallery between c.1840–1856. He learned his trade through experimentation and study. He gave evidence regarding the cleaning and restoration of pictures before the Select Committee on the National Gallery in 1853. Source: Report of the Select Committee on the National Gallery, 1853 (NG15/10). Plymouth and West Devon Record Office hold bills from H R Bolton for fine art restoration at Saltram, Devon [Morley of Saltram Collection, ref 69/M/6/17 and 69/M/6/20]. Online [<http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/archivescatalogue?record=0&cid=cczw5z45l5tjnu55puj4555&criteria=69/M/6/17>].

¹³⁸ Daniel P. Mannix, *The Hellfire Club* (ibooks, Inc., 2015), p.21.

eighteenth-century England primarily under the rubric of luxury consumption.¹³⁹ 'Luxury' wrote Werner Sombart in his essay on the concept and nature of luxury, 'is any expenditure that goes beyond the necessary', although quantifying levels of it was notoriously difficult.¹⁴⁰ Bernard Mandeville's 1705 poem, *The Fable of the Bees* pinpointed the dilemma: 'what is call'd superfluous to some degree of People, will be thought requisite to those of higher Quality.'¹⁴¹ Both William and Reginald fall into the elevated category but, rather than the conspicuous consumption of those above them in the social scale, they chose to secure their cultural identities through personal relationships, crafting meaning through association and in the calibre of the things they commissioned, collected and displayed.

An obvious danger in recounting a family's picture collections is that the thesis questions become subsumed to a catalogue of biographies. However, their displays provide structure to questions surrounding the Carews' cultural capital and how it was unpacked by contemporary audiences. William and his new bride were the fortunate offspring of long-established and regionally-powerful families, defined by dynastic portraiture, crafted by experts, to preserve and project personal attribute and/or national service. For families lacking an impressive lineage such as the Parkers of Saltram, the societal requirement to parade ancestral faces at the family seat lead to creative searches for

¹³⁹ See, for example, Berg, *New Commodities, Luxuries and Their Consumers*, loc. cit.

¹⁴⁰ Werner Sombart, *Luxury and Capitalism*, (Michigan: 1922), p.92.

¹⁴¹ Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924).

satisfactory associations, however tenuously-wrought.¹⁴² It was the country house that demonstrated a family's dynastic heritage, longevity and inherited wealth; although, more prosaically, it was the country residence that usually provided the sheer space needed to contain any substantial collection of ancestral portraits.¹⁴³ Antony's portrait collection – already substantial before the marriage of William and Anne – legitimised its patrons' claims to reputable lineage and weighty connections, which represented the fundamental currency of self-fashioning in the world beyond the estate borders. Reginald adopted the extant collection in pursuit of authority to his inheritance and then added to it – extending the family connections to include his own relatives.

Throughout the century, the appraisal of material goods represents a key preoccupation of the élite and social commentators alike with a significant proportion of eighteenth-century literature focused on the function and significance of physical objects. Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) introduced the term 'conspicuous consumption' to describe the practices of the élite who applied their wealth as a means of publicly manifesting their social

¹⁴² The Geerhaerts portrait of Thomas Parker at Saltram (discussed in Chapter 1) is, anecdotally, a case in point. The paucity of inherited family portraits (it had only been a Parker property for half a century) sat uncomfortably with the family's rising social rank, lead to Parker spending vast amounts of money to clothe the walls of Saltram in appropriate paintings. Reynolds' most imposing contribution to Saltram is the full-length portrait of Theresa Parker in the Saloon, hanging beside a would-be ancestral portrait, *Thomas Parker* by Marcus Gheeraerts the younger. Its purpose was to maintain the traditional function of the pendant format in pairing male and female figures but replace the usual husband-and-wife with an ancestor and a woman married into that ancestor's family line (via the dukes of Bolingbroke). Thus the painting is foremost a statement of Theresa's inclusion within the ancient Parker lineage, although neither of these paintings have any provenance to substantiate a link; the narrative was carried through dress and accessories.

¹⁴³ Retford, *Patrilineal Portraiture?*, p. 317

power and prestige.¹⁴⁴ As ‘most private commissions fulfilled important social functions by maintaining family relations and sealing ties of friendship,’¹⁴⁵ it follows, therefore, that the artist’s role assumes an importance beyond talent and celebrity. Reynolds was a close friend of the Carews and their immediate circle.¹⁴⁶ the artist’s works appear in all four neighbouring houses – five at Antony, two at Mount Edgumbe, twelve at Port Eliot, and fifteen at Saltram. The concentration of works by one artist suggests that not only were his West Country clientèle among his most ardent patrons, Reynolds could also be seen as an important linking agent between these prominent families in terms of the cultural identities of each estate’s principals and the transmitter of those qualities to a wider audience.

Simon Schama’s essay on British portraiture offers an anecdote about Churchill sitting for Graham Sutherland in 1954 during which he asked: ‘How will you paint me ... the bulldog or the cherub?’¹⁴⁷ The resulting portrait revealed more about the Prime Minister than any mechanically descriptive likeness could convey.¹⁴⁸ Churchill’s physiognomy easily lent itself to the canine comparison but, behind the jowly face, the sitter was the pictorial embodiment of the steadfast

¹⁴⁴ Veblen. *The Theory of the Leisure Class* was based on a trio of articles published in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1898, and contained most of the major themes Veblen would develop in his later works.

¹⁴⁵ Lippincott in *The Consumption of Culture*, pp 75–78.

¹⁴⁶ Smiles’ *Reynolds* concentrates on the artist’s south-western patrons, particularly those clustered around Plymouth. See Introduction, p. 12

¹⁴⁷ Simon Schama, *The Face of Britain: The Nation through Its Portraits* (Penguin Books Limited, 2015).

¹⁴⁸ Lady Churchill thought it made him look half-witted and is rumoured to have set fire to it to protect her husband’s legacy. Sonia Purnell, *First Lady: The Life and Wars of Clementine Churchill* (Aurum, 2015), p.340.

determination and fighting spirit symbolised by the British bulldog. Richardson would have called it the 'history of a man'.¹⁴⁹ In particular, the theorist averred that in a good portrait:

[we] conceive a better opinion of the beauty, good sense, breeding, and other good qualities of the person than from seeing themselves, and yet without being able to say in what particular it is unlike.¹⁵⁰

Richard Carew, the sixteenth-century courtier-aristocrat announced his cultural identity with a finger thrust into a book, and Sir John's baton of office declared his role as representative of the Crown. In the mid-seventeenth century, the sorts of painting that Shaftesbury termed 'philosophical portraitures' were accorded that status because they offered images of tangible heroes who might be emulated for their genius and virtue. In the absence of a native English tradition of history painting, artists turned to portraiture to fulfil the moral and civic codes usually reserved for grand historical and mythological canvases, but in the eighteenth century such overt symbolism gave way to perceptivity. Thus, in Penny's portrait of Coventry Carew with his hunting dogs, the imagined conception of the composition conflated his landownership with contemporary social expectations of ease and elegance. Scholars such as Pointon, David Solkin and Shearer West saw such portraits as components of a complex system of representation and as intricately expressive of the society that produced

¹⁴⁹ 'A portrait is a general history of the life of the person it represents.' Richardson, *Works*, p. 119.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.* p. 176.

them.¹⁵¹ By the latter part of the century, the process of sitting for one's portrait had become a decidedly fashionable and self-conscious activity. As Retford put it, portraits became 'vehicles for the act of self-fashioning' in which painters, sitters and patrons collaborated to create visual narratives that modelled themselves on the manifestations of sensibility found in polite society and literature.¹⁵² The power of a portrait to describe the cultural identity of the sitter was among the principal resources of self-fashioning among the aristocracy and the prevalence of near-identical imagery in country mansions illustrates shared goals among those commissioning portraits. As a strategy of distinction, we can claim for William and Reginald that the accumulation of family portraits established the symbolic continuity between ancestry and posterity.

¹⁵¹ See Pointon, *Hanging the Head*; Solkin, *Painting for Money*; and West, "Patronage and Power: The Role of the Portrait in Eighteenth-Century England," in *Culture, Politics and Society in Britain, 1660-1800*, Black and Gregory (eds.), (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991).

¹⁵² Retford, *Sensibility and Genealogy*, p.116.

CHAPTER 4: Circulating and Consuming

I like the spirit of this great London which I feel around me. Who but a coward would pass his whole life in hamlets; and for ever abandon his faculties to the eating rust of obscurity?¹



FIGURE 4.1 *A FAMILY PIECE*, ENGRAVING, PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM DICKINSON, AFTER HENRY WILLIAM BUNBURY, 1781
15 1/2 IN. X 11 3/4 IN. (394 MM X 299 MM) NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

This chapter is presented as a series of geographic-cultural perspectives within which the Carews and Antony can be placed to help us understand their position in the world and the extent to which their self-fashioning responded to broader influences. Framed by contemporary literature and social expectation rather than material culture, the investigation concerns not what often seems like a false and reductive opposition of town versus country but their interconnectedness, of the importance of Plymouth and its dockyard to the Carews, and of the urban society within which a cultural identity was rehearsed and received in London.

¹ Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, 1853, Chapter VI, (Courier Corporation, 2007).

The coordination of social life could not be undertaken by completely self-sufficient and self-referential individuals, immersed in hermetically sealed and self-sustained private realms.² While Pope, as Lord Bathurst's guest in 1718, enthused 'I like this course of life so well', he also acknowledged its insulation from Society but resigning himself 'to stay here till I hear of somebody's being in town that is worth coming after'.³ Tellingly, Pope identified that his social position was framed by the people around him and, like Pope, the Carews could not cultivate a significant identity and disengage from peer-lead activities without risk to their public identity.⁴ Stobart's studies have demonstrated the significance of the local, civic and wider communities that structured the gentry's economic worlds of wealth creation and, concomitantly, their material culture.⁵ For both William and Reginald, their local interests comprised their estate, Plymouth and its port; their civic responsibilities included management of their expansive estate(s) and tenants, patronage and official roles; and their wider community embraced extended family relationships, friends, neighbours and national interests. The cultural geographies of local, regional and metropolitan encounters broaden perspectives: the landscapes of Plymouth, Bath and London were superficial, public and attuned to fashionable sociability, demanding more of the Carews than their static country seats.

² Unlike Charles Cavendish, heir to the vast Devonshire estates, who lead a reclusive life, devoting himself entirely to scientific research, and fleeing, if approached by a stranger or a housemaid.

³ Girouard, *A County House Companion*, p. 49.

⁴ Frank N. Magill, *The 17th and 18th Centuries: Dictionary of World Biography* (Taylor & Francis, 2013), p.261.

⁵ See, for example, Stobart, *Spaces of Consumption*.

As members of an exclusive stratum of society, the Carews were, ostensibly, compelled to spend money on visible symbols of rank. Conspicuous consumption of luxury goods reinforced either the reality, or the perception, of status and could, perhaps, mitigate blunt censure based on the remoteness of their principal estate. Examinations of how the country and city have been constructed as concepts and as spatial locations (shaped through history and literature) highlighted a reified divisive trope: an urban or rural myth in the service of its creator.⁶ The point was taken up by Girouard who wrote of the mythology surrounding English country houses that extols them as 'magical places'.⁷ Their owners are cast as wise custodians who tend the land, look after their tenants and servants, devote their lives to public service, fill their galleries with beautiful pictures and their libraries with rare books, and are unfailingly hospitable to friends and guests. While the archetype was rarely found, some truth existed in the notions surrounding rural aristocratic life.

Fêted by poets of earlier centuries, Ben Jonson ('To Penshurst', 1616), Thomas Carew⁸ ('To Saxham', 1640), and Andrew Marvell ('Upon Appleton House', 1681), the country house was a model of social responsibility. Building design, fountains, garden statuary, the provision of beef and beer: any of these might win compliments, as long as they reflected well on the taste and generosity of the owners. 'Thou are not, Penshurst, built to envious show / Of touch, or

⁶ See Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford University Press, 1975), p.1.

⁷ Girouard, *A Country House Companion*, p.152.

⁸ Thomas Carew was a grandson of Sir Wymond Carew and thus William's great-great-grand-uncle.

marble; nor canst boast a row / Of polished pillars or a roof of gold,' Jonson wrote, contrasting it with the 'proud, ambitious heaps' of showier estates.⁹ These poems celebrated simple rural virtues as against the dubious pleasures of London (conveniently ignoring that the hosts often owned a house there too). In this, Jonson (*et al.*), was following Virgil, whose *Bucolics* (37BC) – populated by and large with herdsmen and their imagined conversations and songs in largely rural settings – provided the inspiration for the whole European tradition of pastoral poetry.¹⁰ Predictably, the most zealous purveyors of the myth were aristocrats themselves who depict their homes not only as monuments to power and wealth but also as embodiments of grace and gentility.

From this perspective, Antony House functioned not only as the seat of rural hegemony, but also as the symbol of continuity: ancestral lands, feudal rights, and strict settlement¹¹ which Edmund Burke recognised was a 'partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who were living, those who were dead, and those who are to be born.'¹² Rural and heritage concerns, in any case, found themselves under pressure from the yokes binding country to town; forged by the intimate, historical links between the landed oligarchy and politics. Locke, in the seventeenth century, had argued that the sole purpose for which government existed was to protect and secure its subjects' property, an

⁹ Don E. Wayne, *Penshurst: The Semiotics of Place and the Poetics of History* (London: Methuen, 1984).

¹⁰ It should be noted that *The Bucolics* added a strong element of Italian realism to the original Greek model, with real or disguised places and people and contemporary events blended with an idealised Arcadia.

¹¹ Jonathan C.D. Clark, (ed.), *Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution: A Critical Edition* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p.25.

¹² Burke was criticising the social contract theories of Rousseau, Hobbes and Locke.

ideology seized upon by the establishment as being a natural right.¹³

Unsurprisingly, in the eighteenth century, the Lockean claim was championed by numerous aristocratic statesmen and policy-makers dedicated to preserving their landed interest.

The adverse view exaggerated the remoteness of Antony House in metropolitan constructions of a constitutive Other based in idiosyncratic notions of rural identity. Although the Carews were regularly at their London residences, their estates and landed interest resided in Cornwall and categorised them, by default, as country-dwellers. Defoe once described rural lords as brutish, 'worthless despicable animals [who spent their lives] eating, drinking and sleeping,'¹⁴ conjuring a collective stereotype useful in literary discourse. Most memorably, Sir Roger de Coverley stepped out of *The Spectator* as one of Addison and Steele's most enduring fictional characters. An antediluvian baronet 'of an ancient descent',¹⁵ Sir Roger's provincial lifestyle was measured by the church, hunting, and the unrequited love for a 'perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him.' To the delight of readers, he materialised as a quaint and lovable caricature of landowning Tories; an amiable but rather ineffectual anachronism whose characteristics equally marked him as unsuitable for serious

¹³ John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

¹⁴ Savile and Defoe, *The Complete English Gentleman*, 1729, Karl D. Bülbring (ed.), Whitefish: Kessinger (2006), p. lxxxii.

¹⁵ Addison, *The De Coverley Papers, the Spectator (1711)*, ed. Joseph H. Meek (2006), online [<http://www.Gutenberg.Org/Files/20648/20648-H/20648-H.Htm>].

political responsibility.¹⁶ Although Sir Roger maintained a house in Soho and spent time mingling with the *beau monde* at coffee-houses, clubs and Vauxhall gardens, of his Worcestershire ancestral seat Addison quipped ‘the knight is more a tory in the country than the town, because it advances his interest’.¹⁷ In one pithy sentence Addison denigrated the embedded systems of hereditary power behind government, allegiance to the Crown, the Church, and in the notion of a British identity. In the eighteenth century, the usable past of traditional structures of control were re-invested in an ‘imagined community’ of Britishness, embodied in the aristocracy, which Colley regarded as an ‘invented nation superimposed [...] onto much older alignments and loyalties, universally understood and functionally established.’¹⁸

Most members of the ruling élites possessed a country house on inherited lands yet, for city-dwellers, the prospect of the ‘rust of obscurity’ that bloomed in the provinces accrued to the generalised view that rural England was, in many ways, alien. A ‘species, almost as different from those of the metropolis, as the natives of the Cape of Good Hope’ gibed the dramatist George Coleman in 1761,

¹⁶ In number 108, Mr. Spectator relates the situation of Will Wimble, the ‘younger Brother to a Baronet’ (p.22). Will is a bright man who has nothing to do with his time but go fishing, make handicrafts, and hunt. Mr. Spectator laments the fact that because Will is an aristocrat he can make no use of his talents, whereas ‘What good to his Country or himself might not a Trader or Merchant have done with such useful tho’ ordinary qualifications?’ (p. 23). This intimates that Will would have been better off as a member of the middling sorts and challenges the idea that the aristocracy should be revered. *The Spectator* 4 July 1711.

¹⁷ Addison, *The Spectator; with Notes, and a General Index* (1811), p.150. Hypocritically, Addison bought the rotten borough of Lostwithiel in 1708 (erstwhile Tory under the control of Sir John Carew in 1679) and used his political appointment as its MP to benefit his personal concerns. Throughout the run of *The Spectator*, Sir Roger’s politics, etiquette, and country manners were often, but not always, shown to be silly and humorous yet ultimately harmless due to Sir Roger’s good nature. Addison and Steele undertook this mocking task in order to satirise the Tory party and promote Whiggish politeness, which was in the process of loosening social discourse and moving away from a civil interplay that was ceremonial and hierarchical in nature.

¹⁸ Colley, *Britons*, p.5.

adding: 'their dress no more resembling the habit of the Town, than the Turkish or Chinese'.¹⁹ Any deference afforded the élite evaporated in caricatured rustic knights whose 'manners, as well as dialect, were entirely provincial.' The socialite Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, no stranger to hostile criticism herself, was a frequent visitor to Saltram and known to have described Theresa Parker's husband as 'dirty [...] as comical and talking as bad English as ever.'²⁰ While personal hygiene might have raised her genteel eyebrow, the Duchess's sensibility to her host's language called attention to his accent. The courtly speech patterns of the educated aristocrat in the capital were naturally considered to be superior.²¹ The underlying function of the affected hyperlect was an exclusionary tactic used to maintain social distance and, especially when employed within the aristocracy itself, another feature in city/country oppositions.²² Parker's regional dialect deviated from what was 'acceptable in polite society' and indicated the speaker's lack of parity with his cosmopolitan

¹⁹ *The Jealous Wife*, a 1761 comedy written by George Coleman, partly founded on Fielding's *Tom Jones*, which guaranteed Coleman's fame and fortune, quoted in Kirstin Olsen, *Daily Life in 18th-Century England* (Greenwood Press, 1999), p.71.

²⁰ Fletcher, *The Parkers at Saltram*, p. 13.

²¹ The use of Latin, allusions to and imitations of ancient Greek and Roman figures and texts, the use of satire, and the promotion of classical education and ideology are among the prominent features evident in 18th century writings which reveal both the classical training of the authors, and the familiarity of the educated population with classical teachings. Among the literary works produced during this period that reflect society's renewed interest in the classical tradition as resultant from the educational system at that time are: *An Essay on Criticism*, *An Essay on Man*, and *the Rape of the Lock* by Pope, *Cato, a Tragedy*, and *Genius* by Addison, *the Vanity of Human Wishes*, and essays in *The Rambler* by Johnson, and *Gulliver's Travels* by Swift.

²² Lynda Mugglestone, *Talking Proper: The Rise of Accent as Social Symbol* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 19. Rhetorical grammars and pronunciation dictionaries abounded in the eighteenth century. Swift published a *Proposal for Correcting, Improving, and Ascertaining the English Tongue* in 1712 because he was of the opinion that the language was deteriorating rapidly. The production of dictionaries became a growth industry, albeit always lagging behind the 'boundless chaos of a living speech' as Johnson admitted. (Preface to *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), and cited in Cohen, *Sensible Words: Linguistic Practice in England, 1640–1785* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

counterparts.²³ At the very least, a provincial brogue differentiated Cornish landowners of all ranks and added to the accumulation of mental and visual images that intoxicated the urban imagination, surfacing as an agent for parody in contemporary literature.²⁴

Parker was not just badly-dressed, ill-mannered and ill-spoken but also, according to one contributor to *The Spectator*, indicative of the poor company to be anticipated in a rural retreat. The correspondent wrote that his 'uneasiness in the Country [...] arises rather from the Society than the Solitude of it', deeming it 'neither entertaining or serviceable'.²⁵ The subscriber's complaint was likely grounded in the pace and content of the country house visit, the tone of which was considerably more pedestrian than the witty debates experienced in the city. Sparkling conversation could hardly be guaranteed when the topics ranged from agricultural returns and tenant welfare, occasionally spiced by details of the quarterly criminal sessions over which the host was likely to have presided, or the news of an eligible bachelor who might be conscripted as suitable bloodstock. It is little wonder that the writer considered his visit a 'Vile Loss of Time'.²⁶ How he lamented the lack of informal sociability and urban gossip in the London coffee-

²³ Joan C. Beal, *English in Modern Times: 1700–1945*. (New York: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.183; see also E. K. Sheldon, 'Pronouncing Systems in Eighteenth-Century Dictionaries,' *Language* 22, no. 1 (1946), online [<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/410332>].

²⁴ Lampooned 'country types' frequently deliver entertaining interjections such as 'Fire and faggot!', 'Zukers!', 'Ecod!' and 'Bandbox!', invent words, and use unconventional grammar, demonstrating the speaker's lack of sophistication. Cumberland's *The Box-Lobby Challenge* (1794), Foote's *The Cozeners* (1774; published 1778), Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773), and Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775) are just a few examples whose plot-lines accelerate around such hackneyed stereotypes.

²⁵ The correspondent is later revealed as Richard Parker, a friend of Steele's and who became Vicar of Embleton.

²⁶ *The Spectator*, 3 September 1712, number 474.

house, and the freedom to quickly extricate himself from his host's primitive manners and rituals. Mister Spectator concurred: 'if we look on the People of Mode in the Country, we find in them the Manners of the last Age',²⁷ citing Sir Roger de Coverley as representative of an entire landed cohort. Derided as a nostalgic relic, his (Tory) politics as outdated as Sir Roger himself, he emerged as the model of differences between town and country. The press eagerly exploited London's sense of its own superiority, visually annexed in satirical prints. The efficiency in caricature's ability to reduce more complex subjects and topics to a single frame – as in Bunbury's loaded sketch (Figure 4.1) that introduced this chapter – helped popularise the urban perspective on the rural aristocrat and fuelled debates about a system of government by élites whose interests often foreclosed claims to participation in the popular nation.²⁸

That people only begrudgingly resided in the countryside was a rhetorical trope used to comic effect and which regularly featured in literary discourse. In *The Relapse* (1696), for instance, the protagonist, Loveless, informs his country-living wife, Amanda, that the city offers numerous 'delights, of which a private life [in the country] is destitute'.²⁹ Insinuating that life in the country drained its residents of vitality, Lord Foppington asks Amanda: 'Far Gad's sake, madam, how has your ladyship been able to subsist thus long under the fatigue of a country life?'³⁰ Whether this sentiment was actually felt by the majority of

²⁷ Addison, *The De Coverley Papers*; Phillip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*.

²⁸ *Spectator* readership estimated by Addison to be 60,000 in London alone.

²⁹ Brean Hammond, (ed.), *John Vanbrugh, the Relapse and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 23, Act II, Scene One, lines 16–17.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.27, Act II, Sc. One, lines 176–78.

country house residents in the early modern period is questionable, yet historians have tended to privilege the view that aristocrats' lives were unfulfilled, both culturally and socially, when they were in the country.³¹ Studies regarding the growth of the absentee landlord, for example, have reinforced the notion that a full and enjoyable life was one based in the city.³² Such a view has been further strengthened (and gendered) by proposals that the eighteenth century witnessed the rise of a public sphere, which was best appreciated in the city. In eighteenth-century country houses, aristocratic women lead increasingly isolated, private lives, not only removed from the public sphere but also divorced from the running of the family estate. This impression, though challenged in recent years, has contributed to the overall understanding of country house living as disconnected from the social and cultural spheres that were based in London and other urban centres.³³ Some rustic exiles were viewed with suspicion and accused of taking advantage of both the ancestral seat and the London townhouse (for whatever purposes). This surfaced in William Cowper's observation, 'he Likes the country / but in truth must own / Most likes it, when he studies it in town'.³⁴ The extent to

³¹ See Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 103, and Port, 'Town House and Country House: Their Interaction,' in Arnold, *The Georgian Country House*, pp.117–38.

³² The topic of absenteeism appears, not unsurprisingly, as a key theme in research concerning the role of the landed aristocracy. See, for example, David R. Hainsworth and Cherry Walker, (eds), *The Correspondence of Lord Fitzwilliam of Milton and Francis Guybon, His Steward, 1697–1709*, vol. 36 (Northampton: Northamptonshire Records Society, 1990), and Hainsworth, *Stewards, Lords and People: The Estate Steward and His World in Later Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp.14–15.

³³ Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, (eds), *Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities* (London and New York: Longman, 1997), pp.1–28, and Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*. For a discussion of the rural retreat, see Maudlin, *The Idea of the Cottage in English Architecture, 1760–1860* (Routledge, 2015).

³⁴ William Cowper, 'Retirement' 1782, line 573, in Elizabeth M. Knowles, *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (Oxford University Press, 1999).

which Cowper restated a commonplace is open to speculation and we cannot know whether any of the Carews preferred the view of Cornwall from Westminster, but it is clear that Antony, as the locus of wealth and social rank, financed and empowered them to move, with the demonstrated fluidity of the landed gentry, between rural estate and the self-indulgent pleasures of the capital.

In 1795 Goethe noted that 'the nobleman was authority inasmuch as he made it present' adding that he 'displayed it, embodied [...] in his cultivated personality.'³⁵ For the Carews, their extended family represented a principal, and probably the primary, access route to wider social and commercial networks within which a strategy of distinction could be honed. Through an established system of referral and accrual, William and Reginald were able to select those objects that best demonstrated the cultural identity each wanted to project.³⁶ Encapsulated in a cultural identity are notions of belonging (Habermas' 'public sphere').³⁷ The public sphere was, by definition, inclusive and dependent upon many social conditions (breeding, rank, behaviour, associates, etc.,) but regulated by opinion. Since the Carews formed part of the annual influx into the

³⁵ Charles W. Eliot and William A. Neilson, (eds), *J.W. Von Goethe: Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, 20 vols., vol. 14 (New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1917), pp.13-15.

³⁶ Cressy has argued that kinship formed an especially strong social bond and, as a network, relationships could also be utilised as a route to the accumulation of objects that signified position.

³⁷ The term public sphere is the English translation of the German term *Öffentlichkeit*. This term's significance in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century stems initially from its use in Habermas's *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962). In spite of its foreign origin, the term public sphere actually represented an attempt to more adequately articulate those aspects of Anglo-American liberal culture associated with the formation of public opinion and popular sovereignty. The term *Öffentlichkeit*, which literally translates as 'public-ness', can be taken to communicate two interconnected sets of meaning, one set involving the notion of 'the public' as an actual physical entity, and a second set involving the concept of "publicity".

capital, they engaged in marking and redefining their position through patronage, visible expenditure and palpable discernment – aspects of status that were, quite literally, written onto their material possessions. Although the public spheres of Antony and of London were populated by different societies, each with its own set of functional expectations, we should not, as Roy Porter has highlighted, view the metropolis and provinces as stark opposites, but rather as complementary to each other.³⁸

4.1 THE FORGOTTEN CORNER³⁹



FIGURE 4.2: ANTONY HOUSE AND ITS IMMEDIATE ESTATE, WITH VIEWS OVER THE HAMOAZE TOWARDS PLYMOUTH (NT)

³⁸ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin Ltd, 1990), p.40.

³⁹ The local appellation for the Rame Peninsula (forgotten by the hordes of tourists who stream over the Tamar Bridge further into Cornwall).

The sweeping lawns of Antony House lead down to the Cornish banks of the Lynher River which flows into the Hamoaze, and out into Plymouth Sound, a natural boundary line that separates Cornwall from Devon, (See Figure 4.2..⁴⁰ Its location, a three-day journey from London (in the fastest coach), might appear disadvantageous to the Carews when considering the exchange of ideas. However, the proximity of Antony to extensive transport links allows us to view them as active consumers within the context of their discerning cultural world. Far from being isolated, the adjacency of Plymouth Sound connected them with the commercial opportunities of an expanding Empire of goods. For example: fragments of correspondence dated 30 June 1714 concerned goods imported to the estate with instructions to the estate agent 'to meet the boat inbound for Antony'.⁴¹ There was no itemisation of what that shipment contained although it is not unreasonable to presume that it stowed goods that were not locally available: perhaps Bowen's fragile plants from London; furs from North America; or continental wines (we know of William's taste for madeira); the latest porcelain designs, which may have come from the north of England potteries or have been

⁴⁰ The east bank of the Tamar was fixed as the border of Cornwall by King Athelstan in the year 936. In a few places the border deviates from the river, leaving, for instance, the Devon village of Bridgerule on the Cornish side. The modern administrative border between Devon and Cornwall more closely follows the Tamar than the historic county border. Several villages north of Launceston, to the west of the Tamar, were transferred to Devon in the eleventh century; the border was changed to follow the River Ottery westward, rather than the Tamar. Boundary changes of 1966 restored the border to the Tamar. Part of the Rame Peninsula was in Devon until 1844, when the parish of Maker was transferred to Cornwall. Robin Davidson, *Cornwall*, (London: Batsford, 1978), p. 31.

⁴¹ Archive CE/E/31.

imported from China, too fragile to risk to unpaved roads and the dangers of highwaymen?⁴²

The Carews had long-recognised the importance of access to Plymouth as a regional artery to the rest of Britain and beyond, and in the 1790s Reginald took up the challenge, inaugurated at the beginning of the century by William, to improve riverine connections with the port. Together with Edgcumbe, Reginald petitioned the Commissioner of the Board of Excise for a local landing point for inward goods to escape the 'easterly winds [that] plague the landing of perishable goods at Plymouth.' Supported by the port's principal merchants, the appeal lobbied for the expediency of an alternate dock on the Antony estate:

[a]s Importers of Foreign Cargoes [who] labour under great inconveniences and Extra Expences in being deprived of the advantage of landing our Goods at Torpoint, which Place lays most convenient for our Purpose.⁴³

Landing cargo '[at] all times free from damage' interested both merchant and consumer. That Antony's quay was 'but a trifling Distance by Land from the King's Custom-House' formed a persuasive argument to the Exchequer since it ensured that excise duties on imported goods could be swiftly collected. The petition succeeded and Reginald received Parliamentary approval in 1791 for the

⁴² By 1721 Britain successfully wrested control of Hudson's Bay from the French. In the 1760s, the Franco-Anglo fur trade rivalry in the Ohio River valley helped trigger the Seven Years' War. Following the conquest of Canada, Britain dominated the trade. By the American Revolution, Britain imported 95 per cent of all its furs from North America. 'Fur Trade,' Susan Sleeper-Smith (ed.), *Encyclopædia of American History: Colonization and Settlement, 1608 to 1760* (2010), online [[Http://www.Fofweb.Com/Activelink2.Asp?](http://www.Fofweb.Com/Activelink2.Asp?)].

⁴³ Archive CC/G3/1.

first commercial ferry service at Torpoint.⁴⁴ For Reginald and Edgcumbe the clear advantage of a local ferry service was that it permitted transfers of luxury goods and cultural activities most directly to the end user. In reducing a 25-mile road journey between Torpoint and Dock to 20 minutes by foot, Plymouth and the influx of East Indiamen cargoes had a direct influence on the collecting habits of the Rame peninsula's landowners.

In the seventeenth century, William's father backed the Honourable East India Company for the export of tin and copper from Falmouth and the import of goods from the Americas and British territories to the East. As the Empire expanded and accounts of the New World arrived into Britain, artists incorporated symbolic motifs into their works to evoke a sense of danger and exoticism. The interest in a mythologised noble savage is found in furniture made for Antony House. A marble-topped walnut table with cabriole legs, gilded at the knee, and carved with heads of Mexican Indians was attributed to Exeter-born cabinet maker, John Channon.⁴⁵ The decoration is unrepresentative of Channon's style (which was generally influenced by French and German examples) but his business acumen recognised that Indian heads were marketable among his élite

⁴⁴ In the 17th century, passage across the lower reach of Stonehouse Creek to Plymouth Dock was either by pedestrian ferry or the long journey by track around Mill Bridge. In 1767 Lord Mount Edgcumbe, as Lord of the Manor of East Stonehouse, and Sir John Saint Aubyn, Lord of the Manor of Stoke Damerel, obtained an Act of Parliament authorising the construction of Stonehouse Bridge to provide a more direct link between Plymouth Dock and Stonehouse. The tolls were fixed by the Act at 2d return for a 1-horse drawn vehicle, 3d for 2 horses and 6d for wagons drawn by more than 2 horses. Pedestrians paid a halfpenny and the bridge was for ever known as 'Halfpenny Bridge'. The Act also absolved the owners from paying any public or parochial rate or tax. The Bridge was opened in 1773, when the approach to it was via Stonehouse Lane (later known as King Street) and High Street rather than through Union Street, which was not built until 1815. Carriages began to ply for hire between Plymouth and Plymouth Dock in 1775. Online [<http://www.plymouthdata.info/Bridges.htm>].

⁴⁵ Garnett, *Antony*, p.13.

clientèle who were excited by an alternative to *chinoiserie*. Looking eastwards, the British Empire's overseas interests are found at Antony in collections of Asian porcelain including Chinese lidded vases from the Qianlong period (1736–95), and late seventeenth-century Japanese Imari plates which are (currently) displayed alongside Chippendale Chinese-inspired mahogany furniture.⁴⁶ The Devonshire dockyard received a fair proportion of East Indiamen cargo ships returning from China,⁴⁷ and vast amounts of Chinese silks, tea, lacquerware and porcelain passed over its wharves; some of it, evidently, found its way into Antony House. Porcelain tea sets, imported alongside the tea, led not only to the development of a variety of table-wares for the rituals of tea drinking, but also to the social significance of an elaborate tea ceremony based on eighteenth-century concepts of civility and politeness. Chippendale's shrewd marketing strategies enabled him to capitalise on such fashionable interests. His 'fine set of six chairs and two armchairs in the Chinese taste' in the Dining Room at Antony offered a practical enrichment to the societal vogue for tea parties among the

⁴⁶ Dutch traders had a monopoly on the insatiable export trade, the first large order being placed at Arita by the Dutch East India Company in 1656. The trade peaked in the late 17th century and was slowly replaced by Chinese kilns in the early 18th century; it ended in 1756, as social conditions in China settled with the full establishment of the Qing Dynasty. Imitating Arita designs, fine 'Chinese Imari' export wares were produced in the 18th century, eclipsing the original Japanese exports. Oliver Impey, 'Japanese Export Art of the Edo Period and Its Influence on European Art', *Modern Asian Studies* 18, no. 4 (1984). Special Issue: 'Edo Culture and Its Modern Legacy' (pp. 685–697). 'On the one hand a gaudy, brash brightly coloured and highly decorated style, the Imari style', p. 695.

⁴⁷ The *Albemarle* was stranded around 1708 near Polperro when blown ashore with her freight of diamonds, coffee, pepper, silk and indigo. The ship was a total loss and little of the freight ever recovered, yet it is said that most of her crew survived. The location of the wreck is still unknown. The *Dutton* was blown ashore on Plymouth Hoe in 1796. Braudel, *The Perspective of the World: Civilization & Capitalism, 15th–18th Century* (Harper & Row, 1979), p. 506.

aristocracy in general, and the Carews specifically.⁴⁸ The commission and possession of Chippendale chairs, Imari porcelain and carved Indian heads were the outward manifestations of the Carews' participation in socially-conscious activities identical to those that could be found in the city.

4.2 PLYMOUTH



FIGURE 4.3: *VIEW OF DEVONPORT* (BRITISH SCHOOL) UNSIGNED, EARLY 18TH CENTURY, OIL ON CANVAS, 106 X 177CM.

Two paintings of Dock (as Devonport was known until 1823) allow us to consider their interpretation in terms of representing both a local and a civic identity. A seventeenth-century view (Figure 4.3) showed the activity of Dock and tied the image to William's vision for direct links to the port and the world

⁴⁸ Garnett. *Antony*, p. 10.

beyond, which can be seen in the large numbers of commercial vessels at anchor in the harbour. Modern and substantial buildings erected by Edward Dummer in 1689 line the wharves,⁴⁹ while the white church in the middle distance, to the left of the garrison, is the Royal Dockyard Chapel of Saint Loe founded in 1700.⁵⁰ An ordered town (which is actually a conflation of Dock and Plymouth) set against rolling hills and illuminated by a symbolic shaft of light breaking through the clouds alluded to the incipient wealth of the area, its society and its idyllic topography. Saint Nicholas' Island (also known as Drake's Island) to the right of the garrison had a particular resonance for the Carews: their ancestor, Alexander, was its Governor in 1642, during the Civil War. The island held a strategic position for Plymouth and, despite having sworn his allegiance to the Parliamentarians, Alexander planned to deliver it to Royalist forces who were then besieging Exeter. Before he could put the plan into action, the plot was discovered and he was taken to London, tried and executed for treason. Topographical views such as this were primarily used as an objective record and William's father probably acquired this as an expression of the complex and unique importance that English society attached to locality rather than as a memorial to his executed father.

⁴⁹ Dummer was the Surveyor of the Navy who designed and supervised the construction of the Royal Navy dockyard at Plymouth and at Portsmouth, and founded the first Packet Service between Falmouth and the West Indies. Wessom, William "'The Devonport Royal dockyard'". (24 September 2007).

⁵⁰ It is the only church of record to have a tall Norman tower, pierced with Romanesque arches and the second oldest Church of England place of worship in the Town of Devonport. (It was demolished in 1814).

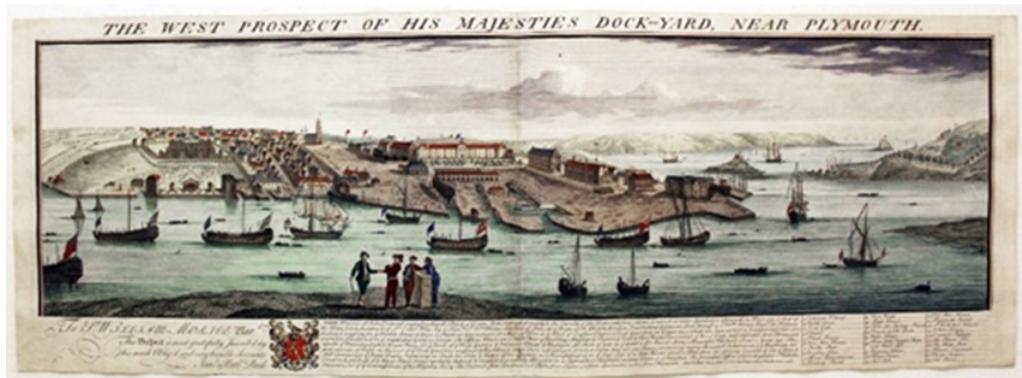


FIGURE 4.4: *PROSPECT OF DOCKYARD NEAR PLYMOUTH*, ENGRAVING BY SAMUEL AND NATHANIEL BUCK, C.1765
IN CITIES, SEA-PORTS, AND CAPITAL TOWNS, LONDON:, 1743, 1745–1749

By contrast, a superb panoramic copper-engraved view which shows four figures in the foreground and a variety of shipping on the Sound, (Figure 4.4) served the direct purpose of honouring its benefactor. The coat of arms of William Morice, Baronet of Wirrington signalled the intent. Morice's money built Dock in the parish of Stoke Damerel, and Morice Town for its workers.⁵¹ The inscription on the print commemorates its founding under his command, with a key to 29 places of interest. From 1728 to 1752 the engraver Samuel Buck collaborated with his brother to produce several series of prints of town prospects, creating 90 remarkably detailed panoramic views which were published and sold to wealthy subscribers. The series entitled *Cities, Sea-ports and Capital Towns* (featuring this view of Dock) found a secondary life in copies

⁵¹ Named after Sir William Morice who owned the land at the time that it was being developed for housing for the employees in the Naval Dockyard. It was originally a part of the town of Devonport but since the amalgamation of the Three Towns in 1914, it is now a part of Plymouth.

and re-prints circulated in the popular press. This image secured the interest in Dock for the Morices and the Carews. Together with the earlier view these two images represented the vested interests (both commercial and personal) beyond the Torpoint estate, as well as the importance of Plymouth and Dock to Antony's first family. Towards the end of the century, the value of the port and its activities are noted in Letterbook entries made by or for Reginald. Correspondence from London dated 25 March 1785 concerned the Rope House building at Dock. Reginald's instructions that it 'be at a good and proper Distance from the present Road' were not only precise but also indicate a continued investment in the prosperity of the location, part of the legacy of Antony and of his Carew ancestors.⁵²

The garrison provided the town with an additional focus. The presence of the military lent an air of spectacle and contributed to an awareness of the Empire to which the inhabitants belonged. At the same time, billeted regiments reinforced the position of the sovereign, his representative the governor, and even the church in society. Its officers encouraged and participated in leisure activities as an important part of community life. Trewman's *Exeter Flying Post* reported:

Yesterday the Honourable Colonel Onslow, and Lieutenant Colonel Sir John Frederick, Bart. of the 2nd Royal Surrey regiment, gave a splendid ball and supper at Cowley's Royal Crown Hotel, Dock, to a numerous and fashionable assemblage of the nobility, gentry, officers of the army and navy, and their ladies, resident at Plymouth,

⁵² CC/G3/1.

Dock, and environs. Dancing continued to a late hour. The supper consisted of all the delicacies of the season: the desert was magnificent, and the wines excellent; and the company departed with regret after a most pleasant evening.⁵³

It is not difficult to imagine friends and neighbours Reginald and the Edgumbes among the 'fashionable assemblage'. The Edgumbes had long been associated with the governorship of Plymouth. George Edgumbe was Commander-in-Chief of Plymouth in 1765, promoted to Admiral in 1778 which was accompanied by his creation as Earl of Mount Edgumbe. His son, Richard, (and Reginald's friend), was Lord Lieutenant and Vice Admiral of Cornwall between 1795 and 1839, succeeding his father and grandfather in the post. As the most senior officer in Dock when Colonel Onslow hosted his party, his attendance was as inevitable as Reginald's.

If the presence of the military in Plymouth in the eighteenth century was a social bonding agent for the region's élites, the range of cultural activities it harnessed also contributed to the creation of a lavish and costly aristocratic culture. York and Bath had built Assembly Rooms and Town Halls as important social centres as early as 1710.⁵⁴ As one of the primary functions of such new

⁵³ *Exeter Flying Post*, 23 October 1800. Established in the year 1763, it boasted that it 'Circulates in every town and village in Devonshire, also generally in Cornwall, Somerset, and Dorset. Advocates especially the agricultural interest. A political and literary Journal, attached to the Church of England. It is the oldest paper in Devon and Cornwall, and almost from its commencement has been the property of the Trewman family.' *The Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and Periodicals: 1800–1900*. This newspaper was digitised and first made available on the British Newspaper Archive on 3 May 2013. The latest issues were added on 17 July 2013. Online [<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/exeter-flying-post>].

⁵⁴ Borsay, *The Eighteenth-Century Town: A Reader in English Urban History 1688–1820* (Taylor & Francis, 2014), p.168.

leisure facilities was personal display, patronage helped to spread the values of a 'polite and commercial society' (to borrow Langford's phrase) more widely throughout provincial England, underlining the civic role of rural landowners.⁵⁵ Girouard described the Assembly Rooms as one of the 'main manifestations of polite society, and a means of education in its ways,'⁵⁶ with urban sociability ably illustrated in Austen's novels as the occasions where her principal characters first encounter each other. In a national perspective, assembly rooms in the south-western towns of Exeter and Truro appeared late, in the second half of the eighteenth century. The capital to finance the building of Truro's (1787) was raised by the sale of shares costing £55 each,⁵⁷ and although the subscription lists for Exeter and Truro have not survived, it is likely a correlation in the social composition of their patrons can be found with the New Assembly Rooms at Newcastle (1776). There, each shareholder paid £25 and of the 128 subscribers, the majority (42%) came from the social and political élite of the city: the nobility or gentry ranks,⁵⁸ and even without hard evidence, we can assume these figures were mirrored at Truro and at Exeter.

⁵⁵ Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*. While rapid commercial growth and burgeoning bourgeois pretensions gave rise to the positive achievements of military success and imperial expansion, cultural confidence and polite manners, tensions and contradictions simmered and threatened. Evangelical enthusiasm jostled with scientific rationalism, oligarchical politics with popular insubordination, entrepreneurial opulence with plebian poverty and sentimentality with utilitarian reform.

⁵⁶ Girouard, *The English Town* (New Haven and London, 1990), p. 132.

⁵⁷ Source: The Royal Cornwall Museum, Courtney Library archives.

⁵⁸ Berry, *Creating Polite Space*, pp. 124–125. The rooms' titled patrons included two dukes, one earl, four lords and eight baronets; with the latter investing between £50 and £200 each. Berry cautions, however, that the social profiles of subscribers were no indication of who actually used the rooms.

Borsay's 'urban renaissance' cited the appearance of leisure facilities designed to cater for the upper ranks of society as key to the development of the intellectual and cultural life of England's provincial towns. Bath's Assembly Rooms opened in 1708 and a large ballroom was added in 1720, the year in which the foundation stone for York's assembly rooms was laid.⁵⁹ While the construction of purpose-built cultural venues provided a focus for elite patronage, Berry noted that the seasonal patterns of Newcastle's assemblies coincided with 'associational activities which brought the local gentry into the towns'.⁶⁰ Horse-racing, in particular, is often cited by urban historians as a reflection of status, in marked contrast to cock-fighting and the 'bat-and-ball' contests associated with non-gentry leisure.⁶¹ The spa towns of Bath, Cheltenham and Buxton each had a bathing season, and while Exeter and Truro could not compete with the north-east's racing calendar, nor Bath's curative waters, the Devonshire and Cornish towns were central to the Western Circuit's Assizes: the Lenten Assizes were held at Exeter and the summer Assizes were at Truro. As leading men of property, William and Reginald would have been called upon to serve as magistrates but whether or not they were benched, the Assizes constituted sites of sociability since they reinforced status and, with the assemblies, were central to the social life of the Carews.

⁵⁹ See Borsay *The English Urban Renaissance*, p. 583.

⁶⁰ Berry, *Creating Polite Space*, p. 123

⁶¹ See: 'The Commercialisation of Leisure' in McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, (eds), *The Birth of a Consumer Society*.

While no accounts for Truro's or Plymouth's assembly rooms have survived that might allow us to trace how directly Reginald was involved as a patron or consumer, their use in the cultural life of the town can be extrapolated by the example at Newcastle, as a provincial near-contemporary. As Berry reminds us, the range of activities and attendant customs were similar to those started at Bath, although regional variations have been identified and relate to the character of the town's commercial enterprises.⁶² Plymouth's strong military presence, for example, provided not only a show of uniforms, but also the potential for courtship. Since courtship and dancing were an inextricable feature of assemblies, it would be surprising had Reginald's daughters, upon reaching marriageable age, not attended 'coming out' balls at Truro, Exeter, or Plymouth. Unmarried daughters represented social burdens – 'pathetic, failures, or even loathed, diseased, and bestial creatures' – often seized upon by the press in order to diminish a family's status and cultural value.⁶³ Spinsters – in the wider appraisal of their state – presented a distinct, ideological and practical threat to the community's welfare: scrutinised and subject to malicious slander, unmarried women or widows were often the targets of accusations of illicit sexual relationships and, perhaps most importantly, the financial burdens of bastardy.⁶⁴ The pressure to make a suitable match was never more keenly felt. But whether or not the local assembly was a catalyst, Reginald must have been justifiably relieved by the matches his daughters made. Two were married to local men:

⁶² Berry, *Creating Polite Space*, p. 135 and 136

⁶³ Froide, *Never Married*.

⁶⁴ Barbara Hill, *Women Alone: Spinsters in England, 1660–1850*. (Yale University Press, 2001).

Harriet took as her husband John Eliot in 1819, becoming the Countess of St. Germans, and two years later, Amabel married, in the medieval parish church dedicated to St. James on the Antony estate' her brother-in-law's friend, Francis Glanville, the Magistrate for Cornwall and a prominent Cornish landowner. Two others chose from within existing family relationships: Agneta's future husband, Thomas Somers Cocks, was a collateral relative; his mother was Elizabeth Eliot of St Germans, and his step-mother, Anne Pole, Agneta's aunt; Frances married a Yorke relative. Finally, Juliana married Thomas James Agar-Robartes, the first Baron Robartes of Lanhydrock and Truro. As Berry noted, for assembly room shareholders (and we will assume Reginald to have subscribed to, at least, the construction and maintenance of Plymouth/Dock's rooms) the main interest was 'in contributing to the establishment of a cultural activity from which they were expected to benefit.'⁶⁵

One of the front-page announcements in the *London Morning Post* of 3 October 1821 concerned the Winter Assemblies at Whiddon's Royal Hotel in Plymouth. Its reporter wrote of its 'elegant ball-room [...] filled with company, [...] the *coup d'oeil* [was] brilliant beyond description' before providing a list of the 'distinguished characters' in attendance. They included the Earl and Countess of Morley (the now-ennobled Parkers of Saltram), the Eliots (St Germans), and Reginald and Caroline, alongside cohorts of high-ranking officers from the Guards, 10th Regiment, Royal Artillery and the Royal Mariners, as might have attended Onslow's ball or Shadwell's *Fair Quaker*. Those attending the Royal

⁶⁵ Berry, *Creating Polite Space*, p. 133.

Hotel on that autumn evening were reported to have enjoyed ‘Quadrilles, Waltzes, and the fashionable Gallopade’ which were ‘kept up with much spirit until a late hour’. Many on Whiddon’s guest list would arrive in London within a few short months, so the capital’s newspaper readers were interested in the social calendars of the provinces and the potential for gossip or scandal. For those with wider interests, descriptions of venues where comparable sociability could be anticipated inspired travel throughout the country.

Dock’s Assembly Rooms at the Fountain Tavern on Fore Street seemed to offer equivalent promise – reportedly ‘spacious and elegant’ and offering subscribers ‘fortnightly assemblies for six months of the year.’⁶⁶ George Alexander Cooke, the author of the *British Traveller’s Directory*, while pleased with the interiors, and the programme of entertainments, also commented that participants appeared ‘to be confined to a few families in the town, and the naval and military officers’. Signalling less refined manners, he denounced their egocentricities which, for urban social comportment, veered too far away from dancing and polite conversation:

their principal gratification seems to arise from an inordinate ... devotion to cards, which occupy whole evenings in succession.⁶⁷

Was this an accurate description or the recycling of an urban-centric rural social inadequacies trope? Cooke’s censure was not, however, entirely a

⁶⁶ George A. Cooke et al., *Topography of Great Britain: Or, British Traveller’s Directory: Cornwall* (C. Cooke, 1802). Online [https://archive.org/stream/topographyofgrea01cook/topographyofgrea01cook_djvu.txt].

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

condemnation of provincial etiquette. In part, his appraisal of the Fountain's denizens invoked the problematic characteristics of both rural and urban gambling. Reynolds' 1759 painting, *The Out of Town Party, or A Conversation*, commemorated the holidays that Walpole organised twice a year at Strawberry Hill for Richard Edgcumbe and the two aristocratic friends also depicted, George James Williams and George Augustus Selwyn. Edgcumbe is shown at his Twickenham host's gaming table, among his friends, scribbling a poem while, with apparent lack of concern, he is also frittering away his family's money and his future. Edgcumbe was an amateur painter and poet whose life was defined by an addiction to gambling: his father described him as having an 'utter aversion [...] for every Branch of the Parliamentering Trade.'⁶⁸ It makes this painting a poignant social document: the *ubi sunt* of a son-and-heir's lack of (political) ambition, an Ossianic lament in oil on canvas. We have no evidence of William or Reginald being seduced by cards at the Fountain although it is safe to wager that they were both active in the polite spaces of Plymouth and Dock as a visible strand of their self-fashioning.

Despite its obvious connections with a wider world via maritime industries, Devonshire had a reputation for isolation and rurality: Squire Acres, the bumpkin

⁶⁸ Smiles, *Reynolds*, p.33. In 1758, Richard Edgcumbe succeeded his father, Baron Edgcumbe of Mount Edgcumbe, to become the 2nd Baron. Once Lord of the Admiralty, he was also known as a talented artist. Horace Walpole, an art historian and writer, described Richard Edgcumbe as 'a man of fine parts, great knowledge and original wit [...] who was calculated by nature to serve the public and to charm society.'" He was also, however, what Walpole termed "a man of pleasure," an incurable gambler who squandered his money. He never married and died childless in 1761, succeeded by his brother George.

in Sheridan's *The Rivals*,⁶⁹ had his home, Clod Hall, in Devon; and while Defoe once branded it a wild, barren, poor country, his later, fulsome, evaluation reversed his earlier reproach:

I found here some men of value (persons of liberal education, general knowledge, and excellent behaviour), whose society obliges me to say that a gentleman might find very agreeable company in Plymouth.⁷⁰

His *volte face* came about from a quantitative measurement applied to provincial townships where its quality was appraised in terms of its resident gentry presence. It was generally assumed that institutional manifestations of politeness – assembly rooms in particular – owed their existence to aristocratic patronage. (Although funding cultural institutions did not, at least in Cooke's review of Dock's Assembly Hall, also underwrite urbane behaviour.) In general terms, coffee houses, bookshops, libraries and schools were evidence of the facilities for education and rational discourse without which the cultivation of politeness was impossible. Samuel Simpson described the grammar school at Tiverton as its 'beauty' and the 'chief nursery of almost all the young Gentlemen of these Western parts'.⁷¹ For a small community, the satellite town of the great naval dockyard, and 250 miles from London, Dock (and its larger neighbour, Plymouth) had good links with the capital city which made it an ideal base for the

⁶⁹ *The Rivals* was Sheridan's first play, and remains, along with the *School for Scandal*, one of just two plays on which his reputation in today's theatre is founded. First presented in Covent Garden in January 1775, the play is rooted in the audience's taste for comic character. In poking fun at poseurs, pretentious country arrivistes and snobs, Sheridan pushes the manners and stereotypes of the plays and society of the time to extremes.

⁷⁰ Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island* (1724), p. 98.

⁷¹ Samuel Simpson's *The Agreeable Historian: Or, the Compleat English Traveller* (1746), cited in Sweet, *Topographies*, p.362.

exchange of material culture in the service of William and Reginald's individual strategy of distinction.

The *Plymouth-Dock Guide* listed '[a] very good Country Theatre' endorsed by local celebrities:

[the] Patronage of the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe and Family, [...] with neighbouring Families, the Officers of the Regiments in Barracks, Officers of the Navy and others, who make it an Object in Rotation to countenance the support the Manager and Company, their Seasons are commonly above Par.⁷²

In the creation of a cultural identity, two points arise from this entry. Reginald was among the 'neighbouring families' who funded the enterprise; a handful of playbills were found loose or interleaved with unrelated correspondence.⁷³ Shadwell's 'Fair Quaker of Deal' (subtitled the 'Humours of the Navy') and its broadly-sketched characters likely found an appreciative audience among the town's gentry and its military population. The second point resists the assumption that, as Borsay and Wahrman have suggested, provincial cultural production was a pale reflection of London's cultural development. Shadwell's comedy had recently found, if not critical acclaim then certainly audience figures, at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane suggesting that the demand for and reception of a West End show found reciprocal audiences in rural locations. Berry and Sweet successfully argued that provincial towns did not seek to import

⁷² *The Plymouth-Dock Guide: Or, an Authentic Account of the Rise and Progress of That Town, ... With a Description of Whatever Is Worthy of Notice* (sold by G. G. J. & J. Robinson, London and all other booksellers, 1796), (Kessinger Publishing, 2010), Chapter IX, pp. 19–20.

⁷³ Archive CC/G3/1 – 22 February 1703 – 31 December 1797.

unabridged forms of urbanity.⁷⁴ Instead, they asserted, the provinces adapted metropolitan cultural systems to best suit regional needs by combining them with existing traditions, although the language of prestige invariably referenced London with regard to services, events and goods.⁷⁵

4.3 CULTURAL TOURISM

Condy's watercolour of the Hall at Antony (Figure 2.4) could be interpreted as the visual equivalent of the opening chapter in William's autobiography. The public nature of aristocratic homes and the circulation of ideas in the eighteenth century licensed commentators who were particularly attentive to the way interiors were arranged, and to particular features both for their own sake and as a way of providing an indication of the Taste of their owners.⁷⁶ The practice is demonstrated within Antony's archived diaries and correspondence wherein each author ventured an opinion as they visited other country houses, noting the size and aspect of a room, furniture and furnishings and the artworks on display.⁷⁷ The rise of cultural tourism effectively obliged visitors of all ranks to make such judgements, with the aristocracy becoming the most frequent arbiters of Taste. In the case of nobles whose homes were almost permanently open to the public,

⁷⁴ Berry, 'Promoting Taste in the Provincial Press: National and Local Culture in Eighteenth-Century Newcastle Upon Tyne', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 25, no. 1 (2002), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-0208.2002.tb00241.x>, pp. 1–15; and Sweet, *Topographies*, p. 359.

⁷⁵ Berry, *Creating Polite Space*, p. 138; Sweet, *ibid.*

⁷⁶ Charles Suamarez-Smith, *Eighteenth-Century Decoration: Design and the Domestic Interior in England* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson Ltd., 1993), p. 22. Celia Fiennes' travel journals detailed the interior decoration of noble homes throughout the land, in particular Chatsworth (home to the Dukes of Devonshire), Lowther Castle (Viscount Lonsdale's property in Westmoreland), Saltram, and Chippenham Park, Cambridgeshire, belonging to the Earl of Orford).

⁷⁷ Letterbook of Reginald Pole-Carew CC/G3/1 dated Feb 1783 to 31 December 1833, contains a diary kept during a tour of aristocratic houses, both at home and abroad, with anecdotal references on the layout and the artworks in various rooms.

carefully composed catalogues compelled tourists to appreciate the value of their collections through orchestrated promenades that pointed to their distinctive cultural acquisitions.

The artist and author, William Gilpin, noted, ‘the first source of amusement to the [...] traveller, is the pursuit of his object.’⁷⁸ For William [Carew], the object may well have been confirmation of his aesthetic interests but as he was often calling on friends and political allies his visits perhaps had a more serious tenor than admiration of house finishes and furnishings, although the aspirational influence of the latter cannot be dismissed. In 1704 William was travelling around England, visiting the houses of the country’s more famous citizens and his notes, in French and spare in detail, add to our understanding of the Carews as cultural consumers in a broader context.⁷⁹ William’s architectural interests commended the Duke of Devonshire’s house in Chiswick as displaying ‘*belle architecture*’, while at Syon, the Earl of Northumberland’s apartments were declared ‘*beau*’, adding that they contained ‘*qualité d’antiquities – portraits personnes célèbres*’.⁸⁰ (Horace Walpole, in a letter written to Horace Mann in May 1757 lacerated the gallery and its contents:

Lord Northumberland's great gallery is finished and opened; it is a sumptuous chamber but might have been in a better taste. He is wonderfully content with his

⁷⁸ John Whale, ‘Romantics, Explorers and Picturesque Travellers’, in *The Politics of the Picturesque*, Stephen Copley and Peter Garside, (eds), (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 176.

⁷⁹ Archive CZ/EE/10 – 12B (Letters from February 22, 1783 to December 30, 1833).

⁸⁰ Cavendish was a supporter of the Country Party – a coalition of patriotic Tories and disaffected Whigs whose members fought against the self-interest of London politicians; Northumberland was classed as a ‘Tory in the Hanover list’ or ‘Tory patriot’.

pictures, and gave me leave to repeat it to you. I rejoiced, as you had been the negotiator—as you was not the painter you will allow me not to be so profuse of my applause.⁸¹

Most of these pictures were copies, not originals, although that may have escaped William's notice.)

Country house visiting had, since medieval times, been the principal methodology by which influence, ideas and fashion transferred among the aristocracy. Richard Carew had written about visiting neighbours and estates farther afield, a practice maintained by his descendants in the eighteenth century. As a strategy in the creation of distinction from William's time onwards, domestic tourism's focus on art collections and display became the primary determinant of aristocratic individualism. In evidence of this, an undated loose page inserted into Reginald's 'Transactions' describes his journey from London to Cornwall via some of the better-known country estates in the south.⁸² Reginald had become MP for Penryn in 1782 and his appointment in 1803 as Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department meant that either role would take him to London for regular parliamentary sessions, permitting him to break his journeys by visiting friends or relatives.

Reginald's travel diaries record a 61¼-mile route from London to Stowe. Its owner, George Nugent-Temple-Grenville, the Earl Temple and Marquess of Buckingham, shared many of Reginald's cultural landscapes: ex-Etonian, ex-

⁸¹ Horace Walpole and George Vertue, *Anecdotes of Painting in England; with Some Account of the Principal Artists; and Incidental Notes on Other Arts* (J. Dodsley, Pall-Mall, 1782), Vol. I, p.249.

⁸² Archive CZ/AV/7.

Christ Church, and successor to an estate and title due to a failure in the direct line.⁸³ The earl's uncle, Richard, Viscount Cobham had been enthused by the arts and a curious brand of 'green' propaganda; his liberal politics were displayed to a steady stream of visitors through the revolutionary language of Arcadian landscape gardening. Guidebooks referred to Stowe as a 'princely edifice and the chief ornament of the County', breathlessly recounting its Library of 'over 20,000 volumes', its manuscript room 'modelled from King Henry VII's chapel', and 'valuable pictures by the first masters.'⁸⁴ Many of the art works that adorned the house were acquired during Viscount Cobham's Grand Tour although Earl Temple also bought paintings at the sale of the Orléans Collection in 1798 and continued to buy paintings for another twenty years.⁸⁵ Reginald's experience of Stowe involved consuming not only the hospitality of the Temples, but also their social ambitions as seen through their home and art collections. Unfortunately, he offers no commentary on the house, its interiors or its setting. At the Duke of

⁸³ George Nugent-Temple-Grenville would, from 1790, assume sole parliamentary patronage of St Mawes having inherited in 1788 his father-in-law Earl Nugent's moiety and having purchased the interest of the co-patron Hugh Boscawen, who accordingly gave up the seat he had personally occupied for 16 years at the dissolution. the Whigs found that they had no chance when they contemplated contesting the borough in 1790. Donald E. Ginter, *Whig Organisation in the General Election of 1790* (University of California Press, 1967), p. 190.

⁸⁴ J.P. Neale and Jones & Co., *Jones' Views of the Seats, Mansions, Castles, Etc. Of Noblemen and Gentlemen in England: Accompanied with Historical Descriptions of the Mansions, Lists of Pictures, Statues, &C. And Genealogical Sketches of the Families, of Their Possessors: Forming Part of the General Series of Jones' Great Britain Illustrated* (London: Jones & Company, 1829), p.3.

⁸⁵ The Orleans Collection comprised over 500 paintings formed by the French prince of the blood, Philippe d'Orleans, Duke of Orleans, mostly acquired between 1700 and his death in 1723. the core itself comprised 123 paintings once in the possession of Queen Christina of Sweden who had acquired works from the war booty of the sackings by Swedish troops of Munich in 1632 and Prague in 1648. A consortium of British collectors lead by Francis Egerton, 3rd Duke of Somerset, acquired most of the Orleans collection. *Description des tableaux du Palais Royal avec la vie des peintres à la tête de leurs ouvrages*, text by Louis-François Dubois de Saint-Gelais (1669–1737), who was later the secretary of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture; it was the first published catalogue of a French princely collection.

Bedford's home Reginald was nonplussed, 'nothing Extraordinary' he wrote, and Blenheim he judged as '[a] good House and some good pictures in it.'⁸⁶ The range of interpretations for the word 'good' in the eighteenth century and lack of nuance in the written word is unhelpful in deciding the level of Reginald's interest or approval. Vanbrugh's monumental Baroque palace-mausoleum for the Marlboroughs was already considered to be in bad taste before it neared completion in the 1720s. Walpole had dismissed the architect's work as 'execrable within, without, & almost all round.'⁸⁷ Perhaps Reginald agreed with this assessment or that, for him, Blenheim was just another country house on a regional tourism circuit?

As a privately-owned country house, Blenheim was fundamental to the political identity of the duke; but the public's interest in how the British battlefield hero staged his persona meant that Marlborough was obliged to bow to social pressures and open up his home to the casual visitor. The advent of guidebooks and plans allowed him to choose both what the public saw and how they experienced it, permitting Churchill some control over the marketing of his image. The *New Description of Blenheim* (1789) declared '... we shall conduct our readers through the grand suit of rooms, usually open to public inspection, in the

⁸⁶ Letterbook Feb 1783 to December 1833 in archive CZ/AV/7; CP/124 a notebook of Reginald's experiences travelling around England's prestige residence which noted acreages and genres of painting, one entry recalled that Marlborough had paid 300 guineas for a picture of St Jerome, the only instance of money being attached to a material possession. This information was most likely gleaned from Blenheim's guidebook.

⁸⁷ Walpole, Francis Steuart, and John Doran, *The Last Journals of Horace Walpole During the Reign of George III, from 1771–1783* (London, New York: J. Lane, 1910), p. 29.

order they are shewn',⁸⁸ its aim, as Carole Fabricant determined, was to shape tourists' aesthetic judgements within a descriptive framework.⁸⁹ We have no account of how visitors interpreted the Great Room – hung with important royal and family portraits (referred to as the 'Fame Gallery') and festooned with crimson damask hangings, chosen by the duchess; but the *Description* was equally garlanded with lyrical adjectives and fulsome praise for its appearance. It was self-fashioning *in extremis*.

For country-house owners, tourism allowed their taste (and concomitantly the cultural hegemony of the ruling élite) to be displayed, endorsing and reinforcing their position among their peers. Notwithstanding the politics of visual culture, as Maura Henry concluded, 'élite collections exerted considerable influence in shaping the aesthetic sensibilities of the British nation'.⁹⁰ By opening up their homes as *ad hoc* galleries, British aristocrats played an important role in the establishment of Britain's national cultural institutions. In fact, it is through their cultural activities that the aristocracy consolidated their power and authority, and thus remained at the apex of British society throughout the long eighteenth century and beyond. The Carews, as gentry landowners and art collectors throughout the period, were part of this larger cultural world that drew on regional, national and international ideologies and practices according to the

⁸⁸ W.F. Mavor, *A New Description of Blenheim, the Seat of His Grace the Duke of Marlborough: Containing a Full and Accurate Account of the Paintings, Tapestry, and Furniture; a Picturesque Tour of the Gardens & Park; a General Description of the China Gallery, Etc. : With a Preliminary Essay on Landscape Gardening* (Slatter, 1820), p.33.

⁸⁹ Carole Fabricant, 'The Literature of Domestic Tourism,' in *The New Eighteenth Century*, Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (eds), (London: 1987), pp.254–275.

⁹⁰ Maura A. Henry, 'The Making of Elite Culture,' in *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain*, H. T. Dickinson (ed.), (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2002), pp.311–329.

desires of each patron. By visiting the homes of the land's noble families William and, later, Reginald made contacts and forged collective links that fed into and established shared connections of broad (cultural) influences and interpretations. Their personalities and social or political aspirations did not reach the lofty heights of those of higher rank, but in recognising the intrinsic power of visual culture to craft an identity, they were able to adapt examples of self-fashioning to their own goals and circumstances.

4.4 BATH

Another world of sociability occupied by the Carews was the spa leisure society of Bath. Jane Austen set two of her six published novels in the city and their narratives created images of the *beau monde* in a social whirl of high society events, although the popularity of the spa town is owed to Queen Anne's patronage in 1702 and 1703 to ease her painful gout. For gentry families blessed with a surfeit of time and money, Bath offered diverse shopping and entertainment, as well as ancillary diversions as the stage upon which to enact their claims to status. This fashionable life, which had become necessary to the Quality, was the world Austen presented in her novels, although it was not the whole truth, at least for Jane. Her position in society excluded her from the upper ranks enjoyed by the Carews and their peers but her participation in the Season at Bath as a well-placed observer and social commentator gave form to her romanticised depictions which appeared unvarnished in the city's press.

The spa town of Bath lay just a little over 140 miles from Torpoint, a convenient mid-way point between London and Antony. Once at Bath, the

Carews' calendar was likely filled with a well-established pattern of bathing, worship, entertaining, and shopping – each functioning as an arena for the exchange of ideas. Since the cultural identity of Bath (along with other spa towns) developed along the lines of the polite model implemented in London, such provincial urban centres were an integral part of a cosmopolitan network of interconnecting social and art worlds. William and Anne were, doubtless, among the 'Persons of Distinction' invited to attend the Ball given in honour of their Royal Highnesses in November 1738. Dining on 150 dishes, the *Newcastle Courant* proclaimed Bath 'an Epitome of London itself for Gaiety and Loyalty.'⁹¹ The comparison of provincial Bath to the capital recalls Berry and Sweet's referential cultural modelling mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette* recorded the arrival of Jemima Carew as a regular visitor until 14 April 1774, ten years before her death.⁹² Concurrent and subsequent visits by the Carew circle of friends and relatives were well-documented; their names appear among a large contingent of the nation's élite families in town as the *Journal* of Edmund Rack (founder of the first Bath Philosophical Society) recounted:

Jan 3 [1780] - In the morning went to Pump Room – saw there the Dukes of Leeds, Marlborough & Beaufort; Lords Grantham, Dillon, Mulgrave, Drogheda, Rivers, Donnegal, Cashell, Chichester, Tracy, Northington, Colvill and Ilchester, Baron Wamsdale, Judges Willes & Buller, Bishops of Worcester, Man, and Salisbury; General

⁹¹ *Newcastle Courant*, Saturday 11 November 1738. Online [<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000085/17381111/005/0001>].

⁹² Archive CC/G3/1–4.

Trapoud [?], Dunning, with as many other gentry as could
croud into the Room.⁹³

Of those named, several were numbered among Carew personal or political alliances. The Duke of Leeds, Tory MP for Helston, was a distant relative – connected through his impressive lineage which included the second Duchess of Marlborough, the second Earl of Godolphin and the Duke of Newcastle. Henry Somerset, the fifth Duke of Beaufort married into the Boscawen family (Viscounts of Falmouth) whose cousins were among Carew ancestries. Lord Grantham was Theresa Parker's brother and the husband of Jemima Yorke, (a cousin of Reginald's wife, Jemima). The Judge Buller mentioned was Francis Buller ('Judge Thumb')⁹⁴ brother-in-law to Reginald's father, whose portrait by Reynolds hangs at Antony. The daily ritual of attending the Pump Room in the lower part of the city served two purposes for the élite: taking the waters was as much a social occasion as a much-vaunted therapeutic enterprise. The curative effects of Bath's thermal springs were extolled in published case histories such as Thomas Guidott's *Register* which recounted how Bath's sulphates had cured William Howard, Viscount Stafford of the Universal Palsy, a condition that had erstwhile rendered the unfortunate

⁹³ Rack's *Journal* online [<http://www.batharchives.co.uk/PDF/Rack%20Journal.pdf>].

⁹⁴ In 1782 Francis Buller was said to have remarked that a man was permitted to beat his wife as long as the rod he used was no bigger than the width of his thumb. He was promptly jumped on by several caricaturists, including the first great political caricaturist, James Gillray; on 27 Nov. of that year, he depicted a berobed judge with an armload of sticks saying: 'Who wants a cure for a nasty wife? Here's a nice Family Amusement for Winter Evenings.' Meanwhile a wife is shouting, 'Murder!' and a husband is shouting back: 'Murder, hey? It's Law you Bitch! It's not bigger than my Thumb!' Henry A. Kelly, 'Rule of Thumb' and the Folklaw of the Husband's Stick', *Journal of Legal Education* 44, no. 3 (1994) Online [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/42893341>].

nobleman paralysed,⁹⁵ (one can immediately see the attraction for Reginald).

The second and more purposeful motive was to see who was newly arrived in the city, to make introductions and, most importantly, to exchange gossip and arrange social events aided by topographical literature.

Despite Bath being steady in its social mix, publicity was devoted to the activities of the élite. The popular news of the day was the rank of visitors, the dinners and entertainments attended by them, and the mercantile opportunities afforded them. Travellers enthused over Bath's handsome shops 'filled with every thing that contributes to Pleasure', a high proportion of which sold non-essentials.⁹⁶ Here Anne could shop for new textiles to hang at Antony; later, Reginald could stock up with a variety of medicines he felt necessary to his well-being while Jemima browsed the minutiae of personal display, the chic symbols of surplus wealth, the purely ornamental but telling trifles that drew the patronage of the Carews and their peers. The literature of the century – newspaper reports, personal diaries and exchanged letters – were each a self-fashioning strategy as authors engaged readers with what was seen or experienced, providing material for conversation in polite discourse. The resurgence of interest in letters written by wives, mothers, daughters and female friends has garnered the attention of many scholars who have used this particular example of material culture to explore the eighteenth century. It would have been interesting to be able to report what interested Carew women, but existing written materials are, as noted

⁹⁵ Thomas Guidott, *The Register of Bath*, (Leach, 1694).

⁹⁶ Southey, *Letters from England*, J. Simmons (ed.) (London, 1951), p. 472. Cited in Fawcett, *Eighteenth Century Shops and the Luxury Trade*, pp.49–75.

in the Preface, one-sided and framed by the interests of the male heads-of-household. As such, they occupy a contested realm and cannot be presumed to represent the scope or authority of all the scribal literature of the occupants of Antony House.

Because of the influx of aristocratic and influential persons throughout the century, Bath can be seen as a provincial urban gateway through which international, metropolitan and regional goods and tastes were distributed. Borsay's studies of the English urban renaissance have shown how commercial expansion and improvements in communications and mobility fuelled the development of the provinces as dynamic locations in the evolution of fashionable urban culture and high-status leisure.⁹⁷ The sort of cultural renaissance Borsay described was closely linked to the growing interest in the visual arts and the development of distinctive artistic centres in provincial towns and cities; such places acquired (or claimed) a certain status as the 'foci of polite society, consumption, communications and the art' during the period.⁹⁸ Participating in the sociability of Bath claimed, for the Carews, membership in a variety of associational worlds that were polycentric and cultural.⁹⁹ The musical,

⁹⁷ The contributors to Borsay and Lindsay Proudfoot, (eds), *Provincial Towns in Early Modern England and Ireland: Change, Convergence and Divergence* (Proceedings of the British Academy) (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), make clear that early modern provincial towns in England were vibrant places. While some certainly faltered under the changing economic scene across the period, most held their own and played an important role in both market development and increased 'civility'. See also Alan Dyer's essay on small towns in England, *Small Towns in England, 1600–1800*, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp.53–68, which goes so far as to argue that these towns retained their social and economic significance, labelling the period 1660–1800 as the 'highest point of [their] development' (p. 54).

⁹⁸ Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, p.50.

⁹⁹ Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies 1580–1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.135.

literary, and philanthropic societies that flourished in Bath and London were mirrored in those at Truro, Plymouth and Exeter and are among the Habermasian 'public spheres' so vital in the performance of Carew self-fashioning.

After London, Bath was the best place to commission artists for portraits, one of the most significant constituents in the carefully curated identities of Britain's élites. In Bath artists honed the painterly techniques and social skills needed to cultivate élite circles of patronage beyond the spa town.¹⁰⁰ At least 160 artists spent some time working in Bath in the eighteenth century, a statistic which indicates that sitting for a portrait was indeed one of the most popular activities and crucial to aristocratic self-fashioning.¹⁰¹ One of the Carews' principal strategies of distinction was portraiture, the protean and portable declaration of self. As discussed elsewhere, sitting for a face painter was a privilege of the wealthy. It was the dominant art form that legitimised dynastic continuity and powerful relationships and, while able to be carried or moved

¹⁰⁰ Richard Stephens, 'City and Country,' in Smiles, *Reynolds*, pp.17–27. The trajectories of Reynolds' famous contemporaries such as Thomas Hudson, Thomas Gainsborough and John Opie follow a similar pattern. Their early years in the provinces laid the foundations for their later success in the capital, and like Reynolds, these London-based artists all returned to the provinces during their careers: Hudson maintained contact with his West Country clientele, Gainsborough also made trips to the West Country and the Lake District, and Opie visited Wales and the South-west to execute commissions between 1783 and 1785.

¹⁰¹ An undated typescript 'Index of Bath Artists' at the Victoria Art Gallery, Bath, compiled by Reginald W.M. Wright, former Curator at the Gallery, lists the majority of artists associated with the city. An unexpected consequence of Isabella Molyneaux, Countess Sefton, (a first cousin twice removed of Anne Somerset, wife of the 2nd Earl of Coventry,) sitting for Gainsborough was that she lent her name to commerce. 'Lady Molyneaux's Liquid Bloom' advertised in the *Bath Chronicle* guaranteed to 'give a pale Cheek the Rose of Nature, and which the most nice Eye cannot possibly suspect for Art'. Gainsborough's portrait of the young lady uses the warmth of her cheek to counter the cool silver of her silk gown and animate her facial features although it is impossible to state whether this was the artist's invention or his faithful rendering of fashionable make-up. (A large painting of Lady Anne de la Pole by George Romney (1786) at Antony hints at the popularity for ladies of quality to be depicted in ice-coloured gowns offset by pale complexions and highlighted cheeks.)

easily, was probably permanently sited in the country house where it received limited exposure. However, if we consider the circulation and consumption of cultural identities beyond the estate, then the practice of artists reproducing work in mezzotint and the rise of the print trade enabled and amplified the value of the sitter's projected identity. For example, it has been argued that Reynolds's portrait of Anne Dashwood, the daughter of an Oxfordshire baronet, was based on Hudson's line engraving of Mary Carew, Coventry's wife.¹⁰² Richard Phelps, a fellow pupil with Reynolds under Hudson, appears to have been particularly interested in the Carew dynasty for, apart from Mary, his portraits included Thomas Carew, the Haccombe poet, George Carew, the Earl of Totnes and nephew of Sir William Courtenay; Reginald's Pole ancestors John and Mary Periam, and Coplestone Warre Bampfylde, a Politmore relative via Gertrude Carew. In each image based on Mary Carew the sitter appears costumed as a shepherdess with a crook, straw hat and a nosegay of flowers, customary for paintings of eligible young women. Hudson's painting was engraved by James Lovelace in 1744 and was instrumental in conventionalising mid-century portraits of well-born daughters, although the inclusion of sheep was optional. Kneller imported the device from the Continent and its popularity could probably be traced back to images of Madame de Pompadour, but its cultural value lay in associative meaning: pastoral themes centred on the tranquillity of country life

¹⁰² Katharine Baetjer, 'British Portraits in the Metropolitan Museum of Art,' *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 1999, p.25–26, online [http://www.metmuseum.org/art/metpublications/british_portraits_in_the_metropolitan_museum_of_art_the_metropolitan_museum_of_art_bulletin_v_57_no_1_summer_1999]

and the romantic fantasy of shepherds and shepherdesses living in the wilds of Arcadia in Greece. In eighteenth-century England, Arcadia was reproduced in the aristocratic estate and revived in poetry inspired by Virgil,¹⁰³ although Christopher Marlowe's *Passionate Shepherd* probably had as much to do with the mental landscapes of rural life as the pastoral *locus amoenus* did for eighteenth-century poets who revived Virgil's idylls.¹⁰⁴ The 'sense of place' the country estate offered was deeply-rooted in the traditions of the landowning aristocracy as a site of control, again modelled on ancient examples.¹⁰⁵

'Rank is rank,' Mr Elliot told Anne in *Persuasion*, explaining why the company of her father's cousin, the vapid Lady Dalrymple, and her awkward daughter was to be desired.¹⁰⁶ Rank, for the Carews, was made visible not only by the accumulation of material culture but also by the company one kept, bound by shared social advantages and carried forward to London like Richard Carew's

¹⁰³ When, in the 3rd century BC, Theocritus wrote the first pastoral text for the Greek court in Alexandria about the shepherds he remembered from his youth in Sicily, he idealised the country for his urban audience. His book was called the *Idylls*. Two centuries later Virgil set his Latin pastorals in Arcadia, a real part of Greece which has come to represent the idealised location of pastoral literature.

¹⁰⁴ Marlowe's *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* 1599 begins: 'Come live with me and be my love / And we will all the pleasures prove / That Valleys, groves, hills, and fields / Woods, or steepy mountain yields', quoted in *The Poems of John Donne*, vol. 1 (London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1896), p.10.

¹⁰⁵ John Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730–1840: An Approach to the Poetry of John Clare* (Cambridge University Press, 1972). His first chapter (concentrating on the traditions of rural poetry) juxtaposes the eighteenth-century idea of landscape in painting with that idea in poetry, and examines how the taste for landscape affected the poetry in detail.

¹⁰⁶ Jane Austen *Persuasion*, Linda Bree, (ed.), (Broadview Press, 1998), Chapter 16. Lady Russell respects Sir Walter Elliot because he has a hereditary title while she is only the widow of a knight. Sir Walter's reading of the Debrett's Baronetage alerts us to his anxious attention to status. The guidebook had been made necessary by the large number of 'new' baronetcies created in the late 18th century. Sir Walter reassures himself that his own title dates from the seventeenth century. Even among this group of minor aristocrats there is a pecking order.

'merry snowballs', gathering new possessions, associations and ideas as they progressed.¹⁰⁷

4.5 A LONDON ADDRESS

Antony House may have been described in the parochial terms of its picturesque features or tenanted topography, but the characteristics of an urban residence were more likely to be judged by the standards of its architecture and interiors. These were closely interrogated – so that even when the owner faced financial ruin due to excessive ornamentation – he could, as in the case of Williams-Wynn, redeem his reputation by the spectacular finish of his house (Wynn's commission of Robert Adam mitigated his social disintegration). The anecdote soundly refutes Summerson's notion that members of the aristocracy were not interested in their town dwellings to anything like the same extent as their country dwellings.¹⁰⁸

The Carews had maintained a presence in London since 1548 when Wymond Carew bought Brooke House in Hackney for £1,200.¹⁰⁹ William's father-in-law owned a home in Piccadilly; his 'crazy' cousin Thomas lived at Harrington House, St Martin-in-the-Fields in the mid-1750s; and William owned 10 Charles Street, Berkeley Square, once the home of John Pitt, the second Earl

¹⁰⁷ In 1602, Richard Carew had written: 'All Cornish gentlemen are cousins ... They converse familiarly together, and often visit one another. A gentleman and his wife will ride to make merry with his next neighbour, and after a day or twain those two couples go to a third, in which progress they increase like snowballs, till through their burdensome weight they break again.' Carew, *Survey*, p. 55

¹⁰⁸ Greig, *The Beau Monde*, p.12.

¹⁰⁹ *Survey of London*, volume 28, Brooke House, pp. 52–66.

of Chatham and eldest son of the statesman William Pitt.¹¹⁰ The archives contain three inventories for London properties in three different hands. The organisation of cultural material in rooms and [the author's amateur] palaeographic skills suggest that the earliest hand refers to William's occupation of 10 Charles Street, a three-minute walk from Berkeley Square Gardens (Coventry's inventory gives the title 'Berkeley Square' to this property); while the later copperplate described Reginald's New Cavendish Street property.¹¹¹ Ground plans for Charles Street detail a four-storey building with stables, rear gardens and basement levels devoted to servants and utilities; the principal rooms on the ground floor lead from the entrance hall and through a succession of rooms (Library and Dining Room) to an intimate Morning Room. The first-floor rooms comprised two significant drawing rooms which could be opened up to become one large space. We can begin to reconstruct the appearance of this property and how it operated as a site of intellectual and social exchange from an extensive inventory created for Coventry Carew who, it is assumed, inherited this property from his father and passed it on to Reginald in due course (the evidence for this is found in a Sun Insurance Office insurance policy dated 26 October 1797).¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Archive CE/E/56 dated 1793 and compiled for Reginald Pole-Carew is referred to as 'Berkeley Square'; also CE/E/57 dated 1797 updates the earlier catalogue.

¹¹¹ All are couched in variations of what is known as Secretary Hand – the last set of documents relating to New Cavendish Street are in fine Copperplate, the style used for copy-book writing.

¹¹² Founded in 1708 by Charles Povey as the Exchange House Fire Office, transferring his right to the Company of London Insurers in 1710. The Sun Insurance Office was based at Causey's Coffee House in St Paul's Church Yard (1710–11), Sweeting's Rents (1711–27), Threadneedle Street (1727–63), Bank Buildings in Cornhill (1763–1843), and Threadneedle Street (1843), London Metropolitan Archives.

Charles Street was laid out in 1675, with its terraced properties typical of those that surrounded the West End's squares.¹¹³ These 'first rate' residences averaged 4,500 square feet of habitable interior space spread out over three floors, plus an attic and a basement. Once again, we read of a procession of rooms and privilege – now laid out vertically rather than horizontally: the grand reception rooms on the ground and first floors faced the street ensuring that these rooms (and their occupants) might easily be admired by the passing public through large windows. The French architect, Germain Boffrand, wrote in 1745 that one judged the character of the master 'for whom the house was built by the way in which it is planned, decorated and distributed'.¹¹⁴ Although no Carew had a hand in the design of his London residence, each house was planned as an urban 'country villa' with the same amenities as at Antony; servants' quarters, entertaining spaces and family rooms. Their decoration and spatial organisation invite more specific questions about how the Carews arranged their London townhouses to function as sites of self-fashioning from November to May each year.¹¹⁵

Vickery's research demonstrated the importance of the effect of architectural and interior design in the eighteenth century using the voices of Austen's characters.¹¹⁶ Elizabeth Bennet (*Pride and Prejudice*) recognised

¹¹³ See Appendix 3.

¹¹⁴ Boffrand: *Book of Architecture*, p. 6.

¹¹⁵ During the 1780s, parliament often began in January and conversely, many of the parliamentary sessions after 1800 began before Christmas. The shift in the start date of the parliamentary sessions from October/November to January/February was certainly not consistent and the shift in the season had more to do with the increased ease of travel during the winter.

¹¹⁶ Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors.*, p.84.

Darcy's legitimate claims to status via the 'lofty and handsome' rooms and the 'furniture suitable to the fortune of their proprietor' at Pemberley.¹¹⁷ While it is true that Austen relied on the social, economic and emotional importance that her readers would attach to the drama of setting up home, (where the age's principles were carried in domestic details), we must be guarded about the use of fictional characters as the definitive voice of the century: Austen's characters are framed within a mediated discourse.¹¹⁸ However, the correlation between inanimate furnishings and the prosperity of their owner makes the case for theories surrounding conspicuous consumption. Neatly bypassing any other reinforcing characteristics, (such as Darcy's education or intellect), Austen's heroine deduced the quality of her interest through the visible merits of his accommodations, chairs and upholstery.

Stepping from the pages of a novel and into the entrance hall of Charles Street, we can appreciate the impact of the picture collection on William's/Coventry's guests. In the entrance Hall, portraits of Anne and her father, Kenelm Digby and Williams-Wynn hung beside the Duke of Richmond – in re-enactment of the display at Antony. On the socially more prestigious first floor, items made explicit references to the political baggage of Country-Tory hegemony via portraits of Charles the First sited alongside views of Antony and

¹¹⁷ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Oxford World Classics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹¹⁸ The context for Austen's novel revolves around the pressing problem of five unmarried sisters who were dependent upon their father's income (a substantial amount – £2000 a year – derived from tenant rents) whose prospects plummeted upon his death since the Bennet estate was entailed upon the next closest male relative (Mr Collins). Such were not the immediate concerns of the Carews, although the failure of their direct line would cause a similar disruption.

family portraits.¹¹⁹ The Saloon was dominated by battle scene (featuring the Duke of Marlborough) and a portrait of Sir Thomas More – an intriguing display that resists a coherent theme relating to William’s or Coventry’s self-fashioning but that might be considered as past histories’ ‘hero worship’. Lady Carew’s bedchamber had a ‘Picture of Antony House’ which, at least, privileges the family seat, although there are no details about the artist, medium or view, nor can we ascertain whether it was Anne’s or Mary’s bedroom. The compiler of this inventory was more concerned with the household furnishings so that curtain fabric and upholstered items are more carefully described. The semiotic value in display-wares on the ground floor (statues, Japann’d screens, and a marble French clock with ‘Boys and Ormulic’ ornaments)¹²⁰ represented the social assertion of luxury goods as a tactic of self-fashioning. In both reception rooms, as Arjun Appadurai noted, what was displayed not only identified the social status of its possessors but also expressed the epitome of aesthetic and social knowledge of the culture that produced it.¹²¹ Imported goods and antique clocks as the transient cultural artefact, and paintings, whose assessment lay in their (unchanging) political and historical value, together formed the projected self-fashioning of the early- and mid- eighteenth-century Carews. In town, William appears to have subscribed to the fashionability of London life, displayed in luxury and imported goods many of which may have been acquired *en route* at

¹¹⁹ Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), Appadurai refers to these as ‘incarnated signs’.

¹²⁰ Archive CE/E/59, p. 15.

¹²¹ Tim Dant, *Material Culture in the Social World* (McGraw-Hill Education, 1999), p.24.

Bath. As a strategy of distinction, however, the portrait displays in the Hall described more directly William's aims for his material possessions. Like at Antony, the host, his immediate family, his friends and political associations framed the visitor's experience and introduced William in the context of these relationships. These were not fashionable accessories but grounded in his hereditary interests, dynastic hopes, and the cultural worlds of [his] Society.

On 6 January 6 1801 Reginald sold 10 Charles Street¹²² and purchased Lord Hardwicke's House for £6,500 to accommodate his expanding family.¹²³ This Marylebone house is most likely 207 New Cavendish Street built for his wife's grandparents, the Lord Chancellor Philip Yorke and Margaret Cocks,¹²⁴ in a newly developed area described by Cowper in *the Citizen's Retreat* as:

Suburban villas, highway-side retreats,
That dread th' encroachment of our growing streets,
Tight boxes, neatly sash'd, and in a blaze
With all a July sun's collected rays,

¹²² The archives refer to documents relating to the sale catalogue for this property under PZ/Lib/40/7 but none have been found either at Antony or the Penzance Library collections. A representative ground plan is at Appendix 4.

¹²³ Archive CZ/AV/7. A second entry for 1801 (CC/G) details the cost of the purchase at £8,472.17s.10d; the difference might be accounted for by the 'incidentals' of furniture, fixtures and coal, and taxes of £371.14.7d. (Equivalent to £460,000 in 2013.) At this date, he had five children by his first wife and had recently married Caroline Lyttleton who would give birth to five more children, although not all survived. Their second son, William Henry inherited the estate and died at Antony in 1888.

¹²⁴ Sometimes referred to as 7 New Cavendish in the archives. In 1781 John Soane was engaged to make alterations for the Earl of Hardwicke; the Soane Museum notes that number 7 New Cavendish Street was later renumbered as 63 New Cavendish Street (now Asia House). See Appendix 4 for the ground plan. In the same year, Soane was working at Hardwicke's country residence, Hamels Park, Hertfordshire where he undertook alterations to the house, gateway and various lodges; and in 1784, a crescent of houses and a rustic dairy.

Delight the citizen, who, gasping there,
Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air.¹²⁵

One hundred years before Reginald moved in, Marylebone had been a quiet country village with a few houses dotted along a high street with open fields beyond, nearly a mile distant from any part of the great metropolis. In 1719, the wealthy and socially ambitious Edward Harley, the second Earl of Oxford and his wife, Henrietta Cavendish Holles, commissioned the architect John Prince to draw up a plan to convert this rural backwater into a fashionable estate, based upon an elegant grid of streets, with Cavendish Square at its focal point. Given the extensive amounts of building in this part of London, it is unlikely that Cowper's 'dust' settled for decades. Theresa Parker's nephew, Frederick Robinson, marvelled at the changing appearance of the West End and the speed of its expansion. In a letter to his brother in the late 1770s he wrote: 'I walk'd a few days ago into Norfolk Street and found [it] so spruce'd, clean'd & adorned that I scarce knew it again.'¹²⁶ Fifty years earlier Defoe had observed 'new Squares and new streets rising up every day'.¹²⁷ London's garden squares – arguably the most significant contribution to the development of urban form (there are some 300 in Greater London) – were designed as a way of creating open spaces at the centre of London's new residential neighbourhoods and recreating, in miniature, a modicum of the rural experience for most occupants in houses

¹²⁵ Cowper, *Beauties of Cowper. To Which Are Prefixed, a Life of the Author and Observations on His Writings* (London: Holt and Hage, 2006), p. 207.

¹²⁶ Letter: Frederick Robinson, Whitehall to Thomas Robinson, 2nd Baron Grantham, Madrid, 9 June 1778, L30/14/333/101, BRO, WPP.

¹²⁷ Defoe, *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*. Letter V: 'containing a description of the city of London, as taking in the city of Westminster, borough of Southwark, and the buildings circumjacent'.

surrounding them.¹²⁸ Over the course of the century garden squares developed into:

the *sine qua non* of development at this time and were synonymous with privilege, elegance, and prosperous metropolitan living.¹²⁹

Open fields to the north and west of the capital became Queen's, Hanover, Cavendish and Grosvenor Squares: the latter the pinnacle of social prestige with its oval garden reserved exclusively for the use of key-holding inhabitants.

For the first time, a substantial proportion of high born citizens resided in a compact geographical area for a significant period of the year. The West End became, as historical geographer Peter Atkins put it, '[a] container of frighteningly concentrated power',¹³⁰ in the midst of which we find Antony's principals: men of metropolitan experience and members of a relatively small, inter-connected, social cohort who were drawn together from all over the country to the capital for the Season.¹³¹ The concepts of the Season were thus reframed in modern

¹²⁸ 'I think some sort of Wilderness-Work [in squares] will do much better, and divert the Gentry better than looking out of their Windows upon an open Figure.' Thomas Fairchild, *The City Gardener*, 1722, cited in Michael Leapman, *The Ingenious Mr Fairchild: The Forgotten Father of the Flower Garden* (Faber & Faber, 2012).

¹²⁹ Todd Longstaffe-Gowan, *The London Square: Gardens in the Midst of Town* (Yale University Press, 2012).

¹³⁰ Peter J. Atkins, 'The Spatial Configuration of Class Solidarity in London's West End, 1792–1939,' *Urban History Yearbook*, no. 17 (1990), [Online \[http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0963926800014346\]](http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0963926800014346), p.56. Langford similarly flags the growing concentration of elite power in London noting that by the mid-1700s the majority of peers (and MPs) owned or rented a London property, particularly one that was near to Westminster, and that over the course of the century politicians were increasingly expected to do their political business from a London property. Langford, 'Public Life and the Propertied Englishman 1689–1798.', p. 194, in Greig, p.11.

¹³¹ Weatherill reports that 'as many as 5,000 gentry families commonly in residence [in London], a number swelled annually by visitors for the Season or parliament or business. 'The Meaning of Consumer Behaviour in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England,' in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, Brewer and Porter, (eds), p.47.

government as important components of *noblesse oblige*, requiring concomitant investment in accommodation suitable to both lifestyle and social rank.

'Desirably Situate', in the all-too-familiar idiosyncratic argot of the estate agent, expressed location (close to Westminster but within the boundaries of a relatively small area); and the status of one's potential neighbours ('the fourth Door down from Lord Coventry's'),¹³² each highlighting the social articulation of the capital.

The sociability of the London townhouse was the domain of its hostess whose decorative accomplishments were noted in letters and diaries.¹³³

Commentators, both reactionary and progressive, were apt to read furniture and furnishings as either displays of power or failures in taste. As one of the most visible indicators of rank in the city, Carew residences invited private judgements and attendant responsibilities regarding the finish and the furnishings: indicators that were eagerly read or misread by other West End residents. Robert Lloyd's poem, *Cit's Country Box* (1756), sneered at the maligned Sir Thrifty and the pretensions of his wife. The glorious vulgarity in the design of their suburban villa flaunted a muddle of architectural features and decorations that they lacked the education to understand and the discernment to harmonise.¹³⁴ Material comfort could, in some interpretations, serve as a justification for rule by the élite. The jurist William Blackstone repeated a common argument in 1760 when he claimed

¹³² Excerpted from *The Public Advertiser*, 2 January 1775.

¹³³ See Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors.*, p.160 –165.

¹³⁴ 'The trav'ler with amazement sees / A temple, Gothic, or Chinese / With many a bell, and tawdry rag on / And crested with a sprawling dragon / A wooden arch is bent astride / A ditch of water, four foot wide / With angles, curves, and zigzag lines / From Halfpenny's exact design'. *The Poetical Works of Robert Lloyd: To which is Prefixed an Account of the Life and Writings of the Author* (T. Evans, 1774) referred to in Vickery, *ibid.*, pp.41–46.

that aristocrats were perfectly suited to rule precisely because they lived so well. In their very act of doing so, he wrote, they were protecting the 'gradual scale of dignity, which proceeds from the peasant to the prince; rising like a pyramid from a broad foundation, and diminishing to a point as it rises'.¹³⁵ Positioned just below the mid-point in this pyramidal construction, the Carews would have appeared to be 'living well' surrounded by luxury goods that connoted status and distinction. Yet in the discourses of conspicuous consumption they did not demonstrate any desire to use their material possessions other than as a strategy to maintain social standing. To underscore this point, it should be remembered that in everyday speech a titled landowner was usually referred to by his principal estate's name (since many could claim multiple titles by descent or through marriage).¹³⁶ The power of a name had long been immortalised in prose, poetry and religious ceremony and, for landed families, it linked the past to the future. 'Antony' was, in turn, the verbalisation for William, Coventry and Reginald; thus, when establishing permanent urban residences fitted out to accommodate lengthy stays, connections to the Carews' Cornish estate took on singular importance. The social capital of Antony was validated through carefully-chosen paintings and, as at the rural seat, in the articulation of their public spaces to consolidate their entitlements, narrate their interests, demonstrate their taste.

¹³⁵ William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1775), p.399.

¹³⁶ For example: the Duke of Marlborough held subsidiary titles: Marquess of Blandford, (used as a courtesy title for his eldest son and heir), Earl of Sunderland (the title adopted by the Duke's eldest grandson), and Baron Spencer of Wormleighton, (reserved for the Duke's eldest great-grandson).

The urban visit was a polite occasion, distinct in length, scope, and purpose, bound by rules and expectations. As such, the value in purchases of silk damask window curtains, looking glasses, and tea equipages was as a debut; a superficial fashionable display that could pass the scrutiny of those whose visits were measured in hours rather than days.¹³⁷ Visiting England in 1784, the Duc de Rochefoucauld commented that tea drinking provided 'the rich with an opportunity to display their magnificence in the matter of tea-pots, cups and so on',¹³⁸ even though women demonstrating an obsessive collection of tea wares were criticised by social commentators. Afternoon tea was often claimed to be no more than an opportunity for women to spread malicious gossip or boast about themselves. A savage poem, *The Tea-Table*, by 'Moses Oldfashion' was published in *Mist's Weekly Journal* in 1722, aimed squarely at whisperers at the tea table:

Chief Seat of Slander! Ever there we see
Thick scandal circulate with right Bohea.
There, source of black'ning Falshoods! Mint of Lies!
Each Dame th'Improvements of her Talent tries,
And at each Sip a Lady's Honour dies.¹³⁹

While we have no evidence that salacious gossip was a feature of the Carew drawing room the notion cannot be totally discounted, and a later-century morning visit or afternoon tea certainly offered the stage upon which exchanges

¹³⁷ Chinese blue and white export ware, archive CE/E/57.

¹³⁸ Helen Clifford, 'A commerce with things: the value of precious metalwork in early modern England', in Berg and Clifford (eds) *Consumers and Luxury*, p. 161.

¹³⁹ From a collection of miscellaneous letters, selected out of *Mist's Weekly Journal* (1722): 224–227' London: printed by N. Mist, in Great Carter-Lane. Eighteenth Century Collections Online [<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO>].

of ideas (and tittle-tattle) could take place in an atmosphere of informal sociability.

Serious and substantive strategies for self-fashioning, including the buying (and selling) of luxury goods, were more likely to be conducted in the upper rooms of the house, perhaps over dinner. Reginald's Dining Room could entertain a modest gathering; its 15 chairs limiting the guest list to a more convivial number, perhaps in recognition of Reginald's distaste for formal occasions? The archives indicate that the majority of the portraits that William hung at Antony also appeared in Reginald's Dining Parlour. However, this inventory lacks the specificity of Antony's (it is merely a list of the subject matter) which could suggest that the London portraits were, in fact, copies. Letters written by Cassandra Brydges, the Duchess of Chandos, revealed a commonplace among the aristocracy for commissioning copies of significant pieces due to the impracticability of removing and rehanging pictures as the family moved between their country seat and the city.¹⁴⁰ William's London residence featured, unsurprisingly, Carew principals and extended family members' portraits; and when Reginald bought New Cavendish Street, he displayed these portraits for the same reasons he used the collection at Antony – as a cultural identifier (although it is possible that inheriting an existing collection had benefits that were both expedient and pragmatic). Reginald's individualism can be seen in what he added: the majority being landscapes and, oddly, only

¹⁴⁰ Rosemary O'Day, *Cassandra Brydges, Duchess of Chandos, 1670–1735: Life and Letters* (Boydell Press, 2007).

one Pole portrait. Referred to in the inventory as 'Head of Lady Pole' we cannot ascertain whether the sitter was Urith Shapcote (d. 1679, Reginald's great-great grandmother), Anne Morice (d. 1713/14, his grandmother) or Elizabeth Mills (d. 1758, wife of John Pole, his cousin who succeeded to the Pole baronetcy).¹⁴¹

Pole ancestry did not have the historical reach of the Carews, so it is feasible that what might seem like an over-dependency on Carew connections was judicious given that Reginald's position in London society was not as established as William's.

It has been possible to consider the hanging of pictures in both London houses as a planned construction of identity using the 1771 inventory in conjunction with those made for William/Coventry and, later, for Reginald's urban townhouses. The most prominently displayed images were those that connected the Carews with their lineage(s) and their land, as discussed earlier. Diners at Coventry's table would have eaten in the company of Carew pedigree: his own portrait by Penny; Kneller's portrait of his grandfather, Sir John; Dahl's portraits of his parents; and those of his maternal grandparents, the Earl and Countess Coventry. By the date of Reginald's inventory, the claustrophobic weight of family portraits had been removed and his guests were surrounded by a more eclectic selection of landscapes, maritime pieces and family pets. The dynastic portraits hung in his entrance Hall and first floor drawing room, allowing visitors to dispense with the historical (Reginald was, of course, not the lineal inheritor of Antony) in favour of the personal choices of their host, although in both houses

¹⁴¹ Archive CE/E/60.

the views of Antony House and Plymouth Dock appear prominently displayed. Such carefully curated arrangements defined the relationship of image and patron/consumer in terms of their cultural significance. Attached to each painting were the value-laden judgements – aesthetic, historic, or social – important to the aristocracy as non-material transmitters of a cultural identity. Consequently, the visual culture of the Carews became the tangible means by which they could maintain and project their identities.

4.6 THE SEASON

The London Season followed the rhythm of Parliament with the biggest influx of visitors for its State Opening, and the area around Berkeley Square offered the Carews uninterrupted amusements and social intercourse on a scale not found at their country seat. Here, when not conducting parliamentary business, they rubbed shoulders with powerful national figures in whose city mansions the most exclusive events were held. The Royal Society was certainly the most prestigious and probably the largest of the many learned clubs in eighteenth-century London. Meeting to discuss science, literature, politics, business, or any other interest that drew men together, London clubs often had a mostly formal membership organised by rules and dues; and whose patrons formed the habit of appearing during particular hours at venues. Reginald, had been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1788 (perhaps on the sponsorship of his wife's grandfather, Lord Hardwicke). When not at weekly meetings of the Society, other diversions tempted the Carews and other visitors to the city: the theatre and opera; a promenade in the pleasure gardens of nearby

Marylebone (now Regent's) Park; while wives and unaccompanied ladies could enjoy ices and sorbets at Gunter's Tea Shop in the Square.¹⁴²

Every Monday the *Morning Post* carried a column entitled 'Fashionable Arrangements for the Week' which listed, among other items, dates and hosts of private soirées (useful as a comparison with one's own social calendar or as the basis to exchange gossip.)¹⁴³ Reginald appears to have been extremely hospitable: The *Post* of 25 May 1815, reported his name among the 'Persons of Rank and Fashion [who] gave grand dinners' the evening before. Merely five days earlier, he had entertained with a 'Grand Dinner' at his New Cavendish Street address. June was a particularly sociable month in London since parliament was in recess and, beyond its regular feature, the *Post* announced 'Further Arrangements', to supplement the 'Fashionable Arrangements'. Caroline hosted a Ball on 7 June and a second Ball on the 14th albeit in competition with the 26 other Balls in the neighbourhood over the same period. The *Post* reported that Caroline's later Ball was 'given in all the splendour of former times [with] Two of the four great drawing rooms [...] thrown open for dancing.' One suspects that the reporter was providing further evidence of the family's profile, rather than a more general comment. Her Ball commenced at 11 p.m., supper was served at 1

¹⁴² Established in 1757 and catering to the *beau monde*, Gunter's was the only establishment where a lady could be seen eating alone with a gentleman who was not a relative without harming her reputation. The ladies would remain seated in the carriages in the shade of the maples. Their gentlemen escorts would step down from their equipages and come around to the passenger side of the curricule or barouche and lean against the Square's railings sharing the lady's company and the treat.

¹⁴³ *The Morning Post* was part owned by the auctioneer James Christie.

a.m., and the party broke up at 4:30 a.m. Among her guest list were the Eliots, Hoares, Walpoles, Edgcumbes and a handful of countesses.

When not hosting, the Carews were to be found at charitable events such as the 'Fancy'[-dress] Ball at Almack's (a gaming club) to raise money for the Adult Orphan Institution¹⁴⁴ which attracted 'the *elite* of society': Prince Esterhazy, the Duke of Wellington (in his Field-Marshal uniform) and persons of rank. While the reporter noted that 'attendance was [...] not more than three hundred persons', his journalistic instincts for sensationalism lead his readers to imagine '[a]ll the Lady Patronesses [were] in sable, and the contrast between that and the profusion of diamonds worn was very striking.' Jane Austen's letter to her sister, Cassandra, described a party she had attended the previous night, at which she revelled in the opportunity to dissect the guests:

Poor Miss B. has been suffering again from her complaint and looks thinner than ever [...] Miss M. seems very happy, but has not beauty enough to figure in London [...] Capt. S. was certainly in liquor'.¹⁴⁵

Austen's fiction, as noted earlier, described social reality within her own time and her own social group, although there is nothing to suggest that the topics of illness, appearance and alcoholism were not also commonplace discussions. Indeed, she might be writing about Reginald's interminable medical complaints; Maria Coventry's acid-ravaged face; or any member of the Society of

¹⁴⁴ Established for the relief and education as governesses of the orphaned daughters of clergymen and of military and naval officers.

¹⁴⁵ Oliver MacDonagh, *Jane Austen: Real and Imagined Worlds* (Yale University Press, 1993), p. 273.

the Dilettanti (including Reginald) which Walpole described as 'a club, for which the nominal qualification is having been in Italy, and the real one, being drunk.'¹⁴⁶ Élite sons were taught (from school) the social rituals that involved (and occasionally required) excess alcohol consumption although if they had not learned the qualities of self-discipline, the results could be disastrous. Elizabeth Shackleton's increasingly miserable marriage was recorded in her diaries from Alkincoats Hall which, by 1773, was 'not a Regular house [...] the Master so much given to Drunkenness'. That year, Elizabeth recorded 43 incidents in which 'Mr S' had returned home drunk.¹⁴⁷ John Pole's brother-in-law Nicholas Morice, expressed concern that the former's intemperance would reach the county's ears and imperil his reputation there:

for he cannot forbear the bottle among drinking company. the last time at London, he almost destroyed himself and could not get free from the mischief bad wine did him a year's time. Last week my man saw him at Exeter sessions; he had not been two days in town before gout seized him: how he got home I know not.¹⁴⁸

Such confessions were, of course, usually confined to personal diaries and correspondence but their ubiquity indicates such incidents among rural landowners were commonplace. Newspaper journalists were often constrained

¹⁴⁶ Walpole, *Letters* p. 318.

¹⁴⁷ 'Mr S [...] went a Hunting this morning the 7th time in 6 days staid all day & night in Coln rather too much - & a bad example to my son to whom his Behaviour is very disrespectfull too - the Gentleman came home near 12 at noon & sans ceremony went snoring into a clean bed - where he farted & stunk like a Pole Cat'. Quoted in Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*, p.15.

¹⁴⁸ Morice MSS, Nicholas to Humphrey Morice, 21 January 1706.

to report less salacious offerings from an aristocratic social calendar: the tri-weekly *London Chronicle* announced on the 22 January 1767:

Last night the Duchess of Northumberland had a great rout at Northumberland House. Invitations were given to above four hundred of the Nobility.¹⁴⁹

The Duchess, Elizabeth Percy, became an immensely popular figure in eighteenth-century London. An abiding presence at social events, she held the prestigious title of Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Charlotte during the 1760s, while her London home, Northumberland House, provided the setting for huge parties with hundreds of guests. As a result, by the end of their lives, Elizabeth and her husband were ranked among the richest and most influential couples of the kingdom. One can be fairly certain that the Carews – whether early-, mid-, or late-eighteenth century – were included on the invitation list of, if not this particular soirée, then for similar social events. As Hannah Greig reminds us, the cultural life of the *beau monde* was expressed within and through the London Season – with guests planning to capitalise on social occasions with the express intent to:

scrutinise the ‘world of fashion’ to understand the connections that structured it, the practices that defined it,

¹⁴⁹ *The London Chronicle*, January 22, 1767. Ann C. Dean, ‘The Talk of the Town: Figurative Publics in Eighteenth-century Britain’, *The Bucknell studies in eighteenth-century literature and culture*, Bucknell University Press, 2007, pp. 62–63, Online [<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=2CYNAyRAHe4C&pg=PA62&lpg=PA62&dq=London+Chronicle+>]

and the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of its most rarefied members.¹⁵⁰

Some commentators may have found the activities of the *ton* less exalted in nature. Often referred to as the ‘aristocratic vice’ one of the worst excesses of Society, alongside duelling, suicide and adultery, was gaming.¹⁵¹ The publisher of *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, having read Bramston’s satirical poem *The Man of Taste* (1733),¹⁵² wagged his editorial finger at the root cause: ‘the Nobility, who can aim no higher, plunge themselves into debt and dependance, to preserve their rank.’¹⁵³

The reproach was not without substance: Lord Thanet (a Coventry/Edgcumbe descendant) lost his entire income of £50,000 in one sitting at White’s; Theresa Parker’s son left debts of £258,000, and Reginald’s father-in-law, Lord Lyttelton, wrote of his dread that:

the rattling of a dice-box at White’s may one day or other
(if my son should be a member of that noble academy)
shake down all our fine oaks. It is dreadful to see, not only
there, but almost in every [gambling] house in town, what

¹⁵⁰ Greig, *The Beau Monde*, pp.3 and 27.

¹⁵¹ In 1745 the betting book notes that Lord Montford wagered Sir John Bland 1000 guineas that Beau Nash would outlive Colley Cibber. Unfortunately, neither intrepid gambler outlived Nash or Cibber and a footnote in the wager book adds: ‘Both Lord M_ and Sir J__n Bland put an end to their own lives before the wager was decided.’” Mountford would have been the winner: Cibber died in 1757, Nash in 1761. See Donna T. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: The Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery, and Gambling in Eighteenth-Century England* (Yale University Press, 2013). Chapter 1 discusses the social, political and religious dimensions of honour pp.15–43; Chapter 5 considers gaming laws in the contexts of duelling, suicide and adultery.

¹⁵² James Bramston, *The Man of Taste (1733)* (William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1975), p.15: ‘Had I whole Counties, I to *White’s* would go / And set lands, woods, and rivers, at a throw / But should I meet with an unlucky run / And at a throw be gloriously undone; [...] My *Title* would preserve me from arrest’.

¹⁵³ *The Universal Magazine* (published for J. Hinton, 1761), p. 389.

devastations are made by that destructive fury, the spirit of play.¹⁵⁴

Lyttleton clearly struggled with the advantages of club membership ('that noble academy') and its often-ruinous consequences. White's had been founded in 1693 and soon became the unofficial headquarters of the Tory party. Its earliest membership lists were destroyed when the premises caught fire in 1733, but research has revealed that its 650 members paid annual subscription charges of 11 guineas with an identical amount as an entrance fee, thereby ensuring funds to cover the club's losses and a means to discourage reckless venturers (at least at the reception desk).¹⁵⁵ 'Dick' Edgcumbe, (Walpole's 'a man of pleasure'), was a member of White's and an incurable gambler (the first clues might have been discerned in Hogarth's painting of Edgcumbe and his friends at Strawberry Hill). Walpole said of the Devonshire heir, '[he] thinks nothing more important that is not to be decided by dice,'¹⁵⁶ but could not bring himself to utter any forceful opprobrium of his friend's reckless habits – even when Edgcumbe saddled his family with considerable debt (due to White's) on his death in 1761.¹⁵⁷ When social distinction (and public opinion) was formed in the solid foundations of rank and wealth, to fritter away the underpinning was a culpable error. At stake was

¹⁵⁴ Venetia Murray, *High Society in the Regency Period: 1788–1830* (Penguin, 1999).

¹⁵⁵ G.F. Cruchley, *Cruchley's London in 1865: A Handbook for Strangers, Showing Where to Go, How to Get There, and What to Look At* (1865).

¹⁵⁶ Walpole to Richard Bentley, 13 December 1754, Namier and Brooke, (eds), *The History of Parliament*, p. 380.

¹⁵⁷ Cited in a series of letters between Edward Jerningham and his friends. Jerningham, the son of a Norfolk baronet, is described in the opening pages of this publication as a 'poet, dramatist, and man of fashion'. Lewis Bettany, *Edward Jerningham and his friends: a series of 18th century letters*, London 1919. <https://archive.org/details/edwardjerningham00bettuoft>

more than the physical loss of an inherited estate: imperilled was the code of honour among persons of rank and breeding that valued heritage more than possessions. Yet, membership to a gentlemen's club was vital to the integrity of a man of standing (as Lyttleton acknowledged), and a skilful player would be revered and respected by his peers. Players who risked large amounts could become celebrities: Lord Alvanley bet £3,000 on a race between two raindrops on the window pane, and the Duke of Wellington allegedly chanced £100,000 on whist one evening at White's;¹⁵⁸ the club revelling in the notoriety.¹⁵⁹

Brooks' was established in 1762. Among its membership were Reynolds, Pitt, Temple and, party politics notwithstanding, it is likely that Reginald gravitated to this club because of his relationships with these three men. In the broadest sense, club membership offered, through proximity to men of state and lawmakers, the opportunity for corporate and political networking. In common with Temple, Reginald held not only governmental office but also the fruits of primogeniture's caprice; and with Reynolds he shared true friendship. In a society obsessed with wealth and status, the gentleman's club was a form of

¹⁵⁸ Anecdotes surrounding the gaming house abound: John Montague, the Fourth Earl of Sandwich (1718–1792), was a hardened gambler and wagered for hours at a time at the Beef Stake Club, sometimes refusing to get up even for meals. It was said that he invented the sandwich, by ordering his valet to bring him meat between two pieces of bread, causing others to order 'the same as Sandwich'. The famous leader and foreign secretary Charles James Fox was introduced to gambling by his father, Lord Holland, at an early age, and is widely credited with turning Eton College into a renowned gambling den during his school days. In 1770, for instance, two earls struck a bet that one could ride from Edinburgh to London and back in less time than it took the other to draw a million dots. He also recounts the story of the northern peer who won a large wager by going to Lapland and bringing back two native females and two reindeer within an allotted time.

¹⁵⁹ White's betting book: 3 February 1743. Algernon H. Bourke, *The history of White's [with the Betting Book from 1743 to 1878 and a list of members from 1736 to 1892]*, published 1892. Online [<https://archive.org/details/cu31924028074411>]

conspicuous consumption, a way to pass time, but also an important way for the aristocracy to assert itself. Club membership was exclusive but did nothing to ameliorate the unstable boundaries that existed between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour among the *beau monde*. As we have seen, gambling was not solely an urban preserve.

Life in the city was not, however, an endless pirouette of dicing, dancing, or dining; prosaic and routine matters consumed the day-to-day calendar. Principal among them was the upkeep of the residence, and account books, where extant, testify to the vast sums required to support a metropolitan house. Reginald's recurrent bills for New Cavendish Street revealed that he paid £2,500 in taxes;¹⁶⁰ a further £250 on stabling; £325.14s.1d on servants' wages; while repairs to the property amounted to £636.9s.3d in 1802, and the year's window tax of £12.15s, (for a property with more than 100 windows).¹⁶¹ Added to which were the costs of furnishing the house, entertaining guests, and the increasingly large amounts on annual management fees for his Cornish estates: the financial investment for his presence in the city was considerable.¹⁶² There were numerous tales of

¹⁶⁰ Including land tax (4s in the £), sewer services (or night-men's charges at 5s per ton of waste carried away), water supply, insurance – fire and damage to lead pipes, poor's-rate (half yearly, one to six shillings in or according to the number of parish poor), church-wardens rate (for repairing the parish church), paving tax (for repairing, cleaning and lighting the streets – 1s 6d in the pound or 2/3rd property value), private lamp lighting (i.e. the lamps at one's own front doors – 7s per quarter, each), Easter offerings to the church (to allow family members to receive the sacrament at Easter services, 4d per head). Source: UK Parliament (taxation) online <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/private-lives/taxation/overview/taxes18thcentury/>

¹⁶¹ CA/H/133. Window tax tables in J. Trusler's *London Adviser and Guide*, 1786, self-published (1790) Online [<https://archive.org/details/londonadviseran00trusgoog>]

¹⁶² It should be noted, however, that Reginald was able to afford the costs of maintaining both a London and a Cornish property. The advantageous marriage settlements of his forebears meant that, by 1873, Reginald's descendant, Henry, realised annual rental income of £13,743.7s.1d from

pecuniary struggles among those of similar rank to the Carews. Thomas Clavering, one-time MP for St Mawes,¹⁶³ forsook a seat in Parliament in order to be rid of the expense of his London home, the news circulating rapidly among Society and the lower orders.¹⁶⁴ Smollett's splenetic patriarch, Matthew Bramble, (*Humphrey Clinker*, 1771) bemoaned the London house as a drain on his finances, parasitic and inefficient, and an incitement to, as well as the locus of, frivolous and extravagant consumption.¹⁶⁵ The excesses of the Duke of Newcastle were legendary. A consummate host, he regularly ran up food and drink bills of £350 per month (equivalent to £41,000 today.)¹⁶⁶ In reality, most aristocrats negotiated the economics of running a house in the capital without inciting negative commentaries and, in the case of the Duke of Newcastle, his reportedly generous hospitality doubtless energised his social standing and enhanced his self-fashioning. William at Charles Street and Reginald in New

land in Drewsteignton, Devon, – a vast sum from only one of many scattered lands that comprised the entirety of the Antony estate amassed throughout the century. The indication here is that the Carews were not languishing at the bottom of the wealth tables and would have been regarded as 'greater gentry' because of their landownership. The Return of Owners of Land, 1873, represented the first complete picture of the distribution of landed property in the British Isles since the Domesday book. Rothery, 'The Wealth of the English landed gentry, 1870–1935', Table 1, *Agricultural History Review*, issue 55(2) 2007 p. 258, online [http://www.bahs.org.uk/AGHR/ARTICLES/55_205Rothery.pdf].

¹⁶³ Clavering, the 7th Bt. Axwell, Co. Durham, held office as MP for St Mawes, Cornwall in 1753, the post passing through Robert Nugent, the Earl Clare to Hugh Boscawen, the illegitimate son of Hugh, 2nd Viscount Falmouth. On Boscawen's death, the interest passed to his daughter, Mary, wife of George Grenville, 1st Marquess of Buckingham, and Reginald's friend and host at Stowe.

¹⁶⁴ Letter from Mary Noel to Judith Milbanke, 16 October 1783, 'Mrs Bland told me she knew for a certainty that T[homas] C[lavering] has positively said he shall decline being again in Parliament, that he is parting with his House in Town, & intends to live intirely in the Country, being in very bad Circumstances.' Malcolm Elwin, *The Noels and the Milbankes: Their Letters for Twenty-Five Years, 1767–1792* (Macdonald & Company, 1967), p. 224

¹⁶⁵ Tobias Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, (1771) (Penguin Classics, London, 1967), (Bramble likens London to 'an overgrown monster; which, like a dropiscal head, will in time leave the body and extremities without nourishment and support', p. 97.

¹⁶⁶ 'The Bedford Estate: From 1700 to 1802', in *Survey of London: Volume 36*, Covent Garden, Sheppard ed. (London, 1970), online [<http://survey-london/vol36/pp37-40>].

Cavendish Street were obliged to entertain. Not on the scale of the Northumberlands or Newcastles but in the recognition that the approval of their guests also encompassed an acknowledgement of common social values and characteristics of status. Whether discerned through the quality of food, wine, entertainments, or the subtexts of location, luxury displays and family portraits, it was the aggregate of such conspicuous consumption that vouched for William's and Reginald's identity and status.

Reginald's finances were tested by the arrival of children: The *Gentleman's Magazine* of 29 September 1787 announced the birth to Jemima of a son, Joseph.¹⁶⁷ Approximately nine children later,¹⁶⁸ in the section entitled 'Births and Marriages of Remarkable Persons' in 1809, the arrival of a daughter at 'New Cavendish-street' to 'the lady of the Right Hon. Reginald Pole-Carew' was recorded.¹⁶⁹ The date suggests that the baby was probably Frances Antonia, the first of Caroline's children, and born within a year of her marriage to Reginald.¹⁷⁰ The apparent inclination of the aristocracy to give birth in the safety of London is particularly interesting in view of the intimate associations of the country seat with heritage and lineage. Nevertheless, the practice of women of substance

¹⁶⁷ *The Gentleman's Magazine, and Historical Chronicle* (E. Cave, 1787).

¹⁶⁸ The records are incomplete for female births except when they marry and produce offspring. *The Gentleman's Magazine* Obituary for Reginald dated 3 January 1835, reveals he had two sons and five daughters with Jemima: Charlotte, Jemima, Joseph, Elizabeth, Agneta, Ammabel, and John-Reginald who died aged 4.

¹⁶⁹ *The Gentleman's Magazine: And Historical Chronicle for the Year 1809* (E. Cave, 1809), p.476.

¹⁷⁰ This Frances Antonia married Joseph Yorke, the grandson of the 1st Earl of Hardwicke, and thus a second cousin to Jemima, her father's first wife. Of her siblings, the *Gentleman's Magazine* mentions William, and 'some' daughters with Frances Antonia's marriage date 31 December 1834 in Reginald's obituary.

travelling from the country to the town for their confinements is well-documented.¹⁷¹ Writing to her brother, Theresa Parker advised:

Mr. Parker begins to grow uneasy at my staying so long in the Country, but I am convinced I am safe if I am in Town by the 1st of October I am not desirous of going sooner than necessary, tho' in reality I have no objection than that of leaving the little boy a week earlier.¹⁷²

In 1781 Sophia Curzon, Baroness Howe, thanked God that she 'did not stay to be confin'd in the Country' suspecting that her pregnancy was already troubled,¹⁷³ while the ever-gracious Duke of Newcastle insisted that his niece, the Countess of Lincoln, should come to London a month before her confinement in 1783 and offered to put his house at her disposal.¹⁷⁴ The trend also suggests that the benefits of medical expertise (especially for a rather elderly *primigravida* like Caroline) countered any concerns about the proverbial risks of the unhealthy city. Some scholars say this revolution would not have happened without two F's: fashion and forceps. In the times of the crystallisation of England's middling sorts, it was fashionable for families aspiring to higher social status to have male

¹⁷¹ In Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759–1767), published in 1759, there is a suitably involved joke about this in Tristram Shandy: Mrs Shandy's marriage settlement stipulated she could have her children in London, but that should there be a false alarm, Mr Shandy could insist that the next birth was at home in Yorkshire to save him the expense. Tristram's farcical birth and flattened nose at the hands of a country quack is the result and the first example of his misfortunes. Chapter 1.XV.

¹⁷² The 'boy' referred to was Parker's only son, Jack, by his first wife. The baby girl was born before her mother, Therese Robinson, Parker's second wife, could leave Devon. Lady Parker died in 1775, the year of the girl's birth (born 22 September) and little Theresa and her brother (born 3 May 1772), were brought up by their aunt, Anne Robinson, at Saltram, in Devon. Theresa married George Villiers, son of the 1st Earl of Clarendon, in April 1798.

¹⁷³ Sophia Curzon to her aunt Mary Noel, 30 November 1781 in Elwin, *The Noels and the Milbankes*, p.184.

¹⁷⁴ Letter to the 4th Duke of Portland, 6 November 1781, Portland papers PW F 1289, cited in Rachel Stewart, *The Town House in Georgian London* (Yale University Press, 2009), p.34.

practitioners attend births. Doctors charged a substantially higher fee than midwives and so learned men's authority helped show off family wealth.¹⁷⁵ The establishment of forceps-assisted delivery as a means of avoiding both maternal and neonatal morbidity had been initiated in the sixteenth century but gained social acceptance when William Smellie used forceps on Queen Charlotte, the wife of George III. Having been safely delivered, most aristocrats chose to have their children baptised at the newly founded St. George's, Hanover Square, in recognition of not only its fashionable location but also the bias of its Select Vestry – the administrative body of the church – composed of 7 dukes, 14 earls, 7 barons, and 26 other persons of title.¹⁷⁶ Baptism's public ceremony embraced lineage, Anglicanism, patronage and, at least for one day, the celebration of continuity.

4.7 CREDIT

The country house and estate were the cause, effect and symbol of things that included financial security, political authority, rural hegemony, plus the prospect of the continuance of all of these for the future. The same cannot be

¹⁷⁵ A 1737 manual, *A Complete Practice of Midwifery* by Sarah Stone, claimed she used forceps only four times throughout her practice. More opportunist man-midwives made forceps their trademark, although they were not always successful in their use. Laurence Sterne portrayed one such practitioner, Dr Burton of York, in the character of Dr Slop in *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759–1767).

¹⁷⁶ They were responsible not only for the Church's affairs, but also for the civil government of the Parish; and the Vestry Minute books (now in Westminster City Archives) are a rich mixture of the ecclesiastical and the secular, and much time is spent on street lighting, highways maintenance, refuse disposal, the appointment of constables, beadles and night-watchmen, and the levying of rates to pay for these services. There was also the supervision of the Workhouse in Mount Street, situated on the edge of the Parish Burial Ground. The Vestry assumed almost the status of a municipal corporation, and was presided over by the Rector and Churchwardens. St. Marylebone parish records, Westminster City Archives, item MBN/TV/2/1/6 (1770–1811)

said for the town house which, according to Rachel Stewart, was 'personal rather than family property' and could be retained or disposed of at will.¹⁷⁷ At Charles Street and in New Cavendish Street the Carews acquired not only a prestigious London address which drew attention to their presence in the capital (and advertised their substantial rural and regional distinction) but also an asset that served abstract financial functions – including its use as surety to raise money.

In November 1790, Reginald:

borrowed £1,900 of Messrs. Biddulph, Cocks & Co. and gave a promissory note payable on the 25th of March 1799 [...] and of my brother Rear Admiral Pole, I also borrowed £3,500 payable on the 20th May 1799.¹⁷⁸

It is not recorded why he needed loans from the bank or his brother, nor precisely what he spent the money on, although the archives show that he expanded his landed interest and purchased the manors of West Antony and of Crofthole¹⁷⁹ from the Duke of Cornwall (Prince of Wales) by virtue of the Land Tax Redemption Act. Sponsored by his friend the Marquess of Buckingham, the Act's appeal was in the financial payoff for purchasing 3% consols, or bonds, in government stock which could yield an annuity exceeding the tax by a fifth. For

¹⁷⁷ Stewart, *The Town House in Georgian London*, p.56.

¹⁷⁸ Archive CZ/AV/7 – Reginald Pole-Carew's 'Transactions'.

¹⁷⁹ Richard Carew's opinion of Crofthole judged it 'a poore village, but a much frequented thorow-fare, somewhat infamous, not upon any present deserts, but through an inveterate byword; viz. that it is peopled with 12 dwellings, and 13 cuckolds: for as the dwellings are more than doubled, so I hope the cuckolds are lesse than singled. Howsoever, many wayfarers make themselves glee, by putting the inhabitants in mind of this privilege; who againe, especially the women, (like the Campellians in the north and the London bargers,) forflow not to baigne them, (unlesse they plead their heels the faster,) with a worse perfume than Jugurth found fault with in the dungeon, where the Romanes buried him alive, to attend his lanquishing and miserable death.' D. Lysons and S. Lysons, *Parochial History: Introduction.*, vol. 3: Cornwall, *Magna Britannia* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1814), pp. 280–298, Online [<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/magna-britannia/vol3>].

Reginald, this represented a shrewd commercial decision and he bought £11,240's worth, perhaps part-funded by the loans.¹⁸⁰ His punctilious repayment to Biddulph (within four months) proposes that, unlike other improvident nobles whose indebtedness became scandalous, he was at pains to maintain an unblemished reputation linking him to his political life, and that the speed of the repayment indicated a regular income stream outside of the large investment in government bonds.

This cyclical link between credit and power may be explored through the earlier-mentioned family friend, Watkin Williams-Wynn, the wealthiest landowner in Wales.¹⁸¹ He had negotiated the purchase of 20 St. James' Square from Earl Bathurst, commissioned Robert Adam to rebuild the dilapidated structure, and spent over £29,000 on fixtures and furnishings.¹⁸² His extravagance on the house was matched by the money spent organising entertainment to impress his aristocratic neighbours – to the extent that his expenditures nearly bankrupted him. He admonished his steward and agent to be as secretive as possible about his financial affairs.¹⁸³ Losing money at the gaming tables, squandering huge amounts on wine, or over-extending one's credit might have invited public

¹⁸⁰ The Land Tax Redemption Act which had, as its ancillary function to raising capital for the government, qualified landowners to vote in parliament.

¹⁸¹ His estates yielded an estimated rental income of £20,000, its purchasing power he tackled with enthusiasm and considerable success. On his coming of age in 1770, he held an extravagant party for 15,000 guests; the bills record consumption of '31 bullocks, 50 hogs, 50 calves, 80 sheep, 18,000 eggs.' Extracted from Namier and Brooke, (eds), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1754–1790* (London: Bydell and Brewer, 1964 (1986)).

¹⁸² *The Survey of London*, volumes. 29–30, St. James Westminster, part 1, pp.164–174 (1960) for details of the decorations including illustrations. Online [<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vols29-30/pt1>].

¹⁸³ National Library of Wales, Wynnstay MSS. (1952 collection). His kitchen account included payments for the butcher, baker, poulterer, fishmonger, greengrocer, buttermilkman, charcoalman, cheesemonger and pastry cook.

censure of aristocratic conspicuous consumption, although scholars of élite gaming culture would argue that the practice could often enhance a reputation and forge an attractive rakish identity,¹⁸⁴ and the extravagances of Newcastle or Williams-Wynn did nothing to diminish their reputations. Bankruptcy, however, was an altogether different dishonour since it invariably involved the dispersal of the landed estate. In Burney's novel *Cecilia* (1782), Miss Larolles recounts her delight to attend the creditors' sale at the townhouse of a financially broken member of the aristocracy: 'I am come [...] to my Lord Belgrade's sale', she chirruped, 'All the world will be there and we shall go in with tickets.'¹⁸⁵ Already at the mercy of the Grub Street press, the demolition of a (rural) knight's reputation as public entertainment (ticketed – as if an act in Astley's circus)¹⁸⁶ had the potential to ruin the subject's social and political standing. Wynn was

¹⁸⁴ Peter Burke, 'The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe' *Past and Present*, No. 146 (1995) offers moral debates for and against leisure time/pursuits; also John Hatcher, 'Labour, Leisure and Economic Thought Before the Nineteenth Century' *Past and Present*, No. 160 (1998) whose research concentrates on the gaming houses of London. White's, Almack's and Brooks' members showed their detachment from the value of money by risking vast quantities of wealth on the whim of a die. Stone referred to gambling as the 'opium of the idle' in *The Crisis of the Aristocracy*, p. 185. Sheridan's rake-hero Charles Surface (*School for Scandal*, 1777) or Hogarth's Tom Rakewell characterise the extremes.

¹⁸⁵ Frances Burney, *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress*, 1782 (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999), pp. 44–45.

¹⁸⁶ In 1768, Philip Astley (1742–1814) opened a riding-school near Westminster Bridge, where he taught in the morning and performed his 'feats of horsemanship' in the afternoon. In London at this time, modern commercial theatre (a word that encompassed all sorts of performing arts) was in the process of developing. By 1770, Astley's considerable success as a performer had outshone his reputation as a teacher. After two seasons in London, he needed to bring some novelty to his performances. Consequently, he hired acrobats, rope-dancers, and jugglers, interspersing their acts between his equestrian displays. Another addition to the show was a character borrowed from the Elizabethan theatre, the clown, who filled the pauses between acts with burlesques of juggling, tumbling, rope-dancing, and even trick-riding. With that, the modern circus—a combination of equestrian displays and feats of strength and agility—was born.

rightly concerned that his steward might be tempted to reveal his lord's profligacy.

Bankruptcy also differentiated between those who defaulted as a result of misfortune and those who behaved fraudulently. Among the misfortunate were those aristocrats with numerous unmarried daughters, or a dowager mother (the third wife of the Duke of Leeds outlived her husband by 63 years and siphoned £190,000 from the estate). For the reckless gamblers, intemperate, or fraudulent, family money would often rescue them from ignominy. While debtors' prisons were crowded with the lower social orders, rarely did an aristocrat have to peer from between the bars of the Fleet: their creditors' claims could be settled outside the court by a system to preserve their stature. However, without the financial support of family or a 'fortunate' marriage on the horizon, an insolvent aristocrat was often forced to sell some of the material culture that might have contributed to his identity, fuelling the growth of art auctions. Reginald's estate income allowed him to live in some comfort and out of the gossipmongers' orbit, and from the archives we see that he, too, profited in another's disgrace by buying paintings to decorate his residences.

4.8 THE ART MARKET

The interest in the art market for William and Reginald can be deduced by what they collected. The ability to acquire another man's material culture had long been a feature of aristocratic life, and the recirculation of existing stocks of high-quality paintings belonging to the nobility gave rise to the auction houses of Christie's and Sotheby's. Art, divested of its emotional associations, became a

transferable commodity, as we saw with the Duke of Atholl's curatorial schemes for Blair Castle, or Walpole's acquisition of the Wharton family portraits¹⁸⁷ When Reginald's friend, William Petty died in 1805, his son and heir sold almost all the literary and artistic treasures which his father had accumulated; the greater part of these were dispersed under the hammer of the auctioneer.

Auctions provided London's population with both entertainment and the opportunity to redistribute possessions.¹⁸⁸ Auction houses owed their prosperity to the entrepreneurial endeavours of the first auctioneers who transformed a sales mechanism that was used primarily to sell off the household effects of the recently deceased into what Solkin called 'the invention [...] a commodity to be consumed ostensibly for its own sake.'¹⁸⁹ The character of the early English art auction was decisively shaped by the social conventions and the intellectual interests of the English social élite who had a pronounced interest in art appreciation and whose aesthetic interests forged the development of art

¹⁸⁷ Brewer and Porter, 'Culture as Commodity', *Consumption and the World of Goods*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p.345. Chief among the commodities acquired by the aristocracy were a range of 'cultural goods' – 'fine arts', sometimes called 'elegant arts' or 'arts of taste' which could be distinguished from the 'necessary' and 'mechanical', or 'useful' arts.

¹⁸⁸ Cynthia Wall, 'The English Auction: Narratives of Dismantlings,' *The American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies* 31 (1997), p.177. Wall's study is focused on Samuel Baker (Sotheby's) and James Christie and the strategies employed in the establishment of their auction houses from the types of bidding, the production of catalogues, to the promotion of cultural interests. For example: Topham Beauclerk, the fashionable friend of Dr. Johnson and Horace Walpole (and husband to the third Duke of Marlborough's daughter), collected a very large library, which was auctioned in 1781. There were thirty thousand volumes, which took fifty days to sell. The lure of a celebrated, titled book-collector's auction translated into a major literary event. Henry B. Wheatley's 'Auction Sales in the eighteenth century', in *Prices of Books: An Inquiry into the Changes in the Price of Books Which Have Occurred in England at Different Periods*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898 pp. 126–146), p. 140

¹⁸⁹ In *Painting for Money*, Solkin traces the formation of a new type of 'polite' art which corresponds to the sociable and sentimental values of a commercial society.

connoisseurship. Centred on the metropolis and organised to coincide with the parliamentary Season, auctions accounted for about 92% of all English sales.¹⁹⁰

The aesthetic language of the *virtuosi* in sales catalogues made the art auction appear as a legitimate new mechanism in the battlegrounds of polite society, and descriptive advertisements often emphasised the taste, discrimination, and expenses vested in collections, although prices achieved were often at the mercy of the market. In 1773, Theresa Parker remarked to her brother that:

not a Picture this year has sold for half the value [...] all owing to every creature being in want of money [...] tho' in general the bad run that causes such a sale, is what enables another to purchase.¹⁹¹

Collecting was, of course, influenced by the preferences and the extent to which collectors simply followed their own inclinations, governed by quite another set of values such as aesthetic appeal, merit of the artist, the quality, and the subject matter. As Bramston's narrator professed:

In curious paintings I'm exceeding nice,
And know their several beauties by their Price.
Auctions and Sales I constantly attend,
But chuse my pictures by a skilful friend.
Originals and copies are much the same,
the picture's value is in the painter's name.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Of the 908 art auctions between 1660–1699, 839 of them were held in London. The second most popular place, Cambridge, held 10 auctions.

¹⁹¹ Therese Parker to her brother, 5 March 1773, Morley papers, vol. 1, Add MS 48218, fol. 129. British Library, in Stewart, *The Town House*, p.88.

¹⁹² Preben Mortensen, *Art in the Social Order: The Making of the Modern Conception of Art* (State University of New York Press, 1997), p.84.

As collecting increased as a form of recreation and a means of distinction, so did the need for connoisseurs who were adept at evaluating paintings and in managing the flow of art across national borders and through public auctions, which emerged as a crucial site of exchange. Energetic dealers like William Buchanan made enormous fortunes for, as Francis Haskell said, 'Bliss indeed it was to be a collector in that dawn, but to be a dealer was very heaven.'¹⁹³ The half dozen major sales catalogues produced between 1736 and 1748 constituted a significant scholarly achievement, quite apart from their interest as forerunners of the type still in use today.¹⁹⁴ Intended as permanent reference works, and as objects of curiosity in their own right, each catalogue went beyond describing objects for sale to address the public on various aspects of collecting: its social rewards, the origins and properties of porcelain; what to look for in shells and how and when to have them cleaned, and so on.¹⁹⁵ There were colourful asides on the difficulty of getting the Dutch to part with anything valuable, and the love of the English for van de Velde's seascapes; while profiles of the owners whose collections were for sale and the artists whose paintings were represented added cultural weight to the printed matter.

To secure the landscapes of taste and fashion beyond the confines of a country house or city dwelling, picture collecting became a *leitmotif* of the

¹⁹³ Bermingham and Brewer, *The Consumption of Culture*, p. 503.

¹⁹⁴ For the French artist, Gersaint, his most important publicity tool. See: Andrew McClellan, 'Gersaint and the Marketing of Art in Eighteenth-Century Paris,' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29, no. 2 (1995–96).

¹⁹⁵ Examples in the British Library's copy of Gersaint's 1736 *Catalogue, raisonné de coquilles* came from the library of the distinguished naturalist, Joseph Banks (1743–1820), having belonged earlier to one Mendez da Costa.

aristocracy in the eighteenth century, with public auctions as a cultural practice becoming almost *de rigueur* for fashionable town life.¹⁹⁶ As we have seen with the Parkers, commissioning a dealer (in their case, the artist Reynolds) to procure a list of works to augment the patron's self-fashioning goals also had an effect on the popularity of artists, both living and dead. When Dutch and Flemish portraitists emigrated to England at the end of the seventeenth century, the demand for their work rose. Among Antony's archives are handwritten lists of desirable paintings, the inference being that these works could be sought for the house as fashionable cultural consumption that had the potential to increase the value of existing collections, and enhance (if well chosen) the patron's intellectual interests as a man of taste.¹⁹⁷ From various inventories we can verify that the Carews were successful in acquiring several works by esteemed artists. There is sufficient evidence in auction catalogues of the 1720s and 1730s that William sought (and bought) many of the artists on the list as contemporary art. The presence of Dutch landscapes is testament to William's *virtuoso* objectives and to his interest in genre paintings as opposed to grand historical narratives – more aligned to his personality and projected through collected art, while later acquisitions point to Reginald's acumen. Archive bundle CZ/EE/12a contains a list of Lord Ashburnham's collection of Old Masters from the sale of which it is

¹⁹⁶ Wall, *The English Auction*, p.2 acknowledges that for all its popularity, the auction could be a profoundly ambivalent experience for those most committed to its pleasures – the fashionable world – precisely because it wasn't just the fashionable world to whom auctions appealed. In 1751 Horace Walpole worried that 'Gidion the Jew and Blakiston the independent Grocer have been the chief purchasers of [his father's] pictures sold already [at Houghton].' See also, Walpole, *Correspondence*, for a detailed discussion of auction practices and participants.

¹⁹⁷ CE/E/41 and CE/E/48.

probable that Reginald acquired the Rembrandt etchings that were soon to feature in his own post-mortem auction.

A codicil to Reginald's Will of 1835 appointed his brother-in-law William Henry, the third Lord Lyttleton; his Pole cousin Thomas Somers Cocks; and his son-in-law Francis Glanville, executors. In that capacity, they arranged an auction of quantities of art works to cover death duties. Benjamin Wheatley – a well-known auctioneer and librarian – held a three-day sale of '[a] Very Beautiful Collection of the Etchings of Rembrandt [...] and other Celebrated Works.'¹⁹⁸ The catalogue's Preface recalled Reginald's art collecting habits noting that what was up for sale had been 'collected with great judgment, taste and expense, out of the Barnard, Hibbert, [...] and Bute collections.'¹⁹⁹ The auctioneer wrote of Reginald that he had an:

¹⁹⁸ CP340 and CP/ADD/Box/15/9 – copy and original sale catalogue.

¹⁹⁹ John Barnard (1709-84) an English collector of prints, drawings and paintings often of high quality, but was otherwise renowned as a miser. He used a large fortune inherited from his father Sir John Barnard (about 1685-1764) to devote 50 years to collecting art. By 1761 he had 65 paintings, and about 12,000 prints including 449 attributed to Rembrandt and drawings of high calibre bought from the sales of the earl of Arundel, Sir Peter Lely, Lord Somers, Richard Mead and Sir Uvedale Price. To give an idea of the extent of his collection, there are references to sales of drawings, prints and paintings in 1787 (over 8 days); 1798 (26 days) and at Christies in 1799. George Hibbert's Library included rare manuscripts and Luther's copy of the German Bible. In 1829 Hibbert aged 72 inherited a country property from his wife's uncle, Roger Parker. The move from his very commodious house in Portland Place, necessitated the downsizing of his library. The auction of 8786 lots, approx 40,000 volumes took 42 days and raised £21,753/9/- an extraordinary sum at the time. Even this considerable sum does not match the cost of the library, mentioned by several contemporary commentators as being in excess of £40,000. The veracity of this figure has not been traced to any reliable source, see, *The Gentleman's Magazine: and Historical Chronicle For the Year 1809*. (1809), Arkose Press, 2015. The core of the collection was formed in the second half of the eighteenth century by John, 3rd Earl of Bute (1713–1792) and his son, John, 4th Earl and 1st Marquess (1744–1814). Although not the first, it was arguably one of the greatest collections of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings in Britain, and influenced the taste of other collectors of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A study of all the auction sales of Robert Harding Evans of Pall Mall from 1812-1846 has been undertaken by Marc Vaulbert de Chantilly who found only one other contemporary auction sales of similar value. The 1812 John Duke of Roxburghe sale £22,992/7/- over 41 days.

enthusiastic love for the pursuit – a warm admiration for the works of the inimitable artist, with a tasteful eye in the selection of the finest impression he could procure.

Lamentably, this is the first (and among the last) indication we have of Reginald's fervency for art as a passionate, discerning collector who enjoyed the quest. In all, 391 lots went under the hammer netting the estate £2,647.18s.6d,²⁰⁰ as well as column inches in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for July to December 1835. The sale of Rembrandts may have been predicated upon an economic necessity, although the disposal of such a unique collection of seventeenth-century Dutch masterpieces was probably more indicative of the value assigned to them in the third decade of the nineteenth century. As the authority of the Academy declined and interest in naturalism, human personality and psychological subtlety grew, the clear-eyed portraits of Reynolds (*et al*) replaced the tawny miasma of the Old Master. In short, Rembrandt was out-of-fashion and British artists were pursuing commissions from a society that demanded works rooted not only in British cultural values but also in its present cultural values. With the passing of Reginald, so too the élitism of the Grand Tour and its neoclassical influences faded, to be replaced by the distinctive styles of British painting as seen in the landscapes of Constable, the portraits of Gainsborough, and the evocations of pure light in the work of Turner that, each, plumbed the emotional depths of their subjects.

Wheatley's first sale of Rembrandts on behalf of Reginald's executors was followed in June of the same year by a second auction at Elgood & Ward of

²⁰⁰ The equivalent of nearly £4million today.

Wimpole Street. Among the 44 paintings in the subsequent catalogue was a Reynolds work, *Hope Nursing Love*, (c. 1769.) Reginald had bought the painting in 1816 from Henry Hope, the Dutch art collector, for £168 but from this sale the hammer price was 530 guineas, sold to Lady St Germans, and it remains to this day at Port Eliot alongside 13 other Reynolds' paintings.²⁰¹ Although not a portrait, this painting's significance arises from the connection between the artist and his connections to the West Country. Patronised by Eliot, Carew, and Parker, and promoted by Edgcumbe, these earlier associations contributed to his success and fame in London. Unique among portraitists, Reynolds did not simply paint individuals, he befriended them, brought them into contact with one another, and shaped their public images: each a crucial aspect in self-fashioning and integral to the conspicuous consumption and circulations of his patrons.

Although the Carews amassed pictures through inheritance and marriage, the archives contain significant correspondence regarding their interests as collectors. Mid-century letterbooks discuss the disposition of pictures at Shute, the Pole family ancestral seat; the collections of the Marquess of Salisbury, of Lord Lansdowne and of Lord Mount Edgcumbe and, finally, the dispersal of Reginald's collection at auction.²⁰² One particular document concerns Lord

²⁰¹ In 2007 Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery acquired 23 portraits from the Trustees of the Port Eliot estate through the Acceptance in Lieu scheme. The core of the acquisition is a group of 14 works by Reynolds, spanning his career from the 1740s to the 1780s and which remain *in situ* at Port Eliot.

²⁰² CVW/Y/18; PZ/35/7B, PZ/35/11 and CE/E/48 respectively. The National Portrait Gallery's biography of H. Resta Bolton reveals he restored more than 100 pictures at Saltram between 1840 and 1845; four paintings at Antony, and was active at Crowcombe Court, Mount Edgcumbe, Prideaux Place and other west country houses. See also Christine Sitwell and Sarah Staniforth, eds., 'Approach to Restoration in English Country Houses', *Studies in the History of Painting*

Ashburnham's picture collection and points to 1786 when the Sussex peer bought the entire collection of his distant relative, William Morice.²⁰³ Ashburnham was a noted collector and while paintings were certainly commissioned and exchanged at county level, the opportunities to do so must, perforce, have been limited.

4.9 CONCLUSION

From Antony, where their position and role in society was anchored in the house and estates, the Carews' cultural identity was projected outwards in support of the privileges attached to a country seat. Neither the negative construction of town versus country, nor the isolation of Cornwall, appear to have hindered William or Reginald. Dock offered access to luxury goods through national and international trade routes; Plymouth provided active social and cultural engagement where the traditional public role of an aristocratic landowner could be enacted. While in Bath they were able to strategise routes through the sociable and commercial venues enjoyed by their peers and employed in self-fashioning. London's fast-moving *beau monde* required adaptive strategies to negotiate the much broader public spheres often controlled by etiquette and fashion. In Charles Street and New Cavendish Street, however, they could

Restoration (Archtype Books, 1998), pp. 129–138, and Sitwell, 'Henry Resta Bolton, a Nineteenth-Century Picture Restorer,' *The Picture Restorer* 18, Autumn (2000), pp. 26–28. National Portrait Gallery

²⁰³ CZ/EE/12a. Ashburnham was distantly related to the Carews through the Morice/Coventry lines, although it is not known if the connection advantaged the Earl in his purchase.

reconstitute the familiar – making direct references to Antony and the importance of its visual culture to their strategies of distinction.

The Carews were evidently fully conscious of their obligations to their families, estates and constituencies, and responsibilities to the key social systems that orchestrated aristocratic lives throughout the century, and in the preservation of the dynastic identity of the family.

CHAPTER 5: Epilogue

The aim in this thesis was to draw attention to two members of a gentry family who occupied the space between the hereditary nobleman and the capitalist merchant and whose self-fashioning strategies have been overlooked. The abstract posed two questions: the first was about the value of this project to scholarship, and the second was whether the eighteenth century looked different when the thesis findings were included. A simple response would endorse the view that the landed élites used material culture to confirm wealth, status and power and that, from that platform, the social distinctions between the aristocracy and the middling sorts are vouchsafed.

The Carews belonged to the aristocracy and the things they commissioned, collected and displayed were a reflection of that social position. From that perspective, the eighteenth century probably does not look very different. Conspicuous consumption went some way to defining them, but it was not the only source of identity and, since the collective noun 'aristocracy' does not discriminate among its own hierarchical structures, it is deceptive to treat all members equally. Any survey of country houses and their owners underlines marked contrasts. For example: William Cavendish purchased Chatsworth from his brother for £10,000, by which calculation William's expenditure of £1,260 to build Antony House was modest and, in the analysis, probably more representative of the larger number of early-century house builders. Furthermore, the differences between the Carews and the Cavendishes (in this

example) are expressed in the uses of material culture.¹ The noblest families of the eighteenth century arrived by way of the Elizabethan court which functioned as the greatest member of a federation of great households whose influence criss-crossed the realm in a dense network of personal bonds.² Their prestige houses were filled with luxury goods that impressed upon visitors their power, wealth and social position. While recognising that the Carews had interests in common with the greater landowners, as non-peerage country gentlemen they lived in a different way and used material culture to dissimilar ends.

As unexpected heirs, William and Reginald had each to create an identity that explained their roles as rural estate owners, family members and regional politicians, and that also illustrated their educational, cultural and social refinement. Orwell was correct when he referred to England's social structures as traditional, layered and exceptionally complex: 'bound together by an invisible chain.'³ The forged links representing William and Reginald were created locally but could be detected within broader geographies. The value of this project lies in its focus on non-peerage landowners and the findings help to form a fuller, more comprehensive appraisal of the uses of material culture throughout the century.

¹ Susan Pearce, *Museums and Their Development: The European Tradition 1700–1900* (Routledge, 1999), pp. 320–369. An 1835 visitor to the Derbyshire estate listed, over 25 consecutive pages, the paintings and sculpture arranged to signify the connoisseurship in the duke's collection and the frequent use of 'noble conception' in the descriptions suggests a pointed corollary between the characteristics of the painting and its owner.

² R. Malcom Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), p.66.

³ George Orwell, *The Lion and the Unicorn* (1941).

Heir to the baronetcy and his father's estates, William used its income and social significance in partnership with the influence of his personal relationships to craft a cultural identity commensurate with his new-found status. Unlike those above him in the aristocratic hierarchy whose princely connections and vast wealth precluded any strategic self-fashioning, William was obliged to invest in the material culture that would satisfy his inherited obligation to status and project his entitlements beyond the estate's borders. While only partially transparent, we can infer that his approaches were based in tradition, politics and symbolism. The traditional landed aristocrat derived power from systems of privilege that dated back to the Middle Ages; however, and particularly for William, the events following the Glorious Revolution threatened to destabilise the *status quo*. If Antony House was to represent the traditions of Carew family heritage, then it did so by reference to Vitruvius and the role of architecture in ancient Rome. Augustan architecture promoted imperial themes of legitimacy, prosperity and civic idealism. Its revival in eighteenth-century England claimed for the ruling hegemony a parallel identity. More specifically, the political primacy accorded to independent landowners was premised on glorified role models of classical antiquity (Cincinnatus, for instance)⁴ although selective memories of seventeenth-century constitutional struggles continued to whisper in Tory ears until the death of Queen Anne.

⁴ Cincinnatus, (519 BC–430 BC), the aristocratic Roman statesman whose lack of personal ambition in deference to the good of the state earned him a mention in Dante's *Paradiso* (Canto XV, line 127) as an exemplary good citizen. In the eighteenth century Cincinnatus' civic virtue was refitted as noblesse oblige so that the hegemonic relationship that existed between Britain's politics and its dominant relationships was preserved.

Andrea Palladio's influence on aristocratic architecture arrived via Inigo Jones and the Grand Tour. In Protestant England, the visual rhetoric of the Baroque's grandeur, redolently absolutist and Catholic, was culturally unsuited to the country's lords of the manor who preferred to evoke the civic idealism diffused through Classically-inspired forms. Much contemporary literature historicises the British-Palladian as the *leitmotif* of Whiggism's political vision, although scholars have shown that to be misleading since the majority of British-Palladian houses were built by Tories. By the time the Whigs gained parliamentary control, William (a Jacobite) had already begun building Antony. William's Tory relatives were also engaged in plastering over earlier-built country residences with neo-Classical elements. The Courtenays of Powderham updated their medieval manor in the modern style and, later, the Parkers (also Tory), having re-clad Saltram in an approximation of the Palladian, commissioned Robert Adam to refurbish its Tudor interiors. Adopting Palladianism was therefore politically neutral, and not simply a question of appearing to be fashionable but also a means of advertising the enlightened, virtuous and learned attributes of those who did so.

On a personal level, the style made visible William's modernity: from an impressive riverine site, through to its articulation of interior spaces. While there were references to the courtly progression of privilege in the layout, what was more important was that his guests could appreciate his pedigree and his relationships (his cultural identity) through his conspicuously referential decorative schemes. It could be possible to propose characteristic self-effacement among baronetage families throughout the years: Sir Richard Carew

judged his own social rank as 'keep[ing] Liberal, but not costly builded or furnished houses'.⁵ Even when Reginald inherited the mansion and reconfigured some interior rooms to provide a separate dining room, he retained the Hall's Tudor linen-fold panelling which William had rescued from the original manor house on the estate. Sixteenth-century interior design was incongruous in a British-Palladian reception room but it was symbolic: it had probably been introduced by William's great-grandmother and to dismantle it would have destroyed its historical value and been improvident to Reginald's claims to lineage. Furthermore, the panelling made clear connections with the family's histories – the estate was inherited in 1465 by Sir Nicholas Carew's fourth son, Alexander, who died in 1492.

The circumstances surrounding Reginald's inheritance might make useful comparisons with the gentry, although his conspicuous consumption had less to do with aspiration than with the maintenance of a social position thrust upon him. Contact with his aristocratic forebears, his grandfather Sir John Carew and great-grandfather Sir John Pole, and with extended family members on both sides could have prepared him for the role of a landowner with political responsibilities and their accompanying social expectations. Although Antony was less than 50 years old when Reginald moved in, his first attempts to stamp his mark on the estate were established by commissioning Repton to update the immediate landscaping and to re-order the rear elevation to suit his personal needs and the more informal spaces appreciated by later eighteenth-century society. The

⁵ Carew, *Survey*, 1602.

prestige of a famous designer propelled Reginald into a *coterie* (albeit 400 plus strong) of landowners who prized Repton's approaches. Some of those held that viewing the landscape required natural taste and aristocratic training in structuring the view into an artistic composition. Thus, the cognitive map of the re-ordering of Reginald's surroundings could serve as an external physical indicator of his mental cultivation. By visually enlarging the property's boundaries, Reginald was seen as a greater land owner which enhanced his cultural identity.

Land was the historical key to power with control being exerted through endogamic marriage and the authority of primogeniture. The role of successful marriages as the bedrock for preserving hereditary influence was claimed by portraiture. It was *de rigueur* for the aristocracy to sit for artists who could record their significant narratives in the style appropriate to the age. The Carews' portraits disclose how they wanted to be viewed and which abstracts they preferred to project and in William's case, family portraits demonstrated an unbroken line from his most celebrated ancestor, Richard Carew, to Coventry, his son. An inventory prepared in 1771 for Reginald was an exceptional discovery and provided insight into William's aims for his art collection. The site and placement of portraits were designed to be understood as a *précis* of the relationships that were important to him and validation of the substance of hereditary entitlement, while images of friends and political associates added further richness to his characterisation. As a planned display, they were the pictorial evidence of William's self-fashioning and a demonstration of the emotional comfort that ancestors' portraits provided. Unlike the early-century

Parkers who reimagined family history with the help of Reynolds, William had no need to fabricate his pedigree.

Reginald's ascent was less linear although by amalgamating key paintings from his family's collection with William's he achieved the claims to heritage so necessary to the formation of his cultural identity. A later inventory, prepared for the paintings at his London residence, articulated Reginald's approaches in some detail. From these archives, we can appreciate the value he placed on the Antony collections through what he replicated in London and in the significance of their location. By this inventory, we can see that portraits of William and Anne and her parents greeted visitors in the Hall as they had at Antony, although an eclectic mix of paintings now graced the walls of the principal reception rooms. Having ancestors who mattered, especially in the form of rank and title, made the élite distinctive and shaped their identities. Reginald's hanging schemes are clear evidence of his interests in projecting blood-links to William but in a less hierarchical fashion. Linking portraiture and consumption in terms of choices about what to retain and how to present these things within the house were crucial to demonstrate Reginald's cultural currency. Inheriting William's material culture – from paintings to silverware – established rank and status that retained meaning for Reginald and for wider society because they provided a valuable reference point. As Stobart remarked, while heritage and pedigree could be recreated, they could not be purchased.⁶

⁶ Stobart and Rothery, *Consumption and the country house*, p.266.

That William and Reginald each maintained residences in London authorises the assumption that their contact with the capital was indispensable to self-fashioning. Arriving in London for the Season, which corresponded with the sitting of Parliament, these Cornish landowners became constituents of the *beau monde* which organised itself around activities designed to advertise their prestige and confirm their superior status. The self-preserving intellect of an established ruling élite recognised that, in a changing world, culture was power, with its defining features established and exclusively codified. While coffee houses, card parties, and dinners provided venues for discussing the day's events and the morrow's plans, daily and weekly newspapers were the most effective means of popularising and commercialising the concerns of the élite. Given the swell of titled people arriving on a regular basis, column inches were reserved for the most spectacular events hosted by glittering personalities or the most notorious of their ranks whose behaviour was far from polite, the Carews' appearances in the press were, unsurprisingly, limited. The relatively quiet lives of William and Reginald were not courted for publicity and, yet, when they are written about in terms of social engagements there is sufficient evidence that the Carews circulated, consumed, commissioned, and carried back to Cornwall, if not physical luxury goods, at least inspiration from their encounters that contributed to their strategies of distinction.

Humphry Bowen, William's gardener, was among a handful of London nurseryman whose businesses were stimulated by a fashionable taste for exotic plants and trees. The archives provide evidence of plants shipped to Antony by him but the commission, in all likelihood, arose from a personal visit (perhaps

based on a relative's recommendation) to the Lambeth nursery during the winter social Season. While many paintings were inherited, those by Dahl, Riley, and Kneller in William's time (and Beach, Hudson, and Romney in Reginald's), were contemporary commissions of court artists or artists patronised by family members and friends. These networks suggest protracted contact with London studios and the circulation of ideas about the merits of portraits and their creators. How gratified Reginald must have been to see Reynolds rise through the ranks, in part on the recommendation of their mutual friend, Edgcumbe. From his studio in Leicester Fields (now Square) the artist's reputation as the leading portraitist flourished and many south-western friends and neighbours sat for him there, evidenced by the dates on their portraits. In the transmission of ideas and association, Reynolds was an important link for the Carews. It is speculative to say that a portrait by Reynolds of John Russell, the sixth Duke of Bedford, constructed a relationship between Reginald and Repton. Reginald's Whitehall associations certainly introduced Repton to the south west where Bedford commissioned the landscapist to redesign the gardens at Endsleigh, overlooking the northernmost tributary of the Tamar, thus putting the designer and his patrons at either end of the river. Reginald's friend, the Earl of Shelburne, was influenced to employ Repton to update Capability Brown's designs at Bowood, and Edward St Germans commissioned a *Red Book* for Port Eliot. William's vintner and Anne's draperies may have been sourced locally but were certainly traded through London; Reginald's books, Caroline's 'Tournay' [Tournai] chocolate cups, and ultimately, the sale of Rembrandt prints were interchanged in the capital. The direct effects of the influence of family members,

co-relatives, friends and neighbours are elusive in many cases but, from these few examples, we can be assured that such relationships amplified entrées to social and cultural interactions for the Carews throughout the century.

The deployment of strategies of distinction as an analytical tool in this thesis is doubly significant. Firstly, it has been used to support a specific argument (i.e., the primacy of personal relationships which informed the creation of the Carews' cultural identities); secondly, it showed that a baronetage family were as concerned with the concept of distinction as those above and below them in the social hierarchies. The populist notion that all eighteenth-century mansion owners were wildly famous or contributed to public life in a spectacular and abiding manner is disingenuous: the larger numbers in the lower aristocratic ranks represent an undiscovered resource. Standing, as they did, at the crossroads of dynastic identity, syncretic family relationships and the exigencies of financial and estate management, William and Reginald's investments in material culture intersected with broader sets of values.

Without them and their contributions to our understanding of the uses of material culture throughout the eighteenth century, debates lack intellectual amplitude. Whilst I have provided a structure through which scholars might consider lower-ranked aristocratic country house owners, this thesis has only been about two quite ordinary men and one unexceptional country house. However, their distinction arises in their motivations for and approaches to self-fashioning as a collaboration between obligation and selfhood mediated by personal relationships. Beyond the structural forces of land, a country house and

a family estate, William and Reginald's discretionary spending and the choices they made, tell us far more about their strategy to create a cultural identity.

Paradoxically, the majority of National Trust properties were the residences of an effaced social group like the Carews – aristocrats, but not noble enough to signify in the syndicates of the uppermost echelons of society – and whose legacies now represent a portion of society that rarely features in eighteenth-century discourse. Their discrete self-fashioning may have wider cultural resonance since, in part, what they chose to project as a cultural identity was a reflection of the culture that surrounded them. While recognising the similarities with greater landowners, the minor English aristocracy lived in a different way and, as this thesis has shown, what was important to the Carews was how to prove and maintain the entitlements and privileges that their rank bestowed upon them. William's and Reginald's investments were calculated to maximise and enhance their characterisations and personal relationships were a principal conduit through which to create and exploit their cultural identities. Thus, we should be confident that investigating the self-fashioning strategies of England's slightly paler blue-bloods complements existing scholarship. Understanding their strategies of distinction alters an imprecise historical understanding of early modern England for it identifies connections between two owners of south-western estates, their embedded obligations to the land, and to the social position they inherited. This thesis brings to light people, spaces and things which have thus far remained undetected. From the visual culture of Antony to the material culture of their portrait collections, their personal relationships influenced the creation of a cultural identity for William and for Reginald.

To study the historical significance of Antony's owners, particularly from a cultural point of view, requires the willingness to embrace the intricate and often asymmetrical interlacing of social and cultural interactions, engagements and exchanges. By forging links between intergenerational Carews, their objective self-fashioning and their personal relationships, the individual cultural identities of William and Reginald became reanimated. In order to maintain their identities as titled landowners with appropriate wealth and heritage, Antony's principals were compelled to project themselves beyond their Cornish estate's borders. To validate their entitlements of education, status and taste, they participated in the public spheres of Bath and London and engaged in social activities expected of their peer group. The Carews were evidently fully conscious of their obligations to their families, estates and constituencies, and responsibilities to the key social systems that orchestrated aristocratic lives throughout the century. Their written records and visible material culture attest to the value they attached to their roles in society and in the preservation of the dynastic identity of the family. The continuance of these falls to Richard, the present and thirteenth Baronet of Antony, and his heir, Tremayne.

Identifying the importance of self-fashioning, conspicuous consumption and relationships as approaches to the creation of William's and Reginald's cultural identities highlighted the compactness of English society. The next step might be to ask whether knowing about the Carews contributes to the success of that society, which could offer more interest than any strategy employed by them. The paradigm of bourgeois social success projected certain assertions, models, images and claims on the imagination from the past into the future. But we must

be careful of our viewpoint – as the character of Hannah Jarvis quips in Tom Stoppard's 1993 play *Arcadia*:

English landscape was invented by gardeners imitating foreign painters who were evoking classical authors... Capability Brown doing Lorrain, who was doing Virgil.⁷

5.1 Post Script

Peter Mandler (*The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home*) argued that heritage (as a physical legacy of the past belonging, however abstractly, to the citizenry of the present by virtue of its contribution to national history) was a Victorian construct – eighteenth-century élites demonstrated no feeling for the past and the existence of a cultural nation.⁸ A sense of the past is clearly evident at Antony: indeed, its building and art collections form the foundation upon which successive generations build their narratives and through which we are able to reanimate their cultural worlds. Britain's eighteenth-century aristocrats were dedicated guardians of their histories, seen in the numerous collections at noble homes across the land.⁹ Their social contract to preserve their cultural heritage was still

⁷ Tom Stoppard, *Arcadia* (London: Faber and Faber, 1993), p.25.

⁸ Peter Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p.7 argues that an understanding of heritage required 'both a feeling for the past and the existence of a cultural nation' the latter, he declared erroneously, did not feature in Georgian England.

⁹ 'a partnership, not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those that are yet to be born'. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

alive in 1929, when the third Lord Montagu of Beaulieu inherited the estate and proclaimed:

We belong to our possessions, rather than our possessions belong to us. To us, they are not wealth, but heirlooms, over which we have a sacred trust.¹⁰

Admittedly, though, not all beneficiaries honoured the trust and shared the same attachment to or reverence for the historical, prestigious or culturally significant. The heir to Althorp, Charles, the ninth Earl Spencer, bemoaned his stepmother Raine's cavalier attitude to the family's material culture:

She treated the chattels as her own, to be disposed of discreetly via a network of Bond Street dealers, for reasons that did not seem to benefit the fabric of the house or the wider estate. The house had been ours since 1508, and the collection reflected the varying tastes of 17 previous generations of Spencers, none of whom had divorced. There had been second and third wives, because of early deaths, but they had not been allowed to break the aristocratic code...¹¹

As individuals, William and Reginald were keen to preserve and maintain within Antony those items that informed their cultural identities. Throughout the century, self-fashioning was the impetus for what they commissioned, collected, and displayed, adding layers of meaning beyond mere conspicuous consumption. Inherent in the building and paintings were the characteristics and social aims of the patron, replicated in what they selected to be retained for posterity. The Carews' strategies of distinction warranted that their part in the

¹⁰ Spencer, 'Enemies of the Estate,' *Vanity Fair*, October, 2010.

¹¹ Spencer, *Ibid*.

family's history was tangible, evident and visible, not only for their descendants but also for the general population. The confirmation for this is the collection we see today at Antony and the visitor numbers to the property.

In 2011, National Trust recorded close to 100,000 visitors to Antony, reflecting the enduring interest in how the owners of country houses created their identities through what they collected and displayed.¹² Alongside Chatsworth (722,906 visitors) or Blenheim (571,567), the Carews' material culture adds a dimension to discourses on the uses in the eighteenth century of culturally significant goods: offering a more accessible middle-ground between the ostentatiously rich and famous and the burgeoning merchant class. Their contribution should not be marginalised: the strategies they employed to create and maintain their cultural identities were based on the construction and cultivation of a set of shared characteristics that defined and articulated their ambitions. For Britain's eighteenth-century élites material culture was not only central to their lives, their relationships, and their wider relationship with society, it was also important to the development of audience reception. What the Carews collected, consumed and displayed must, therefore, count as contributing to our understanding of the uses of material culture by lesser nobles throughout the century.

¹² For example: National Trust Annual Report 2014/15 calculated visitor numbers over 50,000 to 18th century houses charging admission. Stourhead received 389,294 whereas Killerton attracted 187,509; Croome Court, 140,686; Saltram, 65,061 – there were no numbers for Antony indicating its turnstile registered fewer than the 50,000 benchmark for inclusion in the tabulations.

While keen to avoid any Heritage studies debates, it must be acknowledged that they act as a direct link to the past that shaped the England of today and, through the act of visiting, tourists validate the cultural significance of the country house and its associated social values. However, in the interests of the Carews, and others like them who retain a vested interest in their ancestral seats, perhaps the National Trust should re-evaluate how they present the residences of lesser nobles? Harry Mount's article in *the Spectator* (15 November 2014) may well have been channelling its eighteenth-century founders when he lamented the 'infantilisation' of the Trust's houses and landscapes. Referring to a late-1990s advertising campaign in which the venerable Victoria & Albert Museum described itself as 'an ace caff with quite a nice museum attached' (which at least admitted the museum), he wept for the death of serious public culture. The National Trust, he wrote, 'wants to ignore its incredible houses in a monetised scramble for 'accessibility.'

While the collection of paintings at Antony contains many by well-known artists, the intent was never to form prestigious galleries dedicated to the genius of Kneller or Reynolds, but rather to record, for posterity, the interconnectedness of family and friends. William and Reginald inherited and added to the collection by commissioning artists who could best represent their goals, with a significant number of paintings expressing personal relationships. The Carews are revealed as rather reticent, perhaps even complacent, characters: apart from a brief scuffle by William with government ideology in 1715, their names are not attached to scandal or other noteworthy action. Their ancestors' deeds are far more colourful, including a Cavalier poet/crazy zealot (Thomas, d. 1640), a traitor

(Alexander, d.1644), and a regicide (John, d.1660). The stories of William, the 'spare heir' of a landed aristocrat who was probably destined for a minor role in society, or of Reginald, a Devonshire clergyman's grandson, both suddenly catapulted into the position of running and maintaining a family business are interesting local history. However, it is through the strategic self-fashioning that shored up their role, entitlement and position in society that their story has relevance to social historians. William and Reginald must be representative of the nearly one thousand of their rank throughout the century for whom a cultural identity was a primary objective. It would not be unreasonable to suggest that their concerns to project the 'right' sort of identity have a twenty-first century equivalence: judgements are still formed around family, friends, possessions, and shared interests.

Antony is promoted for its gardens and horticultural collection, but the house guidebook is a dreary catalogue of what the visitor can see, rather than the dynamic storyline of the house and its occupants. The Trust's most prestigious houses are privileged in its literature: its book on Ham House costs £75.00 – tellingly, Antony's guide book is priced at £4.99. It appears manifestly incoherent that the Trust can sell Antony's 'soul' to Disney but not invest the proceeds in reconnecting with the house's builder, his heirs, and their relationships, which are its palpable authenticities. The Carews' histories have

more value to the eighteenth century and Cornwall's heritage than a twenty-first century CGI'd *Alice in Wonderland*.¹³



FIGURE 5.1 THE DISNEY CORPORATION, FILM STILL FROM 'ALICE IN WONDERLAND' 2010

13 The reference is to Tim Burton's 2010 film *Alice in Wonderland* which used Antony House as a location in 2008. The National Trust hoped to capitalise on the connection with the Disney Corporation and predicted visitor numbers to the house would increase by 40,000 per year. Location fees paid to the Trust are not available.

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CA/H/133 – details the cost of the purchase of New Cavendish Street, London by Reginald Pole-Carew from Lord Hardwicke in 1801. This archive also lists the taxes paid on this property.

CC/G – Reginald's 'Letterbooks' 1783–1833.

CE/E/22, 32 items – agreements and sketch, specifications and some bills re: construction of garden and house, dated 1713–34 and 1768.

CE/E/23, two notes of work done and materials used, 1723 and undated.

CE/E/24, 9 Letters and plans re: construction of bath house and bathing pool, c. 1788.

CE/E/27, 57 letters and plans re: furnishing of Antony House and coach building, undated.

CE/E/31 dated 1714 – lists pictures, frames, plants, silver and chinaware, presumably at Antony House).

CE/E/32 – contains receipts, advertisements for servants, prescriptions, letters between the doctors and Reginald, the physicians' case notes for June 1795; recipes in French and English for medicinal cures; beer-brewing recipes and home-preserving winter vegetables.

CE/E/42 – inventory, 'Furniture at Antony' dated 1771 and 1804.

CE/E/48 – an inventory of pictures at Antony dated 1771, 1792–1843.

CE/E/51 This document is Reginald's household account book re: groceries which also contains consumption tables 1832–34.

CE/E/54 – a bound volume and several loose sheets listing 'books sent to the Library at Antony House, July 30, 1802'.

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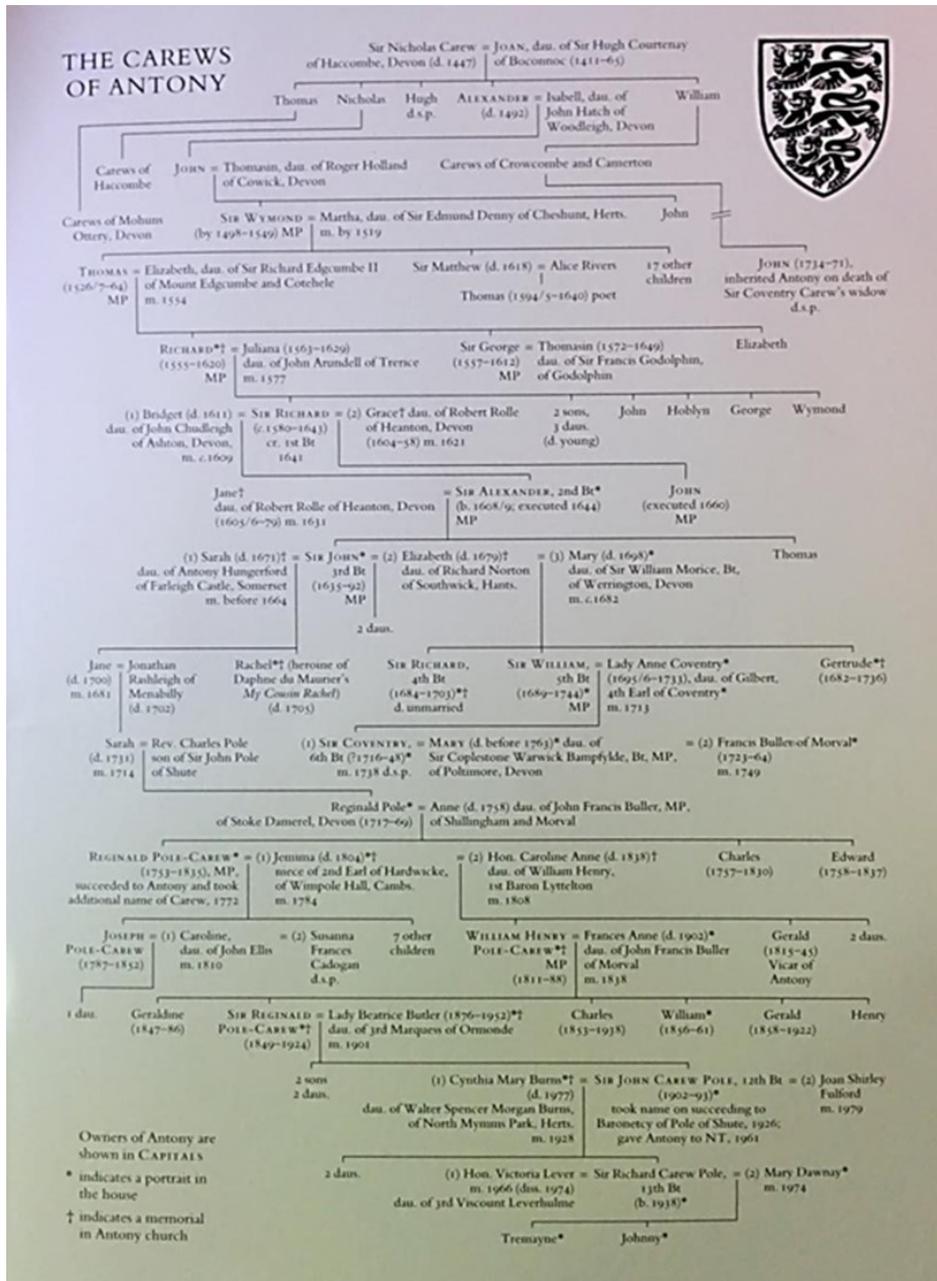
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APPENDIX 1: CAREW FAMILY TREE



APPENDIX 2: REGINALD'S LIBRARY ADDITIONS (transcribed from the archive by the author)

List of Pole additions to the Library. Archive CE/E/54 is a bound volume and several loose sheets listing 'books sent to the Library at Antony House, July 30, 1802,' to which I have added a publication date and further information, where available:

Loose sheets:

Buffon *Natural History* – 8 volumes (the Comte de Buffon originally wrote 36 volumes between 1749 and 1788);
Linnaeus *Systemia Vegetabilium*, 4 volumes (1774);
Linnaeus *Botanical Terms*, 1 vol. (1751);
Withering *Botany*, 4 volumes (1776);
Dictionary of Husbandry, 2 volumes. (Could refer to the 'Society of Gentlemen's' 1777 publication originally published in weekly instalments but gathered into 2 volumes by 1807);
Kirwan *Mineralogy*, 2 volumes (1784);
Whitechurch *Inquiry*, 1 volume;
Bryant *Flora Dilation (Florae Diaetetica)*, 1 volume (1783 – any encyclopaedia of medicinal uses for plants);
Henry *Great Britain*, 10 volumes;
Hume, *History of England*, 8 volumes (1754–61);
Smollet, *Continuation of the Complete History of England*, 5 volumes (1760);
Jonson and Storm, *Shakespeare*, 10 volumes (possibly posthumous publication of Jonson's critiques);
Biographical Dictionary, 12 volumes;
Townsend's *Guide*, 2 volumes;
Gilles, *Origin of Writing*, 1 volume;
Worsley, *Isle of Wight*, 1 volume;
Rose, *Elements of Botany*, 1 volume (1775);
Martin *Letters on Botany*, 2 volumes with a further volume of illustrations.

Bound volume catalogues:

The Bible;
Cowper's *Letters to a Young Lady on the Sacrament* (1773 – a summary of the evidence for Christianity);
Brydon's *Tour – Sicily and Malta* (1773). The English knew and visited Sicily, but they came to the Island after visiting more famous places. Only in the second part of 1700, after the publication of 'A Tour through Sicily and Malta' by Patrick Brydon, did the island become a place that should be visited;
Extract from Bertzsh's *Principles of Music*;
14 lectures on the Italian language;

- Nelson on the Festivals and Fasts (full title: *MR Nelson's Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England, Made More Useful, and Instructive, ... to Which Is Prefix'd Some Account of MR Nelson's Life and Writings, with a True Copy of His Last Will and Testament*, (1793);
- Tillotson's Sermons, 3 volumes – Most likely part of *the Works of the Most Reverend John Tillotson, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, in Twelve Volumes, Containing 254 Sermons and Discourses on Several Occasions together with the Rule of Faith; Prayers Composed by Him for His Own Life; A Discourse to His Servants before the Sacrament; and a Form of Prayer Composed by Him for the Use of King William*. (Published in London in 1742.)
- Hode's *Ariosto*, 5 volumes – Most likely the *Satires of Lodovico Ariosto*, published in 1759, concerning the prose of the sixteenth century Italian Renaissance poet. (I can find no mention of Hode as publisher, compiler, translator or commentator);
- Vielles du Chateau*, 3 volumes – quite possibly French tourist guides ;
- Physics and Astrology, Theology, 3 volumes;
- Arabian Nights Entertainment*, 4 volumes,(1706): the first English language edition, based on Galland's French rather than the original Arabic, rendered the title as the Arabian Nights' Entertainment – or simply the Arabian Nights, the title by which it has been best known to English-speaking people ever since;
- Mrs. Carter's Poems – presumed to be the 1807 account of the life and work of the English Poet and classicist Elizabeth Carter (1717–1806) by Montague Pennington, *Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter with a New Edition of her Poems, Some of which have Never Appeared before published*;
- Madame Cayus *Les Souvenirs* – probably the marquise de Caylus (1673–1729), a French noblewoman and writer. Her memoirs of the court of Louis XIV and the house of St Cyr were edited by Voltaire (1770);
- Dictionnaire de Mythologie* ;
- Keats' *Sketches from Nature*, 2 volumes ;
- Perceval's *Moral Tales*, 2 volumes ;
- Marmontel, *Belisarius*. Jean-François Marmontel was a French historian, writer and member of the Encyclopédiste movement, patronised by Mme de Pompadour. In 1767 he published *Bélisaire*, now remarkable in part because of a chapter on religious toleration which incurred the censure of the Sorbonne and the archbishop of Paris;
- L'histoire d'Angleterre – par demandes et par Réponses* – full title: *Instructions Sur L'Histoire d'Angleterre par Demandes et par Réponses, depuis l'Invasion de Jules-César jusque et y compris le Règne de George III, la mort de Paul I et l'expédition d'Égypte* – a French edition of a book by Oliver Goldsmith (published in 1801) ;
- Thomas, *Sur les Femmes*, the published essays of Antoine Thomas Leonard's *Essays on the Character of Women* (1772);
- Nelson: *An Essay on the Government of Children*: (1761);
- Madame de Genlis: *Theatre de Societé, Theatre d'éducation, lettres sur l'éducation* Stéphanie Félicité du Crest de Saint-Aubin, Comtesse de Genlis was a French writer and educator;
- Millot : *Eléments de L'histoire de France*, published between 1767 and 1769 ;
Il Funerale – commedia ;

Œuvres de Molière ;

Milton's Poetical works: the First edition of *the Complete Poetical Works of John Milton with Life* was published by Gall and Inglis (1886), this entry must relate to collections of poems published earlier;

Gill Blas, 4 volumes – this entry may relate to *L'Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane*, a picaresque novel by Alain-René Lesage published between 1715 and 1735;

Magasin des Adolescents – Mme de Beaumont – is probably journalist, educator and writer Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont; her *Magasin* was published in London (1760); it contains Bible stories, Roman history and moral guidance. She also wrote 'Beauty and the Beast' (1765);

Pamphlet – Reflections on the days of the week;

Dictionary of French Idioms;

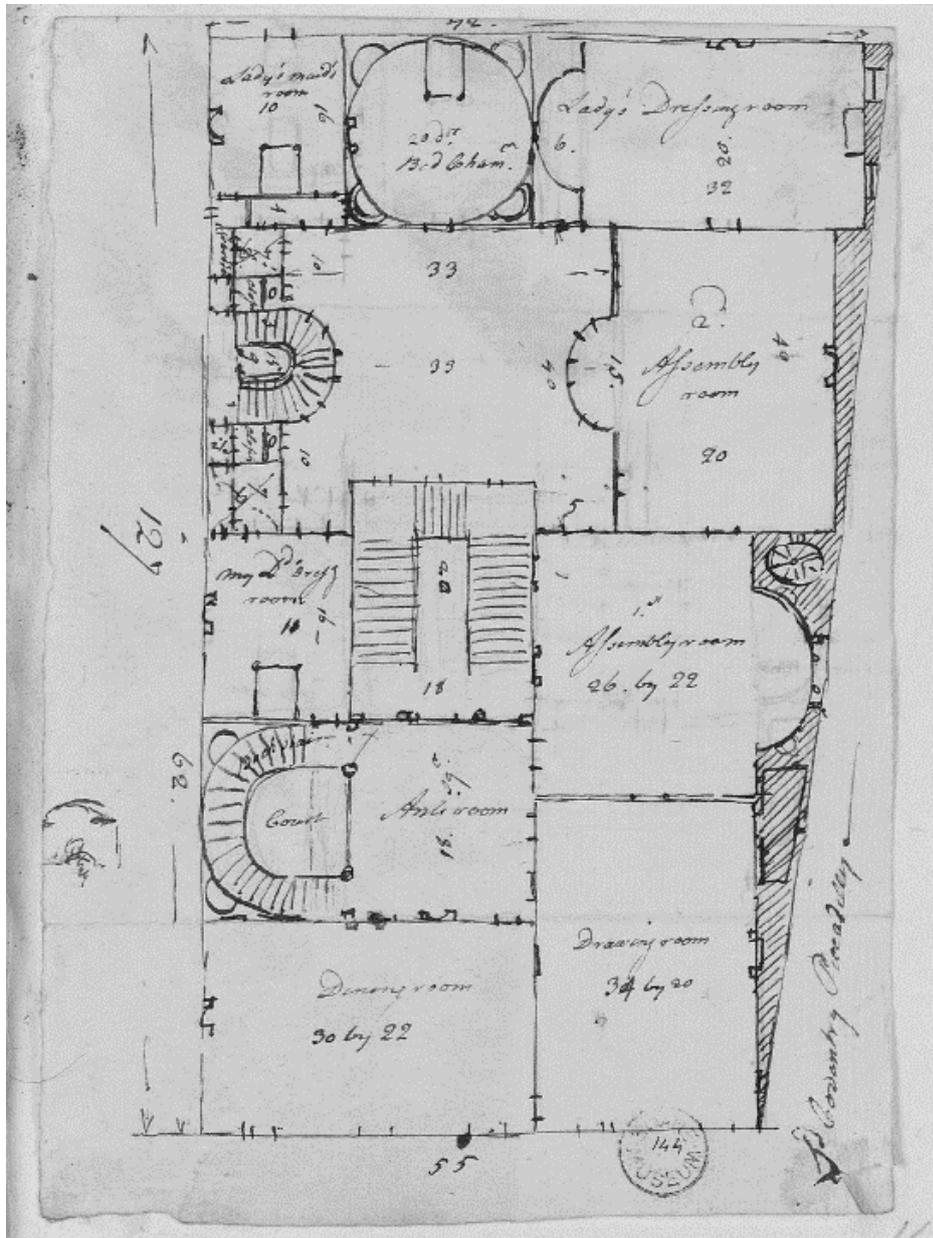
Aminta di Tasso – a pastoral fable composed by Torquato Tasso in 1573 and published in c.1580.

APPENDIX 3: CHARLES STREET GROUND PLAN



Image source: British History website: www.british-history.ac.uk

APPENDIX 4: NEW CAVENDISH STREET GROUND PLAN



Sometimes referred to as 7 New Cavendish in the archives. In 1781 Sir John Soane was engaged to make alterations for the Earl of Hardwicke; the Soane Museum notes that number 7 New Cavendish Street was later renumbered as 63 New Cavendish Street (now Asia House).

http://www.soane.org/museum/soane_buildings_projects

APPENDIX 5: SOCIAL RANK TABLES

Gregory King's analysis of rank, household size and income, c. 1688

Class	families	income (£)	families	income (£)
A. High titles and professions				
Temporal lords	160	2800	200	6060
Spiritual lords	26	1300	26	1300
Baronets	800	880	800	1500
Knights	600	650	600	800
Esquires	3,000	450	3,000	562.5
Gentlemen	12,000	280	15,000	280
Persons in offices, greater	5,000	240	5,000	240
Persons in offices, lesser	5,000	120	5,000	120
Persons in the Law	10,000	140	8,062	154 ^a
Clergymen, greater	2,000	60	2,000	72 ^a
Clergymen, lesser	8,000	45	10,000	50 ^a
Persons in sciences and liberal arts	16,000	60	12,898	60
B. Commerce				
Merchants . . . by sea, greater	2,000	400	2,000	400
Merchants . . . by sea, lesser	8,000	200	8,000	200
Merchants on land, greater			3,264	400
Merchants on land, lesser			13,057	200
Shopkeepers and tradesmen	40,000	45	101,704	45
C. Industry and building				
Artisans and handicrafts	60,000	40	6,745	200
Manufacturing trades			162,863	38 ^a
Building trades			73,018	25
Miners			14,240	15
D. Agriculture (excluding laborers)				
Freeholders, greater	40,000	84	27,568	91 ^a
Freeholders, lesser	140,000	50	96,490	55 ^a
Farmers	150,000	44	103,382	42.5 ^a
E. Military and maritime (excluding traders)				
Naval officers	5,000	80	5,000	80
Military officers	4,000	60	4,000	60
Common seamen	50,000	20	50,000	20
Common soldiers	35,000	14	35,000	14
F. Laborers and the poor				
Laboring people and outservants	364,000	15	284,997	15
Cottagers and paupers	400,000	6.5	313,183	6.5
Vagrants	30,000	2	23,489	2
All Families	1,390,586	31.29 ^b	1,390,586	39.18

Area circled indicates William's ranking based on his title; the second set of figures are those revised by Lindert and Williamson

James Massie's census showing numbers/incomes of ...a Family of each Rank, Degree or Class ... (London, 1756)

Class	families	income (£)
A. High titles and professions		
Temporal lords	160	2800
Spiritual lords	26	1300
Baronets	800	880
Knights	600	650
Esquires	3,000	450
Gentlemen	12,000	280
Persons in offices, greater	5,000	240
Persons in offices, lesser	5,000	120
Persons in the Law	10,000	140
Clergymen, greater	2,000	60
Clergymen, lesser	8,000	45
Persons in sciences and liberal arts	16,000	60
B. Commerce		
Merchants . . . by sea, greater	2,000	400
Merchants . . . by sea, lesser	8,000	200
Merchants on land, greater		
Merchants on land, lesser		
Shopkeepers and tradesmen	40,000	45
C. Industry and building		
Artisans and handicrafts	60,000	40
Manufacturing trades		
Building trades		
Miners		
D. Agriculture (excluding laborers)		
Freeholders, greater	40,000	84
Freeholders, lesser	140,000	50
Farmers	150,000	44
E. Military and maritime (excluding traders)		
Naval officers	5,000	80
Military officers	4,000	60
Common seamen	50,000	20
Common soldiers	35,000	14
F. Laborers and the poor		
Laboring people and outservants	364,000	15
Cottagers and paupers	400,000	6.5
Vagrants	30,000	2
All Families	1,390,586	31.29^b

Area circled surmises Reginald's social position as a 'gentleman' and as a 'person in office' even though the averaged income levels are too low.

Colquhoun's Occupational Head Counts for Engand and Wales,
1801–1803

Category	No. of families plus unrelated individuals	Average annual income (£)
A. High titles and professions		
Temporal peers and peeresses	287	8,000
Spiritual lords or bishops	26	4,000
Baronets	540	3,000
Knights	350	1,500
Esquires	6,000	1,500
Gentlemen and ladies living on income	20,000	700
Persons in higher civil offices	2,000	800
Persons in lesser offices	10,500	200
Eminent clergymen	1,000	500
Lesser clergymen	10,000	120
Dissenting clergymen & itinerant preachers	2,500	120
Persons of the law, judges down to clerks	11,000	350
Persons educating youth in universities and chief schools	500	600
Persons . . . in the Education of Youth of both sexes, etc.	20,000	150
Liberal arts and sciences	16,300	260
Persons employed in theatrical pursuits	1,000	200
Persons keeping houses for lunatics	40	500
	<u>102,043</u>	

Area indicated represents Reginald's rank although within years of this census, his estate income exceeded £6000 per annum.

Social Tables: extracts taken from Peter H. Lindert and Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'Revising England's Social Tables 1688–1812', *Explorations in Economic History* (1982), The Academic Press, Inc., issue 19, pp. 385–408.