

THE
British
Folk Art
COLLECTION

COMPTON
VERNEY

English Vernacular Art is enjoyable on many levels, not least through its uninhibited nature. It stands outside the conventions of the received understandings of 'Art' as a distinctive dialect. Paintings of this kind do not simply ignore perspective, they respect the picture plane. Sculpture within this tradition emerges as carvings in wood and stone rather than the marble and bronze more typical of classicism.

JAMES AYRES

James Ayres was for many years the Director of the Judkyn Memorial at Freshford Manor near Bath, now absorbed into the American Museum in Britain. In 1977 he published *British Folk Art* and in 1980 *English Naïve Art*, with an introduction by Andras Kalman.

In the early fifties my father Andras Kalman often visited auction houses and it was at a sale of pictures that he bought his first 'primitive' painting; Bear Baiting. My father was captivated! He quickly bought four or five pictures of farm animals – a misshapen sheep, a fat heifer – these paintings were amusing and decorative.

SALLY KALMAN

Folk Art is a term used to describe objects and paintings made by people with no formal training as artists, but who made use of their innate abilities or skills acquired as part of their trade or training. Other terms have been used to describe this genre, including 'Popular Art' and 'Vernacular Art'.

Growing out of the long-established craft traditions of local communities in an era before mass-production, many Folk Art pieces were designed to fulfil a specific function; others were purely decorative.

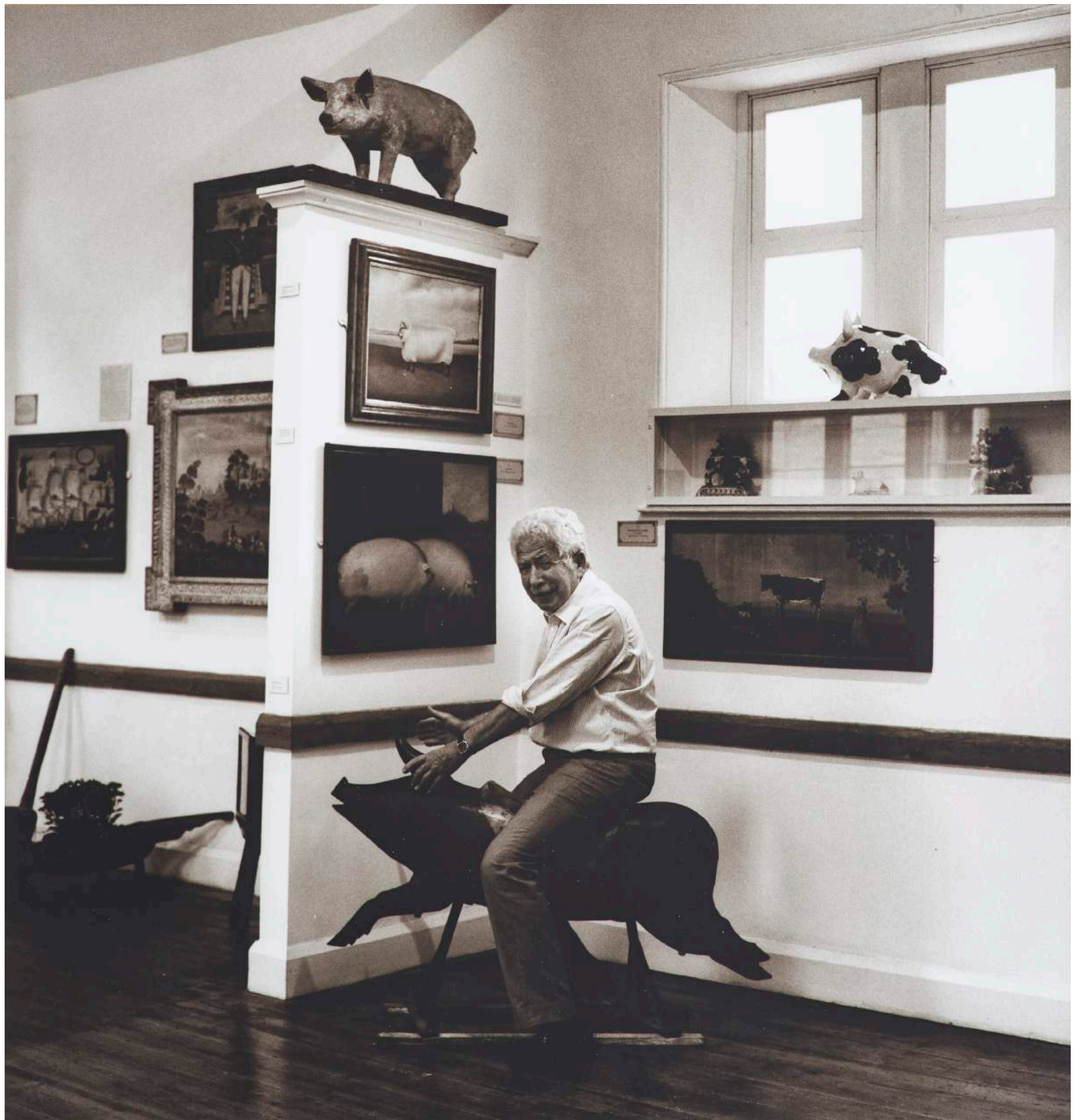
Compton Verney's unique Folk Art collection was formed by the Hungarian émigré art dealer Andras Kalman (1919–2007) in the second half of the last century. Kalman called Folk Art 'the endangered species of the English art world', and his varied collection comprises mostly British works from the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries.

Compton Verney has worked with artist and designer Mark Hearld to re-imagine the British Folk Art Collection. He has been inspired to produce work in response to the collection which includes a wallpaper design, collage and metal silhouettes. With a long-standing interest in the British countryside, British Folk Art and popular arts, Mark has recently worked on other curatorial projects, including with York Museums Trust.



THE
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Mark Hearld



Andras Kalman, whose collection now forms the vast majority of The British Folk Art Collection owned by Compton Verney.

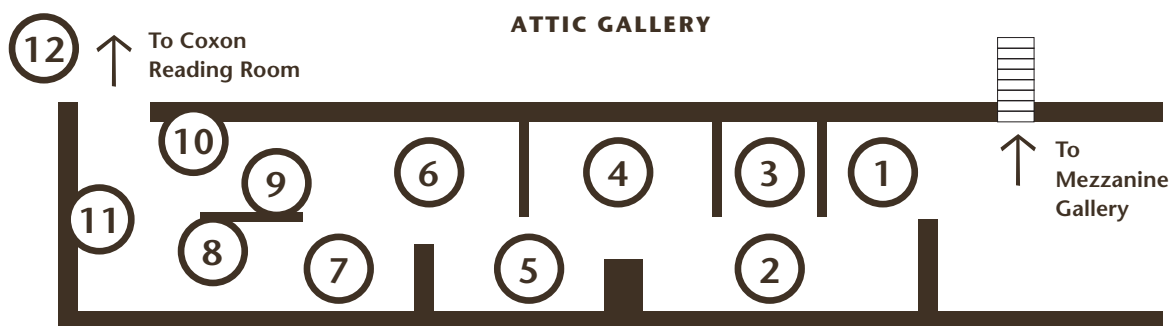
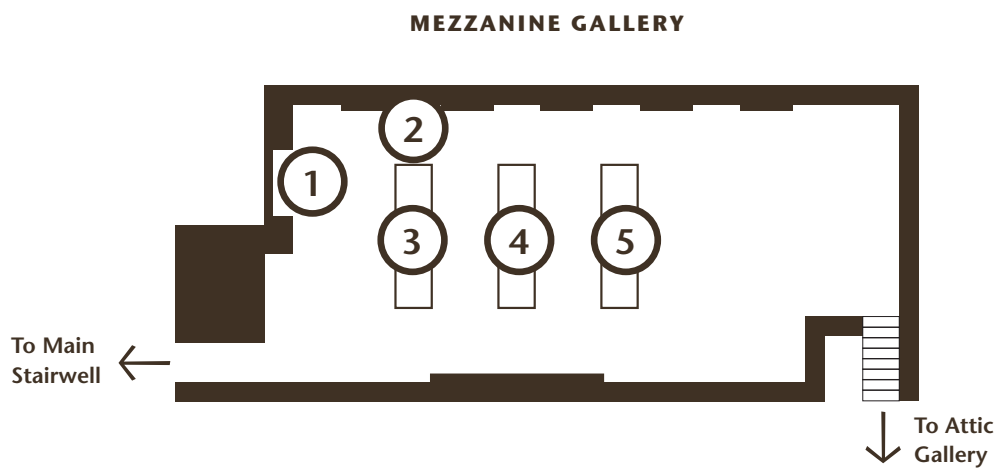
This photograph was taken in the early 1990s at The Museum of English Naïve Art in Bath where Andras Kalman's collection was previously displayed.

My father didn't set out to become a collector,
he gathered eight or nine pictures and asked
himself 'Do I want more?' – suddenly, his
dining room was full!

SALLY KALMAN

Navigating the British Folk Art Collection

This guide groups the works according to different areas in the galleries. Areas are numbered in the maps below to help you navigate the collection.



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Dog

STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERY, ENGLAND

ABOUT 1850

HEIGHT: 39.8 CM

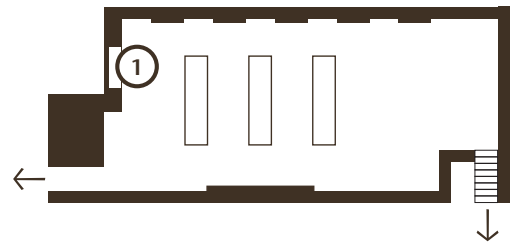
When people generally think of Staffordshire pottery dogs, they imagine a pair of seated black or red and white King Charles spaniels on a mantelpiece. This example could not be further from that misconception. This unusually-decorated figure looks unlike any dog breed, but is probably most likely to have been modelled on a poodle. The dog's upright tail is finished with a shredded clay detailed pom, which this was a signature feature of groomed miniature poodles of the 19th century.

The artist has chosen to embellish the figure with a cream glaze, and afterwards splattered it with a russet brown glaze.

Ceramic Staffordshire dogs were generally sold in pairs, facing each other to flank the mantelpiece – a practice reflecting traditional associations between dogs, loyalty and vigilance. A pair of Staffordshire King Charles spaniels was arguably the most common form of Staffordshire pottery, having been popularized in the mid-19th century by Queen Victoria and her pet spaniel, Dash, and such dogs were subsequently mass produced in large quantities to satisfy popular demand. The size of this piece, however, means it is unlikely to have been part of a pair. Each Staffordshire figure was decorated individually by hand, giving the artists a certain degree to freedom to decorate pieces as they wished.

MEZZANINE GALLERY

1. Glazed cabinet



Policeman Whirligig

BRITISH

WOOD, PAINTED, EARLY 1800s

HEIGHT: 33 CM

The term 'whirligig' comes from 'gig' meaning a whipping top, and can be used to describe any spinning or whirling toy. The top part of the policeman's helmet has been lost, which led to this object being described for many years as a postman. The policeman's arms whirl in the wind as if directing traffic.



Candleholder

POSSIBLY SCANDINAVIAN

PAINTED WOOD, MID-19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 35CM

This wooden candleholder is modelled with two figures in servants' clothes supporting the candle with a yoke on their shoulders. They sit on a carriage with rough-hewn wheels. The object would have been wheeled along the table after meals to light gentlemen's cigars – generally at weddings or other festival occasions. This sort of object was from an old Scandinavian tradition and was sometimes repainted for future generations.



Recumbent Doe

STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERY, ENGLAND

ABOUT 1800

HEIGHT: 11.9 CM



Reclining Sheep

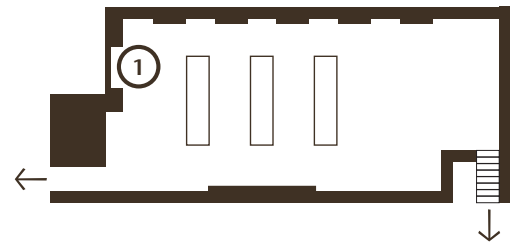
STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERY, ENGLAND

1850-1900

HEIGHT: 7.8 CM

MEZZANINE GALLERY

1. Glazed cabinet



Beakers (four)

BRITISH

HORN, 1800–1850

ALL APPROXIMATE HEIGHTS: 10 CM

The decoration on these beakers was made by scratching a hot needle into the horn. Beakers of this kind were cheap, light, and washable, their translucency highlighting the decoration.



Pig

WEMYSS WARE, SCOTLAND

EARLY 1900s

HEIGHT: 28.2 CM

Wemyss pottery was first produced in Kirkcaldy, Fife, in 1882. The pottery closed in 1957, despite its wares being a great favourite of the Queen Mother, and the rights to the name acquired by Royal Doulton. In 1994 the Wemyss pottery was revived in Fife by local artist Griselda Hill.



Sheep with Tree

STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERY, ENGLAND

1850–1900

HEIGHT: 19.4 CM



Bull with a Tree

STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERY, ENGLAND

PROBABLY 1750–1800

HEIGHT: 19.9 CM

It is that sense of fun that somehow defines the Folk Art galleries at Compton Verney. These works are inspiring, they make us all feel like ‘artists’ and that we could also create things and paint pictures from memory or imagination. You don’t need to study or read about them, just wander, look and enjoy

ROBERT YOUNG
Folk Art specialist



Two Boxers
STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERY, ENGLAND
 EARTHENWARE, ABOUT 1815
 BOTH: 22 X 11.5 CM

On 18 December 1810 thousands of people gathered around an impromptu boxing ring on Copthall Common near East Grinstead, Sussex, to watch one of the most brutal and bloody bare-knuckle fights ever held: between 29-year-old former Bristol docker and British heavyweight champion Tom Cribb and 26-year-old Tom Molineaux, a freed slave from America and the first black man ever to fight for the British heavyweight boxing title. Bill Richmond, Molineaux's manager, had suffered a humiliating defeat in a fight with Cribb in 1805 and wanted vengeance. He saw his chance by training and encouraging Molineaux to challenge Cribb. Foul play and the crowd's bigotry during the match conspired against Molineaux, cheating him of victory.

Molineaux subsequently became a celebrity, though, as the man who had dared to challenge Cribb. Drinking heavily and enjoying food and the attention of women, Molineaux was not fit enough for the re-match in Leicestershire on 28 September 1811, which was easily won by Cribb in just 19 minutes. Cribb continued to enjoy his success and died aged 66 in 1848. Molineaux died of liver failure in 1818, alone and forgotten, at just 34 years of age.



Sailor Whirligig
BRITISH
 WOOD WITH METAL ARMS, PAINTED,
 EARLY 1900s
 HEIGHT: 44 CM



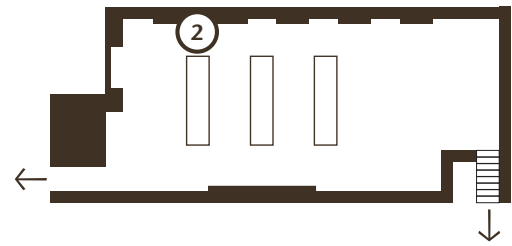
Pony and Trap Whirligig
BRITISH
 WOOD WITH METAL PARTS,
 ABOUT 1900
 HEIGHT: 51.8 CM

As the propeller turned in the wind, the horse's legs moved as if trotting. A small hammer between the driver's feet clattered to simulate the sound of the horse's hooves.

MEZZANINE GALLERY

2. Hanging signs, long shelf & walls

Hanging signs



Pincers (Trade Sign)

BRITISH

ASH, 1900–1950

HEIGHT: 117 CM



Locksmith's Sign (padlock)

NORTHERN EUROPE

WOOD, COPPER AND IRON,
19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 89.5 CM

This padlock is made from sheet steel and was originally gilded, but is now painted a grey-green. The key is made of wood with a steel plate on the shaft (in order that the key could be hung lengthwise) and metal fixings on the handle and on the teeth.

This was most likely a locksmith's shop sign. However, according to Sir Ambrose Heal's seminal *The Signboards of Old London Shops* (1947), bell-hangers and ironmongers also identified themselves by this trade symbol.



Locksmith's Sign (key)

BRITISH

PAINTED WOOD AND ZINC,
19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 45 CM



'Fishmonger's Sign'

BRITISH

PAINTED PINE, 20TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 42.7 CM



The demand for British Folk Art in the 20th century – first from America then later from Britain too – led to the creation of a number of fakes targeted at would-be collectors. This 'shop sign' is one such: older fishmonger's shop signs would have been painted to look anatomically exactly like a fish, not like this stylized version, while the shiny oil-paint surface suggests it was never intended for outside use.



Flying Goose Decoy

BRITISH OR AMERICAN

PINE, EARLY 1900s

HEIGHT: 27.5 CM



**Woollen Draper's or Inn Sign
(The Golden Fleece)**

BRITISH

COPPER AND GILT, 1850–1900

HEIGHT: 36.5 CM

During the medieval period, wool became an increasingly important commodity across Europe for the production of cloth. English fleece was regarded as being the best wool, and therefore was sort after for feeding the looms of the best weavers and cloth-making towns in Europe, who willingly paid a premium for it. The export of wool became a lucrative business, and drapers and cloth merchants took up the symbol of 'The Golden Fleece', from the ancient Greek myth of Jason and the Argonauts, as their trade emblem. In the myth, Jason endures many tasks, the final of which was to fetch the golden fleece, in order to become the King of Iolcus. The golden fleece has accordingly become a symbol of authority, wealth and kingship.

Many public houses in England were named 'The Golden Fleece' because of their close association with the wool trade. The wool industry employed large numbers of people, and these pubs became social and commercial centres within the industry, where workers could find a job or borrow money. There have been many speculations about the origin of the creature from which the golden fleece came. In the myth the creature was described as a 'gold haired winged ram', however, it is now thought by some that the creature was in fact a 'golden takin', a goat-antelope from the Himalayas.



**Gunsmith or Armourer's Shop Sign
(shotgun cartridge)**

BRITISH

METAL, AROUND 1900

LENGTH: 45.5 CM

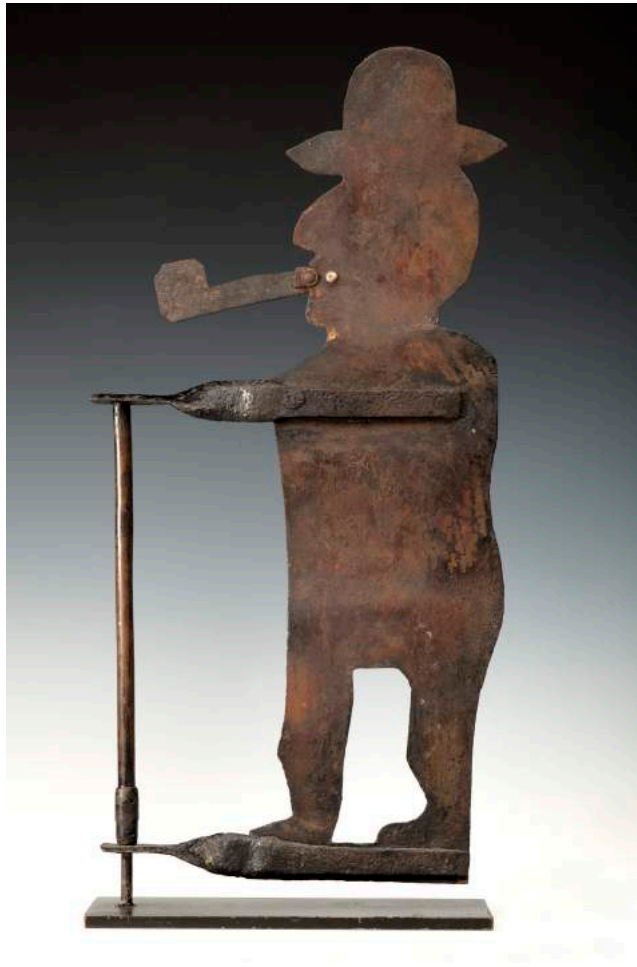
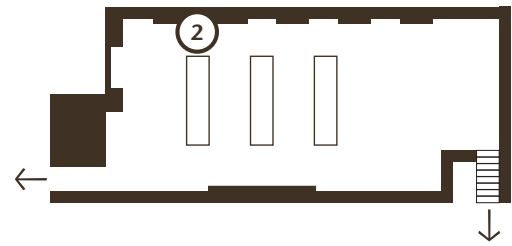
Compton Verney's Folk Art collection has no boundaries and as you enter the galleries you feel you are entering a glorious fantasy world, populated with extraordinary objects, including outsized tea pots, a key, a shotgun and cartridge, a padlock, a wooden clog and a golden fleece, all variously hanging above a medley of whirligigs, weather vanes, toys and signs, alongside paintings of stiff people, wonky buildings, two dimensional ships, square sheep, spotted cows, silhouette fish, strutting cockerels and impossibly fat pigs. You feel that these things were made by people who had fun.

ROBERT YOUNG
Folk Art specialist

MEZZANINE GALLERY

2. Hanging signs, long shelf & walls

Long shelf



Man with a Pipe Weathervane

BRITISH

METAL, 1800s

HEIGHT: 46 CM



Lion Weathervane

BRITISH

METAL, 1900–1950

HEIGHT: 42.8 CM





Man with House Weathervane, probably St Florian

AUSTRIAN

IRON, c. 1750

HEIGHT: 54 CM

This weathervane-like object depicts St Florian, one of the patrons of the Catholic Church and patron saint of Linz in Austria and of Austrian firefighters, chimneysweeps, and brewers. He was frequently invoked against fires, floods, lightning, and the pains of purgatory.

This is not a typical image of St Florian, as he is usually depicted as a Roman soldier. Florian was born around 250AD in the ancient Roman city of Aelium Cetium – the present-day Austrian town of St Pölten – and converted to Christianity. He joined the Roman Army but became the victim of Diocletian's persecution against Christians. When he refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods he was sentenced to be burned at the stake. Standing on the funeral pyre, Florian is reputed to have challenged the Roman soldiers to light the fire, saying 'If you do, I will climb to heaven on the flames'. Apprehensive of his words, the soldiers did not burn Florian, but executed him by him drowning in the Enns River with a millstone tied around his neck.

Weathervanes were usually made by local blacksmiths. This example, though, appears to have been made as decoration, not to work as a vane: it has been made from re-used metal, and is fastened by mechanical and not blacksmith's pins.



Basket Weaver's Sign

FRENCH

METAL AND STONE, AROUND 1900

HEIGHT: 82.1 CM



Coffee Shop Sign (coffee pot)

NORTHERN EUROPE

BRASS, 1850–1900

HEIGHT: 46 CM

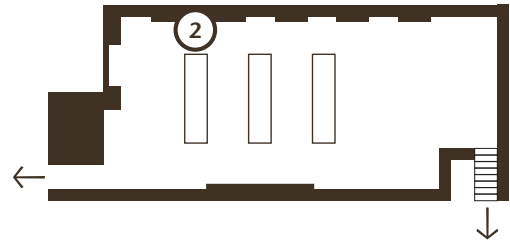


RITE" 1920. 6906. 1920. ALL STAGES | BLUE CHECK HEN. 11. 199. FLOWN. 1911 CHAR
JOURNEMOUTH 4TH DOL. 1922 ALL | NANTES MARENNES. 1914 RENNES MARE
NDON MARENNES CLUB | FLOWN. 1919 TAVISTOCK 1920 DOL. MARENNES. 19
S. FACTORY WYNN 6TH DECEMBER 1911

MEZZANINE GALLERY

2. Hanging signs, long shelf & walls

Walls



Racing Pigeons

E. H. Windred



OIL ON CANVAS, 1922

53 X 63.4 CM

Pigeon racing can be traced back to the third century AD, but only really caught on in Britain in the later 19th century. The first formal pigeon race in this country was staged in 1881, and by 1886 even Queen Victoria was sending a royal pigeon in at the behest of her second cousin, the notorious Belgian monarch King Leopold II. (Belgium was and is the epicentre of pigeon-racing in Europe, and was where the modern sport first took off in the 1850s.)

The racing or homing pigeon is a variety of domestic pigeon (*Columba livia domestica*) selectively bred for its ability to find its way home over extremely long distances. By the early 20th century Belgian fanciers were breeding exceptionally fast varieties known as *voyageurs*. From the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 to the Second World War, racing pigeons were used extensively to carry messages across the lines. In 1918 one such messenger pigeon – *Cher Ami*, donated by the pigeon fanciers of Britain for use by the US Army Signal Corps in France – was awarded the French *Croix de Guerre* for her heroic service in delivering twelve important messages despite having been badly injured.

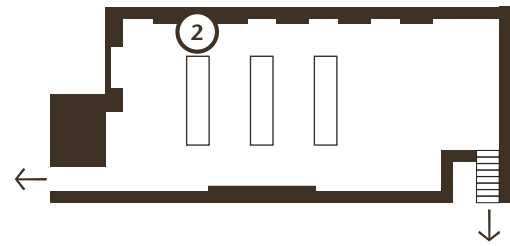
Edward Henry Windred (1875–1953) supported his family by working as a barber in South London but also had a thriving sideline business as a painter specializing in portraits of racing pigeons. In pigeon racing, birds which have been specially bred and trained are released at a point very distant from their homes (often hundreds of miles away) and timed on their journey home. According to the records at the bottom of the picture, these two birds were taken to France or Spain to be released on a number of occasions, and one of them raced over a period of at least ten years.

Owners of winning birds were sometimes awarded portraits of their champions as prizes; other pigeon fanciers undoubtedly commissioned portraits of their favourites privately. Windred seems to have had only a little training as an artist, but he took care to produce good likenesses of his subjects. He would save samples of their feathers, or would have their owners bring them to his barber shop when it was closed, sometimes even keeping the birds for longer periods in his own pigeon loft so that he could paint them from life.

MEZZANINE GALLERY

2. Hanging signs, long shelf & walls

Walls



Three Sober Preachers

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1860

96.4 X 95.5 CM

The person responsible for producing this is thought likely to have been a wood grainer, given the care and attention which has been given to the grain on the table at which the preachers are seated. It is suggested that the repeated image of the mirror on the left of the picture is a comment about one of the effects of alcohol; double vision.



Bear Baiting

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, 1830s

35.1 X 39.4 CM

Bear baiting was a popular town spectacle in Britain before it was banned in 1835 by the Cruelty to Animals Act. Afterwards, illegal bear baiting contests were sometimes held indoors by artificial light, which may be what is depicted here.

This was the first Folk Art painting Andras Kalman acquired.



Champion Ratcatcher

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON BOARD, ABOUT 1840

24 X 29 CM

'Ratting' events such as that described here were common in the nineteenth century. This painting closely resembles an engraving in Henry Mayhew's highly influential book *London Labour and the London Poor*, published in 1851, which described brightly-lit 'ratting' pits fitted with high wooden rims. Unlike other contemporary views of the 'sport', this view is unusual in that shows no human figures, creating a bleak and claustrophobic atmosphere. Mayhew believed that the sport of ratting was then on the rise: 'The passion for rat-hunting is on the increase, and seems to have attained the popularity once vouchsafed for cockfighting. There are now about seventy regular pits in London, besides a few that are run up for temporary purposes.'

The most famous rat-catching terrier of all, 'Billy', who was kept by the landlord of the Seven Bells pub in London's St Giles, was said to have killed 100 rats in five minutes during a ratting match of 1823.

Most of the works in the Andras Kalman Collection were made by individuals who were trained in the craft of their art. Among them were house, sign and ship painters and others who were apprenticed as carvers. Various items in the collection offer internal evidence for such an origin: for example, *Three Sober Preachers* includes lettering and wood graining of a type that would have been well within the scope of a sign-painter.

JAMES AYRES

James Ayres was the Director of the Judkyn Memorial at Freshford Manor near Bath, now absorbed into the American Museum in Britain.



Nell the Rat Hunter
John Whitehead
 OIL ON CANVAS, 1852
 73 X 60.2 CM



A Morning's Tally
ENGLISH SCHOOL
 OIL ON CANVAS, 1836
 60 X 72 CM



Duck Shooting
ENGLISH SCHOOL
 OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1830
 87.3 X 101.8 CM



Military Patchwork
BRITISH
 AROUND 1870
 HEIGHT: 254.5 CM

This patchwork was made for the 98th (Prince of Wales's) Regiment of Foot, as indicated by the regiment's colours and 'XCVIII' inscribed on the Union flag in the centre. The 98th served in India between 1858 and 1867 and in Ireland from 1870 till 1873. It was stationed in Malta when, in 1881, it was amalgamated with the 64th Regiment to form The Prince of Wales's North Staffordshire Regiment. Its present-day descendant is The Mercian Regiment.

Made with various scraps of military material, the patchwork may have been produced by convalescing soldiers at a field hospital. The initials 'V. R.' (Victoria Regina) and the crown honour the reigning monarch. The two central flags are the regimental colours, below which are stitched two crossed rifles, a badge that was awarded to the best shot in the regiment.

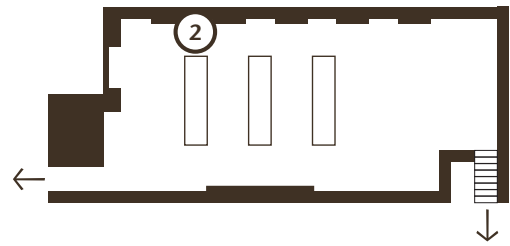


The earl of Admarth Lord Exmouth from his Lodge at Rumb Park

MEZZANINE GALLERY

2. Hanging signs, long shelf & walls

Walls



Admiral Lord Exmouth

ENGLISH SCHOOL

INK, WATERCOLOUR AND GOUACHE
ON PAPER, ABOUT 1815

66 X 54.2 CM

Born in 1757, Sir Edward Pellew, 1st Viscount Exmouth, entered the Navy in 1770 at the age of 13. He eventually became a captain, was knighted in 1793, and two years later commanded a frigate squadron in the 44-gun heavy frigate HMS *Indefatigable* in the Channel, a painting of which is displayed on the right of this picture. In 1797, during the war with France, Pellew's *Indefatigable* was engaged in one of the most daring battles in British naval history with the *Droits de l'Homme* and won. Pellew became a Member of Parliament for Barnstaple in 1802, a full Admiral in 1814, and was later made a Viscount. He died in 1833.

Recognised for his personal courage and strength, Lord Exmouth led by example. During his time as a captain on HMS *Indefatigable* there was not a single duty on the ship that he could not perform. Possessing a superiority of seamanship and good tactical skills, he was also a strict disciplinarian. However, he always cared for the welfare of the men under his command.



Nelson

BRITISH

WOOL, SILK AND BEADS ON CANVAS,
ABOUT 1850

55.8 X 77.8 CM

Two icons of 19th century patriotism stand on either side of the tomb of the greatest British naval hero, Admiral Nelson. On the left is Britannia, her bodice embellished with tiny gold beads, and on the right, Jack Tar (a common term used to refer to a seaman of the Merchant or Royal Navy). Angels, taken from an early embroiderer's pattern book produced for women, draw back curtains and union flags to reveal not Nelson's famous flagship HMS *Victory* but a frigate – perhaps the artist's own ship. Tightly-interlaced darning stitches change direction to give volume and texture to the theatrical panorama, while small random stitches shape the flowers of England's green and pleasant land beneath a zigzag sky.

British sailors' woolworks like this one were commonly known as 'woolies', and were produced throughout the 19th century.



The Indefatigable

BRITISH

OIL ON CANVAS, AFTER 1796
56.6 X 76 CM

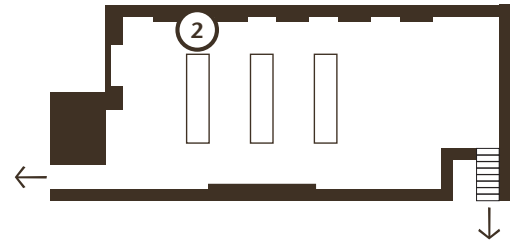
The 44-gun heavy frigate HMS *Indefatigable* had a long and distinguished career under several commanders, engaging in battles during the French Revolutionary Wars and the Napoleonic Wars. In 1796 HMS *Indefatigable* captured the French frigate *La Virginie* after a 15-hour chase, but the *Indefatigable* and her captain, Sir Edward Pellew, are probably best known for the subsequent engagement with the 74-gun French ship-of-the-line *Droits de l'Homme*, part of the French force which emerged from its base at Brest in Brittany in December 1796. Contending with high winds, darkness and heavy seas, Pellew's brave action in the ensuing battle of 13 January 1797 in which the *Droits de l'Homme* was destroyed, raised his already considerable reputation. A portrait of Pellew is on the wall to the left of this picture.

HMS *Indefatigable* is here presided over by the figures of Britannia, Fame and Hope and at the lower right, Poseidon and Amphitrite, Greek god and goddess of the sea.

MEZZANINE GALLERY

2. Hanging signs, long shelf & walls

Walls



Swan Inn Sign

BRITISH

WOOD, EARLY 18TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 101.3 CM

Inns used to adopt the coat of arms of a noble family as a sign to denote their patrons. Many heraldic symbols contain depictions of animals, and so many of the inns that adopted these emblems came to be recognised through the names of these animals. The swan is associated with numerous noble families and monarchs, including Edward III and Edward IV, whilst the gorged swan was used a device by Henry IV (reigned 1399–1413). In more general terms, however, the swan is the emblem of innocence.

Swans have been adopted as inn-signs for centuries. That at The Swan pub in the town of Clare, Suffolk, is one of the oldest inn-signs in England. The example here at Compton Verney is an especially elaborate inn-sign because the swan is carved and not just painted. The detail in the feathers and the water is especially striking. As with most inn-signs, which are regularly exposed to the force of nature, this one has been regularly repainted and there are remains of white paint on its surface.



Boar's Head Inn Sign

PROBABLY GERMAN

PINE, 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 90.7 CM

The boar is another example of an heraldic device converted into an inn-sign. The boar was the heraldic symbol of the Yorkist faction in the 15th century Wars of the Roses, whose most notorious member was King Richard III. The blue boar, on the other hand, was a symbol of the De Veres, Earls of Oxford.

This sign is a carved relief set in a typically Teutonic cartouche frame. It includes particularly charming details, most notably the inclusion of a pipe which juts from the animal's mouth. It was likely to have been displayed outside, as suggested by its weather-beaten appearance. While this example may be German, there is an account of a similar, English sign – a boxwood boar's head in a circular frame – being pulled from the rubbish of Whitechapel after the Great Fire of 1666.



Gunsmith's Trade Sign (shotgun)

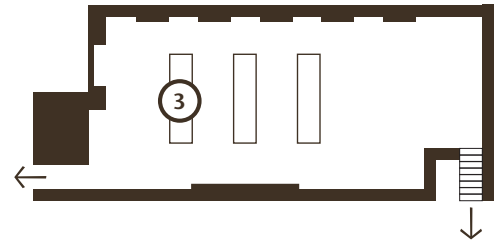
FRENCH

TÔLE PEINTE (PAINTED METAL SHEET) AND WOOD, 19TH CENTURY

LENGTH: 45.5 CM

MEZZANINE GALLERY

3. Table



Pull-along Toy Bull

BRITISH

WOOD AND METAL, ABOUT 1900
HEIGHT: 38.5 CM

Pull-along or push-along animals on wheels were very popular in the period before 1900, as is confirmed by the number of portraits in which children are depicted with them.



Fire Bellows

ENGLISH

METAL AND MAHOGANY, ABOUT 1800
HEIGHT: 14 CM



Fairground Carousel Pig

BRITISH

CAST IRON, ABOUT 1850–1900
HEIGHT: 79 CM

This pig was one of the rides on a fairground carousel, possibly one of a number of farm animals. With the rise of steam power, powered merry-go-rounds became more common and included not only farm animals but also exotic creatures and decorated horses.

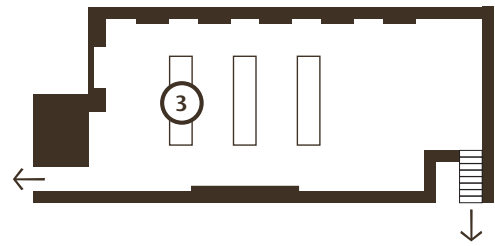
This pig was previously coloured pink, and repainted as a saddleback in the 1980s. Andras Kalman is pictured seated on this object in the photograph at the entrance to Compton Verney's Folk Art galleries.

Eager to please and to attract attention the memorable pieces are immediate and bold. They lack the self-consciousness and precision of mainstream artworks and reflect the vision of Andras Kalman, whose enthusiasm and eye built the core of Compton Verney's British Folk Art Collection.

ROBERT YOUNG
Folk Art specialist

MEZZANINE GALLERY

3. Table



Hare and Hounds
ENGLISH SCHOOL
OIL ON TIN, ABOUT 1860
54.8 X 70.8 CM

This tray is most likely to have come from Birmingham or Wales. It was comprehensively restored in the later 20th century.



Hand Weathervane
BRITISH
PINE, ABOUT 1900
HEIGHT: 16 CM



Three-legged Dog Toasting Fork
BRITISH
WOOD AND IRON, 1750-1850
HEIGHT: 48 CM



Butcher's Shop Counter Sign
NORTHERN EUROPE
PAPIER-MÂCHÉ, ABOUT 1900
HEIGHT: 38.5 CM



Vase
J. Seard
FRENCH
PEWTER, DATE UNKNOWN
HEIGHT: 17.5 CM

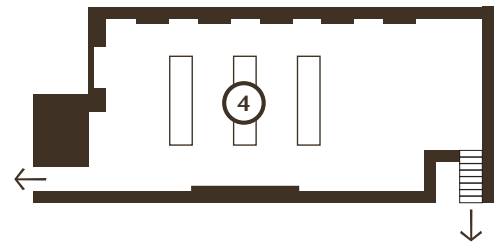
An inscription on the base reveals that this vase was made by Seard's pewter firm, Étain d'Art, in Abbeville, France.

Folk Art is like the art of young children, you somehow immediately relate to it and it makes you smile. Yet somehow it goes further than that and can move us.

ROBERT YOUNG
Folk Art specialist

MEZZANINE GALLERY

4. Table



Floating Goose Decoy

BRITISH

PINE, PROBABLY 1900–1950

HEIGHT: 27.5 CM



Floating Swan Decoy

R. Madison Mitchell (1901–93)

AMERICAN

CORK, WOOD AND LEAD, 1955

HEIGHT: 45.5 CM



Decoys were often made of cork so that they would both float and would be light enough to carry in a sack. Madison Mitchell lived and worked in Havre de Grace, Maryland.



Pair of Whistling Partridge Decoys

PROBABLY BRITISH

TÔLE PEINTE (PAINTED METAL SHEET),
20TH CENTURY

BOTH HEIGHT: 24 CM



Each of these decoys, with its detailed plumage, has an opening in its throat. In other known pairs of decoys like this, a small tube is attached to each of them, with a small rubberized bulb at the end. When squeezed, air would have been pushed through the tube, like a set of bellows, producing a sound similar to the whistling of a partridge. While such decoys would have been common in the 19th century, this pair have been identified as modern reproductions, and were popular in the late 20th century in Parisian markets.



Ditcher's Shovel

BRITISH

WOOD, LEATHER AND WROUGHT
IRON, 1850–1900

HEIGHT: 14.3 CM



Lark Decoy

BRITISH OR FRENCH

WOOD AND MIRRORS, ABOUT 1800

HEIGHT: 31.5 CM

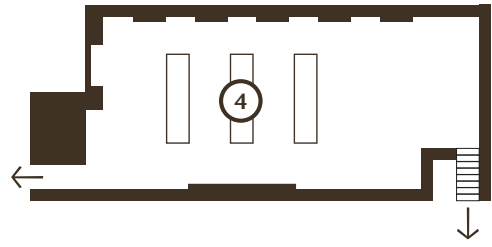
Entrusted to Compton Verney by
Richard Russell

Used as a hunting aid for luring larks, this decoy – made from bits of broken mirror – would have been pushed into the ground, much like a potato dibber. The string at the back was wound round the upright, and when pulled would have made the crosspiece spin. The small mirrors would have shone in the light and attracted larks.

There are various historical references to larks being used in cooking with recipes such as steak, lark and oyster pie. In Ruth Scurr's recent biography of John Aubrey there is an interesting account of a meal which included larks: 'Anno 1643. February. Tonight I watched the King dine in Christ Church... The meal was of mutton and veal (boiled and roasted), capons, hens (with eggs), partridges, pheasants, cocks, larks, beef, mallards, pig, salmon, sea flounder, venison, conies and teales with baked tart and Pippins to follow.'

MEZZANINE GALLERY

4. Table



Cockerel Weathervane

FRENCH

ZINC AND IRON, 1800–1850

HEIGHT: 60 CM

One of the earliest and most enduring of weathervane shapes, the cockerel is symbolic of St. Peter's betrayal of Jesus 'before the cock crowed'. While most British cockerel weathervanes of the 19th century have just one leg; their French equivalents usually display two; thus this example is probably French.



Rick Knife

Isaac Nash

ENGLISH

WROUGHT IRON AND WOOD, ABOUT 1900

HEIGHT: 60.1 CM

The rick or hay knife was typically used for cutting up piles of hay or straw thatched into regular piles (ricks). This knife was almost certainly made in or near Belbroughton, about five miles north-west of Bromsgrove – an area where metalworking was widespread during the Industrial Revolution. Belbroughton and other adjacent villages specialised in making types of blade, especially scythes.

Isaac Nash started his scythe-making business in this area in 1842 by acquiring a chain of forges and mills, before amalgamating his operations in the centre of Belbroughton. By 1881 his company was employing over 100 men. Nash died in the late 1880s, but his company continued trading until the 1930s.

The words 'T.CROWN' are etched into the knife, which possibly refers to the fact that these blades were commonly fashioned from wrought iron or steel, often styled 'BEST CROWN'. Wrought iron is an easy-to-work metal that was also relatively cheap and strong; but, unlike steel, it does not keep a cutting edge. Blades such as this were made by heating bars of metal at red heat before hammering them out. Typically the hammers were powered by waterwheels before the final shaping of the blade by hand on an anvil.



Turf Cutting Spade

BRITISH

WOOD AND WROUGHT IRON, ABOUT 1900

HEIGHT: 8.4 CM

This tool was mainly used in Scotland, Ireland and Scandinavian countries. The first step in cutting turf was 'clearing', which involved removing the upper living layers of stems and roots called heathy scraw (from the Irish word *sraith*, meaning a green sod) using the *flachter* for cutting the layer of growth -grass or heather – on top of a peat bog to reach the layer of peat, cut with a peat-spade.

Flachter or *flaughter* is also the name applied in County Antrim to the push-plough or paring spade – the Irish and Scottish equivalent of the English breast-plough. There are references to the *flaughter-spade* as far back as 1492.

The turf cutter was one of the tools used in the roof construction of the Scottish single story cottages, including the black houses of Western Scotland and white houses on the isle of Tiree. The roofs were made up of three layers of local materials: *cabers* made from thin branches of birch, laid from eaves to apex; cuts of turfs or sods; and heather or straw, depending on the local material. On the island of St Kilda the turf was laid on a flat stone layer.



Turnscrew

BRITISH

WROUGHT IRON, BRASS AND BEECH, 1900–1950

HEIGHT: 114 CM

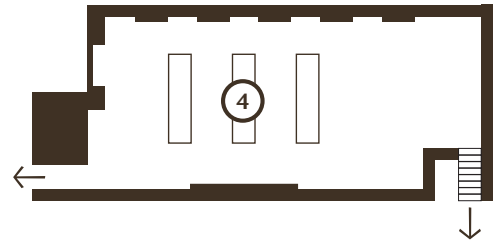


At one point thought to be a trade sign, this outsize screwdriver, or turnscrew, is more likely to simply have been produced as a specific tool to assist with a specific task in order that the user could extend their reach.

Others were produced as display items in order to demonstrate a manufacturer's skills.

MEZZANINE GALLERY

4. Table



Soldier Whirligig

BRITISH

POLYCHROME PINE AND METAL, EARLY 1900s

HEIGHT: 62 CM



Truncheon

BRITISH

ASH HEIGHTENED WITH GILT, AROUND 1920

HEIGHT: 50.3 CM

This police truncheon was made during the reign of George V (reigned 1910–36), as evidenced by the monarch's initials 'G.R.' and a royal crown.

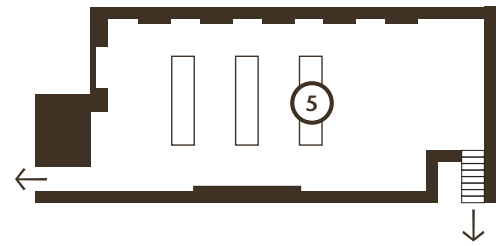
If fine-art connects my head with the heart, then folk-art joins the guts to both. In this collection, for example, I feel the fun of the Soldier Whirligig oddly contrasting with the enacted depiction of 'armed' conflict; the function of the Coffee Shop Sign abruptly stands for itself; and the force of A Terrible Shipwreck is so direct in its conveyance of nature's forces.

My deep admiration for such works provokes in me a keen desire for the skills of making, and a longing for playfulness and originality in the objects of everyday life. I search for these qualities in our future as much as in our past, not in a conservative way, but with a look-out for surprising instances of ever-changing human expression and invention.

PAUL RYAN

Paul Ryan was artist-curator of *What the Folk Say* at Compton Verney in 2011, in which artists and curators re-located works from the British Folk Art Collection to make new connections with other parts of the permanent collection.

5. Table



Seated Dog Weathervane

BRITISH

IRON, ABOUT 1880

HEIGHT: 62 CM

This engaging weathervane has been weighted to make it spin in the wind. The ‘point’, the front of the vane, is the dog’s tail; the ‘sail’, to catch the wind, is at the back.

Through my role at the Museum of English Rural Life I share an overlap of interest in the traditions of British Folk Art with the curators of Compton Verney. In many ways, the approaches of these two museums complement one another well. The MERL’s folk art collections have evolved as an almost unintended consequence of acquiring a record of the English countryside, including objects integrated into typologies that illustrate the form and function of rural life and work, while those of Compton Verney reflect the aesthetics, tastes and vision of an inspired collector Andras Kalman.

KATE ARNOLD-FORSTER

Director of the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading.



Chestnut Roaster

BRITISH

IRON AND WOOD, 1850–1900

HEIGHT: 9.1 CM

Chestnuts were roasted in the drum-shaped container, the lid of which was released by turning the screw half-way down the handle.



Ladle

ORIGIN UNKNOWN

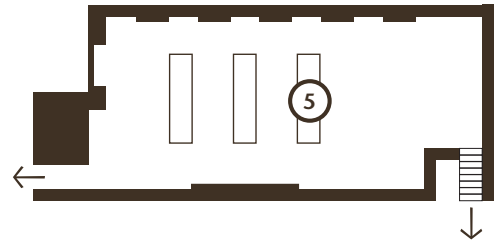
VARNISHED WOOD, 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 75 CM

This ladle was bought by Andras Kalman in the belief that it was Welsh. However, while it seems to date back around 150 years, it has been suggested that this is from a Central Asian country such as Afghanistan.

MEZZANINE GALLERY

5. Table



Tub
BRITISH
WOOD AND IRON, ABOUT 1890
HEIGHT: 27.2 CM



Child's Commode Chair
BRITISH
WOOD, 1800–1850
HEIGHT: 59 CM

This green-painted child's commode opens at the front and is shaped to allow room for the child's legs. The chair back was once higher.



Sheep-shearer's Bench and Sheep Shears
BRITISH
OAK, PINE AND IRON, 1850–1900
HEIGHT: 31.2 CM

As these benches aged with repeated use, the worn and damaged legs were repeatedly cut down. It is thus rare to find a Victorian example with long legs.



Pointer Dog Weathervane
BRITISH
METAL, 1850–1950
HEIGHT: 127 CM





Wheelbarrow

BRITISH

PAINTED WOOD, 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 30 CM



Flax Breaker, British

BEECHWOOD, 1850–1900

HEIGHT: 56.5 CM

This object was constructed using keyed mortise and tenon joints, sometimes called wedged mortise and tenon joints, which are a very old type of joint, historically used mainly in construction techniques for timber-framed buildings.

Compton Verney chose to use this joint as a detail in the partition walls of the Folk Art Attic Gallery, as a deliberate direct reference to the collection.



**Bargeware-style
Painted Jug**



ORIGINALLY FROM AMERICA

GALVANISED IRON, 1925–1950

HEIGHT: 32.2 CM

This jug was originally a galvanised four-quart oil can from America. It was later painted in the style of bargeware, with stylised foliage on a black background.



Footstool

PROBABLY SCANDINAVIAN

PINE AND BIRCH, 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 12 CM

Nine Angry Bulls
attributed to John Funnell
(1813–87)

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1870
64.6 X 90 CM

The multi-talented John Funnell of Newick, near Lewes in East Sussex, was a self-taught painter, photographer, land surveyor and schoolmaster. He particularly enjoyed painting views of his local South Downs landscape. Here adults, children, a man on a horse and a dog race from a herd of charging bulls – a scene which Funnell may well have seen at first-hand on his travels. As James Ayres has noted, Funnell's aim here was 'to provide a fluid and entertaining narrative', and has certainly succeeded.

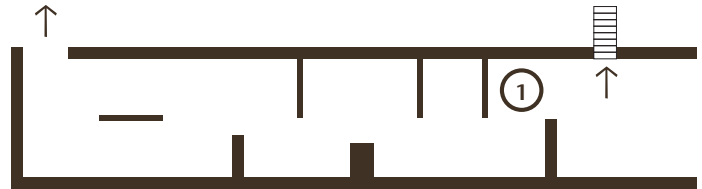
I love these humorous touches. This painter did not go to Greece or Rome to study their civilisations; he painted what he saw around him.

ANDRAS KALMAN, 1980s
Andras Kalman originally formed what is now The British Folk Art Collection at Compton Verney.



ATTIC GALLERY

1. Area near Mezzanine



In the Lion's Den

W. H. Rogers (1825–73)

OIL ON CANVAS, MID 19TH CENTURY

42.2 X 48.8 CM

Rogers' intimate painting depicts a keeper sitting uneasily with a lion, tiger and three liger cubs in a travelling cage. Ligers are the offspring of lions and tigers, and were in several travelling menageries recorded at this time. The picture may recall Atkins's Royal Menagerie, in which a liger was born in October 1824 while the menagerie was visiting Windsor; the cub was duly presented to King George IV, who declared them to be 'the greatest curiosities he had ever seen'.

Travelling menageries became a great fairground attraction in the 19th century as a result of public fascination with exotic animals in a period of imperial expansion, overseas exploration and growing interest in the natural sciences. Lions and tigers can only interbreed in captivity, and their offspring have low survival rates. The cubs of a lioness and a male tiger are called 'tigons'.

Most male ligers are infertile, and their gentle nature has been attributed to a lack of testosterone. (This explains the scene in this painting by W H Rogers, in which the keeper was able to safely enter the wooden den of a travelling menagerie wagon and join the family unit.) Ligers also grow larger than either of their parents, making them the largest cat on earth.



Prize Bull, Prize Cabbage

W. Williams

OIL ON PANEL, 1802

42.2 X 90.2 CM



West Country Comb-Back

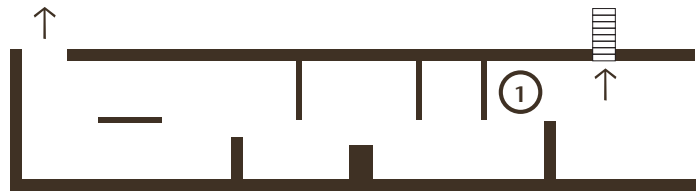
Windsor Armchair

ENGLISH

ASH, MID-1700s

HEIGHT: 104.5 CM

1. Area near Mezzanine

**Carved Spoon****ENGLISH**

BEECH, ABOUT 1800

HEIGHT. 20CM

This small spoon has a handle which was carved in the shape of a miniature longcase clock. It has small areas of polychrome decoration which simulate the inlay you would expect to find on a full-size longcase clock.

There are various historical references to small carved objects such as spoons being given as romantic gifts, and these often had symbols which were meaningful to the couple incorporated into the design. In *Treen and Other Wooden Bygones* of 1961, E H Pinto describes a Victorian practice of couples being given a small wooden pair of shoes connected by a chain: 'It was formerly a charming marriage custom to carve and give them to the bride and groom, with a knob of coal in one ... and sugar in the other, to ensure that the couple never lacked warmth and sweetness or sustenance.'

From as early as the 17th century in Britain, love spoons have been exchanged as tokens of affection between loved ones. Traditionally love spoons presented by a suitor to his betrothed to prove his skills as a woodworker and his ability to provide for his future wife. Over time, though, the love spoon lost its practical function and became purely a decorative treen to be displayed on a wall.

The year of carving of most love spoons cannot be established unless dated by the maker. The handle of this love spoon has been carved into the shape of a scroll-top longcase clock, dating this piece to around 1800. Often love spoons would bear the initial of the recipient, and this piece seems to bear a 'C' or 'G' in the middle of the clock case. The symbol of a clock on a love token represented 'a passage of time', perhaps alluding to time spent apart or having to wait for your betrothed. Equally this symbol also has been interpreted as a 'memento mori', a reminder to the recipient that life is short.

Nowadays, longcase clocks are often referred to as grandfather clocks – a term popularised by the 1876 song 'My Grandfather's Clock' by the American composer Henry Clay Work.



The Hunt

BRITISH

OIL ON PANEL, ABOUT 1780

75 X 136 CM

You must discard the word Fancy altogether. You have nothing to do with it. You are not to have, in any object of use or ornament, what would be a contradiction in fact. You don't walk upon flowers in fact; you cannot be allowed to walk upon flowers in carpets. You don't find that foreign birds and butterflies come and perch upon your crockery; you cannot be permitted to paint foreign birds and butterflies upon your crockery. You never meet with quadrupeds going up and down walls; you must not have quadrupeds represented upon walls. You must use,' said the gentleman, 'for all these purposes, combinations and modifications (in primary colours) of mathematical figures which are susceptible of proof and demonstration. This is the new discovery. This is fact.

This is taste.

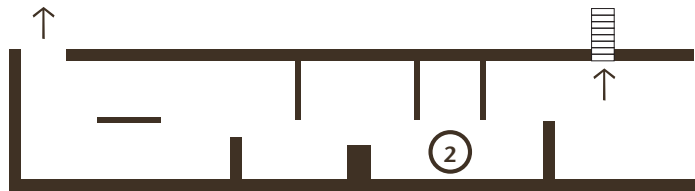
Mr Gradgrind in Charles Dickens, Hard Times, 1854

QUOTE CHOSEN BY ALAN POWERS

Writer, artist and publisher of decorative papers

ATTIC GALLERY

2. Back wall



A Still Life with Cheese, Bread and Beer
attributed to James Booth Higginson

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1870

68.8 X 78.8 CM

Donated by Christopher Bibby

J. B. Higginson is listed in the 1869 Directory for Madely, Staffordshire, as a painter and decorator. Other known works by him are of a similar composition. However, a recent analysis by James Ayres suggests that this oil may be by another hand.

Unlike comparable still-life scenes in our Naples collection, where fruit and vegetables assume metaphorical value, this modest meal is recorded purely topographically. It is seen close-up, is phrased in a restricted palette of colours, and the objects are placed against a dark background – just like a Dutch still life of the 17th century.

The dominant elements of the composition are the cheese and the bread. While the picture may have been devised to show off the artist's skill, it may alternatively have been intended as an advertisement for a locally-made cheese. Historically a farmhouse industry, British cheese began to be mass-produced from 1870 with the opening of England's first cheese factory at Longford, near Derby. The tableware below the cheese serves as evidence of British glass and cotton damask production in factories at the time.



Blue-Painted Side Table

EARLY 1800s

WIDTH: 91.5 CM



**Green-Painted Solid Seat
Turner's Chair**

WEST COUNTRY, ENGLISH

WOOD, 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 79CM



Windsor Chair

IRISH

ASH, 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 66.5 CM



Beechwood Settle

EARLY 1800s

W: 181.5 CM

The remarkably sophisticated lines of this settee suggest it could have been made in the 1930s. Instead, it dates from the Regency era, and was probably made in the beechwoods of Buckinghamshire.



West Country Comb-Back Windsor Armchair

ENGLISH

ASH, LATE 1700S OR EARLY 1800s

HEIGHT: 82.7 CM

The Windsor chair originated in the Buckinghamshire Chilterns in the early 18th century as an elm-and-beech construction made by the itinerant chair bodgers of the Chiltern beechwoods (and sold via the nearby town of Windsor – hence their name), and had spread across Britain by 1800.

Windsors were constructed with a solid wooden seat, into which the chair-back and legs were anchored. Early versions of the Windsor chair were, like this Ash model, of the comb-back variety; by the middle of the 18th century, however, steam-bending was being used to produce the characteristic “bow” back of what we now regard as the classic Windsor chair. Updated Windsors are still being made today by Buckinghamshire furniture makers such as Ercol of Princes Risborough.

ATTIC GALLERY

2. Back wall



Model of a Butcher's Shop

BRITISH

PAINTED WOOD, ABOUT 1850

HEIGHT: 37 CM

Wood or plaster models of butchers' shops, encased in a wooden frame, were common by the mid-Victorian era. No one is really sure of the purpose of the models, though. They provided a useful visual guide to the different cuts of meat available, and today they serve as reminders of how meat used to be sold.

It has been suggested that models such as this were placed in the window when the shop was closed or the weather hot, as a trade sign. Shopping at the butcher's was usually done daily, as fridges had not yet been invented. When refrigeration became available such models would no longer have been necessary.

Another suggestion is that it was an instructional toy, for children to learn about different cuts of meat and prepare them for the adult world of Household Management. Toymakers sold a range of miniature High Street Shops as playsets which were extremely popular with Victorian children.

I love this. There is something wonderful about the proud stance of the Master Butcher in the centre of the composition and his 'Butcher's Boy' on the right. Both are depicted standing with their legs apart and hands by their sides, wearing brown aprons and mutton chop whiskers. They are surrounded a fantastic array of carefully hand carved and painted carcasses and joints of meat and framed by an architecturally detailed Georgian style building, which houses their shop and displays the Royal Coat of Arms. This is one of several similar examples, all seemingly made by the same hand and all informed by a remarkable understanding of the various carcasses, joints and cuts of meat. They are quintessentially English, yet nobody knows who made them, or why. Theories exist that they were used in Butchers' Shop windows when they were closed and had no meat to display on their slabs, others speculate that they were used as instruction models to teach the various cuts of meat. Whatever the original purpose, this work epitomises for me the quality and spirit of Folk Art. Anonymous, individual, static, colourful, engaging – and inspired.

ROBERT YOUNG
Folk Art specialist



Red Painted Pine Chest

EARLY 1700s

HEIGHT: 62 CM



Dug-out Seat

SCANDINAVIA

BIRCH, 1800–1900

HEIGHT: 78 CM

This type of seat was known, for obvious reasons, as a ‘tree-trunk’ chair. Chairs carved from single pieces of wood were a common type of furniture making before the arrival of mass-production. The designers were often limited to common types of wood such as oak, elm or, in this case, birch. Nevertheless their talents enabled them to create innovative and highly personalised types of furniture, where the end product has an irregular yet sturdy form.

This particular piece of furniture is ascribed as ‘Scandinavian’, as little 19th century timber folk furniture from Britain has survived. Unlike most other examples of furniture displayed here, this piece is painted – as was the case with many examples of Scandinavian and German folk furniture.



Grocer's or Tea Merchant's Sign (teapot)

BRITISH

PAPIER MÂCHÉ, GILT AND PAINT,
MID-TO-LATE 19TH CENTURY

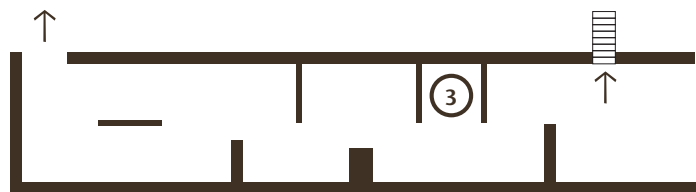
HEIGHT: 77.7 CM

This enormous model of a teapot would not have been sturdy enough to survive out in the elements, so it seems it must have been displayed inside, probably in a shop window. On its front, it advertises a premium grade of Chinese tea, Yu-tsien (i.e. *yuqian* 雨前, meaning ‘before the rains’), offered at three shillings per pound, a price which was easily two to three times the price of ordinary tea. It was probably a variety of green tea – making it even more unusual, as by the turn of the 20th century Britain’s preference for black tea was well on its way to being established.

What makes this sign most unusual, however, is the Chinese inscription on its back. In a competent hand, written vertically with a calligraphy brush, is the sentence 在此不可小便 *zàicǐ búkě xiǎobian*, meaning ‘small convenience not allowed here’. It is hard to fathom why someone would have written an injunction against urination on a model of a teapot, and the two other fragments of Chinese, written horizontally, are little help in explaining the mystery. They read: 白毛佬 *báimáolǎo* (‘white-haired gent’) and 白毛 *báimáo* (‘white-haired’), but there is no other indication who the gent (or gents) might be.

ATTIC GALLERY

3. Small bay



White Villas

BRITISH

OIL ON BOARD, ABOUT 1880

34 X 27.5 CM

The stuccoed terraces shown here, with their wood-grained front doors, suggest that they are situated in one of the late Georgian or early Victorian developments in a town such as Leamington or Cheltenham.



South View of Fen End Farm *initialled 'M. L. L.'*

WATERCOLOUR AND INK ON PAPER,

1790

31.3 X 41.5 CM



Windsor Castle

ENGLISH

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1850

90.5 X 46.5 CM

This engaging view contrived to make Windsor Castle, as rebuilt to the designs of Sir Jeffry Wyatville after 1824, even more of a fairytale castle than Wyatville had intended. The bicorn and top hats suggest that this anonymous picture may date from the 1840s or 50s. The bulky frame, though, may well be from a chimneypiece overmantel – which suggest that the painting itself may not be entirely genuine.

Accident on the Road to Inverness

SCOTTISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1825

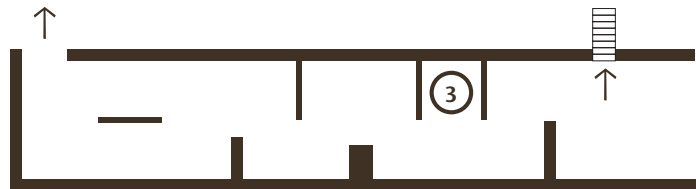
78.5 X 57 CM

This dramatic scene of a carriage accident is likely to be a record of an actual event. In this case the landscape is painted in sufficient detail to identify the stretch of road which runs from Inverness (to the left of the picture) towards Nairn. On the left stands Castle Stuart, with ships in the Moray Firth beyond.



ATTIC GALLERY

3. Small bay



Midsummer Night's Dream
W. Balls

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1860
63.9 X 77.3 CM

Inspired by a scene from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, this painting shows the fairy king and queen, Oberon and Titania, and possibly the character Puck. Fittingly, the play was filmed entirely at Compton Verney by Sir Peter Hall a century later, in 1968.



Abraham offering up his son Isaac

ENGLISH SCHOOL
OIL ON CANVAS, 1800–1820
56.9 X 51.5 CM



Family Group

ENGLISH SCHOOL
OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1830
48.5 X 54.2 CM

The girl's high-waisted dress, the father's high Regency collar and neckcloth, the voluminous curtain drapery and the fashionable floor-length sash windows all suggest that this simple family portrait was painted in the 1820s or 30s.



Ceremony at Gretna Green
Anonymous (initialled A. B.)

OIL ON CANVAS, 1907
36.5 X 32 CM

The 1754 Marriage Act set the age of consent at 21 in England, but in Scotland couples could still marry from the age of 14 by declaring their wish to be husband and wife in front of two witnesses. Many couples eloped to Gretna Green, just over the border, where the simple civil ceremony was performed by the local blacksmith over his anvil. This painting is based on a popular engraving by W. Matthews of Oxford, which bears the inscription: 'GRETNA GREEN or the RED HOT MARRIAGE/ Oh! Mr. Blacksmith ease our Pains and Tie us fast with Wedlock's Chains.'



A Guard Dog outside a Kennel

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON PANEL, NO DATE

25.5 X 37.5 CM

Donated by Christopher Bibby

The paintings of dogs in the Folk Art collection often depict the animals at work, commonly rat-hunting. In this case we find a guard-dog, a Terrier, standing alert. The sideways pose proudly shows off the animal's strength and conditioning to maximum advantage, recorded for posterity.

The modern Bull Terrier was bred for dog fighting in the 1800s, and descended from a cross between the Bulldog and the White English Terrier. The type was stabilised by the addition of some Collie blood, likely to be by Birmingham breeder James Hinks. Most earlier examples were white like this one, but in the 1920s other colour Bull Terriers started to be bred. Pure white dogs had become susceptible to deafness.

To me, this Bull Terrier is the essence of “dog”. His expression is both noble and characterful, he is full of life, but the structure of the painting is formal and poised. This reflects the particular eye of its donor Christopher Bibby, a dealer and collector of Folk Art who helped Andras Kalman form the collection which Compton Verney now own. The composition here is simple: dog and kennel tied together by a collar and chain, painted with a precise delight.

MARK HEARLD

Artist and curator of the re-imagined British Folk Art Collection at Compton Verney

3. Small bay



Girl with Cherries

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1820

83.4 X 61.8 CM

The red-coral necklace worn by this discomfiting girl relates to the superstition, dating back to antiquity, that coral warded off evil spirits. The cherries she holds are symbols of heaven, representing the fruit of paradise. Religious overtones like this are often seen in portraits of children.

It has been suggested that this portrait is likely to be American, due to the costume.

She gives me as much pleasure as a Gainsborough. I would rather have her than a Rubens, so fresh, so simple, so enchantingly honest. Like the first steps of a baby, or a puppy playing – how can you resist?

ANDRAS KALMAN, 1981

In reference to *Girl with Cherries*



Canine Friends and Feline Friends

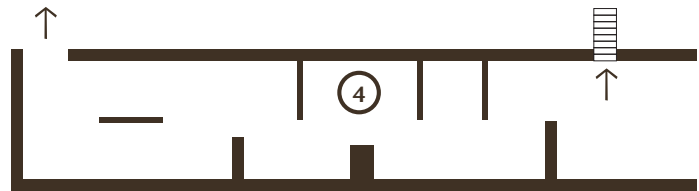
ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1870

42 X 48.8 CM AND 42 X 49.5 CM

ATTIC GALLERY

4. Large bay



Hatter's Trade Sign

BRITISH

TÔLE PEINTE (PAINTED METAL SHEET),
ABOUT 1850

HEIGHT: 24 CM

The top hat first became popular in the Regency era: the first silk top hat was invented by a Middlesex hatter in 1793, and the first collapsible top hat in 1812. It had become very common by the 1850s, when it was given the royal imprimatur by Prince Albert.

The production of top hats, however, occasionally caused hatters (who produced men's hats; milliners made women's headgear) to develop 'erethism', a neurological disorder caused by the mercury used to stabilise felting wool – a condition famously exhibited by the Mad Hatter in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* of 1865.



Printer's Shop Sign (stamp)

FRENCH

WOOD AND METAL, C.1900

HEIGHT: 106.5 CM



A. Marshall, Dyer and Scourer *Arthur Goodwin*

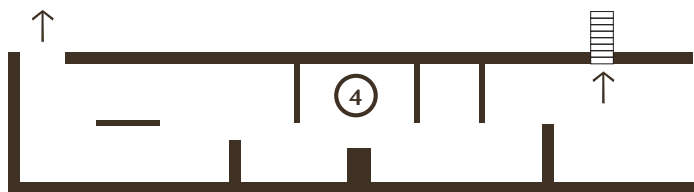
OIL ON CANVAS, 1898

71.6 X 102.2 CM

This depicts the premises of A. Marshall in St Ann's Street, Nottingham. On the right is a public vaccination station – vaccination against smallpox having become compulsory with the Vaccination Act of 1853.

ATTIC GALLERY

4. Large bay



Bridge Foot, Castleford, Yorkshire
Thomas Wainwright

OIL ON CANVAS, 1892
50 X 109.5 CM

The artist Thomas Wainwright lived and worked in Castleford and many of his paintings of local scenes survive today in public and private collections. The lamp in the centre of the painting, at the junction of Aire Street and Bridge Street, was a popular meeting place and focus for events and public debate; so much so that it became known as 'The Castleford Forum'. The bridge remains today, but the lamp post and the *George and Dragon* pub were demolished in 1976 to make way for a new roundabout.

Wainwright's painting has also been known as 'A Yorkshire Square.' The attribution could be a tongue-in-cheek reference to the 'forum': a Yorkshire slant on the classical meeting-place. Alternatively, given the preponderance of public houses in the painting, it could be an oblique and whimsical reference to the 'Yorkshire Square' method of brewing beer, peculiar to Yorkshire and Lancashire. This method employed a two-storey Yorkshire Square fermenting vessel, traditionally crafted from Yorkshire sandstone (later Welsh slate, and then stainless steel). The system dates back some 200 years and is still used by a handful of northern brewers today.



The Town House

ENGLISH

CARVED AND PAINTED WOODEN PANEL, LATE 18TH CENTURY
72 X 41.5 CM

This panel, featuring a five-bay Georgian townhouse, was recently bought by Compton Verney from art dealers in New York, but at some point this piece had been owned by Andras Kalman, who originally put together Compton Verney's British Folk Art collection. Andras' daughter Sally Kalman remembers it being in their London home after much of his Folk Art had been bought for Compton Verney.

The latticed fence and front gate, lined with stylised trees, creates a distance between itself and the viewer, as well creating a sense of space between the house and the front gate. This, alongside the use of three-dimensional (and functioning) miniatures of a door knocker and door knob on the front door, and the handle on the gate, gives a sense of realism that can often be hard to achieve in Folk Art representations. This panel bridges the gap between the Folk objects and paintings, being both a carved wooden object and a painted panel, and not just decorative but also operable.

It is possible that the painter L S Lowry, Kalman's long-term friend and client, took inspiration from this piece. You can see the uncanny likeness between the building in this carved panel and Lowry's own industrial architecture: large looming facades pierced with countless windows staring out at the viewer.

I first met Andras Kalman in 1959, when I owned the Rutland Gallery in London. He really was the first to say that we should take these kinds of pictures seriously. An émigré from Hungary, he really wanted to show the British how important these works were.

When I owned the Rutland Gallery I had ‘runners’ working for me who sourced many pictures for him and these make up about three quarters of the paintings which are now owned by Compton Verney.

I was interested in the powerful composition and the abstract quality of Folk Art or naïve art. It was the subject matter and humour that appealed to Andras Kalman, the fun of the outsize objects, and the interplay of scale.

I was very pleased to have the opportunity to donate three pictures from my personal collection to Compton Verney in 2014.

People often used to think these works were by artists who travelled round the country from place to place painting pictures, but there are generally only three or four pictures by each artist so this is very unlikely. Otherwise there would be more examples by an individual artist, and there doesn't seem to be. They were unique, local painters. The main part of these artists' time would have been spent working as plumbers or other trades, and we know this because some of their names appear in Trade Directories of the time.

CHRISTOPHER BIBBY

Collector and owner of The Rutland Gallery in London. Christopher was described by Robert Young as “a great visionary who sourced the best British naïve art”. He assisted Andras Kalman in forming the collection of Folk Art which is now Compton Verney's British Folk Art Collection.



Great Northern Railway

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, 1881

55 X 83.5 CM

This picture shows an example of the Great Northern Railway's celebrated No.1 Class of express steam locomotives, designed in 1870 by the GNR's Locomotive Superintendent, Richard Stirling, and subsequently called Stirling Singles on account of the large, single driving wheel on each side. An identical engine can be seen today at the National Railway Museum in York.



View of the Thames

ENGLISH SCHOOL

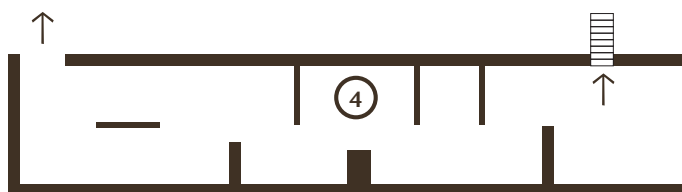
OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1870

106 X 75.5 CM

This fine view looks towards Cremorne Bridge (also known as Battersea Railway Bridge), which opened on 2 March 1863 and is one of the earliest surviving railway bridges to cross the River Thames.

ATTIC GALLERY

4. Large bay



Pottergate, Richmond, Yorkshire

John S. Newton

OIL ON CANVAS, 1847

73.2 X 86.8 CM

John Newton was only nineteen when he painted this picture. The sign over the door of the red-brick building advertises his father's business: 'Newton, Painter, gilder, paper hanger'. Local figures animate the view, including Jackie Patterson, the cleaner of the local privies, who is seen on the left with two donkeys. In the foreground carrying a parcel is Harry Pickall, private postman to the local landowner, the Marquis of Zetland.



Eastwood's Crown Brewery

F. L. Carter

OIL ON CANVAS, 1898

52.1 X 67.5 CM

John Eastwood's impressive brewery in Northowram, Halifax, was bought by Bentley's of Leeds in 1892 and was closed in 1900, not long after this picture was painted. Bentley's was subsequently acquired by Whitbread in 1968 and cased to brew beer in 1972.

These industrial scenes became particularly appealing to Andras Kalman in his later years of collecting. As well as adding this painting to his own collection he sold two early industrial pictures to the Science Museum in London.



The Cathedral, Old Church Steps

G. H. Hepworth

OIL ON PANEL, 1852

68.7 X 91.5 CM

This shows Teall Street and the steps leading to Wakefield Cathedral, including the premises of William Morrell, licensed dealer in wines, spirits, beer and tobacco. Morrell is recorded as the publican of the Old King's Arms in an 1834 commercial directory.



The Kings Harms, Manchester

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1800

58.8 X 86.1 CM

In this busy street scene the Liverpool coach departs from the Kings Arms (here spelt 'harms') in King Street, Manchester. Today the pub has gone but King Street remains the heart of the city's pub, club and bar scene.

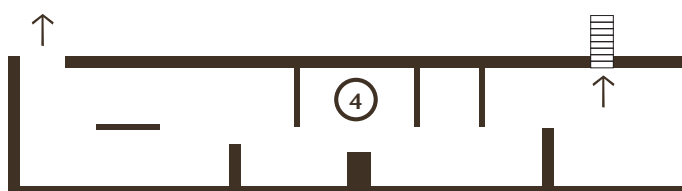
Looking at this picture, one discovers something new in it every time. This must have been a proper little coaching station. I love the detail of the four maids in the upper windows with their caps on, so very curious as to who's coming here, how much luggage they have, what they're wearing and so on. And all the shop keepers – saddler, tea merchant, stationer – are ogling. One character is rushing to catch the coach with a sealed letter. One forgets how the mail then went. When the coach arrived in my little Hungarian village, the great thing was to watch who came in and who went out. We lived on a street corner where you could see everything.

ANDRAS KALMAN, 1988

Andras Kalman originally formed what is now The British Folk Art Collection at Compton Verney.

ATTIC GALLERY

4. Large bay



The Old King's Arms, Wakefield

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, 1850-1900

38.8 X 48.2 CM

Donated by Christopher Bibby

This painting depicts The Old King's Arms on Teall Street, the public house owned by William Morrell. The steps on the left lead to Wakefield Cathedral.

This painting is almost identical to that of the same subject matter by G.H. Hepworth also in our collection. The flattened perspective and more primitive quality of form are the key differences, perhaps indicating that this painting was executed as a copy of Hepworth's.



Pestle and Mortar Trade Sign, (Apothecary's sign)

NORTHERN EUROPE

TÔLE PEINTE (PAINTED METAL SHEET), 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 80.5 CM

This sign is made of gilded tinplate fixed to a wooden platform with a metal sheet covering the top and the pestle sticking out. According to Sir Ambrose Heal's comprehensive 1947 study of London shop signs, by the late 17th century a Pestle and Mortar sign was commonly used to designate a brazier's or a cheese monger's shop, as well as a chemist's. This variation in possibilities is a reflection of the fact that shop signs were more often adopted to identify the establishment, meaning the person or family who owned the business, rather than the trade itself.

Andras Kalman's father was a Hungarian pharmacist and he, his parents and two older brothers lived above the family pharmacy. Inspired by his childhood experiences, Kalman came to Britain to study chemistry at Leeds University in January 1939. At the outbreak of war later that year, the allowance sent by his father dried up and the young Kalman needed to find other ways to provide for himself. After periods working as a night watchman and in a tanning factory in Bolton, he met Dorothy, whom he went on to marry. She had an interest in art, so they opened a little shop together in Manchester called the New Kalman Gallery. *The Manchester Guardian* misspelled this title as 'The Crane Kalman Gallery', which is what the gallery was known as from then on – and still is today.



The Eagle Tavern, Hammersmith

J. Chalmers

OIL ON CANVAS, 1857

88 X 108.5 CM

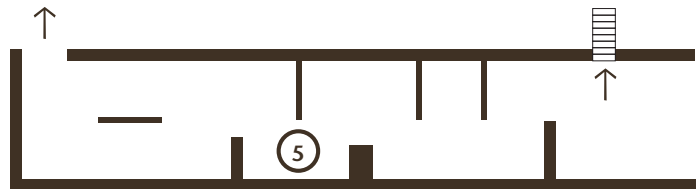
The handsome, three-bay Eagle still stands, although an additional bay has been added since this picture was painted. Here we see the landlord in 1857, James Bott, standing proudly on the doorstep. The painting (like a visual business card) advertises all the establishment has to offer; including a fashionable Tea Garden.

Bott, who had previously run a number of other pubs in West London, took over the licence of 'The Eagle' in 1853, and managed it until his death in 1865. Already separated from his wife, he had three children with his much younger housekeeper, Elizabeth Baker. Perhaps the youngsters we see standing in front of the pub could be two of their three offspring? After Bott's death, Elizabeth continued to run the pub.

The site where the Eagle stands – on the fringes of Hammersmith – remained largely rural until the coming of the railway in 1874. This opened up the area to residential development, and would have provided a new clientele of thirsty builders and commuters to The Eagle public house.

ATTIC GALLERY

5. Back wall



Primitive Windsor Armchair
WELSH
ELM AND ASH, 1700
HEIGHT: 94 CM



Rectangular Four-Legged Stool
WEST COUNTRY, ENGLAND
PAINTED ASH, 19TH CENTURY
HEIGHT: 34.8 CM

This low, painted stool would have been used as a footrest whilst spinning.



West Country Green-Painted Windsor Armchair
ENGLISH
ASH, EARLY 19TH CENTURY
HEIGHT: 98.2 CM



Model of a Potter's Workshop
BRITISH
WOOD AND METAL, ABOUT 1900
HEIGHT: 32CM

This potter's workshop model is an 'automaton' or moving model, operated by a key on the reverse. The figure on the right turns the flywheel that drives the potter's wheel, and his left arm rises intermittently to mop his brow with a rag. The potter moves his arms up and down to shape the revolving pot.

It may have been placed in the window of a potter's workshop to attract passers-by.



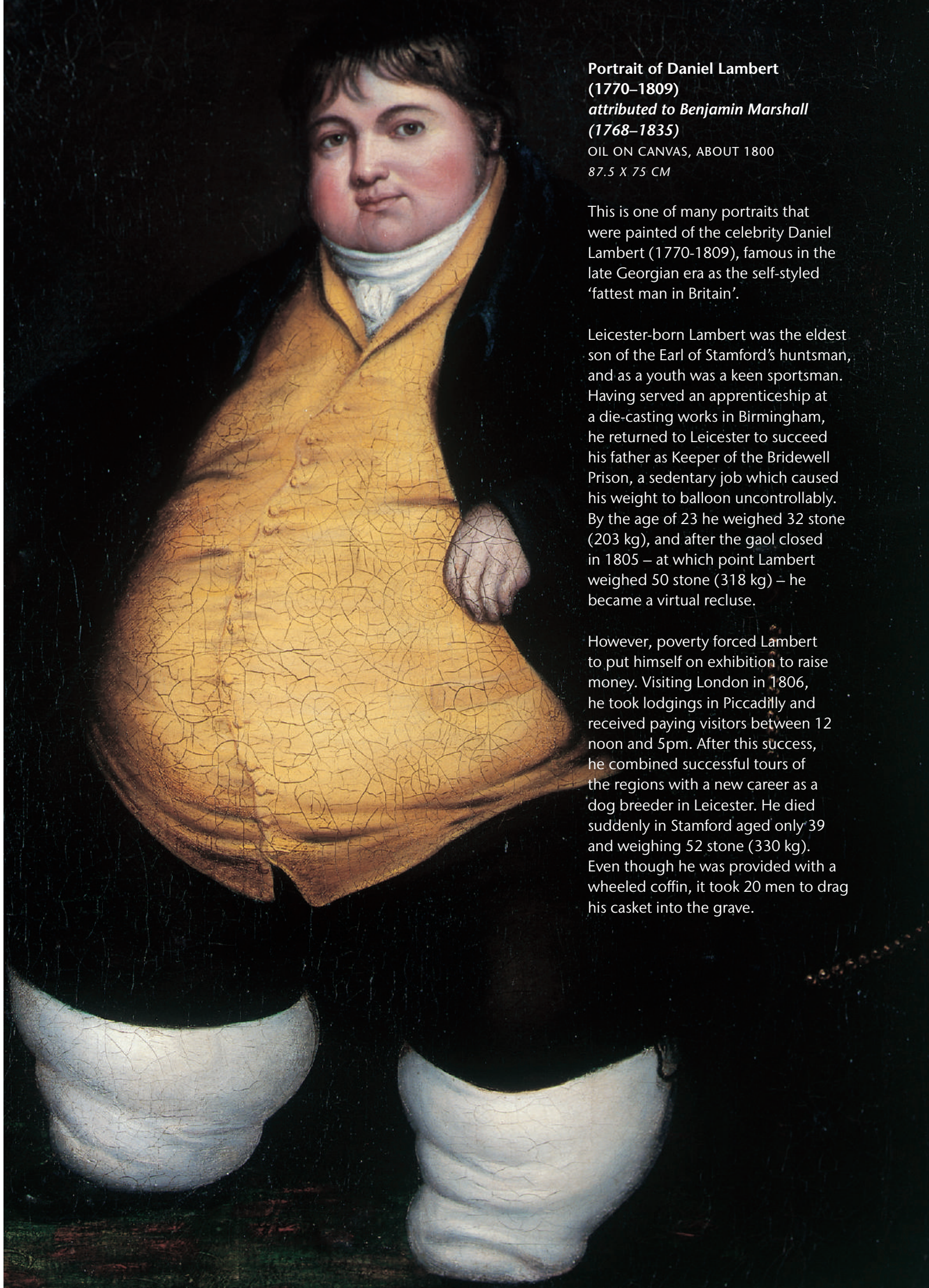
Population Explosion
Elizabeth Allen
PATCHWORK ON CANVAS, 1965
38.4 X 47.6 CM



Elizabeth Allen's subjects were frequently inspired by current affairs and offered a serious comment on religious attitudes and morality. This work was inspired by a report Allen heard on the radio about a woman who had taken a fertility drug and had given birth to seven stillborn babies.



Teashop Sign (kettle)
BRITISH
METAL, 1900s
HEIGHT: 76 CM



**Portrait of Daniel Lambert
(1770–1809)**
*attributed to Benjamin Marshall
(1768–1835)*

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1800
87.5 X 75 CM

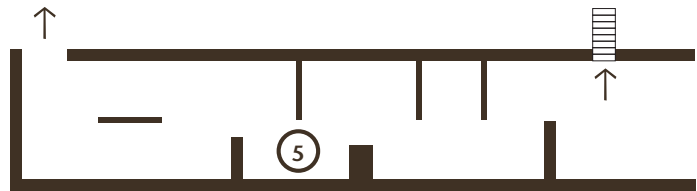
This is one of many portraits that were painted of the celebrity Daniel Lambert (1770-1809), famous in the late Georgian era as the self-styled 'fattest man in Britain'.

Leicester-born Lambert was the eldest son of the Earl of Stamford's huntsman, and as a youth was a keen sportsman. Having served an apprenticeship at a die-casting works in Birmingham, he returned to Leicester to succeed his father as Keeper of the Bridewell Prison, a sedentary job which caused his weight to balloon uncontrollably. By the age of 23 he weighed 32 stone (203 kg), and after the gaol closed in 1805 – at which point Lambert weighed 50 stone (318 kg) – he became a virtual recluse.

However, poverty forced Lambert to put himself on exhibition to raise money. Visiting London in 1806, he took lodgings in Piccadilly and received paying visitors between 12 noon and 5pm. After this success, he combined successful tours of the regions with a new career as a dog breeder in Leicester. He died suddenly in Stamford aged only 39 and weighing 52 stone (330 kg). Even though he was provided with a wheeled coffin, it took 20 men to drag his casket into the grave.

ATTIC GALLERY

5. Back wall



Lile Clog Shop Sign

BRITISH

PAINTED WOOD AND WROUGHT
IRON, 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 78.4 CM

As for the signs, they have pretty well begun their reformation already, changing the sign of the Salutation of our Lady into the Soldier and Citizen and the Catherine Wheel into the Cat and Wheel; such ridiculous work they make of this reformation and so jealous are they of all mirth and jollity, as they would pluck down the Cat and Fiddle too, if it durst but play so loud as they might hear it.

Richard Flecknoe

Aenigmatical Characters, 1665

QUOTE CHOSEN BY ALAN POWERS

Writer, artist and publisher of decorative papers



Cabbage Grater

GERMAN

METAL AND WOOD, 19TH CENTURY

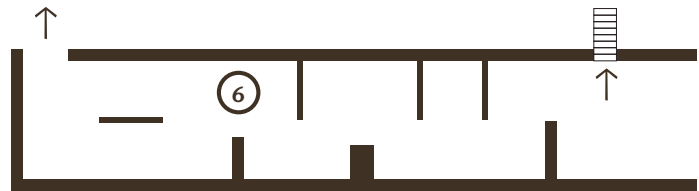
HEIGHT: 92.6 CM

The trade signs that have found their way into naïve art collections today are often admired for their nostalgic and almost comical qualities, especially with the numerous examples in this collection of signs that represent oversized objects. There are numerous examples of such in Compton Verney's collection, including an iron kettle, a giant stamp for a printer's shop and a pair of pliers or pincers, possibly used to designate a hardware shop.

However, this object – which Andras Kalman bought as a shop sign – is in truth a real, functioning object: an immense iron grater which was used to grate cabbages (presumably for sauerkraut). The metal ring at the top suggest it was hung up when not in use.

ATTIC GALLERY

6. Long wall to exit



Prize Ram

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1870

53.6 X 64 CM

The dramatic improvements in animal husbandry and selective breeding that took place from the 1750s onwards – a response to the innovative methods of Leicestershire farmer, Robert Bakewell (1725–95) – led to a demand for animal portraiture, as prosperous farmers commissioned artists to record their prize animals for posterity. Before the introduction of books devoted to the various breeds, animal portraiture was a means of advertising the quality and ancestry of a farmer's stock.

Artists were, though, often required to exaggerate the animal's proportions in profile to promote a breeder's livestock to potential clients. Spindly legs, small faces but very fat bodies became the norm in these portraits – pictures that were displayed in grand country houses and farmhouses – to impress visitors. Fat also meant profit, since fattened meat could feed a burgeoning population and the rendered fat itself could be used as a preservative and tallow. Those wealthy enough could commission the leading animal artists of the day, such as George Stubbs, to portray their beasts. Many farmers, however, could not afford professional artists, so called upon local craftsmen such as the local plumber or glazier to produce a painting.

I am especially drawn to the livestock portraiture, for perhaps obvious reasons, and particularly this dignified and proud prize ram. I sense his physical form and formal pose would be utterly familiar to those who belong to the world of livestock breeding today, yet he also speaks clearly from another time. I love his mildly amused and knowing look: with his careful grooming (presumably a recent and lengthy visit to the equivalent of a sheep barber), puffed-up chest and watchful gaze, he understands the importance of appearing at his very best for his proud owner.

KATE ARNOLD-FORSTER

Director of the Museum of English Rural Life,
University of Reading

A Farmer and his Prize Heifer

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1844

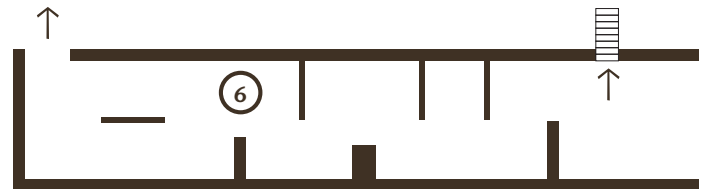
80 X 90 CM

This painting shows Maria, a five-year-old prize heifer bred by farmer Ralph Walker of Middleton Grange near West Hartlepool in County Durham. The figure holding the rope is Henry Hamilton, a servant who had been with Ralph Walker's family for over forty years. Maria weighed 154 stone and was slaughtered on 2 April 1844.



ATTIC GALLERY

6. Long wall to exit



A Pair of Pigs

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1850

61 X 75.5 CM

Breeders of farm animals in the 18th and 19th centuries often commissioned artists to paint exaggerated portraits of their livestock in order to impress neighbours and visitors. Portraits of overly fattened sheep, pigs and cattle appeared as a response to the innovative methods of the Leicestershire farmer Robert Bakewell (1725–95), who was recognised as an important agriculturalist and introduced grassland irrigation and other new farming practices. Bakewell revolutionised livestock breeding by methodical selection and inbreeding, and was the first to improve animals for meat production and carcass quality. He also established on a large scale the practice of letting animals for stud. Bakewell's farm became famous as a model of scientific management, and his annual auctions created great attention – leading to an audience with agricultural enthusiast 'Farmer George', King George III.



Waiting Outside Number 12

BRITISH

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1870

59 X 85.7 CM

The carriage shown in this view is a simple 'gig', a light, two-wheeled transport which was the most common vehicle on Victorian roads and which was largely used for short trips to the shops or station. While the anonymous artist has detailed the front door with sympathy, the rendition of what are presumably sash windows on the projecting bow is less precise.



Musselburgh

T. Collier

OIL ON PAPER LINED ONTO

CANVAS, 1873

65.5 X 91 CM



Skipton, Yorkshire

ENGLISH SCHOOL

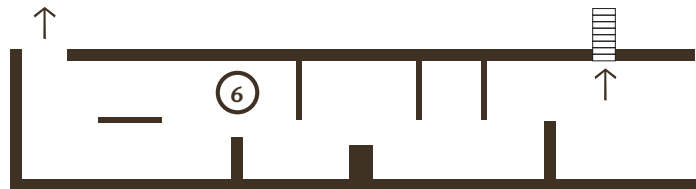
OIL ON CANVAS, EARLY 1800s

68.5 X 95 CM

This view shows the church of Holy Trinity, Skipton, at the meeting of Mill Bridge (left) and the High Street (right). This fourteenth-century church had been substantially repaired in the 1650s after damage in the Civil War, work which was funded by local landowner Lady Anne Clifford. After 1909 the church as we see it here was further restored by the Lancaster architectural firm of Austin and Paley.

ATTIC GALLERY

6. Long wall to exit



A Surprising Incident

J. Miles

OIL ON CANVAS, AFTER 1811

54.1 X 67 CM

This painting portrays an incident at a farm at Farmington near Northleach in Gloucestershire which took place in July 1811. A butcher was called to slaughter an old cart horse, which managed to escape.



Chopping Block

ASH, EARLY 1800s

HEIGHT: 62 CM

Initially identified as a butcher's block, this would have been used in a country house kitchen, or as a base for chopping kindling. The square hole was probably for holding a post which had a shoe 'last' on it – a wooden form used for moulding a shoe. Later in its history the block was recycled as a candleholder: hence the wax deposits.



Barber's Shop

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, 19TH CENTURY

76.5 X 65 CM



**Returning from a Bad Market,
Butter Only One and Nine**

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1815

59.8 X 72.4 CM



The Dentist
attributed to John Collier

BRITISH

OIL ON PANEL, ABOUT 1770

52 X 74 CM

The popular artist John Collier, a Lancashire schoolmaster who published illustrated books in Lancashire dialect under the name of 'Tim Bobbin', painted a number of pictures of contemporary dentistry designed to be engraved for his collection of Lancashire dialect poetry, *Human Passions Delineated*, of 1773. This book of illustrated verse, satirizing the behaviour of upper and lower classes alike, proved highly successful, and the etchings produced from his paintings were widely reproduced.

This scene was engraved to accompany Collier's poem 'Laughter and Experiment':

*A packthread strong he tied
in haste
On tooth that sore did wring;
He pull'd, the patient follow'd fast,
Like Towzer in a string.*

*He miss'd at first, but try'd again,
Then clapp'd his foot o'th chin;
He pull'd - the patient roared
with pain,
And hideously did grin.*

In 1829 Sir Walter Scott began a public subscription to provide Collier with a fitting memorial for his grave at St Chad's Church, Rochdale.

I was lucky enough to stroll into the museum in Bath soon after Andras opened his exhibition to the public in 1988. I was so overwhelmed by the character and unique quality of his historic collection of paintings, artefacts and objects that I immediately thought how much I would love to become involved in some practical way and to work there. My thoughts became reality, and so in addition to teaching part time in the art department at All Hallows School, I was able to devote my spare time working on the reception desk, welcoming people in and giving out information.

Shortly afterwards Andras decided to offer me a full time post as curator, which I was delighted to accept. To be in a gallery surrounded by the most delightful paintings and artefacts was a dream come true. I had a wonderful team helping me and we ran adult and children's workshops, concerts and talks relating to the collection. Andras often came down to Bath to follow up his strong passion for the collection. He loved to talk to visitors, to witness the organised programmes and events, and in particular he became very interested and involved in the children's workshops which interacted with the collection.

Sadly he had to sell the collection in the late 1990s, and I was very concerned that it might be split up, or indeed sent to America to be lost forever. We were all delighted that it had been rescued, and I was glad to be involved in working with a close friend and colleague, Kathleen Sinclair, in setting up the whole collection afresh at Compton Verney.

MARY NICE

Mary Nice was Curator of the Museum of English Naïve Art in Bath for ten years, where the collection was established by Andras Kalman.



The Earth Stopper has the amusing idea of the Swain thinking he had met the Devil when in fact it was the chimney sweep with his donkey! I used to run children's workshops in the gallery that were often stimulated by some of these collage pictures, which each told a magical story.

MARY NICE

Curator of the collection when owned by Andras Kalman and displayed in Bath.

The Earth Stopper

George Smart (1774–1846)

MIXED MEDIA (PATCHWORK AND WATERCOLOUR),

ABOUT 1840

36 X 48 CM

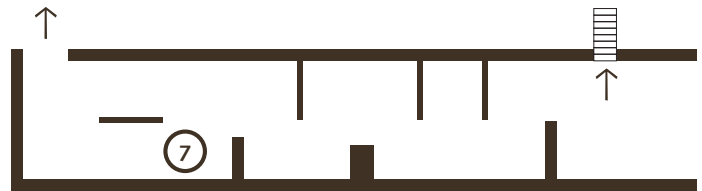
A cutting attached to the reverse of this picture tells the object's story: 'The Business of an Earth Stopper, the Night previous to a Day's Sport, is to stop up the Fox's Earth whilst he is out Feeding. The above gentle Swain is supposed to be on his way home, when by a sudden turn of the Lane he is brought plump upon what he conceives to be nothing more or less than the Devil, but which in fact is a simple Sweep and his Donkey'.

George Smart was a tailor in the Sussex village of Frant. A local celebrity, references to him appear in various

contemporary guidebooks from the early 1820s onwards. Contemporary prints show Smart's house in the village, with an array of cloth figures displayed on the wall; Smart himself can be seen standing in the road, tempting passers-by with his wares. The man walking with the donkey is likely to be one 'Old Bright' the postman, a familiar local sight at the time, who trudged the road between Tunbridge Wells and Frant, 'satchel across his shoulder and leading his ass'.

ATTIC GALLERY

7. Back wall



Country Fête & Country Procession

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON PANEL, ABOUT 1790

77 X 62 CM

This pair of paintings (originally joined as one composition) celebrate the tradition of the country fête. As guests arrive in their finery they are welcomed with the words 'Rare Old Port. Strawberries & Cream Ladies'. It is possible that they are rare visual examples of the pleasure resorts once known as 'Strawberry Gardens', spaces meant purely for leisure rather than for botanical study. Some were found on the outskirts of growing city centres, such as at Vauxhall in south-west London (and as famously depicted by Canaletto in a picture now at Compton Verney). Other Strawberry Gardens were more remote, yet some of these continued to grow up until the early-twentieth century as getaway spots for urban holidaymakers. The remote Strawberry Gardens at Heysham in Cumbria became increasingly popular with the arrival of the railway to the nearby town of Morecombe in 1851, leading to the addition of new attractions including aviaries, conservatories and greenhouses.

There are few records of early pleasure gardens, making these paintings a valuable reminder of a once common pastime.

This was always a special piece to me, probably because I have a great affinity with collage work. The idea of cutting and tearing up scraps of paper and material and creating such interesting pictures appeals to me like the idea of the postman going about his daily deliveries.

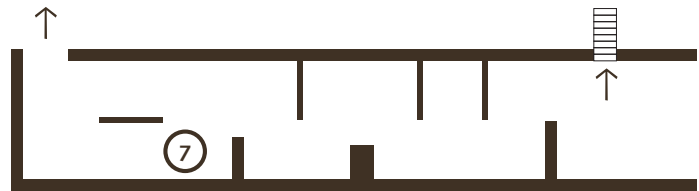
MARY NICE

Curator of the collection when owned by
Andras Kalman and displayed in Bath.



ATTIC GALLERY

7. Back wall



Old Man and Donkey **George Smart (1774–1846)**

COLLAGE ON PAPER, 1833
37 X 31 CM

'Old Bright' the postman reappears in this George Smart collage. To the right can be seen 'Smart's Repository', where the artist exhibited his cloth pictures. In *Clifford's Guide of Tunbridge Wells* of 1823, the writer tells us that those that ride through Frant were attracted by the 'Exhibition of a tailor, who, out of cloth of divers[sic] colours, delineates ... a variety of grotesque characters, particularly old Bright, the Postman, many years sweeper of Tunbridge Wells' Walks, which is considered a good likeness.'

The subject of this image, 'Old Bright' the postman, was a familiar yet mysterious character in Smart's local community. 'Old Bright' seems to have been quite a mystery. He was described in John Evans' *An Excursion to Brighton* of 1823 as being of 97 years of age 'attesting to the purity of the atmosphere in which they lived by their longevity'. A curious piece of verse on a label often pasted to the back of Smart's pictures reads:

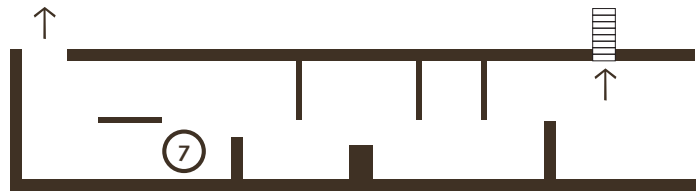
*There I beheld the Postman's face,
His walking stick and letter case;
With Ass in hand, (to where he dwells,)
As he returns to TUNBRIDGE-WELLS...*

There are multiple reproductions of this image by Smart; other examples can be found at the Tunbridge Wells Museum. The composition, though, is largely the same throughout. 'Old Bright' is depicted walking with a large cane, carrying a satchel full of mail and holding a letter addressed to "G Smart". He tows his donkey behind and is never depicted without him. Behind is the village of Frant, with the parish church on the left, whilst to the right can be seen 'Smart's Repository', where the artist exhibited his cloth pictures. In *Clifford's Guide of Tunbridge Wells* of 1823, the writer tells us that those that ride through Frant were attracted by the 'Exhibition of a tailor, who, out of cloth of divers[sic] colours, delineates ... a variety of grotesque characters, particularly old Bright, the Postman, many years sweeper of Tunbridge Wells' Walks, which is considered a good likeness.'

George Smart is one of the few known and documented Folk Artists from the British tradition. Working as a tailor in the village of Frant, he used off-cut swatches of fabric to create memorable and graphically powerful silhouettes, such as this collage depiction of 'Old Bright', the local postman and character. Starting out by making simple cut-outs of cats and rabbits, which he sold to passers-by, Smart gradually grew more ambitious and created images of local personalities, with the village landscape in the background. Look at the details and the way he has highlighted the felt with painted detail, has applied metallic leaf buttons to the coat, used fine leather for the satchel and ass's reins, and is carrying a letter addressed to himself. His images are timeless in their appeal, with the static figure in hat and overcoat, leading his donkey on his rounds of the village. Smart epitomises the transferring of vocational skill to artistic endeavour, not immodestly comparing himself to Rubens and Aristotle! His compositions are inventive and well balanced and his work is idiosyncratic and instantly recognisable. It just doesn't fit into any established category of art, so he simply addressed himself as 'Mr Smart Professor of peculiar art'.

ROBERT YOUNG
Folk Art specialist

7. Back wall

**Tub Armchair**

ENGLISH

ELM, LATE 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 89.5 CM

**Kirkdale Cave**

ENGLISH SCHOOL

WATERCOLOUR, ABOUT 1824

43 X 51.5 CM

Kirkdale Cave in North Yorkshire was the site of an important scientific discovery when, in 1821, the bones and teeth from a variety of animals, including elephants, hippopotamuses, rhinoceroses, hyenas and bison, were found. The bones were identified by William Buckland (1784-1856), the theologian and palaeontologist first Reader in Geology at Oxford University, who appears in the foreground of this picture. Dating from around 125,000 years ago, in the period before the last ice age, the bones were important evidence in establishing the idea of a geological past.

Buckland's work in proving that Kirkdale Cave had been a prehistoric hyena den, littered with bones of its prey, won him the Copley Medal. In later years Buckland became a pioneer in the use of fossilised faeces, which he termed 'coprolites', to reconstruct ancient ecosystems.

**The Cock Fight**

BRITISH

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1850

76 X 88.5 CM

The vicious sport of cockfighting spread across Britain in the 17th century, but in 1835 was banned by the Cruelty to Animals Act (although it still remained legal in Scotland until 1895). Secret cockfights still continued, however. In this example, a policeman bursts through the door, truncheon in hand, to stop the illegal fight.

The painting suggests the universality of cock fighting, with different social classes represented by the onlookers.



A Match at the Badger & Drawing the Badger

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, DATE UNKNOWN

EACH: 40 X 50 CM

These two paintings depict scenes of illegal badger baiting. This practice was banned in 1835 but it remained rife for years afterwards. The prominent, oversized door in each scene and large locks add to a feeling that this was forbidden.

In the 'sport' of badger baiting, the captured animal would have been placed inside a box, representing a badger's den. The owner of a dog would then choose to 'match' the badger, the dog entering the box and both animals seizing each other with their jaws. The dog was then drawn out of the box by its tail, along with the badger. In order for the dog to release the badger, the owner would bite the dog's tail – a practice which can be seen in the second painting. The badger was then returned to the box and the action repeated. The idea was to see how many times the dog could seize the badger, and the pair be pulled out together, in one minute.

It's thought that these dramatic paintings are based on a series of prints by Henry Alken (1735–1851), an English painter and engraver chiefly known as a caricaturist and illustrator of sporting subjects and coaching scenes.



City Foulers Mark

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1840

49.4 X 57.2 CM

This painting is taken from a popular print by Henry William Bunbury, first published in 1785. It shows a wooded scene in the immediate suburbs of London, with St. Paul's in the background. Two city gentlemen with guns prepare to fire, as their dog points at a bush – behind which, concealed from the sportsmen, squats a man excreting. A man holding a powder-flask watches with amusement from the top of a gate on the right-hand side, while another dog sits patiently in the foreground. Beneath the title are lines from John Gay's *Trivia: Or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London* of 1714:

'Against the Wind he takes his prudent way,

While the strong Gale directs him to the prey;

Now the warm scent assures the covey near,

He treads with caution & he points with fear.'



The Tradesmen's Friendly Union

ENGLISH SCHOOL

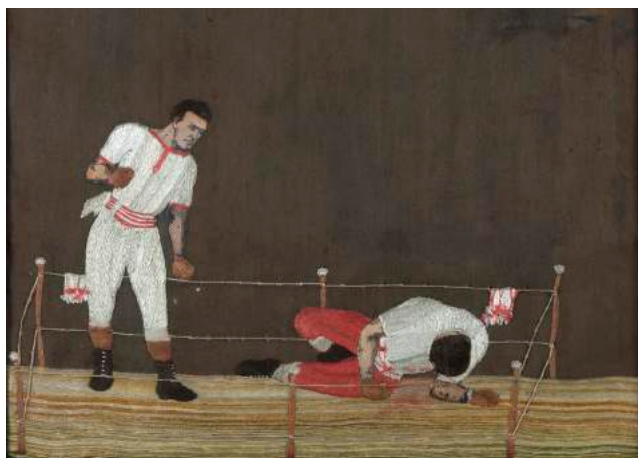
OIL ON BOARD, ABOUT 1828

70.4 X 93.4 CM

'Friendly societies' such as Plymouth's Tradesman's Friendly Union began to develop in Britain from the 1770s, in response to the rapid progress of industrialisation and the labour demands that this created. However, militant trade unionism was still frowned on by local and central government – as seen by the penal transportation of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, Dorset union activists, in 1834. It was not until after the formation of the Trades Union Congress in 1868 that unionism became effective for its members.

ATTIC GALLERY

8. Freestanding wall



Boxers

ENGLISH SCHOOL

WATERCOLOUR AND COLLAGE,

ABOUT 1870

34.3 X 42.2 CM



The Charing Cross Arms

Harrison

OIL ON CANVAS, 1819

47.3 X 74 CM

This pub was sited not at Charing Cross in London but the village of Charing in Kent. Charing's medieval church can be seen out of the leaded Tudor window.



Royal Ratcatcher

James Clark (1812–84)

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1807

44.3 X 72.4 CM

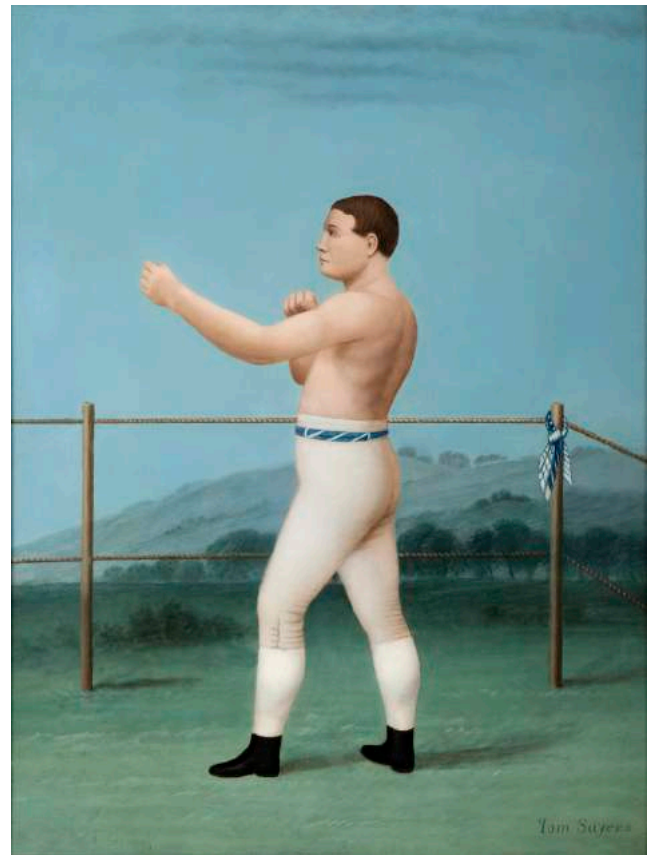
Here the eponymous 'royal ratcatcher' is seated to the centre left near the fire, wearing his top hat and appointment sash.

Chelsea-born James Clark made his living as an animal painter, and three of his sons also became artists.



Daisy the Cow
ENGLISH SCHOOL
 OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1790
 61 X 76 CM

Many folk art paintings and objects were made by tradesmen. An inscription on the reverse details the artist's other occupations: 'Plumber, Glazier and Painter, Pumps of all sorts, water-closet man, beer machines'.



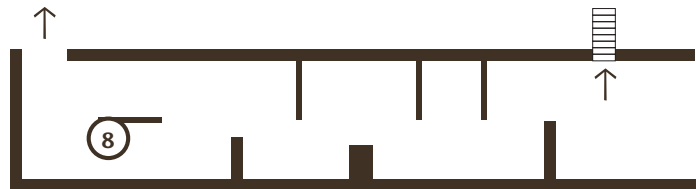
Tom Sayers, Prize Fighter
ENGLISH SCHOOL
 OIL ON PANEL, ABOUT 1850
 73 X 57 CM

In London's Highgate Cemetery lies a monument to Tom Sayers (1826–65), watched over by a sculpture of his loyal dog, Lion, who had been a well-behaved 'chief mourner' at Sayers' funeral. Brighton-born Tom Sayers, a bare-knuckle champion prize-fighter, attracted large crowds to his matches and his funeral was no exception. Thousands of people turned up amid scenes of disorder to see the famous fighter buried. Tom Sayers' last fight was on the 17th April 1860 at Farnborough, Hampshire. His opponent, American John Camel Heenan, was taller, heavier and younger than Sayers. However, after 42 rounds taking well over two hours, the fight was a draw, with both fighters battered and bloodied.

Bare-knuckle fighting was technically illegal but it was rumoured that Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, the 19-year-old Prince of Wales, and Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston attended what was called 'the fight of the century'. Sayers never fought again and died five years later from tuberculosis, aged 39. In 1867 the Queensberry Rules (under the sponsorship of the 9th Marquis of Queensberry) set out a code of conduct for boxing, which included the wearing of gloves during fights.

ATTIC GALLERY

8. Freestanding wall



West Bromwich Sweep
WATERCOLOUR, ABOUT 1850
48.5 X 60.3 CM

Before the introduction of boxing gloves as a result of the Queensberry rules of 1867, bare-knuckle fighting could cause extreme facial injury. The West Bromwich Sweep's bruised and swollen face is vividly portrayed, tended to by his manager Jem Parker.

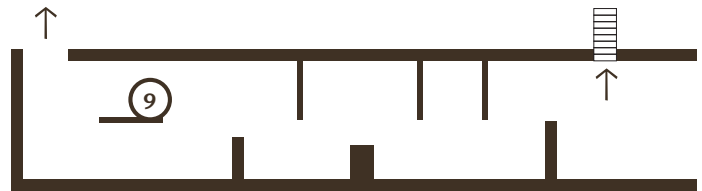
The spectators are all drinking beer out of ceramic mugs. The familiar clear-glass pint did not appear until the end of the 19th century.



Primitive Comb-Back Windsor Armchair
WELSH
ASH, 18TH CENTURY
HEIGHT: 112 CM

ATTIC GALLERY

9. Freestanding wall



Daisy the Cow

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1790

61 X 76 CM

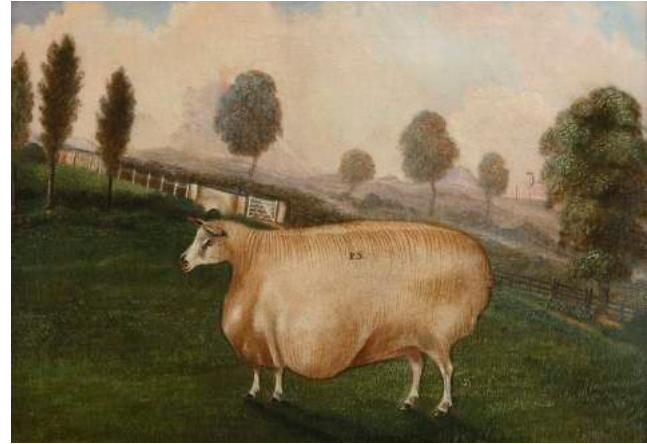
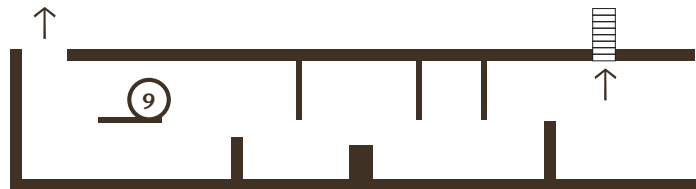
For centuries tradesmen had also worked as house painters, and some extended their skill to become artists. This association of plumbing with painting is confirmed by this picture, which has been painted on the back of a superbly lettered sign.

JAMES AYRES

James Ayres was the Director of the Judkyn Memorial at Freshford Manor near Bath, now absorbed into the American Museum in Britain.

ATTIC GALLERY

9. Freestanding wall



White Ram & White Sheep

William Bagshaw

OIL ON CANVAS, 1846

53.3 X 73.5 CM & 46.4 X 67.2 CM

The lack of documentation and the general absence of signatures imposes an almost archaeological approach for an understanding of these works. Fortunately some items here offer firm evidence for their provenance in a craft. For example, we know that the series of “cloth and velvet pictures” in the collection were made in the early 19th century by a tailor named George Smart. Likewise, this pair of canvases of a White Ewe and the White Ram are signed and dated ‘William Bagshaw, Rugby, 1846’. From the relevant Trade Directories it is known that Bagshaw advertised himself as a plumber and glazier.

JAMES AYRES

James Ayres was the Director of the Judkyn Memorial at Freshford Manor near Bath, now absorbed into the American Museum in Britain.



Master George
ENGLISH SCHOOL
 OIL ON CANVAS, 1870
 41.4 X 51.4 CM

The eponymous Master George is driving his gig along a road just outside Brentwood in Essex, since identified as the two-mile former Roman road which connects Brentwood with Harold Hill.



Greyhound
W. H. Ruggles
 OIL ON CANVAS, 1837
 53.4 X 63.7 CM

Greyhound racing was a popular Victorian sport. The first official coursing event was held in 1776, and the first race to use an artificial lure was staged exactly a century later. Greyhounds had originally been bred to course deer in the wild.



Jockey on a Bay Racehorse
ENGLISH SCHOOL
 OIL ON PANEL, ABOUT 1830
 36.6 X 47.2 CM

George Stubbs it is not, but this cheerful view nicely depicts the octagonal brick lodge which evidently served as the base for the racetrack starter. By the 1830s flat racing – regulated since 1750 by the Jockey Club at Newmarket – was big business; that decade also saw the introduction of steeplechasing and Aintree's Grand National. When the railways expanded prodigiously in the 1840s, many of the earliest lines were directed to prominent racecourses in order to transport the many thousands who flocked to these hugely popular sporting occasions.



Frogs
James Lloyd (1905–74)
 WATERCOLOUR, PEN AND INK
 ON PAPER, 1960
 44.2 X 34 CM

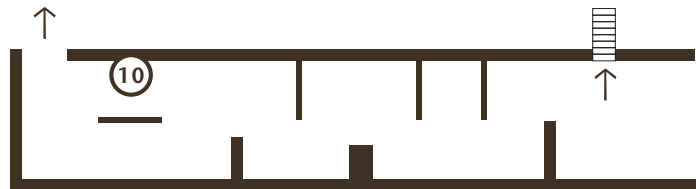


James Lloyd began painting because of his interest in farm animals, and imitated the dots which made up photographic reproductions in *Farmer & Stockbreeder* magazine. This became the basis of his personal style.

Lloyd subsequently became the first living, self-taught artist to have a picture accepted and hung by the Tate Gallery, in 1969.

ATTIC GALLERY

10. Wall near Coxon Reading Room



Lifeboat Model

BRITISH

WOOD, EARLY 1900s

HEIGHT: 46.5 CM

This unidentified sailing lifeboat, of the type used at Lowestoft after 1807, properly carries the livery of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), which was founded in 1824 and granted a Royal Charter in 1860.

In the traditional arts it is never Who said? But only What was said? that concerns us.

Ananda Coomaraswamy,
*The Christian and Oriental, or True
Philosophy of Art*, 1943

QUOTE CHOSEN BY ALAN POWERS

Writer, artist and publisher of decorative papers



A Terrible Shipwreck

T. L. Mourilyan (1840–1922)

OIL ON CANVAS, 1870

42 X 51 CM

The shipwreck which Mourilyan depicts occurred on the night of 12 February 1870, according to an inscription on the reverse of the canvas. The great storm of that night drove several ships ashore near Deal in Kent; the furthest ship shown may well be the *Glenduror*, whose master, Thomas Warland, beached the vessel in the shingle at the south end of the beach in order to enable the crew – and his wife and daughter – to escape over the bow. While the other beached vessels floundered, Warland's action saved the *Glenduror* – only for the ship to be wrecked off Cumbria in 1873.

The amateur Deal artist Thomas Mourilyan was a naval officer who retired from the Royal Navy as a Staff Commander in 1888. Mourilyan Harbour in Queensland is named after him.



Lowestoft Lifeboat

J. Starling

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1850

48.7 X 71.6 CM

Lowestoft Lifeboat Station was established in 1801 by the pioneering rescue lifeboat campaigner Henry Greathead (1757–1818), who by 1807 had established a chain of 16 lifeboat stations around the coasts of the British Isles. In 1807 Lowestoft Station became the first to operate a sailed lifeboat, the *Frances Anne*, which is depicted here. This vessel operated until 1850 and during her years of service saved over 300 lives.

Greathead's initiatives led to the founding of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (originally called the National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck) in 1824.

Margate was one of the first seaside resorts, with everything that entails: leisure and opportunities for health and self-indulgence. A classy resort must provide respectable bathing facilities – Margate is where the hooded bathing machine was invented – and to fill the empty times of day with books. In the painting, we can see both things happening in the same building: no sooner out of the briny than into the library to pick a new novel for the long afternoon.

I have always wanted to live in 1820, and living in a house of the period provides the excuse for collecting transfer pottery, books and trinkets of that magic time when nothing was ugly however humble its purpose, when classicism was tipping into Romanticism, and a naïve artist could evoke a scene such as this with detail so mediocrally clear we can walk into it.

ALAN POWERS

Writer, artist and publisher of decorative papers

Alan Powers is a writer, artist and publisher of decorative papers. Alan knew Enid Marx and her collection before it came to Compton Verney, and his book on Marx and her work was published in 2018.



**Garner's (the Marine Library),
High Street, Margate**
George Varlo, RM (c.1779-c.1855)

OIL ON CANVAS, 1818

93 X 119 CM

The popularity of sea-bathing from the 1750s onwards helped secure Margate a burgeoning tourist trade, which was acknowledged by the opening of The Royal Sea-Bathing Hospital in 1796. The mass-tourism which followed the arrival of the steam packet in 1815 – not long before this view was painted – and railway in 1846, however, prompted a rebuilding of the town centre which swept away many familiar landmarks, including the handsome Georgian block of Garner's Marine Library, a repository of books, periodicals, prints and pictures which had been rebuilt after its predecessor was swept into the sea in 1808.

George Varlo was a captain in the Royal Marines who by 1815 was semi-retired as Paymaster at Woolwich, where the London packet to Margate stopped. He painted a number of urban streetscapes; topographical training being mandatory for officers of all services at this time.

ATTIC GALLERY

11. End wall



Scarborough

ENGLISH SCHOOL

OIL ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1850

65.5 X 95 CM

The arrival of railway entrepreneur George Hudson's York and North Midland Railway at Scarborough in 1845 swiftly transformed the town from a genteel spa into a working-class holiday destination. This pleasant view shows the town in the days just before the onslaught of mass-tourism. The completion of Cuthbert Brodrick's massive Grand Hotel on the hilltop to the left in 1867 was to transform the bay's panorama for ever.



Yacht Race at Newhaven

BRITISH

OIL ON CANVAS, DATE UNKNOWN

66.2 X 86.1 CM

What we have lost is the organic community with the living culture it embodied ... an art of life, a way of living, ordered and patterned.

F. R. Leavis and Denys Thompson,
Culture and Environment, 1933

QUOTE CHOSEN BY ALAN POWERS
Writer, artist and publisher of decorative papers



Schooner Approaching Harbour

Alfred Wallis (1855–1942)

BRITISH

OIL ON METAL, ABOUT 1930

32.1 X 41.2 CM

Alfred Wallis was an untrained, Plymouth-born artist who, in 1890, moved to the Cornish port of St. Ives, where he ran a marine store. He only began painting after the death of his wife in 1922, using pieces of found debris such as boxes, jugs or jars, and his subjects were invariably maritime. He was not bound by the conventions and the perspective of academic painting, and his work proved inspirational for contemporary artists who were attempting to break with tradition and develop a new pictorial language.

This painting of a schooner with red sails approaching a harbour with a lighthouse was painted on a tin tray, using industrial boat paint, and is typical of Wallis's naïve style. Lighthouses often featured in Wallis's work; indeed, his gravestone in St Ives is covered with a picture of a lighthouse executed in tiles by potter Bernard Leach. The red-sailed boat was the *Bessie*, a second-class Penzance mackerel boat built in 1870. Owned and skippered by Charles Pearce of Newlyn, she was 42 feet long, carried a crew of six, and was lost at sea in December 1906. The two boats alongside the left-hand pier are steam trawlers – in the middle of the harbour is a topsail schooner; and the one two-funnelled ship berthed next to the lighthouse is possibly a passenger vessel.

In 1928 Wallis was discovered by two artists of the St Ives artists' colony, Christopher Wood and Ben Nicholson, who were interested in primitive art. Wallis's work proved inspirational for Nicholson, who was attempting to break with the art tradition of his father, a highly-respected and successful painter, and develop a new pictorial language. Yet while Nicholson's new works sold well, Wallis sold few paintings and died impoverished in a Penzance workhouse in 1942. Today, ironically, his works are much sought after, and fetch high prices at auction.

The tray is tin plated pressed steel, typical of those produced by Joseph Sankey, and shows signs of previous under-painting.

At the end of the 19th century as formal apprenticeships declined fewer tradebased artists emerged.

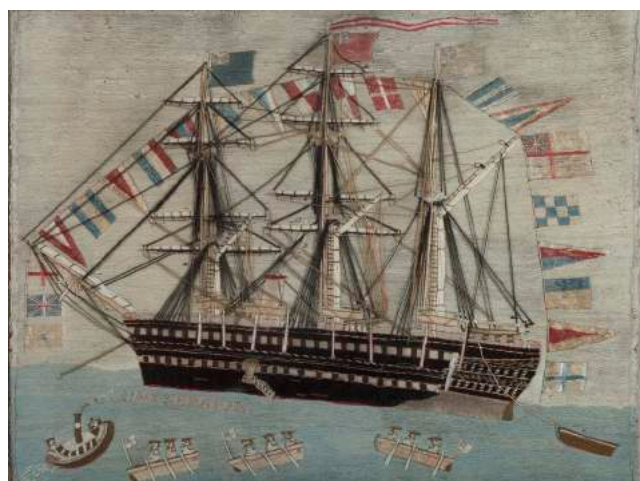
Besides, the growth in the number of art schools enabled more people to become 'proper' painters and sculptors. In this context this work is significant, for Wallis stood on the cusp of this change. In working on the maintenance of fishing boats Wallis would have gained some familiarity with oil paint.

On becoming a widower in 1922, he turned to making pictures 'for company'. He summarised his objectives in this field in a letter dated 5 April 1935, which, despite some deficiencies, is fully expressive of Wallis's intentions: 'what i do mosely is what use to Bee out of my own memery.' This says it all. Vernacular art is the work of the mind's eye.

JAMES AYRES

James Ayres was the Director of the Judkyn Memorial at Freshford Manor near Bath, now absorbed into the American Museum in Britain.

11. End wall

**HMS Serapis**

BRITISH

WOOL AND SILK ON CANVAS, ABOUT 1850

54.2 X 71.7 CM

The 44-gun fifth-rate warship *Serapis* had barely been launched when, at the height of the American War of Independence, she became a worldwide celebrity. On 23 September 1779 she surrendered to the US Captain John Paul Jones' *SS Bonhomme Richard* after a bitter fight off Flamborough Head. *Serapis* was later transferred by the Americans to their French ally, but exploded off the coast of Madagascar in 1781.

This richly detailed picture shows HMS *Serapis* in better days: fully dressed and with all flags displayed. It is typical of the woolworks made by sailors in the British navy during the 1800s. Sailors were adept at sewing and used this skill to create personal tributes to the ships on which they sailed. Made in port, at sea or in retirement, such works used Berlin wool applied in a variety of stitches, from cross stitch, chain stitch and darning to long stitch and trapunto (a quilting technique). Rigging and other details were stitched in button thread or silk.

The demise of 'woolies' was caused by the advent of marine photography and unrigged steamships in the last decades of the 19th century.

In the early fifties my father Andras Kalman had a gallery in Manchester and would regularly go to London to look for paintings and to buy frames. He often visited auction houses and it was at a sale of pictures belonging to a Lady West that he bought his first 'primitive' painting called *Bear Baiting*. My father was captivated! He quickly bought four or five pictures of farm animals – a misshapen sheep or a fat heifer – these paintings were amusing and decorative. In 1956 or 7 my father went to America where he visited the then modest Museum of American Folk Art. The fact that there was a beautiful museum and there were books on the subject gave him more encouragement. He thought the art was as clean-cut as an American farm – unpretentious.

When my father opened a gallery in London and became a little more successful, he could afford to go to many more auctions and antique shops. He was looking for inexpensive pictures – he didn't want conventional, late Victorian paintings. When he moved into a larger house in London he decided to fill the hall, dining room and the walls going up the stairs with primitive paintings. I remember my father would take our dog out for a walk after dinner; often armed with a large torch, he'd walk around Pimlico and the Fulham Road peering into shop windows. In the sixties there was no competition for English naïve paintings; for most people the work was almost too crude.

My father began collecting ‘by accident’ – he didn’t set out to become a collector – he gathered eight or nine pictures and asked himself ‘Do I want more?’ And suddenly, his dining room was full!

If my father bought a very good painting, he’d keep it. He became his own best customer! He was in friendly competition with his close friend Christopher Bibby, who shared his enthusiasm for primitive paintings. Around 1965 Christopher opened the Rutland Gallery – an elegant space in Bruton Street, London.

My father had a rare, discerning eye for the fresh and original. The collection that he slowly built up of pristine, non-academic paintings depicting ordinary daily life gave him endless delight. He said ‘Naïve art has a freshness, crispness, originality’. He loved the humour, charm and colour.

His eclectic taste led him to open a gallery in the King’s Road. He then extended his business to include an old tailor’s workshop that he turned into an unusual and beautiful gallery selling English Folk Art. He also opened a tearoom in Nettlebed in Oxfordshire. The sign advertised ‘Tea and Art’ on the basis that ‘not everybody needs art but everybody needs tea’!

As the collection grew, he was keen to find a permanent space for it. David Sylvester, the art critic of the Sunday

Times, ran a feature on his interest in English Naïve Art. Around 1972 The Arts Council became interested in the collection and sponsored a tour around the country. Then in 1973 Beatrix Rumford, Director of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum in Williamsburg, Virginia visited England to research the kinship that exists between the folk art of America and Britain. She later invited the English Naïve Art Collection to travel to Williamsburg and to the American Museum of Folk Art in New York. This resulted in a nationwide tour of the US organised by the Smithsonian Institute.

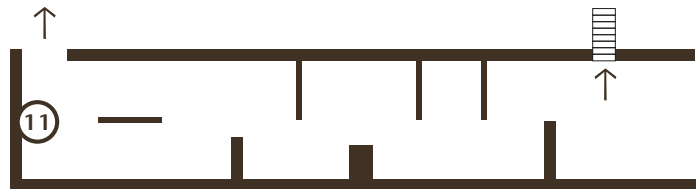
Over this period, the collection had been added to, and it soon became apparent that it had outgrown our home. In 1987 Bath was chosen as the new base for the collection, where it was housed in the Countess of Huntingdon’s Chapel.

SALLY KALMAN

Daughter of collector Andras Kalman

ATTIC GALLERY

11. End wall



The Fleet Offshore

ENGLISH SCHOOL
OIL ON PANEL, 1780s
51 X 174 CM

This depicts a squadron of the Royal Navy, including HMS *Victory* (centre, flying the pre-1801 blue Union Jack), lying off the coast of Plymouth. *Victory* was launched in 1765, and during 1780-2 she fought the French under the flags of Admirals Kempenfelt and Howe. Nelson did not hoist his flag in the ship until 1803.

The Fleet Offshore may be attributed to someone who applied paint to ships to protect them from wave and weather – an individual who doubled as a marine artist with a working knowledge of ships.

JAMES AYRES

James Ayres was the Director of the Judkyn Memorial at Freshford Manor near Bath, now absorbed into the American Museum in Britain.



Sunbeam
Gunner Baldie

WOOL AND SILK, ABOUT 1876
38.4 X 47.6 CM

The 323-ton, three-masted schooner *Sunbeam* was built in 1874 for railway tycoon Sir Thomas Brassey. The name *Sunbeam* came from the nickname the Brasseys had given to their daughter, Constantine Alberta Brassey, who had died in 1873 from scarlet fever. One of the first yachts to sail around the world, *Sunbeam* carried the Brassey family on their 1876-7 circumnavigation of the world which Brassey's wife, Annie, subsequently recorded in her bestselling book *A Voyage in the Sunbeam, our Home on the Ocean for Eleven Months*. The gunner on the crew list for that voyage was

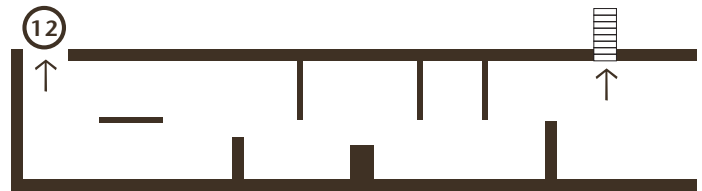
not the artist, Gunner Baldie, but another Royal Artillery gunner; Baldie probably went on a later voyage.

In this scene *Sunbeam* sails serenely up the Solent. Baldie captures the English countryside with stylised charm, from story-book trees to meticulously-sewn rigging. The faded flag flying from the mizzen gaff is possibly that of the Royal Yacht Squadron, of which Brassey was a member.

Sunbeam carried many VIP's, including Prime Minister William Gladstone, while in the Brasseys' ownership, and in the First World War served as a Hospital Ship. She was broken up after the death of her last owner, shipping magnate Sir Walter Runciman, in 1937.

ATTIC GALLERY

12. Coxon Reading Room



West Country Winged Highback Settle

PINE, EARLY 19TH CENTURY

HEIGHT: 153 CM

The survival of occasional patches of white paint on this imposing settle suggests this piece was tank-stripped at some point. In truth, all such pieces of furniture would originally have been painted.

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The Wolfson*
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Gallery Guide

Text by
Steven Parissien and Annelise Hone, Compton Verney

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The British Folk Art Collection Galleries


Curated by
Mark Hearld

Designed by
Schimmer Child

Project Managed by
Annelise Hone, Compton Verney

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Almost all the works in this collection
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Compton Verney
ART GALLERY AND PARK

Warwickshire CV35 9HZ
t. 01926 645500
comptonverney.org.uk