

The original documents are located in Box 34, folder “Curator's Office - Steve's Room” of the Betty Ford White House Papers, 1973-1977 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 3, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR MRS. FORD

FROM

CLEM CONGER 

I think you will be pleased to see the results of the transformation of Steve's third floor bedroom, formerly known as the Red Toile Bedroom.

We have set the room up the way it is going to look, but it isn't really finished because we cannot get delivery of the upholstery material for the chairs until the middle of September. However, the draperies are in place and add great distinction to the room. Plaster repairs had to be made near the ceiling all around the room where there had been incorrect molding which had been removed. We will put a correct cornice in the room. In the meantime, our painters cannot do a final paint job until the repair plaster has dried, but it will be done shortly.

The night lighting in the room is also greatly improved.

Enclosed is a description of all the objects in the room with this renovation.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 3, 1976
Office of the Curator

THE RED TOILE ROOM

During the latter part of August room #329, known as the Red Toile Room, was refurbished for the first time in fourteen years. No major architectural changes were made. Fabric was removed from the walls which were then painted platinum with the ceiling, woodwork and wall space, below the chair-rail, painted a complementary bone white. A cornice moulding, similar to one used during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, will be installed in the near future.

In 1962, the name Red Toile Room was established when Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis redecorated the room with a reproduction of a patriotic English-made red toile fabric; a design which glorified George Washington and Benjamin Franklin with symbols of Liberty. This tradition has been preserved through the current selection of another red toile fabric, for the draperies, entitled "Coronation Print", a reproduction of an antique French toile. The term toile refers to a type of transparent linen.

The following pages enumerate and describe the present furnishings in the Red Toile Room. These descriptions begin with the north wall (to the right of the doorway) and continue clockwise around the room.



PAINTINGS - TWO VIEWS OF CHINESE PORTS

Two oil-on-panel "hong" paintings, so called because they depict the ports in China at which western merchants were permitted to maintain trading facilities called "hongs", have been hung on the north wall on either side of the mirror above the chest. These were executed in the nineteenth century by unknown Chinese artists. The frames are also period Chinese, but will be restored with a finish of red lacquer with gold decoration. The left painting is of Hong Kong with its mountainous setting and harbor full of western ships. The right painting is a nearer view of Canton harbor, circa 1847-1856, with its Chinese vessels and dock lined with the "hong" buildings above which fly the flags of certain western nations. Acquired in 1972.

FEDERAL MIRROR

This gilt architectural mirror, circa 1820, has been hung over the chest on the north wall. Its glass is divided into two panels. Inset rosettes show at the top and bottom of the rope-turned pilasters. At the center of the carved frieze is a large applied shell, while acorn drops are attached under the overhanging cornice. Gift of Mrs. Giles Whiting, New York, New York in 1961.

FEDERAL CHEST

An important curly mahogany Federal chest of drawers has been placed against the north wall. It has been attributed to the craftsmanship of Michael Allison of New York, circa 1790-1800. The front of its deep top drawer shows two diamond-shaped inlays of curly maple in each of which is inset a shielded eagle below fifteen small stars. Various other bandings and crossbandings of veneer, handsome French feet, and period oval eagle brasses contribute to the beauty of this chest. Acquired in 1976.

SEYMOUR TEA BOX

A beautiful, three-compartment, Federal tea box has been placed on the chest on the north wall. Attributed to the Seymours of Massachusetts, it is magnificently veneered and inlaid with mahogany and satinwood. Acquired in 1972.



STAFFORDSHIRE PLATES

Three pinkish-red English dinner plates, showing a central depiction of the White House, have been placed in the room - one each on the chest on the north wall, the chest on the east wall, and the library table on the south wall. Made in Staffordshire, England in the 1830's, they are signed on the back, "The President's House, Washington" and "Jackson's Warranted". One was a gift of Mrs. Harry M. Ullman, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 1961, and the other two were gifts of Mr. and Mrs. James W. Fosburgh, New York, New York in 1962.

GEORGE WASHINGTON STATUETTE

This small bronze statuette of George Washington in military dress has been placed on the chest on the north wall. With his tri-cornered hat under his left arm, he holds a partially-rolled copy of the Declaration of Independence in his right hand. Gift of Mr. Hugh D. Auchincloss, Jr., New York, New York in 1961.

"CLOVE POND" by WILLIAM GLACKENS

This oil painting of skaters on a pond, in shades of red and blue, by American artist, William Glackens (1877-1938), has been hung on the east wall to the left of the windows. A gift of the artist's son, Ira Glackens, Washington, D. C., in 1968.

TEA TABLE

A mahogany tea table, one of a nest of four, has been placed against the east wall in the left corner. Its rectangular top is supported by four slender turned legs mounted on two show feet. This table and its companions were transferred to the White House in 1929 from the Presidential yacht, "Mayflower".



FRENCH EMPIRE SIDECHAIRS

This pair of mahogany sidechairs, circa 1820, have been positioned against the east wall, flanking the chest under the windows. The curving stiles of their barrell-backs terminate at the seat frame in ormolu animal heads. The square front legs terminate in brass paw feet. Other ormolu mounts have been applied to the seat frame and the back splat. These chairs were reputedly brought from France by the infamous Citizen Genet and presented to Francis Scott Key, through whose family they have descended. Gift of Mrs. Morehead Patterson, Washington, D. C. in 1962.

HEPPLEWHITE BUTLER'S DESK

This handsome butler's desk, with satinwood string inlay, has been placed under the windows on the east wall. Made in America, circa 1790-1800, it has three graduated drawers below a top drawer fitted out as a desk with a fall front. It has unusual brasses bearing the likeness of George Washington. On loan to the State Department from Dr. and Mrs. Henry Lihn.

VICTORIAN LAMP

This brass astragal lamp has been placed atop the chest standing under the windows on the east wall. It was made in America, circa 1850. Below its frosted globe, which is etched with floral motifs, hang knotted and faceted prisms. Acquired in 1972.

"CARL SCHURZ PARK, NEW YORK" by WILLIAM GLACKENS

This outdoors scene painted in oils by William Glackens (1870-1938) has been hung on the east wall to the right of the windows. Beyond the people in the park is a background of a ferry and a tugboat before the Hell's Gate Bridge. It is signed "W.G." in the lower right corner. A gift of the artist's son, Mr. Ira Glackens, Washington, D. C. in 1968.



TRIPOD TABLE

A small tripod table has been placed adjacent to the easy chair in the southeast corner of the room. It has an oval top supported by a turned pedestal.

EASY CHAIR

An overstuffed easy chair with seat and back cushions has been placed in the southeast corner. It is presently upholstered in blue and white stripes. Acquired in 1941.

WALL BRACKETS

This pair of Chippendale, carved and gilded, eagle wall brackets have been placed on the south wall, one to each side of the window. Made in America in the eighteenth century, each shows a platform supported by a spread-winged eagle perched upon a rococco C-scroll. Gift of Colonel and Mrs. Edgar W. Garbisch, New York, New York in 1961.

AMERICAN PORCELAIN PITCHERS

A pair of white porcelain pitchers have been placed atop the eagle wall brackets at either side of the window in the south wall. Their pear-shaped bodies narrow to a fluted base and are decorated with floral sprays and gilt edges. A product of the manufactory of William Ellis Tucker of Philadelphia in the late 1820's, they are considered significant examples of the earliest successful American porcelain manufacture. Gift of Mr. Philip Hammerslough, West Hartford, Connecticut in 1961.

ENGRAVING - "THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE FROM THE RIVER"

This colored engraving of the White House has been hung below the wall bracket on the left side of the window in the south wall. It shows the White House on a hill above Tiber Creek, on which are a sloop and rowboats. It was drawn by W. H. Barlett and engraved by W. Radcliffe in England, circa 1841. Gift of Mr. Malcolm Ross, Coconut Grove, Florida in 1962.



SHERATON LIBRARY TABLE

This drop-leaf library table has been placed under the window on the south wall. It was made in England, circa 1795, and has two drawers with brass pulls. The top shows a border of mahogany veneer lined with satinwood inlay. Gift of Mr. Joseph Alsop, Washington, D. C. in 1964.

LAMP

A small, urn-shaped lamp, with griffin-head handles, has been placed on the library table under the window in the south wall. Classical designs are shown on its largely gilt body.

INKWELL STAND

This bronze American Empire inkwell stand has been placed atop the library table on the south wall. It is sarcophagus-shaped with a lid on which is a reclining figure, "The Dying Gaul", and an inscription, "T. Jefferson, 1804". Gift of Thomas Jefferson Coolidge, Jr., Magnolia, Massachusetts in 1962.

BUST OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

This small basalt bust of George Washington has been placed on the library table on the south wall. It was made in America by Enoch Wood in 1818, his name and the date inscribed on the rear of the bust along with the subject's name and dates. Gift of Mrs. A. Noe Horn, New York, New York in 1963.



ENGRAVING - "THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, WASHINGTON"

This black-and-white engraving of the south front of the White House has been hung below the wall bracket to the right of the window in the south wall. Executed in England, circa 1844, by an artist named Brown and engraved by Fenner, Sears & Co., it shows the south portico and west colonnade with a few figures and a flock of sheep in the foreground. Gift of Eva Lee, Great Neck, New York in 1961.

AMERICAN EMPIRE SIDECHAIRS

This pair of sidechairs, circa 1820, have been placed along the south wall, one before the library table, the other in the corner adjacent to the closet. The horizontal splat in their raking backs is a carved, spread-winged eagle. These chairs are reputed to have been used in the White House in 1841 by President William Henry Harrison and were then sold after his death. Gift of Roxanne and John Beardsley, West Hartford, Connecticut in 1961.

BEDS

A pair of mahogany beds have been positioned perpendicular to the west wall. Each bedstead has two low turned posts with a turned rail between them. Acquired in the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration.



NIGHT STAND

This modern, mahogany night stand has been placed between the beds against the west wall. It has a galleried top, an upper compartment with a tambour door, and a stepped lower half which pulls out and contains a drawer. Purchased in 1952.

LAMP FROM CHINESE EXPORT VASE

This lamp, one of a pair, made from a four-sided Chinese export vase, has been placed on the night stand on the west wall. A product of the K'ang-Hsi period (1662-1722), it shows white cherry blossoms on a black ground. Acquired in 1974.

LYRE CLOCK

This American lyre clock with a gilded case, circular face, and brass eagle finial has been hung on the west wall above the night stand between the beds. Made circa 1825-1835, it has two eglomise panels - a vertical one showing black and gold stripes, and a horizontal one below the pendulum case showing floral motifs and a gilt medallion. Gift of Mrs. Jeanne Dixon, Washington, D.C. in 1974.

ENGRAVINGS - MONUMENTS TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

Four black-and-white engravings of monuments to George Washington have been hung in the west wall above the beds. All were gifts of Mr. Frederick Bucher, Newport, Rhode Island in 1961.

- 1) The upper left print is entitled, "Design of a National Monument to be Erected at Washington's Headquarters at Newburgh, N. Y." Executed in Massachusetts, circa 1800, by J. Penniman, it shows a classical monument with doric columns.
- 2) The lower left print is entitled, "Clark Mills Statue of Washington". Executed in New York, circa 1850, by J. Rodgers, it shows an equestrian statue on a large rectangular plinth.
- 3) The upper right print is entitled, "The National Washington Monument, Washington, D. C.,". Executed in Boston, circa 1870, by Asa Coolidge Warren, it shows the present obelisk surrounded by a classical colonnade.
- 4) The lower right print is entitled, "Washington Monument at Richmond, Virginia". Executed in New York, circa 1850, by J. Rogers, it shows an equestrian statue of Washington atop a high base.

