

The original documents are located in Box 46, folder “White House - Dining Room (wallpaper removal)” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Letters regarding removal of
wallpaper from President's Dining
Room, the Second Floor



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

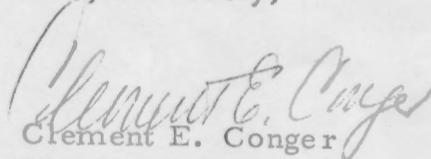
August 7, 1975

Dear Mrs. Woods:

I have your letter of July 17 addressed to Mrs. Weidenfeld, Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford, regarding the wallpaper from the President's Dining Room on the Second Floor private quarters of the White House. The United Press International newspaper story which you enclosed has a number of unfortunate unaccuracies. In the first place, it shows the paper in the Diplomatic Reception Room on the Ground Floor of the White House which is the "historic" wallpaper, "Scenic America." This wallpaper will remain there. The paper removed from the walls of the President's Dining Room on the Second Floor of the White House in the private quarters is a later version with no history, dating about 1834 in design. It is a modern copy (about 1960) made from the earlier blocks.

For your information, in the family quarters, the President and First Lady may change things as they wish. However, the Committee for the Preservation of the White House approved this change at a meeting held on March 11, 1975.

Very sincerely,



Clement E. Conger
The Curator

Mrs. John P. Woods
2048 - 5th Avenue, SE.
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403



N-8

Mrs. Ford Removes Historic Wallpaper
(Excerpted from the N.Y. Times)

Some historic mid-19th century wallpaper depicting battle scenes from the American Revolution, installed in the White House in 1961 by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis when she was First Lady, has been removed from the family dining room on orders from Betty Ford, who found the wallpaper "kind of depressing."

The old wallpaper remains in the reception rooms, Sheila Rabb Weidenfeld said yesterday, but it has been peeled off the dining room wall, which has been painted a "bright sunny yellow," matching the colors in the corridor and yellow Oval Room in the family quarters.

Mrs. Weidenfeld said that Pat Nixon, the former First Lady, had also found the battle-scene wallpaper unpleasant to live with, but endured it. (7/10/75)

Ford Attends Ground Breaking Ceremony

President Ford (shown on CBS film) joined top Pentagon officials Thursday at a ground breaking ceremony in Bethesda, Maryland for a special school where health professionals will be trained for careers in the armed forces. CBS (7/10/75)



Dining room wall.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 3 taken down
Color now bright, sunny, yellow

Took down wallpaper
in dining room &
stored it - so it
can be used again.

It is being offered
to Smithsonian to see
if they want to
put up in Kennedy
Admin.

St. improvement



Johnson's didn't
like wallpaper either -
same paper in din
room, ⁽¹⁸³⁰⁾ but battles
supper imposed in Dining
Room. Nixon's didn't
like it. Mr. Nixon didn't
like wanted

Room Cold - depressing.
Mech up March 11 - with
Preservation - feeling wa
for 2d have what
They wanted

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 8, 1973

MEMORANDUM TO MICHAEL J. FARRELL

FROM CLEM CONGER *cc*

A new rug has been placed on the floor of the State Dining Room. This rug is only in the room on a trial basis. It is preferred that the rug not be discussed by the guides on tour duty. If questions are asked about the rug, it can be stated that it is a contemporary rug based on a mid-17th century Persian design, that is being considered for the room.

✓ cc: Helen Smith



Some items in this folder were not digitized because it contains copyrighted materials. Please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library for access to these materials.

Notes on People

Mrs. Ford Removes Historic Wallpaper

Some historic mid-19th century wallpaper depicting battle scenes from the American Revolution, installed in the White House in 1961 by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis when she was First Lady, has been removed from the family dining room on orders from Betty Ford, who found the wallpaper "kind of depressing."

The then Mrs. Kennedy, who had embarked on an ambitious White House restoration project, had the wallpaper removed from the walls of an old home in Thurmont, Md. It was rehung in the family dining room and in the diplomatic reception rooms.

The old wallpaper remains in the reception rooms, Sheila Rabb Weidenfeld, the First Lady's press secretary, said yesterday, but it has been peeled off the dining room wall, which has been painted a "bright sunny yellow,"

gles with her producers. Miss Struthers, who has refused to show up for work on shows for the coming season, is under a preliminary injunction issued to Tandem Productions, the show's producers, restraining her from working in the entertainment industry except in connection with "All in the Family." Now she's asking the Court of Appeal to "vacate and dissolve" the injunction.

Empress Farah of Iran is in Washington. She went to the ballet with the Henry Kissingers Tuesday night and had lunch yesterday with Betty Ford, Nancy Kissinger, and Mary Louise Smith, chairman of the Republican National Committee. Earlier in the week she was at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., in connection with her plans to set up a pediatrics hospital in Iran, and she left one patient touched and



Associated Press

Empress Farah of Iran with Betty Ford, her hostess yesterday at White House luncheon

official said. The \$1,800 globe has been replaced by a 24-inch version, which cost about \$500.

by Susan Ford." The picture showed prospective customers at a land auction at the Supreme Court.

There's more to that story about the National Enquirer reporter in Washington who

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO: Clement Conger
FROM: Sheila Rabb Weidenfeld

Attached are letters
regarding the dining room wall-
paper. I think it would be best
for you to handle them.





Part of W H collection
 (Morris Lane
 legislation
 prohibits ~~selling~~ ^{selling}
 except lend
 to Smith
 11768

July 15, 1975

Dear Ms. Wardenfeld,

On July 10 I read in

the ny times - notes on people that Mrs Ford had
 the historic wallpaper removed from the dining
 room of the White House.

Our home is on an

historic Revolutionary war site in Fat Salonga
Long Island, NY. Our dining room needs redecoration.

We would feel very honored if the first lady
 entrusted us to use this paper in our room.

We would agree to return it to the White House



a subsequent first lady desire to use it
join. In the coming ~~centennial~~ year celebration
we would agree to open our house to the public
to view this paper in cooperation with the
Smithson Historical Society.

Please discuss my request with the
first lady and the President and seek
serious consideration.

Sincerely

Helen Decker

(Mrs. Andrew Decker)





White House wallpaper "revolution": Mrs. Kennedy selected it, Mrs. Nixon disliked it, Mrs. Ford removed it.

Historic wallpaper banished

WASHINGTON—Historic wallpaper, depicting battle scenes of the American Revolution and selected by Jacqueline

the dining room and the diplomatic reception room with the paper in 1961 during her White House restoration project.

the corridor and yellow Oval Room in the family quarters.

with every day, but did nothing about it. Mrs. Onassis had the mid-19th century wallpaper removed from an historic home in Thurmont, Md., and covered

*Living room - removed
and stored to be used
again - what kind of wallpaper
did they make in 1834?*

*I have never seen any
"removed" wallpaper that would
be fit to rehang.*

*I am not writing in
criticism or to be humorous.
I would really like to know.*

Sincerely,

Mayou Woods

(Mrs. John P.)



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 23, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR MRS. FORD

FROM : CLEM CONGER

Herewith a description of all the paintings in the President's Dining Room, 2nd Floor as seen from the left as you enter the room.

The painting to the left of the door is a small landscape of Niagara Falls painted by Albert Bierstadt (American Artist 1830-1902) at the end of the 19th century. This painting was purchased for the White House Collection in 1975 and was formerly hanging in the Queen's Bedroom.

The painting on the west wall above the sideboard is entitled "West Point Near Garrisons." This landscape was painted by Robert Havell, Jr. (American Artist 1793-1878) circa 1850. Havell is most famous for the engravings he did in London of the Audubon bird drawings. This very beautiful landscape is part of the White House Collection and was formerly hanging in the East Sitting Hall.

To the left of the mantel in the upper tier is a charming still life painting by Rubens Peale (American Artist 1784-1865) entitled "Still Life with Fruit" and dated circa 1862. Rubens Peale was a popular still life painter and on the the famous American family of five Peales all of whom were artists. This painting was hanging in the Green Room prior to the recent placement of "The Misquito Net" by John Singer Sargent. This painting is part of the White House Collection.

To the left of the mantel in the lower tier is an early 19th century painting of the Capitol from Pennsylvania Avenue. This painting was painted by an unknown artist in the mid 19th century. This painting is also part of the White House Collection.



Above the mantel is hanging "Under the Palisades" by Jasper Cropsey (American Artist 1823-1900). This very handsome landscape of the Hudson River was given to the White House by the great great granddaughter of the artist (Mrs. John C. Newington , Greenwich , Connecticut). This painting was formerly hanging in the Red Room.

To the right of the mantel is a charming pastoral landscape painting by Shepard A. Mount, (American Artist 1804-1868) entitled "Hudson River Landscape " and dated 1861. This painting was a gift to the White House from Mr. and Mrs. Francis Sullivan of Washington D.C. It was hanging in the East Wing Reception Room.

To the right of the door from the West Sitting Hall are two very beautiful still life paintings.

The smaller one is entitled "Strawberries and Cherries" by Margareta Peale (American Artist 1795-1882). This painting is on loan from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia.

The larger still life is entitled "Grapes and Apples " by James Peale (American Artist 1749-1831) and was painted circa 1810. This painting is part of the White House Collection and was hanging in the Family Dining Room on the State Floor.

We are presently working on a complete room guide which will describe every object in the room. We will send one up to you when it is completed.



UP-143

(JACKIE)
WASHINGTON (UPI) -- HISTORIC WALLPAPER DEPICTING SCENES OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, SELECTED BY JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONASSIS, HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE FAMILY DINING ROOM BECAUSE BETTY FORD THOUGHT "IT WAS KIND OF DEPRESSING."

FORMER FIRST LADY PAT NIXON ALSO FOUND THE WALLPAPER, WHICH SHOWS BATTLE SCENES OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, UNPLEASANT TO LIVE WITH EVERYDAY BUT DID NOTHING ABOUT IT.

MRS. ONASSIS HAD THE MID-19TH CENTURY WALLPAPER REMOVED FROM AN HISTORIC HOME IN THURMONT, MD., AND COVERED THE DINING ROOM AND THE DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION ROOM WITH THE PAPER IN 1961 DURING HER WHITE HOUSE RESTORATION PROJECT.

SHEILA RABB WEIDENFELD, THE FIRST LADY'S PRESS SECRETARY, SAID THAT THE ROOM HAS NOW BEEN PAINTED A "BRIGHT SUNNY YELLOW," MATCHING THE WALLS OF THE CORRIDOR AND YELLOW OVAL ROOM IN THE FAMILY QUARTERS.

SHE SAID THE WALLPAPER HAS BEEN STORED AND MAY BE USED AGAIN.

MRS. WEIDENFELD SAID THAT MRS. FORD THOUGHT THAT THE BATTLE SCENES WERE "KIND OF DEPRESSING."

THE WALLPAPER REMAINS ON THE WALLS OF THE DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION ROOMS.

UPI 07-09 05:44 PED

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