

VICTORIA
ALSO ADMIT TO
PRESS VIEW
ON THE SAME DAY
10-27



ALBERT MUSEUM

THE DIRECTOR, SIR LEIGH ASHTON,
REQUESTS THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY ON

THURSDAY, 17th JULY, 1952

between the hours of 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. for a private view of

THE WELLINGTON MUSEUM

at Apsley House, Hyde Park Corner

Admit two



VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM
LONDON S.W.7

KENsington 6371

PRESS

OPENING OF THE WELLINGTON MUSEUM,

APSLEY HOUSE, HYDE PARK CORNER,

*for good
private show
Shm.
Sb*

Press View: Thursday, 17th July, 1952, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Members of the Press are invited to stay for the Private View in the afternoon if they wish).

Press Photographers will be welcome throughout the day.

Open to the Public: Saturday, 19th July, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

WILL THE PRESS PLEASE BE SURE TO MENTION THAT
THE HOUSE IS NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC UNTIL THE
SATURDAY MORNING, 19th JULY, AT 10 A.M.

Opening Hours Thereafter: Weekdays (including Saturdays and Bank Holidays) 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sundays: 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m. Closed on Good Friday and Christmas Day.

Admission: 1/-; children under 16, 6d. Unaccompanied children under 12 cannot be admitted.

Official Guide: The illustrated guide (price 1/6d.) will be available free to members of the Press on the Press Day only.

Apsley House was built during the ^{years} 1777-8 from designs by Robert Adam for the second Earl Bathurst. It takes its name ~~for~~ ^{from} Earl Bathurst's title before he succeeded his father, i.e. Baron Apsley.

The Duke of Wellington (1769-1852) bought the house from his brother, Lord Wellesley, in 1817; and extensive alterations were carried out for the Iron Duke by the architect B. D. Wyatt in 1828-9. These involved adding to the west side of the building to make the Waterloo Chamber, adding the Corinthian portico to the front, and facing the whole house with Bath stone.

In 1947 the present Duke (the 7th) generously offered to the Nation not only Apsley House, but much of its artistic and historical contents valued at about half a million pounds. The Government gratefully accepted this offer and the house became part of the national treasure, to be called the Wellington Museum and administered by the Victoria and Albert Museum. The gift comprised the house itself (in which certain apartments are kept permanently by the Wellington family) and some 1,650 objects of fine and applied art including paintings, plate, porcelain, batons, orders and decorations, furniture and personal relics of the first Duke.

The house has had to be completely renovated both inside and out, which also necessitated the re-decoration of every room. The work of restoration has been carried out with great skill by the Ministry of Works (a special hand-out on this work will be available on Press Day) under the Direction of Sir Leigh Ashton.

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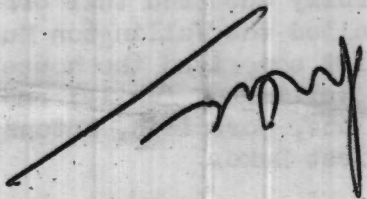
PRESS

On the ground floor there is the Muniment Room containing the Duke's orders and Decorations, his medals, batons, swords, snuff-boxes, personal relics and other special objects. These include the diamond encrusted Garter "George" first owned by the Duke of Marlborough and afterwards by the Duke of Wellington; the silver-gilt Waterloo Shield; a French artillery standard captured at Waterloo; a dressing case with the Duke's shaving brushes, razors and medicines; and the porcelain service presented by the King of Prussia. The Inner Hall contains busts of famous Regency politicians, etc., and the Duke's Garter Robes (lent by the present Duke). The Staircase Vestibule contains the giant nude statue of Napoleon (11 ft. 4 ins.) made by Canova, but disapproved of by the Emperor.

On the first floor are the richly decorated State rooms; the Piccadilly Drawing Room, the Portico Room the Waterloo Gallery, the Yellow Drawing Room, the Striped Drawing Room and the Dining Room. Here are shown the most important paintings (including three works by Velasquez), the "Ambassador" Service of silver plate; the "Saxon" Service of porcelain; and the "Austrian" Service of Vienna porcelain. Of particular interest is the great Waterloo Gallery where the Duke entertained the generals and other officers who fought at Waterloo, each year on the anniversary of the Battle. (18th June). On the long table in this gallery is the decorative centre-piece and "plateau" of the "Portuguese" Service of silver plate, which stretches for over 26 feet. Many of the pictures in the Waterloo Gallery were in Joseph Bonaparte's baggage train which the Duke captured at the Battle of Vittoria (1813).

To make the house of maximum interest to visitors, every picture and other object is clearly labelled and described.

Telephone enquiries before Press Day to KENSINGTON 6371 (Department of Extension Services).



VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM
South Kensington,
London, S.W.7

*A Museum of Fine and Applied Art of
all countries, styles and periods*

BUS NOS.: 14, 30, 49, 74, 96,
Brompton Oratory or South
Kensington Station stops

UNDERGROUND: South Kensington



HOURS OF OPENING
WEEKDAYS (including Saturdays and
Bank Holidays): 10-6
SUNDAYS: 2.30-6
CLOSED: Good Friday & Christmas Day
TELEPHONE: KENSINGTON 6371
ADMISSION FREE

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM BULLETIN

OPENING OF THE WELLINGTON MUSEUM

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MINISTRY OF WORKS PRESS NOTICE

Press Office : Reliance 7611



(P278) Wt. 27001/L8882 50,000 10/50 V.B. Gp 835

WELLINGTON MUSEUMRestoration and Repair of Apsley House by the Ministry of Works

Apsley House was given to the Nation by the present Duke of Wellington to be used as a "Wellington Museum" in which historic possessions of his famous ancestor would be on view to the public.

A special Act of Parliament was passed in 1947 vesting Apsley House in the Minister of Works and making the Minister responsible for its maintenance; and vesting the chattels of the first Duke in the Minister of Education under whose auspices the Museum is administered by the Victoria and Albert Museum.

In order to put Apsley House into a condition to house the new Museum, the Ministry of Works has carried out an extensive programme of restoration in consultation with the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The building suffered damage in the last war, and major items of repair had to be undertaken in advance of general restoration. The preliminary repairs were completed in 1950, and in November of that year a contract was let by the Ministry for the preparation of the House as a Museum, with certain portions segregated and prepared for the private use of the Duke of Wellington.

The total cost of repair, decoration and restoration work, excluding furnishings, was £50,000.

Internal Work To Museum Rooms

Ground Floor. The walls of the Inner and Outer Halls have been marbled to match as near as possible the original. The Plate and China Room (sometimes called the Muniment Room or Museum) where the walls are lined with show cases, is painted. A small room off the Inner Hall has been prepared as the Office.

First Floor. The large reception rooms are on this floor and they had to be restored and redecorated to serve as the main galleries of the Museum. The walls of two of them, the Portico Room and the Striped Drawing Room, have been re-lined with new silk damask of similar designs to the original, while in others, for reasons of economy, a similar effect has been obtained with specially printed papers. The remaining rooms on this floor have painted walls, the colours following the original as closely as possible.

Much of the gilded surfaces had deteriorated badly but in order to limit expenditure the new areas of gilding have been confined to the most badly worn parts. By "toning down" the new areas it has been possible to produce a blended appearance.

Waterloo Gallery. This room is one of the additions to the house and the effect of the new dark red wallpaper and the highly decorated and gilded walls, ceilings, door and windows is typical of the period. The sliding shutters, mirrored on the inside, can be drawn across the windows. They were fitted by the first Duke, but are not those which he installed at the time of the Chartist riots. These were fitted to the outside of the windows and have long since been removed. Other features in this room that have been fully restored are the etched glass ceiling lights and the beautiful inlaid floor margin.

Portico Room. The ornamented ceiling had been considerably damaged and it was necessary to lift it and strengthen the plaster key before decorating to the colour scheme shown on Robert Adam's original drawings in the Soane Museum.

Dining Room. A special problem was the repairs to the "Scagliola" or imitation marble pilasters and fireplace surround. For this work the services of an Italian specialist craftsman were employed.

The installation of the new radiators behind the oak panelling presented another difficulty which was solved by facing them with an oak veneer.

Internal Structural Work

A new staircase to give access to the basement was constructed from the Inner Hall on the ground floor. The basement was adapted to provide offices and rooms for staff, and a "strong" room. A new boiler house for the central heating system was installed in what was the first Duke's kitchen, and public lavatories were provided. A fuel store was built adjoining the boiler house, with a new hoist to facilitate removal of ashes. An old hydraulic lift was replaced with an 8-passenger lift serving the Museum floors.

External work included permanent repairs to roofs, chimney stacks and top lights. New tank enclosures and lift motor rooms were built, the badly damaged covered way at the main entrance was removed and the forecourt paving repaired, and essential restoration and repair work was done to balustrades, railings, gates and lamps. Some further restoration to the railings and gates will be carried out at a future date in the ordinary course of maintenance.

Engineering Services

Radiators forming part of the new hot water central heating installation have been concealed in the dadoes or the floors. Such original candelabra and chandeliers as remained have been restored by the Victoria and Albert Museum and adapted for electric lighting by the Ministry of Works; other chandeliers on the main staircase and on the ground floor have been purchased by the Victoria and Albert Museum. Some rooms have, in addition to the chandeliers, fluorescent lighting behind the cornices, and the Waterloo Gallery has additional lights behind the glass ceiling panels. The Napoleon statue in the Staircase Vestibule is illuminated by spotlights. There is a mechanical ventilation system in the Waterloo Gallery. Domestic hot water in the Museum has been provided by means of multi-point instantaneous gas water heaters.

Names and addresses of the main contractor and sub-contractors are given in Appendix I.

Historical Note

Apsley House was designed by Robert Adam and built 1777-8. It was bought by the first Duke of Wellington in 1817. In 1828-9 it was extended, the red brick exterior being faced with Bath stone by B.D. Wyatt and the Corinthian portico added.

Note to Editors. Comparative photographs of some of the rooms before and after restoration are obtainable on application to the Ministry of Works, Photographic Section, Lambeth Bridge House, London S.E.1. (Tel: RELiance 7611, Ext. 1031).

17th July, 1952

APSLEY HOUSE: LIST OF CONTRACTORSMain Contractor

F.G. Minter (Decorations) Ltd.
4, Buckingham Gate, S.W. 1.

Sub-Contractors

Structural Steelwork	Measure Bros. (1911) Ltd.
Hollow Tile Roofing	Caxton Floors Ltd.
Asphalt roofing and pitchmastic flooring.	The Excel Asphalt Co. Ltd.
Patent Glazing	Aygee Ltd.
Terrazzo	Art Pavements and Decorations Ltd.
Metal Windows	Crittall Manufacturing Co. Ltd.
Special Decorations	Ernie Bayliss Ltd.
Ornamental Laylights (repairs)	J. Preedy & Sons Ltd.
Inlaid Floor Margin (repairs)	Great Met. Flooring Co. Ltd.
Wrought Iron Balustrade	S.W. Farmer & Son Ltd.
Reglazing Dome	Bond & Co.
Ironmongery	Comyn Ching & Co. Ltd. and Yannedis & Co. Ltd.
Sanitary Fittings	J. Chater & Sons Ltd.
Wallpaper to Waterloo Gallery	Supplied by Cole & Sons (Wallpapers) Ltd.
Wallpaper to Yellow Drawing Room	Supplied by John Line & Sons Ltd.
Restoration of Stonework (Contractor)	Szerelmey Ltd.
Scaffolding for Res. of Stonework.	Palmer's Travelling Cradles and Scaffold Co. Ltd.

The Contractors for the Engineering services were:-

Electric lighting and power installation.	G.W. Day & Co. Ltd.
Central Heating System	Johnson & Tanner Ltd.
New Lifts	Evans Lifts Ltd.
Ash Hoist	Aldous & Campbell Ltd.

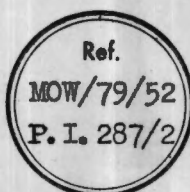
The Suppliers of the new silk damask were:-

Red Striped Silk	Gainsborough Silk Weaving Co. Sudbury, Suffolk.
Apsley Green Damask	Warner Bros., 77, Well Street, Oxford Street and Braintree, Essex.
The hanging of the silks and the making of the banquettes	Hampton & Sons Ltd., Pall Mall.

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